



**Welcome to
the Parish of
Saint Michael
Thirroul**



PARISH BULLETIN
22/23 JUNE 2024
12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
WINTER SOLSTICE: 06:50, FRIDAY, 21 JUN

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Parental Pains

In the first reading we get to hear the story of creation told by God.

God tells it to the “prophet” Job, who is in great pain. People often think that God in the Old Testament is fierce and harsh, but here we find God described as a mother giving birth.

God tells Job that the sea came forth from God’s womb! And God says that God took the clouds and wove them into swaddling clothes for baby ocean and then made the clouds into garments.

The infant sea turns out to be a wild child, however. God has to make some parental rules, as when a mother or father says “no throwing the ball inside the house. Go play outside.” It is as if God says to the ocean, “you may have all your wild fun in your own space, but you may not cross onto the dry land. Now mind me.”

The reason God speaks with such maternal care is because God is faced with Job, an individual who has lost hope. God had long delayed answering Job’s prayers, it is true, had let Job’s immense losses go on for a very long time. Now, at last, God tries to soften Job’s despair. “Weren’t you present when I lavished such love on everything I created?” God asks. “Don’t you remember my love? Don’t you trust it?”



In the lines of Scripture that follow the ones included in our reading, Job sees how wrong his depression had been, how God’s infinite love had been there all along. (Job 9:4ff) Apparently God’s delay was needed in order to strengthen Job’s faith and trust. Maybe real surrender to grace happens this way.

For its part, the Gospel shows Jesus using the same manner of love on the disciples in the boat. He too takes his time giving them help. He lets the winds and waves nearly engulf their boat while he is busy snoozing in the back. To borrow words from Psalm 107, the heaving boat and its men, lurching and reeling like drunks, helpless without their skills.

How could Jesus sleep through this? The men shake him into consciousness, and he does finally calm the waves. The disciples must have looked like frightened children as they tried to rebuild their scared dignity and quiet their melted hearts.

Then Jesus revealed his plan, or at least hinted at it. “Do you not yet have faith?” he asked. Strange question. But just like God with Job, Jesus is using tough love to invite their faith to go deeper. “Don’t you remember that God’s love is all around you, and in fact is now riding right next to you in this boat?”

Why are Jesus and God so bent on inducing faith and trust in us?

Because faith and trust are openings that allow God’s love to come into us. God cares enough about us to allow pain and sorrow to find us and to stretch us and to open doors to a deeper relation with him.

Our Lord does not cause the pain and sorrow, but allows it. And lets it stretch us and even to stretch himself. He joins us, and invites us to join him in the saving, widening power of reversal: instead of only happy, painless living, we are allowed to take part in human form in this life of God.

Today’s reading from Mark’s gospel – telling how Jesus calmed one of the storms that are common on the Sea of Galilee – is one of three accounts of miraculous actions of Jesus which Mark brings together as he concludes his account of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee. The impact of this dramatic narrative would have been heightened for the first Christians, as they recalled the Saviour’s triumph over the storm and confusion of his passion and death: the very centre of their new-found faith. Listening to this story, they would have found a new joy in the triumph of the Paschal Mystery. For those of Mark’s community who were from a Jewish background, the Lord’s mastery over the violence of the sea would have called to mind an Old Testament theme echoed in the first reading from the Book of Job.

For ancient cosmologies of the Middle East, the sea was mysterious and threatening – beneath the visible waters, they imagined a vast abyss upon which the flat earth rested precariously – as we hear In the biblical account of creation, as God’s almighty power over the sea establishes the ‘dry land of earth’ (Genesis 1:9). This outlook is recalled in the magnificent poetry of the Book of Job – the Lord responds to Job’s complaints by appealing to the mysterious sovereignty of divine action evident in creation.

In this narrative, Jesus displays the mastery which belongs to the Creator; but the disciples in the boat with him are still far from the ‘faith’ that will be theirs when they recognize the full implications of his actions. In a typically Marcan detail – evidencing an immediacy that may well reflect Peter’s telling of the story of Jesus – they



✠ abruptly confront Jesus: ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ And when Jesus had calmed the storm, they were confronted by the sub-text we have already noted in Mark’s gospel: **‘WHO CAN THIS BE?’**

It is possible, as we have noted, that Mark’s community belonged to the infant Church of Rome, who found themselves in the storm unleashed by Nero’s persecution – that was to lead to the martyrdom of Peter. They have found the ‘faith’ to which Jesus had invited the disciples in the boat – a trusting awareness of God’s almighty presence in the ordeal that they were facing. This gospel speaks to the Church in every age – its relevance to our stormy times needs no elaboration.

As so often happens, the reading from Paul accords well with the gospel reading. Paul recalls the time when, like the disciples in the boat, he had not found faith in Christ, but judged the Saviour ‘by the standards of the flesh’. But now, aware of the ‘new creation’ brought forth in the Paschal Mystery, he can face even the martyrdom that he is to share with Peter.

In 64AD a fire burnt to the ground something like a third of the city of Rome. Fires were common enough because of the primitive methods of heating which were used at that time, but this was a catastrophe. It seems that Nero, the emperor, not only failed to make any attempts to contain the conflagration, but also encouraged its spread. It created the empty space for him to establish an artificial lake and built a luxurious palace surrounded by a large park for his own personal enjoyment. To distract the populace, and to give them an object on which to vent their anger, he put the blame on the small Christian community. They had no legal protection, and, since they were known to avoid social occasions which required involvement in cult of the Roman gods, they were thought of as atheists, and the general populace found it easy to imagine them to be quite capable of any kind of anti-social behaviour.

Many Christians were crucified and then set alight for the entertainment of the crowd. Tradition has it that both Peter and Paul were among the victims of this persecution. Tradition also tells us that Mark’s gospel, part of which we read in this mass, was written about this time, and that it draws heavily on Peter’s memoirs.

Today’s gospel uses traditional imagery to depict a community that has come together in order to journey to a destination that is ‘across on the other side’, and that has come up against insuperable opposition. It is in danger of going under and being utterly destroyed. Mark is reminding the members of the persecuted community that Jesus is truly present among them, though he seems asleep. He is encouraging them to cry out to God in their distress, and to believe that Jesus, in whom they have placed their trust, will calm the storm, and will bring them safely to the haven for which they long. Let us cry out to Jesus in our distress, and let us trust that, moment by moment, we will receive the grace to remain faithful to love.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Job 38:1,8-11

- ↳ “The Lord addressed Job in a storm.” If God addresses you in the stormy times of your life, do you progress, regress, or just hang on for dear life?
- ↳ Who is in charge in this reading? Explain. Even though it doesn’t seem so, do you think God will limit your “storms”?

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

- ↳ How do people who “no longer live for themselves” qualify as “new creations”?
- ↳ “The love of Christ impels us.” What does the love of Christ “impel” you to do? What actions do you perform because you love Christ that you might not otherwise perform? Relieve someone’s suffering in some way? Work for ecojustice? Do something to change the climate crisis?

Gospel Mark 4:35-41

- ↳ The disciples thought they were going down with the storm and they were afraid. Can you relate to that? As he was with the disciples, is Jesus with you when “violent squalls come up” in your life? What does Pope Francis say can happen if we cry out to Jesus like the disciples did?

Today we can ask ourselves: what are the winds that beat against my life? What are the waves that hinder my navigation, and put my spiritual life, my family life, even my psychological life in danger? Let us say all this to Jesus; let us tell him everything. He wants this; he wants us to grab hold of him to find shelter from the unexpected waves in life. The Gospel recounts that the disciples approach Jesus, wake him and speak to him (cf. v. 38).

This is the beginning of our faith: to recognize that alone we are unable to stay afloat; that we need Jesus like sailors need the stars to find their course. Faith begins from believing that we are not enough for ourselves, from feeling in need of God. ... When we cry out to him, he can work wonders in us. It is the gentle and extraordinary power of prayer, which works miracles.

– Pope Francis, *Angelus*, 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 20 June 2021

- ↳ Pope Francis reminded us that during the coronavirus we were all in the same boat, caught off guard by the turbulence, disoriented and fragile. We needed to row together. What are some things we can work on together to solve some of the world’s problems now? Pray? Feed the hungry? Recycle? Build Tiny Homes for the homeless? Care for the sick? Help stop trafficking? Work to prevent discrimination?

BAPTISM FOR OLDER CHILDREN – CONFIRMATION

If your daughter or son is **7 years or older** and is not baptised, then their preparation for baptism will be over a few months, as they will receive together the three Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist – this is called **RCIC**, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children. Please contact the Parish Office to enrol in the RCIC program which will be commencing in the second half of July.

Please remember before the Lord the **eighteen Year 6 Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation**. They are currently preparing for the Sacrament, which they will receive on **Thursday, 27 June 2024**.

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS TO ARTISTS FROM THE WORLD OF COMEDY

Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you, and to express my gratitude to those in the Dicastery for Culture and Education who have organized this meeting.

I hold you in high esteem as artists who express yourselves through the language of comedy, humour, and irony. Among all the professionals working in television, cinema, theatre, print media, with songs, and on social media, you are among the most loved, sought after, and popular. Certainly, it is because you are very good at what you do, but there is also another motivation: you have and cultivate the gift of making people laugh.

In the midst of so much gloomy news, immersed as we are in many social and even personal emergencies, you have the power to spread peace and smiles. You are among the few who have the ability to speak to all types of people, from different generations and cultural backgrounds.

In your own way, you unite people, because laughter is contagious. It is easier to laugh together than alone: joy opens us to sharing and is the best antidote to selfishness and individualism. Laughter also helps to break down social barriers, create connections among people, and allows us to express emotions and thoughts, contributing to building a shared culture and creating spaces of freedom. You remind us that *homo sapiens* is also *homo ludens*! For playful fun and laughter are central to human life, to express ourselves, to learn, and to give meaning to situations.

Your talent is a precious gift. Together with a smile, it spreads peace in our hearts and among others, helping us to overcome difficulties and cope with everyday stress. It helps us find relief in irony and go through life with humour. I like to pray daily with the words of Saint Thomas More: “Grant me, O Lord, a good sense of humour”. I ask for this grace for every day because it helps me approach things with the right spirit.

You also succeed in bringing about another miracle: you manage to make people smile even while dealing with problems and events, large and small. You denounce abuses of power; you give voice to forgotten situations; you highlight abuses; you point out inappropriate behaviour. You do this without spreading alarm or terror, anxiety or fear, as other types of communication tend to do; you rouse people to think critically by making them laugh and smile. You do this by telling stories of real life, narrating reality from your unique viewpoint; and in this way, you speak to people about problems, large and small.

According to the Bible, at the beginning of the world, while everything was being created, divine wisdom practiced your form of art for the benefit of none other than God himself, the first spectator of history. It is described in this way: “I was beside him, like a master workman; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men” (Proverbs 8:30-31). Remember this: when you manage to draw knowing smiles from the lips of even one spectator, you also make God smile.

You, dear artists, know how to think and speak humorously in different forms and styles; and in each case the language of humour is suitable for understanding and “feeling” human nature. Humour does not offend, humiliate, or put people down according to their flaws. While communication today often generates conflict, you know how to bring together diverse and sometimes contrary realities. How much we need to learn from you! The laughter of humour is never “against” anyone, but is always inclusive, purposeful, eliciting openness, sympathy, empathy.

I am reminded of the story in the book of Genesis when God promised Abraham that within a year he would have a son. He and his wife Sarah were old and childless. Sarah listened and laughed inwardly. Abraham must have done the same. However, Sarah conceived and bore a son in her old age, at the time that God had set. Then Sarah said, “God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me” (Genesis 21:6). That is why they named their son Isaac, which means, “he laughs”.

Can we laugh at God? Of course, we can, just as we play and joke with the people we love. The Jewish wisdom and literary tradition is a master in this! It is possible to do this without offending the religious sentiments of believers, especially the poor.

Dear friends, may God bless you and your art. Continue to cheer people up, especially those who have the hardest time looking at life with hope. Help us, with a smile, to see reality with its contradictions, and to dream of a better world! With heartfelt sentiments, I bless you; and I ask you, please, to pray for me.

Franciscus



14 June 2024

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

Monday	24 Jun	The Nativity of John the Baptist	Isaiah 49:1-6	Acts 13:22-26	Luke 1:57-66,80
Tuesday 📖	25 Jun	Tuesday, Ordinary Time Week 12	2 Kings 19:9-11,14-21	Matthew 7:6,12-14	
Wednesday	26 Jun	Wednesday, Ordinary Time Week 12	2 Kings 22:8-13, 23:1-3	Matthew 7:15-20	
Thursday	27 Jun	Thursday, Ordinary Time Week 12	2 Kings 24:8-17	Matthew 7:21-29	
Friday	28 Jun	St Irenaeus, bishop, martyr	2 Kings 25:1-12	Matthew 8:1-4	
Saturday	29 Jun	Sts Peter and Paul, apostles	Acts 12:1-11	2 Timothy 4:6-82	Matthew 16:13-19
Sunday	30 Jun	13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B – Scripture Readings are listed below.			

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ **Thursday, 27 June** 19:00 **Sacrament of Confirmation, 17 Candidates**
- ✦ **Weekend, 29/30 June** **Confirmation Candidates welcomed and congratulated at Masses**
- ✦ **Monday, 1 July** **until Friday, 12 July, Ken teaching at the Seminary in Suva, Fiji**
Andrew will care for the Parish; no “televised” Masses
- ✦ **Friday, 5 July** **Anointing of the Sick during 09:30 Mass**
Last day of School for Term 2
- ✦ **Weekend, 13/14** **Blessing of those celebrating July Wedding Anniversaries, Birthdays**
- ✦ **Saturday, 13 July** **Dinner at Club Thirroul after 17:30 Mass**
- ✦ **Tuesday, 16 July** **to Thursday, 18 July – Wollongong Clergy Conference, Campbelltown**

RECIPE: TUSCAN SHRIMP WITH GNOCCHI

450g gnocchi; 1 tablespoon olive oil; 1 tablespoon unsalted butter; 4 garlic cloves, minced; 1 cup cream; ½ cup seafood stock or broth chicken stock or vegetable stock; ½ cup grated parmesan cheese; 2 tablespoons plain flour; 2 cups spinach; 1 jar (200g) sun-dried tomatoes, with juices slightly drained; 450g shrimp; ½ teaspoon salt; ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper; 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley.

If using shelf-stable gnocchi, boil water in a large pot and cook gnocchi according to package directions. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, add the olive oil and butter. Once the butter has melted, add the garlic and stir, sautéing about 1 minute, just until the garlic is soft and fragrant. Pour in the cream and seafood stock, and stir to combine. Add the grated parmesan cheese and flour, and whisk until both have melted into a silky smooth sauce. Add the spinach and sun-dried tomatoes, stir. Add the shrimp and stir to combine. Drain the gnocchi and add the cooked gnocchi to the skillet. Gently fold the gnocchi into the shrimp sauce to coat the gnocchi. Season with salt and pepper, and garnish with chopped fresh parsley just before serving.

2024 SIGNIFICANT MARRIAGE ANNIVERSARIES MASS

If you are celebrating 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 or over 60 years of marriage this year, you are invited to the celebration of Significant Marriage Anniversaries, to be celebrated with Bishop Brian Mascord on **Sunday, 25 August 2024** at 2pm at the St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong. Mass will be followed by light refreshments in the Xavier Centre Conference Room. Please register online at <https://dow.sh/MA2024> or contact Helen Bennett, at the Office of the Bishop ☎ 4222 2403, or via email helen.bennett@dow.org.au by no later than **Monday, 29 July 2024**.

Winter Solstice – the shortest day; the sun is furthest north

The Winter Solstice is at 06:50 on Friday, 21 June 2024 – in the northern hemisphere, it’s the summer solstice.

<p>THIS Sunday’s Readings – on website</p> <p>12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B</p> <p>1st Reading Job 38:1,8-11</p> <p>2nd Reading 2 Corinthians 5:14-17</p> <p>Gospel Mark 4:35-41</p>	<p>NEXT Sunday’s Readings – on website</p> <p>12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B</p> <p>1st Reading Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24</p> <p>2nd Reading 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15</p> <p>Gospel Mark 5:21-24,35-43</p>	<p>SUNDAY</p> <p>MASS TIMES</p> <p>Saturday 📖 17:30</p> <p>Sunday 08:00</p> <p>📖 Saturday Mass is recorded.</p>
<p>Parish of St Michael – Thirroul</p> <p><i>One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes</i></p> <p><i>Moving forward as a Parish Family</i></p> <p>Patrick Vaughan • <i>Parish Priest</i></p> <p>Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • <i>Assisting</i></p> <p>Kerry Fabon • Parish Secretary</p> <p>Tues, Wed 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00</p>	<p>🌐 www.thirroulcatholic.org.au</p> <p>📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive</p> <p>📮 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515</p> <p>☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976</p> <p>✉ thirroul@dow.org.au</p> <p>Parish School of St Michael</p> <p>☎ 4267 2560</p>	<p>THIS WEEK’S LITURGIES</p> <p>Monday _____</p> <p>Tuesday 📖 17:30</p> <p>Wednesday 09:00</p> <p>Thursday 09:00</p> <p>Friday 09:30</p> <p><i>Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday</i></p>