



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



10 / 11 MARCH 2018
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT ✦ YEAR B
Prayer ✦ Fasting ✦ Almsgiving

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Not Just a Set of Rules

God's people are in exile. They are homeless, sleeping in the streets of our cities. They are hungry, not knowing where the next meal will come from. They are exploited because they are not male, or white, or European, or middle aged, or healthy. They are abused, tortured, locked up in detention and abandoned by society.

Who will be Cyrus, the liberator of God's people? Who will be Christ, saving God's people by joining them in their suffering? Who will bring light into this world of darkness? Who, if not the follower of Christ, will "turn hatred to love, conflict to peace, death to eternal life"?

We live in a world that is in need of salvation. God sends messengers to us such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and we scoff at these prophets.



There remains, however, the challenge of Christ, who "brought us to life when we were dead in sin, and who came not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved."

"The poor are an exiled and oppressed people whom God will rescue (Isaiah 51:21-23) as well as a faithful remnant who take refuge in God (Zephaniah 3:12-13). Throughout the Bible, material poverty is a misfortune and a cause of sadness. A constant biblical refrain is that the poor must be cared for and protected and that when they are exploited, God hears their cries (Proverbs 22:22-23)".

– US Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, 1986: 49

There is often a time in a long journey when we find the going hard. The enthusiasm with which we set out has faded, and there is still a long way to go. At this stage in our Lenten journey we may be inclined to identify with Nicodemus of today's gospel – not daring, as a well-known Pharisee, to consult Jesus openly, he came 'by night', weighed down in his heart, no doubt, by an interior darkness of confusion and embarrassment.

In our disappointment with our lives, the darkness seems so real and overwhelming. The first reading, telling the story of old Israel – a story of unfaithfulness, stubborn selfishness, destruction and exile – reminds us how often human history has been filled with darkness, right down to our own day. In the second reading from the letter to the Ephesians, Paul confidently confronts this darkness: for him reliance upon false and selfish securities is to embrace 'death'.

If we are inclined to feel demoralised at this point in our Lenten journey, we are invited by today's readings to find again the source of new energy and encouragement. In the midst of the deepest darkness the true Light shines! Old Israel finds that God's designs ✨ ✨

✠✠ will not be frustrated by their foolishness and selfishness – the conqueror of the Babylonians sends them back to rebuild the temple. Paul announces to those who are in danger of losing their way the astounding truth at the centre of our faith – God’s free gift to a lost world of new life in Christ: our redeemed humanity is God’s ‘work of art’, we each have our part to play in the realisation of God’s great designs.



But it is especially in climax of today’s readings, the words spoken to Nicodemus, by Jesus – the Light of the World – that all our darkness is dispelled! These words are perhaps the most quoted of the Gospels. Let us not take them for granted, but take them to heart and rejoice in the new life they bring: ‘God loved the world so much that he gave his own Son, so that everyone who believes in him ... may have eternal life’. A world weighed down by the darkness of failure and selfishness must know, Jesus says, that he came from the Father, not ‘to condemn’ but to bring reconciliation and life.

As we take our bearings in the middle of a long journey, we often find new purpose and energy. Reflecting at this point in our journey of Lent, on the burdens we carry, can bring us to find again, in a more personal way, the essential truth of our Christian faith, the great truth we are celebrate at the end of our journey.

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**
FOR A JUST FUTURE

Fourth Sunday of Lent 10/11 March 2018



Evangeline is strengthening Aboriginal culture, while making a living for herself and creating opportunities for her community. Featured in Project Compassion 2016, Evangeline was employed by the Caritas Australia supported Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation and quickly rose to the role of Senior Arts-worker.

Her work at Djilpin Arts has supported the organisation’s growth from a multi-media project to a multi-level contemporary arts and culture centre. An example of excellence in Indigenous tourism, it’s now a key employer for young people in the remote Northern Territory community of Beswick (Wugularr). This year, in 2018, Evangeline is busy guiding tourists, coordinating cultural activities and helping community members to practice and market their arts, such as weaving and jewellery-making.

Evangeline’s career has flourished and she has become an inspirational youth leader.

Evangeline says that Caritas Australia’s support for Djilpin Arts, through Project Compassion, is vital for all Wugularr’s young people. Although their families do their best to pass on knowledge, Elders are dying and she is keen to spearhead the preservation of culture and lore for future generations.

“It’s good for them to learn and to keep their culture strong,” Evangeline says.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2018 and help provide employment and training for First Australians, allowing them to remain on country and keep their culture alive, essential for a just future.

A Just Future starts with your support!

You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, or phoning **1800 024 413**.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE MEETING

Next **Tuesday, 13 March**, commencing 11:00am in the McCarthy Centre, Fr Ken Cafe ofm will be guest speaker. Light luncheon to follow. **All welcome.** Monthly meeting 1:30pm. *Thank you to our local CWL for their ministry!*

FASTING AND FEASTING

Lent is more than a time of **fasting**, it can also be a joyous season of **feasting**. Lent is a time to **fast** from certain things, and to **feast** on others.

Fast from judging others

Fast from emphasis on differences

Fast from apparent darkness

Fast from thoughts of illness

Fast from words that pollute

Fast from discontent

Fast from hostility

Fast from bitterness

Fast from self-concern

Fast from anger

Fast from pessimism

Fast from worry

Fast from personal anxiety

Fast from discouragement

Fast from acts that tear down

Fast from complaining

Fast from negatives

Fast from unrelenting pleasures

Fast from thoughts that weaken

Fast from idle gossip

Fast from problems which overwhelm



Feast on the Christ dwelling in them

Feast on the unity of life

Feast on the reality of light

Feast on the healing power of God

Feast on words that purify

Feast on gratitude

Feast on peace

Feast on forgiveness

Feast on compassion for others

Feast on patience

Feast on optimism

Feast on Divine Providence

Feast on trust

Feast on hope

Feast on acts which build up

Feast on appreciation

Feast on affirmatives

Feast on unceasing prayer

Feast on promises that inspire

Feast on purposeful silence

Feast on prayer that undergirds

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

LAETARE SUNDAY ... "HALF-TIME" IN LENT

The term comes from the Latin Entrance Song which begins, *Laetare* Jerusalem. Rose coloured vestments may be worn. This Sunday heralds about the halfway point of Lent.

EASTER LITURGIES 2018

The **Easter Triduum** is the highpoint of the Church's entire liturgical year. It begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, continues with the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. **Please join us if you can.**

Mass of the Lord's Supper

Way of the Cross

Celebration of the Lord's Passion

Easter Vigil with adult baptisms

Easter Sunday Mass with infant baptisms

Holy Thursday, 29 March 7:30pm

Good Friday, 30 March 10:30am

Good Friday, 30 March 3:00pm

Holy Saturday, 31 March 7:00pm

Sunday, 1 April 8:00am

NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THE EASTER LITURGIES

Palms for Palm/Passion Sunday, 24/25 March

please bring them in (all sizes) by 10am on **Friday, 23 March**

Rosemary for Good Friday, 30 March: please bring them in

by **Thursday, 28 March**, cut into strips about 10cm long

Small plastic bottles for the Easter Water:

please bring them in by **Friday, 23 March**



RECONCILIATION RITE II

Tuesday, 20 March at 7:30pm at Thirroul. One great way to prepare for Easter.

CATHOLIC CARE RACE DAY

Kembla Grange, **Saturday, 24 March**. All proceeds to support our diocese's CatholicCare.

SWIM SAFELY

So far in Australia **this season 5,042 rescues** have been made! *Last week it was 4,873!*

ORDINATION OF BISHOP BRIAN ... CHECK IT OUT ...

If you didn't attend the ordination, or if you would like to relive the experience, the video is available to watch online at www.livestream.dow.org.au (the proceedings commence 4min 35sec into the video).

There are also over 500 photos of the ordination taken by the official photographers that can be viewed on Facebook at www.facebookphotos.dow.org.au, or if you don't have Facebook you can view them at www.photos.dow.org.au

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Fourth Sunday of Lent • Year B

1st Reading 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23

2nd Reading Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel John 3:14-21

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Fifth Sunday of Lent • Year B

1st Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34

2nd Reading Hebrews 5:7-9

Gospel John 12:20-33

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*

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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

Parish School of St Michael ☎ 4267 2560