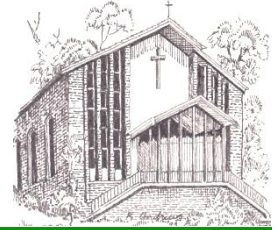




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



8 / 9 AUGUST 2020
19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ❖ YEAR A
Vinnies Winter Appeal 25 July to 23 August

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Walking on Water

In the second reading, Paul enumerates the many blessings God gave God's people in the time of the Law and the Prophets: the adoption as children of God, covenants, commandments and an order of worship. They had God's promises, and the promise of glory was among them. But Paul makes the list of these blessings with great sorrow, as he says, because it is hard for him to see any of the promised good things in the current state of God's people.

It can certainly seem to a Christian as if the same list and the same sorrow are suitable for Christians now.

Christians are also promised adoption as children of God. They have a covenant, a new covenant, with God, and a new worship to go with it. They are promised glory too, the glory of holiness and union with the Lord.

But, for Christians now as for God's people then, it is often very difficult to


see the fulfillment of these promises in one's own life. Does anyone have even one day in which they feels that their life has shown the fruit of these promises on that day?

So, for every Christian, there is a sorrow of the sort Paul expressed, because the sins and failures of one's life can seem so hard to square with the promises of God. Where is the adoption and the glory?

What are God's people to do in this condition and its sorrow?

The Gospel gives us a picture for an answer: as long as he has faith and doesn't look down, Peter comes to the Lord, walking on water.

No matter how sorrowful a person's failures, they can nonetheless come to the Lord. Doing so may feel like walking without any solid ground under foot. But faith is a kind of walking on water, too, isn't it? As long as one doesn't look down, as long as one keeps one's eyes fixed on Jesus in faith, even walking on nothing in order to come to Jesus is possible. All the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus.

The people who gave us the scriptures had a very different outlook from ours. Because they had no doubt that miracles frequently occur, their traditions in the scriptures often make use of miracle stories to express their faith that God has been active in their history. Elijah was a 9th century prophet who profoundly influenced the faith of old Israel, 



✠✠ teaching the incomparable greatness of the divine mystery. He is remembered through stories like that in today's first reading. This story describes Elijah meeting the Lord at Mount Horeb (Sinai). Whereas God's presence was shown to Moses at Sinai, through earthquake and fire, Elijah's meeting was very different – in 'the sound of a gentle breeze'. Clearly, such things as the wind's shattering of rocks are contrived, to show how Elijah's teaching about God went even beyond that of Moses. Historically, there is no doubt that Jesus worked miracles – raising people to life, and healing them in a manner that defied explanation. A very limited number of such events are recalled in the gospel narratives. Studies made of these narratives show that do not have the form of 'wonder stories' – the wonder is not emphasised; Jesus even discourages the awakening of popular enthusiasm, wanting those involved to recognise in faith that what has happened is a sign of the coming of the Kingdom he is proclaiming. The fact that this common pattern is not found in this narrative has led many interpreters to see the miraculous events of today's gospel reading as a symbolic creation of early Christian teachers, expressing the lessons of Jesus for his disciples. This reading, we should recall, belongs to a narrative section of Matthew's gospel describing the formation Jesus is giving to his disciples. Perhaps it is related to the story of the calming of the storm by Jesus, that Matthew has included in an earlier chapter (8:23-27).



Sudden storms are frequent on the Sea of Galilee. For the people of the Middle East, the waters of the sea were a mysterious and menacing element of creation, kept in place by divine power. They provided a ready symbol of forces hostile to God's designs. This narrative is also found in the gospels of Mark and John. Neither of them, however, mentions the astonishing experience of Peter. In Matthew's gospel, on the other hand, this incident is one of three that single out Peter's place among the disciples (Matthew 16:17-19; 17:24-27). Let us not be distracted by the question of the origin of this unusual narrative. As a symbolic account of the formation Jesus was giving it has great value for the Church of every generation.

Sending his disciples on their way, Jesus gives himself to prayer. Only his living relation with his Father explains the authority and serene courage that were so evident in his life. He invites us to learn from his example. The symbol of the Church as 'the barque of Peter' has long been part of Catholic awareness. Those in the boat are sustained by the words of Jesus, promising that, in the end, he will re-join them, when they reach the shore to which he has directed them. More than that, they are assured that, despite the hostile forces of the sea and the deepest darkness of the night, they will experience the Saviour's mysterious presence assisting them. His words, 'It's me! Don't be afraid', are the turning point in all three gospel accounts. In Matthew's account, it is the inimitable Peter – the one who is to 'strengthen his brothers' in their doubts (Luke 22:31) – who leads the others to recognise the Lord's presence, and make their confession of faith, 'Truly, you are the Son of God'.

BAPTISMS 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.

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 all weekends of August and September. *For your safety, please do not attend if you are elderly or feeling unwell.*

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

As the great increases in population and desire for ever-higher levels of consumption became increasingly evident, the “have-nots” of the world increased greatly both in number and in degree of misery. The Industrial Revolution in all of its manifestations began to exacerbate human misery and cause dislocation and inequality in ways that writers, philosophers, political systems, and religious leaders had to confront. The Catholic Church entered the discussion in a notable way in 1891, when Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* was promulgated. In this significant document, the pope stressed the differences that had become apparent between classes and the growing inequality between rich and poor worldwide. In doing so, he initiated starting a robust tradition within the Church of treating such matters as central priorities.

The revolution in Church thinking that Pope Leo XIII brought about was more than matched by that associated with Pope St John XXIII, despite the fact that he served as pope for only five years, 1958–1963. Pope John XIII brought the Church much more fully into the modern world than it had been earlier through the results that came from the Second Vatican Council. The pope convened the Council in 1962, and it continued its deliberations for two years after his death, to 1965. The findings of the Second Vatican Council represented a major turning point for the Church, opening the way for its modernization, and thus laying the foundation for its direct concern with the environment, which soon followed. In his Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope St John XXIII argued cogently, in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, that matters of war and peace were basically moral issues that required spiritual leadership as a basis for their permanent solution. He called for a ban on nuclear weapons, which certainly pose an ever-present threat to the majority of the human population. Half a century later, nuclear weapons continue to be maintained in huge numbers to bolster the competitive strength of the nations who possess them. They are a great danger for us all whether we think about them or not.

Over the years that followed the Second Vatican Council, it became clear to religious leaders as it was becoming clear to the world generally that the plight of the poor was closely and increasingly tied to the way we collectively were treating our environment. It soon became evident that neglect and overuse of the different ecological systems of the living Earth were inextricably interwoven with the possibility of global equity.


In 1967, Pope Paul VI, in his Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, called attention to the social and moral challenges left by the general demise of European capitalism throughout their former colonies. In doing so, he was echoing Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, but in a new context: the exploitation of colonies had environmentally taxed the environmental sustainability of much of the world, but the dissolution of those same colonies gave rise to a whole series of new problems associated with less obvious forms of exploitation. Pope Paul VI may legitimately be regarded as the first pope who fully comprehended the relationship between human progress, justice, and the environment. He called consistently for greatly increased attention to the problems associated with our mismanagement of all three of these factors.

... continued next week.

HOLY COMMUNION OR ANOINTING FOR HOMEBOUND

Do you know of any parishioners who are homebound, or who cannot or do not want to come to church during this pandemic? There is currently no obligation to attend Sunday Mass or Mass on Holy Days of Obligation. If you have health issues, or if you are not feeling well, please do not come to Mass. If you – or any parishioners you know – are homebound or who cannot or do not want to come to church, **please call the Parish Office so that it can be arranged for Holy Communion to be brought to them, and, if they wish, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.**

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Monday	10 Aug	Saint Lawrence , deacon, martyr	
Tuesday	11 Aug	Saint Clare of Assisi , virgin	
Friday	14 Aug	St Maximilian Kolbe , friar priest, martyr	
Saturday	15 Aug	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary : Mass at 9:00am	

**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** 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. **So far, \$2,824 has been collected.** Last year you donated **\$3,456** in total, so a great result this year – so far!



Vinnies
good works

THIS 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

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

1st Reading Isaiah 56:1,6-7

2nd Reading Romans 11:13-15,29-32

Gospel Matthew 15:21-28

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 Tuesday 17:30

Wednesday 09:00

Thursday 09:00

Friday 09:30

Saturday 09:00

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

 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