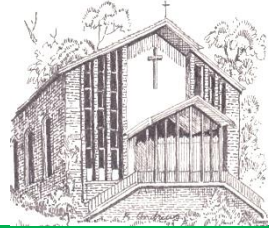




# Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



**17 / 18 AUGUST 2019**  
**20<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR C**  
**WELCOME TO THOSE BAPTISED**

## **THIS WEEK'S READINGS**

## ***Furious Love***

When you sit quietly on your porch, listening to the old earth receiving abundant rain, you hear the delicious drenching sounds of this enormous rain, splattering, slapping the ground. Is it friend or foe? For sure a storm would overcome us if we were silly enough to walk around in its violence. It is restrained mainly by the need to get its water just as fast as possible out of the skies and into the earth.

It has no intention of harming anything. But remember the many floods we have known and feel a twinge of fright. Well, the rain just ignores us. In fact, it redoubles its efforts. Its huge sound gets huger, like a swell of applause.

Rain like this carries goodness for the tough, tender earth. We know this. Comfort sighs deep within the storm's rough pounding, and the big tree branches bow their heads to receive cleansing and nourishment.

But why so furious a love, one that is so sweetly intended but so able to hurt? We do not have an answer. Maybe it is a "tough love," one which uses its fury to keep our planet in bloom.

Hopkins once addressed God as "father and fondler of heart thou hast wrung: Hast thy dark descending and most art merciful then." Well, Jesus is headed into such a darkness this Sunday. He is on his way to Jerusalem.

He loves Jerusalem and its people and he wants to shower abundance upon them. But he knows with increasing certainty that they will put him, not merely down a cistern, and not just outside Jerusalem's gates and walls, but right straight into the jaws of death. "It is a baptism," he says, and he wants it. He shouts to his disciples that he has come to set the earth on fire—just like the blazing lightning in a storm. "What stress I am under until it is completed!" he says in the Gospel.

Is Jesus the storm or is he the stormed upon?

Both. He is filled with the Spirit of God and says he cannot wait to let it flow. But he must let it flow upon him as a pounding downpour! He will not run away. Sunday he will proceed into a continuous storm that has by no means reached its apex. No wonder he is distraught. Because, you see, love is not just sweetness and light. It is the dark and pounding rain as well.

In the first reading, Jeremiah is literally "stuck in the mud." He had prophesied too truly and too many times. They threw him into an empty cistern with just enough mud for him to sink into. How could he prophesy from the midst of mud?



✠✠ And how could Jesus speak God's Word from a criminal's cross?

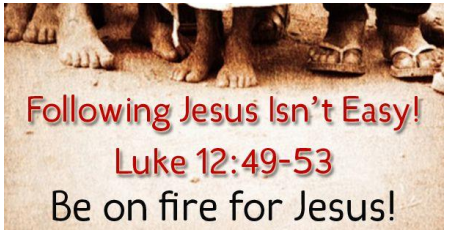
Yet each one does.

No doubt Luke knows that his readers would be startled by today's reading: 'Do you suppose I bring peace. No, I tell you, but rather division'. But he sees these statements of Jesus as important for the Church community of his time, that was facing great difficulties: not only from persecution on the part of outsiders, but also from internal disputes and divisions that sometimes ended up in the civil court, disputes that divided the Christian community itself and even the families that belonged to it. Such a situation calls for stern measures.

The whole story of the Scriptures leaves us in no doubt that evil, or 'sin', is real. God's designs for the human family have been continually frustrated by selfishness and destructiveness – sometimes motivated by the evil in human hearts; sometimes more an expression of ignorance and foolishness, but destructive nonetheless. Jesus did not come to provoke dissent; but the decision to live by the ways of God, that was essential to the message he preached, inevitably led to disagreements. If selfishness and destructiveness are to have their way unchallenged, the peace Christ came to bring – as a foretaste of the final 'kingdom' – will never become a reality.

It is important – in a moment of history marked by an increase of violence that is often motivated by religious differences – to understand the paradox involved in these startling words of Jesus. Luke has already made it clear that Jesus came to bring peace – rebuking the brothers who called down vengeance on the unfriendly Samaritans (9:55); proclaiming the demands of his New Commandment: 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you' and you will be true children of the Father who 'is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked' (6:27-35). The very words Luke quotes invite us to understand the paradoxical truth of what he is saying. The 'fire' he brings can symbolise destruction or purification. When we recall Luke's account of the message preached by John the Baptist, that the one who came after him would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire' (3:16), and we link this with reference to the ordeal that awaits him in Jerusalem as a 'baptism', we can conclude that his is a purifying fire. His standing up to the forces of violence and destructiveness in opposition to him are to be a healing and reconciliation for a world unable to overcome its divisions and antagonisms. The true disciples of Jesus have understood the paradox: '*God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself*' (2 Corinthians 5:19); '*For he is the peace between us*' (Ephesians 2:14); '*a peace the world cannot give, that is my gift to you*' (John 14:27).

When we know the challenge to having to oppose the forces of destructiveness, we have the example of the Saviour's courage, as he pressed on to Jerusalem, and 'endured the cross, for the sake of the joy which was still in the future.



## RETIRING FROM OUR LOCAL VINNIES



Thank you to **Ron Buchan** and **Bob Ascoli**, both of whom have recently retired as members of our local Conference of St Vincent de Paul. **Ron** had been a member for **17 years** including 4 years as President. **Bob** had been a member for 11 years, serving as treasurer and secretary during that time. Thank you to Ron and Bob for your ministry in our parish and beyond. Currently our Vinnies Conference has **12** members.



## WELCOME TO THOSE BAPTISED



Welcome to those baptised in our Parish this weekend: **SIENNA DAVIS** and **LOUIS FAIRBAIRN**. **Congratulations** and thank you to their parents, godparents and families for bringing their children to our Parish for baptism.

Next Baptisms in our Parish will be during the weekend Masses on **21/22 September**. If you want your infant daughter or son baptised on 21/22 September, at least one parent needs to attend the Baptism Preparation Class which will be held at **7:15pm** on **Thursday, 29 August**. Baptism enrolment forms are obtainable from the Parish Office. Please note, just for this year there will be no baptisms during October.

## CONGRATULATIONS ON 50 YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE

**Congratulations** to **Chris and Brian Cummins**, who on **16 August** celebrated **Fifty Years of Married Life**. Last weekend they were presented with a Blessing from Pope Francis. **Congratulations**, **Chris and Brian**, and thank you for your vocation and service.



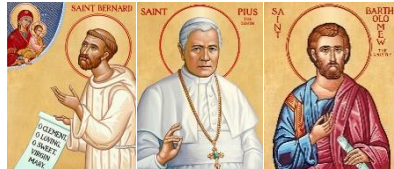
## MAKING OUR PARISH EVEN GREATER

Well, we've had a new coat of paint, now to go deeper to enliven our faith and our parish community. The Parish Pastoral Council has reviewed and summarised the ideas for renewal suggested by focus groups and individuals during the Plenary Council discussion. Many of the suggestions could be initiated at our local level. The Pastoral Council invites all parishioners to consider carefully the checklists handed out with the Bulletin over this weekend. The checklists will also be available on our Parish website. We urge each of you to tick the activities you'd like to see happen and suggest any others. It would be helpful if you would also nominate your **TOP THREE** suggestions, by numbering them, **1, 2 and 3**. Please return the checklists by **next weekend, 24/25 August**. Thank you all!

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

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

**Tuesday** 20 Aug St Bernard, abbot, doctor  
**Wednesday** 21 Aug St Pius X, pope  
**Thursday** 22 Aug Queenship of Mary  
**Saturday** 24 Aug St Bartholomew, apostle



## HEARING LOOP IN THE CHURCH

The hearing loop in the church has “packed it in”. A replacement has been ordered and will take at least two weeks to arrive and install. Apologies for the inconvenience, and thank you to parishioners who mentioned the problem.



## SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – 27 AUGUST

Invites you to a discussion on: **Reflections Beyond the Black Stump**. Speaker: **Chris Clerke**. Chris is a retired Anglican Minister. He grew up in Gynea, Caringbah and Miranda. From 1958-65 he worked in the Commonwealth Bank. He then studied at Moore Theological College from 1965-69. Chris was the assistant Minister in Neutral Bay and Hunters Hill Anglican Parishes from 1969-72. He gained his private pilot's licence in 1973. He was the remote area Minister with Anglican Bush Church Aid Society in 1972-86, working in Menindee, Wilcannia, White Cliffs, Ivanhoe, Pooncarie (NSW) 1972-77, and Leigh Creek, Blinman, Copley, Maree, Oodnadatta (SA) 1977-84. Chris was then seconded to United Aborigines Mission, Gnowangerup Training Centre (WA) 1985-86. He was the Anglican Parish Minister for Botany/Mascot/Eastlakes from 1987-93 and Anglican Parish Minister for Marrickville in 1993-2006. Chris retired to Fairy Meadow in 2006.

Venue: Woonona Bulli RSL Club, 455-459 Princes Highway, Woonona 2517, (corner of Princes Highway & Nicholson Road Enter off Nicholson Road), on **Tuesday, 27 August, 7:30pm – 9:00pm. All Welcome.** Please come and join in the conversation!

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

**20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Jeremiah 38:4-6  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** Hebrews 12:1-4  
**Gospel** Luke 12:49-53

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

**21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Isaiah 66:18-21  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** Hebrews 12:5-7  
**Gospel** Luke 13:22-30

### 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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 ☎ 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