

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHNS CHURCH



ST MARYS CHURCH



ST JAMES CHURCH

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TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: 19 OCTOBER 2025

Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord instructs us to “pray continually and never lose heart.”

Prayer is our living and personal relationship with the living and true God who is always close to us. When we pray, we raise our minds and hearts to God or we open them to God’s offer of himself, of his life, light and love. Since we are his creatures, and we need his constant care and providence, we speak with God from the depths of a humble heart. Prayer is our response of faith and love to the offer of communion of life and love with God. When we pray, we are enlightened by divine wisdom and strengthened by his divine power. To pray continually means that we are in the habit of being in the presence of and in communion with God who is closer to us than we to ourselves, so that he may guide and direct our journey of life. Through the habit of prayer, as we say in the Collect, we are able conform our will to the will of God and serve him with sincerity of heart.

In the first reading, from Exodus 17:8-13, the fruit of unceasing prayer is illustrated. The passage tells us how Moses ordered Joshua to attack the Amalekites, while he would go up the mountain with Aaron and Hur to pray for the help of God. The Amalekites had committed an unforgivable crime when they attacked and killed Israelites who were faint and weary when Israel had to cross the territory occupied by them. Thus it happened that while Moses kept his arms raised in prayer, Joshua would be winning, but as soon as he lowered his arms for weariness, the enemies had the advantage. With the assistance of Aaron and Hur, Moses was able to raise his arms in prayer until sunset and so Israel routed the Amalekites. If we want to achieve our goals in our spiritual life – to grow in love, to be able to forgive one who has offended or harmed us, to resist temptations and evil inclinations, to persevere and grow in faith and hope – goals that are beyond our human power, we must pray without getting tired.

One of the ways we can nourish our relationship with God is by a prayerful reading of passages of the Bible. In the second reading, from 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2, St Paul tells us that from the holy Scriptures, we “can learn the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus,” because “all scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding peoples’ lives and teaching them to be holy.” The word of God spiritually equips and makes us ready for any good work. A prayerful reading of a biblical passage consists of reading it to discover the message of God affirmed in it; applying this message to one’s life; asking for the grace to live according to it, and having the firm resolve to live according to God’s message with the help of divine grace.

In the gospel, from Luke 18:1-8, our Lord Jesus illustrates the need to pray continually and never lose heart, using a parable. “The judge is unjust because he failed to ensure justice for all. The woman is a widow, a member of one of the most oppressed classes in Israelite society. Though vulnerable, she is bold. As indifferent as the judge seems to be toward her case, so is she persistent in her demands of him. He will not give in; she will not give up. The persistence of the woman becomes the model of resoluteness for God’s chosen ones. Like the woman in the parable, they cannot be certain regarding when God will respond, and so they must persist.” (Dianne Bergant CSA)

What the Lord Jesus wants to emphasise in this parable is that God at times seems to pay no heed to us: he keeps silent and delays to intervene. God does not always answer our prayer in the way we want and when we want it. If we persevere in prayer, we will learn his will for us, and we will have the strength to accept it. Persistence in prayer bears the fruit of trusting surrender to the providence of God. We will learn to say: thy will be done: you know what is best for me, I entrust my mind and will, my freedom and desires to you.

As we come and pray together in this Mass, let us ask the Lord to give us the grace to pray without ceasing, to be always in his presence and to be in living exchange of mind and heart with him.

Fr Roland

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God;
 turn your ear to me; hear my words.
 Guard me as the apple of your eye;
 in the shadow of your wings protect me.

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God, grant that we may always
 conform our will to yours and serve your majesty in
 sincerity of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity
 of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING*Exodus 17:8-13*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

The Amalekites came and attacked Israel at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, 'Pick out men for yourself, and tomorrow morning march out to engage Amalek. I, meanwhile, will stand on the hilltop, the staff of God in my hand.' Joshua did as Moses told him and marched out to engage Amalek, while Moses and Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the hill. As long as Moses kept his arms raised, Israel had the advantage; when he let his arms fall, the advantage went to Amalek. But Moses arms grew heavy, so they took a stone and put it under him and on this he sat, Aaron and Hur supporting his arms, one on one side, one on the other; and his arms remained firm till sunset. With the edge of the sword Joshua cut down Amalek and his people.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Ps 120. R. v2*

R. Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

1. I lift up my eyes to the mountains:
 from where shall come my help?
 My help shall come from the Lord
 who made heaven and earth. (R.)
2. May he never allow you to stumble!
 Let him sleep not, your guard.
 No, he sleeps not nor slumbers,
 Israel's guard. (R.)
3. The Lord is your guard and your shade;
 at your right side he stands.
 By day the sun shall not smite you
 nor the moon in the night. (R.)
4. The Lord will guard you from evil,
 he will guard your soul.
 The Lord will guard your going and coming
 both now and for ever. (R.)

SECOND READING*2 Timothy 3:14-4:2*

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy.

You must keep to what you have been taught and know to be true; remember who your teachers were, and how, ever since you were a child, you have known the holy scriptures – from these you can learn the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy. This is how the man who is dedicated to God becomes fully equipped and ready for any good work.

Before God and before Christ Jesus who is to be judge of the living and the dead, I put this duty to you, in the name of his Appearing and of his kingdom: proclaim the message and, welcome or unwelcome, insist on it. Refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience – but do all with patience and with the intention of teaching.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION*Alleluia, alleluia!*

The word of God is living and active; it probes the thoughts and motives of our heart.

*Alleluia!***GOSPEL***Luke 18:1-8*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus told his disciples a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. 'There was a judge in a certain town' he said 'who had neither fear of God nor respect for man. In the same town there was a widow who kept on coming to him and saying, "I want justice from you against my enemy!" For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, "Maybe I have neither fear of God nor respect for man, but since she keeps pestering me I must give this widow her just rights, or she will persist in coming and worry me to death."'

And the Lord said, 'You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now will not God see justice done to his chosen who cry to him day and night even when he delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find any faith on earth?'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant us, Lord, we pray, a sincere respect of your gifts, that, through the purifying action of your grace, we may be cleansed by the very mysteries we serve. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE VI ; EUCHARISTIC PRAYER III

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Behold, the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, who hope in his merciful love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord, we pray, that, benefiting from participation in heavenly things, we may be helped by what you give in this present age and prepared for the gifts that are eternal. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

The theme that links the First Reading, from the Book of Exodus (17:8-13) and the Gospel (Luke 18:1-8) today is clearly that of perseverance in prayer. The Gospel in fact expresses this clearly when it has Jesus introduce a parable about ‘the need to pray at all times and not lose heart’.

The episode told in the First Reading, Exod 17:8-13, occurred, according to the Book of Exodus, early in the desert wandering of Israel following the deliverance from Egypt. The climax of that deliverance came when Moses, on God’s instruction, lifted up his staff over the sea. At this the waters parted, allowing the Israelites to escape. When they were safe on the other side, Moses again lifted up his hands and the waters returned to engulf the pursuing Egyptians. In the present episode Israel confronts another enemy, the Amalekites. The victory is gained in a similar way. When Moses lifts up his staff, God fights for the Israelites and they prevail. But when he wilts and his hands droop, the fortunes of battle reverse. So Aaron and Hur support Moses, holding up his hands until, as the sun is setting, Joshua gains the victory for Israel. In the Christian tradition the episode has always been taken as a symbol of perseverance in prayer: when people pray they open themselves up to the power of God; when, through weariness or discouragement, their prayer begins to wilt, they move away from that source of strength. The assistance Aaron and Hur render to Moses shows how believers must support each other in prayer – especially as persevering in that exercise can often be a trial of faith.

The parable making up the Gospel appears to commend praying to God with the kind of persistence displayed by the widow in her dealings with the judge. But it hardly means to suggest that God

needs to be worn down like the judge. Basically, it commends an attitude of trust in God that would motivate such persistence in prayer – even when the answer seems a long time coming.

As is sometimes the case in Jesus’ parables (see especially that of the Rogue Steward from Luke, chapter 16 that we heard as the gospel four Sundays before), the action revolves around a rather unsavoury character. A judge who fears neither God nor fellow human beings takes no action in defence of a widow who had appealed to him. Lacking the support of a husband and possibly adult sons, widows were particularly dependent on the smooth and fair working of the institutions of justice. Hence the plight of this woman, whose entreaties the judge so long ignores. As Jesus tells the story, the lazy judge stirs himself on her behalf only when he suspects that her verbal entreaties are about to give way to actual physical violence. Translated literally, what he says to himself is ‘lest she come and give me a black eye’ (The Greek expression is at home in the boxing arena). Like the Rogue Steward, the judge moves against his own previous inclination because he realises that a stage has been reached where to take no action may incur serious loss. The force of the parable emerges on an a fortiori kind of logic. If the unjust judge at long last – albeit through base and self-interested motives – moves to grant justice to the woman, how much more certainly and readily will the God of all goodness move to grant justice to chosen ones who make entreaty day and night.

Since the parable is ultimately about the character of God, it is understandable that its final comment has to do with faith. Faith in God, displayed in prayer that is both trusting and calm as well as constant and persistent, is the right attitude for the present time – a time of waiting and hope, rather than possession of the Kingdom. In a world where so much injustice prevails and where the poor, like the widow, continue to cry out for justice day and night, the challenge of the parable is sharp. Those whose actions or inertia allow the world to remain for the majority an unjust and inhospitable place must reckon with the truth that God proclaimed in the Gospel is a God aligned with the cause of the poor. How long can such a God allow the situation to go on without redress?

A similar warning in view of the accountability to come emerges from the instruction given to church leaders, in the person of Paul’s protege Timothy, in the Second Reading, 2 Tim 3:14 – 4:2. It also contains a valuable early reflection upon the role and function of scripture in the life of the community of faith. Those, in particular, who would aspire to leadership must take care to equip themselves with this resource. *By Brendan Byrne SJ*



ONLINE GIVING

Internet donations to assist our parish are always welcome. Details for donating online via Electronic Funds Transfer BSB: 032582 Account Number: 810033 [Surname, parish envelope no]

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers for the Sick: Miriam Scherger, Tony Murphy, Kathy Leseberg, Ava Blay, Donna Ellis, Jom Jose Akkarathakidiyil, Mark Thurbon, Alma Bailey, Mary Wiseman, Sue Gravalin, Ron Weekes, Margaret Donges, Pam Lewis, Matthew & Paul Gallagher, Chris Naismith, Trevor Nocolia, Graham Courte, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Matt Mohorovic, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Recently Deceased:** Eva Bailey, Vincent Colnan, Fr Frank Mulcahy. **Anniversary:** John Deasy, Hazel Starr, Neville Dodds, Ben Neville. **Pray for:** Gordon & Kym Eckersley, Les & Dulcie Sinderberry, Clarrie Woodroffe, Apolinario Habido Sesaldo Snr. All the suffering souls in Purgatory especially the dec'd members of F.O.S.S.

MASS TIMES:

Sunday Masses: Yamba: 5:30pm (SAT); Maclean: 8:30am (SUN); Iluka: 5:00pm (SUN).

Weekday Masses: Wednesday, 9:30am: Yamba; Thursday, 10:00am: Iluka; Friday, 12:00nn, Maclean; First Saturday: 11:30am, Maclean.

RECONCILIATION TIMES

Saturday, 11:00am, Maclean; 6:30pm, Yamba
Sunday, 8:00am, Maclean
Wednesday, 10:00am, Yamba
Thursday, 10:30am, Iluka

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

First Wednesday: 10:00am, Yamba
First Saturday: 12:00pm, Maclean

MINISTRY ROSTER: 25/26 OCTOBER 2025

Readers: Yamba: St James School; Maclean: L Senz/ C Newton; Iluka: D Speirs, **Commentators:** Yamba: St James School, Maclean: R Wiseman, Iluka: T Sullivan. **E Communion:** Maclean: J Moloney. **Count Team:** Neander.

READINGS 25/26 OCTOBER 2025

First: Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18; **Second:** 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; **Gospel:** Luke 18:9-14.

NEWS & EVENTS

Emergency contact: In case of emergency outside of parish office hours, contact Fr Roland 0401 508 812.

Jubilee Mass: Thank you to all who prepared, volunteered and participated in this week's Jubilee Mass. Your contributions helped make it a truly beautiful and memorable occasion.

Parish Pastoral Council: This consultative group will be established in our parish in December this year. In

this council, presided over by the parish priest, parishioners "give their help in fostering pastoral action." Members are appointed by the parish priest, and are accountable to him. Their counsel assists him in his responsibilities for the governance of the parish. It is an exercise of collaboration with him and other parishioners. "The orientation of the pastoral council is to propose, study, and facilitate pastoral initiatives responding to the needs of the local community." Those interested in joining the council are asked to write a letter to Fr Roland by 8 Nov, addressed to office@stmarysparish.org.au.

Supporting Halle McClymont – NET Ministries

Missionary 2026: Thank you to Halle who spoke at all our masses last weekend about her upcoming missionary work with NET Ministries Australia. Halle is stepping out in faith to serve young people across Australia, helping them encounter Christ through retreats, youth groups, and evangelisation. If you would like to support Halle in this mission, please take home one of the envelopes available at the church entrance. Let us continue to keep Halle in our prayers as she prepares for this exciting journey of faith and service.

November Masses: The month of November is dedicated to prayer for the Holy Souls. Mass offering envelopes are now available at each church.

RCIA and RRFC Network: We are planning to establish a network in the Diocese of Lismore for those who work in the ministry of RCIA for unbaptised people and RRFC (Rite of Reception into Full Communion) for Christians entering into full communion with the Catholic Church. This is not for catechumens or candidates. If you are someone in the parish leading these processes or working with those who do, this network is for you. This initiative is supported by Bishop Greg Homeming. The next planning meeting is Wednesday November 26, 7-8 pm. Please register, with your name and parish, to receive a zoom link via email to Deacon Anthony Gooley agooley@lismore.catholic.org.au

Columban calendars 2026: Please place your order through the parish office by October 31. Calendars are \$10 each.

Josephite calendars 2026: This year we are also offering Josephite calendars for purchase. Calendars are \$10. If you would like to order one, please contact the parish office by October 31.

The Promise – Advent Booklet 2025: Journey through Advent to the Baptism of the Lord with this beautifully presented 88-page booklet of daily reflections (30 Nov 2025 – 11 Jan 2026). Available to order now — \$7 each booklet. To request a copy, contact Fran: 0401 303 522 or fishinstead@gmail.com