

Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN

7 / 8 MAY 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER + YEAR C

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Love Your Enemies

In the first reading, Paul is preaching in Antioch, and things are not going well for him. His audience contradicts him and shouts violent abuse at him. They find Paul's Christianity an affront to their own religion, which they do not want to give up.

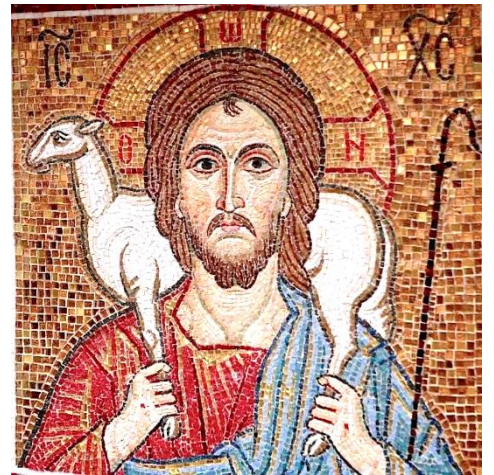
What would we expect Paul's response to be to these angry people in his audience? How about this?

Paul: "Oh, gosh! I see that I have offended you! I am so sorry! I want you to know that I do validate your point of view too. No doubt, we all believe in the same God! I wasn't for a moment trying to suggest that there is anything wrong about your religion! I do wish that you wouldn't call me names and shout at me when I am trying to talk to you, but it's OK if you feel you need to do so. I appreciate that I upset you, though I really didn't mean to do so."

But, of course, this is not what Paul says at all. By rejecting my preaching, he tells the angry people, you condemn yourselves and show yourselves unworthy of eternal life. This is a stern condemnation both of their religious views and of their rejection of Paul's preaching. What happened to meekness, to turning the other cheek, to love of your enemies?

Well, if your enemy is determined to walk off a cliff, what would you do? Validate his point of view and tell him that all paths near the cliffs are equally good? The only way to love your enemy in this case is to tell him vehemently that he will kill himself if he doesn't alter his path. There is no love for him in being meek or gentle when he is about to go over the edge.

In fact, all of us are headed for that cliff because of our post-Fall human nature. We are all unworthy of eternal life. But Christ suffered and died to save us—not from a wrathful God, but from ourselves. Our path to God lies through Christ and his cross.



And so, Paul's line to his audience is as stern as it is because, in their abusive rejection of him, they are racing towards destruction. Telling them that they are doing so is the best loving thing Paul can do for them.

The liturgies of the last two Sundays have led us to reflect upon the apostles' coming to faith in the Risen Lord. As they shared this faith with the first generation of Christians, the image of Jesus as 'shepherd and guardian' of God's people (1 Peter 2:25) established itself in Christian consciousness. One of the Church's first representations of the Saviour portrayed him as a youthful shepherd with a sheep on his shoulders – no doubt indicating that when they heard the parable of the lost sheep, the first Christians instinctively identified the shepherd of the parable with the Risen Lord.

The image has a long pre-history. In Old Testament times, the peoples of the Middle East had an old tradition that spoke of a king as 'shepherd' of his people. Though these ancient rulers were all too often exploiters, dictators and abusers of their subjects, this remarkable ideal of humble service lived on in the peoples' traditions. In the outlook of old Israel, something remarkable occurred when this image was associated with the God of the covenant, the champion of the oppressed – who rebuked the nation's rulers through his prophet: 'You have failed to bring back strays or look for the lost ... I myself shall take care of my flock' (Ezekiel 34). This arresting theme is echoed in the psalms, Israel's confession of faith – in Psalm 99 used in today's liturgy, and in the familiar Psalm 23.

Against this background, the New Testament passages that speak of Jesus as 'shepherd' ('when the chief shepherd appears, you will be given an unfading crown of glory', 1 Peter 5:4; 'the God of peace brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep', Hebrews 13: 20) take on a new depth of meaning – a meaning that is fully expressed in today's short gospel reading from John.

'The Father and I are one': with these final words of the fourth gospel's long and familiar passage on the 'shepherd' theme, Jesus makes it clear that, in his role as 'shepherd', he identifies himself with the Shepherd who is the God of Israel – full expression of the Father's being. Because he speaks with the fullness of the divine authority, true believers 'listen to his voice'; he is the very Author of 'eternal life'. The first two readings complement this affirmation, by celebrating the universal nature of his flock: before the throne of the one who laid down his life for them are gathered 'people from every nation, race, tribe and language'; his 'salvation reaches the ends of the earth'.

How should we live out our faith in the Risen Lord? Let us learn from first generation of Christians who did so by owning him as their 'Good Shepherd' – by 'listening to his voice' as they pondered all that the great truths of faith offered them, and by living in the hope he brought to the world as he 'led them to springs of living water'.

This gift of the Spirit is God's most precious gift: the gift of total love to enable us to be Christ in our world today.

QUESTIONS ABOUT EASTER SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Acts 13:14,43-52

- ✚ “Almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.” Does it seem that they liked what they heard? What made Paul and Barnabas decide to preach to the Gentiles? Was salvation planned for the Gentiles from the beginning or was this a change of plans?
- ✚ Were Paul and Barnabas instruments in spreading God's word? Are you an instrument in any way? For racial justice or eco-justice? What did they do when they met with opposition? Is there any situation where “shaking the dust off your feet in protest” and moving on, might help you or the situation?

Second Reading Revelation 7:9,14b-17

- ✚ Do you yourself need to hear “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes,” or are those words for other people?
- ✚ “They will not hunger or thirst anymore.” When you encounter conflict regarding social justice and the people who suffer because of it, what do you do? What would you like to do?

Gospel John 10:27-30

- ✚ Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice.” Do You? Maybe in your heart? Or in homilies, or in the poor, or in people around you? In books, poems, nature? Any of the above? All of the above?
- ✚ Jesus is the Good Shepherd. According to Pope Francis, is there anyone who is not one of his sheep?
Christ's love is not selective; it embraces everyone. He himself reminds us of this in the Gospel when he says: “And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So, there shall be one flock, one shepherd” (John 10:16). These words testify to his universal concern: He is everyone's shepherd. Jesus wants everyone to be able to receive the Father's love and encounter God. And the Church is called to carry on this mission of Christ. Aside from those who participate in our communities, there are many people, the majority, who do so only at particular moments or never. But this does not mean they are not God's children: the Father entrusts everyone to Jesus the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for everyone.
– Pope Francis, *Good Shepherd Sunday Angelus*, 25 April 2021

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

CAN YOU HELP WITH TRANSPORT SOMETIMES??

With the forthcoming closure of McCauley Lodge, some of our parishioners have to move – such a pity. One parishioner, **Joe Scerri**, used attend every Mass in our parish, weekends and weekdays. At present, some parishioners drive Joe to and from the Saturday evening Mass and Sunday morning Mass. On Friday, 6 May, Joe is moving to Marco Polo Nursing Home, Woonona. Pat Mirabito is more than happy to coordinate a “roster” to drive Joe to/from Mass at Thirroul on either Saturday evening (5:30pm Mass) or Sunday morning (8:00am Mass). **If you can help every so often, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, please contact Pat Mirabito ☎ 0488 571 899 or 4268 3727 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, as Pat and Ray will be away from the parish for some weeks in May. **Thank you for your generosity.**

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 **this Monday, 9 May**.

CATHOLICARE: AGED CARE SERVICES IN THE HOME – 10 MAY

Wollongong Diocese CatholicCare will be providing information about **in home Aged Care Services** provided through CatholicCare and also about **My Aged Care**. **All are welcome. 10:30am on Tuesday, 10 May** – and the venue is **in our Church of Saint Michael, Thirroul**. Thank you to our local Catholic Women's League for organizing this for all parishioners. **All parishioners are welcome.** ☎ Jane Hollier ☎ 0417 018 152.

DINNER AFTER 5:30PM MASS AT CLUB THIRROUL, SATURDAY 14 MAY

Every second Saturday evening of the month, you are welcome to join other parishioners – after the 5:30pm Mass for dinner at Club Thirroul. No bookings needed. Next Saturday, 14 May, at dinner there will be a presentation to **Bob Scott** to honour and thank him for his many, many years of volunteer service to our parish and school.

FLOOD AND UKRAINE APPEALS – THANK YOU!

Thank you for your generosity over the last month. Totals *so far* ... as donations keep coming in:

VINNIES FLOOD APPEAL – **TOTAL TO BE DONATED IS: \$13,175. THANK YOU!**

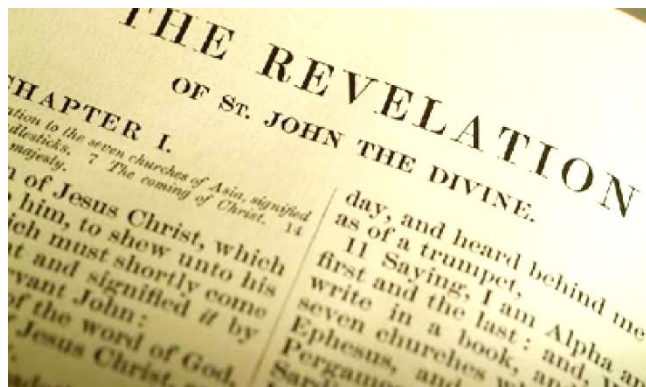
UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL – **TOTAL TO BE DONATED IS: \$9,945. THANK YOU!**

} TOTAL \$23,120

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.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION – THE APOCALYPSE [CTD.]

Rather than attend to its hard message which challenges the reader to live an authentic Christian life here and now in difficult circumstances and to oppose evil, some see the Apocalypse [Revelation] as referring to an indefinite future and choose to throw up their hands and wait for God to intervene. Alternatively, they read the symbolic language as indicating that God is intervening right now, and they call people to join their sect in order to escape involvement with the real world and prepare themselves to be caught up by God into a new state of being. No matter how weird an idea may be, its proponents seem to be able to find support for it somewhere in Revelation. They dismiss as being in league with the ‘beast of the Apocalypse’ anyone who opposes their strange, unsupported and frequently blatantly absurd interpretations of the text. They are especially keen on locating signs in current happenings of the coming of the end of the world. We are assured that these happenings were foretold in this book of prophecy. Chapter and verse are readily supplied.



If you think I am exaggerating read *Armageddon* by Jimmy Swaggart (Louisiana, J Swaggart pub.1987). The author uses the Book of Revelation as though it were a ball-by-ball description of the final days of human history, with the wicked finding their due punishment from God, while the just are rapt into the heavens by God, escape the judgment, and then come back and reign on the earth for a thousand years. And so it goes on. Fine as science fiction, but the author believes that he is describing reality, and as revealed by God.

The uninformed reader readily falls victim to such propaganda, because its perpetrators claim to be in possession of important information from God which provides the key to an otherwise complex and confusing world. By asserting that the Book of Revelation [the Apocalypse], as they interpret it, is God’s word, they claim that their interpretation is beyond the reach of reason or the ordinary laws that govern meaning in human communication. Mindless acceptance and rote memorisation are all that are required of the reader.

Summing up the fruits of scholarship concerning the Book of Revelation, Brevard S Childs writes:

There is a wide consensus that all interpretations which would see in the book a prefiguring of various epochs of world or church history are misconstrued ... Modern commentators, both conservative and liberal, are agreed that the book arose during a crisis of the first century, and was addressed to the needs of its recipients of the same period within the thought patterns of that era. In sum, the book offers neither a blueprint of future history nor a timeless symbol system.

– *The New Testament as Canon: an Introduction* (SCM 1984) 503.

Some apocalyptic writings reveal a fascination with the other world, and take the reader on imaginary journeys into heaven or hell. Scholars note an influence here from Greek and also from Persian literature. Others, especially the Book of Daniel (the only apocalypse in the Old Testament canon), and the Apocalypse (the only apocalypse in the New Testament canon) are concerned directly with history.

Like other apocalyptic works, the Book of Revelation [Apocalypse] focuses on the supernatural world, for it intends to examine history from a divine perspective. Like them also, it is concerned to make the point that the ultimate judgment of history transcends space and time as we know it. Being a Christian work, its focus is on the influence upon history of the exalted Christ.

If you are studying the Book of Revelation hoping to use it as a crystal ball that will give you inside information concerning the 22nd or 23rd (!) century, you are in for a complete disappointment. A reading of Revelation was never meant to by-pass either faith or intelligence. The inspired insights which the author had concerned his own world. They do, however, have much to teach us. If we understand him intelligently, and reflect in faith on what he has written, we will be helped as we seek divine assistance in responding to our world in the way in which Jesus responded to his.

– *This and last week’s articles are by Michael Fallon MSC, Scripture Scholar, www.mbfallon.com*

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO ALL MOTHERS, GRANDMOTHERS AND ...

Happy Mothers [Mother’s / Mothers’] Day to all mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers – and expectant mothers. At both Masses this weekend there will be a special blessing and Mothers Day card for all mothers – and thanks to you for your gift to your families and the community.

RESUMPTION OF MORNING TEA AFTER SUNDAY MORNING MASSES

As most Covid health restrictions have now been lifted, Morning Teas of a Sunday morning can now be resumed. If you would be available to go on the roster – say once every three months – to prepare and serve morning tea of a Sunday morning after Mass, please contact Judy Bull, Roster Coordinator ☎ 4267 2417, or the Parish Office ☎ 4268 1910. The aim is to resume morning teas from Sunday, 7 August – if not before.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS – THIS WEEKEND

Good Shepherd Sunday is a time to “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Monday	9 May	Monday of the 4 th Week of Easter Enrolments for Confirmation 2022 close today	Acts 11:1-18	John 10:1-10
Tuesday	10 May	Tuesday of the 4 th Week of Easter 10:30am CatholicCare Information about Aged Care Services in the Home	Acts 11:19-26	John 10:22-30
Wednesday	11 May	Wednesday of the 4 th Week of Easter	Acts 12:24-13:5	John 12:44-50
Thursday	12 May	Thursday of the 4 th Week of Easter	Acts 13:13-25	John 13:16-20
Friday	13 May	Friday of the 4 th Week of Easter	Acts 13:26-33	John 14:1-6
Saturday	14 May	Saint Matthias, apostle One baptism during 5:30pm Mass	Acts 1:15-17,20-26	John 15:9-17
Sunday	15 May	FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER ... <i>Scripture Readings are listed below</i> Two baptisms during 8:00am Mass	Dinner at Club Thirroul after 5:30pm Mass	

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE ... Carrot & Ginger Soup with Olive Oil Croutons

200g sour dough, torn into bite sized chunks; 3tbs Squeaky Gate extra virgin olive oil; sea salt; 1kg carrots, chopped; 1 brown onion, chopped; 1 thumb size piece of ginger, sliced; 3 garlic cloves, sliced; 1 Thai chilli, sliced; 2cups vegetable stock; 1 tin coconut cream. **Garnish:** coriander; chilli; Squeaky Gate extra virgin olive oil. **Method:** Heat an oven to 180°C. In a mixing bowl combine the bread, extra virgin olive oil and pinch of salt. Toss to coat the bread in oil. Place onto an oven tray and into the oven for 30 mins until golden and toasted. Once cooked remove from oven and allow to cool. In a large saucepan combine the carrot, onion, ginger and garlic with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Place over a medium heat and fry for 5 minutes. Add a pinch of salt, the chilli, vegetable stock and coconut cream, and bring to the boil – then reduce to a simmer and cook for 20-25 minutes until vegetables are soft enough to blend. Turn off the heat and blend with a stick blender until smooth. Taste for seasoning and adjust to your liking. Serve the soup topped with croutons, coriander, chilli and an extra drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. *Thanks to Michael Weldon via Barbara Bosley for this recipe.*

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 ... and even though the season has now ended, still more rescues and first aids are being done ... there have been **4,821 rescues** [last week 4,776] performed by Surf Lifesavers in Australia, and **14,443 first aids** [last week 14,320]. Except for North Wollongong, beaches will not be patrolled by surf lifesavers or council lifeguards. Where waves are breaking is a safer place to swim. **THANK YOU** to surf lifesavers for keeping our beaches safe this past season. Ever thought of being a surf lifesaver yourself? **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/>

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

3rd Sunday of Easter • Year C

1 st Reading	Acts 5:27-32,40-41
2 nd Reading	Revelation 5:11-14
Gospel	John 21:1-19

Parish of St Michael – Thirroul

*One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes
Moving forward as a Parish Family*

Patrick Vaughan • *Parish Priest*

Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • *Assisting*

Lauren Faulks • Parish Secretary
Tues, Wed 9am-3:30pm; Fri 9:30am-2:30pm

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

4th Sunday of Easter • Year C

1 st Reading	Acts 13:14,43-52
2 nd Reading	Revelation 7:9,14-17
Gospel	John 10:27-30

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Parish School of St Michael

4267 2560

SUNDAY

MASS TIMES

Saturday 5:30pm

Sunday 8:00am

Saturday Mass recorded

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday _____

Tuesday **5:30pm**

Wednesday 9:00am

Thursday 9:00am

Friday 9:30am

Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday