



## Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**30 / 31 MARCH 2024**  
**EASTER SUNDAY + YEAR B**  
**CHRIST IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!**

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

*Soft Light*

Night's dark soul awakens. Chirps of life tug at its ear. Just the smallest candle-full of light peeks through its shadows. Dawn tiptoes in.

It is the balance-point of all time.

Easter.

Friday tempted us to guilt—about his wounds, thinking that our sins caused them. About his arms, still marked with shrill hurts. And maybe that is why he can hold us, enfold us so well. Maybe the wounds know somehow the shape of our small selves.

Mothering Christ.

The cantor at Easter Vigil sings these words: Oh truly necessary sin of Adam, blotted out by the death of Christ! O blessed fault, which has merited such a Redeemer, so great a Redeemer.

Isn't the cantor singing in praise of the sin of Adam and Eve? Even if Christ's death has taken their sin away, could it be a "necessary" fault? Is it right to rejoice about sin being necessary? Original sin does not really seem like a good or blessed event. Nor does our selfish penchant for misdeed.

Yet without such a sin, would such a Savior have had reason to come? Now Christ's wounded arms can sweep us up, comfort and absolve and hold us. We are blessed beyond words.

Sins always carry, in their revolt, the pledge of forgiveness. Night always carries in its midst the promise of light.

O truly blessed night, in whom earth is wedded to heaven, and humans to God!

Several rows of the people might have their candles lit. Over there, a lot more. Soon half the church could awaken to the gentle light. And, quickly, the rest. Morning has eased their faces into daylight, into the soft, humble glow.

Jesus became the night. Jesus is the light.

We can see him for who he has been all along. The Christ, the Messiah of God. The essence of love. The modest flame who softly lights the world.

We come to Easter Sunday's celebration filled with the memory of the liturgies of the greatest week of the Church's year - liturgies which have spoken for themselves, as they invited us to relive in faith the great things God has done for us, coming to a great climax in the Easter Vigil – captured in the words of St Paul read during the Vigil, 'As Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too' are called 'to live a new life'.

The days after Easter have a remarkable atmosphere. The Church's mood is not one of exuberant triumph, but one of wonder and calm. Faith must come to terms with the new creation brought into existence by the Paschal Mystery. And it is impossible to forget the price that has been paid: the one who 'went about doing good' has died 'hanging on a tree'.

Though they proclaim realities which are incomparable in their greatness and importance, the Church's liturgies do not strive to impress by creating effect. Only faith can fully appreciate the motivation that brought them into existence; they are a reflection of the Church's living response to what God has done for us. A group of people who have come through a great ordeal or an extraordinary experience will often find themselves in a mood of calm, reflection and gratitude. The liturgies of Easter Week have such a mood.

With Peter, in the first reading, we look back upon the gospel story that has led up to the great event in which we have been given to share. Peter recalls the ministry of Jesus 'anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power' and his tragic death; and as a privileged witness he announces the Lord's resurrection, to be 'the judge of the living and the dead', the one witnessed to by 'all the prophets'.

With Paul, in the second reading, we look forward with a hope that has no bounds. The destiny which is ours through the power of the Saviour's resurrection invites us to 'look for the things that are in heaven', because the life we now have 'is hidden with Christ in God'.

In the gospel reading – the story of Peter and the beloved disciple running to the empty tomb – the Church of the Apostles acknowledges that faith does not come easily: only a generous openness to God will find faith in the Risen Lord. This openness is linked especially with a knowledge of God's ways to be found in 'the teaching of scripture'.

The renewal of baptismal promises, which is customary at the Easter Day Mass, invites us to reflect upon the immense implications of our sharing in the Saviour's risen life, for the sake of the whole world. "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad." Easter is the great celebration of victory of life over death.



✠✠ Ours is an Easter religion. We do not deny or turn away from the evils that surround us: the wars that have killed some 100 million people in the last century; the poverty that grips more than half of the human race; the hunger that kills millions every year and ruins the lives of millions more; the discrimination that divides the human family into contending parties.

We do not deny these miseries, but we refuse to surrender to their power because of our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Suffering will be vindicated; death will be overcome; a new life will arise: that is the Easter message of the paschal mystery.

The resurrection of Jesus is the proof that God is as Jesus believed him to be. It is the proof that though everyone else abandoned Jesus, God did not. It is the proof that good will ultimately triumph over evil, and that the wielders of unjust power do not have the final say.

“Let us feast with joy in the Lord.” Just as Christ passed through death to resurrection, so too will the world pass through its suffering to the glory of a new life.

There is no room for despair: our Easter faith tells us that God will “raise us up and renew our lives.”

“This is the ‘day which the Lord has made.’ Alleluia! Take fresh hope, brothers and sisters of the whole world! With Christ our Passover everything is possible! Christ goes forward in our future!”

– Pope John Paul II, Easter Message, 1991:8.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading Acts 10:34a,37-43 (Easter Sunday)

- ✠ What is the significance of the word “witness,” in the sentence, “We are witnesses of all that he did”? Peter uses it both as a noun (meaning “observer”) and a verb (meaning “corroborate,” “testify”). So, is it something you can be and do? Be: how are you a witness? Do: what is your action to witness to truth?
- ✠ Should we witness with more than words? Peter bore witness in a different manner after the Resurrection than he did before Christ died. To what do you attribute this? Was he consumed by love for Christ and his Gospel? Is the source of strength for Peter the same source for us?

### Second Reading Colossians 3:1-4 (Easter Sunday)

- ✠ “Brothers and sisters: If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above.” (See later in Colossians 3 for Paul’s meaning of “above”). He says that we should put on heartfelt compassion. What does compassion look like in our immediate world and in the larger one? Discuss Pope Francis’ statement below. What cries of the poor “deeply move” you? Dying children in Gaza, Ukraine, Yemen? People suffering from effects of global warming, homelessness and starvation?

“We incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor when we are deeply moved by the suffering of others.”  
The Joy of the Gospel: *Evangelii Gaudium*, #193

- ✠ One of Paul’s last directives is to let the peace of Christ control our hearts. How do you do that now, when you’re feeling paralysed with fear because of violence, the pandemic, or depression? Where do you find help?

### Gospel John 20:1-9 (Easter Sunday)

- ✠ The same women who came to anoint his body in the morning had been with Jesus when he died. Were they deterred from their task by fear? Compare their behaviour with some of Jesus’ other disciples. Think about events like our pandemic, our protests against injustice, such as the Selma march. Were people like John Lewis, doctors and nurses in the ERs, Gandhi and Dorothy Day stopped by fear? Where is your courage on a scale of 1 to 10? Will it look different on every person and in every situation?
- ✠ What is it that allowed John to “see and believe,” to have this kind of clarity? Does love give you knowledge about a person, or insights into their behaviour? In John, Jesus said “Whoever loves me ... I will love him/her and reveal myself to her/him)” (John 14:21). Is there a connection between Jesus’ statement and John’s “seeing and believing”?

## BAPTISM THIS EASTER SUNDAY – WELCOME TO OSCAR!

WELCOME to **OSCAR HUNTER FLETCHER TIGHE** baptised in our Parish this Sunday during the 08:00 Mass: **welcome** and **thank you** to his parents, godparents, family and friends for bringing him to our Parish community.

If you want your infant son or daughter (under 7 years) to receive Baptism, the next Baptisms to be held in our Parish will be during Easter Masses, **Saturday, 21 April and Sunday, 22 April** – the following baptism will be held on **18/19 May 2024**. The next Baptism preparation meetings for parents will be in the presbytery on **Thursday, 18 April at 19:15**. Call in to the Parish Office to collect the Baptism Enrolment Forms.

Baptism is the first Sacrament of Christian Initiation, followed by Confirmation and Eucharist. In most of the Eastern Catholic Churches, the three Sacraments are celebrated together as is done in the Latin Catholic Church with adults and children over the age of reason – that is 7 years or older.





**Happy Easter from all at Caritas Australia!**

Thank you for your continued support through Project Compassion. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, *for all future generations*.



**Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2024 Lenten appeal.**

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413..

There is still time to donate! Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, *for all future generations*.

**Scan this with your phone to donate to Project Compassion**

## THE JESUS OF THE GOSPELS

The picture here of Jesus is laughable. Jesus was not some sweet, neatly-shaven white guy who carried a baby lamb in his arms, picking daisies, patting children on the head and spouting off sentimental stories about being nice. That halo around his head in the picture doesn't work either. Jesus was no "saint".

Jesus raised hell against the religious establishment, and his life was a repudiation of the ways religion oppressed, exploited, and divided people. He once drove a bunch of hypocrites out of the temple, wielding a whip. Jesus was not fond of entrenched power structures – political or religious. Whether in the name of God or Caesar, Jesus would have none of it.

There was a Jesus before Christianity. That Jesus was fierce, courageous, and unyielding. He stood for the inherent worth of every human being. He denounced the religious lie that humankind was separated from God and told people to find heaven within themselves. Jesus proclaimed another world was possible. He chastised people for sitting around waiting for God to save the world, and challenged them to wake up and save it themselves.

Jesus rebuked those who tried to make a religion out of him, and insisted that everyone is Jesus. He proclaimed that the hope of the world is not floating up in the sky, but present in our own hearts. The real Jesus of history was a lightning rod. The religious establishment hurriedly condemned him to death for blasphemy, while the political regime executed him for sedition.

Very few people truly sign up to live as Jesus did. It's much easier to make Jesus into a religion and sing about him on Sundays, and get all dressed up for Christmas and Easter.

Jesus said you have to take up a cross in order to follow him. In other words, to join the revolution Jesus started meant you had to quit playing religion, confront your ego, give up your comforts, speak truth to power, and endure hardship and suffering. No one really wants to do that. The cheap alternative is to wear a cross and sing Jesus songs."



## ACCOMMODATION URGENTLY NEEDED

My next-door neighbour, a single man of 70, has to vacate his rental of over 40 years by 2 April, due to it being sold. I have known Paul as my neighbour for 30 years and a better neighbour you couldn't wish for. Paul is a clean living, gentle person of good character. He is looking for a granny flat, bed sitter or room anywhere from Shellharbour to Helensburgh and preferably long term. He is prepared to pay up to \$300 a week rent. His number is 0424 451 357.

– John Denning, President, Vinnies Conference, Thirroul.

## BISHOP BRIAN'S PASTORAL MESSAGE FOR EASTER

Jesus is risen! Alleluia! He rose, just as he said he would, and has won for us the gift of eternal life. Pope Francis reminds us in his Lenten message: "Through the desert God leads us to freedom." If the invitation of Good Friday is to follow Jesus to the cross—where sin was defeated—then the call of Easter Sunday is the sound of freedom, proclaimed to all people, at all times, and in all places. This is the song sung over the world by our loving God: "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." So let us hesitate no longer. Let us step out of the tomb of sorrow and despair into the light of hope and freedom, knowing that, "Whatever faces us there, whatever storms ... Jesus is with us." Therefore, let us make our lives a song of joy, peace, kindness, and above all else, love. I urge you to live your life as if it matters to God ... because it does. Every blessing for this Easter season. I pray that we all find the fullness of life promised to us in Jesus.



## SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

Monday	1 Apr Easter Monday	Acts 2:14,22-33	Matthew 28:8-15
Tuesday 📖	2 Apr Easter Tuesday	Acts 2:36-41	John 20:11-18
Wednesday	3 Apr Easter Wednesday	Acts 3:1-10	Luke 24:13-35
Thursday	4 Apr Easter Thursday	Acts 3:11-26	Luke 24:35-48
Friday	5 Apr Easter Friday	Acts 4:1-12	John 21:1-14
Saturday	6 Apr Easter Saturday	Acts 4:13-21	Mark 16:9-15
Sunday	7 Apr 2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF THE 50 DAYS OF EASTER • YEAR B – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

## FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

✦ Wednesday, 3 April	19:30	Spirituality on the Sofa <a href="#">Click here to join via Zoom</a>
✦ Friday, 5 April	09:30	Anointing of the Sick during Mass
✦ Sunday, 7 April	03:00	Daylight Saving ends – turn the clocks BACK one hour
✦ Wednesday, 10 April	11:00	Catholic Women's League Meeting
	17:30	Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

## SPIRITUALITY ON THE SOFA

Wednesday, 3 April 2024, 10:30 to 21:00 (AEST) Via Zoom. [Click here to join via Zoom](#)  
Start Zoom and enter Meeting ID: 881 9482 4050 – Passcode: 101016

Topic: “Let’s talk about Consent.” Speakers: *Ms Prue Gregory OAM* and *Professor Michael Salter*. Our Moderator: *Ms Susan Eichorn*. Two powerful and imaginative leaders who will invite us to reflect with them on the spiritual dimension of Consent.

**Professor Michael Salter** who is a criminologist at the University of New South Wales, where he specialises in the study of child sexual abuse, gender-based violence and complex trauma. **Ms Prue Gregory OAM**, a lawyer who has spent the past 25 years working in the community – from helping to set up a legal clinic in Kings Cross for people experiencing homelessness, to Campbelltown as the principal lawyer at Macarthur Legal Centre and more recently as the former principal lawyer of knowmore Legal Service.

We look forward to “seeing” as many of you who can make it on 3 April. If you can assist us with a donation to help us that would be wonderful. Here are the details: Commonwealth Bank, Account Name: “Catalyst for Renewal Inc.” BSB: 062 182 Acc No: 1002 4424. Thank you for continuing to help us strengthen our SIP community.



## RAY'S RAPTUREOUS RECIPES RETURN – FRENCH APPLE CAKE

After the Lenten fasting, try this during the Fifty Days of Easter! Ingredients: 25g butter, for greasing; 2 eggs; 150g caster sugar; 1 tsp vanilla extract; 125ml vegetable oil; 150g plain flour; ¼ tsp salt; 1 tsp baking powder; 4 medium apples, peeled and cored, cut into 2cm pieces; 2 tbsp demerara sugar; whipped cream, to serve.

Heat oven to 170°C fan-forced (190°C conventional). Grease a 1.2-litre loaf tin with butter and line with baking paper. Reserve any leftover butter. In a bowl, lightly whisk together the eggs and sugar, then whisk in the vanilla extract and the oil. Gently whisk in the flour, salt and baking powder to form a batter. Stir the apples through the batter and pour into the tin. Dot the reserved butter on top and scatter with the demerara sugar. Bake for 1 hour, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes and remove from tin. Serve warm or at room temperature with whipped cream.

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website	NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website	SUNDAY
EASTER SUNDAY • YEAR B	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER • YEAR B	MASS TIMES
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading Acts 10:34,37-43	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading Acts 4:32-35	Saturday 📖 17:30
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading Colossians 3:1-4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading 1 John 5:1-6	Sunday 08:00
Gospel Mark 16:1-7	Gospel John 20:19-31	📖 Saturday Mass is recorded.
<b>Parish of St Michael – Thirroul</b> <i>One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes</i> <i>Moving forward as a Parish Family</i> Patrick Vaughan • <i>Parish Priest</i> Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • <i>Assisting</i> <b>Kerry Fabon • Parish Secretary</b> <b>Tues, Wed 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00</b>	🌐 <a href="http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au">www.thirroulcatholic.org.au</a> 📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive 📮 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515 ☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976 📧 <a href="mailto:thirroul@dow.org.au">thirroul@dow.org.au</a> Parish School of St Michael ☎ 4267 2560	<b>THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES</b> Monday _____ Tuesday 📖 17:30 Wednesday 09:00 Thursday 09:00 Friday 09:30 <i>Anointing of the Sick 1<sup>st</sup> Friday</i>