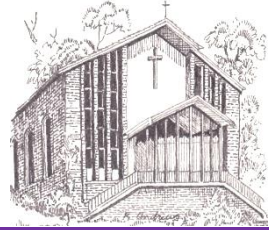




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



6/7 MARCH 2021

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT ❖ YEAR B

Prayer  **Fasting**  **Almsgiving**

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The Instruction Manual

In the first reading, God gives Moses and the Israelites the ten commandments. These are God's basic instruction manual for life. In Christ's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), that basic instruction manual is supplied with more details. The ten commandments forbid murder. The Sermon on the Mount commands you actually to love your enemy, turn the other cheek to him, and so on.



The rules of God's instruction manual for us are helpful; but, as we all have learned, it is hard to know in what circumstances they apply. Suppose you take the commandment about turning the other cheek to apply to someone who is beating his wife. If you apply it to mean that you should not try to stop him, you will simply be cooperating with his evil.

The trick is to see that the commandment about turning the other cheek has to be applied in the context of the broader rule: love your enemy. If you enable your enemy to become more evil, how have you loved him?

Elsewhere in the Gospel (John 2:15), Christ uses a whip to chase the moneychangers out of the Temple. In doing this he helps us understand how to apply the rules. In cases where turning the other cheek would make your enemy worse instead of better, loving your enemy requires helping him to stop his evil in some other way. And that is why the same Christ who gave the Sermon on the Mount drives out the moneychangers. If he had turned the other cheek to them, he would have been an enabler of their evil. Instead, it is good for them, as well as for others, that they stop the evil they were doing. And so, Christ uses force to get them to stop.



Here is the thing to notice, then. God's instruction manual for life is not limited just to the sets of rules in the ten commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. There is a medieval saying: every act of Christ is a teaching for us (*Omnis Christi actio nostra est instructio*). Christ's life and actions, as they are set out in the Gospels, are our best help for seeing how to live our lives well. Our best instruction manual is Christ himself.

The dramatic intervention, whereby Jesus drove the merchants and money changers from the Temple, may well have triggered the events which led to his death. As the gospel of Luke puts it, Jesus – knowing that his end was drawing near – ‘resolutely looked toward Jerusalem’ (9:51). It is in the holy city that he must meet the fate that was becoming inevitable. For all faithful Israelites, the journey to Jerusalem was a journey to the Temple. How old Israel loved the Temple! It was the place of God's presence. Their faith in that  

presence was so vivid, that to take part in the Temple worship was ‘to see the face of God’, as the Psalms put it.

The prophets of Israel sometimes performed gestures that had a lesson for the people. What Jesus did – disrupting the normal proceedings of the Temple precincts – was more than a lesson in reverence. It pointed to the new order of things he was to inaugurate.

True worship was only darkly foreshadowed in the old Temple’s ceremonial. In John’s gospel, we remember, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that true worship will not be tied to some particular sanctuary; it will be worship ‘in spirit and truth’ (4:24). Now he promises a ‘sign’ to confirm his prophetic gesture: ‘Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up’. When he had risen from the dead, his disciples recognised that ‘he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body’.

The first reading from Exodus, proclaiming the commandments which were an essential part of the covenant God made with his people in the desert, matches the gospel in today’s liturgy, because it calls us to a worship that is authentic – through the renunciation of the false securities we are tempted to put in the place of God.

With Jesus leading us, we look towards what lies at the end of our journey. The reading from the letter to the Corinthians points to the Cross, the astounding inauguration of the new order of things which will take place at the end of the Saviour’s journey to the Holy City. In this new order of things, we can all worship the Father ‘in spirit and in truth’: through the Paschal Mystery – our sharing in the life and worship of the Risen Lord. We are able to share in his gift of himself to the Father, as he becomes for us ‘the power and the wisdom of God’. In the drama of the Cross, ‘God’s foolishness’ is to prove ‘wiser than human wisdom’; and ‘God’s weakness’ is shown to be ‘stronger than human strength’.



THE GOSPEL OF MARK

During this year, Year B of the Lectionary cycle, we read mainly from the Gospel of Mark. Mark wrote his gospel to deepen the faith of his community. Most likely the Gospel was composed in the 60s AD at Rome. Then, the Christian community lived under the threat or reality of persecution. By showing his community how the traditions about Jesus related to their belief in the saving significance of the Cross and Resurrection, Mark equipped them to face persecution and resist the temptations of their world. The focus of Mark’s theology is the focus of Jesus’ theology – the kingdom or reign of God. What is taught about who Jesus is (Christology) and the response to Jesus (discipleship) takes its framework from the kingdom of God. What Jesus taught about the kingdom of God in parables, his life was really the parable *par excellence* of the kingdom. Mark’s message is that whoever wishes to understand the kingdom must look at Jesus the healer, the teacher and the crucified-and-risen one. The large amount of space devoted to healings and exorcisms proves that Mark knew and revered Jesus as a wonder-worker. The miracles are balanced by teaching in both word and deed. But the way in which Mark has outlined the story of Jesus suggests that the passion and death constituted its climax. Without the cross, the portrayals of Jesus as wonder-worker and teacher are unbalanced and without a directing principle. The whole thrust of Mark shows that the real meaning of Jesus’ messiahship became clear only with his death and resurrection.

A KIOSK IN TANZANIA

Oliva, 22, lives in Tanzania with her farmer husband, two young sons, and their adopted niece and nephew. Oliva didn't have the opportunity to go to school growing up, and she was embarrassed that she couldn't read, write or count. She runs a kiosk and works as a farm labourer, but her business was losing money because she couldn't add up.

Oliva is far from alone. Around 25 percent of Tanzanian girls and women over 15 can't read or write, with many families unable to afford school fees or uniforms. Then Oliva enrolled in Caritas Australia-supported literacy and numeracy classes. She also set up a classroom at home to teach her neighbours for free, because they were too shy to attend larger classes.

Oliva's now graduated, as have some of her students. Attendance at her classes is growing, her kiosk is thriving, and she can help her children with their homework. She aims to become a pastor and run for leadership in her next local election.

Oliva aspires to "Be More" and wants to help her community to achieve its vision of a better life for all.

"I am proud to be a teacher who helps others to achieve their dream," Oliva says.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2021 and support people like Oliva's gain access to education to build a brighter future and live in communities that upholds everyone's dignity. Thank you for your generosity.

You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413

"Aspire not to have more, but to be more." – Saint Oscar Romero

RECONCILIATION RITE II

Tuesday, 23 March at 7:30pm at Thirroul. One great way to prepare for Easter.

SMALL PLASTIC BOTTLES NEEDED FOR EASTER WATER

At the Easter Vigil, water is blessed and **everyone** will be given a bottle to take to bless your homes and cars. *However*, we need more small plastic bottles. **If you have some or can acquire some small plastic bottles, please bring them in by Sunday, 28 March.**

TRIBUNAL OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Marriage breakdown is a distressing experience for all those concerned. The Church reaches out in support of those who are divorced, while upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage. The Wollongong Office of the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Sydney extends an invitation to any divorced person who would like to talk about the annulment process. You can be assured that your privacy will be respected. Should you choose to apply for an annulment, you will be guided and supported through the process. For further information please phone the Wollongong Office of the Interdiocesan Tribunal of Sydney on 4222 2409 or email tribunal@dow.org.au



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Saturday 13 Mar Parish Dinner at Club Thirroul after the 5:30pm 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**

SURFING SEASON ... BE SAFE

Since 1 July 2020, there have been **3,898** rescues [*last week 3,762*] completed by surf lifesavers, and **14,743** first aid treatments [*last week 14,165*] have been performed. Swim safely.



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE THIRROUL

Next Tuesday, 9 March the Catholic Women's League will be meeting in the church at 10:30am, and afterwards for lunch at a local coffee shop. All are welcome.

DINNER AT CLUB THIRROUL – A GREAT SOCIAL OCCASION

The next Parish Dinner is at Club Thirroul after the 5:30pm Mass on Saturday, 13 March – all are welcome ... no need to book ... a great way to meet other parishioners.

PALMS NEEDED FOR PALM SUNDAY

If you have any palms that could be used for Palm Sunday, please drop them on the lawn outside the sacristy by **Friday, 26 March**. Thanks for your help!

WHY NOT BECOME A CATECHIST ASSISTANT?

Catechists teach Special Religious Education in our four local State Primary Schools. Classes last 30 minutes. If you could assist a Catechist, please call the Parish Office ASAP.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Third Sunday of Lent • Year **B**

1st Reading Exodus 20:1-17
2nd Reading 1 Corinthians 1:22-25
Gospel John 2:13-25

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Fourth Sunday of Lent • Year **B**

1st Reading 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23
2nd Reading Ephesians 2:4-10
Gospel John 3:14-21

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul
Saturday – 5:30pm • Sunday – 8:00am

**Restricted numbers apply ... however, there is
no need to register beforehand with the Parish Office**

LITURGIES THIS WEEK

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

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