



# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**18/19 FEBRUARY 2017**  
**7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR A**  
**Welcome to those Baptised on Sunday**

## **THIS WEEK'S READINGS**

## *A Living Love*

If a schoolyard bully beats up your son or daughter, are you supposed to tell them to turn the other cheek? Or should you alert the principal of the school and get the bullying stopped? If the local thieves steal your car, are you supposed to find them and give them your wife's car too? Or should you call the police?

It looks as if Christ is recommending the first alternative in each case. Turn the other cheek! If someone takes your tunic, give him your cloak, too. It looks as if Christ is telling us to support bad people in their badness, so they can do bad things with impunity.

But to think this is to listen to Christ with a focus only on your own virtue. It is to forget entirely the wellbeing of your enemy. Christ is not commanding us to be enablers of the unjust and oppressive. Christ is asking us to love them. How is love shown to a person by helping him towards hell?

Love your neighbour as yourself, Christ says. If you love your enemy in this way, you will want to help him be like you: someone trying to be like Christ.

Ordinarily, a bully will become worse and worse if he thinks he can hurt others with impunity. So to threaten an ordinary bully with punishment is to tug him back from his own moral destruction.

But sometimes a bully is so sunk in self-deceived evil that no threat of punishment, however credible, would make him better. The British in colonial India were an unjust, oppressive force of this kind. And so for them Gandhi's strategy of non-violent resistance was just right. Turning the other cheek might make a schoolyard bully worse; but it helped the British out of India.

Christ commands us to love our enemies. What we can give to help our enemies become more what we ourselves want to be is our gift of love to them. Christ exceeds our expectations and demands that we exceed all expectations too!

But how can we be "perfect"?! The fundamental reason for Christ's coming was that we might become untied to God as sons and daughters. "God became human in order for humans to become God" – St Athanasius. "Perfect" in the gospel is not our concept of getting all the answers right on a test or never making a mistake; rather it means fullness and completion, fully alive. How much are we 'perfect'?



## 7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A

The teachings of Jesus in this gospel are those most people remember from the ‘Sermon on the Mount’. Understanding them can help us better appreciate Jesus’ charter of the Kingdom.

Jesus quotes the law of retribution common in ancient societies: ‘an eye for an eye’. This law of commensurate retribution was a distinct advance on the endless feuding of barbarian societies. The New Law of Jesus does not do away with the human laws which are essential to human society; it adds a new dimension to the enactment of their provisions – a dimension that will foster a society that is more life-giving. Jesus teaches that the provisions of strict justice are not enough to foster the healthy human community of God’s designs for the human family. We see this verified when those in authority rely on more and more legislation or executive orders to create a “good” society – without good will such laws only bring resentment.

When Jesus says, ‘Do not resist an evildoer’, he is not saying that we should never defend ourselves and seek justice when we are wronged. Matthew is applying these words to persecutions suffered by the Jewish converts of his community; but they have far wider implications. If hatred is contagious, so too is good will. Jesus forgave his enemies; Stephen, the first martyr, followed his example; the attitudes of the early Christian martyrs embarrassed and challenged the imperial authorities. The selfless response of the followers of Jesus has released a new force in the world’s history. It was the teaching of Jesus that inspired Ghandi’s program of non-violent resistance, and the heroic leadership of Martin Luther King.

However it must be understood that Jesus does not outlaw organized resistance to injustice; he is pointing to what will often prove a better way. It has been suggested that the examples provided by Jesus, bringing us back to our common experience, were recommendations concerning the attitude God’s people should have under the Roman occupation – they should give up their hopes of an earthly triumph; and if they put aside their resentment and antagonism and witness to the ways to God by showing good will and cooperation to the occupying power, they would fulfil their call to be ‘a light to the nations’. Certainly, as the last section of today’s gospel shows, the charter of Jesus is a call to learn and identify with the generous and merciful ways of God the Father in heaven who cares for ‘the righteous and unrighteous’.



### NEWS IN BRIEFS

**Trish and Norm Roberts**, after 42+ years in our Parish have moved to Sydney to be close to their family (children and grandchildren). Thanks for the wonderful gift of your married love and for all you have done for our Parish. Be blessed in Sydney town.

**Opening Mass for the School Year** will take place at 9:30am on Friday, 24 February.

**Ash Wednesday** is on **1 March** ... and we need ashes! **Bring along your palms from last year’s Palm Sunday**, and after the 5:30pm Mass on **Tuesday, 28 February**, the palms will be burned to make the ashes for **Ash Wednesday**. *Bring them in next weekend.*

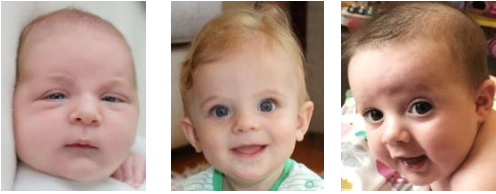
**Ash Wednesday** is on **1 March** and Masses will be at **9:00am** and **7:00pm**.

**Anointing of the Sick** will take place during the 9:30am Mass on Friday, 3 March.

“*Am I Being Unfair to You?*” is the theme for the 2017 **World Day of Prayer** celebration prepared by women in The Philippines. Please, all come along to **our church**, at **10:30am, Friday, 3 March**: we are hosting other Christian Churches for this annual celebration. Please come and join our sisters and brothers.

## BAPTISMS THIS WEEKEND – WELCOME!

Welcome to those baptized this weekend. Thank you to the parents, godparents and families for bringing your children to our Parish for Baptism. Baptized on Sunday morning: **NICHOLAS BLAND; WILLIAM BALLESTEROS; and AUSTIN AILWOOD.**



Baptisms are held on the third weekend of each month, except January and Lent. The next baptisms will be held on **Easter Sunday, 16 April 2017**. If you want your child baptized then, please call at the Parish Office to obtain the necessary forms and information. The next Baptism Preparation

Classes are on 23 February and 30 March. *Call the Parish Office for details.*

## THIRROUL SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

**Surf Lifesaving Patrols help keep our beaches safe. Swim between the flags.** So far in Australia **this season 5,168 rescues** have been made! *Don't be one!*

## ANDREW AND KEN CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF PROFESSION AS FRIARS

On **20 February 1967**, Andrew and Ken made their profession of first vows as Franciscan Friars at Maryfields, Campbelltown – **fifty years ago on Monday**. Friars are permitted three months “Jubilee Leave” [holiday!] after 50 years of profession of first vows. So ... Andrew will be away March to 31 May in the Holy Land and Poland, and Ken will be away [on trains in USA and Europe] 5 June to 1 September. **Thank you** for your support and prayers.

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK  
TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA**

## SPECIAL WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES IN 2017??

If you, or if a parishioner you know, is celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary in 2017, please let the Parish Office know **as soon as possible**. Pope Francis would like to know of your celebration so he can thank and bless you personally.

## HOPE: LENTEN GROUPS/PROGRAM 2017

**Lent begins on Wednesday, 1 March.** As usual, during Lent, small groups will gather throughout our Parish to reflect on the Diocese of Wollongong's 2017 Lenten resource – **HOPE**. The program contributors are Mr Shane Dwyer, Director of the National Centre for Evangelization, Sr Hilda Scott OSB and Fr Graham Schmitzer.

Groups will meet for approximately one hour each week during Lent and are a great way to meet other parishioners and to prepare for Easter. If you wish to host or be part of a group, please add your name and contact number, **along with two preferred times**, to the sign-up sheets at Masses **this weekend**. *If you cannot get to a group and would like a copy of the resources to use by yourself, please contact* ☎ Kerrie Hennessy ☎ 0422 987 058

## FRANCISCAN FRIARS SPEAK OUT AGAINST IMMIGRATION BAN

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-statement-on-the-immigration-ban/>

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35) Suggesting that all Islamic immigrants and refugees are suspect is an affront to the human dignity of our refugee sisters and brothers fleeing persecution and war, and the many immigrants who hope for a better life on our shores.

# THE CORRUPTIVE NATURE OF POWER

Abraham Lincoln said, “Nearly anyone can withstand adversity; if you really want to test the character of the person, give him power.” Over the years, myth and legend have doubtless combined to simultaneously sanitise, sterilise and sanctify Abraham Lincoln. If this statement, however, demonstrates the nature of Lincoln’s personal integrity, he is an impressive benchmark for every human being – including every Australian parliamentarian and council member ... and, indeed Church leader.

Relating Lincoln’s comment only to political power, however, diminishes its force because power of some sort is in the grasp of every human being: parents have power within their families; so do their children. Employers, employees, teachers, students, merchants and customers – even the most disenfranchised possess some power. This doesn’t mean that everyone has the power needed to deliver them from their situation, but everyone has power. You know the story – the husband shouts at his wife, scolds the son, the boy pulls his sister’s hair and the girl kicks the dog – they’re all exercising power in some way.

Foremost to using power properly is realising that power is gift entrusted to us by any multitude of sources – visible sources (democratic processes or corporate structures), or invisible social duties (parenting or civil obedience). Consequently, because power is a gift it must be received, not as a privilege, but as a responsibility. Power isn’t ours to keep but ours to give away: whatever power we have, is given to us for the sake of others. What this means is that when we’re not using our power to benefit the lives of others, we’re using power to bring about personal satisfaction or fulfilment, power has corrupted us.

– Brian Stewart, Camden

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEKEND:** Ever stop to think and forget to start again?

**NEXT WEEK: 7 staggering facts about global inequality.**

<p><b>THIS Sunday’s Readings</b> <i>on our website</i></p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time YEAR A</b></p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading</b> Leviticus 19:1-2,17-18</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading</b> 1 Corinthians 3:16-23</p> <p><b>Gospel</b> Matthew 5:38-48</p>	<p><b>NEXT Sunday’s Readings</b> <i>on our website</i></p> <p><b>8<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time YEAR A</b></p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading</b> Isaiah 49:14-15</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading</b> 1 Corinthians 4:1-5</p> <p><b>Gospel</b> Matthew 6:24-34</p>
<p><b>SUNDAY MASS TIMES</b></p> <p><b>Church of St Michael • Thirroul</b></p> <p>Saturday – <b>5:30pm</b> • Sunday – <b>8:00am</b></p> <p><b>Bulli</b> Sunday <b>8:30am</b> and <b>5:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Corrimal</b> Saturday <b>6pm</b>, Sunday <b>9:30am</b></p>	<p><b>LITURGIES THIS WEEK</b></p> <p><b>Wombarra</b> [<i>Liturgy</i>] Monday <b>4:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Thirroul</b> Tuesday <b>5:30pm</b></p> <p>Wednesday <b>9:00am</b></p> <p>Thursday <b>9:00am</b></p> <p>Friday <b>9:30am</b></p>

## Parish of St Michael – Thirroul and Wombarra

*Moving forward as a Parish Family + one of the Northern Illawarra Parishes*

Patrick Vaughan • Parish Priest ❖ Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • Assistant Priests

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**Parish Office Hours**

**Tuesday, Wednesday Friday**

**9:00am to 3:30pm** Magda Pires  
**10:00am to 3:00pm** Maureen Franciskovic

 [www.thirroulcatholic.org.au](http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au) Parish School of St Michael  4267 2560