



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



28 / 29 SEPTEMBER 2019
26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR C
SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Rags and Riches

A wise man came to a banquet, dirty and dressed in rags. The host protested his sloppy appearance and told him to go dress properly. Then he would be welcome.

So, the prophet went and bathed in the river and then dressed himself in the finest clothing he could borrow. Returning to the party he found himself warmly welcomed and even honoured.

But as the evening proceeded, someone noticed the man sitting in a corner. The host demanded to know why the man was putting all the expensive food, spoon by spoon, into the sleeve of his fine garment!

The man answered, "It was not me that you invited to the banquet; obviously it was my clothes. So, I am giving them what a guest should receive!"



Which is more important, the human person or the luxuries of life by which she or he is surrounded?

A second story, this one from the Gospel for Sunday.

A rich man went to hell. In life a poor beggar had lain at his door, starving, but he had ignored this tramp entirely. When both died, the poor man, surprisingly, was cradled in heaven in the bosom of Abraham, while the rich man was agonizing in flames. Fine food and fine clothes, his normal fare, did not save him.

The first reading has a description of the luxury which the rich man had preferred instead of his fellow human being. God used this story to describe the complacent people in Zion, who were "lying on beds of ivory. ... They eat lambs taken from the flock and calves from the stall! ... They drink wine from precious bowls and anoint themselves with the best oils."

God says they shall be the first to go into exile.

If you live in the "developed world"—in Australia, for example—the amount of coddling you receive every single day far surpasses anything described in these stories. Our population uses a tremendous portion of the world's resources. Are you and I helping to overlook the world's people as we "stretch on our couches" and gobble up our television shows? Are we, like the rich man, never glancing at the poor outside our door? In death, that man got exactly what his whole life had pointed to: a future empty of true relationship to anyone else!

The rich man cried out from hell, "Send Lazarus [the poor man] to dip the tip of his 

finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.” But father Abraham replied from heaven that the gulf was too wide. The rich man then at last thought to ask help for someone else: “send someone from the dead to warn my five brothers so this does not happen to them too!” Father Abraham answered, “If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.”

Listen to those words!

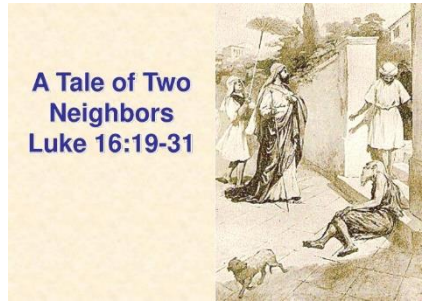
Someone at last has risen from the dead. Will you and I be persuaded finally to give people in need what they deserve, or will we continue, totally absorbed in how we are fed and dressed?

Luke returns to the teaching of Jesus concerning poverty and wealth. In today’s gospel reading, however, we are taken to a new level of understanding, as the issue is related to the very heart of the Good News brought by the Saviour. With the parable of Lazarus at the rich man’s gate, Jesus shows his skills as a storyteller, able to enthrall his listeners, as he challenges their complacency.

This story, we are told, is addressed ‘to the Pharisees’, many of whom were attached to their wealth, seeing it as a sign of God’s favour. The rich man in the story is not condemned for evil behaviour. Reading between the lines, we may well conclude that he thought he had treated Lazarus well – he had allowed him to remain at the gate in his destitution; and he was happy for him to have the leftovers of his feasting. The Pharisees are told, however, that when he repeatedly addressed Abraham as his ‘father’ he was rejected. On the other hand, Lazarus – whose name means ‘God helps’ – is received by Abraham as the guest of honour – at the eschatological [heavenly] banquet looked forward to by the prophets (‘in the bosom of Abraham’ indicates his reclining at table next to Abraham). The rich man, and those like him, are not accepted as true children of Abraham, because, in their complacent insensitivity, they have disregarded the teaching of the Law of Moses and the exhortations of God’s prophets – a teaching that Jesus makes his own.

Lazarus represents ‘the poor’, whose cry the Lord hears – the common people looked down upon by the Pharisees, people whose straitened circumstances made it next to impossible for them to carry out the many prescriptions seen by this well-to-do group as a true observance of the covenant. Because the power structures of their people left these ‘*anavim*’ [the poor ones] disenfranchised, they must stand before God in a trust and hope that kept alive the genuine faith traditions of Israel’s covenant with their God. Jesus himself comes from their midst; and his great mission will carry forward the ways of his Father, the God of the covenant – revealed from the first as the champion of the poor and oppressed. Those who follow him are from this background; and the communities they form will share their outlook (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:26-27: ‘Consider your own call, brothers and sisters, ... not many were powerful ... God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise’). Jesus appeals, in his parable, to the prophets, so often defenders of the powerless and mouthpieces of their faith – as in the stinging rebuke of Amos in today’s reading. It was the prophets who condemned the empty ritualism that was an escape from what the covenant really required – ‘Is this not the fast that pleases me ... sharing your food with the hungry and sheltering the homeless poor?’ (Isaiah 58:6-7).

The lesson of the parable, of course, extends far beyond the need for material assistance. Our neighbours have also emotional and spiritual needs, to which true followers of Jesus will respond in friendship and concern.



**A Tale of Two
Neighbors
Luke 16:19-31**

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020 – DISCERNMENT STAGE

This is a process of communal discernment in which we pray, reflect, share, think nationally, think locally and respond with proposals for action will take place across three of the Northern Suburbs Parishes over the next few months. You are invited to read about the national themes for discernment, prayerfully contemplate them, and then come to one or more of the sessions across our parishes. Each session has a cut-off date for registrations to allow the Animators time to distribute materials and prepare.

Session times and dates are below. How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is ☩:

	☩ 2:00pm ☩	☩ 7:30pm ☩	at	☩ Register by ☩
humble, healing, merciful	Saturday, 12 Oct	Monday, 14 Oct	Bulli	Sunday, 29 Sep
open to conversion, reform	Saturday, 26 Oct	Monday, 28 Oct	Thirroul	Sunday, 13 Oct
inclusive, participatory, synodal	Saturday, 9 Nov	Monday, 11 Nov	Corrimal	Sunday, 27 Oct
prayerful and Eucharistic	Saturday, 23 Nov	Monday, 25 Nov	Bulli	Sunday, 10 Nov
joyful, hope-filled, servant	Saturday, 30 Nov	Monday, 2 Dec	Thirroul	Sunday, 17 Nov

Sign-up sheets are in the church ... sign up to make practical suggestions.

GROWING GOOD MEN: FATHER & SON WEEKEND

Growing Good Men is an experientially-based program which encourages and enables fathers and sons to strengthen their relationship and to explore important issues of growing into manhood. It is designed for fathers and their adolescent sons ages 12 to 16 years (school Years 7 to 10). The next weekend is Friday, 25 October to Sunday, 27 October at Cataract Scout Park, Appin. Cost is \$350 for father and son. Brochures and registration forms are near the church entrances.

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

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI: FEAST DAY, FRIDAY, 4 OCTOBER

Saint Francis of Assisi abandoned a life of luxury for a life devoted to following the Gospel, after reportedly hearing the voice of God, who commanded him to rebuild the church of San Damiano and live in poverty. Born in Italy about 1181, Saint Francis was renowned for drinking and partying in his youth. After fighting in a battle between the towns of Assisi and Perugia, Francis was captured and imprisoned for ransom. He spent nearly a year in prison — awaiting his father's payment. Francis preached and taught a new kind of emotional and personal Christian religion that everyday people could understand. He even went so far as to preach to animals, which garnered criticism from some and earned him the nickname "God's fool." During his life he also developed a deep love of nature and animals and is known as the patron saint of the environment and animals. His life and words have had a lasting resonance with millions of followers across the globe.

BLESSING OF ANIMALS: MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 9:30AM

The annual Blessing of Animals will be held on the long weekend in October, at 9:30am on Monday, 7 October. All animals are welcome ... *Obstreperous camels must be on tight leashes. Leopards must be easily spotted. Chooks must purchase their eggs from IGA.* On 4 October, people all over the world will be celebrating the feast day of the Patron Saint of Animals, Saint Francis of Assisi. It's customary that in remembrance of St Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures, animals are led to churches for a special ceremony called the "Blessing of the Animals." Every year, millions of animals are blessed by priests/friars in a ceremony that touches the hearts of most of those in attendance.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Monday	30 Sep	St Jerome, priest, doctor
Tuesday	1 Oct	St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin, doctor
Wednesday	2 Oct	The Holy Guardian Angels
Friday	4 Oct	St Francis of Assisi + Anointing of the Sick
Weekend	5-7 Oct	Model Railway Exhibition at the Showground, Homebush



SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY: MAKING IT REAL

Our Bishops' Social Justice Statement for 2019–20 shares Pope Francis' call to us to **'boldly become citizens of the digital world'**, with the image of the Good Samaritan as our inspiration. Where do we encounter our neighbour? Increasingly it is online. *"The digital world is a public square, a meeting place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. Access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected."* – Pope Francis. The digital world can be a place of communication, encounter and solidarity, or a place of hatred, sexual objectification, exploitation and bullying. With essential services increasingly moving online, digital inclusion has become a matter of human rights. Social media platforms may seem like free and neutral technology, but their core business is to sell advertising and maximise profits. Extreme positions, fake news and conspiracy theories sell, but they are at odds with human solidarity. These are not just technical problems. They are primarily moral and social problems. We are called to make the friendship of the Good Samaritan real in this virtual world. **The call to everyone:** make your online presence one of dignity and respect; be present to others in the real and virtual worlds; take care of yourself and others online. **The call to communities:** promote digital literacy; make sure that everyone is included in the digital world; be places that make the virtual real. **The call on political and business leaders:** protect the personal data of citizens; ensure transparency and accountability online; guarantee truth and trustworthiness.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C
1st Reading Amos 6:1,4-7
2nd Reading 1 Timothy 6:11-16
Gospel Luke 16:19-31

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C
1st Reading Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4
2nd Reading 2 Timothy 1:6-8,13-14
Gospel Luke 17:5-9

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
Anointing of the Sick 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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📧 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