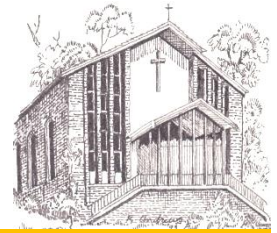




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



4 / 5 MAY 2019

3RD SUNDAY OF THE 50 DAYS OF EASTER ✦ YEAR C
The Book of Revelation ✦ Acts of the Apostles

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Do You Love Me?

Jesus asks Peter a question in Sunday's Gospel. How would you feel if he asked the same question of you?

The former disciples were milling around on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius. (John 21:15) Jesus had appeared to them twice before, but they did not yet understand. They had not yet received the Holy Spirit

They were at loose ends.

Peter got tired of standing around so he said, I'm going fishing, anybody want to come? They joined him gladly and they fished all night. This might seem crazy from our point of view, but maybe not from theirs. Maybe, among other things, it was a way to handle stress.

The break of day revealed a man standing on shore.

John, the mystic, the one Jesus loved especially well, whispered hoarsely, "It is the Lord"!! Peter hurled himself into the water and wobbled the hundred yards to shore, leaving to someone else the job of bringing the boat in. It seems that Peter, the denier, actually loved Jesus very much.

And that is the question. Can you say that you love Jesus very much?

Jesus looks at your face and addresses you by your name. "Do you love me more than these?"

Such a question. What will you say? Answer the Lord when you are ready, even if it isn't perfect. Put it into words. Don't read further till you have done this.

When he hears your response, listen to him say to you, "feed my lambs."

Phew. Thank God the trial is over and you don't have to deal with any more questions like that.

He asks you again, by name, "do you love me?"

How would such a repeated question affect you? For his part, Peter came emotionally unglued. He said loudly, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Our hearts go out to him, and also to you since you also have been asked a second time. What is your answer now? Put some thought into it.

After your answer, Jesus replies, "tend my sheep."

Then, yet again, not just twice but a third time, he asks the tender, unnerving question—before you have had time to settle your mind and heart.

"Do you love me?" Let it echo inside you.





Does he suspect that you really do not love him? You need to know. So, consider your daily attitude toward Jesus and toward God. Do not say your answer lightly. Offer it quietly in prayer to Jesus, or out loud if you wish. Take your time. Pay attention to how it feels to say it. Maybe you will reply as Peter did, “Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you.”

Or do you have another answer? Something like, *Lord, you know everything, you know that I want to love you, but also that I want to have a good life too. You see the fear and the running away and the distraction that I live by—are you going to condemn me for them? I want to love you but ...*

Jesus answers, “feed my lambs.” Stay with it. Think about it. Pray about it.

Doesn't it mean that we who are sinful can be part of Jesus' mission? We don't have to be perfect? We are forgiven? If the answer is yes, then let us act as the Body of Christ always does.

Feed his lambs.

Last Sunday we found encouragement in the fact that it was not easy for the apostles to grasp the difference the Lord's Resurrection should make in their lives. Today's gospel reading from John tells us of the conversion that brought this difference in Peter, destined to become the fearless leader of the Twelve. According to this account, the disciples have already been in the presence of the Risen Lord more than once; but – still uncertain what is required of them – they are taking up their old life: ‘I'm going fishing’ ‘We'll come with you’. Most are slow to recognise Jesus on the shore of the lake; it is the disciple bonded to Jesus by a special love that is the first to do so. And even when they have joined him they hesitate to interrogate him. The whole account underlines the change of heart they still have to undergo.

It is Peter especially who must be converted, if he is to be their leader, when with him they come to know that they are called to be ‘fishers of people’ – with the Lord at their side. Peter is confronted with his threefold denial as Jesus asks him three times, ‘Do you love me?’. Scholars have long discussed the fact that, in this exchange, two different terms for ‘love’ are used. In his first two questions, Jesus uses the word Christian faith came to identify with the New Law brought by Jesus (*agapao*). When Peter responds evasively, using another less demanding term (*phileo*), Jesus asks for a third time, now using this less demanding term – as if to say, reminding Peter of his recent failure, ‘Are you really sure that you care for me at all?’ Now Peter is ‘upset’: confronted by his inadequacy he knows that he can only rely on the Lord's decision to entrust him with a role of leadership, and now he used the word he has been avoiding (J Marsh): ‘Lord you know everything; you know I love you’.

We see how well this new trust in the Risen Lord sustains Peter as he faces the Sanhedrin, the very body in the presence of which he had felt intimidated when he betrayed his Master. Unafraid of them now, he has ‘filled Jerusalem’ with his teaching. Now he sees his life, shaped by the Lord's call, as ‘obedience to God’ – whatever it may cost. He gives his fearless witness to the God of Israel as the one who raised Jesus to be ‘leader and saviour’ – confident that he is supported by ‘the Holy Spirit whom God; has given to those who obey him’; and he calls those who unjustly put Jesus to death to ‘repentance and the forgiveness of sins’. Now the lessons of the Risen Lord, given on the evening of his resurrection day, have become the charter of his life.

An encouraging memory for each of us in our Easter reflections, as we seek to respond to the call of the Risen Lord in the confusion of our lives. In a trusting acknowledgment of our weakness we shall find our true strength.



SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR?

Are you celebrating a significant wedding anniversary this year, **25, 50, 60 or more years**, please contact the Parish Office **as soon as possible**, so that arrangements can be made to inform the diocesan office so congratulations can be sent to you from our bishop.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred by Bishop Brian on **Wednesday and Thursday, 26/27 June 2019** to Year 6 (or older) students. **Enrolment Forms** may be downloaded **from our Parish website**. Download and complete the Form, then return it to the Parish Office: thirroul@dow.org.au Enrolments close on **Monday, 13 May 2019**.

USED STAMPS

Used stamps are worth money! That money can be used to help people in need in many and various ways. If you have any used stamps, **please drop them in to the sacristy – there is a special box in the sacristy for used stamps**.



PLASTIC BOTTLES – A RECYCLING PROJECT

At Easter about one hundred small plastic bottles of Holy Water were distributed so that you could bless your home or cars with it. When you have used the Holy Water, **please return the empty plastic bottles** to the church – place them in the tray near the baptism font, so we can fill them again. *How long should you keep Holy Water?* We bless new Holy Water usually every month, so it's probably a good idea not to keep Holy Water longer than a couple of months. *What do you do with it then?* Best solution is to pour it on a garden – but not on sensitive plants, as we use salt water from our beach for our Holy Water.



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

This year, Year C of the three-year cycle of Readings, the second reading of the Sunday Masses during the Easter Season is from the **Book of Revelation**, sometimes called *The Apocalypse*. Revelation is unique within the New Testament. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are, for the most part, realistic narrative. The epistles (letters) are basically descriptive prose or words that exhort or encourage. Revelation differs from all of these in being narrative of a special kind. It narrates extraordinary visions and auditions that concern things normally unseen and unheard by human beings. Revelation is unique in the New Testament, but not in the ancient world. Similar texts have been preserved in the Old Testament, in other Jewish literature, and in other early Christian literature not in the Bible. In genre Revelation is (a) an apocalypse, although it has affinities with (b) prophecy, (c) letters, and (d) drama as well.



“An apocalypse”: Revelation begins with the words, “The revelation of Jesus Christ ...” In this context the Greek word *apokalypsis*, “revelation,” expresses the idea that God through Jesus Christ, John and this written text, has unveiled secrets about heaven and earth, past, present and future. The ancient genre of apocalypse seems to have been fluid and imprecise. Any text that revealed secrets about heaven or the future fitted under this category.

Revelation, the last book of the Bible, is one of the most difficult to understand because it abounds in unfamiliar and extravagant symbolism, which at best appears unusual to the modern reader. Symbolic language, however, is one of the chief characteristics of apocalyptic literature, of which this book is an outstanding example. Such literature enjoyed wide popularity in both Jewish and Christian circles from ~200BC to AD200. This book contains an account of visions in symbolic and allegorical language borrowed extensively from the Old Testament, especially Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel.

[continued next week]

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Weekend 11/12 May **Blessing of Mothers** at both weekend Masses

Monday 13 May 6:00pm **Enrolments for Confirmation 2019** close

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

5,478 rescues performed since 1 July 18 – last week **5,385**

SWIM SAFELY — WHERE THE WAVES BREAK — OR IN THE POOL

ACTS OF APOSTLES

All during the 50 days of Easter we read from Luke's **Acts of the Apostles**. The Acts of the Apostles, the second volume of Luke's two-volume work, continues Luke's presentation of biblical history, describing how the salvation promised to Israel in the Old Testament and accomplished by Jesus has now under the guidance of the Holy Spirit been extended to the Gentiles. This was accomplished through the divinely chosen representatives whom Jesus prepared during his historical ministry and commissioned after his resurrection as witnesses to all that he taught. Luke's preoccupation with the Christian community as the Spirit-guided bearer of the word of salvation rules out of his book detailed histories of the activity of most of the preachers. Only the main lines of the roles of Peter and Paul serve Luke's interest. Peter was the leading member of the Twelve, a miracle worker like Jesus in the gospel, the object of divine care, and the spokesman for the Christian community, who, according to Luke, was largely responsible for the growth of the community in the early days. Paul eventually joined the community at Antioch, which subsequently commissioned him and Barnabas to undertake the spread of the gospel to Asia Minor. This missionary venture generally failed to win the Jews of the diaspora [Jews outside of Israel] to the gospel but enjoyed success among the Gentiles.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Third Sunday of Easter • Year C

1st Reading Acts 5:27-32,40-41
2nd Reading Revelation 5:11-14
Gospel John 21:1-19

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Fourth Sunday of Easter • Year C

1st Reading Acts 13:14,43-52
2nd Reading Revelation 7:9,14-17
Gospel John 10:27-30

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

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

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

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**Parish Office
Hours**

**Tuesday, Wednesday
Friday**

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



www.thirroulcatholic.org.au

Parish School of St Michael  4267 2560