



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
21 / 22 SEPTEMBER 2024
25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
THE SEASON OF CREATION

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Childish Behaviour

For the past Sundays Jesus has been shocking the disciples by showing himself as the “The Just One,” as in today’s first reading: He is telling them and us the most intimate fact of his life.

First, the setup. People known as “the godless” practiced what we could call a version of childish self-interest. They say the equivalent of the following: Look at this “righteous one.” He thinks he is so wonderful. Let’s use his high opinion of himself and “test it.” Let us see how revilement and torture will affect him. Let us see what a shameful death will do to someone supposedly so patient and gentle.

The first reading quotes these “godless” as saying, sarcastically, doesn’t this Just One claim that “God will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries”? We’ll see.

So, they practice mockery and cruelty, all based on self-deception.

Mockery: “If he says he is so wonderful, if he has God on his side, surely he will pass our little test. We are just conducting an ‘interesting experiment’.”

Translation: he’s on the wrong side, kill him.

Cruelty: “He thinks he is so holy. We will give him torture, revilement, and a shameful death. This is just reasonable research, to see how he will react.”

Translation: holiness is all a sham, a way for people to get what they want. Well, we want him dead.

Self-deception: we do not need this God stuff. We base our lives in what is real.

Translation: we are more important than God and this Jesus H. Christ. Self-interest will always win.

All these are seductively false. No human being can become truly and freely human unless he or she puts God in first place, valuing everything else in relation to God’s love—even power, even wealth, and especially pride.

The disciples, out of confusion, engage in a long argument about which of them is the greatest! It is as if they are children fighting for the best toys.

Instead of this, Jesus says in the Gospel that, in fact, the Son of God was going to be condemned to this shaming torture, the one that the wicked had planned, and would be killed. It would look exactly as if God did not care.

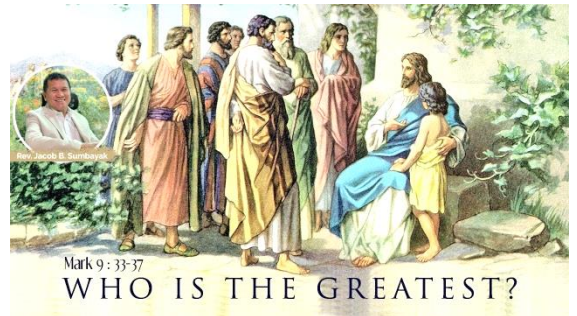
“This is what I am going to do,” he says. I will be saying “I love you,” to my Father. But I will do it by not resisting insults and humiliating death, because I love God above these things. And I love the world, and everything in it.

And I love you, with the fullness and warmth and generosity of God’s everlasting love. Even if it is hard for us to believe, God’s promise is that good can emerge out of suffering and death. Ultimately it seems that good can come only from these. So, in the end, shocking or not, God does defend us and deliver us from the hand of our foes!

The Galilean ministry of Jesus has ended in rejection. In today’s gospel reading Jesus begins to give his whole attention to preparing his disciples for the final rejection that awaits him in Jerusalem – a rejection God will transform into a victory over all evil in the Saviour’s Paschal Mystery. The first reading, from the Book of Wisdom vividly anticipates what lies ahead for Jesus. In fact, it is describing the selfishness and foolishness good people have to contend with in every age. The existence of real and pervasive evil presents a challenge to Christian faith. The freedom and responsibility that are the hallmarks of our human dignity will often be abused and obstruct the purposes of God. How is God to make creation a final masterpiece, by turning all things to good in the end?

There is something truly prophetic in the reading from Wisdom, because it echoes the Songs in the Book of Isaiah concerning God’s Servant: ‘the punishment reconciling us fell on him, and we have been healed by his bruises’ (Isaiah 53:5). These Songs were quoted by Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:18-19). No doubt they were of great importance to him as his mission unfolded. God’s designs have been patiently prepared. Evil is a problem for all of us: we have to contend with disruptive forces – within ourselves, in our dealings with others, in the wide world in which we live. Like the disciples Jesus is instructing, we are still learning how to cope. Those whom Jesus wants to be the bearers of the Good News of God’s ways are still lost in their self-centred ambitions. It is a situation that is so typical of our human experience. It leads Jesus to give the disciples a lesson that is at once radical and simple: ‘Anyone who wants to be first must become last of all and servant of all’. Perhaps we have here another echo of the Servant Songs that have been mentioned – Jesus himself will be our example in the living out of this truth. Great teacher that he is, Jesus goes on to give the disciples an object lesson – receive those who have nothing to give you in return, like this child I am embracing, he tells them, and you will be true disciples of mine and dear to my Father.

James’ letter, as we have said, reflects the ideals of a Jewish community of Christian faith. Their spirituality has its roots in the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament and its call to live in harmony with God’s ways. Today’s



✠ reading shows how well these first Christians have learned the lesson Jesus was teaching the apostles on their way to Jerusalem. We are all challenged to look into our own lives as James names those things that belong to a world shaped by selfishness: ‘jealousy and ambition’, ‘disharmony’, ‘battles between yourselves’, unrealistic desires ‘so that you fight to get your way by force’. It is all too familiar. How much more authentic and attractive is the alternative, shaped by God’s ways – ‘the wisdom that comes from above’ – bringing ‘peace’, ‘compassion’ and generosity, fairness and straightforwardness. And James’ characteristic practicality helps us to relate to this ideal as something within our reach: we must ‘pray properly’, not seeking through our prayer ‘to indulge our own desires’, but finding the joy that comes from identifying with the ways of God, after the example of Jesus.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Wisdom 2:12,17-20

- ✠ “Let us lie in wait for the righteous one, who makes life inconvenient to us and opposes our actions.” These are the words of “the godless”. But if you were to speak out against unjust “doings” might you be considered obnoxious? Does that stop you?
- ✠ Who are the “righteous ones” who endure persecution by the wicked ones? Is there and injustice that “tries your patience”? What “doings” would you like to speak out against? Racial injustice? Trafficking? Eco-injustice? Poverty?

Second Reading James 3:16–4:3

- ✠ Where does ambition for power and greatness lead? What does it do to a country? To a business? To a Church? Is there a way to cultivate peace?
- ✠ St James asks, “ ... where do the conflicts among you come from?” In today’s Gospel the disciples had been arguing and “discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest.” Do you think their discussion could have ended in anything but conflict? Why?”

Gospel Mark 9:30-37

- ✠ Jesus tells the disciples that in order to rank first, they should be the servants of all. Who would you serve if you could? Where do you think your church ranks in taking care of people in need? Where would you rank yourself?
- ✠ In this homily, who does Pope Francis say are the greatest in the Church? How does his answer to this question relate to Jesus’ answer to the disciples in Gospel question!?

Who is the most important in the Church? The Pope, the bishops, the Monsignors, the Cardinals, the Pastors of the most beautiful parishes, the Presidents of Lay Associations? No! The greatest in the Church are those who make themselves servants of all, those who serve everyone, not those who have titles.

And to help us understand this, he took a child and placed him in their midst; and embracing him with tenderness—because Jesus spoke with tenderness, he had so much of it—he said to them, “whoever receives a child, receives me.” That is, whoever welcomes the most humble, is the one who serves the most. This is the path. There is only one path against the spirit of the world: humility. Serving others, choosing the last place, not climbing the ladder.


– *Greatness in the Church comes from service*, Pope Francis, Mass at Casa Marta, 25 Feb 2020

PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES – DIRECT DEBIT – PARISH CENSUS

Parish of St Michael · Thirroul
moving forward as a parish family

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ABN: 92 126 598 626

PLANNED GIVING 2024-2025

Please complete this form if you are already in the Planned Giving Program or you would like to join the Planned Giving Program. See over for explanation.

Method of contribution: [please one box]

Monthly Direct Debit (a form will be mailed or emailed to the address below)

Weekly envelopes (new envelopes commence Sunday, 6 October 2024)

First Name: _____

Family Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Post Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email address: _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Completed forms can be handed in or emailed to the Parish Office or placed on a collection plate or handed in at the sacristy at the church.

For further information, contact Kerry Fabon, Parish Secretary, during office hours (Tuesday and Wednesday 09:00–15:00 and Friday 08:30–15:00 - closed for lunch 12:30–13:00 on 4268 1910.

This weekend, the new series of **Planned Giving Envelopes** are available – they start on 6 October. Planned Giving helps maintain the parish funds so the parish can survive financially. If you do not use the Planned Giving Envelopes, you might consider using the **Monthly Direct Debit Program**. Forms to join the Planned Giving Program – either with the **weekly envelopes** or the **monthly direct debit** – are available this weekend. **Please consider joining this program to assist the parish.** Complete the **GREEN** form and return it next weekend – put it on any collection basket or hand it to the parish office. **Thank you for your generosity to the parish.**

It is some time since a **Parish Census** has been conducted. This weekend, **YELLOW** Parish Census 2024 forms will be available. All families or households are asked to take a form and **return the form next weekend**, so that the parish records can be updated. Even if your details have not changed, please complete a Parish Census 2024 form to ensure the parish has accurate records. All information provided by you is for the parish only and is covered by the Privacy Statement which is printed on the form. **Thank you for your cooperation in helping the parish.**



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Thirroul

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entrusted to the care of the Franciscan Friars

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Parish Census 2024

FAMILY NAME: _____

Date form completed: _____

DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

What is the difference between a disciple and an apostle – in the New Testament?

Disciple = “learner, pupil, student” (Greek *mathētēs*, from the verb *manthanein*, “to learn”)

- Jesus is not the only “teacher” to have “disciples” in the New Testament;
 - there are also “**disciples of John** [the Baptist]” (Mark 2:18; Matt 9:14; Luke 5:33; 7:18; John 1:35; 4:1) and “**disciples of the Pharisees**” (Mark 2:18; 6:29; Luke 5:33) and “**disciples of Moses**” (John 9:28).
- In the ancient world, students/disciples usually sought out a teacher (cf. Luke 9:57-62);
 - but Jesus usually reverses the dynamic, “**calling**” people to become his disciples (Mark 1:16-20; 2:14-17; 3:13; etc.).
- Jesus did not establish a “school” in a particular location, but was an itinerant (wandering) preacher/teacher;
 - thus, his disciples literally had to “**follow**” him around (Mark 8:34; 10:21; Luke 9:57-62; John 1:43), including “many women” (Matt 27:55; cf. Mark 15:41; Luke 23:49).
- The word “**disciples**” is used 233 times in the Gospels for Jesus’ followers, but one should not assume that it refers only to “the twelve”;
 - the phrase “twelve disciples” occurs only three times (Matt 10:1; 11:1; 20:17), and “disciples” often refers to this core group;
 - but other people are also called “disciples” of Jesus (Matt 8:19-22; Luke 6:13, 17, 20; 19:37; John 4:1; 6:66; 8:31; 9:28; Acts 6:1-7; etc.).

Apostle = “missionary, messenger, emissary” (Greek. *apostolos*, from the verb *apo-stellein*, “to send out”)

- Many people assume (falsely!) that the words “apostle” and “disciple” have the same meaning in the New Testament. However, one first has to be trained as a “disciple” (learning from the teacher), before one can be sent out as an “apostle” (representing the teacher). Moreover, not all “disciples” (students) are necessarily sent out on a particular preaching mission (thereby functioning as “apostles”).
- The phrase “**twelve apostles**” occurs surprisingly rarely in the NT:
 - From among his many “disciples,” Jesus chooses “twelve, whom he also named apostles” (**only Mark 3:14** and Luke 6:13);
 - but the exact expression “twelve apostles” occurs only twice in the NT (Matt 10:2; Rev 21:14).
 - A few other passages refer to these men simply as “the Twelve” (see below) without calling them “apostles”;
 - Matthew sometimes also refers to them as the “twelve disciples” (Matt 10:1; 11:1; 20:17).
 - In the NT Epistles, Peter identifies himself as “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:1; cf. 2 Pet 1:1).
 - the Letter of Jude once refers to “the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 17), but without specifying who is meant.
- **In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus chooses twelve men “to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message...” (Mark 3:14),**
 - **but he does not actually send them out on a mission until later, after he has taught them further (Mark 6:7-13).**
- The *Fourth Gospel* never calls any of Jesus’ followers “apostles,” but consistently refers to them only as “disciples”; John does not contain a list of the twelve, nor even mention all their names individually.
- Elsewhere in the NT, **other people** are also called “apostles,” aside from the twelve men familiar to us from the Synoptics:
 - **Matthias** - selected to replace Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:15-26).
 - **Barnabas** - a missionary “sent out” by the Jerusalem apostles (Acts 11:22, 30; 12:25), later by the Church of Antioch (Acts 13:1-15:39); Luke and Paul explicitly call him an “apostle” (Acts 14:14; 1 Cor 9:1-6).
 - **Paul** - often calls himself an “apostle” of Jesus, esp. in beginning his letters (Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:1; etc), or when stressing his equal status with the other apostles (Rom 11:13; 1 Cor 9:1-5; 15:7-10; 2 Cor 12:12; Gal 1:17-19).
 - **Apollos** - never individually called an “apostle,” but clearly included when Paul refers to “us apostles” (1 Cor 4:9; cf. 1:12; 3:4-4:6).
 - **Silas** and **Timothy** - again, not called “apostles” individually, but included when Paul says, “we... as apostles of Christ” (1 Thess 2:7).
 - **Andronicus** and **Junia** - a married couple (or brother & sister?), “relatives” of Paul, who are “prominent among the apostles” (Rom 16:7).
 - **Mary Magdalene** - sent by the risen Jesus to proclaim a message to the disciples (John 20:17-18; although the Greek word *apostolos* is not used here, Pope John Paul II repeated an ancient tradition in calling her “the apostle to the apostles”).
 - **Jesus!** - referred to in the Letter to the Hebrews as “the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to the one who appointed him” (Heb 3:1b-2a).
 - **False apostles** - warned against, but not identified more specifically (2 Cor 11:13; Rev 2:2)..

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Monday	23 Sep	St Pius of Pietrelcina, friar priest	Proverbs 3:27-34	Luke 8:16-18
Tuesday 📖	24 Sep	Tuesday, Ordinary Time Week 25	Proverbs 21:1-6,10-13	Luke 8:19-21
Wednesday	25 Sep	Wednesday, Ordinary Time Week 25	Proverbs 30:5-9	Luke 9:1-6
Thursday	26 Sep	Thursday, Ordinary Time Week 25	Ecclesiastes 1:2-11	Luke 9:7-9
Friday	27 Sep	St Vincent de Paul, priest	Ecclesiastes 3:1-11	Luke 9:18-22
Saturday	28 Sep	Saturday, Ordinary Time Week 25	Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:8	Luke 9:43-45
Sunday	29 Sep	26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B –	<i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>	

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ **Sunday, 22 September** 22:43 **Spring Equinox – summer is on the way!!**
- ✦ **Thursday, 26 September** 19:15 **Baptism Preparation Meeting for October Baptisms**
- ✦ **Weekend, 28/29 September** **Bishop's Annual Appeal – special collection at Masses**
Surfing Season commences – Swim Between the Flags
- ✦ **Friday, 27 September** Last School Day of Term III
- ✦ **Friday, 4 October** 09:30 **FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI**
Anointing of the Sick during Mass
- ✦ **Sunday, 6 October** 02:00 **Daylight Saving begins**
- ✦ **Monday, 7 October** 09:30 **BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

RECIPE: SALMON, AN ITALIAN WAY

1 salmon fillet (approximately 900g); 3 tablespoons unsalted butter; 1 drizzle olive oil; 1 onion; 3 cloves garlic; 50g mushrooms; 100g cherry tomatoes; 40g spinach leaves; 150ml water; 120g heavy cream; salt, pepper; ½ lemon.

Make shallow diagonal slits both ways, then slice into three equal-sized pieces. Cook in a large skillet on medium heat with the butter [*skin side down first*]. Fry until golden brown on both sides. In another skillet over medium to low heat, add the oil, the onion cut into thin strips, the garlic cut into small cubes. Sauté until wilted, then add the mushrooms cut into small pieces, then after a minute, add the cherry tomatoes cut in half and the spinach. Sauté until the leaves wilt. Add the water, cream, salt and pepper, stir until combined. Add the salmon with half-moon slices of lemon in the slits. Cover and cook for five minutes. Serve. Delicious.

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

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL – NEXT WEEKEND

“Our faith calls us to help one another through prayer and action. Offering dignified support to priests who are unwell, care for our retired clergy, and a sound and holistic formation of our seminarians, is my responsibility as your Bishop. I seek your prayers and practical support to help me ensure that I can do this. Your tax deductible donation to this appeal is very much appreciated.” – Bishop Brian Mascord. Currently, there are 11 clergy in retirement. It is likely that we will have an additional 11 diocesan clergy retiring over the next 5 years. Our diocese currently has six seminarians studying for the priesthood. Your gift will assist with their seminary education and associated costs. Next weekend, you can donate using your credit/debit card or cash/cheque. *Thank you for your generosity.*

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B
1st Reading Wisdom 2:12,17-20
2nd Reading James 3:14–4:3
Gospel Mark 9:30-37

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B
1st Reading Numbers 11:25-29
2nd Reading James 5:1-6
Gospel Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48

SUNDAY

MASS TIMES

Saturday 📖 17:30
Sunday 08:00
 📖 Saturday Mass is recorded.

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

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THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES

Monday _____
Tuesday 📖 17:30
Wednesday 09:00
Thursday 09:00
Friday 09:30
Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday