



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
23/24 APRIL 2022
SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER + YEAR C
HAPPY 50 DAYS OF EASTER

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Trust After Heartbreak

In the gospel reading, the risen Jesus appears to ten of his apostles. Thomas is missing. The ten are convinced. But when Thomas re-joins them after Jesus has vanished, Thomas is highly sceptical.

A week later, Jesus appears to all eleven of them and invites Thomas to make good on his sceptical challenge. Jesus tells him, Put your finger in my wounds and believe! And then, without so much as touching Jesus, Thomas believes.

Actually, then, all Thomas did was see Jesus and his wounds, and then he believed. But, of course, that is just what the other ten apostles did in the first appearance of Christ, when Thomas was absent.

So why didn't Christ make his first appearance to the apostles at a time when Thomas was there too? Why did Christ first appear when Thomas was absent? Why single Thomas out in this way?

Thomas had trusted Jesus and believed he was the Messiah. But then the Romans killed Jesus; and when they did, they also killed the hope in Jesus that Thomas had. How much Thomas trusted before the crucifixion can be understood by the way Thomas hardened his heart against trust in the aftermath. "The bigger they are, the harder they fall," we say. And the bigness of Thomas's heart and the greatness of his trust in Jesus can be seen by how hard Thomas fell when he thought his trust was betrayed.



Thomas thought he had made a fool of himself by believing in Jesus, and he was not going to let his heart be broken again. And so, when he heard the other apostles express their belief, he scoffed. In scoffing, Thomas protected himself against further heartbreak by turning his back on Jesus and all that Jesus meant to him.

And maybe that is why Jesus left Thomas out of his first appearance to the apostles. When heartbreak is so powerful, it can need space to breathe, to let its pain come to fruition. Maybe if Thomas had not been able to move all the way from heartbreak to scepticism, he would not have been able to move back to Jesus so powerfully either.

Without any more evidence than any of the other apostles had, Thomas says to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

Our Easter Triduum celebrations have once again come and gone. Participation in the liturgy has probably been a deeply moving and inspiring experience for many. But now life goes on as before, in a world that does not seem to have been changed. The words of the Preface, 'The joy of the resurrection renews the whole world', don't seem to ring true. As this mood overtakes us, let us recall that the apostles themselves did not find it easy to come to terms with what the Saviour's victory over death meant for them. They had looked forward to sharing with Jesus in his messianic triumph, but now their world seemed to go on as before. It is remarkable that all four gospels tell of the 'doubts' and 'hesitations' of the apostles as they came to faith in the Lord's Resurrection.

In today's gospel reading from John these doubts are expressed by Thomas – the stolid realist who objected at the Supper, 'We don't know where you are going; how can we know the way?'. Perhaps we shall find the way forward in the faith journey of this Easter season if we reflect upon Jesus' greeting of 'Peace', used twice when he came among the disciples on the evening of his resurrection day, and repeated when he returned to confirm the faith of doubting Thomas. As we look out on today's world, thoughts of the 'peace' the world yearns for are often in our minds. Many times we have been told that we can only be peacemakers if we are at peace in ourselves; and we know from the times we have experienced true peace, that peace is more than the absence of conflict – it is a positive coming together of all that matters in our lives.

Ultimately, the Risen Lord's gift to the world is the gift of true peace. So, in his first meeting with his disciples he points out the way that leads to the peace he will give to the human family – 'a peace the world cannot give, that is my gift to you' he had told them in John's account of the Supper. The peace Christ brings is found through faith, a faith that is alive to God's active presence in the world in Christ, and is open to learning that God's ways challenge our expectations. 'Happy (blessed with true peace) are those who have not seen and yet believe'. Through the gift of faith, we see beneath the surface of the lives we live and the events unfolding in our world, to accept the 'Lord and God' whose self-giving – forever displayed in the wounds of his risen body – invites us to trust that, in the end, beyond all our expectations, the whole of creation will be gathered into his peace. He announced the forgiveness of sins. Perhaps we balk at the theme of 'sin' featuring so prominently in this first encounter. 'Sin' is not a fashionable notion today: our 'liberated' culture finds it hard to accept the obvious fact that most of the problems of humanity are caused by the selfish abuse of freedom. It was the world's selfishness that caused his wounds; only his triumph will bring healing the world needs.

Though a new life-force is at work – 'Receive the Holy Spirit' – the world seems to go on as before. Things are not put right all at once, because God respects our human freedom, and calls us to play our part in the final glorious outcome: 'As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you'.

QUESTIONS ABOUT EASTER SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Acts 5:12-16

- ✚ “Great numbers of men and women were added to them. Thus, they even carried the sick out into the streets.” Where do you see that happening today? Do you see God’s love working in the medical workers and the people carrying the wounded in Ukraine?
- ✚ “They were all cured.” What are some signs and wonders of God’s healing love that you see today?

Second Reading Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

- ✚ Once, when John the Evangelist is “caught up in spirit,” Christ touches him and speaks to him. Are there others in history, “suffering for their faith,” who have received clear understanding and revelations? Can good things come from suffering?
- ✚ In this reading, John says he fell down “as though dead.” Christ says he himself “once was dead but now am alive forever.” He touched him and raised him up. Are you part of his “living forever”?

Gospel John 20:19-31

- ✚ Why do you think Jesus breathed on the disciples when he gave them the Holy Spirit? “The Lord God formed humans out of the clay of the ground and blew into their nostrils the breath of life ...” (Genesis 2:7). What effect did this gift have on the disciples’ fear? How about the Holy Spirit’s effect on your fear, in various aspects of your life? What do forgiveness of sin and resurrection have in common?
- ✚ Where do you think we can find wounded people today? How does Pope Francis say we become witnesses of mercy?

The peace of Jesus made them pass *from remorse to mission*. The peace of Jesus awakens mission. It entails not ease and comfort, but the challenge to break out of ourselves. The peace of Jesus frees from the self-absorption that paralyses; it shatters the bonds that keep the heart imprisoned. ...

Dear sister, dear brother, do you want proof that God has touched your life? See if you can stoop to bind the wounds of others. Today is the day to ask, “am I, who so often have received God’s peace, his mercy, merciful to others? Do I, who have so often been fed by the Body of Jesus, make any effort to relieve the hunger of the poor?” ... Having received mercy, let us now become merciful. For if love is only about us, faith becomes arid, barren and sentimental. Without others, faith becomes disembodied. Without works of mercy, it dies (cf. James 2:17).
– Pope Francis, 2nd Sunday of Easter, 11 April 2021

FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT 14–26 APRIL

Free public transport until 3:59am on Tuesday, 26 April – all Opal transport travel will be free on trains, buses, ferries, light rail (trams) and metro in Sydney, the Illawarra, Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Hunter Valley regions – with the exception of the two Airport stations, private ferries and “point-to-point transport services” (taxis, hire cars, mini buses). So, plan yourself a trip or two ... or three – it’s FREE!



SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION: ENROLMENTS CLOSE 9 MAY

Confirmation, one of the three Sacraments of Initiation, is celebrated in our Diocese for Year 6 students or older. Details of Confirmation this year, including an Enrolment Form, are on our Parish website: thirroulcatholic.org.au Click on **Sacraments** (on the left hand side), then on **Confirmation**. Enrolments close on **Monday, 9 May**.

FLOOD AND UKRAINE APPEALS – THANK YOU!

Thank you for your generosity over the last month. Totals have now been finalised.

VINNIES FLOOD APPEAL – TOTAL TO BE DONATED IS: **\$12,700**. THANK YOU!

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL – TOTAL TO BE DONATED IS: **\$9,500**. THANK YOU!

} **TOTAL \$22,200**

If you still wish to make a donation: please direct credit our Parish account, St Michael, BSB 066 711, Account Number 001788, and in the “Reference” indicate **FLOODS** or **UKRAINE**.

DEFIBRILLATOR UPDATE: AFTER MASSES ON THIS WEEKEND

AED = Automated external defibrillator. An AED may save your life during cardiac arrest. If you’ve ever watched a TV medical drama, chances are you’ve seen someone shocked back to life by a doctor who yells, “Clear” before delivering a jolt of electricity to the person’s chest to get the heart beating again. The machine being used is called a defibrillator, and its use isn’t limited to a hospital setting. Devices called automated external defibrillators (AEDs) can be used at home and in schools and are also found in a number of public places. AEDs are used to revive someone from sudden cardiac arrest. This usually occurs when a disruption in the heart’s electrical activity causes a dangerously fast heartbeat or a fast and irregular heartbeat. **Anyone can use an AED** – thanks to Thirroul Surf Lifesaving Club for providing training **THIS weekend** as to how to use an AED – no previous experience needed.





Caritas Australia would like to **THANK YOU** for supporting Project Compassion 2022. If you still have your Project Compassion box or set of envelopes at home, please bring them back next week or visit lent.caritas.org.au and donate online.

Your generosity will empower the world's most vulnerable communities to grow stronger and lift themselves out of poverty.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **For All Future Generations**. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your Parish, by visiting lent.caritas.org.au, or by calling 1800 024 413.

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

ANZAC DAY SERVICES AND MASS

ANZAC Day is on Monday, 25 April. There are special **dawn services** at **Thirroul, Austinmer and Coledale Cenotaphs** – they are at **06:00 [6am]** and are followed by breakfast at Club Thirroul or the Coledale RSL Club. The special **ANZAC Day Mass** will be held at **08:30** at our Parish Church and will include the special ANZAC Day prayers and memorial. All are welcome. Veterans and their families are encouraged to wear medals.

ACTS OF APOSTLES

During the Fifty Days of the Easter Season, both on the Sundays and weekdays, the first Scripture readings are from “The Acts of the Apostles” – or, rather *Some Acts of Some Apostles*.

In his introduction to his two-volume work [“The Gospel according to Luke” and “The Acts of the Apostles”] Luke writes: ‘After investigating everything carefully from the very first, I decided to write an orderly account so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed’ (Luke 1:3-4). In volume one he recounts the action of the Spirit of God in the ministry of Jesus. Here in his second volume, he recounts the continuing action of the risen Jesus in the life of the church.

Of course, Luke has his own perspective on the history of the early Christian communities. The fact that Acts was treasured, copied and distributed throughout the Christian world, tells us that Christians judged it to be inspired. Some scholars respect it as a profound theological work but distrust it as history. The more we know of the first century Hellenistic [Greek-speaking] world the better does Luke appear as a historian. Upon close examination claimed discrepancies between Acts and what we know of Paul from Paul’s own letters disappear and Luke’s work is revealed as a rich resource for our understanding of Paul from one of Paul’s collaborators. At the same time, it is important to realise that the centre of attention is not Paul or any other apostle. Luke never allows our attention to stray from gazing with wonder at what the Spirit of the risen Christ is doing in the world to continue Jesus’ mission of revealing God as a God of love who is constantly drawing people together, whatever their racial identity, into a community of love. This is a message we still need to hear.

The Acts of the Apostles is the second New Testament work composed by the individual responsible for the Gospel of Luke. It recounts the story of the genesis and spread of the early church, from the ascension of Jesus to the arrival of Paul in Rome. The title, which is not original, is misleading insofar as the book provides little information about the particular activities of the twelve apostles (apart from Peter). It is really *Some Acts of Some Apostles*.

The structure of the Acts can be separated into six sections:

1. The exalted Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit – Jesus’ ascension and all were filled with the Holy Spirit
2. Witnessing to Jesus in Jerusalem – the call to repent, ministry to Greek-speaking Christian Jews
3. The word spreads from Jerusalem to Caesarea – Paul’s conversion, Gentiles welcomed into the church
4. The Church in Antioch : the Wonders of God’s Grace – Jerusalem and a missionary expedition from Antioch
5. Proclaiming the Word from city to city – Macedonia and Achaia, Ephesus
6. Paul the prisoner: a witness to grace – prophetic witness to his people, to nations, then to Rome

Luke ends the Acts with Paul in Rome ‘proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness’ (Acts 28:31).

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK – AND BEYOND

Monday	25 Apr	ANZAC Day – dawn services 06:00 at Thirroul, Austinmer and Coledale 08:30 ANZAC Day Mass Isaiah 9:2-7 Ephesians 2:13-18 John 14:23-29
Tuesday	26 Apr	Saint Mark, evangelist 1 Peter 5:5-14 Mark 16:15-20 Schools resume for Term 2
Wednesday	27 Apr	Wednesday of the 2 nd Week of Easter Acts 5:17-26 John 3:16-21
Thursday	28 Apr	Saint Peter Chanel, priest, martyr Acts 5:27-33 John 3:31-26 7:15pm Meeting for May Baptisms
Friday	29 Apr	Saint Catherine of Siena, virgin, doctor Acts 5:34-42 John 6:1-15 10:30am Parish School ANZAC Day Service
Saturday	30 Apr	Saturday of the 2 nd Week of Easter Acts 6:1-7 John 6:16-21
Sunday	1 May	THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER ... <i>Scripture Readings are listed below</i> Blessing of May Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE ... TWO FRUIT SLAB CAKE

200g caster sugar; 2 eggs; 1 tsp vanilla bean paste; 150ml milk; 110g butter, melted; 150g almond meal; 120g self-raising flour, sifted; 700g canned two fruits, drain really well; 50g slivered almonds; 2 tbsp demerara (raw) sugar.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Grease and line a rectangular slice tin (27cm x 18cm approx.) with baking paper. In a large bowl whisk the caster sugar, eggs and vanilla together until the sugar has dissolved. Then mix in the butter and milk until well combined. Add the flour and almond meal and fold through with a spatula until a smooth batter has formed. Pour into the prepared tin. Scatter over fruit, slivered almonds and demerara sugar. Cook for 40-45 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Allow to cool completely in the tin before serving

If you have a favourite recipe that you are willing to share, please deliver or email it to the Parish Office or hand it in at Mass one day.

SURFING SEASON 2021-2022

Since 1 July 2021, there have been **4,675** rescues [last week 4,470] performed by Surf Lifesavers in Australia, and **14,216** first aids [last week 13,928]. The surfing season finishes this long weekend, on Monday, 25 April 2022. Beaches will not be patrolled by surf lifesavers or council lifeguards. Where waves are breaking is a safer place to swim. **Keep safe at the beach: download this app** <https://beachsafe.org.au/apps>



ILLAWARRA CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

LIVE LOCAL Catholic Youth Ministry Wollongong (CYMW) has arrived in the Illawarra! LIVE Local is a Regional Youth Group run by the CYMW and NET Team which runs every Friday night during school term from 7–9pm, at St Therese Parish school hall, West Wollongong. This regional youth group is for all parishes and is open to young people aged 13–17 who want to make new friends and grow in their faith. Come along for snacks, games, formation, prayer, and music. For more information, please contact our deanery youth group coordinator, Luke Vail at luke.vail@dow.org.au For more details on youth groups, visit <https://www.dow.org.au/cymw/>

THE CHOSEN – A TV SERIES ABOUT JESUS

... The Chosen is a new 'free to view', television program that creatively presents the life of Christ and his followers. The shows are of the highest quality and are receiving acclaim around the world across denominations. Go to watch.angelstudios.com/thechosen to watch.

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website	NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website	SUNDAY
2nd Sunday of Easter • Year C	3rd Sunday of Easter • Year C	MASS TIMES
1 st Reading Acts 5:12-16	1 st Reading Acts 5:27-32,40-41	Saturday 5:30pm
2 nd Reading Revelation 1:9-13,17-19	2 nd Reading Revelation 5:11-14	Sunday 8:00am
Gospel John 20:19-31	Gospel John 21:1-19	Saturday Mass recorded
Parish of St Michael – Thirroul	www.thirroulcatholic.org.au	WEEKDAY MASSES
<i>One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes</i>	325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive	Monday 8:30am
<i>Moving forward as a Parish Family</i>	PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515	Tuesday 5:30pm
Patrick Vaughan • <i>Parish Priest</i>	4268 1910 4268 1976	Wednesday 9:00am
Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • <i>Assisting</i>	thirroul@dow.org.au	Thursday 9:00am
Lauren Faulks • <i>Parish Secretary</i>	Parish School of St Michael	Friday 9:30am
Tues, Wed 9am–3:30pm; Fri 9:30am–2:30pm	4267 2560	<i>Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday</i>