

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHNS CHURCH



ST MARYS CHURCH



ST JAMES CHURCH

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FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A: 5 JULY 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, this Sunday we are invited to reflect on who Jesus is and on his mission. In the first reading, the prophet Zechariah announces a humble and gentle king. In the Gospel, Jesus' prayer and his invitation to his disciples to come to him and learn from him reveal both his identity and his saving mission. The second reading speaks of the gift of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in his disciples, enabling them to live spiritual lives.

Zechariah announces the coming of a great king, a liberator of his people. Yet this king is unlike any other. He does not come at the head of a powerful army, with horses and chariots, but "humble and riding on a donkey" — poor, gentle, and lowly. This prophecy overturns the common idea of kingship. He is not a ruler who seeks to be served; rather, he gives his attention to the needs of his people. He does not dominate the helpless and defenceless, but places himself at the service of all.

Jesus will fulfil this prophecy literally when he enters Jerusalem on a donkey. This act reveals him as the expected king: peaceful, gentle, and a true peacemaker who conquers human hearts not by force, but by love.

In the Gospel, Jesus expresses his kingship through his prayer and his invitation: "Come to me." The first part of the Gospel allows us to listen as Jesus speaks intimately with the Father. Through this prayer, we come to understand his unique kingship. He is the reign of God in person. In him, God and God's saving action are present in a unique way. He is the eternal Son, who addresses the Father with the intimacy and familiarity proper to the only-begotten Son. As the eternal Son with the Father and the Spirit, he creates, sustains, and guides all creation. When he was sent into the world and became man, "everything was entrusted to him." His humanity was filled with divine authority, so that he could speak and act in the person of the Father. In Christ, the message and the messenger are one.

The eternal Son came to reveal the Father to all. Those who are receptive to his teaching come to know the Father through Jesus Christ, who alone knows the

Father in a completely unique way. In this context, "to know" means to have a deep personal experience of another. This knowledge belongs uniquely to the Son, yet the Son who became man shares it with men and women. The little ones, or mere children — those who are humble, sincerely searching for God, and open to Jesus — are blessed to receive this knowledge from him. They are drawn into communion of love with God.

Those who come to Jesus and freely entrust their lives to him will be given rest: the inner peace that quiets the mind and heart, even amid frustration, trials, and suffering, because of his presence and help. Those who come to Jesus are called to learn from him and imitate his meekness and humility. To shoulder his yoke means that, although discipleship is not effortless, it is not an exhausting burden, because Jesus accompanies us and strengthens us with his grace.

The grace he gives, enabling us to live according to his teaching summed up in the commandment to love God and one another, is the Holy Spirit. This is what St Paul teaches us in the second reading. Those who belong to Christ — baptised and actively living their faith — are sanctified and guided by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Christians are called to heed the Spirit's guidance and cooperate with him.

Let us ask the Lord Jesus in this Mass to reveal to us more deeply the Father, himself as the Son made man, and the Holy Spirit, so that we may experience anew the rest, peace, and strength that come to us through him.

Fr Roland



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Your merciful love, O God, we have received in the midst of your temple. Your praise, O God, like your name, reaches the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with saving justice.

COLLECT

O God, who in the abasement of your Son have raised up a fallen world, fill your faithful with holy joy, for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin you bestow eternal gladness. 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

Zechariah 9:9-10

A reading from the prophet Zechariah

The Lord says this:

‘Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion!
Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem!
See now, your king comes to you;
he is victorious, he is triumphant,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will banish chariots from Ephraim
and horses from Jerusalem;
the bow of war will be banished.
He will proclaim peace for the nations.
His empire shall stretch from sea to sea,
from the River to the ends of the earth.’

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 144:1-2. 8-11. 13-14 R. v.1

**(R.) I will praise your name for ever,
my king and my God.**

1. I will give you glory, O God my King,
I will bless your name for ever.
I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever. (R.)
2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures. (R.)
3. All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.
They shall speak of the glory of your reign
and declare your might, O God. (R.)

4. The Lord is faithful in all his words
and loving in all his deeds.
The Lord supports all who fall
and raises all who are bowed down. (R.)

SECOND READING

Romans 8:9.11-13

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Your interests are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him, and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

So then, my brothers, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live.

The word of the Lord.

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 11:25-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus exclaimed, ‘I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

‘Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this oblation dedicated to your name purify us, O Lord, and day by day bring our conduct closer to the life of heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE VI: SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER III

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that, having been replenished by such great gifts, we may gain the prize of salvation and never cease to praise you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Today's Gospel, Matthew 11:25-30, features one of the most remarkable scenes in the Gospel of Matthew (the first part has a parallel in Luke 10:21-22). The disciple – and by extension ourselves – are given access to a moment of intimacy between Jesus and his Father. We 'overhear' a joyful exclamation that Jesus makes directly to the Father, rejoicing that he has communicated to 'mere children' (his disciples) some sense of the knowledge of the Father that he enjoys as divine Son. This privileged knowledge is not something that can be gained by learning or study; that is why the 'learned and clever' have no purchase upon it through their own efforts. It is something directly revealed by God's grace to those most capable of receiving it: 'mere children'.

The point about little children, of course, is that, being so unlearned and weak, they have nothing 'useful' to contribute in an adult world. All they can do is receive what is given to them. What they give in return is simply what they are really good at: affection and love. Jesus comes back again and again to this image of the child to communicate a sense of human relationship to God.

We should realise, too, that when Jesus speaks of 'knowing' God, he is using the word in the Semitic sense where, beyond intellectual knowledge, it has the deeper resonance of real experience. To 'know' a person is not simply to know a great deal about her or him: implied is a communion of love, entailing deep intimacy. This is the kind of knowledge of God of which Jesus is speaking. He blesses the Father because he has communicated such knowledge to the disciples – and, by extension, to ourselves, who are their heirs.

In the second part of the Gospel, Jesus issues an invitation: 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.' The invitation takes us to Matthew's

characteristic presentation of Jesus as the One who bears and lifts humanity's burdens. The view of humanity depicted in the Gospel is that of being weighed down and burdened by a multitude of afflictions (4:23-25; 8:16-17; 9:35-36; 14:13-14). In the guise of the 'Servant' figure of Isaiah (12:15-21; see Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12) Jesus comes to lift that burden, which includes but is by no means exhausted by the burden of sin. He rails at the scribes and Pharisees because, in their interpretation of the Torah (the Jewish law), they make human life more rather than less burdensome: 'They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them' (23:4). For Jesus, on the other hand, the cardinal rule for interpreting the law is the divine intent made clear in Hosea 6:6: 'What I (God) want is mercy not sacrifice' (see Matt 9:13; 12:7). For Jesus, God did not give the law to Israel to impose or add to the burdens of the human race but rather to regulate a way of life worthy of a people chosen by God. It is in the context of being an interpreter of the Torah in this sense that Jesus claims that his yoke is easy and his burden light.

The heart of that 'ease' and 'lightness', however, is the 'knowledge' of which he spoke earlier. To those who do not really know God or who worship God as a distant and threatening potentate, religious and ethical norms promulgated in God's name will indeed appear burdensome. To those who have allowed Jesus to draw them into his intimacy and knowledge of God they will not appear this way. The values they enshrine and seek to foster will already be encased in the heart.

The First Reading, Zechariah 9:9-10, interpreted in a messianic sense (as when cited in connection with the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem [Matt 21:5]), proclaims the kind of Messiah that Jesus in fact turns out to be – not a conquering ruler armed with the weapons of the world but the compassionate, burden-bearing figure emerging from the Gospel.

Interpretation of the Second Reading (Romans 8:9, 11-13) is beset by the difficulty of rendering Paul's sense of living 'according to the flesh', here translated as 'the unspiritual', which rather begs the question. 'Flesh' for Paul denotes human existence in the era before Christ, ruled by selfishness and sin. 'Spirit' denotes the life of the new creation, pulsating with Christ's unselfish love. It is this Spirit that has – or ought to have – 'made his home' within believers, setting their bodies on track to share Christ's resurrection.

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: Maureen Robertson, Clive McLachlan, 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 Gravalin, Ron Weekes, Pam Lewis, Matthew & Paul Gallagher, Chris Naismith, Trevor Nicolia, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Recently Deceased:** Frank Hanigan. **Anniversary:** Frank & Marie Ryan, Les Barnett, Rodney Couper, Bonnie Tonkin, Col McDonald. **Pray for:** 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, 12:00nn, 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: 11/12 JULY 2026

Readers: Yamba: M Dee/B Montgomery; Maclean: A Smith/J Moloney; Iluka: C Nilon. **Commentators:** Yamba: F Robertson; Maclean: L Senz, Iluka: H Naug. **E Communion:** Maclean: J de Roos. **Count team:** James.

READINGS: 11/12 JULY 2026

First: Isaiah 55:10-11; **Second:** Romans 8:18-23; **Gospel:** Matthew 13:1-23.

NEWS & EVENTS

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

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>

Thinking of Becoming a Catholic? Contact Fr Roland 0401508 812

Ignite Conference 2026: This youth conference will be held in Sydney 9-12 July, and Brisbane 24-27

September. This national youth conference is a real world formation with something for everyone. For more information see hello@igniteyouth.com or the poster on the notice board.

Diocesan Investment Fund Interest rate 3.90%

effective 1/6/26: For further information and our current interest rate, please visit our website www.dif.org.au or contact us on 1800 802 516.

ASPIRE Young Adults Spiritual Formation

invitation: Please see the noticeboard for the dates on the poster.

Planned giving envelopes: the planned giving envelopes for the upcoming financial year are now available for collection.

Cursillo Weekend: 5pm 15/10—5pm 18/10 at Marian Valley for the Lismore Diocese. The team encourages anyone willing to put their name forward to contact Rex or Carryl Tory PH: 0478 793 618.

DLCS Schools' Newsletter: Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools is pleased to present the newest edition of its newsletter. To stay up to date with the latest in Catholic education, please use this link: <https://bit.ly/4gwOpX0>

Walking stick found: please contact the office if you have lost one.

Safeguarding: If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Diocese of Lismore, we ask you to contact us. We will listen to you respectfully: offer support and discuss options you have available to you. Contact the Safeguarding Office – Phone: (02) 66219444 or Email: safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au

Peters Pence envelopes: thank you for your contributions.

Claiming the dates: Please mark your calendars for TWO great Parish events in the planning! Souper Sunday singalong! Sunday 9 August—Cranney Room Maclean after morning mass. Feast of Christ the King! Sunday 22 November—Cranney Room, Maclean.

Yamba Catholic Ladies Meeting: Please join us for a meeting after morning Mass on Wednesday 8 July – about 10:15am. Come and see what we do!

A first Class Relic of Carlo Acutis: will be arriving in the Lismore Diocese next week. There will be mass in honour of the Saint at Lismore cathedral on Tuesday 7 July at 10am and at St Mary's Casino on Wednesday 8th at 9am and 12 midday. There will be opportunities for veneration, adoration and catechesis exploring St Carlo's life.

No weekday masses: Tuesday 7 July in Iluka and Wednesday 8 July in Yamba.