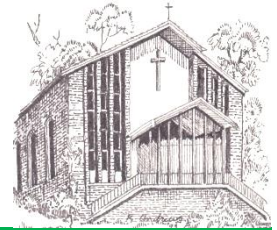




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



5 / 6 OCTOBER 2019
27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR C
BLESSING OF ANIMALS – MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Believe It

Faith. What is faith?

“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” So says the Letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews 11:1).

Do you have any doubt that various cities around the world exist, even though you have not actually walked in them? Moscow, Katmandu, Tokyo? And, can you make plans for dinner with a friend if you suspect that she or he is just a figment of your imagination? No. So, you have a conviction of things (or persons) not seen. You have faith.



This is a first answer, a ground level meaning of the word faith, a simple one. We can say “God exists,” but others might reply, “so what? I believe my spleen exists, but so what?” So, maybe there is more than a simple belief that “God exists.”

That “more” might mean relationship.

You have assurance that a friend will be loyal to you, will be true to the promise contained in friendship. You have faith that your relationship with your friend will not expire.

This is a higher level of faith.

It includes doubt as well. There are moments when it feels like a trusted friend has turned away from you. Such moments are terrible. Some people avoid close relationships altogether just for fear of this kind of a betrayal!

Understandable as such fear is, all of us need gradually and prudently to open ourselves up to deeper friendships. We need and want to love and be loved and it takes time to learn how. Hurt does not have to mean cancellation.

We see a third level of faith in the first reading. The prophet Habakkuk witnesses a lot of harm and speaks to God with great emotion. “O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise.”

Maybe Habakkuk did not know that hurt can be part of a good relationship. He demands to know how the Lord could be so unmoved. Surprisingly, God answers, in a lengthy and encouraging reply. “There is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay.”

Reassuring.

However, the stumbling block in this level is “wait for it.” God will make things better but not yet. Our insides scream “Not yet! What are you talking about? Why don’t you help us right now? Why are you delaying and giving suffering such a feast?”



✠✠ The apostles say roughly the same thing to Jesus in the Gospel: “Increase our faith!”

What is the Lord’s answer? It surely seems like delay, delay, delay.

But, in truth, God is using delay as a way of increasing our faith.

What if we are not yet ready for the depth of God’s answers? What if we are not quite ready for true relationship? God brings us along until we become ready for more.

According to Jesus it does not matter how much faith you have, a carload or a teaspoonful. Stay in there and the remainder will come, he says.

The teaching of Jesus in today’s gospel, in response to the plea of the apostles, has an important lesson for all Christians. It would be unfortunate if the comparisons he uses – very strange to our ears – got in the way, as we listen to him. Black and white affirmations and vivid images were taken for granted by the cultural tradition in which Jesus shared. Perhaps he was near a mulberry tree as

he spoke. That a mulberry bush, a fair-sized tree with an extensive root system familiar to his audience, should suddenly be re-established in the sea, was clearly an impossibility in the world of ordinary experience. But the point Jesus is making is that those who have ‘faith’ will know things that are impossible, except to God.

The notion of faith with which we are most familiar – knowing, through the authority of God, truths that would otherwise be beyond our grasp – is sound as far as it goes, but incomplete when compared with what the Scriptures tell us about God’s gift of faith. The ‘faith’ that Jesus constantly referred to in the gospels was an openness to the coming of God in the miraculous signs he worked. God has been revealed, as the Scriptures constantly remind us, in the ‘great things’ God has done. The eternal Son was sent by the Father to bring about the final achievement of all. He ‘must suffer’ and ‘rise again’ he tells his companions as they press forward to Jerusalem; he looks forward to his ‘hour’, John’s gospel tells us. Though the mission of Jesus meets with resistance, and his followers are told they must expect the same, ‘faith’ will be their strength – the openness that recognizes – owns, finds new life in – what God has done for the world in the Saviour’s Paschal Mystery.

Now the link with the other comparison recalled by Luke in this passage becomes clear. This comparison leaves us uncomfortable, because it refers to the relationship between master and slave that was taken for granted in the world that produced the gospels. Jesus is not approving this system, but he draws a comparison with it to bring out the nature of the relationship with the Lord that the disciple who lives by faith should have. Like the apostles, we are all sent out – given a share in the Saviour’s own mission and what God achieves through him. We are reminded, however, that we are no more than God’s instruments – whatever has lasting worth for the final kingdom is all God’s work. This applies to us all; but it has an obvious importance for those who are called to serve within the Christian community. In the reading from the letter to Timothy, those who have such roles are told, therefore, to ‘rely on the power of God’ and ‘the help of the Holy Spirit’.

The final words of Habakkuk, ‘the righteous person lives by their faith’, had great influence in Christian thought. Paul linked his fundamental principle, ‘we are justified by faith’, with this text – in his dispute with those who wanted to impose on all the observance of the old Law. Clearly, Paul’s principle expresses the mind of Jesus – faith is God’s gift, through which we own the new life brought to the world by the Saviour.



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

The annual Blessing of Animals will be held on THIS weekend, at 9:30am on Monday, 7 October. All animals are welcome ... *Obstreperous camels must be on tight leashes. Leopards must be easily spotted. Snakes must have their own pits to hiss in.* On 4 October, people all over the world celebrate the feast day of the Patron Saint of Animals, Saint Francis of Assisi. It is 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. **All animals and their carers are welcome on Monday, 7 October at 9:30am!**



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	closed
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**

KEN AWAY FOR CANON LAW WORK

In September 2018, Ken was elected for three years as President of the Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand. Once during that time, Ken has to attend the Canon Law Society Conventions in the United States and in Canada. This year, Ken will be attending the US Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and then to Québec City, Canada for the Canadian Convention. Ken will be away 9 to 30 October. **Thank you to Monsignor David O'Brien** and to **Andrew Granc ofm** who will be filling in for Ken during that time. The Canon Law Society of Aus and NZ has 216 members from twenty countries!

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Weekend 5-7 Oct Model Railway Exhibition at the **Showground, Homebush**
Monday 7 Oct Our Lady of the Rosary
9:30am, Blessing of the Animals – all animals welcome!
Tuesday 8 Oct 7:30pm, Parent Information Evening 1st Penance & Communion

SURFING SEASON HAS BEGUN

Our surfing season began last weekend and runs until 26 April 2020! **Please be safe on our beaches and waterways.** So far, since 1 July, there have already been **74** rescues!

In the year 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, in Australia there were **122 coastal/ocean drowning deaths:** 87% were male and 13% female; 58% were at the beach, 18% on rocks or cliffs, 15% were offshore; 42% occurred at least 5km from a lifesaving service.

10,176 rescues [4,710 in NSW] were performed by some of the **50,534** proficient surf lifesavers from the **314** surf lifesaving clubs in Australia, who completed **1,379,056 volunteer hours** last season. 61% are male and 39% female. **SWIM BETWEEN THE FLAGS.**



OUT OF ASHES: AFTER HELL IN JAPAN

In the aftermath of Hiroshima's atomic bombing on 6 August 1945, there was no meaningful medical presence for weeks. At the time, the future Jesuit Superior General, Fr Pedro Arrupe, was novice master at Nagatsuka, just 3km from the epicentre. Arrupe had been a top medical student when, on the eve of his final exams, he was called to the priesthood. So, on the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, 6 August 1945, Arrupe transformed the Nagatsuka novitiate into an emergency hospital. One hundred and fifty victims were initially "admitted", of whom 148 survived.

THIS 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

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year C

1st Reading 2 Kings 5:14-17

2nd Reading 2 Timothy 2:8-13

Gospel Luke 17:11-19

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