



# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**6 / 7 JUNE 2020**

**TRINITY SUNDAY ✦ YEAR A**

**The Communion of Father, Son and Spirit**

## **THIS WEEK'S READINGS**

*Believe and Be Saved*

The first line in the Gospel reading is powerful: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but may have eternal life." God's love for us is so great that God has found a way to bring us from death into life in God's very self.

And what is that way? Well, as the Gospel says, you must believe in the only Son of God.

But what is it to believe in the Son of God? Believing in a person is not the same as believing that a claim is true, is it? To believe in a person is to trust that person for some things.

So, to believe in the only Son of God is to trust him.

Trust him for what? Well, trust him to bring us from death into life. That is what the Gospel says, isn't it? God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

So, here is God's funny system. You are saved from death by believing in the Son of God, and you believe in him if you are willing to believe that he saves you from death. Your contribution to your salvation is to believe that God will save you.

Of course, it is important not to get mixed up here. Your contributions not the self-congratulatory belief that you are saved, or the even funnier but equally self-flattering belief that you have belief in the Son of God. No, your contribution is really just to believe in the Son of God.

Think of it this way. If I say that I believe you are my only way of getting out of this burning building alive and then settle down to watch TV, what I say isn't true, is it? What I say turns out to be true only if I am glued on you, totally focused on following you out of that burning building. If I really believe you can save me from the building burning around me, I will certainly cleave to you now.

How much more should we cleave to the Saviour when we believe in him and trust him to bring us from death into life?

In each of us there are personal depths, mysterious depths that others can know only if we choose to make them our friends. We should not be surprised, that in the boundless life of our God there is a mystery of overflowing life that is far beyond our complete comprehension. Yet – and here we are touching the very heart of our Christian faith, and its greatness – this mystery of personal life reaches out to us, and invites us into its friendship. ✨ ✨





We humans share the mystery of our personhood with others by expressing who we are in our interaction with them. And so, it has been with the divine self-disclosure, or revelation. From the first, the God of our faith tradition has reached out to humanity with an astounding generosity that was very different from what was expected from the remote and fearful gods the peoples of the world had set up for themselves: Israel's God was the champion of the oppressed, a God whose self-giving was expressed in a covenant relationship. Our reading from the Book of Exodus gives a moving expression to the deep lessons this covenant relationship brought to those who were open to a meeting with the God who had made them his own: 'a God of tenderness, and compassion, slow to anger, and rich in kindness and faithfulness'.



Great as these lessons were, however, they were only a prelude and foreshadowing of the interaction that would give an ultimate expression to the personal life of God – when 'the Word became flesh, and we saw the glory that he has as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). Today's reading from John's gospel reiterates this truth: 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son'. Now the mystery of God's generous love has its full expression. The love of the Son, as he gives himself 'that the world might be saved', is the expression of the love of the Father himself – expressed in this text in an echo of Abraham's anguish, when he was told, 'Take your son, your only son; you are to offer him as a burnt offering' (Genesis 22:2). In this expression of divine compassion, the astounding superabundance of life in a Trinity of Persons finds expression; and gives us a sharing in its friendship, as 'the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us' (Romans 5:5). Today's gospel reading is noteworthy for its reference to 'the world'. Usually, in John's gospel, 'the world' refers to humanity's project when it is alienated from God [cf. John 15:19]; and God's love towards the disciples of Jesus is what is stressed. In this text, however, 'the world' too is the object of God's saving love.

Paul's benediction at the end of his second letter to the Corinthians is a remarkable summary of this sharing in the Trinitarian life. It is God's 'Grace' – the absolutely unmerited generosity that has shaped all God's dealings from the beginning – that now finds an ultimate expression in all that 'the Lord Jesus Christ' has done. And what the Saviour has done is the revelation of 'the love of God (the Father)', a love that gathers us into a 'communion' that is united in the gifts of 'the Holy Spirit'. These words of the text and its reference to 'a holy kiss' probably echo the liturgies of Paul's communities. It is especially in a faith-filled liturgy that believers experience their sharing in the communion of the Trinitarian life.

Every time we make the Sign of the Cross, we pray to the Trinity – in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The faith-formula is simple. The interpretation – maybe we do not have one that satisfies all comers.

Often, when we think of our lives as our little attempt at emptying and pouring out ourselves for others, we think about our dying. We might well see it as the final and most complete emptying and pouring out of ourselves. We might also imagine God – in all God's fullness – filling up our final emptiness with God's presence, and we think we have some idea of what heaven will be like.

We call the Spirit, Love. We call the Spirit – working from the word spirit itself – a Breath of Love. What about the word 'gasp' of Love? Even better. This Gasp of Love is done mutually, together, by both Father and Son. It is like their cry of delight when they are together.

## DO YOU WISH TO ATTEND MASS SATURDAY/SUNDAY?

If you wish to attend Mass at Thirroul on Saturdays [5:30pm] or Sundays [8:00am], you **MUST REGISTER BEFOREHAND** with the Parish Office. Either phone or email the Parish Office stating what dates you wish to attend – and how many from your family wish to attend with you. Health regulations allow a maximum of **50 worshippers** at Masses, excluding those essential for and those assisting at the liturgy. **Remember, if you are elderly or not feeling well, then, for your safety, please do not attend. Please do not arrive late for Masses** – aim to arrive at least 5 minutes before Mass is due to begin. **Entry** to the church is **only via the sacristy door**. There are no collections during Mass, but you may leave your donations in the basket or bowl as you enter or leave through the sacristy. There are hand sanitizers inside the sacristy door. *You do not need to register beforehand if you wish to attend a **weekday Mass**, though when you arrive, your details will be recorded. All who attend must observe social distancing of 1.5m – except for people from the same household.*

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK  
TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA  
drop any items onto the front verandah of the presbytery  
or in the special white plastic bin if you come to Mass**

## ON THE CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

*Laudato Si'*, *mi signore* – ‘Praise be to you, my Lord’. The Pope’s encyclical *Laudato Si'* – On the Care for Our Common Home, is the Church’s most profound and comprehensive statement yet on caring for creation and the poorest. It is an inspirational letter that calls for us to examine our hearts, transform our social values and take action for global solidarity.

The encyclical captures the interconnectedness of social, economic and environmental justice in building and protecting Our Common Home. It highlights the ‘intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet’. Protecting the planet requires an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.

Global inequality is a central theme: the poorest are the most affected by climate change and ecological chaos, yet they have done the least to cause it. The encyclical also highlights how unequal distribution and access to common goods such as natural resources, including the climate, perpetuates poverty and contributes to the climate crisis. The voices of the most vulnerable are often excluded from international political and economic discussions, fostering a ‘globalization of indifference’.

Pope Francis is clear that human activity is at the root of climate change and our ‘ecological crisis’ – and that therefore, the solution also lies with us.

Pope Francis calls for nothing less than a revolution of our hearts and minds, for a transformation of our societies and individual lifestyles, to live in harmony with God’s creation. He challenges ‘the modern myth of unlimited material progress’. He asks us to redefine our notion of progress and rethink our current public values which put financial and economic growth before ecology and the needs of the most vulnerable communities and people.

He calls for governments to take strong, united action on climate change and other ecological issues for the global common good. He cautions against ‘weak responses’ including from those who dismiss the dangers of climate change. He also calls for ‘enforceable international agreements’. Act now for climate justice! Call on our political leaders to take stronger action for climate justice for the world’s most vulnerable communities.

# WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

**Thursday** 11 Jun **St Barnabas**, apostle  
**Saturday** 13 Jun **St Anthony of Padua**, friar priest, doctor



## POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE **World Communications Day**

*(continued from last week)* The title of this year's Message is drawn from the Book of Exodus, a primordial biblical story in which God intervenes in the history of his people. When the enslaved children of Israel cry out to Him, God listens and remembers: "God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel – and God knew" (Exodus 2:24-25). God's memory brings liberation from oppression through a series of signs and wonders. The Lord then reveals to Moses the meaning of all these signs: "that you may tell in the hearing of your children and grandchildren... what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord" (Exodus 10:2). The Exodus experience teaches us that knowledge of the Lord is handed down from generation to generation mainly by telling the story of how he continues to make himself present. The God of life communicates with us through the story of life.

Jesus spoke of God not with abstract concepts, but with parables, brief stories taken from everyday life. At this point life becomes story and then, for the listener, story becomes life: the story becomes part of the life of those who listen to it, and it changes them.

The Gospels are also stories, and not by chance. While they tell us about Jesus, they are "performative"; they conform us to Jesus. The Gospel asks the reader to share in the same faith in order to share in the same life. The Gospel of John tells us that the quintessential storyteller – the Word – himself becomes the story: "God's only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18). The original verb, *exegésato*, can be translated both as "revealed" and "recounted". God has become personally woven into our humanity, and so has given us a new way of weaving our stories. *(continued next week)*

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

**Holy Trinity Sunday • Year A**

**1st Reading** Exodus 34:4-6,8-9

**2nd Reading** 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

**Gospel** John 3:16-18

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

**Body and Blood of Christ • Year A**

**1st Reading** Deuteronomy 8:2-3,14-16

**2nd Reading** 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

**Gospel** John 6:51-58

### SUNDAY MASS TIMES

**Church of St Michael • Thirroul**

Saturday – 5:30pm • Sunday – 8:00am

**Restricted numbers apply ... to attend ...  
 you must register beforehand with the Parish Office**

### LITURGIES THIS WEEK

<b>Thirroul</b>	Monday	<b>05:30</b>
	Tuesday	<b>17:30</b>
	Wednesday	<b>09:00</b>
	Thursday	<b>09:00</b>
	Friday	<b>09:30</b>

Most Masses will be  
 televised and emailed.

## 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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📧 [thirroul@dow.org.au](mailto: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](http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au)

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