

## Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**20 / 21 JUNE 2026**  
**12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A**  
**WELCOME TO THOSE BAPTISED**

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

In the Gospel, Jesus encourages us as follows: “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even all the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid.”

God pays attention to each of us. God knows us each in the tiniest detail!

A conclusion follows. See what you think of it:

Each of us is created to be a place where God's love can dwell.

It follows that we will never be truly human unless the greatest value in each of our lives is to receive the love of God and to carry it to the people around us.

Our culture would never buy such a proposition. On television we see people seeking ease, beauty, convenience, pleasure and so on. Quite often on broadcast channels, pay channels, and now on subscription programs, one could conclude that the human person is made for one purpose only: sex. Without realizing it, commercials are built to encourage the seven Capital Sins (pride, gluttony, avarice, lust, sloth, envy and anger). Jot that list down, put it by your television and put a check behind each one when it is promoted.

Alright, we human beings do get attached to many things or fascinated by them. But if each of us is created to be a place where God's love can dwell, then any of these fascinations might be left aside if it begins to take over God's place. If I am attached to wealth, or my stamp collection, or my good looks, or drugs, or even my mate—in a way that makes God's love take second (or third or fiftieth) place, then my life is disordered and I am headed for a fall.

How do you react to this proposal? Personally, I used to react to it with confusion and resistance. “You mean I am to love God only and not care about my friends, my family, music, sports, food, health, etc? Not care about anything except God?”

No.

Healthy love of all these things has its roots in love of God. Everything gets its own individual value from the indwelling of God within it. Each person, each blade of grass receives its full value of love because it proceeds from God's gentle hand.

Whoever takes this proposition seriously will live a full human life. “But that this is too difficult”, some would say immediately. “So many things get in the way.” Have a look through your life and see how often you forget God the source. “Leave me, I am a sinful man,” Peter once said to Jesus in the boat, remembering that he had actually deserted Jesus at least three times. How many times have you done likewise?

So, does the above proposition really apply just to those who never sin?

Not at all. “If you sin, I will not leave you, I will love you,” God has said throughout the ages. The cross of Jesus is the ultimate statement of that truth. God's love remains constant and dear, in spite of the rampant sin in all of us and each of us. God's love will help us get closer to the goal.

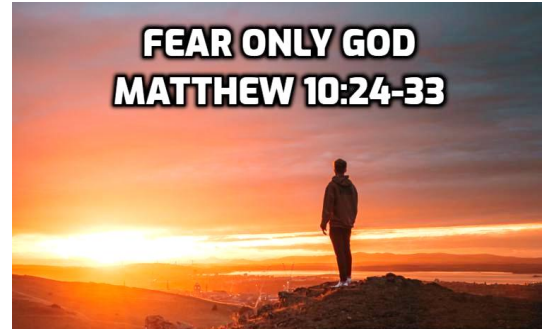
Let us rejoice, then. No matter how many hairs we have on our head, God's love remains to be let in.

As we saw last week, the commission of the Twelve is addressed to all baptised Christians. Continuing his instruction, Jesus tells the apostles that all the ‘hidden’ truths that they have come to know, as his companions during his earthly life, must be ‘proclaimed from the house tops’. The term ‘proclaim’ echoes the word ‘*kerygma*’ (proclamation) that came in the New Testament to stand for the message preached by the apostolic Church.

Jesus knows what the future holds for him, and he warns the apostles that they must be ready for the same fate. The word, ‘martyr’ means ‘witness’. In the early centuries, the fact that so many men and women, young and old, were ready to face a terrible death, rather than renounce their faith, so impressed their pagan neighbours that it led many of them to embrace the Christian faith. Martyrdom has been a continuing fact of the Church's life during the past century. Most of us, however, will not have to face this ultimate test. All of us, in the other hand, will know times when it is not easy to stand up for the things of God.

The courageous example of Jeremiah can still inspire us as we face these difficulties. The messages of the prophets were not miraculous communications, but the reflections of believers who – because they had a living faith in the God of the covenant – recognised God's desires for the people in their changing circumstances. Prompted by the Spirit, they shared their convictions with God's people. Jeremiah lived in a nation in crisis – because of the invasion of a powerful enemy. His prophetic reflections were unwelcome in influential circles. Later developments showed that his fears for his life were justified. Turning to the Lord in his isolation – to the God who comes to the aid of the ‘needy’ – he echoes one of the great themes of Old Testament faith, ‘the Lord hears the cry of the poor (those who have no one else to turn to).’

### *Taking Life Seriously*



✠✠ Now it is the Saviour himself who encourages those who must overcome their ‘fear’, as they give witness to all that he stands for. He translates the theme that gave courage to Jeremiah into terms that bring to mind the whole message of the Sermon on the Mount. Why should they fear? Even the cheapest life in the market ‘two sparrows for a penny’, is in the watchful care of their heavenly Father. ‘Why every hair of your head is numbered’, he tells them. In the end, when he comes to judge the world, he will ‘declare himself for them in the presence of his Father’. Do not be afraid before the threats of the present world; make sure not to be found wanting, in the end.

Our essential Christian witness will not be given in the marketplace, but in the informal exchanges that are a constant part of life – in the discussions that lead to family decisions, in our workplace conversations, and in the attitudes that people know are the expression of Catholic conviction. It will not be so much what we say, as the respect and friendliness with which we express ourselves that matters. ‘Always have your answer ready for the people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have’, St Peter says, ‘But give it with courtesy and respect, and with a clear conscience’ (1 Peter 3:15).

Fear God? This Sunday's Gospel flies in the face of what many current preachers and teachers take for granted is their task: to help people get over their fear of God.

Jesus says just the opposite. On the one hand, after predicting a time in which his disciples will experience their state as being like “sheep in the midst of wolves” (Matthew 10:16), undergoing scourgings, being handed over to death by family members, Jesus says not to be afraid of such people. They can only kill the body but cannot touch the soul. On the other hand, Jesus says, “rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” In other words, fear God. But rather than leave us with that bald statement, Jesus hastens to add a thought “on the third hand”: God whose eye is on the sparrow, cares even more for you. Indeed, he even counts the hairs on your head. So do not be afraid. You are worth much more than a whole flock of sparrows.

If “fear” of God has such a positive meaning, why, then, does Scripture insist on negative words that are best translated “fear” in this case? Analogy may help. Every parent wants to instil in a toddler a healthy fear of fire, deep water, and automobile traffic. Not to respect the danger of such things is to be dangerously out of touch. This is not the craven fear that would keep the child from eventually learning to cook, to swim, and to drive a car. It is a healthy fear that instils a respect for the power of such things. Similarly, biblical fear of God is a deep sense of God's otherness and ultimacy, such that all of our actions are governed by our wonder and respect for this powerful Other.

Perhaps a more helpful analogy is the fear we have of offending those we love the most. Are we not deeply pained when we discover that a word or act of ours has hurt a parent, a child, or a good friend? And do we not fear offending them? That's the fear Jesus would have us feel toward the Father. When our love life is governed by this fear of God, we discover that we really have nothing to be afraid of. “Perfect love drives out fear” (1 John 4:18).

What Jesus offers is a peace that is not fragile, that is already beyond fear and anxiety, that does not depend upon feeling healthy, secure, and loved in this world. What is this peace? It is the absolute assurance that we are connected to the source of life in such a way that nothing, absolutely nothing, can ever sever.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading           Jeremiah 20:10-13

- ↳ Suffering can lead to resentment, bitterness, and anger. Who do you think enabled Jeremiah to not only endure his suffering but also get beyond it and all the negative emotions that came with it?
- ↳ How can trust help you handle a situation when you are surrounded by “terror on every side”? How can you build this trust? Should you wait for “terror” to arrive before you start trusting?

### Second Reading       Romans 5:12-15

- ↳ Paul tells us in this reading that “the gift is not like the transgression.” Does God's mercy wipe out or destroy sin and go far beyond the forgiveness that we all need?
- ↳ Discuss the fact that proclaiming the gospel brings some suffering with it. If you let your sufferings be absorbed into Christ's, do you think they acquire saving significance for the community or for those you love?

### Gospel                   Matthew 10:26-33

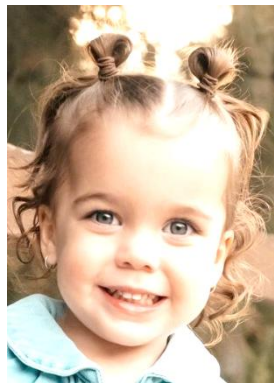
- ↳ If Christ says to “speak in the light” that which he has said in darkness, is that speaking meant to dispel the darkness? Can you “proclaim” the Good News today “from the housetops”? What does that mean in terms of ending racial bias?
- ↳ “And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.” What does Pope Francis say about fear to the people in the middle of a war in South Sudan? Was Francis “speaking in the light”?

When they were locked in there, in the Upper Room, they were not strategizing, no, they were not drafting any pastoral plan. ...

The Spirit himself opens doors and pushes us to press beyond what has already been said and done, beyond the precincts of a timid and wary faith. In the world, unless there is tight organization and a clear strategy, things fall apart. In the Church, however, the Spirit guarantees unity to those who proclaim the message. The Apostles set off: unprepared yet putting their lives on the line. One thing kept them going: the desire to give what they received. The opening part of the first letter of Saint John is beautiful: “that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you” (cf. 1 John 1:3). – Pope Francis, Homily, Mass in South Sudan, 5 Feb 23.

## BAPTISMS THIS WEEKEND – WELCOME!

WELCOME to **SAGE FLANNERY-KAUTER, GOLDIE PIPER, ZANDER HUGHES, ROMY PIPER, BODHI HUGHES** and **SASKIA HUGHES** baptised in our Parish this Saturday, and **ANGUS RAFTY** and **TONY RAFTY** baptised this Sunday: *welcome and thank you to parents, godparents, family and friends from our Parish.*



**Baptism** is the first Sacrament of Christian Initiation, followed by Confirmation and Eucharist. In most of the Eastern Catholic Churches, the three Sacraments are celebrated together as is done in the Latin Catholic Church with adults and children over the age of reason – that is 7 years or older. If you want your infant son or daughter (under 7 years) to receive Baptism, the next Baptisms to be held in our Parish will be during Masses on **Saturday, 18 July / Sunday, 19 July**. The next Baptism preparation meeting for parents will be in the

presbytery on **Thursday, 25 June at 19:15**. Call in to the Parish Office to collect the Baptism Enrolment Forms. Baptism is the first Sacrament of Christian Initiation, followed by Confirmation (Year 6) and Eucharist (7 or 8 year old).

## POPE LEO – REFLECTING ON HIS VISIT TO SPAIN – 17 JUNE 2026

After the long Journey in four African countries, this time I found myself immersed in a European country with an ancient and very rich Catholic tradition. And it appeared evident that today in Spain, which has experienced significant social and cultural changes, the Pope was welcomed everywhere with enthusiasm and readiness to listen. For this I give thanks to God and to the entire Spanish people, the King and the civil Authorities, the Bishops and the ecclesial communities. The people of God gave me great comfort through the joyful expression of their faith and affection. For my part, I confirmed the faithful and, as Bishop of Rome, I encouraged them to overcome every form of division and conflict by always promoting communion, dialogue and unity in diversity. This is the very service of the Successor of Peter, a service which finds a specific expression in Apostolic Journeys, each time adapted to the ecclesial and social situations of the countries visited.

With regard to Spain, I was able to observe with joy that people of all ages and situations had been looking forward to the Pope's visit. I found multitudes [of people] everywhere, who welcomed me with great warmth. This was not something that was taken for granted, and is worthy of reflection. Naturally such participation expresses, first of all, as I said, the faith of the Spanish people. At the same time, I believe it reveals a widespread need to find unity based on a true and deep foundation, one that is neither ideological nor based on partial interests — a foundation which, ultimately, can only be ensured by Christ, and is conveyed in the lives of people by the Gospel, through the necessary "inculturation". It can do so because its message fully responds to both these needs: the search for truth and the thirst for justice. In Madrid and Barcelona, we gathered in the great Cathedral as well as in modern stadiums. We prayed the holy Rosary at the Abbey of Montserrat. We celebrated [Mass] at the Sagrada Família — a majestic symbol, a symphony of stones and light that speaks to everyone of the Christian mystery. This encounter of ancient and modern, Catholic tradition and contemporary culture enabled me to perceive first-hand the very character of Europe, its inestimable wealth, as a living reality, not a thing of the past. It is a heritage to be safeguarded with care, so that it may be invested in today's global world with its momentous challenges: peace, integral ecology, equitable and sustainable development, and respect for human dignity. They are challenges that the Second Vatican Council had already clearly recognized, and to which the subsequent Magisterium returned, up to my recent Encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas, which aims to safeguard the human person in the time of artificial intelligence. Through the various meetings, I sensed a need to hear from the Pope's voice, the Gospel of hope for today's humanity, which is sorely tried by the negative consequences of a deceptive model of development. I recognized this need, which found expression in the many testimonies I was able to listen to — testimonies that were sometimes moving, sometimes edifying — also and above all in the faces of the little ones and the poor whom I met: the child who read his letter to me in the parish; some victims of abuse, who ask to be heard; the inmates who were waiting for me in the prison; the young people filled with anxiety and aspirations; the migrants in the reception centres in the Canary Islands. It was precisely there, in the Canary Islands — the final stop of the Journey — that I was offered a comprehensive insight. It was offered to me, on the one hand, by the very geographical location of that archipelago; and, on the other, by the reality of a local Church which welcomes a large number of forced migrants, mainly from Africa. We know that the migration phenomenon is complex and requires organic and coordinated action plans. But this interpretation opens up a different, broader perspective: it enables us to understand how we are called to reread the Gospel in today's world, exchanging the gifts of our respective cultures with each other, and in particular, the results produced in them by the fruitfulness of Christ's message. And one of these fruits is precisely dialogue between people and between peoples, an encounter in the spirit of fraternity, which enables us to discover and appreciate one another's values. This journey is not easy. It requires goodwill and God's help, but it is the path that leads to the civilization of love. Dear brothers and sisters, the motto of this Apostolic Journey was "*Alzad la mirada*", "Lift up your gaze!" (cf. Jn 4:35). Jesus addressed these words to his first disciples, to teach them to see the desire for life, truth and fullness in people and in the crowds. The Lord repeats those words to me first, and by his grace I also experienced them during this Journey. Today, I would like to share this invitation with you: let us lift up our gaze! Let us learn from Jesus to look at our neighbour, at people and at the world, "through God's eyes", that is, with love, respect and compassion.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year II

Monday	22 Jun	Sts John Fisher, Thomas More, martyrs	2 Kings 17:5-8,13-15,18	Matthew 7:1-5
Tuesday	23 Jun	Tuesday, 12 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	2 Kings 19:9-11,14-36	7:6,12-14
Wednesday	24 Jun	The Birth of John the Baptist	Isaiah 49:1-6	Acts 13:22-26 Luke 1:57-66
Thursday	25 Jun	Thursday, 12 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	2 Kings 24:8-17	Matthew 7:21-29
Friday	26 Jun	Friday, 12 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	2 Kings 25:1-12	Matthew 8:1-4
Saturday	27 Jun	Saturday, 12 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Lamentations 2:2,10-14	Matthew 8:5-17
Sunday	28 Jun	13 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

## FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ 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
- ✦ Week 6 to 13 July NAIDOC Week: <https://www.naidoc.org.au/>
- ✦ Week, 6 to 10 July Meeting of Friars in Auckland NZ – Ken and Andrew away

## PARISH SECRETARY

With Kerry Fabon having resigned and finished up on Friday, 19 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: click on this link ... <https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-your-way-conference/vinnies-thirroul-winter-appeal-2026>

**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

25 younger parishioners will be celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation: please remember them before the Lord.

## CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR?

25, 30, 40, 50, 60 years?? Please contact the Parish Office. Special Mass with the Bishop, 14:00 on 6 September.

<p><b>THIS Sunday's Readings – on website</b></p> <p><b>12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Reading Jeremiah 20:10-13                  2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Romans 5:12-15                  Gospel Matthew 10:26-33</p>	<p><b>NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website</b></p> <p><b>13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Reading 2 Kings 4:8-11,14-16                  2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Romans 6:3-4,8-11                  Gospel Matthew 10:37-42</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY MASS TIMES</b></p> <p>Saturday 17:30                  Sunday 08:00                  Saturday Mass is recorded.</p>
<p><b>Parish of St Michael – Thirroul</b>  <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><b>Mary Pahulu-Falevai • Parish Secretary</b>                  Tues, Thurs 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00</p>	<p><a href="http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au">www.thirroulcatholic.org.au</a>                  325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive                  PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515                  4268 1910</p> <p><a href="mailto:thirroul@dow.org.au">thirroul@dow.org.au</a></p> <p>Parish School of St Michael                  James Bryce Principal 4267 2560</p>	<p><b>THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES</b></p> <p>Monday                  Tuesday 17:30                  Wednesday 09:00                  Thursday 09:00                  Friday 09:30  <i>Anointing of the Sick 1<sup>st</sup> Friday</i></p>