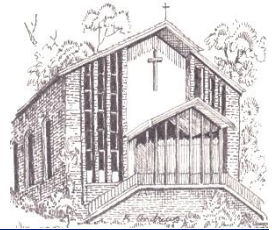




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



30 NOVEMBER / 1 DECEMBER 2019
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ✦ YEAR A

Vinnies Collection 🕯 Blessing of the Christmas Tree

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

A Wake Up Call

The Church seems to have a liturgical strategy in Advent's Sunday readings. Each week, the first reading is positive, a promise of good, the "carrot." Then the Gospel and the second reading seem to whack us with the "stick."

Why celebrate Advent? "I don't know why, it always just comes along"; or, "I don't know, no one ever told me why." Or especially, "if Christ has already been born, what is this Advent 'waiting' for? Have we forgotten what happened so many centuries ago and need to remind ourselves?" Strangely that is part of the answer. Jesus' birth is into our hearts every year, not just once, thousands of years ago. Wake up!



The first reading this Sunday reminds us of the promise God made to God's people: righteousness [= right relationships] and justice will come to the earth. Security. The day of the Lord will arrive, though long delayed. Peace in our day. What a great promise at such a time as ours. Too good to be true? Just pious thought? Read the first reading now and ask yourself such questions. Spend time with them. Pray to God for help. The Responsorial Psalm will help. It asks God to make known his ways to us, to guide us and to teach us.

The second reading urges us to put God's promise of peace into action, even if we are only starting to grasp what it means. Love others and be loved! "Let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy."

It talks as if we were tempted to such things. Yet, why did Paul warn people if there was no reason? Don't we need to "*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*" as this reading urges?

This is the hour now for you to awake from sleep. The Gospel is the "stick" that tries to help us wake up, especially if the above has not helped. Jesus says, "Two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore.

Go ahead and spend time on this. Are you ready for the warning? Let yourself imagine what this planet might be like if no one paid attention except to their own wants. Picture it and don't worry about being exact. Experience it.

Will such a shakeup happen literally? Maybe much worse is to come, judging from our world. Do you live without fear of terrorist acts, of proliferating nuclear weapons, of the crash of an entire world economy, of the crisis of climate change, of the greed that fills so many hearts to overflowing in your city, in your state, your world?



✠✠ If you can say, “I am afraid of these,” then you can go back to the Psalm and pray heartily. Beg that Christ be given birth in your soul and in so many others in this world that need it so badly.

Advent means “Coming”. During this season the liturgies encourage us – as we look forward to the Christmas celebration – to reflect upon the mystery of God’s coming among us. It is a season of expectation, reminding us that we live in time.

The irresistible march of time has puzzled philosophers since ancient times. We shall learn a great deal about ourselves, if we get in touch with the moods that shape our lives – moods that almost invariably involve the passing of time: our hopes and fears, our yearnings and disappointments, our sense of achievement, the lessons life is teaching us. Our faith should help us to situate this pattern of our lives within the designs of God. Where the march of time is leading us has only become clear, of course, because God has made known to us why the world was created. If God had remained silent, time would seem like an ever-going nowhere. Since Old Testament times, however, God’s people have been given a growing awareness of God’s designs – through the divine gifts of faith and hope. A greater familiarity with the Scriptures – in this time of renewal – can give us a more lively awareness of the unfolding of God’s generous plan, and of our place in that plan. An authentic faith is inseparable from a strong Christian hope – the certainty that God’s generous and merciful designs will be fulfilled: in the whole of creation, and in the lives of each one of us.

Today’s readings remind us of this hope. The writings of the prophet Isaiah are filled with the message of hope. It is not surprising, therefore, that they will be used in the Advent liturgies of the coming Sundays. Today’s reading speaks of the future God has in store for the whole human family – as the fulfilment of all our hopes. The nations of the earth will live in harmony – swords will be made into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. The peoples of the whole world will come to share in the blessings of Israel, knowing the life-giving “ways of the Lord” and “walking in his paths”. But the prophet reminds those of us – who, though we claim to be God’s people, are often “unfaithful to our calling” – that we must play our part in God’s great plan: “Let us walk in the light of the Lord”.

The whole message of Paul’s teaching is the Good News that the intervention of God that determines the whole course of the world’s history has taken place in the life, death and triumphant resurrection of the Saviour – summed up in his words, ‘You know “the time” has come’. And he gives us a vivid comparison: with the coming of Christ it is as if the darkest night has suddenly given way to the full light of day, revealing Christ as our life and our protector. In the gospel reading from Matthew, Jesus urges his disciples to situate themselves within the designs of God, because these designs are approaching their mysterious final climax. Christian hope, he teaches us, lives in constant readiness to welcome the Son of Man.

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE All-loving God, we praise you for the light of creation: the sun, the moon, the stars of night, the oceans and the land. We praise you for shepherding your people, Israel, through the Law, the prophets and the Scriptures. We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace, who fills us with the wonder of your justice and love. [*The tree lights are turned on now*] Nurturing God, let your blessing come upon us as we light this tree. May the light and happiness it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts. May the poor, the oppressed, the rejected, and all people find delight in you, and come to the knowledge and joy of salvation. May the gifts we place under this tree be of help to the poor. All glory and praise to you, heavenly Father: we thank you for sending us your Son Jesus to be our brother. Amen.



FIRST COMMUNION 2019

Twenty-six (26) young parishioners have been preparing for receiving the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time. They will receive this Sacrament for the first time as follows: Saturday, 30 November – 2; Sunday, 1 December – 12; Saturday, 7 December – 5; Sunday, 8 December – 4; Saturday, 14 December – 2; Sunday, 15 December – 1. Please remember before the Lord these young parishioners and their families. This weekend the following young parishioners will receive First Communion: **CHARLI COLEMAN; QUINN JEFFERY; WILLIAM HORAN; RIVER HAY; LIBBY SHARRATT; MAYA DAVIES; FINN GULLY; FIADH MOLLOY; SOPHIE LYON; IMOGEN VILLANTI; OLIVER FORTE; JAMES BOLTON; ELLIOT PHELAN; OSCAR NASSO. Congratulations!**

CHRISTMAS EVE MASS IN OUR PARISH SCHOOL

Christmas Eve Mass will be in our Parish School grounds at **6:30pm on Tuesday, 24 December**. Children are involved in the readings and “walk-on non-talking” parts, e.g. carrying up candles, the bread and wine etc. If you would like your daughter or son to be involved, **please email the Parish Office on thirroul@dow.org.au**, giving name, phone number and any “job” they would prefer to do. Also, **singers are needed** to help lead the singing ... anyone from 5 years to 105 year are welcome! Also, **adult parishioners** are needed as “**Safety Officers / Ushers**” at the 6:30pm Mass – you don’t have to be on the usual Safety Officers Roster. Please contact the Parish Office by **4 December**.

Other Christmas Masses are: **9:30pm at Wombarra** and **9:00am at Thirroul**.

DISABLED SURFERS ASSOCIATION: 7 DECEMBER

A fun day surfing experience for any person with a disability, no matter how challenging, with complete water supervision. Registration for participants is \$10 and all participants receive a bag of goodies, thanks to the local participating surf shops and businesses. Free registration for **volunteer helpers** and for giving up your time you will receive **FREE** sausage sizzle on the day, **Saturday, 7 December from 9:00am at Thirroul Beach**.

Disabled Surfing is about helping individuals with a disability to get into the surf and feel the freedom of catching a wave in a safe environment. What the DSA does is provide a safe surfing experience to all in the community with a disability. **Volunteers are needed for this to occur. You DO NOT need to know how to surf. If you can stand waist deep in water you can help.**

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This weekend we begin again, **Advent**, preparing for Christmas, the coming of the Christ-child. As usual, there will be annual **Vinnies Christmas Appeal**, along with the preparation of **hampers** and ‘**Giving Tree**’ gifts for distribution in our local area. The actual **Appeal** is on **30 Nov – 1 Dec** and **7–8 December**. **Hampers** and **gifts** will need to be **returned by**

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL
YOU CAN HELP END POVERTY

the week-end of **14–15 December** for distribution before Christmas. Also, next weekend at all Masses there will be the **Blessing of the Christmas Tree**. Thanks to you for your generosity and Vinnies for their ministry! **YOUR GIFT COULD CHANGE PEOPLE’S LIVES.**



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Weekend 7/8 Dec Vinnies Christmas Appeal

Weekend 14/15 Dec Blessing of the Christmas Crib

Tuesday 17 Dec Reconciliation Rite II



SWIM BETWEEN THE FLAGS

Our surfing season runs until 26 April 2020! **Please be safe on our beaches and waterways.** So far, since 1 July, there have already been **666** rescues – that's **27** since last week! **Please be safe on our beaches.** Can you spot a rip?? **FLAG SWIM FLAG**

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

WANT TO BE BAPTISED? WANT TO BECOME A CATHOLIC?

Anyone over the age of seven (7) who has not been baptised and who wishes to become a Catholic, NOW is the time to let the Parish Office know. Preparation begins this month for the three Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. The preparation is called RCIA or RCIC, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults/Children*. Similarly, if you have been baptised in another Christian Church and you want to become a Catholic, you won't be re-baptised, but there is a preparation period prior to you receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. **If you or if you know anyone who wants to become a Catholic, please call the Parish Office THIS WEEK,** to obtain the "inquiry" form and to begin the preparation. People in the RCIA and RCIC programs will receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil, **11 April 2020.** Welcome to anyone wishing to become a Catholic. **Please call the Parish Office THIS WEEK.**

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

First Sunday of Advent • Year **A**

1st Reading Isaiah 2:1-5

2nd Reading Romans 13:11-14

Gospel Matthew 24:37-44

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Second Sunday of Advent • Year **A**

1st Reading Isaiah 11:1-10

2nd Reading Romans 15:4-9

Gospel Matthew 3:1-12

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

📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive

☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976

📮 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

📧 thirroul@dow.org.au

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