

Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
13 / 14 JUNE 2026
11TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A
MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS – MAGNIFICENT HUMANITY

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

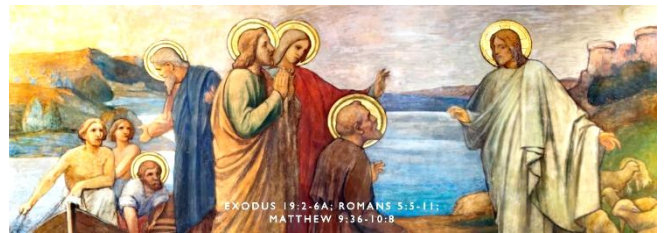
In today's Gospel, Jesus shares his mission to proclaim the kingdom of heaven with his disciples. The signs of the kingdom's presence consist of the work that Jesus has already been doing: the sick are cured, lepers are cleansed, demons are driven out, and the dead are raised to life. The disciples are sent to continue doing the work that Jesus has begun. This is a moment of transition in Matthew's Gospel. The focus has shifted from the ministry of Jesus to the work of the community that he has inaugurated. More than any other Gospel, Matthew's Gospel elaborates on the work of the Church, which is to continue after Jesus' death and resurrection.

The Gospel reports that Jesus commissions twelve disciples. Many scholars believe that the twelve disciples symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel. It designates, therefore, continuity between Israel and the Church.

Matthew lists the names of the twelve disciples, as do Mark and Luke. Matthew also uses the word apostle when referring to the Twelve. The word apostle means "one who is sent." In this context, Matthew is calling attention to the mission that the twelve disciples are being given. They are sent by Jesus to proclaim the kingdom of heaven in word and deed.

As Jesus sent his disciples to continue his work and mission, so too the Church is sent by Jesus. The Church is his continuing presence on earth. Every member of the Church is sent by Jesus to contribute to this mission.

The mission of Jesus was universal. It could only be carried out through the ministry of collaborators who were empowered by a sharing in his own Spirit. The commissioning of the Twelve Apostles was a moment of immense consequence, therefore, in the earthly ministry of Jesus. It is important that we recognise that this commission involved not only the Apostles and their 'successors', the bishops of the Church, but also by every baptised member of the Church. Matthew opens up a broad vision in his introduction to the 'summoning' of the Twelve by Jesus. We are reminded of struggling humanity of all times and places, as Jesus shows concern for 'the crowds, harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd'; he speaks to his disciples of the boundless 'harvest' envisaged in the generous plan of God.



The word 'apostle' (used only here in Matthew's gospel) refers to one sent out with a special commission. Matthew refers to the Twelve as 'disciples', prior to their commission – the commission they are to receive presupposes and builds upon the relationship with Jesus they have shared with the men and women who – as his 'disciples' – have formed the new family of Jesus. Vatican II makes reference to this solidarity as paramount when it describes the role of the Apostles: 'the Apostles were the first shoots of the New Israel, and at the same time the beginning of the sacred hierarchy' (Decree on Mission, n.5). For Jesus, the choice of twelve symbolised the coming into existence of a New Israel. This commission, therefore, concerns not only the hierarchy but all the baptised. The 'successors' of the Apostles must make it their first concern, to foster, identify with, and give witness to, the authentic faith and life in the baptised community entrusted to their care. For their part, the whole community of the Lord's disciples must recognise that they are all called to share in the commission given to the renewed people of God. In other words, the whole Church should be apostolic and missionary.

For a long time, the missionary outreach of the Church has been associated in the Catholic mind with the foreign missions – an apostolic expression that has had a privileged place in the Church's life from the beginning. As they hear today's gospel, committed Catholic communities should ask themselves whether they are truly apostolic and missionary. Not infrequently, those who have joined our parish communities, through a well organised RCIA program, report that they are discouraged by the routinised apathy that seems to characterise so much parish life. Today's gospel indicates two gauges we can use to evaluate the apostolic spirit of our parish community, if we want to respond to this wake-up call. Those in need – physically and spiritually – had a privileged place in the concerns of Jesus. Do we share this concern by a genuine and practical outreach to these people? Time and time again, concern for the marginalised, after the example of Jesus, has brought new life to Christian communities. Our second gauge is the witness of a courageous and generous identification with all that Jesus stands for, in the vision of a renewed faith. The Christians of the early centuries were forbidden to disclose the essentials of their faith to outsiders; but they converted the world of their time, by the quality of their lives. ('Do not turn aside to pagan territory'. Puzzling words, until we realise that the first concern of Jesus was to call Israel back to the ideals expressed in our first reading. Ultimately, however, this was because he needed helpers in a mission to the whole world.)

The more that we pray over these readings, the more they can affect us. When we listen to the first reading, from the Book of Exodus, we must wonder what was in the minds of God's "chosen people" when God says, "I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself." When these chosen people fled from Egypt, it was a miraculous event in their lives. They never really believed that they could be free.



For the Life of the World

✠✠ When Pharaoh's army pursued them, they must have felt that they would be destroyed, and yet the sea opened before them and they escaped. But that was the beginning. Then we hear all about their stories of not having enough water, not having enough food, of the problems of going through the desert—and on and on and on. This does not sound like being born up on eagle's wings and being brought to the mountain of God!!

Sometimes we can get caught up in our own sufferings and not see what is really happening. If we look at the sufferings of the chosen people in the desert, we can't possibly describe it as being born up on eagle's wings. On the other hand, if we look at their escape into freedom and their arriving at the mountain of God, we begin to understand the eagle's wings. They could not have been there if God had not sustained them and helped them.

This is surely a part of the lesson of this Sunday that we are celebrating. We must begin to look at the deeper meanings of history, both the history of salvation and our own personal history of walking with God. So often we get caught up only in our present sufferings and don't keep an awareness of where God is leading us. Always God is leading us to encounter His divine presence.

In Matthew's Gospel today, we can also wonder about this Good News that Jesus asks the apostles to preach. They are to go only to the Jewish people and to proclaim that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For us, this Kingdom may not mean very much. For the Jewish people of the time of Jesus, it probably meant that the Messiah had come and a lot of them would have hoped for freedom from the Romans and freedom to live their faith without interference from others. For some, this Kingdom would have meant a re-establishment of the previous Kingdom of Israel.

Jesus generally means that the Kingdom is the presence of God in the world. The Kingdom is truly present in you and in me when we are following God and trying to be faithful to God's word. The Kingdom is present within us. And when we join with others who are also faithful to the Word of God, then the Kingdom becomes present within the believing community. So, when Jesus sees that lots of people are looking for God and want to follow God, Jesus tells us that the harvest is abundant.

What about our own times? Are people looking for God? Are you looking for God? Am I looking for God. That is the challenge. That is the invitation. God invites us to seek the Kingdom. And as we seek, then we discover that the Kingdom is right here in our midst. Like the chosen people in Exodus, we shall suffer on the way to discover the Kingdom, even though it is right here. Let us pray this Sunday for a deeper awareness of God's divine presence.



A HEART MOVED WITH COMPASSION — MATTHEW 9:36–10:8

The Gospel According to Matthew unfolds within a framework of “Emmanuel — God-with-us.” In the first chapter Jesus is named as “Emmanuel” when the prophet Isaiah is quoted (Mt 1:23). Three times Jesus highlights this: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Mt 18:20); “Truly, I tell you, just as you did it (or did not do it) to one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you did it (or did not do it) to me” (Mt 25:40, 45); and in his very last words: “I am with you always to the end of the age” (Mt 28:30).

Within this “Emmanuel — God-with-us” framework expressions of mercy and compassion are integral to Matthew's Gospel. The power of the biblical tradition of mercy is in the Beatitude: “Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy” (Mt 5:7). This is the only time the passive form of the verb “to mercy” (*eleein*) is used in the Gospels.

John Paul II in his encyclical *Rich in Mercy* wrote: “The concept of ‘mercy’ in the Old Testament has a long and rich history. We have to refer back to it in order that the mercy revealed by Christ may shine forth more clearly ... the people of God of the Old Covenant, had drawn from their age-long history a special experience of the mercy of God. This experience was social and communal, as well as individual and interior.” (DM par 4).

The Israelites believed God was a God of *rahmim* (womb-compassion) and of *hesed* (steadfast love). “God is gracious and merciful (*raham*), slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (*hesed*)” (Psalm 145:8). Mercy is action orientated. We see this when we link the two words Matthew uses to express the mercy of Jesus with the Hebrew *rahamim* and *hesed*.

“I Desire Mercy”

Jesus crosses the sea to Capernaum, his own town. He calls Matthew, a tax collector, to follow him. Then Jesus and his disciples have dinner in Matthew's house (Mt 9:10-13). The Pharisees question his disciples about his dining with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus responds by directing the Pharisees, respected teachers of the Torah, to learn from Hosea 6:6: “I desire mercy (*eleos*), not sacrifice.” This Greek word for mercy, which is found many times in Matthew, translates the Hebrew word *hesed* meaning steadfast love, enduring love, loving kindness. The Greek “*Kyrie eleison*” is still used in the Eucharist but more often in the English translation “mercy”.

The Womb-Compassion of Jesus

The story continues with Jesus responding. He heals a woman with haemorrhage, two men who are blind and a demoniac — all were marginalised in society (Mt 9:18-24). He travelled the countryside “proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and sickness” (Mt 9:35). Then when Jesus saw the crowds “he had compassion for them” (Mt 9:36). This is the first time the Greek word for compassion (*splagizomai*) is used. It literally means “having a heart moved with compassion”. This deeply-felt response to suffering evokes the Hebrew word, *rahamim*, meaning the womb-compassion of God. It is also related to the Hebrew *rehem*, the word for womb, and suggests the love of a mother. This is explicit female imagery for God.

A Triad

Matthew draws us into a triad. First, there is a description of a need: Jesus saw the crowds who “were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Second, seeing this need Jesus is described as “having a heart moved with compassion.” And third, the movement to action because something must be done to address the heartfelt need.

Something Must Be Done

Jesus acts. He turns to his disciples reminding them that “the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few.” Then he calls together the twelve and delivers his second mission discourse (Mt 10:1-11:1) which reflects both the time of Jesus and the time of the early Church. While Jesus confines the mission of his disciples to the people of Israel (Mt 10:5-6), the time of the early Church is suggested by the mention of disciples being dragged before governors and giving testimony to the Gentiles (Mt 10:18; cf. 28:19). All disciples are called to participate with Jesus when something must be done — we are to be like him who sees a need and “having a heart moved with compassion” responds by taking action. Jesus gives the twelve disciples authority to respond to the suffering of the crowd. This triad form (seeing a need, “having a heart moved with compassion,” and then doing something to address the felt need) is repeated four more times in Matthew — being sick (Mt 14:14); being hungry (Mt 15:32); in huge debt (Mt 18:27); and being blind (Mt 20:34). It is also in Luke — the death of widow’s son (Lk 7:13); the wounded one (Lk 10:30); and the lost son (Lk 15:20).

“Mercy-ing” in the World

Moral theologian James Keenan wrote: “Our entire theological tradition is expressed in terms of mercy, which I define as the willingness to enter into the chaos of others.” And Biblical scholar Veronica Lawson explained: “Mercy is a way of being in the world, a way of seeing and of hearing and a way of responding.”

Pope Francis uses the verbal noun “mercy-ing” to translate the first word of his Latin motto “*Miserando atque eligendo*”. He said: “The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person ... wherever the Church is present, the mercy of God must be evident. In our parishes, communities, associations, and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy.” (*Misericordiae Vultus* par 12).

The mercy related word “having a heart moved with compassion” which is linked to the womb (*reḥem*) connects Christians, Jews and Muslims. We all speak of God as mercy-ing.

In Arabic, the word *Rahm* meaning “womb” is related to *ar-Raham* which is translated as “the merciful”. Zain Ali wrote that *ar-Raham* is “used in the Qur’an as an attribute, or name of God — that is, God the most merciful.”

If we wish to relieve suffering and eradicate inequalities, we will need to see the needs around us, have our hearts moved with compassion — and then we will need to act.

Just as we are “**merciéd**” [receive mercy], so we will need to be **mercy-ing** to others, so that all experience God-with-us — a mercy-full, compassionate, loving Divine.

POPE LEO, IN SPAIN – 6 JUNE 2026

Our age, seemingly shaken by terrible imbalances and conflicts, cries out from its depths for peace, for a new understanding of the human person and its inviolable dignity, for a civilization of love (cf. *Magnifica Humanitas*, 186). ...

Today, the temptation to gain popularity by fanning the flames of polarization seems to have grown rather than diminished, and human dignity continues to be violated. This is why we need culture, interiority, and free quality education; we need transcendence. And yet, even in these dark nights, men and women who are faithful to the truth have been driven to advance from one room to another until justice and peace embrace in their conscience. It is through their freedom that we learn to be free.

The Catholic Church is at the service of the thirst of the human heart. It is a service not marked by imposition, but rather the Gospel witness attested to by a multitude of martyrs and saints. Today the Church is ready to place herself at the service of the future of a people in search of reconciliation and peace.

“We must avoid humiliating or antagonistic words, opting rather for a clarity that sheds light and a frankness that unlocks new possibilities. We cannot condone naïve enthusiasms, nor fuel unfounded fears. Instead, let us establish standards for discernment — the dignity of the human person, the universal destination of goods, the preferential option for the poor, care for our common home and peace — and let us translate these standards into practices such as responsible planning, the assessment of human and social impact, the inclusion of the most vulnerable, the promotion of digital literacy and guiding research and industry toward justice and peace” (*Magnifica Humanitas*, 14).

– This is an excerpt from an Address of Pope Leo to the King of Spain, Civil Authorities and Diplomatic Corp in Madrid.



A poster for a concert. The top half has a black background with the word "CONCERT" in large white letters, followed by "FOR THE CHILDREN OF GAZA" in white and red. Below this, it lists the featured acts: ILLAWARRA UNION SINGERS • RISING TIDE, ZLATKO'S BALKAN CABARET • SHALANI, ANDY OPHEE • PAUL SPENCER, SOLIDARITY CHOIR AND ECOPPELLA. It also mentions "ENTRY BY DONATION TO UNION AID ABROAD/APHEDA'S GAZA APPEAL" and "AFTERNOON TEA | RAFFLES". At the bottom, it says "RAILWAY INSTITUTE HALL, 14 RAILWAY PDE, THIRROUL" and "2 - 5PM | SATURDAY JUNE 27". There is a red triangle on the left side of the poster.

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year II

Monday	15 Jun	Monday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	1 Kings 21:1-16	Matthew 5:38-42
Tuesday	16 Jun	Tuesday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	1 Kings 21:17-29	Matthew 5:43-48
Wednesday	17 Jun	Wednesday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	2 Kings 2:1,6-14	Matthew 6:1-6,16-18
Thursday	18 Jun	Thursday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	Sirach 48:1-14	Matthew 6:7-15
Friday	19 Jun	Friday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	2 Kings 11:1-14,9-18,20	Matthew 6:19-23
Saturday	20 Jun	Saturday, 11 th Week in Ordinary Time	2 Chronicles 24:17-25	Matthew 6:24-34
Sunday	21 Jun	12 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ 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**
- ✦ Weekend, 20/21 June 6 **Baptisms at the 17:30 Mass and 2 Baptisms at the 08:00 Mass**
- ✦ Sunday, 21 June 09:00 **Morning Tea after the 08:00 Mass**
18:24 **Winter Solstice – 06:30 swim at Thirroul ... Shortest day**
- ✦ Thursday, 25 June 19:15 **Baptism Information Evening for July Baptisms**
- ✦ Saturday, 27 June 14:00 **Concert for the Children of Gaza, Railway Institute, Thirroul**
- ✦ Weekend, 27/28 June **Vinnies Winter Appeal Week #1 at both Masses**
- ✦ Wednesday, 1 July 19:00 **Sacrament of Confirmation practice**
- ✦ Thursday, 2 July 19:00 **Sacrament of Confirmation with Bishop Brian Mascord**
- ✦ Weekend, 4/5 July **Vinnies Winter Appeal Week #2 at both Masses**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

PARISH SECRETARY

With Kerry Fabon having resigned and finished up on Friday, 12 June, a new Parish Secretary has been employed, **MARY PAHULU-FALEVAI**. Mary commenced employment on Tuesday, 9 June, and Parish Office hours will now be **Tuesdays and Thursdays, 09:00 to 15:00**, and **Fridays, 08:30 to 15:00**, with lunch 12:30 to 13:00. **Welcome Mary.**



VINNIES WINTER APPEAL – 27/28 JUNE AND 4/5 JULY

The annual Vinnies Winter Appeal will be held in our Parish on 27/28 June and 4/5 July – Thank you for your generosity over the years in supporting and providing for the needy of our area through our local Vinnies. On those weekends, you will be able to donate using cash, credit card – and you will be able to make donations online.

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
Winter Items: soup; noodles; scarves; beanies; jackets; gloves; warm socks.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2026 – 2 JULY

26 younger parishioners will be celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation this year, most of them with Bishop Brian on Thursday, 2 July. As they begin their preparation, please remember them before the Lord.

<p>THIS Sunday's Readings – on website</p> <p>11th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</p> <p>1st Reading Exodus 19:2-6 2nd Reading Romans 5:6-11 Gospel Matthew 9:36–10:8</p>	<p>NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website</p> <p>12th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</p> <p>1st Reading Jeremiah 20:10-13 2nd Reading Romans 5:12-15 Gospel Matthew 10:26-33</p>	<p>SUNDAY MASS TIMES</p> <p>Saturday 17:30 Sunday 08:00 Saturday Mass is recorded.</p>
<p>Parish of St Michael – Thirroul <i>One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes</i> <i>Moving forward as a Parish Family</i> Patrick Vaughan • Parish Priest Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • Assisting</p> <p>Mary Pahulu-Falevai • Parish Secretary Tues, Thurs 09:00–15:00; Fri 08:30–15:00</p>	<p>www.thirroulcatholic.org.au 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515 4268 1910 thirroul@dow.org.au Parish School of St Michael James Bryce Principal 4267 2560</p>	<p>THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES</p> <p>Monday Tuesday 17:30 Wednesday 09:00 Thursday 09:00 Friday 09:30 <i>Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday</i></p>