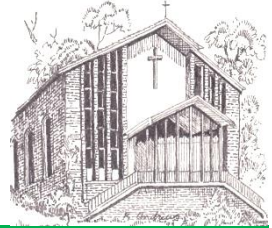




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



24 / 25 AUGUST 2019
21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR C
FIRST PENANCE AND COMMUNION ENROLMENT

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Heaven's Gate

Jesus tells two parables about someone asking a favour at a late hour. They teach us a lot. Maybe you remember the first one, which Jesus told two weeks ago. He said there was a man knocking on a friend's door at midnight, wanting to borrow some bread. The friend yelled back, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything."

But he does. Jesus says: "I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence."

Jesus interpreted as follows: "I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Doesn't it feel good knowing that constant prayer will get the door opened?

Well, hold back that feeling for a while. Look at this Sunday's Gospel. Here again someone is knocking on the door late at night, but receives nothing. The master of the house says, "I do not know where you are from."

The one(s) knocking reply: "But we ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets."

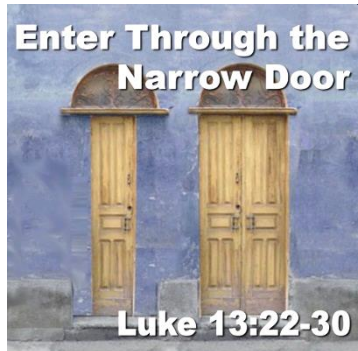
Look carefully at those words: The askers are mere casual acquaintances, if that. Something like this: we liked what you did, and now we want more!

The master says, "I do not know where you come from; go away from me, all you evildoers!"

Ouch. What about "ask and you shall receive"? As if to rub it in, Jesus says, "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see the saved ones — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets — looking down from the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out!"

What is going on here? Is Jesus just in a bad mood? We know that he is "making his way to Jerusalem" when he tells this parable, walking straight into the crucifixion, and maybe he is just anxious.

Yet notice that, in his prior parable, even though the owner opens the door just to get the noise stopped, the interruption was being caused by a friend—even if a rude one—who would not stop asking for what he needed. That parable told us to keep asking God, ↗ ↘



our friend, for what we need, even though he may be a bit grumpy.

But in the parable for this Sunday, the people outside are not friends and in fact they have no relationship at all to the man in the house. The parable states that they knew about him only from parties and from the streets. They heard him preaching, but did nothing. They did not come to his house at a reasonable time and begin a friendship. No amount of midnight knocking will make up for it.

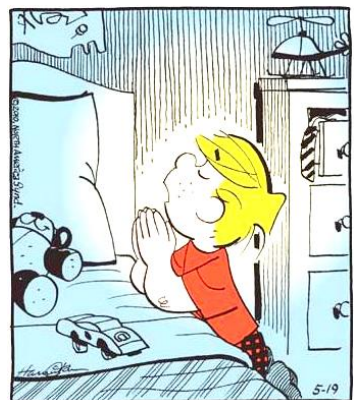
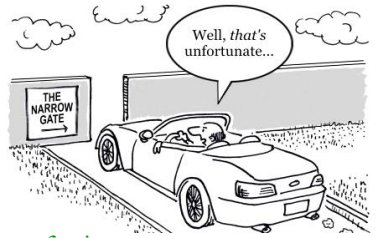
What is our lesson? That God keeps the door open long beyond what we would expect, all the way to the end. But if we are too busy partying and dancing, or just plain apathetic, then finally there is nothing he can do. He has to accept our decision to stay outside.

The message? Get to know God now. Do not delay till you get to heaven's gates and have nothing to show for yourself.

'Will there only be a few saved?' The response of Jesus to this question has often been interpreted in a pessimistic sense – the very opposite of the message of hope he brought to the world. Fortunately, today's biblical scholarship shows this interpretation to be mistaken. The question put to Jesus was much discussed by the rabbis. Their exclusive view had no place for the Gentiles, and their emphasis upon a strict observance of the prescriptions of the Law that was almost impossible for the common people, led them to conclude that the number of the saved would be rather small.

Jesus had no intention of entering into this discussion; in fact, his whole purpose was to lead them beyond the exclusiveness they took for granted. He called them to identify with the generous ways of God. Israel's calling was, in fact, for the sake of the other peoples of the world. They were to be a 'light to the nations', leading them to come to know the life-giving ways of the one true God. The response of Jesus is along these lines. The image of 'two ways' that can be taken in life is a common one. The 'narrow door' of his parable does not imply that salvation is available to only a few; it refers to the conversion called for if his hearers are to accept his teaching, and thus become the people God wants them to be. (Matthew has this same thought, comparing a 'narrow gate' into the city with the 'wide and spacious' one that most make use of, 7:13.) Similarly, the point of the parable of the 'locked door' is not exclusion, but the need to hurry in – the opportunity brought by Jesus is coming to an end. Only conversion from the constricted ways the nation has come to take for granted will give entrance to 'the master's house' – knowing Jesus, even sitting at table with him, without heeding his call to become the people God intended them to be will leave them out in the cold.

All this is confirmed by what follows. A people who have not been faithful heirs to what they have received from 'Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets' will find themselves 'outside'. But God's purposes will not be frustrated; the peoples of the world will 'take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God'. Clearly, the Church's choice of the first reading for today's liturgy is meant to confirm this optimistic interpretation. This passage, the final lines of the bible's collection of the Isaian writings, envisages all the peoples of the known world coming to Jerusalem to worship the true God. Jesus was calling Israel back to a sharing in the generous ways of God that was their true faith tradition. But, as he makes his way to Jerusalem, time is running out.



"I KNOW YOU DO MIRACLES. MR. WILSON SAYS IT'LL TAKE A BIG ONE TO SQUEEZE ME INTO HEAVEN."

FIRST PENANCE AND FIRST COMMUNION

The Sacraments of First Penance and Communion are celebrated when a child is in Year 2 or seven years old (or older). First Communion is given to children who have reached the age of reason, which is accepted as seven years old, that is, when a child is in Year 2 [Canons 913, 914]. Prior to receiving First Communion, children are to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance [Reconciliation]. In order to prepare for these Sacraments, there is a preparation program consisting of the following:

- **Enrolments close on Tuesday, 10 September 2019**
 - Enrolment Forms for 2019 may be downloaded from the **Parish website**
- **Parent Meeting is on Tuesday, 8 October at 7:30pm** [NOT 15 October]
... if you cannot make the meeting on 8 October, contact the Parish Office ASAP.
- Penance: Classes 1 and 2 are on Tuesdays, 22 and 29 October, 3:45pm to 5pm
- Sacrament of Penance is on Wednesday, 30 October at 7:00pm
- Eucharist: Classes 3 and 4 are on Tuesdays, 12 and 19 November, 3:45pm to 5pm
- First Communion is celebrated at either of the weekend Masses on ...
 - 30 November or 1 December ... or
 - 7/8 December ... or ... on any later weekend

NEXT MINISTRY ROSTERS

We are now about halfway through the current ministry roster (which runs for 16 weeks). Roster coordinators need time to prepare rosters. So, you can help them by letting them know if you will be away anytime during the next roster period which runs from **9 November 2019 to 23 February 2020**. Please let your Roster Coordinator know by 31 August.

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 are 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 **THIS weekend**. Thank you all!

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

NILS: VINNIES NO INTEREST LOAN SCHEME

Borrow up to \$1,500 for essential goods and services. Repay only what you borrow over 12 to 18 months. Vinnies No Interest Loans provide individuals and families on low income access to safe, fair and affordable lending. Once a loan application is approved, affordable repayments are set up over the course of 12 to 18 months. There are no credit checks. Vinnies No Interest Loans are based on trust and respect. If you are interested or know someone who would be ... contact the Vinnies Corrimal Conference for details and applications ... ☎ 4283 3730 or visit www.vinnies.org.au/NILS

1 SEPTEMBER IS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Tuesday 27 Aug St Monica, mother
Wednesday 28 Aug St Augustine, bishop, doctor
Thursday 29 Aug Death of John the Baptist
Sunday 1 Sep Fathers Day



HEARING LOOP IN THE CHURCH

The hearing loop in the church has “packed it in”. A replacement has been ordered and will arrive and be installed SOON. 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 Gympie, 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*

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

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C
1st Reading Sirach 3:17-20,28-29
2nd Reading Hebrews 12:18-19,22-24
Gospel Luke 14:1,7-14

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

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