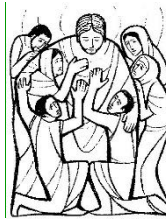




# Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**8/9 JULY 2023**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR A**  
**VINNIES WINTER APPEAL**

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

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' – infants – 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'.

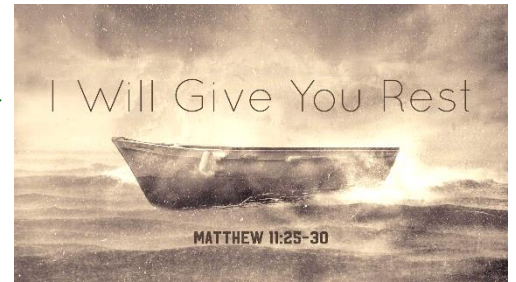
The words spoken by Jesus in today's Gospel are among his most moving invitations to anyone who is feeling overwhelmed. He invites us to come and find rest in his love. His invitation is all the more moving when we read it in context. Jesus' heart has gone out to the people who are harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd, but he has just been rejected by the leaders, the very ones who are failing to care for the people and, in God's name, are laying burdens on them that are too heavy to carry. Jesus invites us to come to him. We still have to suffer the burdens of life, but if we come to Jesus we will find that the yoke sits easily on our shoulders and we can carry the burden, for it is fitted to us, and Jesus is carrying it with us.

The scribes and Pharisees pride themselves on being learned in the law yet fail to understand the basics of justice, mercy, and faith (23:23). They repeatedly reject Jesus and conspire against him, thus conspiring against the very purposes of God.

The "infants," on the other hand, are not regarded as wise or important. They are the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the persecuted, all whom Jesus calls blessed (5:3-12). They are the sick and the lame, the lepers and demon-possessed, the tax collectors and sinners, who come to Jesus for healing of body and spirit. It is God's gracious will to act in ways that confound human wisdom (11:26), and so these "infants" see what the "wise" cannot — that Jesus is sent by the Father and reveals the Father (11:27).

Jesus' prayer then turns to invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest" (11:28). Who are the ones labouring wearily and heavily burdened? Again, it is the common people rather than their leaders. Later in Matthew, Jesus chastises the scribes and Pharisees because "they tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them" (23:4). The heavy burden they lay on the people is not the law per se; it is rather their

## *A Righteous Reward?*



✠ ✠ particular interpretation and practice of the law, which, for instance, excludes from meals the ritually unclean (9:10-13), places restrictions on the Sabbath that ignore human need (12:1-14), is zealous about tithing mint, dill, and cumin, but neglects the “weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith” (23:23).

The religious leaders in Matthew’s story are also complicit with the Roman rulers in maintaining the imperial system. The common people labour wearily under Roman occupation, in which the ruling elite secure wealth, status, and power at the expense of the lowly. Jesus rejects this social order as contrary to God’s will: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (20:25-28).

To all those labouring under harsh religious and political systems, Jesus says, “Come to me... and I will give you rest.” Rest in the Septuagint can refer to Sabbath rest, the rest of death, or rest from war when Israel’s enemies have been subdued. Rest also functions as an image of salvation, of what will be when the world is finally ordered according to God’s purposes and enjoys its full and complete Sabbath. In promising “rest,” Jesus promises life under God’s reign in the new world that he is bringing into being.

Jesus further invites the weary: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (11:29-30). The yoke was a familiar symbol of burden bearing, oppression, and subjugation. Yokes were laid on the necks and shoulders of oxen and also on prisoners of war and slaves. But “yoke” was also used metaphorically with positive connotations, as in the invitation to wisdom in Sirach 51:26, “Put your neck under her yoke, and let your souls receive instruction,” and as a rabbinic metaphor for the difficult but joyous task of obedience to Torah, the Law.

What is the yoke Jesus offers? We might infer that it is his teaching, his way of discipleship, which is not burdensome but life-giving. He invites the weary to learn from him, for he is not a tyrant who lords it over his disciples, but is “gentle and humble in heart.” His yoke is easy (better translated “good” or “kind”) and his burden is light. To take his yoke upon oneself is to be yoked to the one in whom God’s kingdom of justice, mercy, and compassion is breaking into this world, and to find the rest for which the soul longs.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading Zechariah 9:9-10

✠ What idea do you associate with the word meek? Could meekness be a strength? Could meekness/humility help end wars, solve the climate crisis, put an end to racial discrimination? (*Humility* is a synonym, and *truth* is a synonym for humility.)

✠ Does Jesus have the meekness of the first reading’s king? Discuss Pope Francis’ statement about this Sunday’s readings?

The world exalts those who are rich and powerful, no matter by what means, and at times tramples upon the human being and his or her dignity. And we see this every day, the poor trampled underfoot. ... It is a message for the Church, called to live works of mercy and to evangelize the poor, to be meek and humble. This is how the Lord wants his Church, that is, us, to be. May the humblest and highest of creatures implore from God wisdom of heart for us, so that we may discern his signs in our lives and be participants in those mysteries which, hidden from the proud, are revealed to the humble. – *Pope Francis, Angelus, 5 July 2020*

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

✠ “You are not in the flesh: on the contrary, you are in the spirit. ...” At the Incarnation Christ took on human flesh with all its delights and burdens. Who is there to help us when we feel we are called to “live according to the flesh”?

✠ “The Spirit of God dwells in you.” What does this imply about the wonder and holiness of your spirit? Could it help you revere and tend to your neighbour’s needs?

### Gospel Matthew 11:25-30

✠ A carpenter hand-made the yoke to fit the animal that wore it. Is your yoke handmade for you? If yes, who “makes” it? How does Jesus speak about his own yoke in Sunday’s gospel?

✠ If Jesus had never laboured or been burdened, would you still feel he could understand you?

**VINNIES WINTER APPEAL** Total for the two weekends so far: **\$4,626!**

You can continue donate online to the Thirroul Vinnies Conference – go to this link to donate:

<https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-your-way-conference/vinnies-thirroul-winter-appeal>

## CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF OUR PARISH

Our Parish of Saint Michael will be celebrating the parish centenary on **Saturday, 28 October 2023** at the 17:30 **Mass** with Bishop Brian Mascord followed by community picnic/BBQ in the grounds of our Parish School.

**Contributions** are due to be received by Judy Bull [judy.bull@bigpond.com](mailto:judy.bull@bigpond.com) or 0407 672 417 **by this weekend.**

## POPE SAYS IMITATING JESUS IS MORE THAN 'RIGID OBSERVANCE' OF RULES

Honouring Saints Peter and Paul, the patrons of Rome, on their liturgical feast day, Pope Francis said understanding and imitating Jesus is not a matter of following doctrinal formulas or the "rigid observance" of rules and norms. Rather, it means letting go of preconceived convictions and daily being transformed by his love in order to spread the Gospel to others, the pope said.

Speaking during a Mass for 29 June Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Pope Francis said the two apostles answered the most essential question for a Christian, "Who is Jesus for me?" in a very specific way: "By following him as his disciples and by proclaiming the Gospel. It is good for us to grow as a Church in the same way, by following the Lord, constantly and humbly seeking him out. It is good for us to become a Church that is also outgoing, finding joy not in the things of the world, but in preaching the Gospel before the world and opening people's hearts to the presence of God," he said.

He urged the faithful to bring Jesus everywhere they go "with humility and joy: in our city of Rome, in our families, in our relationships and our neighbourhoods, in civil society, in the Church, and political life, in the entire world, especially in those places where poverty, decay and marginalization are deeply rooted."

In Catholic terms, the day is also the feast on which the pope blesses the *pallium* – a white woollen stole with black crosses that the leaders of archdioceses wear around their shoulders on top of their vestments while celebrating Mass – for all the new archbishops appointed in the previous year. After being blessed by the pope, the *pallium* are given to the new archbishops, who will take them back to archdioceses and will formally don the garment for the first time during a special Mass in their archdioceses.

Present at the feast day, as is tradition, was a delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, led by Metropolitan Job, Archbishop of Pissidia, as well as Metropolitan Athenagoras, secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of America, among others.

In his homily, Pope Francis noted how Jesus in the day's Gospel reading from Matthew asks his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter's response to this question, that "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God," is not only a profession of faith, but is "An impeccable, precise, exact and, we could even say, perfect 'catechetical' answer." However, this answer came as "the fruit of a journey," he said, noting that Peter came to this answer only after "the thrilling experience of following the Lord, walking with him and behind him" for some time. Peter, he said, did not hesitate when Jesus called and asked him to follow, but rather followed Jesus "immediately," leaving everything else behind. "Peter did not tell Jesus that he would think it over; he didn't calculate the pros and cons; he didn't come up with alibis to postpone the decision. Instead, he left his nets and followed Jesus, without demanding any kind of guarantee beforehand," the pope said. By doing this, he said, Peter illustrates that "it is not enough to respond to the question – 'Who is Jesus for me?' – with a faultless doctrinal formula or a set of preconceived notions. No."

"It is only by following the Lord that we come to know him each day, only by becoming his disciples and listening to his words that we become his friends and experience his transforming love," he said. Francis cautioned against the temptation to find excuses not to follow Jesus, including spiritual excuses such as "I am not worthy", "I don't have it in me", or "What can I do?" "This is one of the devil's ploys: it robs us of trust in God's grace by making us think that everything depends on our own abilities," he said, saying Peter challenges the Church to be one that follows Jesus in humility. "Only in this way will those farthest from us, those who often regard us with diffidence or indifference, come to realize, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, that 'the Church is the place of our encounter with the Son of the living God and thus the place for our encounter with one another,'" he said.

Turning to the figure of Saint Paul, Pope Francis said Paul's response to faith and to God's intervention on the road to Damascus was to "proclaim," spreading the Gospel throughout the world. Prior to his conversion, while leading a fierce persecution of Christians, Paul was "caught up in the pride of his rigid observance," but thanks to the blinding light of Jesus, "Paul came to realize how blind he had been" and devoted his life to preaching the message of Christ. "If we look at Paul's life, it almost seems that the more he preached the Gospel, the more he grew in the knowledge of Jesus. By preaching the Word to others, he was able to peer more deeply into the depths of God's mystery," the pope said. Paul's answer to the question of who Jesus was for him was not the result of "a privatized piety that leaves us peaceful and unconcerned about bringing the Gospel to others," but it rather demonstrated that as Christians, "we grow in faith and in knowledge of the mystery of Christ when we preach and bear witness to him before others," he said. "This is something necessary also for the Church in our day," Francis said, saying the church needs to preach "even as we need oxygen to breath. A Church that cannot live without sharing with others the embrace of God's love and the joy of the Gospel."

Pope Francis closed his homily telling the new archbishops receiving the *pallium* to imitate both Peter and Paul in being "disciples in following and apostles in preaching. Bring the beauty of the Gospel everywhere, together with all the People of God." He also offered a special greeting to the ecumenical delegation present, and sent personal regards to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, praying that "we advance together, in following and in preaching the word, as we grow in fraternity."

**HAVING OR HAD A SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN 2023?** Please let Ken know as soon as possible so you can be given a special invitation to the Bishop's celebration of the anniversary.

**PARISH OFFICE will be closed 10-14 July as Lauren will be on holiday leave.**

## SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year I

Monday	10 Jul	Monday of Ordinary Time Week 14	Genesis 28:10-22	Matthew 9:18-26
Tuesday 📖	11 Jul	St Benedict, abbot	Genesis 32:23-33	Matthew 9:32-38
Wednesday	12 Jul	Wednesday of Ordinary Time Week 14	Genesis 41:55-57, 42:5-7	Matthew 10:1-7
Thursday	13 Jul	Thursday of Ordinary Time Week 14	Genesis 44:18-21, 45:1-5	Matthew 10:7-15
Friday	14 Jul	Friday of Ordinary Time Week 14	Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30	Matthew 10:16-23
Saturday	15 Jul	St Bonaventure, friar bishop, doctor	Genesis 29:29-33, 50:15-26	Matthew 10:24-33
Sunday	16 Jul	15 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Year A – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

### THIS WEEK'S RECIPE: White Chocolate Liqueur Fudge

Melted butter, to grease; 395g can Nestlé sweetened condensed milk; 200g (1 cup, firmly packed) brown sugar; 125g butter, cubed; 2 tbsp liquid glucose; 100g white chocolate (like Nestle Milkybar brand), roughly chopped; 85g (¾ cup) walnut halves, roughly chopped; 30ml (1½ tbsp – *or more*) Baileys liqueur.

Brush six 3.5cm deep, 5 x 8cm loaf pans or an 18cm (base measurement) square cake pan with the melted butter to grease. Line the base and sides with non-stick baking paper, allowing the paper to overhang the sides. Combine the sweetened condensed milk, brown sugar, butter and glucose in a 2-litre (8-cup), heatproof, microwave-safe glass jug or bowl. Cook, uncovered, on Medium-High/650watts/70%, using a balloon whisk to stir every 2 minutes, for 6-8 minutes or until the mixture begins to boil. Continue to cook on Medium-High/650watts/70%, stirring every minute, for 3-4 minutes or until the mixture is thick, golden and boils rapidly. With a tea towel or oven mitt, very carefully place the jug on a board and set aside for 1 minute or until the bubbles subside. Add the white chocolate and use a wooden spoon to stir continuously until the chocolate melts and the mixture is smooth. Stir in the walnuts and liqueur and mix well. Spoon the mixture evenly into the prepared pans. Set aside for 2 hours to cool to room temperature and become firm. Remove from pan, wrap in greaseproof or non-stick baking paper and store in an airtight container in the fridge. Cut the fudge into 1cm-thick slices to serve.

**PLEASE BRING IN ...ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA: drop items in the special plastic bins near the church entrances.**

**These items are currently in short supply:**

**Biscuits, tinned fruit, tinned vegetables, baked beans & spaghetti, tinned seafood, spreads**

### FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- ✦ Weekend, 8/9 July Blessing of July Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays
- ✦ Saturday, 8 July 18:30 Dinner at Club Thirroul after 17:30 Mass
- ✦ Weekend, 15/16 July 2 Baptisms during Saturday Mass, 1 Baptism during Sunday Mass
- ✦ Monday, 17 July School Term 3 commences

**More Counters are needed for the Roster ... once every 16 weeks – please contact the parish office.**

**HOLY SPIRIT COLLEGE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FORMAL DINNER SATURDAY, 22 JULY 2023**

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1027283?eid=1027283&>

<p><b>THIS Sunday's Readings – on website</b></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 – on website</b></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><b>SUNDAY MASS TIMES</b></p> <p>Saturday 17:30</p> <p>Sunday 08:00</p> <p>📖 Saturday Mass 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>Lauren Faulks • <i>Parish Secretary</i></p> <p>Tues, Wed 09:00-15:30; Fri 09:30-14:30</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 📠 4268 1976</p> <p>📧 <a href="mailto:thirroul@dow.org.au">thirroul@dow.org.au</a></p> <p>Parish School of St Michael</p> <p>☎ 4267 2560</p>	<p><b>USUAL WEEKDAY MASSES</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>