



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
10/11 AUGUST 2024
19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
FOSTER CARERS NEEDED

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

In the first reading, Elijah had just come from a dangerous showdown with 450 prophets of a god they called Baal, in the land ruled by Jezebel. The God of Israel had easily won this encounter, but Elijah did great violence against the surviving prophets anyway. Queen Jezebel, understandably enraged, sent a message that she would do the same thing to Elijah and more within that same day.

In this reading, however, we find Elijah frightened, exhausted, and dispirited. He had come back to find the Israelites being unfaithful to the one true God. So, Elijah became miserable—in spite of his great triumph. He prayed to God to give immediate death to his worthless self. As despondent people will sometimes do, he went to sleep. He was lying under “a broom tree” (a tall hedge that desert people utilized to shield themselves from the sun in the day and the wind at night).

God could have been harsh to Elijah as a result of this depressed prayer. But instead, a quiet touch from God’s angel awakened the man. The angel whispered, “get up and eat.” “He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water.”

Elijah did eat and drink, but then settled right back to sleep again. The angel whispered tenderly, “Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you!” Elijah did and was strengthened. We are witnessing a mother’s care, giving food to the discouraged child (first reading).

The other readings too are all about God’s kindness even in small things. The Responsorial Psalm invites us to share in the banquet: “Drink in the richness of God, enjoy the strength of the Lord. ... I asked and the Lord responded, freed me from all my fears.”

In the Gospel, Jesus offers nourishment, and this time the provisions are for a very long journey indeed, the one to eternal life. The people listening (“the Jews,” as John calls them, but really just “the sensible people”) will not have a bit of it. They argue among themselves, ridiculing his silly offer of miraculous food. They *murmur* that they knew his parents, which made him just a local boy acting crazy.

Jesus ordered them to stop complaining and listen. He made the same comparison that we saw last week, between manna that came down from heaven in the desert, and himself, who was “the living bread that came down from heaven.”

Just concentrate on the deliberate kindness of God: feeding the people, giving them drink, pursuing them again and again in order to offer the greatest gift of all, God’s sacrificial love for them. God follows us quietly, gently.

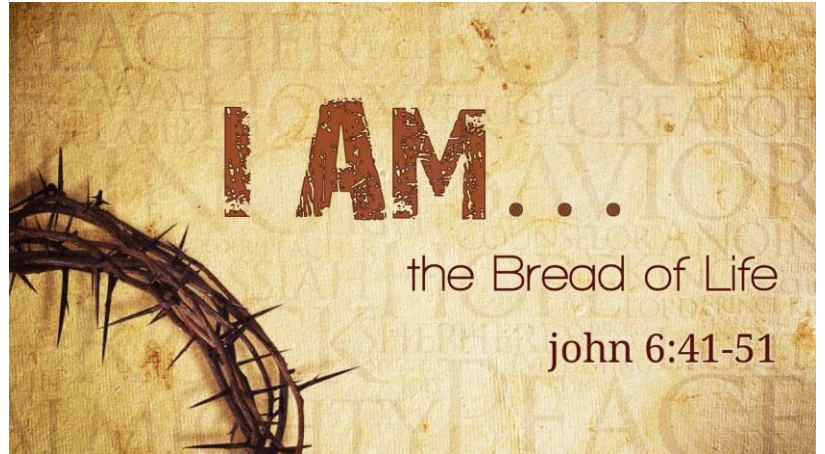
How might we respond? To start with, how about receiving the living bread in Communion? Another way could be to pray on the mellowness of God. Also, by simply slowing down, by stopping the running away and instead letting the Lord find us. God’s kind-hearted love, which is also tough, proves to be quite worth the struggle.

Here is how Paul puts it in the second reading: Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

We continue the Eucharistic meditation from John’s gospel. Last week Jesus called his audience to be open to the gift of faith that will enable them to appreciate the Eucharistic mystery. In today’s reading he explains further what this faith implies. Understanding that this passage is a meditative recollection of what Jesus had done for us, we are able to share in the outlook of the community in which this gospel was written. This passage echoes many of the themes that were fundamental to the faith of that community. John’s gospel begins with a declaration of faith in the Incarnation: ‘The Word became flesh’. This momentous truth is constantly reaffirmed in the writings of this community. Jesus is confronted, in our passage, by the complaints of those who find it hard to accept: ‘Come down from heaven! This is Jesus the son of Joseph’. The faith to which Jesus calls us, however, is not an embarrassing burden. It is a blessing that comes to us from the depths of the divine generosity and freedom – we are ‘drawn by the Father’, setting out on a journey which leads to ‘eternal life’ in God.

The Father and the Son share in all things, and so he declares that faith is also his gift, a gift that will be ours when we ‘come to him’ – we must live in his company as his first disciples did. For Christian faith, Jesus is the revelation of the Father – he has truly ‘come from God’, and ‘has seen the Father’ – an echo of the memorable words of the gospel’s opening: ‘it is the only son who is close to the Father’s heart who had made him known’. The

Here Is Food For You



✠ teaching is like a commentary on his words at the Supper: ‘Eternal life is this: to know you [Father], the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent’. Those who live by the faith Jesus is offering share in the divine wisdom itself; they ‘hear the teaching of the Father and learn from it’. (‘Knowledge’ in the Scriptures, and in the outlook of the community of John’s gospel, has a rich and profound meaning; it is personal and life-giving, far more than the gaining of information.) Referring to the manna – symbol of God’s caring for the people of the Exodus – Jesus reminds his listeners that the time of foreshadowing has ended. (Our first reading mirrors this theme – in the strength of heavenly food, the prophet walks for forty days until he reaches ‘Horeb, the mountain of God’ – another name for Sinai where the old covenant was given.) The faith Jesus offers recognises that all the promises that sustained Israel’s faith are being fulfilled: ‘**I AM** the living bread come down from heaven’.

Jesus has prepared his listeners for his announcing of the Eucharistic mystery. Through this mystery he will be nourishing bread for the world, not in metaphor only, but in reality: ‘The bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world’. These climactic words clearly echo the words of the Eucharistic ritual familiar to the community of John’s gospel: ‘This is my body, given for you’. ‘Jesus came in the flesh’ is one of the formulas of this community’s Incarnation faith.

Paul’s teaching from Ephesians continues to chime in with our theme: let your communion be shown by genuine friendship; show forth the Christ-life you share in through the Paschal Mystery.

Jesus speaks of himself as life-giving bread. He is offering himself as nourishment for our souls and it is through communion with him that we experience real life. He tells us that the bread that he is giving is his ‘flesh’. By this he means his weakness, his vulnerability, his acceptance of the human condition with its pains and disappointments, but also with its utter dependence on the Spirit of God. It is the ‘flesh’ that connects us. It is the ‘flesh’ that draws us together in our common dependence upon God. We give our ‘flesh’ to someone when we give ourselves in all that it means to be part of the human condition. We give our flesh when we give our time, our activity, our energy, our work. We give our flesh when we give our real self in all its weakness. We give our flesh when we keep loving and it causes us pain.

Jesus who promises to be with us as we find our way to the mountain where we will see God’s face. He is the bread which comes down from heaven, the nourishment given us by God for our journey. No one is excluded. The Father is drawing everyone to the Son. The judgment as to who is truly listening is best left to God.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading 1 Kings 19:4-8

- ✠ In this reading, sometimes we are Elijah and sometimes we are the hearth cake. Think of times in your life when you wanted to cry, “enough” and you could have used some help from somewhere. Did help come? How?
- ✠ God sent help to Elijah in the form of an angel. What kind of help do you think God would send today? Name some ways you can be the “cake” for a someone or something in need. For the environment, to recycle? A new energy source? For the needy, dinner? Helping to change the system? A kind word for the depressed?

Second Reading Ephesians 4:30–5:2

- ✠ Do you think you could get better at “being an imitator of God?” How? Is it more likely to happen all at once because you want it to, or a little at a time because you work at letting God into you? If you were going to try for this, where would you start?
- ✠ Would you call people, as did Dorothy Day, Nelson Mandela, Mary MacKillop, “imitators of God”? Do you know any people like that now? What kinds of things did/do they do? Do they transform the world in some small way?

Gospel John 6:41-51

- ✠ The crowd murmured when Jesus said he was the bread that came down from heaven. They knew his mother and father: how did this impact their willingness to believe him? Is it easy to accept a “prophet” [one who speaks for God] in your own circle of acquaintances? Explain.
- ✠ “... the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” Jesus does this because he loves us. According to Pope Francis’ homily below, what does Jesus’ real presence invite us to do? Does he continue to give his flesh for the life of the world and transform it now through us?

Finally, the Eucharistic bread is the real presence. This speaks to us of a God who is not distant, who is not jealous, but close and in solidarity with humanity; a God who does not abandon us but always seeks, waits for, and accompanies us, even to the point of placing himself, helpless, into our hands. And his real presence also invites us to be close to our brothers and sisters wherever love calls us.

Brothers and sisters, our world desperately needs this bread, with its fragrance and aroma, which knows about gratitude, freedom and closeness! Every day we see too many streets that were once filled with the smell of freshly baked bread, but are now reduced to rubble by war, selfishness and indifference! We urgently need to bring back to our world the good, fresh aroma of the bread of love, to continue tirelessly to hope and rebuild what hatred destroys.

– Pope Francis, *Homily*, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, 2 June 2024

SAINT MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP

On 15 January 1842 Mary MacKillop was born of Scottish parents, Alexander MacKillop and Flora MacDonald in Fitzroy, Victoria. This was less than seven years after Faulkner sailed up the Yarra, when Elizabeth Street, Melbourne was a deep gully and Lonsdale Street was still virgin bush. A plaque in the footpath now marks the place of her birth in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.



Mary, the eldest of eight children, was well educated by her father who spent some years studying for the priesthood in Rome but through ill health had returned to his native Scotland until 1835 when he migrated to Australia with his parents. Unfortunately, he lacked financial awareness, so the family was often without a home of their own, depending on friends and relatives and frequently separated from one another.

From the age of sixteen, Mary earned her living and greatly supported her family, as a governess, as a clerk for Sands and Kenny (now Sands and MacDougall), and as a teacher at the Portland school. While acting as a governess to her uncle's children at Penola, South Australia, Mary met Father Julian Tenison Woods who, with a parish of 56,000 square kilometres, needed help in the religious education of children in the outback. At the time, Mary's family depended on her income, so she was not free to follow her dream. However, in 1866, greatly inspired and encouraged by Father Woods, Mary opened the first Saint Joseph's School in a disused stable in Penola.

Young women came to join Mary, and so the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph was begun. In 1867, Mary was asked by Bishop Shiel to come to Adelaide to start a school. From there, the Sisters spread, in groups to small outback settlements and large cities around Australia, New Zealand, and now in Peru, Brazil and refugee camps of Uganda and Thailand. Mary and these early Sisters, together with other Religious Orders and Lay Teachers of the time, had a profound influence on the forming of Catholic Education as we have come to know and experience it today. She also opened Orphanages, Providences to care for the homeless and destitute both young and old, and Refuges for ex-prisoners and ex-prostitutes who wished to make a fresh start in life.

Throughout her life, Mary met with opposition from people outside the Church and even from some of those within it. When Mary MacKillop was excommunicated [by a friar-bishop!] on the 22 September 1871, she and 47 sisters also expelled from the Sisters of St Joseph, were forced to find accommodation and employment where-ever they could. During this time Mary dressed incognito. She had been ordered not to communicate with any of the sisters and anyone associating with her was liable to excommunication. Priests too were threatened with suspension if they supported any of the sisters, however a few of them remained loyal friends. In the most difficult of times she consistently refused to attack those who wrongly accused her and undermined her work, but continued in the way she believed God was calling her and was always ready to forgive those who wronged her.

Throughout her life Mary suffered ill health. She died on 8 August 1909 in the convent in Mount Street, North Sydney where her tomb is now enshrined. Since then, the Congregation has grown and now numbers about 1200, working mainly in Australia and New Zealand but also scattered singly or in small groups around the world. The "Brown Joeys" may be seen in big city schools, on dusty bush tracks, in modern hospitals, in caravans, working with the "little ones" of God – the homeless, the new migrant, the Aboriginal, the lonely and the unwanted, in direct care and in advocacy, in standing with and in speaking with. In their endeavours to reverence the human dignity of others and to change unjust structures, the Sisters and those many others who also share the Mary MacKillop spirit continue the work which she began. This great Australian woman inspired great dedication to God's work in the then new colonies. In today's world, she stands as an example of great courage and trust in her living out of God's loving and compassionate care of those in need.

"Holy God, source of all goodness, you show us in Mary MacKillop a woman of faith who lived by the power of the cross. Teach us to embrace what she pioneered: new ways of living the gospel that respect and defend the human dignity of all in our land." "Through the example of Mary MacKillop, may you learn to recognise God's will for you and trust in God's providence. May her life of service awaken in you a deep respect for the poor and a passion for justice. May you share in her courage, see with her vision, and love with her heart."

The feast day of Mary MacKillop is 8 August.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

On 1 November 1950, Pius XII defined the Assumption of Mary to be a dogma of faith: "We pronounce, declare and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma that the immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul to heavenly glory." The pope proclaimed this dogma only after a broad consultation of bishops, theologians and laity. There were few dissenting voices. What the pope solemnly declared was already a common belief in the Catholic Church



There are homilies on the Assumption going back to the 6th century. In following centuries, the Eastern Churches held steadily to the doctrine, but some authors in the West were hesitant. However, by the 13th century there was universal agreement. The feast was celebrated under various names (Commemoration, Dormition, Passing, Assumption) from at least the 5th or 6th century. "The mother of Jesus, as already glorified in body and soul in heaven, is the image and the beginning of the Church which will receive fulfilment in the age that is to come; so here on earth until the day of the Lord arrives (cf. 2 Peter 3:10), she shines forth as a sign of sure hope and comfort for the pilgrim people of God." (Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 68).

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

Monday	12 Aug	Monday, Ordinary Time Week 19	Ezekiel 1:2-5,24-28	Matthew 17:22-27
Tuesday	13 Aug	Tuesday, Ordinary Time Week 19	Ezekiel 2:8-3:4	Matthew 18:1-5,12-14
Wednesday	14 Aug	St Maximilian Kolbe, friar priest, martyr	Ezekiel 9:1-7; 10:18-22	Matthew 18:15-20
Thursday	15 Aug	THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY Revelation	12:1-6	1 Corinthians 15:20-26 Luke 1:39-56
Friday	16 Aug	Friday, Ordinary Time Week 19	Ezekiel 16:59-63	Matthew 19:3-12
Saturday	17 Aug	Saturday, Ordinary Time Week 19	Ezekiel 18:1-10	Matthew 19:13-15
Sunday	18 Aug	20 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

✦ Friday, 9 August	09:30	Anointing of the Sick during Mass
✦ Saturday, 10 August	18:30	Dinner at Club Thirroul after the 17:30 Mass
✦ Weekend, 10/11 August		Blessing of August Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays during Mass
✦ Wednesday, 14 August	10:30	Catholic Women's League Meeting
✦ Thursday, 15 August	09:00	Mass for the Feast of the Assumption of Mary
✦ Weekend, 17/18 August		<i>There are no Baptisms this weekend</i>
✦ Weekend 24/25 August		Social Justice Sunday: "Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World"
✦ Thursday, 29 August	19:15	Baptism Preparation Meeting for September baptisms
✦ Weekend, 31 Aug / 1 Sep		Blessing of Fathers for Father's Day at both Masses
✦ Tuesday, 10 September		Closing Date for Enrolments for First Penance and Communion

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE – WEDNESDAY, 14 AUGUST, 10:30

Thirroul Catholic Women's League will meet on Wednesday, 14 August from 10:30 in the McCarthy Centre. There will be a guest speaker from Salt Therapy. All are welcome! The monthly meeting will take place at 13:00.

RECIPE: PRAWN PASTA FROM OUR GUEST CHEF DE JOUR

50g butter; 2 cloves garlic; juice and zest of one lemon; chopped parsley; 400g cooked prawns; pasta of choice. Melt the butter in a large frying pan add garlic and cook until soft. Add lemon and zest and allow to bubble for 30 seconds. Stir in parsley and prawns. Season with salt and pepper. Stir the cooked pasta into the prawns and toss until covered with garlicky butter. Divide between warmed plates and serve at once.

Do you have a favourite winter recipe? Email it to the Parish Office.

PLEASE BRING IN ... ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

CATHOLIC CARE: A CALL FOR FOSTER CARERS - CAN YOU HELP?

Over 350 children and young people in NSW are urgently seeking foster care. Close to 100 of the 350 are living in our diocese alone. CatholicCare is doing all it can to meet this need – but more carers are desperately needed. For information on becoming a foster carer, contact CatholicCare 4227 1122 or fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

19 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B	
1 st Reading	1 Kings 19:4-8
2 nd Reading	Ephesians 4:30-5:2
Gospel	John 6:41-51

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*

Kerry Fabon • **Parish Secretary**

Tues, Wed 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

20 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B	
1 st Reading	Proverbs 9:1-6
2 nd Reading	Ephesians 5:15-20
Gospel	John 6:51-58

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Parish School of St Michael

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SUNDAY

MASS TIMES

Saturday 17:30

Sunday 08:00

Saturday Mass is recorded.

THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES

Monday

Tuesday 17:30

Wednesday 09:00

Thursday 09:00

Friday 09:30

Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday