



# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**4/5 MARCH 2017**  
**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT ✦ YEAR A**  
**Prayer ❖ Fasting ❖ Almsgiving**

## **THIS WEEK'S READINGS**

## ***The Love of God***

Jesus went into the wilderness and struggled with the demons. Such is the metaphor of spiritual life presented to us in today's Gospel. In the course of our lives, we are all "led into the wilderness by the Spirit," and we must struggle with the demons.

We struggle with the demon of self-sufficiency. Ignoring our interdependence, we imagine that we can 'go it alone,' and end up dividing ourselves into isolated units of races, classes, ethnics, wealthy and genders, living as though we do not need the other. We may even reach the point of living as though we do not need the Other.

We struggle with the demon of power. We begin by setting ourselves above others, and often end with oppressing them, using our power in a cruel or unjust manner to keep others down ... and this is so evident with some in our world today!

We struggle with the demon of pride, imagining ourselves to be better than others, or the 'top dog' in our little world, or number one in the world.

Lent is a time to struggle with the demons, "to rid ourselves of the hidden corruption of evil."

"Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned."

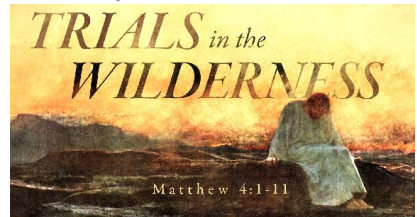
"As the kernel and centre of his good news, Christ proclaims salvation, this great gift of God which is liberation from everything that oppresses people but which is above all liberation from sin and the evil one, in the joy of knowing God and being known by him, of seeing him, and of being given over to him."

– Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) 9

The lessons of the Scriptures are conveyed, for the most part, through stories. Today's readings bring us two outstanding stories of this kind: the story of the temptation of Adam and Eve, and the story of the temptations of Jesus, the 'New Adam', as he takes up his mission after his baptism in the Jordan.

Writing for his community of Jewish converts, Matthew tells the story of the temptations of Jesus in a way that echoes themes of the traditions familiar to them: his temptation 'in the wilderness' calls to mind the trials that led the people of the Exodus, during their forty years wandering in the desert, to lose their trust in the Lord; like Moses, at Mount Sinai, Jesus fasts for 'forty days'; Jesus finds the strength to overcome his temptations by living according to the words of the Scriptures.

This carefully crafted story refers to more than a single episode in the life of the Saviour. It gives us an insight into the ongoing human experience of Jesus who, in the wonder ✨



✠ of the Incarnation, shared our human condition and its struggles – even its temptations, though he was ‘without sin’ (Hebrews 4:15). The temptations of Jesus are set forth as an encouragement for us. As we give direction and meaning to our lives, we are tempted to seek security in false gods (Colossians 3:5): pleasure and possessions; the exercise of power; the achievement of recognition and status. The Saviour’s temptations have often been linked with these false securities. As, in his hunger, he rejects the consolation of miraculous food, Jesus encourages us to recognise the empty promise of pleasure and possessions, and to find our security in the truths of our Christian faith. As he turns his back on the earthly triumph many of his contemporaries associated with the coming of Israel’s messiah, he invites us to see that a selfish exercise of power over others leads only to bitterness. As he refuses to turn aside from his mission to express the ways of his Father, by becoming involved in the politics of ‘the kingdoms of the world’, he points out to us the way that leads to the true peace yearned for by the peoples of the world.

In today’s second reading – a text much discussed in recent scholarship – Saint Paul compares the Saviour, whom elsewhere he calls ‘the final Adam’ (1 Corinthians 15:45), with the Adam of the Genesis story. The point he wants to make is the incomparable greatness of the Saviour and the blessings he brings in the story of humanity – brought out in a comparison with the Adam figure of the Scriptures. He is not concerned to interpret the complex significance of that figure.

The gospels speak of the temptations of Jesus immediately after his baptism and the Father’s words of encouragement as he comes from the waters. We may see here a concern in the community that gave us the gospels, to prepare those receiving baptism for the temptations that they will certainly face as they live their lives as disciples of the Lord.

## PROJECT COMPASSION – WEEK 1

Dinia was pregnant with her fifth child when her husband died, suddenly and unexpectedly. She lost not only her husband, but also the financial security his job at the mines brought. The only way she could earn anything at all was by collecting shells and crabs from the seashore and selling them. She was in a very vulnerable position. In 2011 a Caritas partner organisation began working with Dinia. She has been able to develop a sustainable income through a livelihoods program that helps both her and her neighbours.

“I have a feeling of contentment, being able to help others,” Dinia says.

Poverty is widespread in the Philippines, with more than a third of the people living below the poverty line of AU\$1.66 a day. Around 10 million of the poorest people are women. Poverty is the most severe in rural areas, with almost 80 per cent of the country’s most vulnerable people living there.

In her village in the Philippines, Dinia is a strong force. Active in her local People’s Organisation, she also shares her farming and natural healing skills.

Her strength comes from her own journey of healing, which began in shock and despair. Her husband died suddenly when she was pregnant with her fifth child.

“I didn’t have other income aside from my husband’s from his work as a miner,” she says. After he died, “I used to collect shells and crabs from the seashore to sell. That was my main source of income ... it was a very small income.”

In 2011, Socio Pastoral Action Centre Foundation Inc. (SPACFI) and the local government identified Dinia’s family as one of the most vulnerable in her community. ✠



✦ SPACFI invited Dinia to participate in the Integrated Community Development program (ICDP), which Caritas Australia supports.

“The program aims to improve the capacity of the poorest communities, [to help] them to be self-reliant, and have more independence ... to have a life of dignity and sustain their families,” says Cherie, a SPACFI community development worker.

From the start, she adds, “Dinia showed determination and willingness to be part of the program,” which offered her “alternative medicine training, basic hygiene training, livelihood training for organic gardening, permaculture and for SRI – System of Rice Intensification, or organic rice farming.”

Dinia also took part in training on how to raise pigs for income, and share their offspring with neighbours through SPACFI’s Hog Dispersal Program. She says: “The distribution of pigs is a system of sharing. The program provides you with a pig as long as you are able to raise piglets and pass two of them to others.”

Earlier, Dinia couldn’t afford education for her children. Now, she says, “the extra income helps a lot with the family expenses – for school, the house, and other necessities.”

The ICDP also teaches the Cornerstone Principle. Cherie explains: “This is the principle of sharing and caring. The program empowers the people in that it offers a lot of opportunity for them, not just livelihood support, not just capacity building, but more: learning from each other.”

Dinia agrees. “The Cornerstone is first of all about sharing, being generous with our neighbours. Even in difficult times when there isn’t enough rice, we always share it with the neighbours so everyone has rice to eat. As much as possible I will try to help them so that we are on the same level.”

“Dinia is being recognised by the people as a big influence,” Cherie says. “Her participation in the program has created a domino effect in the community. Before, some people were reluctant [to join], but now they have evidence that what SPACFI is doing can really help the community.”

Dinia’s journey of healing has ended with an integral role in her community, a sustainable livelihood, and a brighter future for her children. “My life is much better now. It is much easier,” she says.

## PROJECT COMPASSION ENVELOPES

Please take home a Project Compassion box and/or a set of donation envelopes and support Caritas Australia this Lenten season themed “**Love your neighbour**”. As Pope Francis said, “Love of God and love of our neighbour is one and the same thing.” You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by phoning ☎ **1800 024 413** or by visiting 🌐 [www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion).



## NEWS IN BRIEFS

**Feast of St Patrick, Friday, 17 March:** Mass at **9:30am**. *Happy St Paddy’s Day!*

**CatholicCare Race Day** at Kembla Grange, Saturday, 18 March. All proceeds to support our diocese’s CatholicCare. 📞 Trish Cooney 4254 9318 [trishc@catholiccare.dow.org.au](mailto:trishc@catholiccare.dow.org.au)



## THIRROUL SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

**Surf Lifesaving Patrols help keep our beaches safe. Swim between the flags.** So far in Australia **this season 5,786 rescues** have been made! *Last week it was 5,594!*

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

# 2017 EARTH HOUR – SATURDAY, 25 MARCH

“The world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us” Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*. Use less energy. It makes good economic sense to reduce your energy consumption to save money. It’s also important given that our main source of energy production in Australia comes from the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, which is contributing to global warming. To avoid dangerous climate change, science is telling us we need to keep additional warming of the planet to no more than 2°C. Setting science-based targets that are within a 2°C economy are ambitious but achievable. This will mean decarbonisation of the global energy sector by mid-century. As a start we can make sure our buildings and appliances are as energy efficient as possible, and then over time, plan to convert buildings and precincts to be “carbon positive” (where buildings are net producers of energy and water) and clever precinct developments, along with technological advances in energy production and materials. [earthhour.org.au/home/](http://earthhour.org.au/home/)

## ARE YOU AVAILABLE FOR THE NEXT 2 ROSTER PERIODS?

The next ministry roster periods run from **27 May** until **10 Sep**, then from **16 Sep** until **31 Dec**. School holidays during that time are: 7–22 July and 29 Sep to 14 Oct. If you are unavailable anytime between **27 May** and **31 December**, please **let your roster coordinator know by 20 March**. *Please contact your Roster Coordinator, not the Parish Office.*

## JOSEPHITES MEETING

The next meeting of the Josephites will be at the church of St Joseph, Bulli, on Thursday, 16 March, commencing with Mass at 6:30pm, followed by a shared meal and meditation.

**AN IDEA FOR LENT:** For each day of Lent, remove one item from your home that you no longer need and put it into a large trash bag. At the end of the 40 days, donate the bag of items to your local Vinnies.

<p><b>THIS Sunday's Readings</b> <i>on our website</i></p> <p><b>1st Sunday of Lent YEAR A</b></p> <p><b>1st Reading</b>      Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7</p> <p><b>2nd Reading</b>      Romans 5:12-19</p> <p><b>Gospel</b>              Matthew 4:1-11</p>	<p><b>NEXT Sunday's Readings</b> <i>on our website</i></p> <p><b>2nd Sunday of Lent YEAR A</b></p> <p><b>1st Reading</b>      Genesis 12:1-4</p> <p><b>2nd Reading</b>      2 Timothy 1:8-10</p> <p><b>Gospel</b>              Matthew 17:1-9</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><b>Wednesday</b> <b>9:00am</b></p> <p><b>Thursday</b> <b>9:00am</b></p> <p><b>Friday</b> <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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[thirroul@dow.org.au](mailto: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](http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au)

Parish School of St Michael 4267 2560