



Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
29/30 JULY 2023

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR A

GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Layers of Wisdom

In the Gospel, Jesus uses common sense wisdom. If you went out into a field, he says, and saw a suspicious mound of earth and happened to dig it up and found there a hidden treasure, as much gold as you could ever want, would you immediately run out and tell everyone about it?

No, no, no. You would keep such a treasure a complete, deep, dark, fail-safe secret and you would re-bury the treasure, disguising it so no one could know that anything was there. You would go sell your goods and buy the field. Then the treasure would be yours and you could tell everyone. "Look what I happened to find on my new property!"

It makes sense.

If you agree, then here is a question. Wouldn't you do as much for the kingdom of heaven? This is what Jesus asks. Well, maybe that is worth some consideration.

As we might remember, King Solomon was noted far and wide for his wise decisions. It is said that the Queen of Sheba travelled to him to get advice. How did he get so wise? Did he just inherit it from his father, David? No, he prayed touchingly to God for a certain kind of wisdom. He did not ask how to increase his fortune or to be well-known or to have power. He asked God for an understanding heart. He would use it to rule God's people well. God was moved by this request and gave Solomon great practical wisdom so he could be on the side of the ordinary people. How many leaders today even listen to the people, let alone listen with understanding?

Perhaps the deepest wisdom this Sunday is in the second reading. Many have undoubtedly quoted its words, not remembering where they came from: "All things work for the good for those who love God." The older we get, the more true this seems. Even when darkness and loss become our daily bread, still the love of God labours incessantly to bring out larger love, larger forgiveness, more acceptance of life, and love even within pain. This is food we all need every day.

Sunday, if we find a way of attending Mass, or even if not, we can pay attention to such a variety of wisdom. The important thing is not to just sit there and gape. Do what every other human being in the world would do if they were given a glimpse into the kingdom.

What is it?

Just listen with an understanding heart.

The collection of parables of 'the Kingdom' that we conclude today is the centrepiece of Matthew's gospel. He closes this section with an autobiographical note. As he tells the story of Jesus for a community from a Jewish background, he sees himself as 'a scribe of the Kingdom'. The scribes who are often mentioned in the gospels were the rabbis who interpreted and taught the Law of old Israel. Matthew sees himself as an interpreter of the fulfilment of all the hopes of Israel brought by the Saviour. From the first, the apostles and their companions taught that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus were 'according to the scriptures'. If the essential message of the scriptures was making known the ways of God, these ways were given a dramatic and final expression, they announced, in Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus is the new Moses, bringing the New Law of the Sermon on the Mount; he inaugurates a new Covenant in his blood; he establishes the new Temple that is his own body; he is the new David, the Messiah exercising divine rule over God's final Kingdom. As one great writer put it, in the light brought by Christ, the Scriptures 'opened their heart for the rejoicing and astonished apostles'. The old figures and shadows have given way to realities beyond all the imagining of old Israel. Matthew shares in this enthusiasm, and sees himself as a 'scribe of the Kingdom', as he relates the old to the new.

But this fulfilment is mysterious, as the parables we have seen already make clear. A conversion is necessary if one is to recognise and appreciate the coming of the Kingdom announced by Jesus. Each parable presents a challenge – we must leave behind our too human way of seeing things and identify with the ways of God that have constituted the essential message of the scriptures from the beginning.

The parables of the treasure in the field and the pearl of great price emphasise this need for conversion. Identification with the ways of God that shape the Kingdom must be unconditional. In our Australian land, buried treasure is the stuff of fairy tales; but in Palestine, with its long history of kingdoms and empires, the possibility of finding a treasure trove was real. And if this happened, the treasure belonged to the owner of the site. One who had such a stroke of good fortune, Jesus says, would do all that he could to buy the field – and in a similar way, no other allegiance will rule the life of one who has found the joy of letting God's word and God's ways to be the measure of his or her life. The pearl for which the merchant sells everything has the same lesson. For ancient peoples, a pearl was the loveliest of possessions. The merchant of the parable will do whatever is necessary to acquire the pearl he has found ↗ ↘



✠✠ that is without compare. This does not mean that he saw no beauty and value in the other pearls that he came across. Our choice of the values of the Kingdom does not mean that we should despise other worthy causes. The parable teaches us, however, that identifying with the Kingdom announced by Jesus means getting our priorities right. The parable of the dragnet has a message similar to that of the wheat and the weeds. It is not for us to make final judgment of the good and the bad – that belongs to the Lord. Meanwhile, the Church – through which the Kingdom is ‘present in mystery’ – is made up of a ‘haul of all kinds’. Following the example of Jesus, who reached out to prostitutes and sinners, the Church will never turn its back on those who are still struggling with the issues of life.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

- ✠ The Hebrew word “*shema*” means listen or hear. What impact might “listening” have today on good leadership? How would problems change if leaders in the world earnestly prayed Solomon’s prayer: “give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart”? Apply this to race relations, immigration problems, climate crises and wars.
- ✠ Would anyone’s life change for the better if you had more of an understanding heart? How do you think you might improve your skills in this area?

Second Reading Romans 8:28-30

- ✠ “All things work together for good for those who love God.” In what ways have you seen examples of this in the pandemic? Did people figure out new ways to solve problems? For example, stepping up to serve others in hospitals and food delivery.
- ✠ How have you experienced “all things work together for good for those who love God” in your own life.

Gospel Matthew 13:44-52

- ✠ Did the pearl-finder and the merchant of this reading have to be shrewd about obtaining their treasures? What about you—are you shrewd about recognizing the “treasure” or the “kingdom of God” in your own life? Do you find, or at least look for God in all things? Do you notice when God is “whispering,” or just when God is “shouting” to you?
- ✠ According to Pope Francis, how are “getting” and “giving” related when speaking of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price?

The Kingdom of Heaven is the opposite of the superfluous things that the world offers; it is the opposite of a dull life: it is a treasure that renews life every day and leads it to expand towards wider horizons. Indeed, those who have found this treasure have a creative and inquisitive heart which does not repeat but rather invents, tracing and setting out on new paths which lead us to love God, to love others, and to truly love ourselves. The sign of those who walk this path of the Kingdom is creativity, always seeking more. And creativity is what takes life and gives life, and gives, and gives, and gives. ... It always looks for many different ways to give life. Jesus, who is the hidden treasure and the pearl of great value, cannot but inspire joy, all the joy of the world: the joy of discovering a meaning for one’s life, the joy of feeling committed to the adventure of holiness.
– Pope Francis, Angelus, 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A, 26 July 2020.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY, PARISH SECRETARY, THIRROUL

Thirroul parish is seeking the services of a part-time secretary for 17 hrs per week – currently Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, but negotiable. The position requires skills in administration, bookkeeping, maintaining a database, and high level of skills in MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The parish secretary needs to be a person who is supportive of the Catholic ethos of the Parish, who bears witness to Christ and Christian values in their own lives and in their work. **Applications close 5pm Monday, 31 July 2023.** If interested, please make contact via email to request an application pack for this position to frances.vanleerdam@dow.org.au

TWO UPCOMING SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 26 August 17:30 Mass Special Mass for the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Andrew Granc ofm as a friar priest ... dinner for ALL to follow in the Hall.

Saturday, 28 October 17:30 Mass Bishop Brian to celebrate Mass for the Centenary of our Parish ... dinner and entertainment to follow in the Hall.

VINNIES NO INTEREST LOANS SCHEME [NILS]

No Interest Loans [NILs] provide individuals and families on low incomes with access to safe, fair, affordable credit with **no fees or charges applied**. If you hold a Health Care Card or Pension Card, or earn less than \$70,000 before tax (\$100,000 for couples or people with dependents), and if you have lived at your current address for at least 3 months (* some exceptions apply), and if you can show you can afford to repay the loan, you are eligible for a loan – loans are available up to \$2,000 for essential goods and services including: household items; car repairs and registration; medical and dental services; technology; furniture; education. Loans are not available for bills, debts, fines, cash, food, penalties. Apply **4283 3730** or nils@vinnies.org.au *Please pass this information on ...*

PARISH CENTENARY – 28 OCTOBER 2023

100 years is a long time, and it should be celebrated in style! Bishop Brian will be the main celebrant at the 17:30 Mass on Saturday, 28 October. Afterwards there will be dinner and entertainment in the Parish Hall – the McCarthy Centre – and in the school grounds. **All are welcome.**

What other ways can we celebrate?! One suggestion so far is during November we have a Parish Centenary Lawn Bowls Night at Club Thirroul – for all ages, up to 100! **Do you have any other ideas as to how we can celebrate the Centenary of our Parish?** If so, please see one of the Pastoral Councillors or call/email the Parish Office.

Are you the oldest person in our Parish? Are you the longest resident in our Parish? Do you have the most family members living in the Parish? Are there any other significant milestones (kilometre stones) in our Parish that should be celebrated at this time? If so, please see one of the Pastoral Councillors.

What about giving our church and grounds a spruce up for the Centenary?! Do you have a **high pressure water hose** – if you have, then it can be used (by yourself or another parishioner) to clean the concrete paths around the church! The “Peace Garden” with the statue of Saint Francis of Assisi is looked after by Pat Mirabito – is there anything you could help with around the gardens? Are there any pointing touch ups that are needed? What about a good, thorough “spring clean” of the church inside and out – would you like to lend a hand there? Any ideas you have, please contact a Pastoral Councillor – the Pastoral Council is meeting this Wednesday evening. Whatever help you can give – large or small – will help all parishioners and others celebrate our Centenary.

WHAT ARE THE COLLECTIONS FOR? THE “BAG” OR THE “BASKET”??

In each parish of our diocese, there are two collections at each Sunday Mass. The “first” collection is for the support of the clergy, and the “second” collection is for the parish.



Money for the **first collection** in our parish is placed in the “red bag” and this money pays the “stipend” for the priests and helps the priests who are retired.

Money for the **second collection** in our parish is placed in the “basket” and this money pays for the expenses of our parish – the secretary’s salary, electricity, rates, telephone, internet, insurance (a big expense!), repairs and maintenance, printing and office equipment, resources for sacramental programs and catechists, car allowance and other expenses.



The planned giving scheme using the weekly envelopes – these are placed in the second collection “basket” and this money supports the parish.

A significant number of parishioners, instead of putting cash in the bag or basket each week, now donate using **direct money transfer**, often once a month. *If you would like to donate this way, please contact the parish office.*

Some parishioners or visitors use the **tap machine** to donate \$10 each time you “tap” – and this money goes to the parish, like the “second collection” does.

However, if you donate at Mass each week, please be conscious of whether you put money in the “bag” – to support the clergy, or into the “basket” to support our Parish of Saint Michael.

SPIRITUALITY ON THE SOFA – WEDNESDAY, 2 AUGUST 2023, 19:30 TO 21:00

Welcome again to our ongoing Spirituality in the Pub/Spirituality on the Sofa on Wednesday, 2 August, 19:30 – 21:00. Our leaders in conversation will be Randa Habelrih and her son Richard together with Dr Rev Ann Edwards. Randa is the Founder and Director of Autism Mates, and a passionate advocate and voice for those living on the Spectrum – an Autism advocate. She is an award-winning speaker and author. Richard is in his 20s and has a diagnosis of Autism and intellectual disability. He has overcome incredible obstacles and is an accomplished public speaker and pre-school teacher’s aide. Ann is the Priest-in-Charge at St Mark’s Anglican Church, the Gap, Brisbane, and a Speech Pathologist and Researcher in family centred service provision. It will be great if you can zoom in and join us – perhaps even make a comment or two or ask a question.

Zoom link –

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88194824050?pwd=L3FZdVVibXFmRElDNmVEOGNwWGZaQT09>

MENALIVE GROWING GOOD MEN FATHER AND SON CAMP 20–22 OCTOBER 2023

Cataract Scout Camp Appin: one of the most impactful weekends we have run in recent years for families has been our Growing Good Men Camps, with incredible feedback from the dads and lads who have attended. Spots are limited to 25 fathers with their sons aged between 12 and 16. 📞 4222 2407 Book early.

BECOME A CATECHIST OR ASSISTANT TEACHING SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Catechists and Assistants are needed for one-half hour per week in our local State Primary Schools. Education and Training is provided. The Level One course is being held in Wollongong, 09:30 to 13:30 on Fridays, 4, 11, 18, 25 August and 1 September – or you can attend via Zoom. You will be doing a great service in our parish for young people to hear the Good News. To register contact Cindy Oliver at support@ccdwoollongong.com Thank you to the Catechists already working in our parish, giving 30 minutes each week!

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A · Weekdays Year I

Monday	31 Jul	St Ignatius of Loyola, priest	Exodus 32:15-24,30-34	Matthew 13:31-35
Tuesday	1 Aug	St Alphonsus Liguori, bishop, doctor	Exodus 33:7-11; 34:5-9,28	Matthew 13:36-43
Wednesday	2 Aug	Wednesday of Ordinary Time Week 17	Exodus 34:29-35	Matthew 13:44-46
Thursday	3 Aug	St Dominic, priest	Exodus 40:16-21	Matthew 13:47-53
Friday	4 Aug	St John Vianney, priest	Leviticus 23:1,4-11,15-16	Matthew 13:54-58
Saturday	5 Aug	Saturday of Ordinary Time Week 17	Leviticus 25:1,8-17	Matthew 14:1-12
Sunday	6 Aug	FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION – <i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE: Quick and Easy Chicken

5 chicken legs; salt; paprika; black pepper; 30ml soy sauce; olive oil; 1 Spanish (red) onion; 3 cloves chopped garlic (can be omitted!); 250ml beer; parsley.

Score each chicken leg with a knife, making 3-4 cuts in each leg, about 1-2 deep. Put the legs in a deep pan, add salt, paprika and black pepper to taste, then the soy sauce. Mix thoroughly so the legs are covered with the mixture. Set aside for 15 minutes. Put the olive oil into a frying pan on medium heat, place the legs in the pan. Cover and fry, turning the legs so they are browned on all sides. Take the legs out of the frying pan and put them back into the deep pan. Cut up the onion and cook it in the frying pan, adding more olive oil as needed. Add the garlic and stir. Fry until brown. Pour the beer over the legs in the deep pan. Cover and cook on a low heat for 25 minutes. Add parsley to taste. Serve and pour over the legs the onion gravy mix. Variations are most acceptable.

CROSS + GENERATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM BELLAMBI

Due to the popularity of the Cross + Generation technology program, CatholicCare Wollongong, Catholic Education DoW will again partner with our school, Holy Spirit College, Bellambi to help with technology: four Wednesdays commencing 25 October – register early as places fill up fast: **0417 018 152** or janeh@catholiccare.dow.org.au

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

✦ Tuesday, 1 August		Horses' Birthday – Gifts may be deposited at your local TAB
✦ Friday, 4 August	09:30	Anointing of the Sick during Mass Years Kindy and 5 attending Mass
✦ Saturday, 5 August	17:30	Confirmation of One Candidate during Mass
✦ Friday, 11 August	09:30	Mary Mackillop Feast Day Mass with whole school Feast of Saint Clare of Assisi
✦ Saturday, 12 August	18:30	Andrew returns after his sabbatical Dinner at Club Thirroul after 17:30 Mass

THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ♦ YEAR A

1 st Reading	1 Kings 3:5,7-12
2 nd Reading	Romans 8:28-30
Gospel	Matthew 13:44-52

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*

Lauren Faulks · *Parish Secretary*

Tues, Wed 09:00-15:30; Fri 09:30-14:30

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

1 st Reading	Daniel 7:9-10,13-14
2 nd Reading	2 Peter 1:16-19
Gospel	Matthew 17:1-9

www.thirroulcatholic.org.au

📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive

📮 PO Box 44 · Thirroul 2515

☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976

📧 thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish School of St Michael

☎ 4267 2560

SUNDAY

MASS TIMES

Saturday 17:30

Sunday 08:00

📺 Saturday Mass recorded

USUAL WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday _____

Tuesday 📺 17:30

Wednesday 09:00

Thursday 09:00

Friday 09:30

Anointing of the Sick 1st Friday