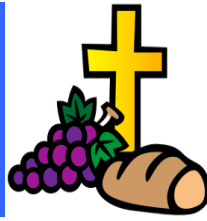


## Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN  
6 / 7 JUNE 2026  
THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST · YEAR A  
MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS – MAGNIFICENT HUMANITY

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Let us review for a moment what has happened in the special season – Lent – the Triduum – Easter – Pentecost – just gone by. It is a summary of the summaries! It leads to Sunday's feast, which is a great remembrance of our salvation.

Holy Thursday: we saw Jesus washing the feet of the disciples, cleaning their feet, washing off the dirt. Then on Good Friday we saw Jesus refuse the way of riches, honour, and pride, instead of following the way of love. He could have avoided the cross, but love said yes to God instead. It was the highest example of real, lasting love we know of. It showed us who God is, in the flesh.

The Sundays after Easter: After his resurrection, Jesus spoke to us about his sacrifice and his having risen from the dead, showing how these are signs of the Father's love for the whole world. Then the Ascension. Jesus was going away, back to the Father. He was to take his love back to the Trinity—where it started—thus completing the circle. Therefore, he left us, and if that were the end of the story, we would have only memories.

On Pentecost he sent his Spirit into our hearts. We ourselves, his followers, were to receive that Spirit and become his new and continuing body for the life of the world. There is only one condition: that we let go and allow his Holy Spirit dwell in our lives. Gradually we would sense with Spiritual eyes what The Holy Trinity is all about.

How, exactly, are we to let the Holy Spirit find this dwelling place within us? If we look around at our culture, it seems impossible. A lot of our neighbours have thrown away the idea of a soul altogether and even the notion of a God. Others just dive into the flesh pots, so to speak, and by doing so, deny that there is such a thing in them as a depth where some Holy Spirit could dwell.

But we do have such a depth, all of us and each of us. We just need to let go and learn to be loved by this Spirit of Jesus and of his Abba. Then it will occur to us why the Christ had promised the Holy Spirit and then sent it.

However, one unhandy fact remains. We are flesh and blood creatures, not merely spirits. Would Christ have gone away to heaven, leaving his followers to make their own way without him? No. The sacrament of his Body and Blood is the way we join in the complete life of Christ. Just as the Holy Spirit comes together with our spirit, the sacrament of Christ's body becomes one with our own bodies in a gradual but intimate transformation.

To put it another way, we need Manna if we are to survive (first reading)! Today's Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ shows this. The great plan of God could get lost unless there were a Manna-like sacrament to draw our bodies and our spirits into Christ's presence.

And so, now the Easter picture is complete. Christ remains in the world for all time. He is spiritually and physically present to the world in us, as often as we accept his body and dwell in his Spirit.

That is the reason for this final feast after Easter.

'Do this in memory of me'. Many of the great things of life are kept alive through the 'remembering' of cherished traditions. Moses says to the people, 'Remember ... do not forget, the Lord fed you with manna'. In the words of John's gospel before the passage we read today, Jesus has recalled this story of the Exodus and likened himself to the manna given to the people in the midst of their complaining. Now he announces the inauguration of a new tradition – and, as John tells us, it too will be met with complaining. To this point, Jesus has been telling the people that he was foreshadowed in the manna. He came to nourish their old faith. Now, however, he makes a dramatic announcement. In all that he does, he is giving expression to the ways of his Father – taking up the initiative himself. He will become the nourishment of God's people in a way that could never have been anticipated: 'The bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world'.

John uses the word 'flesh (*sarx*)' in this reference to the Eucharist. We are accustomed to using another term, speaking of the 'body (*soma*)' of Christ. In the early Church, both terms were in use. When we recall the Prologue of John's gospel – 'The Word became flesh' – we can recognise the implications of this term. 'All flesh is grass', Isaiah declares, 'The grass withers; but the word of God remains forever' (Isaiah 40:6-8). When the Prologue of John's gospel echoes these words – 'The Word was made flesh' – it is underlining the full implications of the Incarnation: the Son of God 'emptied himself', as Paul says, coming to share our humanity in all its frailty. John is presenting the Eucharist as the sacrament of this Incarnation and all that it was to give to the world. He is also affirming the 'healthy materialism' of the biblical tradition. For all its frailty, the human body is God's creation; and in the Incarnate Christ it has become our salvation and the source of eternal life for us.

*For the Life of the World*



✠✠ “This is my body, given, broken, for you. This is my blood poured out for the whole world’. All this is clearly, but subtly, implied in the words of John’s gospel. ‘Sent by the Father’, Jesus is still carrying out – in the eucharistic mystery – the great task he had been given. In John’s account of the last days of the Saviour, Jesus declares, ‘And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself’ (John 12:32). In the Mass, we are given to share in the Saviour’s return to the Father, making intercession for the whole human family. ‘As I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me’ – our sharing in ‘this one loaf’ is nothing less than a sharing the life of the Father. It is unfortunate that discussion of this passage often does not get beyond a defence of the ‘real presence’. The Eucharist is the sacrament of the whole drama of salvation – ‘Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise them up on the last day’. ‘Communion’, the term we have long associated with this sacrament, has implications that have been neglected. Our ‘communion’ in the Saviour’s return to the Father – his Paschal Mystery – is what unites us as members of his Church – a ‘common union’.

This gospel, in its emphatic rejection of the murmuring of those who do not accept the teaching of Jesus, certainly upholds the challenging truth of the Eucharist in what has been the Church’s faith since the beginning. The repeated reference to ‘eating and drinking’ clearly echoes the eucharistic practice of the apostolic Church. The norm, the usual way to receive Communion, is the Body and the Blood of Christ.

What is it that we most hunger and thirst for? In the first reading, Moses recalls the difficulties they encountered on their journey through the desert to the Promised Land. He recalls particularly how hungry and thirsty they were and how it was God who met their need through the manna and the water that gushed from the rock. What they learned from this is that they could not satisfy their own hunger and thirst. They had to learn to rely, not on themselves, but on God. Moses reminds them that God did more than see to their physical needs. To live we need more than bread and water. We need to experience communion with God – and with one another. We need to realise that what we hunger for most is ‘every word that comes from the mouth of God’ (Deuteronomy 8:3). What we thirst for most is to be in communion with God. We need to hear God speaking to us. We need to know that we are loved by God.

Saint Augustine came to a deeper understanding of the nature of sin. His early training led him to think of sin as passion overwhelming reason. It is true that acting impulsively from our feelings can lead us to behave badly. Augustine came to see that sin is something more radical than that. It is self-reliance. It is refusal to accept that we are creatures and that everything we are and everything we have is gift. We are on a journey to the Promised Land. We need bread. We need water. And we need to welcome them from God. We sin when we act as though we can determine what is best for us without accepting God’s guidance, without listening to ‘every word that comes from the mouth of God’.

The Sacraments are signs of grace, that is of the living, moving presence of God – baptism ... not water, but water poured or immersed; the Eucharist ... not bread and wine, but bread taken, blessed, broken and shared as the Body of Christ; not wine, but wine taken, blessed, poured and shared as the Blood of Christ. We eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ so that we become the living presence of Christ in the world today.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16

- ✠ “Do not forget the Lord, your God, ... who guided you through the vast and terrible desert ... and fed you ... with manna.” Can we in this time of racial inequality, gun violence in schools, wars, ethnic cleansing and climate crisis relate to the Israelites in the desert? What is the manna God gives us now?
- ✠ Are there situations which require blind trust on your part? With that in mind, discuss this line: “God made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know.”

### Second Reading 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

- ✠ “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” Does it sound like the Eucharist is a prize just for good people, or for us all, weak included, that helps us to move forward?
- ✠ When we eat, we incorporate our food into ourselves. The opposite is true with regard to the Eucharist. When we partake of that bread we are transformed into it. What does this mean?

### Gospel John 6:51-58

- ✠ When Jesus gives us himself in the Eucharist, does he give us just his presence, or does he give it in the action of the whole Paschal Mystery (passion, death, resurrection)? What does this mean?
- ✠ We are his body now. What does Pope Francis say Jesus would be doing today with his eyes, ears, heart, arms, legs, and brain to show his love? Implications?

The Lord, offering himself to us in the simplicity of bread, also invites us not to waste our lives in chasing the myriad illusions that we think we cannot do without, yet that leave us empty within. The Eucharist satisfies our hunger for material things and kindles our desire to serve. It raises us from our comfortable and lazy lifestyle and reminds us that we are not only mouths to be fed, but also his hands, to be used to help feed others.

It is especially urgent now to take care of those who hunger for food and for dignity, of those without work and those who struggle to carry on. And this we must do in a real way, as real as the Bread that Jesus gives us. Genuine closeness is needed, as are true bonds of solidarity. In the Eucharist, Jesus draws close to us: let us not turn away from those around us! – Pope Francis, *Homily*, Body and Blood, 14 June 2020

## THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

The documents of Vatican II state that Christ is present in several ways when the Church celebrates Mass: **in the people assembled for worship; in the priest or bishop who presides at the Eucharist; in the Word of God proclaimed;** and especially **in the eucharistic elements of bread and wine.**

How does the way we celebrate Mass demonstrate this belief in practice? During the Eucharistic Prayer people give their attention to the words prayed on their behalf by the presider. Some people bow their heads or make a gesture of reverence at the words of institution (“This is my Body; this is the cup of my Blood”). We sing the responses (memorial acclamation, great amen) because this is a high point in the celebration. The sacred elements are handled with care and respect by the ministers of Communion and by all the faithful. The vessels are crafted from materials that are solid and noble. Everything speaks of honour and reverence for Christ present in the consecrated bread and wine.

What about the other presences of Christ in the liturgical celebration? For instance, do we show the same honour and reverence for Christ present in the Scriptures when they are proclaimed? If we really believe that it is Christ himself who speaks when the Word is proclaimed, we must give our full attention to this part of the liturgy too. A homily given by Caesarius, Archbishop of Arles, early in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, could as easily be addressed to us today: “I have a question for you, brothers and sisters. Which do you think more important – the Word of God or the Body of Christ? If you want to answer correctly, you must tell me that the Word of God is no less important than the Body of Christ! How careful are we, when the Body of Christ is distributed to us, not to let any bit of it fall to the ground from our hand! But we should be just as careful not to let slip from our hearts the Word of God that is addressed to us, by thinking or speaking of something else.”

We would be horrified if paper cups and plastic plates were used for Communion, but it is not uncommon to see the Holy Scriptures proclaimed from flimsy pieces of paper or from books that are tattered and torn. What does it say if we sing the responses during the Eucharistic Prayer but speak the Gospel Acclamation during the Liturgy of the Word?

And what of Christ present in those with whom we worship, the Body of Christ? Do we treat them too with respect and reverence? Hospitality is everyone’s ministry, not just the role of the greeters – the safety officers. We all need to be “present” to those with whom we worship – to acknowledge their presence, to share the sign of peace graciously, to sit with the rest of the community and not on our own at the back, to allow others to sit in our pew by not hogging the end seat, to join wholeheartedly in the responses, gestures and singing of the celebration.

Actions speak louder than words. It should be clear in what we do and how we do it, as much as in what we say, that we truly believe that Christ is present not only in the sacred elements but also in the assembly, in the word and in the priest presider when we worship together.

**ADDRESS OF POPE LEO – 30 MAY 2026** ... to members of the "*Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice*" Foundation. The theme chosen for this year — A Fragmented World in Search of Spirituality: Freedom and Pluralism from Within the Social Doctrine of the Church — offers much to consider. Firstly, it acknowledges the unfortunate situation in which humanity currently finds itself as we navigate an era marked by wars and growing polarization, as well as cultural and social divisions. Yet, in the midst of fragility, a new hope arises. Even as division seems to grow, a common denominator that indisputably unites us all appears: our shared humanity. Indeed, it is precisely when faced with adverse circumstances that the human person is called to reconsider the fundamental questions that have gently prodded the heart of countless generations to more serious reflection: “Where are we going? Toward what goal do we wish to orient ourselves? What direction should we choose as a people and as a human community?” (*Magnifica Humanitas* 6).

Such questions are a clear manifestation of humanity’s search for truth, and give rise to a desire for something more, a thirst for God and lasting meaning. They also bear witness to the essential aspects of our humanity: the God-given gifts of reason and freedom by which we may come to know the truth and adhere to what is good. Though freedom is often understood as the capacity to do what one wants, it is imperative to recover an authentic meaning of freedom that allows us to discover its relational dimension, for it is precisely here that we can speak of the person’s fulfilment both as individuals and as a society. Saint John Paul II reminded us that this fulfilment is found when freedom is lived as a “gift of self and openness to others” (*Evangelium Vitae* 19), that is, when freedom is used to love. On the contrary, “when freedom is made absolute in an individualistic way, it is emptied of its original content, and its very meaning and dignity are contradicted” (*ibid*).

What we discover here are the two “cities” described by Saint Augustine that continue to characterize not only the human heart, but also the civilizations that we create. The City of Man, built on pride and love of oneself, is marked by selfish individualism. The City of God, built on love of God unto selflessness, and the cultivation of relationships, is what makes it truly possible to build a civilization of love. In this light, we can discover that what lies behind the crisis of contemporary democracies and the weakening of multilateralism is, in fact, an anthropological crisis that stems from having largely forgotten about the Creator. Far from despairing however, we are called to do our part, remembering that “the civilization of love will not arise from a single or spectacular gesture, but from the sum total of small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization” (*Magnifica Humanitas* 213).

Another aspect of fostering and working toward an authentic civilization of love is dialogue. A dialogue grounded in truth that recognizes and values the shared humanity of every person. Indeed, bearing in mind the innate dignity of every individual allows selfishness and particular interests to be overcome in favour of the common good. This same dignity also provides the context in which we can speak of a healthy pluralism that recognizes the wealth of contributions that come from people of diverse backgrounds, and which leads to peaceful coexistence.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year II

|           |        |                                                                                                |                                  |                  |
|-----------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Monday    | 8 Jun  | Monday, 10 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time                                                 | 1 Kings 17:1-6                   | Matthew 5:1-12   |
| Tuesday   | 9 Jun  | Tuesday, 10 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time                                                | 1 Kings 17:7-16                  | Matthew 5:13-16  |
| Wednesday | 10 Jun | Wednesday, 10 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time                                              | 1 Kings 18:20-39                 | Matthew 5:17-19  |
| Thursday  | 11 Jun | St Barnabas, apostle                                                                           | Acts 11:21-26, 13:1-3            | Matthew 10:7-13  |
| Friday    | 12 Jun | The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus                                                                 | Deuteronomy 7:6-11 1 John 4:7-16 | Matthew 11:25-30 |
| Saturday  | 13 Jun | St Anthony of Padua, friar priest                                                              | 1 Kings 19:19-21                 | Matthew 12:38-44 |
| Sunday    | 14 Jun | 11 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below</i> |                                  |                  |

## FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ Sunday, 7 June 09:00 Morning Tea after Mass
- ✦ Monday, 8 June Public Holiday – King’s Birthday
- ✦ Tuesday, 9 June 10:00 CatholicCare Ageing With Confidence, Fraternity Club  
19:30 Confirmation Parents’ Meeting
- ✦ Wednesday, 10 June 11:00 Catholic Women’s League Meeting
- ✦ Weekend, 13/14 June Confirmation Candidates presented to the Parish at both Masses  
Blessing of June Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays
- ✦ Saturday, 13 June 18:30 Dinner at Club Thirroul with fellow parishioners
- ✦ Sunday, 21 June 18:24 Winter Solstice – 06:30 swim at Thirroul! Shortest day.

## AGEING WITH CONFIDENCE – WHAT’S AGE GOT TO DO WITH IT?!

Tuesday, 9 June, 10:00 to 13:00 at The Fraternity Club. Join CatholicCare for a free community event with Dr Emily Steel from the Australian Human Rights Commission, sharing practical approaches to ageing well. Morning tea and info stalls included. Register via the QR code, call 1800 967 894 or [www.catholiccare.dow.org.au](http://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au) ... Enquiries to Jane Hollier, CatholicCare 0417 018 152 or [janeh@catholiccare.dow.org.au](mailto:janeh@catholiccare.dow.org.au)



## THIS WEEK’S GEM FROM SCRIPTURE – 1 JOHN 3:17-18

“How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.”

## ENCYCLICAL OF POPE LEO – *MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS*, 15 MAY 2026

*Rerum novarum* is an encyclical issued by Pope Leo XIII on 15 May 1891, addressing the condition of the working class. It discusses the relationships and mutual duties between labour and capital, as well as between government and its citizens. Marking the 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Rerum novarum*, Pope Leo XIV releases his first encyclical, entitled *Magnifica humanitas* [Magnificent Humanity] – On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence.’ Pope Leo appeals for the safeguarding of humanity, promotion of truth, dignity of work, social justice, and peace. “Humanity, created by God in all its grandeur, is today facing a pivotal choice: either to construct a new Tower of Babel or to build the city in which God and humanity dwell together.”

To read the encyclical, click the first link below. The second link is an article by Fr Oliver Nwagbara a priest in the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, Canada: *What is Magnifica Humanitas and why should you care?*

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html>

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/africa/news/2026-05/what-is-magnifica-humanitas-and-why-should-you-care.html>

### THIS Sunday’s Readings – on website

**THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST ♦ YEAR A**  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Deuteronomy 8:2-3,14-16  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 1 Corinthians 10:16-17  
 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

**11<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A**  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Exodus 19:2-6  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Romans 5:6-11  
 Gospel Matthew 9:36–10:8

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 James Bryce Principal ☎ 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 1<sup>st</sup> Friday*