



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



8/9 APRIL 2017
PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD ✦ YEAR A
Holy Week ✦ Easter Triduum

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Suffering

Today we celebrate Jesus, the suffering Messiah. He is the one of whom Isaiah foretold: "My face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. He is the Christ who took the form of a slave, ... obediently accepting even death, death on a cross." He is the saviour who "suffered willingly for sinners" and whose suffering makes us pleasing to God.

We all suffer in our own way. We experience physical pain and hardship. We suffer watching our friends and relatives suffer.

We are often offended or abandoned by others, and we add to our suffering by our own sinfulness.

The world around us is filled with suffering: the victims of war and poverty; people living in streets or in shantytowns; refugees; starving children; lonely elderly; people dying of AIDS, cancer, or some other disease.

Today's liturgy teaches us "to welcome our suffering," to bear witness to God by following Christ's example of suffering. We pray that the world "united with him in his suffering on the cross may share his resurrection and new life."

"Had Jesus merely said that his mission was to set people free from sin and all forms of oppression, his words would have fallen on deaf ears. He had to work at this task of liberation. He not only talked about freeing the poor and oppressed but, undeterred by criticism, actually welcomed the poor and sinners to share at his table. Like Jesus, we must be able to accompany others in their suffering and be willing to suffer with them."

– US Bishops, *To the Ends of the Earth* (1986) 48

Today's liturgy begins with the commemoration of the triumphant entry of Jesus into the holy city. This year we hear Matthew's account. Its messianic emphasis is clear. The Master's foreknowledge and authority are affirmed. A prophecy of Scripture (a combination of verses from Isaiah and Zechariah) is being fulfilled; but his coming is in humility and peacefulness. The people cry, 'Hosanna to the Son of David'.

The first reading from Isaiah invites us to learn from the example of the Saviour, the trust we should have in our Father in heaven, whatever trials we face. But it is something else that makes this reading appropriate on the threshold of Holy Week – with God's true Servant, we must be open to a new meeting with our God in what lies ahead – glad that the Lord 'wakes us to hear, to listen like disciples'.

In the second reading, from the letter to the Philippians – echoing a hymn used in the liturgy of the first generation of the Church – Paul summarises with majestic brevity the drama of the Paschal Mystery we are about to celebrate: Jesus 'emptied himself', ... ➤



✚ sharing our human condition, even to ‘accepting death on a cross’; and then, for our sake, he is ‘raised high’, one with the Father in the glory of the divine name.

Matthew’s account of the Lord’s passion has the features we have come to associate with this gospel. Faith in Jesus as the messiah has already been clearly affirmed in the description of his entry into Jerusalem; and the ultimate outcome is clearly anticipated: ‘After my resurrection, I shall go before you to Galilee’. But the subtlety with which Matthew’s account makes an affirmation of faith in the Saviour seems to indicate that he has his Jewish audience in mind. The refrain of fulfilment – as ‘the Son of Man goes to his fate’ – echoes through the narrative. The titles attributed to Jesus are few, ‘the Christ’, ‘Son of God’ and ‘Son of Man’. But they are crucial for converts from a Jewish background. The first raises the great issue that confronted the Jewish people. The title, ‘Son of God’ (which was to become an ultimate expression of the absolute claim of Christian faith) was open-ended to the ears of old Israel, indicating one who has God’s special favour. It was the title, ‘Son of Man’, crucial at the trial of Jesus, that removed all ambiguity. ‘You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power (God)’, Jesus declares (referring to Psalm 110), ‘and coming on the clouds of heaven’, (a reference to Daniel 7). ‘What need of witnesses have we now!’ exclaimed the high priest. The rending of the veil of the Temple and the apocalyptic events in the holy city, are a divine confirmation that, with the Lord’s death, the old order has given way to the new. And the centurion’s words, ‘In truth this was a son of God’, are an expression of the Church’s newfound faith.

The liturgies of Holy Week will teach us, not with fine oratory, but by recounting the great events in which the generous ways of God found a final expression in our human history. Let this recognition set the tone for our participation in the liturgies of these days.

PROJECT COMPASSION – WEEK 6

“Humanity has the ability to work together in building our common home.” – Pope Francis

In the coastal areas of the Philippines, extreme weather has caused extraordinary levels of devastation. Communities have been torn apart, lives lost and futures thrown into ruin. However, in the wake of Typhoon Santi, Aloma and her small children have moved from tragedy to triumph. In times of great need, our human instinct to help each other, to “love our neighbour”, comes to the fore. Through Aloma’s work with the Integrated Community Development Program, supported by Caritas Australia, she has become a community leader, helping develop sustainable farming practices, business knowledge, and resilience to disasters.

A few years ago, Aloma’s village in the Philippines was a scene of devastation – high winds and high seas battered a barren stretch of sand. Extreme weather is a common enough occurrence in this vulnerable area, threatening the safety and food security of families struggling to survive. In 2009, when Typhoon Santi raged, Aloma and her small children cowered while their home fell to shreds around them. Hope first took root for the family in 2011, when Aloma became a participant in the Integrated Community Development Program (ICDP) run by the Socio Pastoral Action Center Foundation Inc. (SPACFI).

“I was so happy ... I understood that the program would help the poor people in the village.” Caritas Australia is a partner of SPACFI, and supports the ICDP.

Aloma gained a range of skills through the program, including bookkeeping, managing logistics, and understanding ecology and environmental conservation. The program’s training on the ‘Cornerstone’ principle guided her in developing a sense of accountability, and concern for others and for the environment.

“All the skills that I learned, I pass on to friends and neighbours,” she says.



✚ Along with others in the community, Aloma also undertook training in disaster risk reduction. She learnt how to manage the logistics of disaster response, and her husband had first-aid training. With Aloma's training, her confidence grew, and so did her awareness of the role she could play in caring for the land.



“The greatest change in my life was to realise that the environment is very important. We grew up cutting down all the trees around us, including the mangroves ... and using [them] for firewood. Now, instead, we are planting the mangroves for our own protection. It is important to protect the environment. We are in a coastal area, and mangroves will protect us from a tsunami or flooding.”

Aloma has always been a community leader. She was chair of the Council for Youth in her area, and is now a board member of the Small Farmers and Fisherfolk Association, and treasurer of her local area. She is also on the Disaster Risk Reduction Council. Inspired by Aloma's leadership, the whole community now comes together – children and adults – to work in the mangrove nursery. Aloma says, “The community finds it enjoyable. It's just like community bonding for them, going in this area, planting the mangroves. Now it's become their lifestyle, to protect the coastal area [using] mangroves.”

Community-wide training in coastal management has enabled everyone to see the value of working together. Now the villagers are preparing a plan that will help them mitigate the impact of disasters in their area. Gazing out through the rows of mangroves, Aloma shares her dream for her family, for her community, and for their common home.

“I have a simple dream for my family: that my children will be able to finish their schooling, unlike us, and eventually they will have a better future. My dream for my community is to continue what we are doing right now, so that the next generation will benefit from what we have started.”

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES/ENVELOPES

Please return Project Compassion Boxes/Envelopes by **Holy Thursday** or **Easter Sunday**. Donate by ☎ **1800 024 413** or by 💻 **www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion**.

EASTER LITURGY TIMES AT THIRROUL

Thursday of the Lord's Supper	7:30pm	Easter Vigil, Saturday	7:00pm
Good Friday Way of the Cross	10:30am	Easter Sunday	8:00am
Good Friday Liturgy of the Passion	3:00pm		

ROSEMARY IS NEEDED

On Good Friday, both in the morning and afternoon, we need rosemary – cut into strips about 10cm long ... please bring them in during the week or on Good Friday. We will also need Rosemary for ANZAC Day, Tuesday, 25 April – please drop it in on 22/23 April.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2017

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be celebrated in our Parish on 1 June. Students in **Year 6 or older** need to enrol by **10 April**. *Download Enrolment Forms from our Parish website.*

KSC ANNUAL CHARITIES DINNER

The annual Knights of the Southern Cross Charities Dinner will be held on Saturday, 27 May 2017 from 7pm at the Thirroul Railway Institute, Railway Parade, Thirroul. The speaker will be Fr Chris Riley AM, Founder and CEO of Youth Off The Streets. Tickets are \$35 each, BYO. Bookings are essential: contact Paul Tuckerman ☎ 4267 2535.

THIRROUL SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

Surf Lifesaving Patrols help keep our beaches safe. Swim between the flags. So far in Australia **this season 6,704 rescues** have been made! *Last week it was 6,591!*

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

MARCH FOR REFUGEES ON PALM SUNDAY

Tens of thousands of people around the country will be walking for justice for refugees on Palm Sunday. It is a significant moment for us all to gather and express our solidarity with those being treated cruelly by our government. The event is of particular significance for Catholics, as it is a time we recognise the persecution faced by Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, just as many refugees face today when they flee their homes.



Let our political leaders see that the time for cruelty and inhumanity is over, and that we need compassion and care. **Crown Street Mall, Wollongong, Sunday 9 April, 2pm to 4pm.** Together, we can demand justice from our leaders and shift the conversation towards how we welcome – not deter – those seeking refuge and asylum.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Palm (Passion) Sunday YEAR A

1st Reading Isaiah 50:4-7

2nd Reading Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Matthew 26:14-27:66

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Easter Sunday YEAR A

1st Reading Acts 10:34,37-43

2nd Reading Colossians 3:1-4

Gospel Matthew 28:1-10

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, Friday, Saturday

See special Easter Triduum Times

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

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