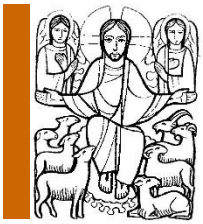


Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



Parish Bulletin
21 / 22 November 2026
Christ the King · Year A

Vinnies Christmas Appeal Begins Next Weekend

This Week's Readings

Make Your Choice

This is the last Sunday of the Church year, which as you know is different from the calendar year. Next week we will begin the new year, starting with Advent, our waiting for the birth of Jesus into the world. On this last Sunday of the year, the Church appropriately celebrates the feast of Christ the King.



Here is the story of this king of ours.

First, God continually sought out his people throughout history, inviting them to a covenant relationship. But the "shepherds of Israel" let God's sheep scatter over the face of the earth. They actually made meals of the sheep instead of feeding them. (See Ezekiel 34:1-10) So God said the words of the first reading. "I myself will look after and tend my sheep. The injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal."

God's care for his people is exquisite, and it is the foundation of all our belief. He shepherds us today in the same way.

The Psalm, "The Lord is My Shepherd," is used here simply as a reply to the first reading. To paraphrase, "We see that God is shepherding us, as he promised. Goodness and kindness are given abundantly. God lets us walk beside restful waters, through green pastures." We are filled with gratitude.

People of different generations sometimes remember and sometimes forget God's love. The ones who forget it fill their lives with other gods, whichever seemed most attractive. Idols, these are called.

So, in the second reading, St Paul tells us about Christ, who is God's shepherding made flesh. Although death and sorrow and sin have been on the rampage, Christ brings the first reading's light and peace and wholeness.

Then the Gospel tells us in a parable who will receive this light and peace. Not everyone can be counted among God's beloved sheep. Some people have been goats instead.

How do you know which you are? The standard is extremely clear. Have you cared for the hungry? Have you given water to the thirsty? What about welcoming the stranger, and giving clothes to those who have none and what about visiting people in prison? This is what God did in the first reading. It is what Jesus did in his life on earth. It is the loving duty he has entrusted to us who are his body, his band of shepherds. If you have joined this group, then you are one of the sheep who have received Christ's love and who are very grateful.

But maybe you or I have never taken time to care for Christ's least brother or sister. Maybe we are goats.

If we keep on that way, we should not be surprised when God says at the end of time, "you never did pass on to others the care I gave to you. You did not let me into their lives. If you had, your gratitude for my love would have led you to them! I care to shepherd you even now, but all I can do is affirm the choice you have made with your life. You have chosen to live without me, your God, and I must respect your choice."

This is how a real King acts. He respects and honours his subjects' needs and desires. We have to ask ourselves in freedom which side we are on right now.

Before it is too late.

The tableau in today's gospel concludes Matthew's collection of the teachings of Jesus concerning the End. Unique to Matthew's gospel, it is a masterpiece. Strictly speaking, it is not a parable, but an allegory – a narrative in which details have symbolic significance. It may be the development of a simple parable, in which Jesus likened the expected coming of the 'Son of Man' with divine authority (Daniel 7) to a shepherd 'separating sheep from goats'. It provides, in a simple form, a splendid summary of the teaching of Jesus in Matthew's gospel, concerning the living of our Christian faith.

For the first Christians, Jesus was the 'Son of Man', invested in his risen glory with divine authority (Matthew 26:64). In today's second reading, Paul celebrates the divine authority with which the Saviour brings his saving work to completion. In the triumph of the Resurrection, he has authority over the whole of creation; when 'the end' comes, having overcome all the forces of evil, he will deliver the New Creation into the hands of his Father, and those who share in his triumph will rejoice in a divine generosity that has no limits. Paul's account of 'the end' is somewhat overwhelming. Matthew's tableau, on the other hand, presents the final Judgment in terms that are easy to understand – terms that can be related to the ways of God that found expression in the Sermon on the Mount. Despite its simplicity, however, the more we ponder this tableau the more we come to appreciate how rich it is in inspiration for those who want to live as followers of Jesus.

The criterion by which we will be judged when we come into the presence of God is practical, simple and clear. It is not so much what we do for the God 'we cannot see' that matters, in the end, but what we do for one another – expressing the fact that we are true children of the same Father (cf.1 John 4:20). And among God's children it 📌📌

is the poor and needy who should have our special care – our 'preferential option'. The things that will establish our worth in the sight of God, and our readiness to share in God's friendship, are simple things, possible to all, learned and simple, rich and poor. What overturns our expectations and is immensely reassuring is the fact that those who have proved themselves worthy of hearing the Lord's invitation – 'Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world' – may well be taken unawares. Responding to the grace of God, working in them 'in a hidden way' (*Gaudium et spes*, n.22), they have shown themselves true children of the Father – helping for the sake of those in need, without any thought of a reward. Matthew's tableau finds a place among the elect for all who fight unselfishly humanity's ancient enemies: 'ignorance, poverty, disease, injustice, bigotry, death of body or soul'. The greatest inspiration of all, however, is found in the Lord's affirmation, 'You did it to me'. Sharing our humanity and experience in a struggling world, the 'Son of Man' has made himself one in a privileged way with those in greatest need.

Placing us on the threshold of the final Kingdom, this tableau gives us a glimpse of what it will be like – one family of the Father, united in God's generous and merciful ways. Today, we venerate Christ the King; today's gospel reminds us that it is only in his final 'glory' that he exercised his kingship. Among us, he makes himself the 'Servant' of all.

Questions About This Sunday's Scripture Readings

First Reading Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17

- "As a shepherd tends his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so will I tend my sheep." If an evangelizing community gets involved in people's daily lives, embracing their sufferings, will they, in a way, take on the "smell of the sheep" [*Evangelii Gaudium*, 24]? Will that make it easier for the sheep to hear the evangelizer's voice?
- According to this reading, what kind of shepherd is the Lord God? If there is a message in this reading for people in Church leadership positions, what is it? What can you do to "bind up the injured and heal the sick"?

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28

- "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." Name some signs of "death or serious illness" that you see in the world, or the environment? What can you do to restore life? How can you help Christ accomplish the task of destroying death?
- Besides the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine, what are some of the many other forms of violence in the world today? How can you help Christ challenge them? Pray and fast with others? Advocate for laws?

Gospel Matthew 25:31-46

- This king is the almighty and glorious God who comes to heal, seek out and bind up. Why did he come into the world in solidarity with the poor, wear thorns for his crown and have a cross for his throne? Can you relate on a personal level to a very rich, brilliant leader? How about to a poor and suffering one?
- In this Gospel Jesus has a "double identity". He is the king-shepherd who also identifies himself with the lost sheep, the most needy of these brothers and sisters. What does he ask us to do? Is our final judgement based on our love?

> And he thus indicates the criterion of the judgement: it will be made on the basis of concrete love given or denied to these persons, because he himself, the judge, is present in each one of them … The judgement will be on love, … we will be judged on works, on compassion that becomes nearness and kind help. Do I draw near to Jesus present in the persons of the sick, the poor, the suffering, the imprisoned, of those who hunger and thirst for justice? Do I draw near to Jesus present there? This is the question for today.
>
> – Pope Francis, *Angelus*, Feast of Christ the King, 22 November 2020

Disabled Surfers Association – Thirroul, 5 December

The annual Disabled Surfers Association event will take place at **Thirroul Beach South** on **Saturday, 5 December**, commencing at **08:30 and continuing until 13:00 – Volunteers are Needed**. The Disabled Surfers Association provides an environment for individuals with a disability, the opportunity to experience the freedom of surfing with friends, using up to date equipment to get individuals over the sand and into the water with dignity. The organisation on the South Coast and Illawarra has been established for over 30 Years and prides itself on their achievements and advancements in the area of disability. The organisation operates on a volunteer basis and requires volunteers to provide the necessary numbers to establish the safety requirements, that we as an organisation hold. The event is designed to ensure the safety of all individuals, be they participants or volunteers. The core role is to ensure that the participants have an exciting day on the beach. The organisation does not have any restrictions in relation to the individuals who attend and participate. We strive to ensure that all participants get the opportunity to experience the day at the beach. Age is no barrier to volunteer and there is no requirement to know how to swim – but it does help at times. **Just turn up on Saturday, 5 December at Thirroul South**. **https://www.disabledsurfers.org/nsw-south-coast**

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2026 – NEXT TWO WEEKENDS

The Annual Vinnies Christmas Appeal will be held **over the next two weekends**: **28/29 November** and **5/6 December**. **Thank you for your generosity in previous years!** There are **four ways** you will be able to contribute:

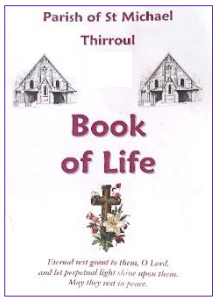
(1) take a hamper notice from those displayed in the church and make up a hamper;
(2) take a toy tag from the Giving Tree (for children 0-11);
(3) make a money/cash contribution using the envelopes on the church pews;
(4) use the link in next week's Bulletin to make an online donation.

Thank you! Also needed at the moment: tinned vegetables; tinned meals; sweet biscuits; condiments.



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

BOOK OF LIFE



All during November we remember especially those who have died, our relatives, friends and those who have no one to pray for them. Next to the altar, the **Book of Life** will be displayed, and each day a new month will be open – as well as those pages listing names for whom no date of death is known. **Please check if your deceased relative or friend is listed in the Book of Life** – either on the date of their death, or towards the end of the Book, if their date has not been listed in the Parish records. If you would like the name of someone who has died placed in the **Book of Life**, there are special forms available next to the baptism font in the church all during November. Please complete a form for each deceased person whose name is not already in the **Book of Life**, and put the form(s) in the basket next to the baptism font, and the name(s) will be added after November. If you are unable to attend Mass, email or phone the Parish Office with details you wish placed in the Book of the Dead (name of the deceased and date of death) A special violet candle will be lit during every Mass in November. *May they rest in peace.*

POPE LEO'S GENERAL AUDIENCE – WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2026

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

I returned to Rome yesterday morning from my long and beautiful Apostolic Journey to Uruguay, Argentina and Peru. Peru, as you know, is the country where I lived for many years, as a missionary and then as a bishop. Argentina is the homeland of Pope Francis, and I wished to visit it, to meet the people whom he loved so dearly. Uruguay is a nation where Catholics are a minority, and it is significant that my itinerary began right there.

The motto of the pastoral visit to Uruguay was *"I bring you news of great joy" (Luke 2:10).* These are the words with which, in the Gospel of Luke, the angel brings the news of the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds in Bethlehem. And in effect, I went to that Country in order to proclaim Him, the Lord, God made man, who bestows fullness of life in truth and in love. I am very pleased because I found a warm and heartfelt welcome amongst the Uruguayan people, so that I was able to remind everyone how important faith in God is and how valuable human life is; and how faith helps us to face the trials of life and to be builders of peace.

In Argentina, the motto was *Welcome, everyone. Go and proclaim!* These words echo the magisterium of Pope Francis, a son of that great South American country. This is the vision of the Church that he has passed on to us: a welcoming Church, open to all, where everyone can feel at home, be listened to, recognized in their dignity, be reconciled with God, with themselves and with the community, and be valued for their gifts and limitations; and, at the same time, a Church that is wholly missionary, finding her coherence and joy in evangelizing. In Argentina, I experienced the enthusiastic and harmonious participation of the holy people of God. In this atmosphere of great affection for the Pope – which I shall never forget – I urged them to cultivate communion in the richness of diversity, and I encouraged their commitment to building a just and supportive society, in accordance with the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

The visit to Peru was a little longer, because I owe a special debt of gratitude to the People of God living in that country. The motto of this third leg was "*Let us open our hearts!*" To follow Christ, we must open our hearts to the Holy Spirit, following the example of the saints. The history of Peru would not have been the same without the presence and work of St Turibius of Mogrovejo, St Rose of Lima, St Francis Solano, St Martín de Porres and St Juan Macías. Together with faith, hope and charity, they promoted respect for human dignity, a sense of the sanctity of life, reconciliation and peace: they built the civilization of love. Their witness is alive and relevant today, and even now there is no shortage of men and women who, with hearts open to God and to their neighbour, are committed to building a more just and fraternal Peru. It was a great joy for me to be able to encourage them with the grace proper to the Petrine ministry; and I also sought to do so by meeting personally, here as in other countries, some victims of abuse.

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK — Sundays Year A · Weekdays Year II

Monday	23 Nov	Weekday, 34th Week in Ordinary Time	Revelation 14:1-5	Luke 21:1-4
Tuesday	24 Nov	Sts Andrew Dung-Lac ++, martyrs	Revelation 14:14-19	Luke 21:5-11
Wednesday	25 Nov	Weekday, 34th Week in Ordinary Time	Revelation 15:1-4	Luke 21:12-19
Thursday	26 Nov	Weekday, 34th Week in Ordinary Time	Revelation 18:1-2,21-23…	Luke 21:20-28
Friday	27 Nov	Weekday, 34th Week in Ordinary Time	Revelation 20:1-4,11–21:2	Luke 21:29-33
Saturday	28 Nov	Weekday, 34th Week in Ordinary Time	Revelation 22:1-7	Luke 21:34-36
Sunday	29 Nov	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT · YEAR B – *Scripture Readings are listed below.*		



FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

Thursday, 26 November	19:15	Baptism Preparation Meeting for December Baptisms
Saturday, 28 November	17:30	10 Parishioners receiving First Communion Vinnies Christmas Appeal Christmas Tree Blessing
Sunday, 29 November	08:00	3 Parishioners receiving First Communion Vinnies Christmas Appeal Christmas Tree Blessing
Friday, 4 December	09:30	Anointing of the Sick during Mass Year 6 Graduation Liturgy with whole school
Saturday, 5 December	09:00	Disabled Surfers Association – volunteers needed No experience required: https://www.disabledsurfers.org



THIS WEEK'S RECIPE: MAPLE GLAZED CHICKEN BREASTS



4 or 5 small skinless chicken breasts; ½ cup chicken broth; ¼ cup pure maple syrup; ½ lemon, juiced; ½ tbsp Dijon mustard; 1 tbsp minced garlic; olive oil; fresh parsley; salt; black pepper.

Season the chicken breasts with salt and black pepper on both sides. Combine the chicken broth, pure maple syrup, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, and minced garlic in a medium bowl. Set aside. Place a large skillet or pan on the stove top over medium-high heat. Cover the bottom with olive oil. Once hot add the seasoned chicken breasts. You may have to do batches, depending on the size of your pan. Sear on both sides for 3-4 minutes, depending on the size of your breasts. Remove the chicken from the skillet and turn the heat to low or completely off. You want the hot skillet to thoroughly cool down. Once the skillet has cooled down, add the maple sauce mixture. Bring to a simmer and scrape up all of the browned bits on the bottom of the skillet. Add the seared chicken back into the skillet. Simmer for about 5-8 minutes, depending on the thickness of the chicken, until cooked through. Baste, or cover the surface of the chicken with the sauce, throughout the cooking process. Remove the chicken from the pan and add to a serving plate. Bring the remaining maple sauce in the skillet to a high simmer for 1-2 minutes to reduce it to a thick, sticky glaze. Be careful to not burn, a couple of minutes is all you need! Drizzle or spread the reduced maple glaze over the chicken breasts. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley and lemon wedges. Serve and enjoy!

What's on around the Diocese? Check out upcoming Diocesan events and courses – too many to list in one place. Subscribe here and we will keep you in the loop: dow.sh/stayingconnected

THIS Sunday's Readings – *on website*

CHRIST THE KING ♦ YEAR A

1st Reading	Ezekiel 34:11-12,15-17
2nd Reading	1 Corinthians 15:20-26,28
Gospel	Matthew 25:31-46

NEXT Sunday's Readings – *on website*

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ♦ YEAR B

1st Reading	Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1,3-8
2nd Reading	1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gospel	Mark 13:33-37

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*

Mary Pahulu-Falevai · Parish Secretary

Tues, Thurs 09:00–15:00; Fri 08:30–15:00

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

THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES

Monday	
Tuesday	17:30
Wednesday	09:00
Thursday	09:00
Friday	09:30

Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday