

17 September 2023
**Twenty-Fourth Sunday in
Ordinary Time Year A**



Entrance Antiphon

Give peace, O Lord, to those
who wait for you, that your
prophets be found true. Hear
the prayers of your servant,
and of your people Israel.

First Reading from the book
of Ecclesiasticus
Sirach 27:30 – 28:7

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102:1-4. 9-12. R. v.8
(R.) The Lord is kind and
merciful; slow to anger and
rich in compassion.

Second Reading from the
letter of St Paul to the
Romans 14:7-9

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I give you a new
commandment: love one
another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to
Matthew 18:21-35

Communion Antiphon

How precious is your mercy,
O God! The children of men
seek shelter in the shadow
of your wings.

NEXT WEEK

24 SEPTEMBER 2023
**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME YEAR A**

First: Isaiah 55:6-9

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R. V.18
Second : Philippians 1:20-24. 27
Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.

**Congratulations to the 27 Children
who will be confirmed this weekend**

The Sacrament of Confirmation confirms membership in the Christian community and seals Baptism with an anointing. Confirmation consists of a prayer to the Holy Spirit, the laying on of hands while the prayer is said and the anointing of the candidate with oil of Chrism.

The Church teaches that Confirmation confirms Baptism and is the second formal step in the process of becoming initiated into the Christian community. Confirmation is an invitation to each one of us to renew the Baptismal promises first made on our behalf by our parents and godparents when we were baptised. This process invites us into a deeper way of relating to God, to Jesus and to one another, and to becoming more actively involved in the life of the community through the on-going presence of the Holy Spirit.

Initiation into the Christian community means becoming a part of the life and work of the community: gathering to celebrate Eucharist, to listen to word of God, to pray together and to share in the care for the poor.

The story of Pentecost shows us how the disciples, gathered together in fear but also to support one another, came to an understanding that Jesus' Spirit was with them and gave them the power and courage to go out and spread the good news about Jesus to the whole world.

The anointing of the candidate at Confirmation is a sign of confirming the gift of the Spirit, and calling the candidates to become involved in the life and mission of the community.

Jesus said: 'The Holy Spirit will come and help you, because the Father will send the spirit to take my place. The Spirit will teach you everything and will remind you of what I said while I was with you.' John 14:26



The Bishop's Annual Appeal

"Our faith calls us to help one another through prayer and action. Offering dignified support and care for our retired clergy, who have always cared for us; and a sound and holistic formation of our young seminarians, our future priests, are my responsibilities as your Bishop. I seek your prayers and practical support to help me ensure that I can do this. Your donation to this appeal is very much appreciated." + Bishop Brian Mascord

Caring for those who have cared for us—support the retirement and health of our clergy Offering dignified support to priests who are unwell and care for our retired diocesan clergy who have dedicated their lives in service of the Church is the responsibility of Bishop Brian. Each year, this support is partly funded by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Your donation to this appeal will help Bishop Brian ensure a dignified retirement for our diocesan clergy through suitable accommodation, transport assistance and holistic health care. Currently, there are 13 clergy in retirement. It is likely that we will have an additional 7 diocesan clergy retiring over the next 5 years. As a matter of priority, we need to ensure that we have the resources to continue to care for our ageing clergy.

Seminarian Education Our diocese currently has 7 seminarians studying for the priesthood. Your gift will assist with the following: onboarding, seminary fees, accommodation, travel, personal & healthcare, mentoring & supervision, ordination expenses.

The Bishop's Annual Appeal will be held at all masses this weekend.

Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri & Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: First Friday of each month from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon		
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12

Contact us

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm

Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176

Email: varroville@dow.org.au

Website: varroville.dow.org.au

Parish Priest: Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Assistant Priest: Fr “Sam” Ransom Rapirap OCD

Parish Associate: Sr “Jill” Girlie Sudario, CM

Prayer intentions

For the sick & homebound: Baby Matthew , Terry Maroun, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys.

May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.

For our recently dearly departed: Rufino Baying Yanga, Diana Antilla, Gladys Bergicourt, Dolores Doyle, Petar Petrinovic, Catherine Crawford, Shirley Chitty,

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Richard McGuinness, Sanjaey Pillay,
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.



Our Community: Rosters

24 September	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Tracey, Richard & Estela	Chris, Margaret & Bianca	Geoff & Margaret
Altar Servers	Maria, Cassandra & Abigail	Orly, Fisiilose & Claire	Vu
Readers	Suzanne & Margaret	Allan & Laura	Evangeline & Kavya
Refreshments	Josephine & Glenda	Volunteers	
CLOTW		School holidays	
Flowers	Sr Ines & Katalina	Church Vacuuming	Tess & Jacinta
Counters	Louise & Lina	Foyer Cleaning	Wicks family

Our Community Notices

Pastoral Care in our Parish Our parish is blessed with a Pastoral Care Team who seek to spiritually support those in our parish who may not be able to attend Mass for a number of reasons; eg, illness, bereaved, living in a nursing home, grieving or lonely. We aspire to be visible signs of God’s loving and caring presence in the life of a person who feels they need or will benefit from prayer and spiritual support. Prayer and a kind listening ear is often balm that promotes healing.

This ministry is able to celebrate the Eucharist on such visits if requested. If you or anyone you know would like more information please contact the parish office.

Fundraising event; 23 September at 7pm. Campfire & Open Mic Night. Come along for a relaxed family evening with a campfire and entertainment. The cost will be \$20 pp or \$50 per family (dinner included; BYO drinks). For more information contact the parish office.



Bulletin Notices

Pilgrimage to Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney on Wednesday 27 September by train. The day will include a visit to the museum, Mass in the chapel, and lunch. Museum entry is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children. Morning tea and lunch is available for \$25 per person. For more info and to register please call the parish office by 22 Sept.

Ignite inspired youth gathering in our parish on Friday 6 October from 5—7pm. The Ignite Conference is a gathering of Catholics for four days of real-world formation, renewal of faith, great people, and powerful worship. Over 2000 high schoolers, young adults, leaders, teachers, priests and religious are taking part in a life changing encounter with God and His Church. The Parish youth who attend the Ignite Conference in Sydney will lead our Parish youth for an afternoon session. For more info call the parish office.

On The Journey podcast Fr Mike Delaney asks: Will it cost me to look at forgiveness differently so that I can see God's mercy being poured out both as justice and compassion in every moment of my day? Mother Hilda's meeting with a new dad reminds her of God's excitement about being our father. Plus, Fr Tony Percy, a faith testimony from Mark Raue, and Pete Gilmore. The Journey podcast available at www.jcr.org.au.

Become a CatholicCare foster carer! The CatholicCare foster care team are urgently looking for a forever home for Ollie* who is 8 years old. Ollie is a very engaging, outgoing, polite and active boy. Ollie enjoys swimming, going to the park, playing Nintendo, watching movies, colouring in, and trying new foods. Ollie would love to learn to ride a bike and play soccer or Oz Tag. Ollie is looking for a forever home with carers who are kind, caring, calm, and patient who can give him a sense of security and belonging. You can find out more by calling 0418 783 956, email fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au or go to <http://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au> for more information. CatholicCare will support you every step of the way. *name has been changed for privacy

Jamberoo Arts & Crafts Exhibition 'By the Work of our Hands' Come and join us for the Jamberoo Arts & Crafts Exhibition being held at the Old Fire Station Kiama. Date: 22 – 27 September from 10am- 3:30pm, Save the date and bring your friends and family along and enjoy beautiful Kiama and discover the beauty 'By the Work of our Hands'.

Sisters of Charity of Australia Heritage Centre We invite you to come and share in the story of Australia's first religious sisters. We'd love to welcome you! Open Tuesday to Thursday 10am- 3pm or by appointment at Potts Point. Bookings recommended. Our centre celebrates over 180 years of ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Australia. Enquiries please contact concierge@rscoffice.com or (02) 9138 0835

Mary in Scripture: You are invited to discover the unique role of Our Lady, as the Ark of the Covenant, New Eve, and Queen Mother in this eye opening in-service revealing the deep theological connections between Mary and her ancient biblical types. Campbelltown - Monday 18th September: 9:30am - 12:00pm; Level 1, Micah House; 35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown; To register for the Campbelltown seminar, please visit <https://dow.sh/marybiblectown>

Morocco Earthquake Caritas Australia has launched an appeal for the victims of the earthquake in Morocco. Over 2,000 people have been confirmed dead. Thousands of people have been injured, over 1,000 critically. Search and rescue efforts are ongoing, with many people still trapped under rubble. The time to act is now. Caritas agencies are on the ground as they assess the scale of the damage and critical needs. Your donation today can help communities affected by the earthquake. Please give generously at www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/morocco-earthquake/

Blessing of Animals, Monday, 2 October at 9:30am As usual, the Blessing of Animals will take place on the Monday of the long weekend, 2 October at 9:30am at the Parish of Saint Michael, 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Thirroul. The blessing takes place in the courtyard next to the church. All animals under 800kg and their carers are welcome, though please keep the larger crocodiles on a tight leash. The feast of St Francis of Assisi is on Wednesday, 4 October, with Mass at 9:00am – animals are welcome at that Mass. Blessed are you, Lord God, maker of all living creatures. May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation.

ARETE - Foundations of Missionary Leadership Program 2024 Applications for our Foundations of Missionary Leadership Program 2024 are now officially open! If you have a strong desire to deepen your faith, acquire practical leadership skills, theological knowledge, and spiritual formation to effectively serve Christ in today's Church, then our program is specifically designed for you. Please note that spaces for our Foundations of Missionary Leadership program for 2024 are limited and expected to fill quickly. Don't hesitate, take action now to ensure your place! Find out more: <https://www.aretecentre.org/>

A women's opportunity to experience a Cursillo three-day weekend; A Cursillo weekend will be held at Carmel House, Varroville from Thursday evening 5 October to Sunday afternoon 8 October 2023. To view brochure and find out more, please email cursillo3dayweekend@hotmail.com or ring Geraldine Dayball on 0421 329 365.

Made Free: Creative Retreat, 20-22 October 2023 Join the MGL Sisters in a weekend retreat that explores a range of creative prayer experiences. Recapture the freedom you were made for, let go of what is burdening you, and let God fill you again with life. Venue: Carmel House, 345 St Andrews Rd, Varroville NSW Bookings: <http://www.trybooking.com/CFBRD> (by 6 October) Contact: Judy - mgl sisters.sydney@gmail.com

Growing Good Men Father and Teenage Son Weekend Experience 20–22 October 2023 Cataract Scout Camp Appin. One of the most important influences in the lives of men is the relationship they had with their father or significant father figure. The encouragement and affirmation that this relationship could, and should, provide, is a key ingredient for how young men view themselves and embrace their faith and gifts as they take their place in the world. This is a unique opportunity for dads and their sons to embark on a quest of discovery with Robert Falzon and the team from menALIVE. Register online <https://www.dow.org.au/events/menalive->

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18:21-35

I tell you that you forgive not seven times but seventy times seven .

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'



'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me", he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said. "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY by Pope Francis 17 September 2017

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Mt 18:21-35) offers us a lesson on forgiveness which does not deny wrongdoing, but recognizes that human beings, created in God's image, are always greater than the evil they commit. Saint Peter asks Jesus: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" (v. 21). To Peter, forgiving the same person seven times already seemed the maximum possible. And perhaps to us it may already seem too much to do so twice. But Jesus answers, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven" (v. 22), meaning always. You must always forgive. And he confirms this by telling the parable of the merciful king and the wicked servant, in which he shows the inconsistency of the man who was first forgiven and then refused to forgive.

The king in the parable is a generous man who, spurred by compassion, forgives an enormous debt — "10,000 talents": enormous — to a servant who beseeches him. That same servant, however, as soon as he meets another servant like himself who owes him 100 dinarii — which is much less — behaves in a ruthless way and has him thrown in prison. The servant's inconsistent behaviour is the same as ours when we refuse to forgive our brothers and sisters. Whereas the king in the parable is the image of God who loves us with a love that is so rich in mercy as to welcome us, love us and forgive us continuously.

From the time of our Baptism, God has forgiven us, releasing us from an intractable debt: original sin. But that is the first time. Then, with boundless mercy, he forgives us all our faults as soon as we show even the least sign of repentance. This is how God is: merciful. When we are tempted to close our heart to those who have offended us and tell us they are sorry, let us remember our Heavenly Father's words to the wicked servant: "I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?" (vv. 32-33). Anyone who has experienced the joy, peace and inner freedom which come from being forgiven should open him or herself up to the possibility of forgiving in turn.

Jesus wished to introduce the teaching of this parable into the Our Father. He linked the forgiveness which we ask from God with the forgiveness that we should accord our brothers and sisters: "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Mt 6:12). God's forgiveness is the symbol of his "overflowing" love for each of us. It is the love that leaves us free to distance ourselves, like the prodigal son, but which awaits our return every day. It is the resourceful love of the shepherd for the lost sheep. It is the tenderness which welcomes each sinner who knocks at his door. The Heavenly Father — our Father — is filled, is full of love and he wants to offer it to us, but he cannot do so if we close our heart to love towards others.

May the Virgin Mary help us to become ever more aware of the gratuitousness and the greatness of the forgiveness received from God, to become merciful like him, Good Father, slow to anger and great in love.