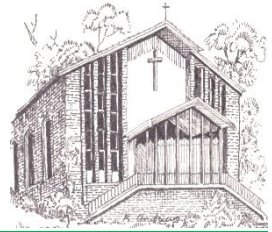




# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**23/24 SEPTEMBER 2017**  
**25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR A**  
**Samaritan's Purse – Operation Christmas Child**

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

## God's Justice

The parable of the workers in the vineyard is rather startling. People who work an hour in the late afternoon are paid the same as those who work all day long. Obviously God doesn't think like we do.

We think of justice in terms of what is fair, of what people deserve. So we would say that the people who worked longer deserved more. But God doesn't see it that way. God thinks of justice in terms of people's dignity, their right to a decent life.

The people who came late had the same right to a decent life as those who had worked all day, so they are all treated equally. Nothing is taken from anyone, but all are treated in accord with their dignity, their right to a decent life. Such is God's justice.



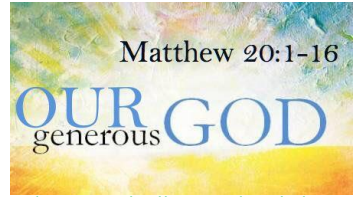
“My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.” Perhaps we would have a better world if we were to adopt some of God's ways. After all, “the Lord is just in all his ways,” and that is something which cannot be said of all our ways.

“Father, guide us according to your law of love.” Free us from our law of vindictive justice. Biblical justice is more comprehensive than subsequent philosophical definitions. It is not concerned with a strict definition of rights and duties, but with the rightness of the human condition before God and within society. Nor is justice opposed to love; rather, it is both a manifestation of love and a condition for love to grow.

– US Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, 1986:39

‘The last will be first and the first will be last’. These words of Jesus, with which today's reading from Matthew concludes, occur in different contexts in all three synoptic gospels – God's ways constantly overturn our human expectations. And that is the lesson of the parable in today's gospel. Of all the parables of Jesus, the story of the labourers in the vineyard is probably the most puzzling for Christians of successive generations. That means that it is a great success, that it achieves what Jesus intended. A plausible story, reflecting the common experience of his hearers begins to unfold. It was normal for day labourers seeking employment to gather in public places. One denarius would have been a normal day's wage. We are given a hint where the story is leading however; Israel, the Lord's vineyard, was a familiar theme of the scriptures. An element of suspense holds the attention of the listeners – what is the unusual behaviour of the landowner leading to? Then the conclusion of the story comes as a shock, leaving us unsettled, as our reasonable ✨ ✨

✚✚ expectations are not fulfilled. That is the purpose of the parable, to invite us to leave aside the human logic and predictability with which we shape our world, and to enter the Kingdom announced by the Saviour, the new world shaped by God's generous and merciful ways. This parable may have been directed originally at the Pharisees' refusal to hear the Good News of God's ways brought by Jesus; but the fact that we still find ourselves challenged by the story indicates that it has a lesson that is valid for every generation.



'Did we not agree? Take yours earnings'. God will never be unjust. But the Lord's great plan for the human family has a measure that goes far beyond our human calculations of what is appropriate and just – designs of generosity and mercy conceived in the eternal depths of the divine freedom. 'Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways'.

Jesus is calling us to bow down before the mystery of God's 'grace'. 'Why be envious because I am generous?' 'Grace' is the term used by the scriptures, for this new world of God's generosity announced by Jesus. In a sense, 'grace' is the essential message of the New Testament – where the term occurs countless times: 'God's grace has been revealed to save the whole human race' (Titus 2:11); 'It is by God's grace you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own ... so that nobody can claim the credit' (Ephesians 2:8). The 'grace' or favour of God announced in the Christian gospel is God's generous outreach to each one of us determined before time began. Because God's will is effective and all-powerful, 'grace' also refers to the many blessings of our new life in Christ. Our Catholic upbringing has stressed these created effects; but we should have given more attention to the folly of divine love made known to us through these blessings. This, we could say, is the point of Jesus' parable: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ' (Ephesians 1:3).

## BISHOPS' SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT ON THE ECONOMY

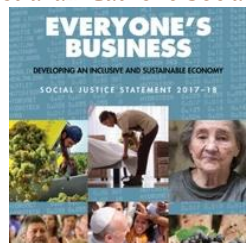
We celebrate Social Justice Sunday this weekend. This year, the Australian Bishops' Social Justice Statement is titled: '*Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy*'. The Statement calls for an economy that is founded on justice and offers dignity and inclusion to every person. For further details about the Social Justice Statement, call 02 8306 3499 or visit [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au) – the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website. An extract is below:

"When it comes to the social justice of the entire economic system, we draw on new understandings of human development from economics and social policy that emphasize how the wellbeing of humans and all of creation must be an economy's central purpose.

"The Church has been part of a global movement for 'inclusive growth'. It is not just about improving sections of the economy that have failed the poor. It is not about continually picking up people who have fallen through the system and placing them back into a market place that cast them aside in the first place.

"We call for a new approach that prevents exclusion from the outset and, like the owner of the vineyard in our Gospel reading, engages all people as dignified, active contributors to sustainable and inclusive growth.

"Inspired by the Gospel, we are all called to take part in the process of transforming our economy so that it better promotes a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable society."





## SAMARITAN'S PURSE – OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

*There are only **13** Mondays left until Christmas Day!* Operation Christmas Child hand delivers gift-filled shoe boxes to children who have nothing. Shoeboxes from Australia are sent to Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. While bringing great joy to a child in need the shoeboxes are also a tool for building relationships with communities where clean water, education and health improvement programs are needed.

The Catholic Women's League, Thirroul Branch, is combining with Austinmer Uniting Fellowship to fill shoeboxes to help build a future for needy children. We are asking please, for the support of parishioners for gifts and donations to fill boxes for boys and girls – ages 2 years to 14 years. **All items must be NEW and able to fit into shoe boxes.**

Required are: toothbrushes, face washers, cakes of soap, combs, hair clips and hair bands, coloured pencils, chalk, erasers, sharpeners, highlighters, small size colouring books and note pads, tennis balls (that bounce), skipping ropes (not heavy), marbles, soft toys, Match Box and Hot Wheels cars and trucks. **No toothpaste or liquids.**

On the weekends **THIS WEEKEND AND NEXT WEEKEND** there will be a tub for the collection in the porch of St Michael Church. Thank you in anticipation of your generosity.

## PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES

Thank you to all who contribute to our Parish, especially through the Planned Giving Scheme. The 2017-2018 Planned Giving Envelopes are now available near the door from the church into the sacristy. *If you would like to join, please contact the Parish Office.*

## RESOURCES TO CELEBRATE THE SEASON OF CREATION (1 SEP TO 4 OCT)

During September Pope Francis invites us to celebrate a 'Season of Creation'. This is a time for individuals and communities to "reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation." It is a "precious opportunity to renew our personal participation in our vocation as custodians of creation."

Joint Message of Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on the World Day of Prayer for Creation 2017 [Part 2]: Therefore, united by the same concern for God's creation and acknowledging the earth as a shared good, we fervently invite all people of goodwill to dedicate a time of prayer for the environment on 1 September. On this occasion, we wish to offer thanks to the loving Creator for the noble gift of creation and to pledge commitment to its care and preservation for the sake of future generations. After all, we know that we labour in vain if the Lord is not by our side (cf. Psalm 126-127), if prayer is not at the centre of our reflection and celebration. Indeed, an objective of our prayer is to change the way we perceive the world in order to change the way we relate to the world. The goal of our promise is to be courageous in embracing greater simplicity and solidarity in our lives.

We urgently appeal to those in positions of social and economic, as well as political and cultural, responsibility to hear the cry of the earth and to attend to the needs of the marginalized, but above all to respond to the plea of millions and support the consensus of the world for the healing of our wounded creation. We are convinced that there can be no sincere and enduring resolution to the challenge of the ecological crisis and climate change unless the response is concerted and collective, unless the responsibility is shared and accountable, unless we give priority to solidarity and service.



***Blessing of Animals is on Monday, 2 October at 9:30am ... ALL animals are welcome!***

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Wednesday 27 Sep** St Vincent de Paul, priest  
**Friday 29 Sep** Sts Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, archangels  
**Our Parish Feast Day!**  
**Saturday 30 Sep** St Jerome, priest, doctor  
**Saturday to Monday** Model Railway Exhibition all weekend  
**Liverpool** [www.amransw.asn.au/exhibition](http://www.amransw.asn.au/exhibition)  
**Monday 2 Oct 9:30am** Blessing of Animals



## THIRROUL SLSC – 110 YEARS YOUNG

Congratulations to all current and past members of Thirroul Surf Life-saving Club, formed in 1907. Surf lifesavers pay for the privilege of saving lives on our beaches. Thank you!



## 2016-2017 RESULTS ON OUR WATERWAYS

291 people drowned in Australia between 1 July 16 and 30 June 17. 74% were males. 32% of the drownings (93 people) occurred in NSW. This is an alarming figure: 266 drowned in 2015 and 282 in 2016. 1,392 men have drowned in the last decade, one in four involving alcohol. Approximately 685 non-drowning incidents resulting in hospitalisation occurred in 2016-2017.



## 2017-2018 SURF SEASON GETS UNDER WAY

This weekend marks the start of the surfing and swimming season. Please be safe on our beaches and **swim between the flags. No flags – no swim.**

### THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

**25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • YEAR A**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Isaiah 55:6-9

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** Philippians 1:20-24,27

**Gospel** Matthew 20:1-16

### NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

**26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • YEAR A**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Ezekiel 18:25-28

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** Philippians 2:1-11

**Gospel** Matthew 21:28-32

### 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

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* ❖ Andrew Granc ofm, Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • *Assisting*

325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive

4268 1910 4268 1976

PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

[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