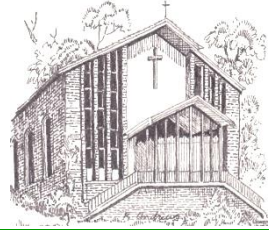




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



20 / 21 JUNE 2020
12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ❖ YEAR A
Ordinary Time resumes ... until 28 November 2020

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Death

The Gospel reading this week is focused on death. In it, Jesus tells his disciples not to be afraid of those who can kill them. Those people are not to be feared, because death itself is not to be feared.

No doubt, there is always something sorrowful about dying, because death separates the dying person from his family and his friends; and they still have to slog through their lives in this world without their companion. But Jesus is not telling people to accept death without sorrow. He is telling them not to fear death.

If you were walking alone down a dark street late at night, and you saw a small group of strangers gathered menacingly at a corner, wouldn't you be afraid? Shouldn't you be afraid? If the cancer doctor tells you that you have only months to live, wouldn't you—shouldn't you—be afraid? How can Jesus tell us—actually, command us—not to be afraid of death?

Well, think about it this way. If you are surprised when you discover that you are dying, you just haven't been paying attention. None of us is getting out of this alive. Everyone of us will die. It is just a question of when. Or maybe better: it is just a question of how.

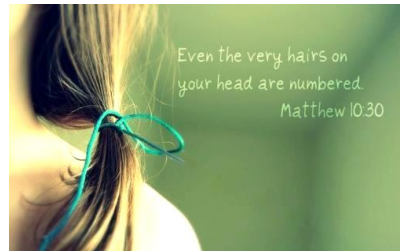
Here is how it will be if you love the Lord. In dying, you will move through the veil that separates you, in this world of sorrow and suffering, from the Lord's own presence. There, on the other side, you will find all tears wiped away—the tears you have already wept and the ones that are stuck in your heart right now. All those tears will be wiped away by your Creator with a tenderness so great that you will think you must be dreaming. The beauty and the goodness of that new world will surpass your every desire. And you yourself will be something lovelier than you ever imagined you could be. Surrounded by beauty and goodness, bathed in the love of the Lord, transformed, yourself, in the beauty of holiness, you will join the angels in singing for joy at what the Lord has done.

Are you afraid now? Is this scary to you?

What is worth fearing is losing all of this beauty and goodness on the other side of death because you will not now surrender to the love of the Lord who calls you to himself. But this is a kind of death that comes only from sin, as the Second Reading says. No one else can force it on you; only you can cause this death in yourself.

And that is why the Lord tells his disciples not to fear those who can kill the body.

The commission of the Twelve is addressed to all baptised Christians. Continuing his instruction, Jesus tells the apostles that all the 'hidden' truths that they have come to



✠✠ know, as his companions during his earthly life, must be ‘proclaimed from the house tops’. The term ‘proclaim’ echoes the word *‘kerygma’* (proclamation) that came in the New Testament to stand for the message preached by the apostolic Church.

Jesus knows what the future holds for him, and he warns the apostles that they must be ready for the same fate. The word, ‘martyr’ means ‘witness’. In the early centuries, the



fact that so many men and women, young and old, were ready to face a terrible death, rather than renounce their faith, so impressed their pagan neighbours that it led many of them to embrace the Christian faith. Martyrdom has been a continuing fact of the Church’s life during the past century. Most of us, however, will not have to face this ultimate test. All of us, in the other hand, will know times when it is not easy to stand up for the things of God.

The courageous example of Jeremiah can still inspire us as we face these difficulties. The messages of the prophets were not miraculous communications, but the reflections of believers who – because they had a living faith in the God of the covenant – recognised God’s desires for the people in their changing circumstances. Prompted by the Spirit, they shared their convictions with God’s people. Jeremiah lived in a nation in crisis – because of the invasion of a powerful enemy. His prophetic reflections were unwelcome in influential circles. Later developments showed that his fears for his life were justified. Turning to the Lord in his isolation – to the God who comes to the aid of the ‘needy’ – he echoes one of the great themes of Old Testament faith, ‘the Lord hears the cry of the poor (those who have no one else to turn to).’

Now it is the Saviour himself who encourages those who must overcome their ‘fear’, as they give witness to all that he stands for. He translates the theme that gave courage to Jeremiah into terms that brings to mind the whole message of the Sermon on the Mount. Why should they fear? Even the cheapest life in the market ‘two sparrows for a penny’, is in the watchful care of their heavenly Father. ‘Why every hair of your head is numbered’, he tells them. In the end, when he comes to judge the world, he will ‘declare himself for them in the presence of his Father’. Do not be afraid before the threats of the present world; make sure not to be found wanting, in the end.

Our essential Christian witness will not be given in the marketplace, but in the informal exchanges that are a constant part of life – in the discussions that lead to family decisions, in our work place conversations, and in the attitudes that people know are the expression of Catholic conviction. It will not be so much what we say, as the respect and friendliness with which we express ourselves that matters. ‘Always have your answer ready for the people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have’, St Peter says, ‘But give it with courtesy and respect, and with a clear conscience’ (1 Peter 3:15).

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 – please register by 10:00am on the Wednesday prior to the weekend you wish to attend.** 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.**

WINTER SOLSTICE: SUNDAY, 21 JUNE AT 07:43AM

The June Solstice (Winter Solstice) is on **Sunday, 21 June 2020 at 07:43am** in Sydney. In terms of daylight, this day is 4 hours, 31 minutes shorter than on December Solstice. In locations south of Equator, the shortest day of the year is around this date.

The summer solstice occurs once a year in December when the Sun's track across the Australian sky reaches its highest point. It is the day that has the most daylight hours of any in the year. The summer solstice usually occurs on 22 December, but can occur between 21 and 23 December. The winter solstice is the day of the year that has the least daylight hours of any in the year and usually occurs on 22 June but can occur between 21 and 23 June. So, from now on, the days get longer ... *As the days lengthen, the winds strengthen.* But! Summer is – will be – on its way!!

POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE World Communications Day

(continued from last week) Our own story becomes part of every great story. As we read the Scriptures, the stories of the saints, and also those texts that have shed light on the human heart and its beauty, the Holy Spirit is free to write in our hearts, reviving our memory of what we are in God's eyes. When we remember the love that created and saved us, when we make love a part of our daily stories, when we weave the tapestry of our days with mercy, we are turning another page. We no longer remain tied to regrets and sadness, bound to an unhealthy memory that burdens our hearts; rather, by opening ourselves to others, we open ourselves to the same vision of the great storyteller. Telling God our story is never useless: even if the record of events remains the same, the meaning and perspective are always changing. To tell our story to the Lord is to enter into his gaze of compassionate love for us and for others. We can recount to him the stories we live, bringing to him the people and the situations that fill our lives. With him we can re-weave the fabric of life, darning its rips and tears. How much we, all of us, need to do exactly this!

With the gaze of the great storyteller – the only one who has the ultimate point of view – we can then approach the other characters, our brothers and sisters, who are with us as actors in today's story. For no one is an extra on the world stage, and everyone's story is open to possible change. Even when we tell of evil, we can learn to leave room for redemption; in the midst of evil, we can also recognize the working of goodness and give it space.

So it is not a matter of simply telling stories as such, or of advertising ourselves, but rather of remembering who and what we are in God's eyes, bearing witness to what the Spirit writes in our hearts and revealing to everyone that his or her story contains marvellous things. In order to do this, let us entrust ourselves to a woman who knit together in her womb the humanity of God and, the Gospel tells us, wove together the events of her life. For the Virgin Mary “treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2: 19). Let us ask for help from her, who knew how to untie the knots of life with the gentle strength of love:

O Mary, woman and mother, you wove the divine Word in your womb, you recounted by your life the magnificent works of God. Listen to our stories, hold them in your heart and make your own the stories that no one wants to bear. Teach us to recognize the good thread that runs through history. Look at the tangled knots in our life that paralyse our memory. By your gentle hands, every knot can be untied. Woman of the Spirit, mother of trust, inspire us too. Help us build stories of peace, stories that point to the future. And show us the way to live them together.

– Pope Francis, Rome, 24 January 2020

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES 2020

Project Compassion boxes for 2020 may be returned when you come to any Mass – please place them in the **yellow** bin inside the church. You may also hand them in to the Parish Office during the usual Parish Office opening hours. Thank you for your generosity.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Monday 22 Jun Sts John Fisher, bishop, and St Thomas More, martyrs
 Wednesday 24 Jun The Birth of St John the Baptist

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO BEDE PARKES

Congratulations to **Bede Parkes** long-time parishioner of Holy Cross Parish, Helensburgh, who was awarded the **Order of Australia Medal** at the recent Queen's Birthday Honours list. Bede was given the award for her service to the community of Helensburgh where she was born and where she lives today. Bede ran the White Elephant Stall at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School Fete for 40 years and volunteered for her Holy Cross Catholic Church her whole life – Bede's **marmalades** are world famous. She has raised money for the local branch of the RSL, the RFS, Helensburgh Junior Rugby League, and Widows and Veterans Entitlements Service 2508 Inc.



'TELEVISED' MASSES FROM THIRROUL IN THE FUTURE

As from 17 June, Masses will be televised **only every Saturday evening** [and emailed by about 7:30pm] **and usually on Wednesday mornings.**

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A
1st Reading Jeremiah 20:10-13
2nd Reading Romans 5:12-15
Gospel Matthew 10:26-33

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A
1st Reading 2 Kings 4:8-11,14-16
2nd Reading Romans 6:3-4,8-11
Gospel Matthew 10:37-42

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

Thirroul	Monday	—
	Tuesday	17:30
	Wednesday	09:00
	Thursday	09:00
	Friday	09:30

Masses
on Wednesdays
will usually be televised.

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