



# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**16 / 17 FEBRUARY 2018**  
**6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR C**  
**Welcome to the Newly Baptised**

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

*Happy Are You*

"The glass is either half empty ... or broken," said a discouraged detective in one of Jonathan Kellermann's mystery novels.

The beatitudes Jesus proclaims this Sunday seem for all the world like the broken option. Blessed are those who are poor, hungry, weeping, hated, excluded, insulted, and denounced. Are these really beatitudes?

What is a beatitude supposed to be, anyway?

They were an ancient formula for encouraging people to do good. For instance, in this week's Psalm, which is the first psalm in the bible, we read, "If you would be happy (Blessed are you): never walk with the wicked, never stand with sinners, never sit among cynics."



And Psalm 41 says, "Blest are those ready to help the poor; in hard times God repays their care them. ..." Jeremiah 17 has "Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord . . . That person shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green."

Beatitudes are numerous and beautiful in the Old Testament. They all say this: if you do a particular thing, you will receive blessings. Beatitudes were consolations, helping their hearers to be good persons.

But Jesus seems to have reversed the idea. Blessed are you if you do the deed of suffering. Wait, Lord, what do you mean? I am supposed to seek to be penniless and sorrowful and in pain? Why would you want me to be in such a terrible state?

A person has to be open and empty in order to let God and others come in. If we want to love and be loved we need to have space at the centre of who we are. And then goodness will come in.

Consider a rich person who "has everything." Aren't they tempted to let their possessions define who they are? "Attack my property and you attack me," they might say. Possessions become an "instead of." Instead of love I choose something more stable [so it looks]: cars or boats or corporations or just plain power. Instead of eating only what I need, do I go to a restaurant and eat enough for five people?! Would you like another order of French fries, the waiter asks after we have already finished a steak the size of a serving plate and a quadruple order of fries.



✠✠ Yet the principle running through all the beatitudes is this: you are blessed if you don't cram yourself full. Full of food, drink, pride, drugs, fame, sex, visits to the beach, stunning hair-do's, flattest abs, shiny teeth, fast cars, every kind of wealth, and of course reputation. Instead, blessed are you if you stay empty, if you become a spacious home for God, for other human beings, for the long-suffering earth.



We are built to be quiet receivers, people who know they are empty and yet are patient. There is only one reality, only one Being who can give us the bread of life, who can satisfy our deep hunger for love. Don't you want to welcome it into your soul instead of flying around at fastest pace having fun, fun, fun?

Blessed are you if you let go into God's arms.

This gospel passage (and its parallel, Matthew 5:1-11) has great importance for those who claim to be followers of Jesus. It brings his answer to the question: Where am I to find true happiness? – the ultimate concern, surely, in all our striving. Happiness – which is often confused in people's minds with the superficial contentment we call 'a good time' – will only be found in the things that meet our deepest needs as persons. And, in the end, only the things of God that will fill the 'depths' that are in every human person (John Paul II). As the world's true Saviour, Jesus shows us how we can fill these depths – all that he stood for as he shared our life shows us the way to true happiness, even in this present life; and he promises to share with us his own happiness in the life to come. In today's gospel he points out the way to those who want to be his true followers.

Note how Luke sets the scene. The audience addressed by Jesus is made up of two groups, 'a large gathering of his disciples' (those who have made a commitment to what Jesus stands for), and 'a great crowd of people from all parts' (those who are drawn to him, but hesitate to commit themselves more fully). Jesus 'fixes his eyes' on the first group, and addresses his teaching concerning true happiness to them. Note, however, that in the scene as Luke describes it there is no hard boundary dividing the two groups. Though the words of Jesus are addressed to the first group, they are also an invitation to those in the second group to find the joy that will be theirs if they take his paradoxical invitation seriously. And, because our Christian communities have always contained these two groups, Luke is inviting us to ask ourselves where we stand.

'How happy are you who are poor'. Jesus' teaching on true happiness – to be continued, we should note, in next week's reading – overturns the assumptions of worldly wisdom. In Matthew we find a different wording: 'Blessed (with true happiness) are the poor in spirit'. There is a subtle difference in what the two evangelists wish to convey of the teaching of Jesus. Luke does not canonise a state of material deprivation – in what follows, as we shall see, Jesus urges those who have material resources to use them with a generosity learned from their heavenly Father: what Matthew calls being 'poor in spirit'. But it must also be recognised that Luke is calling to mind a fundamental biblical theme: those who are materially poor are privileged, not because they are morally superior, but because they are the object of God's special concern: 'God hears the cry of the poor'. Those who have learned to trust in this truth have found great blessings – whether their deprivation has been imposed on them by circumstance, or they have embraced a life of poverty that is voluntary, in imitation of the Saviour's own life.

In our pursuit of happiness, God respects our freedom. As the first reading reminds us, the outcome depends on the choices that shape our lives. Jesus contrasts true happiness with the 'woes' of an empty life. Perhaps we can see in today's troubled world '*a fulfilment of the woes Jesus directed against a rich, abundant, laughing, self-congratulating social order*' (Paul Tillich).

# BAPTISMS THIS WEEKEND

Welcome to **BILLIE PINGNAM** baptized in our parish this Saturday evening, and to **DYLAN EMBLETON**, **LIVIA EMBLETON** and **ELLA EMBLETON** baptized this Sunday morning. Welcome to their parents, godparents and family. Thank you to bringing your child/children to our Parish.



**Next Baptisms** in our Parish will be **on Easter Sunday morning, 21 April** and then on the third weekend of May, either 18/19 May. If you want your infant daughter or son baptized on 21 April, at least one parent needs to attend a Baptism Preparation Class which will be held at 7:15pm on Thursday, 28 February *or* Thursday, 28 March. Enrolment forms are obtainable from the Parish Office.

Baptism, the first sacrament of initiation, prepares us to celebrate the Eucharist. Baptisms are usually held on the third weekend of each month [except January and Lent], during either of the weekend Masses. Baptism forms are obtainable from the Parish Office.

## PLENARY COUNCIL 2020 – We Want to Hear from You

**The closing date for submissions to the Plenary Council is almost here – 6 March. There is no limit to how many submissions you can make and all topics are on the table. No submission is too big or too small, whether it be about our local parish or the broader Church. The Spirit speaks to us all. We want to hear from you!**

There are forms or books on the front seat near the lectern for you to write down any submissions, and they can be done anonymously.

## SACRAMENTS IN 2019

The Sacrament of Confirmation for Year 6 students or older will held in our Parish on 26/27 June this year. Details of the preparation and Enrolment Forms are obtainable on our Parish website – **enrolments close on 13 May.**

The Sacraments of First Penance (Reconciliation) and Communion are held during Term 4 for seven-year-old students (Year 2) or older. Details of the preparation and Enrolment Forms are obtainable on our Parish website – **enrolments close on 10 September.**

## SIGN UP FOR LENTEN PRAYER GROUPS ... NOW!



Lent begins on Wednesday, 6 March. As usual, during Lent, small groups will gather throughout our Parish to follow the Diocese of Wollongong's 2019 Lenten resource. Lenten groups are a great way to meet other parishioners and to prepare for Easter. **Now** is the time to sign up to join one of the groups meeting in the evenings or on Thursday mornings. There are SIX groups: Monday evenings; Tuesday evenings (2); Wednesday evenings; Thursday evenings; and Thursday mornings after the 9am Mass. **Sign up sheets are in the church, or contact the Parish Office for details of the groups.**

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Friday 22 Feb The Chair of Saint Peter, apostle  
**First anniversary of the ordination of Bishop Brian Mascord**  
 Saturday 23 Feb St Polycarp, bishop, martyr

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK  
 TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA**

**3,706** rescues performed since 1 July 18 – last week **3,535**

**SWIM SAFELY – BETWEEN THE FLAGS WHERE THE WAVES BREAK**



## SPIRITUALITY IN THE “PUB” – AT THIRROUL!



All are invited to Wollongong “Spirituality in the Pub” to be held in the McCarthy Centre, in our Parish School, Thirroul, at **7:30pm** on **Tuesday, 26 February**. The topic is “**The Plenary Council 2020**”, and the speaker is **Father Noel Connolly**, a Columban missionary priest. Noel worked in Korea (1970-74). Later he helped found the Korean Catholic Community in Sydney and was their chaplain up till 1981. He was Rector of St Columban’s College and the Pacific Mission Institute (Sydney) from 1979-1984, and Vicar General of the Columbans throughout the world (Ireland) 1988–2000 and Director of the Columbans in Australia and New Zealand from 2005-2011.

He is presently Coordinator of Mission and Culture at the Catholic Institute of Sydney and a member of Catholic Mission’s Adult Formation Team. Last year he was appointed by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to the Facilitation Team for the Plenary Council 2020. He has lectured widely on Pope Francis and is the author of two books, Pope Francis’ Inspiring Vision Parts 1 & 2. **Come along on Tuesday, 26 February, here in our Parish.**

### THIS Sunday’s Readings *on our website*

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Jeremiah 17:5-8  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** 1 Corinthians 15:12,16-20  
**Gospel** Luke 6:17,20-26

### NEXT Sunday’s Readings *on our website*

**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** 1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,12-13.22-23  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** 1 Corinthians 15:45-49  
**Gospel** Luke 6:27-38

### SUNDAY MASS TIMES

**Church of St Michael • Thirroul**  
 Saturday – **5:30pm** • Sunday – **8:00am**  
**Bulli • Sunday 8:30am and 5:30pm**  
**Corrimal • Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am**

### LITURGIES THIS WEEK

**Wombarra [Liturgy] Monday 4:30pm**  
**Thirroul Tuesday 5:30pm**  
 Wednesday **9:00am**  
 Thursday **9:00am**  
 Friday **9:30am**

### Parish of St Michael – Thirroul and Wombarra

*forward as a Parish Family + one of the Northern Illawarra Parishes*

an • **Parish Priest** ❖ **Andrew Granc ofm, Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • Assisting**

**Lawrence Hargrave Drive**  
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✉ **thirroul@dow.org.au**

**Tuesday, Wednesday**  
**Friday**

**9:00am to 3:30pm** **Magda Pires**  
**10:00am to 3:00pm** **Maureen Franciskovic**



☎ [www.thirroulcatholic.org.au](http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au)

☎ **Parish School of St Michael 4267 2560**