

Welcome to
the Parish of
Saint Michael
Thirroul



PARISH BULLETIN
14 / 15 SEPTEMBER 2024
24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + YEAR B
THE SEASON OF CREATION

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Suffer? Be Killed?

The simple Gospel story this Sunday is actually one of the great ones in the New Testament.

Why? Let's look.

First, Jesus was much more than just one of the great heroes from the past—John the Baptist, Elijah, the prophets, etc. Naturally, people were treating him as if he were one of these, so he asks the disciples what they think.

Peter responds: "You are the Christ." So, Jesus, gave the name "Peter," or "Rock," to Simon.

This showed why Jesus had given him his new first name. Under this designation, Peter had proclaimed a turning point for believers, a crucial depth that underlies all Christianity. Jesus was not just a buddy or a healer, he was the long-awaited Messiah.

Jesus could now tell them more about what Peter's answer (Christ) actually meant. He said: "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering ... and be killed, and after three days rise again." (Gospel)

What? **WHAT?** This was the last thought the apostles could have had about the Messiah. "Suffer? Be killed"? No, no!"

Second, look at the intense drama that followed. The same apostle who had just recognized and detailed Jesus as the Christ we see now in complete rebellion. "This will never happen to you, master, we will never allow it!"

Now Jesus calls him "Satan"! What a contradiction! He flares out with anguish and frustration. "Get behind me, Satan. For you are thinking not as God does, but as humans do." Why so harsh a response?

For an answer, check out the temptations in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11). There the devil's enticements had the same point that Peter's does now. Something like this: Save yourself. Do not give up your life for others. Since you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread. Show your power. Be the Christ. You keep talking about your heavenly Father: doesn't he want you to carry out your mission instead of suffering and being killed? Do you and I ever listen to such a temptation? [When do we not?]

The apostles hear it. When Christ finally comes to "undergoing great suffering and be killed," they actually run away! It will take time for them to understand, just as it does for you and me.

Terrible suffering had been in the scriptural tradition for a long time. Read about the "Suffering Servant" in the first reading: I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard. ... See, the Lord God helps; who will contend with me? (Isaiah 50:6)

Whatever name he used for Simon, Rock or Satan, Jesus was not being careless or intemperate. The Satan-like Simon was blindly rejecting just what Jesus must have been struggling with most: that he had to suffer greatly, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days.

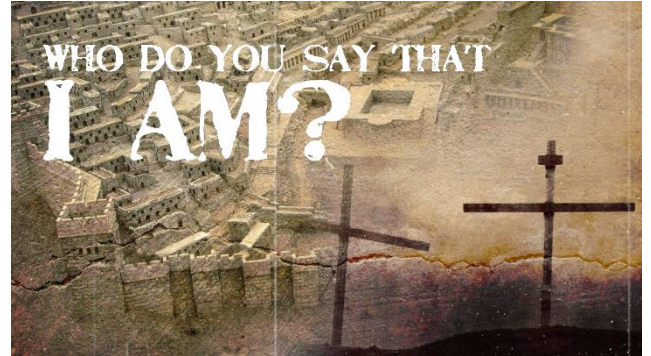
Who wouldn't object to such a plan? But this was Jesus' his true mission, and Simon Peter was both naming it and sweeping it aside.

Which do you or I choose?

Today's reading from Mark is the climax to which his presentation of the life of Jesus to this point has been leading. The mission of Jesus has been rejected and misunderstood. It is essential to God's designs that the disciples of Jesus do not misunderstand the mission that has brought the Son forth from the Father to bring healing to a lost world.

The 'who' question is central to our human existence: 'Who are you, my companion on the journey of life?' 'Who am I?' These questions, if we face their implications, confront us with the depths and mystery of our common humanity. Jesus called himself, 'the Son of Man', a title that affirmed his sharing in our human condition. When the 'who' question is addressed to him we find not only the mysterious depths of our common humanity, but also the mystery of the generous designs of God, conceived with the Son and the Holy Spirit, in the depths of the divine eternity. Discipleship is learning, in the course of our lives, the answer to the 'who' question we address to the Saviour – who has made himself our ever-present companion. Like Peter, we shall find that we are forced to re-evaluate our most basic assumptions in the light of the ways of God we learn from Jesus.

Jesus is 'the Christ', the messiah in whom Israel's hopes are centred. He begins to teach his disciples 'quite openly' what lay ahead of them in Jerusalem. He is not the political saviour so ardently hoped for in popular expectations: the 'Son of Man' will be 'rejected' – 'put to death' even. Peter's brave act of faith must be further clarified. Mark's gospel does not spare Peter – perhaps because this community has already heard of Peter's humiliations



✠✠ from Peter himself. Jesus addresses Peter as ‘Satan’, obstructing God’s plan. That plan, Jesus explains, has been foreshadowed in two themes of Israel’s hopes, the ‘Suffering Servant’ (see Isaiah 52-53 etc – the first reading is one of the descriptions of the ‘Servant’) and the ‘Son of Man’ (Daniel 7). Both of these themes envisage a mysterious personage who will fulfil the destiny of Israel – the first bringing healing for the world’s self-inflicted suffering by sharing in that suffering himself; the other bringing all peoples together under the beneficent reign of God’s ways.

Jesus emphatically spells out the demands of discipleship: sharing in his responsibility for the human family, even if it means sharing his ‘cross’; living ‘for the sake of the gospel’, the Good News of the generous future God has in store for struggling humanity.

Once again, the reading from James speaks in very practical terms. His discussion of ‘faith’, that is ‘quite dead’ if it has no ‘good works’ to show, is familiar. It is possible that James is responding to a self-serving misinterpretation of Paul’s teaching that ‘we are justified by faith’. True discipleship, as Jesus reminds Peter, proves itself in a generosity that has been learned in the presence of the Crucified Saviour.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading **Isaiah 50:5-9a**

✠ Isaiah says, “The Lord God has opened my ear that I may hear ... ” What kinds of things do you think God wants us to hear? That “a brother or sister is without clothing and lacks daily food” from the second reading? Alright, then what? Do you act on what you hear?

✠ “The Lord God helps me. ... The present reading” has these words twice. How do they relate to Jesus’ utterance in the Gospel, “Whoever wants to become my follower. let him deny himself”? Will God be with us, holding our hand, every minute, no matter what?

Second Reading **James 2:14-18**

✠ How important is it to express your faith in works? The letter of James tells us to serve our neighbour. Do you ever respond to such a call? If so, how? With a few words? In some of your actions? With your entire life?

✠ “If a brother or sister is without clothing and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that”? Might one criticize a Catholic faith that is primarily “a fact on an ID card” rather than a missionary? How do you transmit your faith with “testimony”?

Gospel **Mark 8:27-35**

✠ Do you want people you love to know you well? Do you think Christ wants you to know him well personally? He asks the apostles, “who do you say that I am?” What if he asked you that question? Do you answer it differently at different times in your life?

✠ “The Son of Man must undergo great suffering ... ” In these words, Jesus is telling the apostles what discipleship is all about. Why does Pope Francis say Jesus chose the cross?

He [St. John Chrysostom] saw that despite appearances, Jesus is not a loser, but God, who willingly offers himself for every man and woman. Why did he do this? He could have saved his life, he could have kept his distance from the misery and brutality of human history. Instead, he chose to enter into that history, to immerse himself in it. That is why he chose the most difficult way possible: the cross.

So that no one on earth should ever be so desperate as not to be able to find him, even there, in the midst of anguish, darkness, abandonment, in the scandal of his or her own misery and mistakes. There he came, to the very place we think God cannot be present, there. To save those who despair, he himself chose to taste despair; taking upon himself our most bitter anguish, he cried out from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” A cry that saves. It saves because God took upon himself even the experience of our abandonment. And now, with him, we are no longer alone, ever.

– Pope Francis, *Homily at 53rd Eucharistic Congress*, 15 September 2021

RECIPE: CHOCOLATE WEETBIX SLICE – from Raymond!

BASE: 185g butter; 1 cup sugar; 2tbsp cocoa; 3 Weetbix, crushed; 1 cup plain flour; 1 cup coconut; 1tsp baking powder. **ICING:** 2 cups icing sugar; 3tbsp cocoa; 50g butter (softened); 2-3tbsp boiling water.

Preheat oven to fanbake 180°C. In a large saucepan over low heat melt together butter, sugar and cocoa. Take off the heat then add Weetbix, flour, coconut and baking powder. Mix together. Pour into a lined tray and press down firmly. Bake for 15 to 20 mins until the slice is cooked but feels soft to the touch in the centre. **Icing:** Mix together icing sugar, cocoa and butter. Add boiling water as needed to loosen mixture and whisk out any lumps. Ice the slice while it is still warm then chop up once cooled and icing has set.

**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**

THE SEASON OF CREATION – 1 SEPTEMBER TO 4 OCTOBER

Each year from 1 September to 4 October, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. As followers of Christ from around the globe, we share a common call to care for Creation. We are co-creatures and part of all that God has made. Our well-being is interwoven with the well-being of the Earth.



We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all beings who share it. This year, the theme for the season is “To hope and act with Creation”. Amid the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, many are beginning to despair and suffer from eco-anxiety. As people of faith we are called to lift the hope inspired by our faith, the hope of the resurrection. This is not a hope without action but one embodied in concrete actions of prayer and preaching, service and solidarity.

This season, we are also uniting our Christian voices through a joint advocacy initiative to support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty which calls for a halt to new fossil fuel projects. This guide will help you learn about and plan for this season. It includes ideas for prayer, including an ecumenical prayer service and ways to incorporate and reflect on this year’s theme and symbol. In addition, it offers ways to participate in this year’s joint advocacy initiative to support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty which calls for a halt to new fossil fuel projects – see more at <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

More resources, including webinars and prayer services, sample promotional materials, and the official Season of Creation social media channels, are available online. Visit <https://seasonofcreation.org/> to access all the materials.

Pope Francis: ““Despite all attempts to deny, conceal, gloss over or relativize the issue, the signs of climate change are here and increasingly evident. No one can ignore the fact that in recent years we have witnessed extreme weather phenomena, frequent periods of unusual heat, drought and other cries of protest on the part of the earth that are only a few palpable expressions of a silent disease that affects everyone. [...] I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful.”

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Orthodox Church: “It was 35 years ago that our venerable predecessor, the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios, issued the very first encyclical inviting all people of goodwill to dedicate 1 September a special day of prayer for the preservation of the natural environment. (...) Today, across the planet, numerous Christian churches and faithful recognize this celebration as the World Day of Prayer for Creation or the Feast of Creation. This sense of ecumenical conviction and Christian unity is paramount not only because we have been commanded by our Lord ‘that we may be one’ (John 17:21), but also because we cannot and should not hope to address climate change without working closely with one another. As we have repeatedly stated, ‘we are all in the same boat.’ Creation care is a collective mandate and responsibility.”

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, Anglican Communion: “In the face of the climate crisis, protecting God’s Creation is a spiritual imperative for Christians throughout the global Church. The Season of Creation has inspired us to come together in prayer and action – to safeguard, sustain and renew the life of the Earth. That is why, inspired by the Orthodox Church’s leadership, the Anglican Communion enthusiastically supports this ecumenical season. I encourage Anglicans around the world to pray for the unity of the Church, as we follow Christ’s call to protect and renew what God has entrusted to us.”

Anne Burghardt, Lutheran World Federation General Secretary: “At our 13th General Assembly in Krakow (September 2023), the Lutheran World Federation affirmed that as churches in ongoing reformation, we are called to work for peace in the world: between people, countries, and with the whole of creation. The relentless rise in global temperatures has meant loss of biodiversity, lives, livelihoods, and whole communities. Creation cries out in suffering. We acknowledge the urgent call to action, and we acknowledge that we can only respond to it on the basis of faith. The Season of Creation is a source of strength and communion, encouraging us truly ‘to hope and act with creation.’”

Jong Chun J.C. Park, World Methodist Council President: “The World Methodist Council in 2016 commended the celebration of a ‘Time for Creation’ from 1 September to 4 October, first observed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, now welcomed by concerned Christians across the world. This is the time to confess that we are prodigal sons and daughters coming home after such a long devastation of sky and land. Our ecological homecoming is our ‘walking together’ (*synbodos*) with Mother Earth through the intercession of the Holy Spirit. We have entered a new Kairos for the ecumenical Spring of renewing for the Synodal Church, anticipating as far as possible, the logic of the new heavens and new earth toward which we are on the move. Let’s celebrate with St. Paul the Spirit’s role as midwife through the threefold ‘cosmotheandric’ sequence of the holy groaning of creation as Mother Earth, of the Spirit as midwife, and of believers as the adopted children of God!”

Jerry Pillay, General Secretary, World Council of Churches: “Climate change and disasters are already upon us. The planet is in trouble and ‘creation is groaning’ as the Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 8. In the midst of this, we are called to be responsible stewards and citizens as we care for and sustain the earth which belongs to the Lord. This is hope in action as we pray and yearn for a better and safer world for all people and creation. We each need to do our part for creation care.”

<https://laudatosimovement.org/season-of-creation/>

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Monday	16 Sep	Saints Cornelius and Cyprian	Sundays Year B • Weekdays Year II	1 Corinthians 11:17-26,33	Luke 7:1-10
Tuesday 📖	17 Sep	Tuesday, Ordinary Time Week 24		1 Corinthians 12:12-14,27-31	Luke 7:11-17
Wednesday	18 Sep	Wednesday, Ordinary Time Week 24		1 Corinthians 12:31–13:13	Luke 7:31-35
Thursday	19 Sep	Thursday, Ordinary Time Week 24		1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Luke 7:36-50
Friday	20 Sep	Sts Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong +		1 Corinthians 15:12-20	Luke 8:1-3
Saturday	21 Sep	St Matthew, apostle, evangelist		Ephesians 4:1-7,11-13	Matthew 9:9-13
Sunday	22 Sep	24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B –	<i>Scripture Readings are listed below.</i>		

FORTHCOMING PARISH EVENTS

✦ Saturday, 14 September	17:30	One baptism during Mass; Sunday, 15 September, one baptism
	18:30	Dinner at Club Thirroul after 17:30 Mass
✦ Thursday, 26 September	19:15	Baptism Preparation Meeting for October Baptisms
✦ Friday, 27 September		Last School Day of Term III
✦ Wednesday, 2 October	17:30	Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
✦ Friday, 4 October	09:30	FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI Anointing of the Sick during Mass
✦ Sunday, 6 October	02:00	Daylight Saving begins
✦ Monday, 7 October	09:30	BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

CROSS + GENERATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

This program is a partnership between CatholicCare, Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong and Holy Spirit College (Bellambi). The program pairs students with seniors to assist you with technology. Bring in your device, either your phone, laptop or tablet and the students will assist you with becoming more confident and familiar with downloading apps, sending messages, using google maps or other help you may need. *Refreshments will be provided at each session.* **Holy Spirit College, Bellambi: 09:30–11:00 on these Thursdays ... 24 October; 7 November; 21 November; and 5 December.** Please join us in this unique opportunity to connect with seniors, and students for some information sharing in a fun relaxed setting here at the high school. **Places will fill quickly**, so please contact Jane Hollier Parish and Community Officer CatholicCare on 📞 0417 018 152 or janeh@catholiccare.dow.org.au

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BAPTISMS THIS WEEKEND – WELCOME

Welcome and congratulations to **DUKE BREAKSPEAR**, baptised in our Parish this Saturday evening, and to **TORIN ELSE**, baptised in our Parish this Sunday morning. Welcome and thank you to their parents, godparents, family and friends for bringing them to our Parish community. The next Baptisms to be held in our Parish will be during Masses on **19/20 October**. The next Baptism meeting for parents will be in the presbytery on **Thursday, 26 September at 19:15**. Call in to the Parish Office to collect the Baptism Enrolment Forms. Baptism is the first Sacrament of Christian Initiation, followed by Confirmation and Eucharist.



THIS Sunday's Readings – on website

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B	
1st Reading	Isaiah 50:5-9
2nd Reading	James 2:14-18
Gospel	Mark 8:27-35

NEXT Sunday's Readings – on website

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR B	
1st Reading	Wisdom 2:12,17-20
2nd Reading	James 3:14–4:3
Gospel	Mark 9:30-37

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*

Kerry Fabon • Parish Secretary

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

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Parish School of St Michael

☎ 4267 2560

THIS WEEK'S LITURGIES

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