



Today's Gospel gives us both a parable and then an interpretation of that parable. I'm very grateful for this pattern in the 13th chapter of Matthew's Gospel. It indicates to us that not everything that Jesus says should be taken literally. Clearly the disciples were sometimes confused and needed some private coaching to bring them up to speed with what Jesus was on about.

As much as I respect the faith of our fundamentalist Christian brothers and sisters, it is at this point, on the way we interpret the Scriptures, that we cannot agree. The catholic community has always taken the process outlined in Matthew's gospel very seriously. We have always held that the full richness of the scriptures needs careful study and tested interpretations.

Unfortunately, in previous generations, the anxiety over people's private interpretations of the scriptures led Catholics to be suspicious of the Bible and the private reading of it. To read the Bible was often seen as a 'very protestant thing to do'. Given that Jesus, Mary, the apostles and the disciples are all recorded in the New Testament as reading, meditating on, or hearing the scriptures, nothing could be further from the truth. To be a Christian is to ponder the Word of God.

That's why the Second Vatican Council encouraged us all to return to regular private reflection on the Bible. Along with this encouragement they also reminded us, however, that as strong as the feelings and revelations we experience in our private scriptural prayer may be, these may have little or no consequence for the wider community of faith. We believe that the whole Church has the task to discern where the Word of God is leading us.

To help this discernment, it's scholars who pay great attention to the history and the literary, textual and cultural issues in and around the Bible have always aided the catholic community. They look at how various interpretations and approaches of the Scriptures have helped or hindered the Church over the centuries. We place great weight on the 'here and now' of the faith community who listens to the Word of God and lives it out.

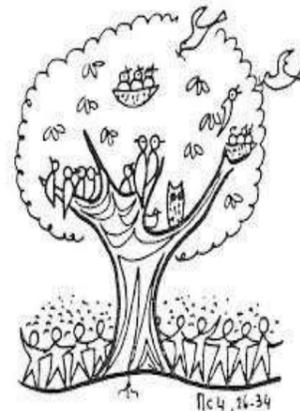
Our approach is a long way from those who hold that the entire truth of the scriptures is found in the text itself. Fundamentalist interpretations of the scriptures dismiss the importance of studying the scriptures by reducing it

to a book of facts. In doing so they tie themselves up in all sorts of textual knots whenever the scriptures seem to contradict themselves.

We hold, however, that the scriptures are not books of facts, though they contain historical information. We believe we have seventy-three sacred books that 'cannot err in leading us to the truth about God'. The Word of God is for us the pathway to faith, a series of revealed and inspired portraits of God and a distillation of God's saving love for us and our response to him.

When there are inconsistencies or differences in any two scriptural texts, rather than unsettle us, we see these differences as examples of the varying rich approaches to the truth of our salvation in and through Christ. This is nicely summed up in the verse, *The Bible in 50 words*.

God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Joseph ruled  
Jacob fooled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peeked  
Prophets warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained.



At this Eucharist let's give thanks that Jesus often used stories to communicate his truth and that he explained their meaning to those with ears to hear. Let's be grateful that we are inheritors of this intelligent legacy.

© Richard Leonard SJ. Liturgy Help

**Sacrament of Confirmation Presentation Weekend**

This weekend we welcome our school Confirmation candidates and their families to our Masses. During their preparation, the children have made very special "Pray for me" cards that they would love for you to take home and pray for them during, and after, their Confirmation journey. Prayer is such a powerful gift. Please take one. We thank you very much for your prayers and blessings for our little ones and your warm welcome of our new families to our church.



The sacrament of Confirmation will be held in St Agnes' Church on the following dates:  
Monday, 31 July St Peter's Primary.  
Tuesday, 1 August St Joseph's Primary & other students.  
Wednesday, 2 August St Agnes' Primary.

**Weekday Mass in the Church on these dates will be held at 8.00am not the usual 5.15pm.**



**MACKILLOP CENTRE**  
*Catholic Gifts and Support*

**Mackillop Centre**

The new MacKillop Centre located at 106 Horton Street is fully stocked with beautiful and affordable gifts, cards and books. It is currently well stocked with Confirmation gifts! Opening hours are 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday. It will also open on Saturday, 29 July from 9.30am to 12.30pm to assist with Confirmation. The phone number is 6584 9779.

**Baptism Information Night**



*Holy Baptism*

The next Baptism Information Night will be held in St Agnes' Church on Thursday, 27 July at 6.00pm. If you are planning on having a child baptised it is important for you to attend. If you have any questions please call the Presbytery Office.

**Catholic Leader**

Is available for sale from the Presbytery Office on a Friday afternoon and after the weekend Masses. The cost is \$2.50.



**Prayer Reflection**

One loves someone so much – a child, a parent, a spouse or partner – yet when one tries to pray for that person the words seem only a pale shadow of the intensity of feeling and total love one feels. Stop! Simply put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us. One's heart is breaking with grief for someone close who is very ill or dying. Or one feels a terrible anxiety or anguish. Words don't come easily even though one wants to pray. Stop! Put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us.

Perhaps accentuated by the constant messaging of social media, when trying to pray we can get anxious when there is a lull in the noise and no words come.

We could pause for a moment to relax and to allow the Spirit to express our plea in a way which could never be put into words.

Fr Michael Tate, Liturgy Help

**Journey into the Catholic Faith 4Teens**

This term we are starting a fresh series of 'Journey into the Catholic Faith 4Teens'. All are welcome! If you want to know more about the Catholic Faith or if you would like to receive the sacraments, come along to the weekly gatherings. Please consider attending the first few sessions this term to test it out! The gatherings are on a Monday afternoon from 3.45pm - 5.15pm. And afternoon tea is always provided. There's always time for questions and every session is interactive. Our first gathering is on Monday, 24 July in the Youth Hub. This gathering will be an opportunity for you to mingle and speak out about the topics you want to know more about. If you have any questions please contact me, or come and see me in the Youth Ministry Office (in the Youth Hub). My email is ehales@lism.catholic.edu.au or come visit me!

Ellen Hales,  
St Agnes Parish, Youth Minister

**OUR VISION**

"Everything is to be oriented towards the praise and glory of God."

**OUR MISSION**

The St Agnes' Parish Community strives to make our Vision a reality by a commitment to:

- holiness in the image of Christ.
- minister within the faith community.
- proclaim the good news of salvation.
- the service of all, particularly those in need.



**Pope Francis - Official Tweet**

We must overcome all forms of racism, of intolerance and of the instrumentalization of the human person.

## Parish Planned Giving

If you have not received your 2017/2018 parish planned giving envelopes please contact the Parish Administration Centre on 6588 7444. Or if you are interested in contributing please call Trudi on the same number.

## Taize Worship

Will be held on Wednesday, 26 July at St Francis Chapel from 6.00pm-7.00pm. Begins with silent candle lighting and proceeds with simple songs, scripture readings, a time of silence and shared prayer, helping the mind to be stilled, the heart opened and the soul nourished in God's presence. For more information contact the Presbytery Office.

## Franciscan Retreat

A retreat will be conducted over the weekend of 23 - 24 September by the Franciscan Order at the Francis Retreat, Bonny Hills. Overnight accommodation is available at the venue. Fr John Cooper will be the spiritual leader. For more information contact Joan on 6583 6549.

## Gift Bearers' Roster

It is time to update this roster. If you would like to be part of this Ministry, or would like to be taken off the roster please contact the Presbytery Office on 6583 1024 by 6 August. We are in need of more volunteers for the 9.00am Mass. So if you attend this Mass and would like to be part of the Ministry please call the Presbytery office.



Will be holding its 2018 Year 11 enrolment open night on Tuesday, 25 July at 6.00pm at the College. You can register for the open night at [www.newman.nsw.edu.au](http://www.newman.nsw.edu.au), email to [newman@lism.catholic.edu.au](mailto:newman@lism.catholic.edu.au) or phone 6580 3800. Don't forget to register!

## Black & White Charity Concert

The annual Black & White Charity Concert will be held at Panthers Auditorium on Sunday, 6 August from 2.00pm. Tickets are \$5.00 with all proceeds going to Rotary Lodge at the Base Hospital. Performances by Hastings Koalas, Sing Australia, Port Macquarie Public School and ExtravDance.

## Remember in Prayer



**Recently Deceased:** Ursula Boyd, Pat Gillan, John McColgan, Max Phillips, Herminia Maningo, Balbino Mercadal Sr, Norman Holland.  
**Anniversaries:** John Hopkins, John Joseph Hopkins, Maxwell Patrick Byrnes, Therese Kelly, James McMahon, Arthur James Duff, Marie Quinn, Enid Quinn, Brenda Quinn, Harry & Mary Needs, Fr Charles Collingridge, Fr Owen Daley.  
**Other Mass Intentions:** Theresa Kelly, Hilton Dodds, Madge Lindsay, Daphne Gabrielle DeZilva, Jack Lindsay, Beryl Thomas, Molly & Robert Friggens, John Cain, Marija Miller, donor intentions and masses of thanksgiving.

## Marriage Encounter Weekend

Is a *Marriage Enrichment* experience for married couples – set in peaceful surroundings, away from the distractions of everyday life. Couples have a unique opportunity to reconnect, rekindle and refresh their relationship. Take time out of your busy schedule, to invest in your most precious asset . . . your Marriage! Date & Location: 18 - 20 August. Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville, NSW.



Bookings: [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au) or phone Adrian and Janet Sullivan on 0490 774 419, email address: [adrian.janet1@bigpond.com](mailto:adrian.janet1@bigpond.com).

## The Journey Catholic Radio Program - Airs 23 July

This week on the Journey we have some fabulous 'God Spots' including, The Catholic Guy Bruce Downes reminding us "About the promise written in the stars" (Repeat), Sr Hilda with her Wisdom from the Abbey and Francine Pirolas talks to us about Romance and Mystery in her SMART Loving segment. We are blessed to have such talented Christian music artists helping us to create a show that is all about faith, hope, love and life. Tune into Rhema FM 99.9 Sunday 11.00am or go to [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au) or [www.itunes.jcr.org.au](http://www.itunes.jcr.org.au) where you can listen anytime and subscribe to weekly shows by email.

Need help with your parish giving?

Call Trudi  
(02) 6588 7444



Parish Giving Programme



**Parish Priest**  
Father Leo Donnelly

**Assistant Priest**  
Father Peter Wood

**Assistant Priest**  
Father Roland Agrisola

**Pastoral Assistant**  
Peter O'Driscoll  
T (02) 6584 9970

**Presbytery Office**  
47 Hay Street Port Macquarie  
PO Box 23  
T (02) 6583 1024  
E [pastoraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au](mailto:pastoraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au)  
[www.stagnesparish.org.au](http://www.stagnesparish.org.au)

**Office Hours:**  
8.30am - 4.30pm

## FEAST DAYS

**Monday, 24 July**  
St Sharbel Makhluf

**Tuesday, 25 July**  
St James, Apostle



**Wednesday, 26 July**  
St Joachim, St Anne

**Saturday, 29 July**  
St Martha

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD ROSTER 30 JULY

Hannah O'Brien  
Claire Michell

## PARISH MASSES

**ST AGNES' CHURCH** | Hay Street, Port Macquarie  
**Monday to Thursday:** 5.15pm  
**Friday:** 12.05pm  
**Saturday:** 8.00am, 6.00pm Vigil  
**Sunday:** 7.30am, 9.00am, 5.00pm  
**Please note:** Weekday Masses at 9.00am on Public Holidays  
**Reconciliation:** Friday 11.30am -12 noon, Saturday 11.30am - 12.30pm  
**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**  
 1st Saturday of the month 8.30am - 9.30am.

**ST FRANCIS CHAPEL** / Lochinvar Place, Port Macquarie  
**Contact:** Sr Anne Hannigan  
 Ph 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259.  
**Communion Service or Mass:** 9.30am Monday - Thursday  
**Sunday Mass:** 9.30am

**CHRIST THE KING CHAPEL** | Boronia St, Port Macquarie  
**Contact:** Sr Anne Hannigan  
 Ph: 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259  
**Weekday Mass:** See Notice On Chapel Door  
**Mass:** Saturday Vigil - 4.30pm  
**Rosary:** 1st Saturday of the month 4.00pm.

**ST BERNARD'S, TELEGRAPH POINT** | Rollands Plain Rd, Telegraph Point  
 Thursday: 6.00pm.

**STAR OF THE SEA, LAKE CATHIE** | Ocean Drive, Lake Cathie  
 Sunday: 8.00am.

## ROSTERS

29—30 July 2017

### READERS AND COMMENTATORS

**6pm Vigil:** George Seanson  
Robert Green  
Sue Williams

**7.30am:** Peter Swan  
Sonia West  
Greg Grace

**9.00am:** Julie Preston  
Beth Flynn  
Anne Thurgate

**5.00pm:** Daniel Ward  
Marraki Kilpatrick  
Tom Inatey

**9.00am:** Michelle Baird  
Albert Jacobs  
Hank Brinkman  
Pat Daley

**5.00pm:** Chris Kalchbauer  
Tina Madden  
Kylie Kipreotis  
Kay Fowler

### MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

**6pm Vigil:** Jason Gill  
Charlie Peoples  
Des Grissell  
Joy Amos

**7.30am:** Geoff Leary  
Kevin Lewis  
Beverley Arthur-Pfeil  
Wendy Pfeil

**GIFT BEARERS ROSTER**  
**6pm Vigil:** B & G Green  
**7.30am:** S & K Panes  
**9.00am:** K Cooper & Family

**THE STATUE OF OUR LADY**  
 Sue Kingston  
 37 Church Street  
 Port Macquarie  
 Phone: 6584 9815

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS**  
**17th Sunday in OT - Yr A**  
 Kings 3:5, 7-12; Psalm 118;  
 Romans 8:28-30;  
 Matthew 13:44-52.

## DIOCESAN INVESTMENT FUND PAYS 2.15% AT CALL!

There are no fees or charges on your account. AGENTS: Mrs Veronica Rinkin & Mrs Mary O'Brien  
 DIF Office, Parish Administration Centre, Phone: (02) 6583 7439 9am – 1pm Monday - Friday