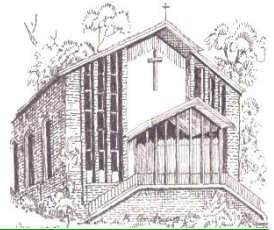




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



27 / 28 JUNE 2020
13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ❖ YEAR A
***Laudato Si'* On Care of Our Common Home – Commentary**

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The Love of the Lord

In the Gospel Reading, Jesus seems to recommend an inhuman attitude: you are not to love your mother or father or your child more than Jesus. In fact, you are not to love your own life more than Jesus. If you do, you will lose what you love.

What does it even mean to compare loves in this way? If you have more than one child, you can love each one equally, can't you? Why think that your love of your child is in competition with your love of Jesus? But if it is, honestly, why wouldn't you love your child more?

Well, think about it this way. To love someone is to want to be united with that person somehow. If your mother sends you lots of gifts but never cares to be near you, you wouldn't think she loved you, would you? More than that, if, when your mother came to visit you, she constantly opposed everything you yourself value, you would have a sense of your distance from her; and that distance would make you feel lonely with respect to her even while she was there visiting you.



And now you can see how loves can be in opposition to each other. If your adult son is selling drugs to teenagers, you can be at one with your son only if you no longer care about those teenagers. But then you will be at a distance from the Lord because the Lord cares about each one of God's people. So, in wanting to be united with your drug-dealing son, you would be willing to be separated from the Lord. And then you would not be worthy of the Lord, would you?

The good news is that if you do love the Lord, then you will be united with him; and in being united with him, you will also be united with everyone else united with the Lord. The love you have for your child, the love you have for your mother or father, have their full home in your shared love of the Lord. And that is why the Lord says that a person who loses his life for the Lord will find it. Real union, and the real love, peace, and joy that union brings, are possible only in the love of the Lord.

On the last two Sundays, our gospel readings have brought us the instructions of the Saviour for those he calls to share in the mission he has received from his Father. Today's reading is the conclusion of the passage we have been reading. Not surprisingly, it takes us

✠✠ to the heart of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Our life as disciples has its beginning in our personal call to follow Jesus. Now he speaks to us of the nature of the relationship he has called us to.

It is a unique relationship – the absolute allegiance to which only God has a right. The original words of Jesus would have used the stark contrast of Semitic expressions – the disciple who ‘loves’ the Saviour must ‘hate’ those of their families (cf. Luke 14:26). In presenting these words of Jesus, Matthew removes the danger of misunderstanding. A right relationship with the Saviour will not destroy our human relationships, but deepen them and make them more wholesome. Even the greatest of these, however, must not compromise the allegiance we owe to the Lord – even if this allegiance brings a sharing in his cross, through persecution and rejection. For the community that gave us Matthew’s gospel, these words would have had practical implications. The following of Christ would have divided some families, and would have been met with hatred from those who used to be their friends in the synagogue.

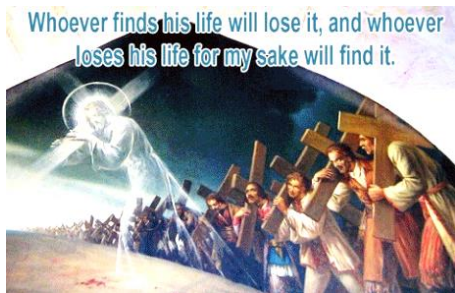
But if Jesus calls for the allegiance that is owing to the Lord himself, he assures us – in words that ring with the fullness of his divine authority – that our absolute trust in him will never be misplaced; it will lead us to the fullness of life. This assurance of the Lord would have been a great source of inspiration to the Church of the beginning. (As we have seen, the Saviour’s commission was given to the apostles as representatives of the whole community of disciples. This is made very clear in Luke’s gospel, in which this call to absolute allegiance is addressed to the ‘great crowds that accompanied Jesus on his way’ [Luke 14:25].)

In the continuation of the text, Jesus promises those who generously entrust their lives to him, that – as they share in his mission – they will already begin to know the reward he promises. In the Jewish society of the time of Jesus, emissaries authorised to carry out a special commission were owed the respect owing to the one by whom they were commissioned. Applying this principle, Jesus promises those who carry out his mission will share in the ‘welcome’ owing to his coming, and the coming of his Father, through them. It is an experience that is familiar to all unselfish bearers of the gospel.

Paul’s magnificent text, from the letter to the Romans – explaining the mystery of ‘baptism in Christ Jesus’ – is a perfect complement to the gospel reading. ‘Anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it’, Jesus tells us. The life he promises is nothing less than a sharing in the everlasting life manifested to the world in his resurrection. The crucified One – who came to share in the life of a world lost in selfishness and violence – has been ‘raised from the dead’ by the Father’s glorious power, to become a sign of hope and a source of new life for the whole of creation. It is through our baptism that we are united to Jesus in the mission he received from his Father, and begin to share in all that has been realised in his resurrection – ‘dead to sin, but alive for God in Christ Jesus’.

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.**




LAUDATO SI'

Commentary by Peter H. Raven, Member, Pontifical Academy of Sciences

Pope Francis' inspiring Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si'* (Be Praised), titled in such a way as to remind us of St Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of the Sun* (1225), calls forcefully on everyone to care for the Creation that makes our lives possible. In the light of the limited progress that we have made over the years in achieving global sustainability, many of us have come to believe that to achieve real and sufficient change it will be necessary to introduce a moral or spiritual element into the discussion. I personally believe that only by doing so will we come to confront the problems we face seriously and effectively. By doing so, we would have a chance to save ourselves and our civilization from the consequences that await if we blithely continue with "business as usual," assuming that what has worked before will work equally well in the very different world of today. This is the reason that Pope Francis has given us his Encyclical, stating, "It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter ... can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face" (*Laudato Si' sec. 15*). Many actions have been suggested to preserve the Earth's living systems, and we must pursue them as actively as we possibly can if there is to be hope for the future. To gain sufficient strength to take these actions up individually and collectively, however, we must collectively decide that there is a problem that demands our utmost effort, and that to make that effort is absolutely necessary. It is to that end that the Pope Francis' Encyclical was written, and to which this analysis is intended to contribute.

To provide a context for the discussion that follows, I shall review the situation in which we find ourselves in the year 2016. Hominids have existed for the last 2.7 million years of the 4.54 billion year history of the planet. As our ancestors developed, the species *Homo sapiens* evolved in Africa and migrated from its area of origin to Eurasia about 60,000 years ago. Once in the north, the early members of our species apparently killed the remaining Neanderthals and Denisovians in Eurasia, the end products of a much earlier hominid migration from Africa. Human beings continued to live as hunter-gatherers until about 12,000 years ago, when crops began to be cultivated in various places, and by 10,000 years ago, agriculture had assumed an important role in feeding people in parts of Eurasia.

At about that time, the human population of the Earth is estimated to have been about one million people, approximately 100,000 of whom lived in Europe. With the development of agriculture, however, our ancestors had for the first time a reliable source of food that they could use to survive through unfavourable seasons; their numbers began to increase rapidly. In the villages, towns, and cities that they built in places where food could be grown successfully, the elements of what we call civilization developed. In settled communities many people lived together for long periods of time, perhaps their entire lives. In such a setting, individuals had the freedom to specialize in various ways and to take up individual professions such as civil leaders, religious leaders, farmers, builders, storytellers, musicians, and all of the varied roles that bring us both the possibilities and the enjoyment of modern civilization. The invention of writing about 5,000 years ago made the transmission of our history dependable and the reliable accumulation of knowledge possible for the first time.

For better or for worse, people began to form groups with civic leaders and to compete with one another for material advantage. It is now believed that the early farmers who swept into Europe, perhaps from Anatolia, about 8,000 years ago, seized the lands they wanted, killing their original inhabitants and then planting crops in the fertile regions they had won. Certainly as the Bible tells us, the ancestors of the Israelites moved up the eastern shore of the Mediterranean from Egypt, conquering and killing the people who were living there when they arrived and taking possession of a land where, unlike Egypt, there was adequate rainfall for them to grow their crops, consolidating their fields as the years went by. With the availability of dependable supplies of food, the human population grew rapidly, probably to at least two hundred million at the time of Jesus, half a billion in Renaissance 

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Monday 29 Jun **Saints Peter and Paul**, apostles
Friday 3 Jul **Saint Thomas**, apostle ... **Anointing of the Sick** *after Mass*

**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**

times, and about 850 million in the 1790s. In that decade, the Reverend Thomas Malthus warned us of what he considered to be the impossibility of raising enough food to feed the growing world population. That challenge was partly overcome by cultivating more farmland with better access to water, ploughs, and technology, although tens of millions of people fell victim to famine during the 19th century and subsequently.

Over the past two centuries, the challenge has become enormous, with the global human population increasing from 1 billion to 7.4 billion today. Growth of this character represents a tenfold increase in our numbers since the start of the Industrial Revolution (250 years ago). Notwithstanding the improved agricultural methods just mentioned, some 750 million people (10% of the world's population) are malnourished at present, with about 100 million people on the verge of starvation at any given time.

Considering that the world is not succeeding in adequately feeding its people now, projections for the future are alarming. The Population Reference Bureau projects that the current world population of 7.4 billion will increase over the next 34 years, by 2050, to roughly 9.8 billion, and that of Sub-Saharan Africa will grow from its current 950 million to approximately 2.1 billion people. At the same time, the population of the United States is projected to increase from 331 million to 398 million. *This is the first part of an article on the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si' (On Care for our Common Home) ... continued next week.*

THIS 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

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A
1st Reading Zechariah 9:9-10
2nd Reading Romans 8:9,11-13
Gospel Matthew 11:25-30

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

**For the present, Masses
 on weekdays will not
 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