



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
28 / 29 SEPTEMBER 2024
26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
THE SEASON OF CREATION

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The Inside Story

All people have an exterior aspect, of course. But we also have an interior one. This seems to be the key to this Sunday's Gospel.

Our exterior is what we often make use of to interact in a daily fashion with everything and everybody, without thinking about it. This is our outside. Acting from it, we may come across to others as, e.g., decisive or fun-loving or threatening or shy or easy to talk to, or who knows what else. It is how we make our way through the day in a busy world, or even in a non-busy time (e.g., reserved for watching TV, drinking beer, staying busy all the time, and so on).

We can find clues to our interior self in a calm time, such as we find at a quiet lake or at the sight of a budding tree or in the company of a much-loved friend. Stillness then emerges, a hushed sense of well-being. This deep interior is where feelings and thoughts can be themselves, can be just as happy or as sad as they feel like being.

The Spirit of God chooses to dwell in these interior depths. Not because there is something wrong with the outside, but because the deep interior is where we are made in God's image. There we are quietly open, desiring to give real love to other people and to receive it. And, if we knew it, to and from God.

The exterior sometimes dwells its life in storm, sometimes in sunlight. It is able at times to out-shout the inside! I want food. I want revenge. I am grouchy. I got three hours of sleep last night, gimmee rest. Gimmee pleasure. Gimmee triumph. I want everything. Gimmee! Me! Me!! Me!!!

Fine, but what if you get all these demands? What if you gain the whole world but in the process lose your very self? We do get caught up in gaining external things. For instance, in Luke 12:15-24 Jesus points out this tendency. He says something like this: "You have built still another barn to hold your riches! But this very night God will ask your actual soul of you, and what will you take with you? Your riches? No. The way you look? No. Your interior self is all that can come with you when you die. God dwells in that inner self, in the quiet recesses of your being."

Today's Gospel. does not receive well those who lead others away from their interior. Jesus says how he might react to anyone who teaches children in such a way.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea."

Maybe you were taught in this way. But do you really now want to ignore such a crucial part of yourself, while there is still time to find it? Why not let your inner self have a chance, as Jesus suggests.

How?

Spend some time in quiet each day. Have the heart to give a cup of water to someone thirsty. Be alert for the Spirit within other persons and respect them for it. Even if you do not like them.

You will be following Sunday's Gospel!

Today's gospel reading from Mark has a lesson as telling today as it was when Jesus was instructing his disciples. The seriousness that characterises groups upholding a religious tradition often becomes exclusive and intolerant. The apostle John reports disapprovingly that they had seen a man 'casting out devils' in the name of Jesus. How precious in the memory of Christian faith is the Lord's response. Authentic faith and discipleship must reflect the inclusive ways of God, proclaimed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Love your enemies ... you must set no bounds to your love, just as your heavenly Father set none to his.' (Matthew 5:48) 'Anyone who is not against us if for us' – words filled with wisdom and generosity. The Lord is at work in every human heart, and who are we to make judgments that may obstruct the mysterious purposes of God?

The rest of the reading provides an important complement to the great lesson concerning outsiders that has just been given. Those who are within the community of faith have a great responsibility to uphold and protect the truth and values of the Gospel – 'these little one who have faith' are not the children in the community, but members of the community who may be led astray. What are we to make of Jesus' drastic advice to "cut off" bodily members that may "cause us to sin"? If they refer to person morality – the more frequently heard interpretation – they are a reminder that faithful discipleship may call for heroically painful decisions. (As we know, the Semitic forms of expression used by Jesus are surprisingly strong to our ears.) There is a strong case, however, for an



✠ interpretation of these words as following on from reference to the ‘little ones’. In this interpretation they would refer to exclusion from the community, of persons who would corrupt the faith of insecure believers.

The first reading from Numbers provides a remarkable parallel to the gospel text. Now it is Joshua – the leader who was to succeed Moses and lead the Israelites into their Promised Land – who reacts in too exclusive a fashion. The response of Moses has a timelessness that is breathtaking; it sums up the ideal that should animate any leader of God’s people: ‘Are you jealous on my account? If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all!’ Prophets are those who speak out in God’s name, pointing the way forward to God’s people. Vatican II stressed the need to foster such gifts of the Spirit in the Church.

The reading from James reminds us of another exclusiveness, the sense of power and difference that can close off wealthy people from their fellow human beings. Our passage follows an ironic description of the plans of the wealthy. In the spirit of old Israel’s Wisdom tradition, it goes on to declare that these grand plans will have no lasting outcome. It is not rich people in the Christian community who are being referred to, but the wealthy and unscrupulous of the surrounding society. Even so, they carry an implicit reminder for believers of the Saviour’s words: ‘It is harder for someone rich to enter the kingdom of Heaven’ (Matthew 19:23; see also Paul’s rebuke to an early Christian community in which the behaviour of the wealthy was forming ‘factions’ 1 Corinthians 11:18-21).

The readings of today’s Mass focus on prejudice. How slow we are to learn this lesson is demonstrated in the Gospel in which John tries to get Jesus to stop a man who is calling on the name of Jesus to bring healing and liberation to people. John wants him stopped because, as he says: ‘he is not one of us’. Jesus response is immediate: ‘Do not stop him!’ Like Moses, Jesus is not interested in defending the rights and privileges of a specially chosen group. Rather, he is delighted that people are finding healing and freedom.

We might reflect in turn on three of the main causes of prejudice: **ignorance**; **greed**; and **fear**. Only love can help us believe in our true selves and change for the better. If we are prejudiced against people, it is a sign that we do not know them as they really are. The terrible injustices that flow from greed are highlighted in today’s second reading from the Letter of James. This is a vice that has grown exponentially in the modern world. There is hardly any need to speak about fear, since governments, especially in countries which defend their unjust share in the world’s limited resources, are using fear as a political tool.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading Numbers 11:25-29

- ✠ Joshua wanted Moses to stop Eldad and Medad’s prophesying because they didn’t follow the rules. Can you relate to this kind of problem? Is Moses’ response in this reading related to Jesus’ response in the Gospel? How?
- ✠ Does the Spirit work in religions other than your own? Ever? Always? What might the Spirit be doing? Do gifts in other people help you see what God might be doing through them? If the origin of a gift is not clearly the Spirit, would “by their fruits you shall know them” be a good test?

Second Reading James 5:1-6

- ✠ James says that wages withheld from the harvesters cry aloud to the Lord of hosts. How does his message apply today to arguments for federal minimum wage hike or for buying milk that doesn’t rip farmers off? Or beefing up laws that would end human trafficking?
- ✠ James says that the rich got their wealth at the expense of the poor. How would humane treatment relate to a living wage? To profound respect?

Gospel Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

- ✠ John reports that no one outside the inner circle was to minister in Jesus’ name? What was Jesus’ response? Can anyone lay exclusive claim to the reign of God as Jesus revealed it?
- ✠ Are the Holy Spirit’s actions limited by confines or boundaries? What is the Holy Spirit looking for in our communities? What does Pope Francis say Jesus is trying to teach us in this Gospel?

The temptation is to be “closed off.” The disciples would like to hinder a good deed simply because it is performed by someone who does not belong to their group. They think they have the “exclusive right over Jesus,” and that they are the only ones authorized to work for the Kingdom of God.

But we need to be vigilant about closure in the Church too. ... Sometimes we too, instead of being humble and open communities, can give the impression of being the “top of the class” and keep others at a distance. Instead of trying to walk with everyone, we can show off our “believer’s license”: “I am a believer”, “I am Catholic”, “I belong to this association, to that one”, and the others, poor things, do not.

This is a sin. Showing off one’s “believer’s license” to judge and exclude. Let us ask for the grace to overcome the temptation to judge and to categorize, and may God preserve us from the “nest” mentality, that of jealously guarding ourselves in the small group of those who consider themselves good: the priest with his loyal followers, the pastoral workers closed off among themselves so that no one can infiltrate, the movements and associations in their own particular charism, and so on. Closed.

All this runs the risk of turning Christian communities into places of separation and not of communion. The Holy Spirit does not want closure; the Spirit wants openness, welcoming communities where there is a place for everyone. – Pope Francis, *Angelus*, 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, 26 September 2021

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM – DIRECT DEBIT – PARISH CENSUS

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

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PO Box 44, Thirroul NSW 2515
02 4268 1910 www.thirroulcatholic.org.au
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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: _____

Sign: _____ 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.**

Parish of St Michael Thirroul
moving forward as a parish family
entrusted to the care of the Franciscan Friars

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Parish Census 2024

FAMILY NAME: _____
Date form completed: _____

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2024 – THIS 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.

A special video has been produced: <https://www.dow.org.au/giving/> You are able to donate to the Bishop's Annual Appeal: by cash or credit card in the envelopes provided in the church this weekend; you can donate online using your credit card; you can use EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer); you can donate over the phone ☎ 4222 2446. Full details are on the website: <https://www.dow.org.au/giving/> **Thank you for your generosity.**

BLESSING OF ANIMALS – MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 09:30

The Annual Blessing of Animals will take place on the **Monday** of the long weekend, **7 October at 09:30** in the courtyard next to the church. All animals under 900kg and their carers are welcome, though please keep fleas well-muzzled, and, if you are bringing your pet crocodile, please have it more restrained than on a piece of string. **All animals and their carers are welcome.** Please pass this message on around our local community.




The **feast of St Francis of Assisi** is on **Friday, 4 October**, with Mass at **09:30** – animals are welcome at that Mass.

THE SEASON OF CREATION 2024

Each year, the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee proposes a theme for the Season of Creation. The theme for 2024 is “To hope and act with Creation” and the symbol is “The first fruits of hope”, inspired by Romans 8:19-25. Our theme this year emphasizes that Creation is not an object that has been created for human use, but rather a subject that we are called to relate to and collaborate with as fellow creatures. By capitalizing Creation, we refer to both the created order and the mystery of God's continuing act of creation. We acknowledge the whole created order, or the whole cosmos, including all living and non-living parts of God's Creation, showing our theological respect, reverence, accountability, and interdependence with the natural world.

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II

Monday	30 Sep	St Jerome, priest, doctor	Job 1:6-22	Luke 9:46-50
Tuesday 	1 Oct	St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin, doctor	Job 3:1-3,11-17,20-23	Luke 9:51-56
Wednesday	2 Oct	The Guardian Angels	Exodus 23:20-23	Matthew 18:1-5,10
Thursday	3 Oct	Thursday, Ordinary Time Week 26	Job 19:21-27	Luke 10:1-12
Friday	4 Oct	St Francis of Assisi Sirach 50:1,3-4,6-7	Galatians 6:14-18	Matthew 11:25-30
Saturday	5 Oct	Saturday, Ordinary Time Week 26	Job 42:1-3,5-6,12-17	Luke 10:17-24
Sunday	6 Oct	27 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ Thursday, 26 September 19:15 Baptism Preparation Meeting for October Baptisms
- ✦ Friday, 27 September Last School Day of Term III
- ✦ Weekend, 28/29 September **Bishop's Annual Appeal – special collection at Masses Surfing Season commences – Swim Between the Flags**
- ✦ 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**
- ✦ Monday to Wednesday 7–9 October: Andrew and Ken in Sydney at meeting of the friars
- ✦ Wednesday, 9 October 11:00 **Catholic Women's League Meeting in Parish Hall**
- ✦ Saturday, 12 October 18:30 **Dinner at Club Thirroul**
- ✦ Weekend, 12-13 October Blessing of those celebrating October Wedding Anniversaries/Birthdays
- ✦ Tuesday, 15 October 19:30 Parent Meeting for First Penance and First Communion

RECIPE: TASTIEST CHICKEN YOU'VE EVER HAD

1kg medium potatoes; 3 medium carrots; 1 large chicken; 200g butter; dried rosemary; fresh rosemary; salt, cracked black pepper, olive oil.

Peel the potatoes, then transfer them to a large baking tray with baking paper. Add the carrots cut into small pieces. Season with salt to taste, cracked black pepper and drizzle with plenty of olive oil. Mix everything until combined. Cut up the chicken's back in half, open it and place it on the tray together with the potatoes and carrots. Add the butter at room temperature, spreading it over the chicken. To season the chicken, add salt to taste, a generous amount of black pepper, dried rosemary. Add a few sprigs of fresh rosemary to the chicken and vegetables. Place in an oven pre-heated to 200°C and roast for 45 minutes. That's it, cut the chicken and serve with the vegetables.

**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**

AN IRISH BLESSING

May the Irish hills caress you. May her lakes and rivers bless you. May your neighbours respect you, trouble neglect you, the angels protect you and heaven accept you.

THIS 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

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR B
 1st Reading Genesis 2:18-24
 2nd Reading Hebrews 2:9-11
 Gospel Mark 10:2-16

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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Parish School of St Michael

 4267 2560

THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES

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