



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
17/18 AUGUST 2024
20TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Do you remember the last time you were thirsty? How your mouth felt dry and brittle? If you were near to a creek, maybe you buried your face in it and drank your heart's desire.

And give a thought to hunger. Most of us will never have experienced true, wrenching hungriness, the kind common in parts of Africa and Asia – or Gaza or Ukraine.

Our bodies demand food for energy, and they can only go on for just a short, short time before thirst must be assuaged.

There are other longings in us too, as the following poignant, anonymous poem from the 16th century illustrates: "Western wind when wilt thou blow / that the small rain down can rain / Christ if my love were in my arms / and I in my bed again."

How can four short lines express such complete, aching desire, deprivation and yearning? Spend just a few moments with this poem and you will feel it. Warmth, sleep, sun, rain, the seasons, and most of all, encircling love.

Fact is, we are small beings. We keep our equilibrium by precarious balancing of need and fulfillment. Small beings. Even our existence is given to us only second by second, never all at once. What would it be like to have every moment of your whole life happen right now? Impossible to imagine, you say. Maybe that is why God portions out your life into one day at a time, one minute, one nano-second at a time.

What is the point?

Underneath all these hopes and wants and desires, mingling with them and undergirding all of them, there silently nestles the desire for God.

Every human being is blest with this longing. God is the only one who can quench our deepest thirst, the only one whose love can create us and keep us. We want the beloved one, whose arms hold us gently in safety throughout the dangers. We yearn for this as we trace our way through time.

Sometimes people grab for substitutes as an escape from such a desire. Fast living. Fast food, fast cars, convenience, comfort, unrestricted sexual fulfillment (without responsibility), and the "right" of complete freedom to do whatever they want to do, whenever they want to do it. If they can remember what it was they wanted.

Wisdom says in the first reading, "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight." Stop thinking that your life will ever make sense if you fill it with piles of stuff and forget the one thing you need the most: closeness to God and closeness through God to everyone and everything else.

In the Gospel, Jesus gives us ultimate food and drink. It is actually the most simple gift of all: bread that is his body and drink that is his blood, poured out for us.

We need to calm down and receive, peacefully, into our own fleshly selves, this body and blood of Christ. In such a way we can allow our realest hunger and thirst at Sunday Mass—not instead of the other needs, but undergirding them. We eat the bread which Christ calls "true food," the blood which he calls "true drink." These nourish the moment-by-moment course of our lives.

If we let them.

In today's gospel reading Jesus concludes his teaching on the mystery of the Eucharist. We hear again the announcing of the Eucharist as the ultimate expression of the Incarnation: "The bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world". The listeners find this hard to accept, giving expression to the challenge all believers face as they own the truth of Jesus' words. The forthright response of Jesus to these doubts is a support and confirmation for our faith: through his Paschal Mystery he has truly become the healing and nourishment of the world, and he gives an ultimate expression to this fact by becoming our sacramental food and drink. Jesus is insistent: 'My flesh is real food, and my body is real drink'; and the words he uses for 'eating' and 'drinking' in the gospel text have a graphic realism, confirming what he has said.

The Eucharistic mystery, whereby the Saviour makes himself – in the achievement of his Paschal Mystery – our very nourishment, is realised in a meal ('Do this' Jesus says). The first reading takes up the banquet theme. A celebratory meal shared with friends is one of the most meaningful moments of our human experience. Wisdom, the personification of God's ways in the world, calls those who are lost to share in her banquet. Now Jesus, who is the very Wisdom of God in person, calls us to his table.

And what does the nourishment of this meal bring to those who respond to the Lord's invitation? Nothing less than a sharing in the divine life that unites Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the same gospel, at the Supper, the

What Do You Want?



✠ prayer of Jesus to the Father will be: ‘All I have is yours and all you have is mine, and in them [my disciples] I am glorified’ (17:10; see also v.21). In this discourse Jesus emphatically links this sharing in the divine life with the Eucharist: ‘As I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me’. And the joy of that life will never end: ‘Anyone who eats my flesh has eternal life and I shall raise him up on the last day’.

Paul’s teaching in the reading from Ephesians gives us a glimpse of the Eucharistic liturgies of the first Christian communities. As they gather to celebrate what God has done for them in Christ, they give expression to their wonder in ‘the words and tunes of the psalms and hymns’. And when they return to their daily lives they take this faith and enthusiasm with them as they ‘go on singing and chanting to the Lord in their hearts’. Their central prayer is one of gratitude ‘always and everywhere they give thanks to God’. ‘Eucharist’ we know means ‘Thanksgiving’ – the Church’s principal act of worship is a grateful response to the God who ‘loved us first’. Our prayer is to the Father, ‘in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ’; because the Saviour has made himself our way to the Father. The people of their time, Paul tells them, have lost their way. Their life of witness and their prayer will be used by God to ‘redeem’ such people. We who are called to the Lord’s table have a great responsibility – in eternal life we shall see how important in the designs of God are our heartfelt Prayers of the Faithful (General Intercessions) as we have bring the needs of the human family in faith and love to the Father.



Jesus defines the life which he is offering; it consists in communion with him. Jesus is continuing to offer himself as one who will give his life for us. If we open our hearts to this gift we will share in the communion which he has with the Father, we will experience eternal life. We can rely on Jesus’ offering of himself to satisfy our deepest hunger, for his flesh is real food. We can rely on his life poured out for us to satisfy our deepest thirst, for his blood is real drink. John’s community could not hear the words spoken by Jesus in this present scene without thinking of the ritual celebration of the Eucharist in which they “proclaimed the Lord’s death” (1 Corinthians 11:26). This Eucharistic reference has been there as a secondary motif from the beginning of the discourse. Here John brings it to the fore by sharing his reflections on the significance of Jesus’ death and resurrection and so of the Eucharist in which this paschal event is ritually celebrated.

Jesus is sharing with us the intimate life-communion which he has with God as the only Son who is close to the Father’s heart. Indeed, it was for this purpose that he became flesh and lived among us (cf. John 1). As we watch him taking the bread we contemplate the Father taking Jesus into his embrace. God did this in the beginning. God continued to do this during Jesus life on earth. God did it at the Baptism, and God continued to do it, as we shall see, even when Jesus was on the cross. As we watch Jesus giving thanks we contemplate the words of love shared between God and the Word in the beginning and throughout Jesus’ life – and in our lives today.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Proverbs 9:1-6

- ✠ Is Wisdom female or male? Does it invite or demand? What hungers does it satisfy? What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Does the latter help us in difficult situations?
- ✠ Our food becomes part of us and helps us grow and repair our cells. This reading talks about a meal that brings us to the fullness of life. If we eat at Wisdom’s table will we know the things of God?

Second Reading Ephesians 5:15-20

- ✠ “Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.” Outside the liturgical setting what are some ways you can show love for your neighbours other than “greeting them with songs”?
- ✠ The reading tells us to give thanks always and everywhere. If giving thanks for painful situations is too difficult, what might be some other ways to handle them?

Gospel John 6:51-58

- ✠ When people love each other they want to be together. Explain “Whoever eats my flesh remains in me and I in him” in this light. Stating it many different ways, how many times did Jesus suggest that the crowd “eat this bread” in Sunday’s Gospel? If we eat at the table of the Lord, will he give himself to us and give us eternal life?
- ✠ According to Pope Francis, what are some of the ways we might see Jesus “remaining” in us when we eat his flesh and drink his blood?

In the Body and Blood of Christ, we find his presence, his life given for each of us. He not only gives us help to go forward, but he gives us himself—he makes himself our travelling companion, he enters into our affairs, he visits us when we are lonely, giving us back a sense of enthusiasm. This satisfies us, when the Lord gives meaning to our life, to our darkness, our doubts. But he sees the meaning, and this meaning that the Lord gives satisfies us. This gives us that “more” that we all seek—namely, the presence of the Lord! For in the warmth of his presence, our lives change.

– Pope Francis, *Angelus*, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, 19 June 2021

CATHOLIC FAMILY CAMPING WEEKEND 13-15 SEPTEMBER, OAKDALE

Join with families of all ages and stages to celebrate the incredible gift of family life. Cost: \$30 per adult or \$70 per family (regardless of size). Camping & Bunk Room Options: you may like to pitch a tent, stay in a caravan, camper or swag. There are also male and female dormitory rooms with bunk beds. These will be allocated during registration on a first-come-first-served basis and will require strict supervision of children by parents/guardians. Come and join in the fun with other awesome people from around the Diocese. To register: <https://dow.sh/cfwsept24>

GROWING GOOD MEN FATHER AND TEENAGE SON WEEKEND

Growing Good Men Father and Teenage Son Weekend Experience 25–27 October 2024, Cataract Activity Centre, Appin. One of the most important influences in the lives of men is the relationship they had with their father or significant father figure. The encouragement and affirmation that this relationship could, and should, provide, is a key ingredient for how young men view themselves and embrace their faith and gifts as they take their place in the world. Don't miss this life-changing father and son weekend! Spots are limited to just 25 fathers with their sons aged between 12 and 17 years. This is a unique opportunity for dads and their sons to embark on a quest of discovery with Robert Falzon and the team from menALIVE. Register online: <https://dow.sh/ggm24>

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME OPEN DAY – 31 AUGUST

The University of Notre Dame Australia Open Day Saturday, 31 August, 10:00–15:00. Join us to discover what Notre Dame has to offer! Explore Sydney Campus, meet students, academic staff and graduates. Contact: 8204 4404 or sydney@nd.edu.au Register: <https://www.notredame.edu.au/>

CATHEDRAL BOOKS AND GIFTS WOLLONGONG

Cathedral Books & Gifts shop has a wide range of gifts for Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Missals, books, rosaries, medals, statues, plaques, cards for various occasions, holy cards etc. Operating hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10:00–14:00. Entry via 38 Harbour Street, Wollongong. Free Parking. Enquiries, contact 4222 2484.

CATHOLIC CARE WOLLONGONG

At CatholicCare Wollongong we focus on client needs, offering families, children and individuals opportunities for growth, healing, resilience and hope. Our services and programs: <https://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au/> 4227 1122

LIFE SAVING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024

The Life Saving World Championships 2024 will be held on the **Gold Coast – 20 August to 8 September**.

The world's best ocean swimmers will race each other along the pristine Gold Coast coastline in various ocean swimming events. Competitors will test their swim skills and ocean knowledge as they compete in a short-distance swim, there's nothing quite like ocean swimming with a view!

The top ocean ski athletes from around the world will come together in a surf sport discipline that is exciting for both competitors and spectators alike. The constantly changing ocean conditions hold the power to make or break a competitor's race. In an ocean ski race, it is anyone's race for the Gold medal.

You'll see the best ocean board riders from around the world go head-to-head in events that are a test of strength, balance and ocean knowledge. Competitors in the ocean board events have to negotiate with the surf as they race to past the buoys beyond the break, and be the first back to shore. It's all about knowing which wave is going to ride you all the way to the finish line.

The surf sport discipline of ocean rescue not only focuses on the athleticism of competing lifesavers, but it also tests their knowledge and vital skills required to excel as a patrolling member. Ocean rescue events typically involve lifesavers competing in a simulated rescue or accident scenario, in which their management of the scenario is assessed.

Watch the best pool rescue swimmers in the world compete against each other in the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre's Olympic sized pool in various events in an attempt to test their lifesaving rescue skills. This competition is designed to enhance lifesavers' rescue skills and accuracy.

In the various beach track events, you will see the world's fastest and most agile lifesavers go head-to-head on the sand. This discipline involves different events such as beach flags, beach sprint and team relays. This is an event not for the faint hearted.

Surf boat races are a test of skill and determination, as teams from around the world go head-to-head in their surf boats past the breaking waves and the buoy, to return to shore before the other crews.

IRB (Inflatable Rescue Boat) Racing is often referred to as the 'motor sports of surf lifesaving'. This high-octane lifesaving sport will see IRB crews from around the world racing against each other to be the first back to shore. All competitors in this discipline share a need for speed, but at its core, this discipline is all about the simulation of rescue situations and how the crew members perform.

The Oceanman/Oceanwoman event, also known as the Taplin event, is the ultimate test of speed, skill, courage and endurance. This gruelling event combines most of the lifesaving disciplines in ocean swimming, running, ocean ski paddling and ocean board paddling. <https://www.lwc2024.com/#>

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

Monday	19 Aug	Monday, Ordinary Time Week 20	Ezekiel 24:15-24	Matthew 19:16-22
Tuesday	20 Aug	St Bernard, abbot, doctor	Ezekiel 28:1-10	Matthew 19:23-30
Wednesday	21 Aug	St Pius X, pope	Ezekiel 34:1-11	Matthew 20:1-16
Thursday	22 Aug	The Queenship of Mary	Ezekiel 36:23-28	Matthew 22:1-14
Friday	23 Aug	Friday, Ordinary Time Week 20	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Matthew 22:34-40
Saturday	24 Aug	St Bartholomew, apostle	Revelation 21:9-14	John 1:45-51
Sunday	25 Aug	20 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

✦ Weekend, 17/18 August	<i>There are no Baptisms this weekend</i>
✦ Tuesday, 20 August	17:30 Mass is not 'televised' this Tuesday
✦ 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
✦ Sunday, 1 September	World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation
✦ 1 September to 4 October	The Season of Creation – "To Hope and Act with Creation"
✦ 1 to 11 September	Ken travels to Brisbane for the Canon Law Conference Andrew will look after the parish
✦ Friday, 5 September	09:30 Anointing of the Sick during Mass
✦ Tuesday, 10 September	Closing Date for Enrolments for First Penance and Communion

CATHOLICARE: A CALL FOR FOSTER CARERS - CAN YOU HELP?

Can you change one child's life? Over 350 children across NSW need a loving home. With the emotional and financial support of CatholicCare, could you offer one child a safe, loving home? 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

RECIPE: SIMPLE FRUIT AND NUT SLICE

395g can sweetened condensed milk; 1 cup sultanas; 1 cup chopped dried apricots; 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans; 1¼ cups self-raising flour; ½ cup shredded coconut.

Grease a 19cm x 30cm lamington pan. Line base and sides with baking paper, extending paper 4cm above pan edges. Place all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well. Spoon into prepared pan. Press evenly over base of prepared pan. Smooth top. Cook in a moderately slow oven (160°C) for about 30 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven. Cool in pan. Lift out the slice onto a chopping board. Cut into squares.

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**

THIS 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

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

21 ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B	
1 st Reading	Joshua 24:1-2,15-18
2 nd Reading	Ephesians 5:21-32
Gospel	John 6:60-69

www.thirroulcatholic.org.au

325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive

PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

4268 1910 4268 1976

thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish School of St Michael

4267 2560

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