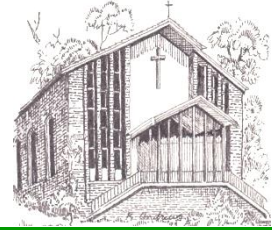




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



1 / 2 AUGUST 2020

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ❖ YEAR A
Vinnies Winter Appeal 25 July to 23 August

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The Bread of Life

In the first reading, God promises that he will feed his people well. Given this promise, the story in the Gospel Reading makes perfect sense: Jesus feeds the people who come to him with bread, the kind of ordinary bread that a person needs for his body to live.

But pause here a minute: how many of God's people go without food every day in this world? Where is the promised feeding of God?

In fact, look at the list of things in the second reading that Paul says cannot separate us from the love of God. Famine is on Paul's list, and so is every other kind of suffering. Why do we have to be told that hunger won't separate God's people from God? What happened to God's promise that he will feed his people?




As far as that goes, in the first reading, God says to his people, "Come to me that you might have life." But even death is on Paul's list of things that cannot separate us from the love of God. Why should Paul have to tell us that death won't separate us from God if God has promised to give us life instead of death?

If God's promises to feed us and to give us life mean that some of us will suffer famine and all of us will die, what good are these promises? What do they mean? What are we to hope for in God's promises?

Here we should remember what Christ says about food and life: "I am the bread of life. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." (John 6:35, 51)

There are different kinds of hunger and different kinds of life, aren't there? The bread Christ offers stills the deepest hunger of all, and the life that Christ gives conquers all death. So the sufferings of this world—hunger, death—remain. But the second reading is right to say that they cannot separate us from the love of Christ. The promises of God, that he will feed us and we will live, are fulfilled in the bread of life that is the Lord.

Having completed Matthew's collection of Kingdom parables, we are now reading from the narrative section that follows. The response of the people of Galilee has been disappointing, and Jesus turns his attention to forming the group of disciples who are to carry on his mission. The miracle of the feeding of the multitude must have been remembered as of great significance by the first Christians – it is recounted in all four gospels. This incident, it seems, gave rise to different traditions of presentation, both of which are included in Matthew's gospel. Today's presentation is for a Palestinian community – the twelve 

👉👉 baskets symbolise the feeding of the tribes of Israel. The other narrative is the telling of the story in a Gentile context – with seven baskets symbolising the seven Gentile nations referred to in the biblical traditions.

As the only miracle in which the disciples are called by Jesus to play a part, it is an excellent introduction to this narrative of the formation of the disciples by Jesus. When they suggested that the people leave Jesus to find food, he replies, ‘Give them something yourselves’. Then, when they produced two loaves and two dried fish, he broke the loaves and handed them to his disciples, who gave them to the crowd. As we listen to this reading, it is not difficult to recognise that the early Christian communities looked back on this incident as a foreshadowing of the Eucharist. Today’s liturgy opens up the vast perspectives suggested by this awareness.

The first reading from Isaiah reminds us of the Old Testament’s amazing tradition of faith and piety – something that has been long neglected in our Catholic awareness. The words of the prophet are not artful poetry, but the expression of the faith and trust that sustained God’s faithful people during their disastrous exile in Babylon. God’s people – especially those who have nothing – are called to the Lord’s feast. The only condition of partaking is a thirst for God. If they respond, and ‘come’ to the Lord’s table, they will find ‘life’, and they will share in the blessings of an ‘everlasting covenant’. If only we came to our celebration of the Eucharist with similar dispositions.

The Eucharistic awareness of the first Christians communities is reflected in all the gospels, in a narrative that clearly echoes their liturgy of the ‘breaking of bread’, Jesus ‘says the blessing’, ‘breaks the loaves’, and has his chosen disciples minister to the people. The crowd in the traditional story handed on by Matthew was immense. 5,000 men with their families would have amounted to 20 or 30 thousand – about 10% of the population of Palestine at the time! As we know, numbers in the scriptures are often symbolic. Clearly, this miracle is remembered as of momentous significance - inclusive of the whole people.

Today’s reading from the letter to the Romans fits well in a liturgy celebrating the greatness of the Eucharist. This central sacrament of the Church’s common life ‘in Christ’ is a celebration of God’s love ‘made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord’. Paul assures the Christians of Rome, for whom persecution for the faith has already been a personal experience, that no power, visible or invisible, can come between them and the Saviour’s love revealed to the world in Eucharistic celebration of the Paschal Mystery.

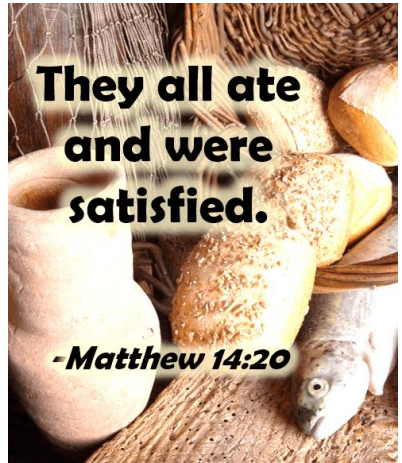
BAPTISMS AND CONFIRMATION AT THIRROUL

If you want your child baptized in our Parish, please contact the Parish Office so that a suitable time can be organized for the celebration – currently baptisms will not be held during the weekend Masses.

If you want your son/daughter in Year 6 to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, Sacrament of Confirmation, you need to enrol them ASAP – *check the Parish website.*

SATURDAY/SUNDAY MASSES IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

If you wish to attend Mass at Thirroul on Saturdays [5:30pm] or Sundays [8:00am], you **MUST REGISTER BEFOREHAND** with the Parish Office. Register now for Aug-Sep.



LAUDATO SI' [ctd.] *Commentary by Peter H. Raven, Member, Pontifical Academy of Sciences*

Current science-based estimates of species number and extinction rates are as follows. For eukaryotes (all organisms except bacteria and archaea), I estimate that there may be some 12 million species (as opposed to the estimate of about 2 million species that was current until about 1980), with only about 2 million of the 12 million having been given names at this point. For some 40 years it has been estimated that as many as one-half of these species might become extinct by the end of this century, and perhaps 20% of them by 2050, just 34 years from now. The most recent report from the IPCC estimates that 20–30% of all species are likely to become extinct during this century as a result of global climate change, and although it appears that this estimate may be too high overall, it is a sobering one. Taken together with habitat destruction, the effects of invasive species on existing populations, and the overharvesting of species for food, medicine, and other purposes, this additional cause of species loss strengthens estimates of a loss of a majority of all species during the lifetimes of our grandchildren are probably well founded (Pimm et al. 2014 summarizes the situation). A majority of the species that disappear permanently during the course of our lives and those of our children will never be seen by any human being: in view of this sad fact, one can readily understand E O Wilson's point that the loss of these species is likely to be the crime for which our descendants will be least likely to forgive us.

Considering that our life depends wholly and directly on living organisms, the destruction that we are driving now will certainly have major negative consequences for the quality of our lives in the future. All of our food, many of our medicines, and a high proportion of our building materials are derived from living organisms. In addition, they possess the ability to absorb the pollutants we produce, and all of the other ecosystem services by virtue of which the condition of the atmosphere is regulated. We depend on them for maintaining the fertility of our soils, conserving and purifying our water supplies, and providing models on the basis of which we are enabled to practice agriculture and forestry on a sustainable basis. When we demonstrably know nearly nothing about the great majority of species, to drive them to extinction as the basis of our activities is about the worst thing we could imagine doing. We do seem to have left the biblical injunction to care for the Earth far behind in our search for “progress” and personal comfort.

What has the position of the Catholic Church concerning the environment been historically? The Pontifical Academy of Sciences (PAS), established by Pope Pius XI in 1936, provides advice to the Papacy on scientific and technical matters. It is nondenominational, with a statutory 80 members appointed by the pope for life, 11 of whom are from the USA; I was appointed in 1990. About half of the members are Nobel Prize winners. In 1994, Pope St John Paul II established two additional academies, the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (PASS) and the Pontifical Academy of Life, the latter the only one of the three that deals directly with moral and ethical issues, as in medicine. Because of the existence of the PAS and its consistent input of objective scientific advice, the Catholic Church has accepted both biological and cosmic evolution since the 1930s and global warming ever since it was established as an important factor in determining our common future. If only our country could do as well in dealing with scientific information.

... continued next week.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL HORSES

In Australia, every horse has its birthday on 1 August each year – known as the horses' birthday. And while it might not be their exact day of birth, the date of 1 August allows standardisation in horse events, like racing, and is linked to the breeding season of horses. *Whether you own a racehorse, a showjumper or a hack, the horses' birthday marks a special day to spoil all our equine friends.*



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Monday	3 Aug	Saint Dominic, priest
Tuesday	4 Aug	Saint John Vianney, priest
Thursday	6 Aug	The Transfiguration of the Lord
Friday	7 Aug	Anointing of the Sick after 9:30am Mass
Saturday	8 Aug	Saint Mary MacKillop, virgin



**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**

VINNIES WINTER APPEAL 2020

The **Vinnies Covid-19 Winter Appeal** will run from **25 July to 23 August 2020**. Vinnies is urgently calling for donations to support its work

with people experiencing poverty, homelessness and disadvantage. Our Appeal will take a different form this year due to the lockdown restrictions. **Donation envelopes** will be available for parishioners able to attend Mass. However, other parishioners will have the opportunity to support us through secure payments made **online** [*see attached brochure*], or by calling in to the Parish Office with your donations. Please support the work that Vinnies carries out in supporting the needy members of our community. Due to Covid-19 and resultant lockdown restrictions, Vinnies income sources have been severely compromised. Reduction of government income support or major unemployment – often people who have never been unemployed ever before – may include significant numbers of people who have never needed to depend on charities previously. Thus, once again we call on your support and thank you for your anticipated generosity.



Vinnies
good works

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year **A**

1st Reading Isaiah 55:1-3

2nd Reading Romans 8:35,37-39

Gospel Matthew 14:13-21

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year **A**

1st Reading 1 Kings 19:9,11-13

2nd Reading Romans 9:1-5

Gospel Matthew 14:22-33

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