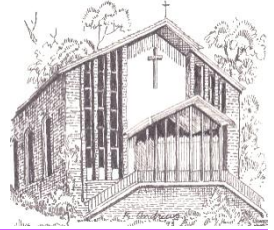




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



9 / 10 MARCH 2018

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT ✦ YEAR C

✦ Prayer ✦ Fasting ✦ Almsgiving ✦

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

You Are My Beloved

Jesus sweeps into the desert, filled with the Holy Spirit, led by a voice that had proclaimed, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:21-22).

These are the words of God the Father. Notice, they were nearly the same as God's utterance eight hundred years before:

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights, upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations." (Isaiah 42:1-4)

Was Jesus surprised to hear this? In the most profound sense, no. After all he already knew in his deepest soul that he was divine. But he was also human, and completely so. Therefore, in his explicit, daily, human mind, he was surprised. Though he had read and re-read the Isaiah passage since he was at his mother's knee, only now did it all click into place.



His vocation was to be the chosen one. So, he was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert in order to recall the Father's words again and again, over and over, in silence and with an openness so holy that it would seem almost like emptiness.

But someone else was aware of these events. The devil, with a dumb and greedy knowledge, knew that this great servant of God could be used for ugly motives. Jesus' strength, his God-like holiness, the fame that he would acquire, all these could become a tool for subjecting the world to evil. So, he slid over to Jesus.

"No point in being empty," he said. "Just give a Godly command and this stone will turn into bread and get rid of that hunger." In other words, you know you are God, don't you? Take whatever you want. Have a great life!

Jesus answered from the scriptures. "No one lives by bread alone." These words paraphrase Moses' great second speech to the people of Israel:

"Not by bread alone do people live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

How do we assuage (satisfy) our hungers?

The devil hurried on to a second temptation. "Join me, worship me. All the kingdoms in the world will be yours, as they are mine already." (Meaning: you can be bigger than this heavenly king of yours.) Jesus replied, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and God alone shall you serve." (see Deuteronomy 6:13)

Whom do we worship and serve?



🔱🔱 Two temptations have failed. Yet, “even the devil can quote scripture.” So, it uses Psalm 91—the part about God commanding angels to guard his beloved one (Psalm 91:11-12). “Just throw yourself off these heights,” he proposes smoothly. “God’s angels will have no choice, they will have to come save you. Take advantage of who you are.”

Don't we sometimes want to show off our power?

Jesus again answered from the same book of scripture (Deuteronomy 6:16). “You shall not tempt the Lord your God,” he says. His meaning: God the Father is first and above all. If you can bribe God



to do tricks for you, then you will seem equal to God! But you aren't.

Don't we sometimes act like we think we are God?

As we begin the journey towards our Easter celebration, today's gospel reading from Luke sets us on our way. For Luke, Jesus' temptations in the wilderness point to the terrible conflict that awaits him at the end of the public life – when 'at his opportune time' the devil returns to frustrate the Saviour's work. In Luke's account, the last temptation takes place in Jerusalem – Jesus' final conflict with the forces of evil will take place in the holy city.

A great realism runs through the biblical story. God's final purposes for the human family and for the whole of creation will only be realised through the Saviour's defeat of the forces of evil. We do not need to be persuaded that evil forces are at work in our world – selfish abuse of the freedom given to God's creatures; but also, the destructiveness caused by the blindness of those who have lost their way in a darkened world. Today's gospel presents the conflict of Jesus with the forces of evil as a very personal one. Perhaps this presentation is a summary of the teaching in which – drawing on the experience of a life shared with us – Jesus warned his disciples of the temptations that would call them away from their commitment to follow him. They will be tempted to give false gods the place the one true God should have in their lives: creature comforts and possessions; power abused for selfish advantage; a 'religious' complacency that presumes on God's favours without a genuine commitment to the ways of God.

In the gospel accounts, the temptations of Jesus are closely linked with his baptism by John: 'Filled with Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there'. In the Jordan he showed that he had thrown in his lot with struggling humanity – 'put to the test in exactly the same way as ourselves, apart from sin' (Hebrews 4:15). By his example, and finally through the power of his Paschal Mystery, he would make himself the 'Way' to the fullness of life for a lost world. Our reading from Paul to the Romans celebrates this triumphant outcome.

As we reflect upon the conversion to which the Church invites us during our Lenten journey, the Lord's example should be our inspiration. The temptations he faced encourage us to look beyond superficial problems in our lives and characters, and to face up to the root causes of these failings – the false gods that so easily seduce our divided human hearts. Today's liturgy brings us another valuable lesson. The Word of God is a power for good in the lives of those who know and love the Scriptures. The words of Scripture with which Jesus confounds the tempter come from the book of Deuteronomy. Paul cites this same book (30:14) as he proclaims the Church's faith in the risen Lord. This book is one of the high points of the Old Testament. In today's first reading it gives us a summary of Old Testament faith in the God's faithfulness – a faithfulness that is finally expressed in the Paschal Mystery.

Welcome to Lent!

PROJECT COMPASSION

100% Determination Life in her village in north western Zimbabwe wasn't easy for 12 year old Thandolwayo. Thandolwayo lives with her grandparents and attends the local school which has just 35 students. Every morning Thandolwayo would walk seven kilometres and risked being attacked by crocodiles as she collected contaminated water for her family. She'd then go to school feeling exhausted. Thandolwayo's grandparents sell pearl millet bran to fishermen and farmers for animal feed. They also sell chickens – but the income it brings isn't enough to support the family. Thandolwayo's hope to be a nurse seemed almost impossible to realise, until Caritas Hwange helped the village to install two solar powered pumps and two 10,000 litre water storage tanks. The pumps draw the water up from the river to the storage tanks. Thanks to Caritas' support, water is now on tap in the village, benefitting the whole community – and Thandolwayo can concentrate on her education. "Now I can bathe every day, the distance to collect water for the family has been reduced," Thandolwayo says. "We now drink clean, safe water and diseases are no longer affecting us." The plentiful water supply has also triggered new ventures. Water is being used to mould bricks for building houses and to pound maize to sell. Plans are underway to establish a community garden and a fish pond, to generate a better income. "Hope is important because it makes me work harder so that I achieve what I want to be when I grow up," Thandolwayo says. Please take home a Project Compassion box and/or a set of donation envelopes and support Caritas Australia this Lenten season.



Lives change when we all give 100%. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, or by phoning 1800 024 413 or visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion

SOCIAL JUSTICE

At this moment in time, passion for what is distinctively human, and for the whole human family, encounters serious obstacles. ... The gap between concern with one's own well-being and the prosperity of the larger human family seems to be stretching to the point of complete division. ... This emergency reveals a paradox. How could it happen that, at the very moment of history when available economic and technological resources make it possible for us to care suitably for our common home and our human family, in obedience to God's command, those same economic and technological resources are creating our most bitter divisions and our worst nightmares? People sense acutely and painfully, albeit often confusedly, the spiritual dejection, or even nihilism, that subordinate's life itself to a world and a society dominated by this paradox. The attempt to dull this sense of deep distress by the blind pursuit of material pleasure produces the ennui of a life lacking in a purpose that can satisfy its spiritual yearning. ... The financial system and the ideology of consumerism regulate our needs and manipulate our desires, with little concern for beauty of a life in common and for the sustainability of our common home. Christians, hearing the cry of suffering peoples, need to react against the negativity that foments division, indifference and hostility. They must do so not simply for their own sake, but for that of everyone.

– Pope Francis, *Humana Communitas*, 6 January 2019

NEXT INFANT BAPTISMS

The next infant baptisms will be on **Easter Sunday, 21 April, during the 8am Mass.** The Baptism Preparation Meeting will be on **Thursday, 28 March at 7:15pm.**

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Tuesday 12 Mar 11:00am Catholic Women's League
Saturday 23 Mar CatholicCare Race Day, Kembla Grange Racecourse
Thursday 28 Mar Baptism Preparation Meeting, 7:15pm
Sunday 7 Apr Daylight Saving ends
Tuesday 9 Apr Reconciliation Rite II at Thirroul, 7:30pm
Sunday 14 Apr Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, Cataract Dam 11am-3pm

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK
 TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA**

4,399 rescues performed since 1 July 18 – last week **4,282**

SWIM SAFELY – BETWEEN THE FLAGS WHERE THE WAVES BREAK



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Next Tuesday, **12 March**, commencing at **11:00am** in the McCarthy Centre. John Dening, President of Thirroul St Vincent de Paul Conference, will be guest speaker. Light luncheon to follow. All welcome! Monthly meeting 1:30pm.

CATHOLICARE ST PATRICK'S DAY FUNDRAISER

All are invited on **Saturday, 23 March** to **Kembla Grange Racecourse** for the annual **CatholicCare Race Day**. All monies raised will go towards supporting siblings of kids with disability. Single tickets (\$100) or tables available. Tickets include: sit down two course meal; afternoon tea; complimentary race day book; three drink vouchers; fashions in the room. For more info contact Jacqueline on 4254 9308 jacquelinem@catholiccare.dow.org.au or www.catholiccare.dow.org.au



THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

First Sunday of Lent • Year C

1st Reading Deuteronomy 26:4-10
2nd Reading Romans 10:8-13
Gospel Luke 4:1-13

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Second Sunday of Lent • Year C

1st Reading Genesis 15:5-12,17-18
2nd Reading Philippians 3:17-4:1
Gospel Luke 9:28-36

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul
 Saturday – **5:30pm** • Sunday – **8:00am**
Bulli • Sunday 8:30am and 5:30pm
Corrimal • Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am

LITURGIES THIS WEEK

Wombarra [Liturgy] Monday 4:30pm
Thirroul Tuesday **5:30pm**
 Wednesday **9:00am**
 Thursday **9:00am**
 Friday **9:30am**

Parish of St Michael – Thirroul and Wombarra

Moving forward as a Parish Family + one of the Northern Illawarra Parishes

Patrick Vaughan • *Parish Priest* ❖ Andrew Granc ofm, Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • *Assisting*

325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive
 4268 1910 4268 1976

PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday Friday

9:00am to 3:30pm Magda Pires
10:00am to 3:00pm Maureen Franciskovic

www.thirroulcatholic.org.au Parish School of St Michael 4267 2560