



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



1/2 MAY 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE FIFTY DAYS OF EASTER ✦ YEAR B
DAYS 28/29 OF THE FIFTY DAYS OF EASTER

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Be Fruitful and Multiply

The first command God gave to human beings was “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). In the gospel reading, there is a kind of reiteration of this command. At any rate, the text describes the bad things that happen to people who are not fruitful.

In Genesis, the fruitfulness has to do with reproduction. It comes from union between a man and a woman, and it multiplies God's image in the production of children.

The fruitfulness at issue in the gospel comes from connection too, but connection with Christ. It comes when Christ is in you, and you are in him.

This reciprocal being-in is a funny state of affairs, isn't it? You can put a bowl in a box, or you can put a box in a bowl. But the box can't be in the bowl when the bowl is in the box!

Boxes and bowls can't manage reciprocal being-in. But persons can, because of love. Love unites you and your beloved without either one of you losing your identity. The union of love is not a fusing; it is a mutual indwelling.

In the gospel reading, Christ says that he always remains in his own. So, if you yield to Christ in love, you have what is needed for the mutual indwelling of love. You are your beloved's, and he is yours. (Song of Songs 6:3) There is joy in this love, because Christ is so much with you that he is in you. There is peace, too, because there is rest for the heart in having your beloved with you.

Your sins and the storms of life retain their power to afflict you. But you can more easily put up with things, even your own troublesome self, if your beloved is yours and you are his.

In that mutual indwelling, then, there is love, joy, peace, patience and longsuffering. But these very things are fruits of the Holy Spirit. When they grow in you, you are bearing fruit. Finally, consider: is there a more powerful witness than a life lived in love, joy, peace, patience and long-suffering? If you have the fruits of the Holy Spirit in you, you will multiply God's image in others too.

And so, by remaining in Christ, you are doing what will make you be fruitful and multiply.

Today's gospel reading, 'I am the true vine', brings us another of John's 'I AM' meditations. It takes up an important theme developed by the Old Testament prophets and one of the psalms: the old Israel was God's 'vine', lovingly planted and tended; but it brought forth only bitter fruits. In Jesus, however, this divine project has been taken up again by 



✠✠ the Father – coming forth from his Paschal Mystery, he is the true vine which will bear fruits which give eternal ‘glory’ to the Father.

Thus, our liturgy carries forward our Easter reflection upon what the Saviour’s Paschal Mystery means in our lives and in the life of the Church. One of the central themes of the New Testament is the solidarity we have with Christ through what was achieved by God through his death and resurrection. For Paul we live ‘in Christ’, we are ‘limbs of his body’. John often repeats that Christ (and his Father) now ‘dwell’ or ‘make their home’ in us.

We could easily overlook the fact that what comes through clearly in this gospel is the call to fruitfulness – sharing with the Son all that makes him the ‘true’ vine, beloved of the Father who has given him over for the sake of the whole world. The vine’s branches are ‘pruned’ by the Father by means of ‘the word’ – a clear call to nourish our Resurrection life through a knowledge and love of the Scriptures. The fruits we will bear are primarily the witness we must give to others, and the outreach through which we are called to embody the Saviour’s presence in our world. Israel was called to be ‘a light to the nations’ but failed; the New Israel, brought into existence through our solidarity with Jesus in his Paschal Mystery, must fulfil that great mission – an apparently impossible task, until we recall that what is at stake is the Father’s great design in creation, and we recognise that all that is to be achieved derives from the One who is ‘the true vine’.

In the first reading from Acts of Apostles, the story of the apostolic Church, energised by its Resurrection faith, continues. The conversion of Paul – through his meeting with the Risen Lord – is a great turning point in this story. As now, the difficulties to be overcome, if the community of believers was to bear life-giving fruits, were both internal and external. It was not easy to accept and trust as a brother the man who had been so violent against them. And the message of life – brought to a lost world – was hated by those who preferred darkness to the light.

If the fruits of life ‘in the vine’ stressed in the gospel are the Church’s effective witness and outreach, the ‘discipleship’ referred to at the end of the gospel’s teaching brings great personal blessings to each believer. The reading from John’s letter spells out some of them: learning from the Saviour what authentic ‘love’ is; finding the trust in God which overcomes all our deepest fears and self-doubts; the unspeakable privilege of the divine indwelling; and finally, the gift of God’s own Spirit.



SURFING SEASON HAS ENDED

Since 1 July 2020, there have been **4,767** rescues [*last week 4,704*] completed by surf lifesavers, and **16,652** first aid treatments [*last week 16,401*] have been performed. There are no longer flags on the beaches [*except North Wollongong*]. Swim with care – NEVER swim alone – remember “White is right ... green is mean” ... where the waves are breaking is safer ... where the waves are not breaking, there’s a rip.

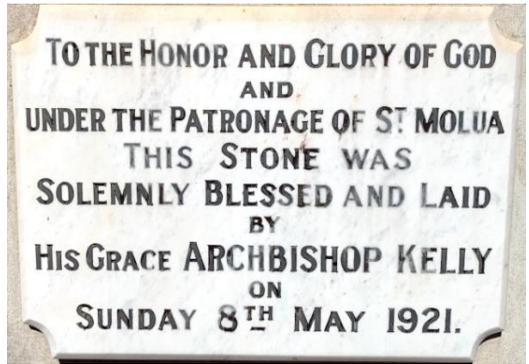


VINNIES NSW FLOOD APPEAL

Thank you for your generosity in giving to the NSW Vinnies Flood Appeal: the total you have donated is – so far – a huge **\$2,955**. You can still donate at the church or Parish Office – special envelopes are available for your generous donations. **Thank you!**

CENTENARY OF OUR PARISH CHURCH

On Sunday, 8 May 1921, the foundation stone of our parish church was blessed and consecrated to St Molua and St Michael by Archbishop Kelly of Sydney. The original name suggested was St Kevin but this was rejected by Archbishop Kelly as there was already a St Kevin's in Sydney at Eastwood. Fr Power, then parish priest of Bulli, suggested St Molua, an Irish monk and abbot of the 6th century. The stone was blessed under both names, Molua and Michael, but only St Molua appears on the foundation stone.



St Michael is well-known as one of the archangels but not so St Molua. Further information about St Molua can be found online at websites such as www.libraryireland.com and <http://omniumsanctorumhiberniae.blogspot.com> – there are also three St Molua churches at Belfast, Ardagh, Co. Limerick and Killaloe, Co. Kilkenny.

To mark the centenary, Bishop Brian will join us to celebrate the **Saturday** evening Mass on **15 May 2021**, and **afterwards**, there will be a gathering in the McCarthy Centre. Due to Covid regulations we cannot have a bring-a-plate/buffet/BBQ meal, so we are asking people attending to BYO picnic/food along. Tea/coffee/cordial will be provided, BYO other liquid refreshment. Sanitiser and QR code check-in will be provided. We also need to keep a check on numbers so if **planning to attend would you please register by email or phone with the parish office** with family name, contact number and number coming.

Please note that this is only the centenary of the church which, at first, remained as part of Bulli Parish. The Parish of Thirroul was not established until October 1923, so the big celebration will be held in October 2023. If you have any photos of or stories about the church, we would be very happy to hear from you.

Judy Bull, on behalf of St Michael's Parish Pastoral Council.

PEACE – SHALOM – שלום

Shalom is a Hebrew word meaning *peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare and tranquility* and can be used idiomatically to mean both *hello* and *goodbye*. One of the most noticeable things in the Scriptures is the development of the theme of peace. In the beginning, “peace” meant, essentially, happiness in all its aspects. The biblical notion was clearly a more positive reality than our modern idea of peace. But this peace was associated with certain conditions: it was the gift of a person (the king) and the result of a covenant. Just in so far as the “bearers of peace” failed in their duty or the Jews transgressed the covenant, so peace was jeopardized—but not for ever. God took the place of the kings and became the peacemaker in the person of God's messiah. As for the covenant which brought peace, it would be sealed again to produce a peace containing in itself the power of reconciliation. This outer peace would be joined to its essential complement: peace of heart and justice.

The framework within which the doctrine of peace in the New Testament was written is the same as that of the Old Testament. At first glance, its elements are the same. The Old and New Testaments used an identical form of greeting in wishing peace. The king is still the one who, in the name of God, dispenses peace.

However, the difference between the two is profound. In the New Testament, peace has lost its material nature. In the one word are included the *life* of the Christian and the ☞ ☜

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Weekend	1/2 May	Blessing of Wedding Anniversaries and May Birthdays
Monday	3 May	Saints Philip and James, apostles
Thursday	6 May	Peter Hill, Director of Catholic Schools visiting our Parish
Friday	7 May	Anointing of the Sick during 9:30am Mass
Weekend	8/9 May	Blessing of Mothers
Saturday	8 May	Dinner at the (Bowling) Club after the 5:30pm Mass
Monday	10 May	Enrolments for Confirmation 2021 close today
Saturday	15 May	Centenary of the Church 5:30pm Mass with Bishop Brian After Mass reception in the McCarthy Centre

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK
TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA
drop items in the special white plastic bin if you come to Mass**

✚✚ *good things* of the new Kingdom – Reign of God. More than that, it takes on the aspect of reconciliation: between Jews and others; between God and humanity. This new meaning has a dramatic aspect caused by the blood of Christ. And finally, this peace is spiritual enough to withstand wars and difficulties. The Christian must bear witness to this peace with God by bringing peace to others.

Shalom is the greeting of the risen Christ (Messiah) to his disciples. Henceforth, peace is equated with the good things of the Kingdom which Christ, as the new King, shares with his own: his priestly, prophetic and shepherd powers.

Peace is only possible because we have a “God of peace”, that is, a God who saves and communicates God’s life to us. Christian peace goes to the extent of reconciliation with one’s enemies, leaving vengeance to God, who, no doubt, *knows a good deal more about peace.*

THIS Sunday’s Readings *on our website*

Fifth Sunday of Easter • Year **B**

1 st Reading	Acts 9:26-31
2 nd Reading	1 John 3:18-24
Gospel	John 15:1-8

NEXT Sunday’s Readings *on our website*

Sixth Sunday of Easter • Year **B**

1 st Reading	Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48
2 nd Reading	1 John 4:7-10
Gospel	John 15:9-17

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul

Saturday – 5:30pm • Sunday – 8:00am

**Restricted numbers apply ... however, there is
no need to register beforehand with the Parish Office**

LITURGIES THIS WEEK

Thirroul	Monday	—
	Tuesday	17:30
	Wednesday	09:00
	Thursday	09:00
	Friday	09:30

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

📧 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

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📠 4268 1976

📧 thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish Office

Hours

Magda Pires – Parish Secretary

Tuesday, Wednesday 9:00am–3:30pm Friday 9:30am–2:30pm



www.thirroulcatholic.org.au

Parish School of St Michael ☎ 4267 2560