



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



11/12 MARCH 2017
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT ✦ YEAR A
Prayer ❖ Fasting ❖ Almsgiving

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The Love of God

High on the mountain, the three disciples witness a dazzling sight as Jesus was transfigured before their eyes, his face as bright as the sun and his clothes as radiant as light. In the middle of this vision, they hear God's voice telling them to listen to "my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased."

Lent is a time to listen to Jesus, "who calls us to repentance and a change of heart." It is a time to reflect on God's Word about loving our enemies and being peacemakers, about proclaiming liberty to captives and letting the oppressed go free, about being the salt of the earth and the light of the world, about being perfect just as our heavenly Father is perfect.

It is a time to be quiet and listen to the God "who has saved us and has called us to a holy life." It is a time to become a "great nation" through whom "all the communities of the earth shall find blessing."

"Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making himself present and manifesting himself:

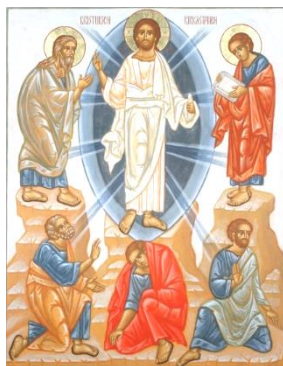
through his words and deeds, his signs and wonders, but especially through his death and glorious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth. Moreover, he confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed: that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal."

– Vatican II, *Constitution on Divine Revelation* (1965) 4

Throughout our long Lenten observance, we are encouraged to keep in mind the triumphant glory of the Saviour that we are preparing to celebrate, and the challenge it brings to us. All three gospels link the Transfiguration with the warning of Jesus, that he was 'destined to suffer' in Jerusalem, and that those who are his true followers must 'take up their cross and follow him'.

What is the basis of this mysterious narrative, that is not easy to relate to the later attitudes displayed by the apostles as the story of the gospels unfolds? It had obvious importance for the Church of the beginnings, because it is given in all three synoptic gospels. Luke associates this experience of the three apostles – who were to witness the agony of Jesus in the garden – with a moment in which Jesus led them in prayer.

Perhaps the narrative has its basis in an ecstatic prayer experience. No doubt, the early Church saw this narrative as an important expression of their faith in the Saviour – as sharing in the Father's greatness and glory, even in the obscurity of his earthly life. ☩



✦ Matthew's recounting of this tradition, with its many references to biblical themes familiar to the Jewish converts of his community, presents the Jesus of the Transfiguration as fulfilling what was prefigured in the history of old Israel: the 'mountain' reminds us of the defining moment of the Sinai covenant; 'Moses and Elijah', representing the Law and the Prophets, both have close links with Sinai; the 'cloud' recalls the '*shekinah*' cloud that was an expression of the Lord's presence during the Exodus; the shining face of Jesus reminds us of the face of Moses when he came down from the mountain; Peter's reference to the 'three tents', or booths, recalls the Jewish feast of Tabernacles, when the people lived in booths celebrating their arrival in the promised land – a celebration of the kingship of the Lord that came to be filled with messianic expectations. Matthew adds to the words of the Father from the cloud a reference to one of the songs of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 42:1), bringing us back to the association of the Transfiguration with the warning of Jesus – of the ordeal that lay ahead of him in Jerusalem, and the challenge of discipleship. The term used by Mark and Matthew for the transformation that took place in Jesus – that we are accustomed to translate, 'transfiguration' – is also used in the New Testament to describe the spiritual transformation brought by life 'in Christ'. For the first Christians, it had overtones of the blessings of the final kingdom announced by Jesus. The journey begun so long ago – in the story of Abraham's heroic response to the call of God, and the promises that accompanied it – has brought God's people to the moment of fulfilment.

PROJECT COMPASSION – WEEK 3

"We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it." – Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*

For Martina, a mother of eight, escaping domestic violence was the first step in her journey to a new life. Gender-based violence is a critical issue for women in Timor-Leste, and domestic violence is the most reported crime to the National Vulnerable Persons Unit. Studies show that 38 per cent of women aged 15-49 experienced physical violence and 36 per cent who were or had been married reported violence – physical, sexual or emotional – by their husbands or partners.



Uma PAS, the shelter where Martina sought refuge, is a partner in Caritas Australia's Protection Program, a holistic community-wide program that offers women like Martina economic empowerment and a life of safety in a supportive community. When she joined the Caritas Australia supported Protection Program, she received vital training in micro-finance, finance management and saving money, and now she has her independence. Here Domingas, a counsellor from the Uma PAS shelter, tells Martina's story.

In 2008 Martina, with her own confidence and bravery, decided to come to the shelter with her eight children to ask for help.

This is a story of a woman who can be a reference for all of us – as women of Timor-Leste, as women of Australia, as women in the world, showing us how we can help each other, and inspiring other women to feel confident and to change their lives. Each person comes to our organisation with their own dignity. The 260 women that I have given counselling to have realised that they are not alone. And they see there are people that are here and wanting to listen, and are ready to help. The other services we provide at Uma PAS are shelter, clothing, food, and activities like practical counselling: cooking, sewing, gardening and baking. And before women go back to the community, Uma PAS has a wide

consultation with the village head and family members [to] get assurance that she is going to a safe place. We also do follow up visits ... trying to see how we can support better. Uma PAS works together with a local NGO, recommending the women who most need it [for] training and funding for income generation and livelihood; and then they are supported to start their own business. I realised that Martina has her own skills and her own talents ... a big talent for finding an income. So we did advocacy and referred Martina to services to get training and assistance – we worked together to help her gain independence. She had training on microfinance, finance management: how to make savings and what to spend the money on.

Martina has achieved great success and independence for herself. She has her own small business. “After I left Uma PAS, I felt confident for my future. Uma PAS really helped me [to learn] how to be strong; how to change my life to support myself, and to have some money to support my children. Education is the most important thing to change my children’s lives,” Martina says.

The Martina I know today is the confident Martina, who stands up and says, “This is me you see; this is Martina” – she’s confident to go forward. The problems and the challenges Martina faced she saw not as an obstacle, but as a key; a key to open a way to a new life.

The Protection Program has two strategies – prevention work and accompaniment work. We accompany survivors of domestic violence to a better future by providing the shelters, and by linking them with police, health and other services offering direct support – microfinance, education for their children, legal services. We also support our local partners to do prevention work. They run community training with men, to help change their attitudes and reduce violent behaviour.” Fernando Pires, *Timor-Leste Director for Caritas Australia*.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2017 and help empower women in Timor-Leste to recover from domestic violence, develop sustainable livelihoods, and lead a life of dignity.

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES/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.

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

Rite II Reconciliation during Lent will take place at **7:30pm** on **Tuesday, 4 April**.

Easter Liturgies – we will need extra ministers and helpers ... if you will be around, please sign up or volunteer your services – *email the Parish Office or sign up at church.*

THIRROUL SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

Surf Lifesaving Patrols help keep our beaches safe. Swim between the flags. So far in Australia **this season 5,886 rescues** have been made! *Last week it was 5,786!*



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

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE MEETING

The next meeting of the Catholic Women's League will be on **Tuesday, 14 March**, commencing at 11:00am in the McCarthy Centre. Fr Andrew Granc ofm will be guest speaker – last chance to hear Andrew before he leaves on his jubilee holiday. Light luncheon to follow. All welcome! Monthly meeting 1:30pm.

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.*

2017 EARTH HOUR – SATURDAY, 25 MARCH, 8:30–9:30PM

Our actions on climate change will shape the future for our children. They know more about climate change than any other generation. And they have extraordinary views on what they want for their planet. In 2017, WWF [World Wide Fund for Nature] is celebrating 10 years of Earth Hour and 10 years of progress on changing climate change. What started as an Aussie grassroots movement has grown into the world's biggest movement for climate change. *On Saturday, 25 March, switch off to support progress for the next generation.*

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.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

2nd Sunday of Lent **YEAR A**

1st Reading Genesis 12:1-4
2nd Reading 2 Timothy 1:8-10
Gospel Matthew 17:1-9

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

3rd Sunday of Lent **YEAR A**

1st Reading Exodus 17:3-7
2nd Reading Romans 5:1-2,5-8
Gospel John 4:5-42

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul
Saturday – 5:30pm • Sunday – 8:00am
Bulli Sunday 8:30am and 5:30pm
Corrimal Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am


LITURGIES THIS WEEK

Wombarra [*Liturgy*] Monday 4:30pm
Thirroul Tuesday 5:30pm
Wednesday 9:00am
Thursday 9:00am
St Patrick's Day – Friday 9:30am

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

 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