



## Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**4 / 5 JULY 2026**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A**  
**VINNIES WINTER APPEAL**

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

### Death and Life?

A long time ago many began to search for some way to understand death as continuous with life. Otherwise dying is merely a cancellation. And suffering is just a smaller version of it.

Jesus seems to imply that we needn't worry about it, just come close to him. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," he says in this week's Gospel. But in Holy Week we experienced Jesus' passion and death on the Cross, which do not seem restful, at least to this writer.

And how about 9/11, and Iraq, and AIDS, and the tsunami and earthquakes, cyclones, shark attacks and such? Yes, we turn to the Lord, and we do find comfort, many of us, but it doesn't really seem restful.

And, of course, there are clergy who abuse children and young people, even though these same men took up the Lord's life explicitly and made themselves public witnesses of it. Have these men ever slept an undisturbed sleep since their crimes? Even if they have, clearly the survivors have not.

Long ago some began quoting with gusto the words of Dylan Thomas, that ragged poet, who if rumour is true drank himself to the death he dreaded. He wrote this to his father who was upon his death bed: *Do not go gentle into that good night, Old Age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light. Yes, rage.* And in his great poem, "Fern Hill," the same poet says, *Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means, Time held me green and dying Though I sang in my chains like the sea.*

Time steals away the life and liveliness of human beings, whatever of it the world has not already plundered, and death puts an end to it all. How does Jesus give us rest from these kinds of weariness and burden? In what way does he make death easy?

"I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls," he says. Read it in the Gospel. Can it be true? How can we welcome a saviour who is meek and humble instead of fiercely opposing the disastrous wrongs?

Jesus' words do bring some fledgling kind of calm in the face of all this. Somehow, he compels us, consoles us.

Actually, you might say that he reveals one of life's secrets that we might never have guessed. What can it be?

Seek it in me, Jesus says. "I am humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (first reading). Watch me on the sad height of Calvary and see. I have let it all go—belongings, beloveds, repute, all. But one thing remains. Make it your life, in the midst of sorrow, in every act of living and of dying. It is the centre of my life.

Love. Love of God and neighbour.

If you can let go into the arms of the Great Love, give your life away instead of raging, you will know rest from your burdens; you will see how death is the ultimate act of giving yourself away, as Jesus did, burdens or not.

Here we start with the question, what is the source and goal of them both, life and death?

Today's gospel reading from Matthew – filled with light and joy – is all the more remarkable, in that it follows passages that recall a lack of response to the ministry of Jesus in his own region of Galilee. The leaders of the nation have rejected him; in Judea, he is despised as a Galilean; and now his own people have turned against him. Perhaps this passage, that promises 'rest', recalls the times he took his disciples aside to encourage them. But his call is universal, it includes 'all' who are overwhelmed by discouragement to come to him. We will find our encouragement in the joy brought by faith in him.

The note of joy brought by faith already sounds in the words of the prophet, in the first reading. Jesus knew that, despite all these setbacks, his ministry and his words are the long-awaited climax to the remarkable tradition of faith and hope that has sustained the common people who were the true believers of old Israel. 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud', the prophet cries out, rejoice because the messiah king is coming – doing away with the 'horses' and other things of war, he will ride on a donkey, but strong and triumphant, as he brings a peace that embraces the whole world.

Gathering his disciples around him, Jesus encouraged them by sharing with them, in prayer, the joy he found in the relationship with his Father that was his very life. The themes of the Scriptures heard in the synagogue, must often have found an echo in the prayer of Jesus. This passage brings out something we could easily overlook, as we ask ourselves how Jesus formed his disciples and prepared them to take up the great mission to which he was calling them. By sharing his prayer with them, he teaches them the great truths they must announce to the world – the mystery of his relationship with his Father; the strength he found in that relationship, how he made his whole



✠✠ life an expression of the ways of the Father. In the remarkable moment of prayer remembered in this gospel, Jesus is filled with joy and gratitude that the Father gives a privileged place to the ‘little ones’ who have been the first concern of his ministry. It is the simple people who have kept the faith of Israel alive, and who will carry on his mission down through the ages. As the disciples share in his prayer, he helps them to ‘know’ the Father. In the language of the Scriptures, let us recall, this word means far more than gathering information. It implies a sharing of life that brings the joys and security of true friendship. It was in his prayer that they came to know the intimacy with the Father that he expressed in the word, Abba, when addressing his Father. We know from St Paul, that the first Christians adopted this same form of address to the eternal Father (see Galatians 4:6). As they recalled that he taught them to begin their prayer, ‘Our Father’, memories of the prayer he had shared with them must have given a greater depth to their personal prayer.

Both Paul and John tell us we should make the Saviour the model of our Christian life. He was himself the perfect embodiment of the life to which God’s faithful people are called. In the time of Jesus, the rabbis spoke of the Law as God’s ‘yoke’. The Saviour assures that if we try to live as he would live, the ‘yoke’ of New Law he brings is ‘easy and light’.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading Zechariah 9:9-10

- ✠ What ideas do you associate with the word king? Is “gentle king” an oxymoron? What ideas do you associate with the word gentle? Can gentleness be a strength? Can it win wars or put a stop to fighting?
- ✠ Would it be easier to approach a king who is gentle? How approachable are you? Do humility and gentleness have any bearing on a person’s approachability? When did Jesus enter the city “riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey”?

### Second Reading Romans 8:9,11-13

- ✠ At the Incarnation, Christ took on human flesh with all of its burdens and delights. What do you think the Incarnation does for the worth of human flesh?
- ✠ “The Spirit of God dwells in you.” What does this imply about the wonder and holiness of your own spirit? Could it help you in respecting, reverencing your neighbour?

### Gospel Matthew 11:25-30

- ✠ Carpenters used to make a yoke by hand to fit the animal that would wear it. Is your “yoke” handmade for you? If yes, who “makes” it? What does Jesus say about this in Sunday’s Gospel Reading?
- ✠ Does Jesus have the gentleness of the first reading’s king? If he had never laboured or been burdened, would you still feel he could understand you? Discuss Pope Francis’ statement about this Sunday’s Gospel:  
The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew.  
*Evangelii Gaudium, 1*

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

Welcome to this year’s celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday. As we gather in faith, we do so as a people shaped by story — by the Gospel, by culture, and by the journeys that have brought us to this moment. We gather in the presence of God, who walks with us always, and who calls us into unity as one people.

This year invites us into reflection. We mark **40 years** since St Pope John Paul II spoke to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Alice Springs, and we celebrate **50 years** of **NAIDOC Week**. These milestones are more than anniversaries — they are reminders of enduring faith, resilience, and our shared call to walk together. At times, it is important to look back. Not to dwell in the past, but to recognise the path that has been travelled — to see the strength, the challenges, and the grace that have carried us forward. In this, we trust in God’s providence, present in every step of our journey.

Our theme, **Walking Together in Christ: 40 Years On!**, speaks to this moment. It calls us to continue the journey with humility and hope – listening deeply, and walking side by side as one Body in Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit. Across this land, the Church is enriched by the cultures and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Their spirituality, connection to Country, and deep sense of community continue to shape and strengthen the life of the Church in Australia. As St Pope John Paul II reminded us, the Church is enriched by the many cultures it embraces. This is not something we simply acknowledge — it is something we are called to live. Today’s Liturgy is an invitation to listen to, reflect, and to encounter Christ in one another.

Wherever you are gathered — in parish, school, or community — may this celebration be a moment of grace. May it renew our hearts, deepen our unity, and strengthen our commitment to walk together in faith. Thank you for being part of this journey.



# VINNIES WINTER APPEAL 2026 – CONCLUDES THIS WEEKEND

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has launched its annual Vinnies Winter Appeal with a focus on the fact that “Homelessness is Just One Sudden Crisis Away”.

People like David need *urgent* assistance.

David found out how easy it is to lose everything and be pushed into homelessness. He'd worked all his life. But when the work dried up, he simply couldn't pay the rent. In a few short months, he went from a well-paid job to sleeping in a park. It was a devastating shock. All it took was one sudden setback – a change in his circumstances – and David was sleeping rough. “At the beginning, I didn't even have a sleeping bag,” he said. “All I had was a suitcase and shoulder bag that I used as a pillow at nighttime. I couldn't believe how quickly it happened.” *David reached out to Vinnies, where he received the immediate and long-term support he urgently needed, thanks to generous people like you.*

## Slipping through the cracks

With fuel, the cost of living and rental prices higher than ever, an unexpected bill, the loss of a job or a relationship break down can be enough to push someone into homelessness. For more and more people, homelessness is just one sudden crisis away. And this winter, more people than ever before are facing homelessness and poverty in Australia. Your generous gift this weekend or next can help people at risk of or experiencing homelessness get the support they need to find and keep a safe place to stay. *I never thought I'd be homeless. It just goes to show that homelessness can happen to anyone.* – David

This winter, more and more people like David are being pushed into homelessness. All it takes is one sudden crisis. Your donation can provide healthy meals, help with living expenses and accommodation assistance, for somebody at risk of or experiencing homelessness. And your gift can provide the lasting, long-term support that helps someone like David find a safe, secure and sustainable place to live.

**LAST FINANCIAL YEAR – to 30 June 2025 – Thirroul Vinnies Conference provided: Total expenditure for the financial year \$10,970; 102 assistance calls, including 4 to domestic violence victims; 32 Christmas Hampers (value approx. \$4,000); removal costs \$2,000; rent payment \$770; white goods and furniture \$1,500; food donations to the Coniston Drop-In Centre approximately \$3,000. Thank you for your generosity. Your kindness this winter can help someone who has lost everything – through no fault of their own – get back on track and rebuild their life. **Last weekend, a total of \$3,507 was donated! Thank you!****

Check out this short video about the Coniston Vinnies Centre: <https://youtu.be/tFE6GOGHs14>

The appeal will conclude this weekend in our Parish. *Help end homelessness.*

You can donate cash or use your credit/debit card. You can also donate online to Thirroul Vinnies Conference: go to this link to donate:



## Confirmation Candidates 2026



## CONFIRMATION 2026

Last Thursday evening, 2 July, 23 of our young parishioners received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Brian Mascord. Congratulations to these Candidates:

**Victoria Fleming  
Leo Zanetti  
Scout Hasham  
Alex Zamuner  
Liam Elias  
Teo Taylor  
Eddie Hay  
Summer Fitzgerald  
Vincent Scimone**

**Everett Wilson; Oliver Weston; Callum Rutledge; Aria Grilli; Milla Barr; Lillian Constable; Elliot O'Brien; Noah Furtner; Ciara Molloy; Olive Bulmer; Felix Nasso; Jemima Crinis; Coral Zamuner; Samson McDonell. Congratulations to the Candidates and their families.**

## SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year II

Monday	6 Jul	Monday, 14 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Hosea 2:16-18,21-22	Matthew 9:18-26
Tuesday	7 Jul	Tuesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Hosea 8:4-7,11-13	Matthew 9:32-38
Wednesday	8 Jul	Wednesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Hosea 10:1-3,7-8,12	Matthew 10:1-7
Thursday	9 Jul	Thursday, 14 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Hosea 11:1-4,8-9	Matthew 10:7-15
Friday	10 Jul	Friday, 14 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	Hosea 14:2-10	Matthew 10:16-23
Saturday	11 Jul	St Benedict, abbot	Isaiah 6:1-8	Matthew 10:24-33
Sunday	12 Jul	15 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

## FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ Weekend, 4/5 July Vinnies Winter Appeal Week #2 at both Masses  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday  
School Holidays begin – *enjoy the relaxation and keep safe*
- ✦ 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  
Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion Tuesday to Friday
- ✦ Wednesday, 8 July 10:30 Catholic Women’s League Meeting in the Presbytery
- ✦ Weekend, 11/12 July Blessing of July Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays
- ✦ Saturday, 11 July 18:30 Dinner at Club Thirroul after 17:30 Mass

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS

MARY PAHULU-FALEVAI is our new Parish Secretary. *Call in and say hi!* 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.**

## JUBILEE OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI 2026

Our Parish warmly welcomes pilgrimage groups to visit St Michael Church during the Jubilee Year of St Francis of Assisi – 800 years since his death. A plenary indulgence is available, under the usual conditions, to all the faithful “who, with a heart detached from sin, participate in the Year of Saint Francis by visiting, in the form of a pilgrimage, any Franciscan conventual church or place of worship anywhere in the world dedicated to Saint Francis.” (Decree, 10 January 2026) Our parish will be celebrating the Feast of St Francis with special Masses on **Saturday, 3 October** and **Sunday, 4 October 2026**. There will also be the **Blessing of Animals** at **09:30** on **Monday, 5 October**.

**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.**

## CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR?

**25, 30, 40, 50, 60 years?? 2026 Significant Marriage Anniversaries Mass.** If you are celebrating 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 or over 60 years of marriage this year, you are warmly invited to the Significant Marriage Anniversaries, celebrated with Bishop Brian Mascord on **Sunday, 6 September 2026 at 14:00 at the St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong**. Mass will be followed by light refreshments in the Xavier Centre Conference Room. **Registration is essential and must be completed online** at [dow.sh/ma26](http://dow.sh/ma26) by no later than Monday, 17 August 2026. Any enquiries please email Helen Bennett [helen.bennett@dow.org.au](mailto:helen.bennett@dow.org.au)

<p><b>THIS Sunday’s Readings</b> – <i>on website</i></p> <p><b>14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Reading            Zechariah 9:9-10</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading            Romans 8:9,11-13</p> <p>Gospel                    Matthew 11:25-30</p>	<p><b>NEXT Sunday’s Readings</b> – <i>on website</i></p> <p><b>15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Reading            Isaiah 55:10-11</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading            Romans 8:18-23</p> <p>Gospel                    Matthew 13:1-23</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUNDAY</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MASS TIMES</b></p> <p>Saturday 📺 17:30</p> <p>Sunday            08:00</p> <p>📺 Saturday Mass is recorded.</p>
<p><b>Parish of St Michael – Thirroul</b></p> <p><i>One of the four Northern Illawarra Parishes</i></p> <p><i>Moving forward as a Parish Family</i></p> <p>Patrick Vaughan • <i>Parish Priest</i></p> <p>Andrew Granc ofm, Ken Cafe ofm • <i>Assisting</i></p> <p><b>Mary Pahulu-Falevai • Parish Secretary</b></p> <p><b>Tues, Thurs 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00</b></p>	<p>🌐 <a href="http://www.thirroulcatholic.org.au">www.thirroulcatholic.org.au</a></p> <p>📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive</p> <p>📧 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515</p> <p>☎ 4268 1910</p> <p>📧 <a href="mailto:thirroul@dow.org.au">thirroul@dow.org.au</a></p> <p>Parish School of St Michael</p> <p>James Bryce Principal ☎ 4267 2560</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THIS WEEK’S LITURGIES</b></p> <p>Monday _____</p> <p>Tuesday 📺 17:30</p> <p>Wednesday 09:00</p> <p>Thursday 09:00</p> <p>Friday 09:30</p> <p><i>Anointing of the Sick 1<sup>st</sup> Friday</i></p>