

# Welcome to the Parish of Saint Michael Thirroul



**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**26/27 AUGUST 2023**  
**21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR A**  
**CONGRATULATIONS ANDREW!**

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

## *It Takes Two*

On previous Sundays Jesus has been curing people. Yet an odd thing happens in each case. He tells them, “Your faith has saved you.” That creates a mystery. Quite obviously Jesus does the healing, so why does he say their faith did it? Why didn’t he just say, “Go in peace, I have healed you”?

Let us seek the answer in Sunday’s Gospel. This will be a roundabout way to get at an answer, so I ask you to wait for it.

Jesus is in Caesarea Philippi and the disciples are just back from their mission of preaching. He asks them who people think he is. The disciples laugh boyishly and repeat some answers they have heard. Obviously they regard these guesses as absurd. Something like this: Believe it or not, some think you are John the Baptist returned from the dead! The ones I talked to said you were the prophet Elijah! It was hilarious! A few of them said you are Jeremiah or one of the other prophets! They just don’t know what to make of you.

Laughter all around.

But Jesus’ question was a curve ball and now it crosses the plate. He says abruptly, “And what about you? Who do you say I am?”

Eyes wander, feet scuff, laughter turns into a cough. The disciples’ faith is still young and perhaps they are confused about it, not to mention the fact that up to this point they have not been required to profess anything out loud. Red faces.

Peter is bold, awkwardly walking on water again, figuratively this time. He stammers out his best answer. “You ... you are ... the, uh, ... yes, uh, the ... the Son of ... you are the Christ, the Son of the living God!”

Silence and then nods and relief all around.

“Simon, how great is your faith,” Jesus says. “Whatever you open with this faith will stay open. Whatever your faith shuts will remain shut, not only here but in heaven.”

A high compliment to Peter’s tottering belief status.

But does this help with the contradiction we began with? Is it Jesus’ action or an act of their faith?

Jesus is always seeking a two-way liaison between himself and us, not just one-way. He wants us to have a relationship to the fullness of who he is. Besides being a charismatic leader or a good friend, he is the very reality of God’s love, present in the world, wide open to loving each of us—and being loved in return. He wants a mutual love-relationship with you and me, one in which we open up our hearts and let Godly love in—and return it.

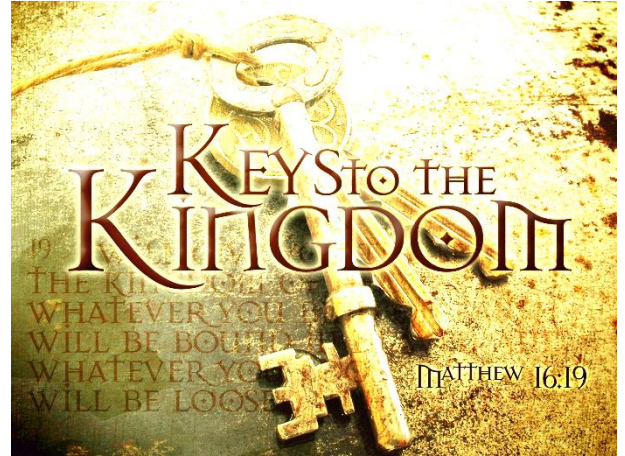
The name of that openness to God’s love on the part of a person is “faith.”

Faith.

So, the answer is truly, “your faith has saved you.” But it is faith in Jesus’ cures. These are never just a matter of him acting on his own, like a mechanic replacing spark plugs. They are love being given and love being received. The ones who were cured must have opened themselves and have at least a beginning relationship with Jesus as the loving Messiah.

Healing is then at last able to take root.

We are all familiar with today’s gospel. It tells us something fundamental about our life as Catholics. This text portrays Peter as the one authorised by the Saviour to lead his disciples in professing their faith in him. In this age, when God calls believers to work for Christian unity, it is important that we understand it well. When we compare Matthew’s account of Peter’s confession with that of Mark (Mark 8:27-33), we see that the two evangelists present Peter in very different ways. In Mark’s account, to the questions of Jesus, Peter responds, ‘You are the messiah’. Then, when Jesus begins to explain that his role will be very different from that of the messiah of popular expectations – ‘The Son of Man is destined to suffer and be put to death’ – Peter cannot accept what Jesus is saying; and he is sharply rebuked by Jesus, ‘Get behind me Satan! You are not thinking as God thinks’. When Matthew is writing his gospel, long after this incident, Peter has long been recognised and venerated as the one who was appointed by Jesus, as the leader of the chosen disciples who were to carry on his mission. In order to celebrate the role given to Peter by the Saviour – a role that he has carried out with great faith and courage – Matthew combines two incidents that took place at different times. He uses Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi as an introduction to what is his main point – the commission that was given to Peter by the Lord, so fundamental for the life of the first Christian



community. The gospels make it clear that Peter received such a commission. This commission may well have been referred to by Jesus in different contexts, in view of its basic importance in the carrying on of the mission of Jesus. The change of name recalled by Matthew in this text is so remarkable (Jesus used the Aramaic word for 'rock', *kephas*, never before used as a name, translated as *Petros* in Greek) that it obviously had far-reaching significance. Luke refers to the commission of Peter as being made in the highly charged atmosphere of the Last Supper: 'I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail, and once you have recovered, you in your turn must strengthen your brethren' (Luke 22:31). In John's gospel, the risen Lord's three questions to Peter on the shore of the lake – reminding us of Peter's three denials – lead on to his great commission, 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep'. This whole tradition is filled with reminders of Peter's frailty – a great lesson for the whole Church, faithful and pastors.



In its totality, Matthew's text is a magnificent summary of the self-understanding of the Church of the first generation, and of Peter's leadership role in that Church. Matthew alone of the evangelists used the term 'church' (in this and a later text). This term, that Paul used so frequently – echoing the Old Testament term for the community of faith of old Israel – refers to the New Israel inaugurated by Jesus. The 'gates' of the cities of antiquity were the embodiment of their strength. The Church founded on the ministry of Peter, the 'rock', will triumph over the dark forces of the kingdom of death; and, under Peter's leadership, open the way to the final Kingdom announced and inaugurated by the Saviour. The words of Jesus make clear the practical implications of the authority given to Peter. 'Binding and loosing' referred to the authority of the teachers of old Israel, to legislate and determine policy, and the exclude from the community. If this pastoral authority is shared with the other apostles (cf. Matthew 18:18), it is only under the leadership of Peter that they can effectively carry out this pastoral responsibility.

The most important leaders are those who lead in love. Leadership in the Church is about serving others in accordance with Christ's interests, so that each member of the community can see and accomplish God's purpose for them in the world.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### First Reading      Isaiah 22:19-23

- ↳ This reading, from Isaiah, says, "he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." How can the Church act as father in the present crises: racial, immigration, environmental, martial? Besides continuing to have a solid faith, what other qualities or virtues do we look for in Church leadership?
- ↳ "I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim's shoulder ... " In the Gospel Jesus tells Peter he will give him the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What might those keys unlock? The depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God?

### Second Reading      Romans 11:33-36

- ↳ "For who has known the mind of the Lord?" Are you good at recognizing the Lord in your life? Are you able to know where God is leading you, or what God is doing in your life?
- ↳ "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! ... For from him and through him and for him are all things." Every person, every race, every part of our environment comes from God. How can we thank or "give glory" to God for gifts such as these? By loving? By protecting others?

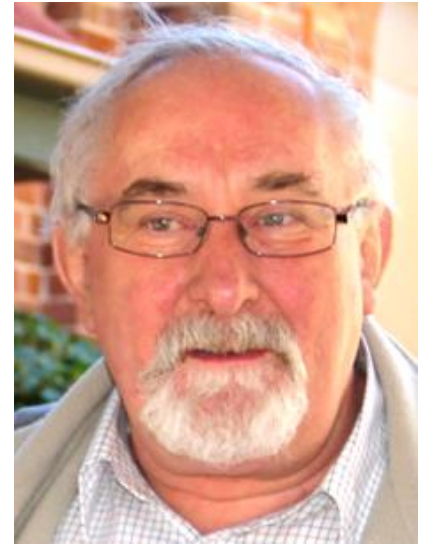
### Gospel      Matthew 16:13-20

- ↳ To answer Jesus' question, "who do you say I am," you have to know him. Which of the following could help you know Jesus?—take whatever time you wish with any of these:  
music by Vivaldi; Michelangelo's David; Van Gogh's Irises; a good homily; a good book; good friends; suffering; joy; meditation; successes; weaknesses; family; flowers; people without a home.  
Can you find (and get to know) God in many of these [and more].
- ↳ When the disciples answered Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" they went from admiring Jesus to following him. What do you think Pope Francis meant when he said that in following Jesus we are "looking ahead and welcoming the *kairos* [moment of grace]"?  
At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asks his disciples: "Who do you say that I am?" ... They had to take that decisive step, from *admiring Jesus to imitating Jesus*. Today too, the Lord looks at each of us personally and asks: "*Who am I for you?*" This question, addressed to each of us, calls for more than a quick answer straight out of the catechism. It requires a vital, personal response.  
That response *renews us as disciples*. It takes place in three steps, steps that the disciples took and that we too can take. It involves first, proclaiming Jesus; second, discerning with Jesus and third, following Jesus. ...  
The present International Eucharistic Congress marks the end of one journey, but more importantly, the beginning of another. For walking behind Jesus means always looking ahead, welcoming the *kairos of grace*, and being challenged every day by the Lord's question to each of us, his disciples: *Who do you say that I am?*

– Pope Francis, International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest, 12 September 2021.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDREW GRANC OFM - FIFTY YEARS A FRIAR PRIEST

**Andrew** was born in Schwabisch Grund, Germany to Polish parents, who emigrated to Australia in 1950. After attending several schools, Andrew completed his secondary education in 1965 at St Leo's Christian Brothers College, Wahroonga. On 7 February 1966, he and twenty other young men entered the novitiate of the Franciscan Friars at Mount Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula, south-east of Melbourne. Andrew received the Franciscan habit on 19 February 1966, and made his first vows on 20 February 1967. He then continued his studies for priesthood and, having made his solemn vows as a friar on 22 December 1970, he was ordained a friar priest at the Polish Community Church, Essendon, Melbourne on 26 August 1973.



Following his ordination, Andrew was assigned to many and varied ministries over the years: youth retreats; parish missions; adult retreats; spirituality counselling; formation director and novice master; pastoral assistance in the Minto housing estate; chaplaincy for Juvenile Justice NSW, caring for two centres at Campbelltown and Wollongong, and chaplaincy coordinator for NSW. Andrew has completed further studies in Franciscan history and spirituality, as well as in pastoral ministry and counselling. Andrew's other interests and hobbies are astronomy and music (piano). Andrew was first appointed to Thirroul in January 2009, and, except for three years in Melbourne, 2014–2016, has been here ever since.

**Congratulations, Andrew, and thank you for your faithful service.**

### UPCOMING SIGNIFICANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

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

### THE ALPHA COURSE – ASK QUESTIONS, SHARE FAITH AND BUILD COMMUNITY

The Northern Suburbs Parishes Spring Alpha Course starts Wednesday, 13 September, 7pm–8:40pm at St Joseph's Primary School Hall, Bulli, and you are invited. Alpha is an opportunity for you, your friends and family to explore life, and faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. We have a meal together, watch a video and then talk over dessert. To register go to [www.dow.sh/alpha23](http://www.dow.sh/alpha23) or email [corrimal.bulli.alpha@gmail.com](mailto:corrimal.bulli.alpha@gmail.com)

📞 Peter Crowe ☎ 0407 913 696 or Kerrie Hennessy ☎ 0422 987 058. RSVP by **Friday, 8 September.**

### FIRST PENANCE AND FIRST COMMUNION 2023

The Sacrament of First Communion is given to children who have reached the age of reason, which is accepted as seven years old, that is, when a child is in Year 2. [Canons 913, 914] Prior to receiving First Communion, children are to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance [Reconciliation].

In order to prepare for these Sacraments, there is a preparation program consisting of the following: a parent information evening; two classes (after school hours) in preparation for First Penance; celebration of First Penance; two classes (after school hours) in preparation for First Communion.

**Enrolments close on 5 September 2023.** Enrolment Forms may be downloaded from the Parish website. Enrolment forms are to be **emailed or delivered to the Parish Office by 5 September 2023.**

**Dates for First Penance and First Communion** are listed on the Parish website.

### CONISTON HOMELESS HUB

The Homeless Hub centre is located at 12-16 Miller Street, Coniston. The Vinnies Van operates out of this centre and provides emergency food relief and items for daily living to people experiencing homelessness and those living in difficult circumstances, 5 days a week. The Vinnies Homeless Hub and the Vinnies Van would be grateful for any one off or regular donations of food items, small toiletry items, sleeping bags, warm jackets, gloves, beanies, and snacks/poppers for school aged children. To donate ☎ 4228 9355 or ✉ [vinniesvan@vinnies.org.au](mailto:vinniesvan@vinnies.org.au)

### THE DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG – BEARERS OF CHRIST'S LOVE

The Diocese of Wollongong covers 9 local government areas and has 29 parishes. Nearly 24% of the region's population is Catholic, that is over 197,000 people, making it the 8<sup>th</sup> largest diocese in Australia. There are over 50 active and retired clergy and 7 seminarians. There are 46 Catholic schools, educating over 25,000 students – 1 in 5 students in the region attend Catholic schools. There are over 2,500 volunteers in parishes, with a workforce of nearly 3,400 people. There are 400 volunteer Catechists teaching Special Religious Education to around 7,500 students in 130 government schools each week. Mass is celebrated in over 55 churches, in 20 languages for over 12,500 people every weekend, and over 40,000 view *Mass for You at Home*. 6 CatholicCare sites offer social services to over 17,500 people every year, and over 15 chaplains provide specialized services to various groups.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Sundays Year A • Weekdays Year I

Monday	28 Aug	St Augustine, bishop, doctor	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Matthew 23:13-22
Tuesday	29 Aug	<b>The Passion of John the Baptist</b>	Jeremiah 1:17-19	Mark 6:17-29
Wednesday	30 Aug	Wednesday of Ordinary Time Week 21	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	Matthew 23:27-32
Thursday	31 Aug	Thursday of Ordinary Time Week 21	1 Thessalonians 3:7-13	Matthew 24:42-51
Friday	1 Sep	Friday of Ordinary Time Week 21	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8	Matthew 25:1-13
Saturday	2 Sep	Saturday of Ordinary Time Week 21	1 Thessalonians 4:9-11	Matthew 25:14-30

**Sunday** 3 Sep **22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A** – *Scripture Readings are listed below.*

### THIS WEEK'S RECIPE: Home Made Apple Pie

Double-crust pie pastry, thawed; 6 to 7 cups thinly sliced peeled apples; 1½ teaspoons cinnamon; 3 tbsp plain flour; 8 tbsp unsalted butter; ¼ cup water; 1 cup granulated sugar; 1 tbsp water + 1 egg, *for egg wash*.

Preheat the oven to 220°C. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in the flour and stir to form a paste. Whisk in the water and sugar and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 3-5 minutes. Remove from the heat. Peel and core the apples, then slice thinly. Sprinkle the top with cinnamon and toss to combine. Four the sauce over the apples and stir to coat apple slices. Sprinkle your work surface with flour and roll out the bottom pie crust to a 30cm diameter circle. Wrap it around your rolling pin to transfer it to the 22cm pie plate. Add the apple mixture, mounding slightly in the centre and being careful not to get the filling on the edges which would make it difficult to seal. Roll the second crust into a 27cm round and cut into ten even thickness strips using a pizza cutter. Arrange strips in a woven lattice pattern over the top. Beat together the egg and water; brush the top with the egg mixture. Bake at 220°C in the pre-heated oven for 15 minutes. Reduce the heat to 175°C and continue baking until the apples are soft, 35 to 45 minutes. Rest at room temperature for one hour before serving.

**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, long life milk, tea bags, small coffee, tinned seafood, spreads

### FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

✦ Thursday, 31 August	19:15	Baptism preparation meeting for September Baptisms
✦ Friday, 1 September	09:30	Anointing of the Sick during Mass Year 3 attending Mass
✦ Saturday, 2 September	10:30	Lawrence Burns and Rodney Mackrill ordained as Deacons
✦ Weekend, 2/3 September		Blessing of Fathers for Father's Day at both weekend Masses
✦ Monday, 4 September		Ken at Canon Law Conference, Christchurch, until Thursday, 7 Sep
✦ Tuesday, 5 September		Enrolments for First Penance and First Communion CLOSE for 2023 The 17:30 Mass will not be "televised" this week
✦ Tuesday, 12 September	19:30	Parents' Meeting for First Penance and First Communion

#### THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

#### 21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A

1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Isaiah 22:19-23
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Romans 11:33-36
Gospel	Matthew 16:13-20

#### NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

#### 22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A

1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Jeremiah 20:7-9
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Romans 12:1-2
Gospel	Matthew 16:21-27

#### SUNDAY

#### MASS TIMES

Saturday	17:30
Sunday	08:00
☞ Saturday Mass 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

Kerry Fabon • Parish Secretary

Tues, Wed 09:00-15:00; Fri 08:30-15:00

#### 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

#### USUAL WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday	_____
Tuesday	☞ 17:30
Wednesday	09:00
Thursday	09:00
Friday	09:30
<i>Anointing of the Sick 1<sup>st</sup> Friday</i>	