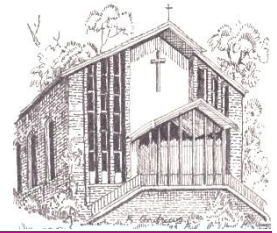




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



29 FEBRUARY / 1 MARCH 2020

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT ❖ YEAR A



Prayer



Fasting



Almsgiving



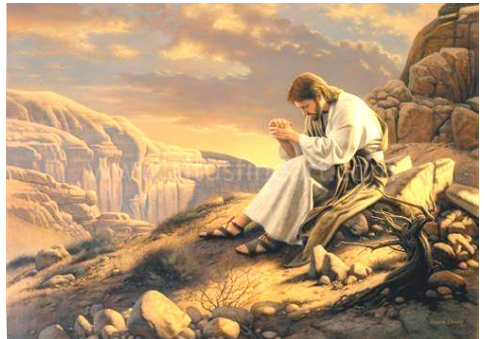
THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Bread and Stones

In the Gospel Reading, Jesus is hungry, and Satan tempts him. "Command these stones to become loaves of bread," he says to Jesus, who rebuffs the temptation by saying to Satan, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Imagine a host asking one of his guests, "Would you like some ham?" How perplexed the host would be if his guest answered, "Man does not live by ham alone"! The question was not whether the guest would like to eat ham and nothing but ham. It was just whether he would like some ham now. Why not say, "Sure! Thanks!"?

So why doesn't Jesus do the miracle? And why does he reject Satan's urging by pointing out that man does not live by bread alone? Of course, we don't live just on bread! But bread is one of the things by which human beings live. In another place Jesus himself explains that no good father will give his son a stone if his son asks for bread. Here is Jesus hungry and having only stones. Why shouldn't he have bread instead?


When a guest says to the host who is offering him ham, "Man does not live by ham alone," it is possible that he is using these words to communicate to his host the thought, completely perplexing in the circumstances, that human beings live on other stuff besides ham. But, of course, there is another possibility. The guest might also be telling his host, graciously, that he is full. There are other things to eat besides ham, and a person who has no ham can still fail to be hungry because he has eaten an abundance of those other things.



And that is what Jesus is telling Satan, isn't it? Anyone who has the word of God does not lack what human beings need to live. "No thanks," Jesus is telling Satan, "I'm full. The word that comes from the mouth of God fills me!"

This is the message to Satan, and also to us.

Jesus, who is the Word of God, gives to every person who will receive him what she/he needs to live, even if she/he has no bread. And, then, for good measure, in the Eucharist Jesus gives bread, too. He, the rock and living cornerstone, gives himself to his own people as the bread of life.

The lessons of the Scriptures are conveyed, for the most part, through stories. Today's readings bring us two outstanding stories of this kind: the story of the temptation 

✠✠ of Adam and Eve, and the story of the temptations of Jesus, the ‘New Adam’, as he takes up his mission after his baptism in the Jordan.

Writing for his community of Jewish converts, Matthew tells the story of the temptations of Jesus in a way that echoes themes of the traditions familiar to them: his temptation ‘in the wilderness’ calls to mind the trials that led the people of the Exodus, during their forty years wandering in the desert, to lose their trust in the Lord; like Moses, at Mount Sinai, Jesus fasts for ‘forty days’; Jesus finds the strength to overcome his temptations by living according to the words of the Scriptures.



This carefully crafted story refers to more than a single episode in the life of the Saviour. It gives us an insight into the ongoing human experience of Jesus who, in the wonder of the Incarnation, shared our human condition and its struggles – even its temptations, though he was ‘without sin’ (Hebrews 4:15). The temptations of Jesus are set forth as an encouragement for us. As we give direction and meaning to our lives, we are tempted to seek security in false gods (Colossians 3:5): pleasure and possessions; the exercise of power; the achievement of recognition and status. The Saviour’s temptations have often been linked with these false securities. As, in his hunger, he rejects the consolation of miraculous food, Jesus encourages us to recognise the empty promise of pleasure and possessions, and to find our security in the truths of our Christian faith. As he turns his back on the earthly triumph many of his contemporaries associated with the coming of Israel’s messiah, he invites us to see that a **selfish exercise of power over others leads only to bitterness**. As he refuses to turn aside from his mission to express the ways of his Father, by becoming involved in the politics of ‘the kingdoms of the world’, he points out to us the way that leads to the true peace yearned for by the peoples of the world.

In today’s second reading – a text much discussed in recent scholarship – Saint Paul compares the Saviour, whom elsewhere he calls ‘the final Adam’ (1 Corinthians 15:45), with the Adam of the Genesis story. The point he wants to make is the incomparable greatness of the Saviour and the blessings he brings in the story of humanity – brought out in a comparison with the Adam figure of the Scriptures. He is not concerned to interpret the complex significance of that figure.

The gospels speak of the temptations of Jesus immediately after his baptism and the Father’s words of encouragement as he comes from the waters. We may see here a concern in the community that gave us the gospels, to prepare those receiving baptism for the temptations that they will certainly face as they live their lives as disciples of the Lord.

2020 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

The origins of World Day of Prayer date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women’s involvement in mission, at home and abroad. It is from such roots as these that WDP has taken its present shape – a **worldwide ecumenical movement of Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action**. The World Day of Prayer Service is held on the First Friday of March. This year’s service has been prepared by the women of **Zimbabwe**, and will be held in our area at **10am on Friday, 6 March at the Austinmer Uniting Church, 48 Moore Street, Austinmer**. **Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.**



PROJECT COMPASSION 2020

Shirley, thirty-six, is an indigenous Manide woman living in a remote province of the Philippines. She is a mother of four and the sole breadwinner of the family, as her husband is sick. But Shirley was struggling to support the whole family and keep her children in school. Indigenous minorities in the Philippines face regular discrimination and disadvantage, limiting their access to education, employment and healthcare.

But thanks to Caritas Australia's Supporters, Shirley's life has been transformed. She is now leading her community to take a stand against discrimination, improve health and education, and pave the way for a better future. Unequal access to health services means that many indigenous children and families cannot access basic medical care. Preventable diseases, such as tuberculosis and measles are common among their community, and there is a high maternal and new-born mortality rate.

With Caritas Australia's support, Shirley trained to become an indigenous health worker and a leader in her community. She has learnt to supplement her income so she is able to feed her family. The program has also helped Shirley's children with school fees, uniforms and supplies. Shirley says there's still a long way to go to fight for better employment opportunities for the Manide tribe and to reduce discrimination, but together they'll get there.

Your support is life saving for people experiencing poverty and oppression. Please help more people like Shirley gain confidence and respect within their community and help improve the conditions of indigenous people's around the world. Let's Go Further, Together.

In today's readings we reflect on the experience of Jesus in the desert for 40 days which parallels the Israelites' experience and journey for 40 years in the desert. The wilderness is a place of hardship and struggle, a place to reset the compass of our lives by asking who are we, where did we come from, where are we going?

Jesus remained steadfast in his commitment to his mission and avoided the temptations presented by the devil; rejecting power and material comforts to live more simply. The temptation for Jesus was to use his powers for his own gain, but he chose not to do this. Rather than turn stones into loaves he remained strong. We are all tempted to selfishly use the gifts God has given us- but we can instead choose the path of generosity and service.

This Lent, how will we answer God's call to go further together with Jesus into the desert, to challenge our understanding of our mission and trust in God's vision for our global community?

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things, with great love." (Saint Teresa of Calcutta)

God of all peoples and nations, as you accompany us on our Lenten journey, may our fasting strengthen our commitment to live in solidarity, our almsgiving be an act of justice, and our prayers anchor us in love and compassion. Awaken our hearts and minds that we may be one human family as we all go further together. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



USED STAMPS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Please bring in any used stamps and put them in the small box just inside the sacristy.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Weekend 29 F/1 M First Sunday of Lent Year A

Collect your Project Compassion boxes or envelopes

Friday 6 Mar 9:30am Anointing of the Sick

10:00am World Day of Prayer Service, Austinmer Uniting

Saturday 14 Mar 6:30pm Social Dinner at Thirroul Bowling Club

SWIM BETWEEN THE FLAGS

Please be safe on our beaches and waterways. So far, since 1 July 2019, there have already been **3,812** rescues – that's **167** since last week! *Please be safe on our beaches. Water is still 22°C!* **FLAG SWIM FLAG**



POPE FRANCIS' WORDS ... Do you want to fast this Lent?

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.

Fast from anger and be filled with patience.

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.

Fast from worries and trust in God.

Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.

Fast from pressures and be prayerful.

Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled.

Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

The average Australian checks their phone every 12 minutes or over 80 times per day. There's something to fast from for Lent.



THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

First Sunday of Lent • Year A

1st Reading Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7

2nd Reading Romans 5:12-19

Gospel Matthew 4:1-11

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Second Sunday of Lent • Year A

1st Reading Genesis 12:1-4

2nd Reading 2 Timothy 1:8-10

Gospel Matthew 17:1-9

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

📮 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976

📧 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