



ST JAMES' PARISH

St James Muswellbrook
St Thomas Aberdeen



We acknowledge the traditional owners who cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who have maintained these spiritual connections and traditions.

PARISH CONTACTS

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Office Hours: Tue - Fri 9.30am – 2.30pm

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A

30 July 2023

First Reading **1 Kings 3:5.7-12**

A reading from the first book of the Kings

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, 'Ask what you would like me to give you.' Solomon replied, 'Lord, my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. Your servant finds himself in the midst of this people of yours that you have chosen, a people so many its numbers cannot be counted or reckoned. Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great?' It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. 'Since you have asked for this' the Lord said 'and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 118:57. 72. 76-77. 127-130. R. v.97

(R.) Lord, I love your commands.

1. My part, I have resolved, O Lord,
is to obey your word.
The law from your mouth means more to me
than silver and gold. **(R.)**
2. Let your love be ready to console me
by your promise to your servant.
Let your love come to me and I shall live
for your law is my delight. **(R.)**
3. That is why I love your commands
more than finest gold.
That is why I rule my life by your precepts:
I hate false ways. **(R.)**
4. Your will is wonderful indeed;
therefore I obey it.
The unfolding of your word gives light
and teaches the simple. **(R.)**

Second Reading **Romans 8:28-30**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

We know that by turning everything to their good God co-operates with all those who love him, with all those that he has called according to his purpose. They are the ones he chose specially long ago and intended to become true images of his Son, so that his Son might be the eldest of many brothers. He called those he intended for this; those he called he justified, and with those he justified he shared his glory.

Gospel Acclamation **See Matthew 11:25**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

Alleluia!

Gospel **Matthew 13:44-52**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

'Have you understood all this?' They said, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Well, then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom



of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.'

REFLECTION by Fr Victor

There is so much that we could ask of God but if we could ask God only one thing, what is it that we would ask of God?

In the 1st reading of the 17th Sunday in ordinary time, year A from the 1st book of Kings, God told Solomon, "Ask what you would like me to give you." Solomon asked God for wisdom: "Give your servant ... an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong." God is pleased that his prayer is selfless – and he gives him far more than he requested. This seems to be God's habit with the humble.

In the Gospel, Jesus is encouraging us to ask for this gift of wisdom so that we will be able to discern what is really important when it comes to choosing how we will live as a member of the kingdom. Like the man who finds a treasure or the merchant who finds a valuable pearl, we must be willing to surrender all to be a part of the reign of God.

Our willingness to surrender our all will be based on the depth of our belief that "God makes all things work together for the good of those who love him" (Rom 8:28). God has called us to become the image of Jesus and has already made this possible through His Son's sacrificial death for us. Our final destiny is glorious because God has already made it so for us. Even now we have some taste of that glory in the midst of the trials and sufferings that are also a part of our calling.

As the Gospel reminds us, the reign of God is in process. The dragnet is collecting all kinds of things. We want to be found among the "worthwhile things" and not among the "useless" which will be thrown away.

Those who are learning as the reign of God unfolds must ask for the gift of wisdom, as Solomon did. Then we will have the insight needed to keep surrendering all as we continue toward the glory that God has prepared for us who are open to being transformed in the image of His Son.

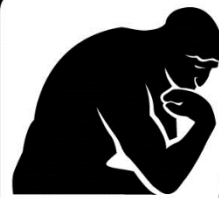
Let us ask the Lord, the gift of an understanding heart and use it well in all we say and do.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe and Stay Blessed!

gospel focus

The Kingdom is like...

Throughout the gospels, Jesus consistently uses the figures of speech of simile and metaphor to describe the kingdom. He never directly describes the kingdom. It is always described as being like some situation or person or as if... This figurative use of language means that we have no single clear picture of what the kingdom is like but we do have a multitude of metaphors and descriptions. This style of description adds to the paradoxical nature of the kingdom – it is like many things yet we don't really know what it is like at all.



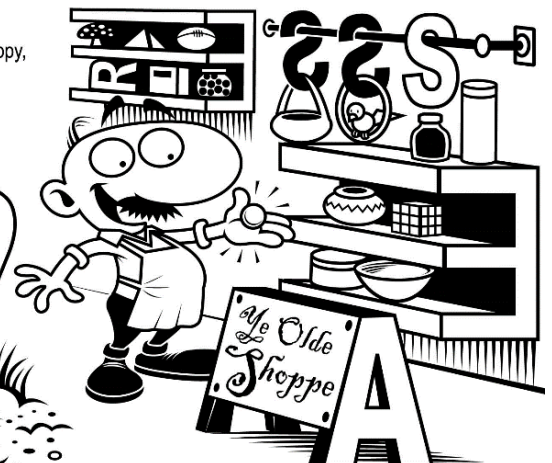
Have you thought?

Interpretation

In today's passage the gospel writer appears to describe himself: "every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old." It is a fantastic description of what it means to be an interpreter of the gospel. To interpret scripture, one must draw on what is old; applying understandings of the text in its original context and its original audience. But one must also draw on what is new; making connections between that original setting and the context in which it is being read today.

Can you find the letters that spell the word TREASURE hidden in the picture below?

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field."



"The kingdom of heaven is also like a shop keeper looking for fine pearls. When he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it."

ST THOMAS' CUPPA ROSTER

Please join us for a cuppa after Mass at St Thomas' this **Sunday 30 July**. July's rostered volunteers are Margaret Hamilton and Carol Bowen.



ADELE ANNUAL LEAVE

The parish office will be closed over the following weeks:
1 – 4 August, 8 – 11 August, 15 – 18 August.

Please contact Colleen Kelly for any bulletin requests during this time.

P: 0402 242 273

E: kellymbrook@westnet.com.au

For urgent matters please call Fr Victor.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING SAVE THE DATE!!

Safeguarding training will be held in Singleton on **Saturday 30 September**. If you are a volunteer who has been told that they require this training, please put this date into your calendar. I will follow up with volunteers when I return from leave.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE

A Reconciliation service will be held on Wednesday 2 August at 4pm in St James Church for the Sacramental children and their families.

PLANNED GIVING TAX RECEIPTS

Those parishioners who requested a tax receipt for the last FY will have received these by email this week. Others will be available at the Churches this weekend.

SEASON FOR GROWTH ADULT PROGRAM

The Seasons for Growth Adult Program is for anyone who is living with the effects of change and loss. Many factors can cause change such as the loss of someone or something you love, family separation and divorce, moving to a new place, impact of illness, migration, and family or work-life changes.

If you, or someone you know, are dealing with significant life changes, you are invited to attend the Adult Seminar:

Date: Saturday 2 September, 9.00am-12.00pm

Venue: Toohey Room, 841 Hunter St Newcastle West

RSVP: 27 August

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/season-for-growth-tickets-671239343947> or ring 4979 1334

REDISCOVERING JOY - DR MICHELE CONNOLLY

How are hearts set on fire with love of God and love of the world? 'The only thing that counts for me,' wrote Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 'is not to propagate God but to discover him.' Join us for a day of formation with Dr Michele Connolly, current Associate Professor of Biblical Studies within the Catholic Institute of Sydney and University of Notre Dame Australia. In a retreat style and setting, Michele will help us examine how rich and life-giving Scripture can be, revealing a God whose story intends to renew our lives and calls us to actively engage with the world.

Monday 11 September, Crown Plaza Hunter Valley, 9.30am – 3.30pm, \$30pp **RSVP: 13 August 2023**.

Registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rediscovering-joy-tickets-626620176817>

ART AND SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP

Creation of art provides an opportunity for a deepening awareness of oneself and the world, and can act as a catalyst for evoking the Spirit. Art is a means to see-to-research and find the living meaning of what it means to open the heart. Everyone has the ability to create art, but in order for it to be theological, the artist needs to explore ways that it makes sense of faith. Opening the heart through art involves making meaning through the creation, then reflecting on the art itself and the unfolding the moment-to-moment direct experience of the process. This workshop will provide an opportunity to awaken the Spirit through the beauty of God's creation, prayer, and reflection. Participants will engage in art-making experiences which will nourish their faith.

Dates: Thursday September 14 (9am-3pm)

Venue: Kilaben Bay Community Centre

Cost: \$25 per person

To register go to:

www.eventbrite.com.au/e/art-and-spirituality-workshop-september-2023-tickets-632417346307

GUEST SPEAKER: CHARBEL RAISH TESTIMONY

There are many ways to grow our faith. The pinnacle being attending Holy Mass and participating in the Eucharist. Spiritual reading (with careful selection of course) is another way to deepen and widen our intimacy with God. Another is listening to others witness to their spiritual journey. In response to an expressed need for such witnessing, Wallsend-Shortland parish are excited to announce that Charbel Raish will be giving his testimony at **Our Lady of Victories School Hall on Saturday, 26th August, 10:30am – 12:30pm**.

Charbel is the founder of Parousia Media which was born in May of 2005. He has organized over 1000 face to face and virtual events consisting of local and international speakers who have featured all over Australia and the world. Charbel has coordinated Faith Formation events for over 21 years.

Please come and join us. If this is well received, we hope to have many other such events in our parish. To register, please contact Sr Mary on, 0249 55 95 75.

WORKSHOPS AND CATHEDRAL LECTURE

We are excited that Father Richard Lennan will be visiting his hometown this August. During his stay he is offering several workshops and presentations. Join Richard in 'tilling' the Church for a more faithful, just, and creative church, one responsive to the movement of grace.

Tues 15 -Workshop open to all diocesan community – The Church: Foundations, Challenges, and Possibilities- Maitland Gaol- 9.30am-3.30pm

Wed 16- Cathedral Lecture open to all diocesan community – Shaping the Church's Future: The Grace of Creative Faithfulness- Sacred Heart Cathedral. 6.00pm-7.00pm

Fri 18- Workshop open to all diocesan community – The Church: Foundations, Challenges, and Possibilities Forster Tuncurry Parish Hall. 9.30 am to 3.30pm

To register go to www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/upcoming-events/

Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 31 July	Tuesday 1 August	Wednesday 2 August	Thursday 3 August	Friday 4 August	Saturday 5 August	Sunday 6 August
						THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD
9.00am Private, Personal Prayer, and Adoration St James Muswellbrook	11.00am Funeral Mass of Lucrecia Casia St. James Muswellbrook	9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook	11.30am Adoration and Benediction 12.05pm Mass St James Muswellbrook	9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook	9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook 5.30pm Mass St James Muswellbrook 6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration	10.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook
	5.30pm Mass St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00am Mass St Thomas Aberdeen

Minister Roster Sunday 6th August 2023

1st Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Extraordinary Ministers	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	Can you fill this position? Can you fill this position?	C. Hayes	Sr. Dorothy	J. Toohey R. Wood		R. Panis	C. Hayes
8am Sunday Aberdeen	T. Hobbs	J. Lonergan	C. Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am Sunday Muswellbrook	M. Kempis Can you fill this position?	Can you fill this position?	K. Mason	Can you fill this position?			K. Goodwin
Counters	Kay and Brian Mason						

MASS AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: David Curran, Pat Hogan, Abbie Sweeper, Kym Mason, Melanie Hoch, Kim Goodwin, Anne Hugo, Helen Tumbers, Anne Rawson, Vinitia Fernando, Kirsty Munn, Kellie Shaw, Vidhya Vijay, Michael Dolahenty, Jenny Paul, and Danielle Camilleri.

Anniversary: Barbara McTaggart

Recently Deceased: Rodrigo Canete and Lucrecia Casia

Privacy Laws. All parishioners are encouraged to pray for the sick. Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

St James and St Thomas - Pray for Us

BULLETIN

Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email:

muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au

The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au.

or on our Facebook page: **Catholic Parish of St James Muswellbrook**

SAFEGUARDING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Please visit our 'Safeguarding' page to access a range of safeguarding resources: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au

Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/ or phone: 02 4979 1390

Muswellbrook Parish Promoter of Safeguarding: Jane Jacobs. Mobile: 0428 164 730 Email: jane.jacobs@mn.catholic.edu.au

"Our mission is to spread the Kingdom by being an alive and informed Community, united as one family in care and consideration for each other in the love of God."