

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHNS CHURCH



ST MARYS CHURCH



ST JAMES CHURCH

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SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A: 10 MAY 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Jesus obtained for us the gift of the Holy Spirit by this death and resurrection. On the Cross he gave up the Holy Spirit who had anointed his humanity. When he rose from the dead, this same Holy Spirit now permeating his humanity was given as a gift to his disciples, to be with them, to be their helper and guide. The readings this sixth Sunday of Easter invite us to reflect on the actions and names of the Holy Spirit.

The first reading, Acts 8:5-8, 14-17, affirms that the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Lord and giver of divine life, is personally received through the ministry of the missionaries and apostles. The pagans in a Samaritan town became disciples of Christ by the preaching of Philip. The Holy Spirit accompanied this missionary disciple, gave power to his words and accompanied what he proclaimed with miraculous deeds. The lives of the people were transformed and filled with joy when they believed in Christ and received baptism.

But for the newly baptised to experience more deeply the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, the apostles Peter and John came to lay their hands on them. By their baptism, they had already received the Holy Spirit. By the laying on hands of the apostles, they received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, empowering them and equipping them to live according to the commandments of Christ and serve others. As soon as Peter and John imposed their hands on them, the extraordinary signs of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit appeared also among them. They are the spiritual gifts, or charisms, given to empower a Christian to serve others and to build up the Church.

In the second reading, 1 Peter 3:15-18, it is implied that Christians need the help of the Holy Spirit to live a good life in Christ, the gift of courage to suffer for doing what is right and living our faith, and the gifts of wisdom and understanding to explain their Christian faith and hope. Christians must always be ready to respond to those who ask what and why they believe in the risen Christ, who is the source of their strength, joy, peace and love, even amidst persecutions. On the one hand, they need to know, understand deeply, and be convinced of, the reasons for their Christian faith, to be able to explain to

others their hope-filled and love-inspired behaviour. On the other, they need the help of the Holy Spirit. He has given them the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to enable to receive divine enlightenment, and the gifts of counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord, to enable them to receive divine guidance, strength and power to love. With these, they can explain and defend their faith and hope “with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience.”

In the gospel, John 14:15-21, Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit. As implied in this passage, the Holy Spirit is the greatest gift Christ obtained for us. Jesus asked this Gift from the Father to be given to his disciples. By surrendering himself totally on the Cross in loving obedience to the Father and out of his love for us, he gained the Holy Spirit for us. In addition, Jesus provides two names of the Holy Spirit, the third divine Person who proceeds from the Father and the Son, namely, another Advocate and the Spirit of Truth. These titles describe what the Holy Spirit does within the followers of Christ.

The first title given to the Spirit is Advocate or Paraclete, which means “the one who stands beside somebody” to guide and assist him/her especially in times of difficulties. So this first title means that the Holy Spirit is the guide and helper of the disciples in their day to day life and their protector in times of spiritual difficulties. Those who are sensitive to his presence and guidance can avail of his help.

The second title is Spirit of Truth. Jesus, the eternal of God who became man, is the Truth, the fullness of divine revelation, of God making himself and his will for us known. His life, teachings, deeds, death and resurrection, recorded in the New Testament writings, express it. The work of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Truth, is to guarantee that the teachings of Christ are not corrupted, changed or distorted. At the same time, the Holy Spirit will guide the Church in understanding deeply the different aspects of the teachings of Christ so that they are genuinely preserved, understood, taught and developed.

In this Mass let us ask the Lord to enable to sense more easily the presence and action of the Holy Spirit and cooperate with his help. Fr Roland

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

COLLECT

Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. 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 *Acts of the Apostles 8:5-8. 14-17*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Ps 65:1-7. 16. 20. R. v. 1*

(R.) Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

1. Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise.
Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds! (R.)
2. 'Before you all the earth shall bow;
shall sing to you, sing to your name!'
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men. (R.)
3. He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him;
he rules for ever by his might. (R.)
4. Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what he did for my soul:
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer

nor withhold his love from me. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 Peter 3:15-18

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 14:15-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you. In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May our prayers rise up to you, O Lord, together with the sacrificial offerings, so that, purified by your graciousness, we may be conformed to the mysteries of your mighty love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE; EUCHARISTIC PRAYER III

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty ever-living God, who restore us to eternal life in the Resurrection of Christ, increase in us, we pray, the fruits of this paschal Sacrament and pour into our hearts the strength of this saving food. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

In these final weeks of Eastertide the thought of the liturgy turns increasingly to the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. This is foreshadowed today both in the First Reading, which tells of a ‘mini-Pentecost’ occurring in Samaria, and in the Gospel, where Jesus speaks of ‘another Paraclete’ which the disciples are to receive.

Central to the vision of the Acts of the Apostles is a sense of the Gospel as fanning out from Jerusalem, to all Judea, Samaria and (at the hands especially of Paul) to ‘the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8). Today’s First Reading, Acts 8:5-8, 14-17, describes both the evangelising activity of Philip (not the apostle Philip but one of the Seven elected to assist the Apostles, as told last week [Acts 6:1-7]), and the follow-up activity on the part of the leading Apostles Peter and John. The Samaritans had received the Word and been baptised ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus’. But it was only when the Apostles laid hands on them that they received the Holy Spirit. This rather curious ‘separation’ between baptism and the coming of the Spirit in a way foreshadows the sacrament of Confirmation. However, the ‘separation’ should not be pressed too rigidly. Fundamentally, Christian Baptism does impart the Spirit. The narrative of Acts at this point probably has in mind a more experiential (‘Pentecostal!’) awareness of the gift.

The Gospel, John 14:15-21, presents a further extract from Jesus’ long discourse at the Last Supper. As we noted last week, the discourse oscillates back and forth between two understandings of Jesus’ ‘going away’ and ‘return’. On the more immediate level there is the ‘going away’ of his death and the ‘return’ of his appearances as risen Lord on the third day. At another

level, the discourse addresses his more permanent ‘going away’ and absence from the disciples following his final return to the Father. The return ‘on that day’ of which he speaks would then be his return on the last day at the end of time.

But here there is more to say. The Fourth Gospel plays down the traditional expectation of Jesus’ coming at the last day in the direction of emphasising his abiding presence in the community. This lies behind the statement: ‘In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.’ In contrast to ‘the world’ (unbelievers), for whom Jesus after his death will cease to exist, believers will ‘see’ him and ‘also will live’ in the sense of here and now experiencing his presence in the community and sharing his risen life.

Thus the passage continues to address directly the situation of the disciples in the period when his appearances as risen Lord have ceased, the situation of the Church that prevails to this day. Naturally, the disciples will feel the loss of his comforting physical presence. But if they grasp the sense in which he will continue to be present, they should not feel ‘orphaned’.

In this connection Jesus speaks of ‘another Paraclete’ that he will ask the Father to give. (The implication is that Jesus himself has been a ‘Paraclete’ for the disciples during his earthly life.) The essential idea behind ‘Paraclete’ is that of someone who stands beside you in time of difficulty, providing a comforting, supportive and encouraging presence. One thinks perhaps of a highly respected person whom you might ask to go to court with you and act as character witness. Such is the idea that the Gospel applies here (and in several other places) to the Spirit. Though Jesus may no longer be physically present, the comfort and assurance his presence gave the disciples during his lifetime will continue in the presence of the Holy Spirit. In the face of constant trial and rejection from the world, the Paraclete will be for the disciples ‘the Spirit of Truth’ in the sense of imparting to them a conviction that what they believe and hold on to is indeed reality in the most profound sense. We come close here to the fine statement in the Second Reading, 1 Peter 3:15-18: ‘Always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that is within you’.

Finally, we should note the way in which the Gospel begins and ends with the sense that believers ‘have entered into the same reciprocity of love that unites the Father and the Son’ (C. K. Barrett). Though the language may suggest it to be the case, the Gospel does not mean that God’s love is conditional upon human observance of the commandments. The essential commandment is that of love. What the Gospel is saying is that when the community is indeed one where love prevails, the atmosphere of love that it experiences is nothing other than a sharing in the communion of love that is the Godhead.

Fr 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: Audrey Hancock, Ben & Nadine Shaw, Patrick Wheeler, Denise & Bob, Tim Scherger, Jan Taylor, Miriam Scherger, Kathy Leseberg, Ava Blay, Mark Thurbon, Alma Bailey, Mary Wiseman, Sue Gravolin, Ron Weekes, Pam Lewis, Matthew & Paul Gallagher, Chris Naismith, Trevor Nicolai, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Recently Deceased:** Margaret Donges, Maree Hammond, Mary Thorne, Dennis Neville. **Anniversary:** Jack Turk, Stan Fornal, Mark Leseberg, William Ellem, Douglas Henry Starr Snr. **Pray for:** Jurgen Zoller, John Fox, Towell, Baker, Gough & Robertson families, Fran Eckersley, Robyn Smith, Pam Sutherland 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: 10:30am (SUN).

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

RECONCILIATION TIMES

Saturday, 11:00am, Maclean; 5:00pm, Yamba
Sunday, 8:00am, Maclean
Tuesday, 9:30am, Iluka
Wednesday, 10:00am, Yamba

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

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

MINISTRY ROSTER: 16/17 MAY 2026

Readers: Yamba: B Cullen/A Ricketts; Maclean: J Moloney/A Smith; Iluka: C Nilon. **Commentators:** Yamba: M Dee; Maclean: R Wiseman, Iluka: T Sullivan. **E Communion:** Maclean: J de Roos. **Count team:** Davies/Stephenson.

READINGS: 16/17 MAY 2026

First: Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11; **Second:** Ephesians 1:17-23; **Gospel:** Matthew 28:16-20.

NEWS & EVENTS

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

New office days/times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:00am-2:30pm.

Parish bulletin online: Our bulletin is now uploaded weekly to our website <http://stmarysparish.org.au>

Baptism: Welcome to the Family of God Jasper who is getting baptised in our parish this weekend.

The 6th National Count of Attendance at Mass and Other (Sunday) Assemblies will take place in May 2026. This year marks a significant milestone—25 years of national attendance data, beginning with the first count in 2001. The 2026 results will provide valuable insights into long-term trends, particularly in understanding the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which influenced attendance patterns in 2021.

Vocations view: Vocations view: Do you know a Catholic man, aged between 18-35, whom God may be calling to the priesthood? Perhaps God is asking you to be the voice to prompt that man to consider the quiet whisper he already hears in his heart. Ask someone if they have considered the call. vocations@lismore.catholic.org.au

Passionist Family Group Movement: Please see the latest copy of the newsletter on the noticeboard.

Thinking of Becoming a Catholic? Contact Fr Roland 0401508 812

Preschool in St James School DA Application: We are excited to announce that we are supporting St James Catholic Primary School to submit a Development Application (DA) for a proposed new on-site preschool. If approved, the preschool building would be funded by the NSW Government's New and Upgraded Pre-School Funding Program. The proposed preschool would provide a high-quality early years education program for local children and in time support potentially a smooth and connected transition into Kindergarten at St James in line with diocesan policy.

Yamba Catholic Ladies General Meeting is taking place on Wednesday 13 May after mass, approximately 10:15am in the Ted Howe Room. The meeting is open to EVERYONE in our Parish Community. We welcome anyone to come along and give us ideas and offers to help. Please come and join us to see what you can do to help our Parish.

Clergy retreat will be held 18-22 May. There will no weekday Masses in the parish that week except Friday 22 May.

No Weekday Mass on Tuesday 12 May in Iluka as Fr Roland will be in Bellingen for their deanery meeting.

Mother's Day Prayer: Loving God, we ask you to bless all mothers today. May they feel the joys of motherhood everyday. In all their struggle giving us livelihood, may your love and compassion be with them for good. May every mother feel today the pride and family they bear. Through all pain and sorrow deliver them. Through the intercession of Mary, we ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen. **Happy Mother's Day to all mothers!**