

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHN'S CHURCH



ST MARY'S CHURCH



ST JAMES' CHURCH

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TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A: 16 AUGUST 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: God's gift of salvation in Christ is offered to all and received through living faith, sustained by active participation in the life and mission of the Church.

In the first reading, we hear the prophecy that peoples from every nation will be offered the gift of salvation. This salvation is not limited to Israel but extends to all. Yet to receive it personally, each person must commit to serving the God of Israel, loving his name, keeping the Sabbath, and remaining faithful to the covenant. Those who do so will be welcomed into God's house, and their offerings will be pleasing to him. In other words, the prophet foresees a time when foreigners who honour God and keep his commandments will be brought to the temple of the Lord to offer their sacrifices and prayers.

Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by offering salvation to all people. This gift is personally received through repentance, faith, love, and active discipleship, nourished by Eucharistic worship.

In the Gospel, Jesus shows his disciples - who will later continue his mission - that foreigners too will receive his good news through them. A non-Jewish woman comes to him: a Canaanite, from a people long hostile to Israel and often associated with leading Israel away from faith in the Lord toward the worship of Baal. Matthew presents Jesus as treating her harshly. At first, when she asks for help, he does not answer her at all. When the apostles urge him to send her away "because she keeps shouting after us," he replies, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Finally, when she kneels before him, he says, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs."

These actions can be understood as one of Jesus' parables in action. The rest of the story reveals that this was a deliberate way of leading his apostles to a radical change of mind. At the end, Jesus declares, "Woman, you have great faith!" No Israelite

receives such praise from him. By healing the Canaanite woman's daughter in response to her persistent faith, Jesus shows that salvation is offered to all and personally received through living faith. The new people of God is open to all, as the prophet promised in the first reading.

Although salvation was first offered to Israel, it was always intended for all peoples. The Good News had to be proclaimed to the whole world, but according to God's plan. Salvation was first announced to Israel, the people prepared over many centuries to understand and receive it. If they remained faithful, they would become a light for all nations. This is what Jesus did: he offered salvation first to Israel. Those who accepted his invitation he formed into the new people of God. He then entrusted his apostles, chosen from the wider group of disciples, with authority and mission: to go and make disciples of all nations. Since then, peoples from every part of the world have been entering into communion with Jesus and his Church.

The salvation offered by Jesus through his Church and missionary disciples is received by faith. Faith is the personal response to God's word: a free act by which we entrust our minds and hearts to him. It is made possible by grace and usually arises from an encounter with God, his Son, or his Church. Often, this conscious act of faith is preceded by curiosity, openness, and a sincere search for truth, goodness, beauty, life's ultimate meaning, God, Christ, or his Church. A persistent longing for Christ leads to intentional discipleship within the Church. Personal faith, freely embraced, marks the beginning of growth in faith and love.

Let us pray for an increase in our faith in Christ so that we become disciples who not only manifest our faith in deeds and words but also invite others to come to Jesus, the Saviour of all.

Fr Roland

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Turn your eyes, O God, our shield; and look on the face of your anointed one; one day within your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

COLLECT

O God, who have prepared for those who love you good things which no eye can see, fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of your love, so that, loving you in all things and above all things, we may attain your promises, which surpass every human desire. 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*Isaiah 56:1.6-7*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord: Have a care for justice, act with integrity, for soon my salvation will come and my integrity be manifest.

Foreigners who have attached themselves to the Lord to serve him and to love his name and be his servants – all who observe the sabbath, not profaning it, and cling to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their holocausts and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Ps 66:2-3 5-6. 8. R. v.4*

(R.) O God, let all the nations praise you!

1. O God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. (R.)
2. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. (R.)
3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. (R.)

SECOND READING*Romans 11:13-15. 29-32*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Let me tell you pagans this: I have been sent to the pagans as their apostle, and I am proud of being sent,

but the purpose of it is to make my own people envious of you, and in this way save some of them. Since their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, do you know what their admission will mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from the dead! God never takes back his gifts or revokes his choice.

Just as you changed from being disobedient to God, and now enjoy mercy because of their disobedience, so those who are disobedient now – and only because of the mercy shown to you – will also enjoy mercy eventually. God has imprisoned all men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION*Matthew 4:23*

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL*Matthew 15:21-28*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus left Gennesaret and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Then out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, 'Sir, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.' But he answered her not a word. And his disciples went and pleaded with him. 'Give her what she wants,' they said 'because she is shouting after us.' He said in reply, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' But the woman had come up and was kneeling at his feet. 'Lord,' she said 'help me.' He replied, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs.' She retorted, 'Ah yes, sir; but even house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from their master's table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.' And from that moment her daughter was well again.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive our oblation, O Lord, by which is brought about a glorious exchange, that, by offering what you have given, we may merit to receive your very self. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE II: SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER III****COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (*Iluka*)

With the Lord there is mercy; in him is plentiful redemption.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Made partakers of Christ through these Sacraments, we humbly implore your mercy, Lord, that, conformed to his image on earth, we may merit also to be his coheirs in heaven. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

The first reading opens with a double imperative: Observe justice; Do righteousness! This word-pair enunciates Israel's primary ethical obligation, which is social responsibility. This imperative is followed by a twofold form of divine promise: Salvation will come; Righteousness will be revealed. The language presumes a covenant relationship. Some outside the community have shown their desire to become part of it. They may be foreigners, but both internally and externally they are one with the community of believers. In response, God invites them into the liturgical life of the community. They are encouraged to proceed to God's holy mountain. God is now accessible to all, not merely to those of the blood line of Israel. Salvation and righteousness embrace all.

The psalm begins with an adaptation of the first words of the blessing used by Aaron and his descendants (v.2; see Nm 6:24-26). This suggests that the favours once promised to that priestly family are now sought for the entire people. God's goodness will enhance God's reputation among other nations. They will conclude that only a mighty and magnanimous God is able to secure such good fortune. The good fortune of one nation is testimony to the salvific activity of God, which in turn becomes the occasion of salvation for all the earth. Thus one nation becomes the source of blessing for all. This is the fulfilment of a promise made to Abraham (see Gen 12:2-3).

Although Paul is proud to be known as the 'apostle to the Gentiles', he continues to insist on Israelite privilege. Using a rabbinic form of argumentation, he explains that if the Jews' rejection of the gospel brought reconciliation to the rest of the world, how much more will their acceptance of the gospel effect? After all, they were God's special people, and it was to them that God granted extraordinary gifts. If God

has shown mercy to those who originally worshipped other gods, surely God will show mercy to God's own people. The Gentiles have no reason to feel superior, for both Jew and Gentile have sinned. Both are shown mercy, not because they earned it, but because God is gracious.

The gospel story addresses several important issues: crossing territorial and cultural boundaries; women and men in public social exchange; the Christian mission to the Gentiles; and faith. It also raises important questions: Why does Jesus enter pagan territory in the first place? Why does he initially withhold his healing power? First Jesus himself disregards territorial boundaries. We are not told why. Then the woman disregards appropriate social decorum (she speaks to a man who is a stranger) and pleads for the healing of her daughter. She even disregards his initial rebuff, thus showing remarkable faith. Moved by this faith, Jesus is forced beyond the limited confines of his own cultural experience. He accedes to her wishes and heals her daughter.

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EUCHARIST28 (eucharist28.org)

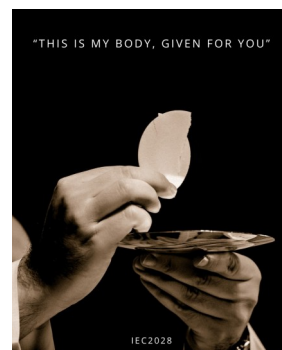
Eternal Life in the Eucharist

The International Eucharistic Congress ('Eucharist28') is coming to Sydney in 2028!

At every Mass, the celebration of the Eucharist is a moment of communion, where we are united in Christ, who's body and blood we share. In the Scriptures, Jesus tells us, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day." (John 6:54)

Through the Eucharist, Christ unites us to Himself and draws us into the eternal life He promises. This invitation is for everyone, even those who have died. At each Mass, the Church offers the Eucharistic sacrifice for the faithful departed, that they may experience eternal life and unity with Christ.

To help you experience this moment of Eucharistic renewal on the journey to Eucharist28, head to eucharist28.org for more.



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: Ann Burns, Clive McLachlan, 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 Nicolai, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Recently Deceased:** Colleen Betteridge. **Anniversary:** Pam Conley, Mick Short, Jean Snelling, Phyl Tyrke, Pat Moran, Kirsty Cox, Patricia Ann Newman (Trish). **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: 22/23 AUGUST 2026

Readers: Yamba: P Edgar/G Drummond; Maclean: S Winter/R Harvey; Iluka: D Speirs. **Commentators:** Yamba: F Robertson; Maclean: L Senz, Iluka: T Sullivan. **E Communion:** Maclean: J Moloney. **Count team:** Robertson.

READINGS: 22/23 AUGUST 2026

First: Isaiah 22:19-23; *Second:* Romans 11:33-36; *Gospel:* Matthew 16: 13-20.

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 0401 508 812

Ignite Conference 2026: This youth conference will be held in Brisbane 24-27 September. This national

youth conference is a real world formation with something for everyone. Please see the noticeboard for more information. To express interest scan the QR code on the noticeboard.

Vinnies Winter Appeal – Donation envelopes will be available at our churches for the next 8 weeks. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible, receipt issued upon request.

First Holy Communion in our Parish will take place in Yamba on 29 August and Maclean on 30 August. Please pray for our children preparing for their first Holy Communion: Yamba—Billy, Jackson, Aria, Amelia, Elsie, Maggie, Nellie, Grace, James and Nick. Maclean—Maeve, Rose, Albie, Phoebe, Talia, Marco, Claire and Kaia.

Rosary Group: to be held at St Mary's Church Maclean, every Saturday at 9am. Seeking expressions of interest, please contact John on 0450 922 686 or the office.

Training of old and new liturgy ministers: in September those involved in liturgical ministries will have their training.

Platinum (70) and Golden Jubilee (50) Priestly Ordination anniversary of Father John Dacey and Father Colin Reinhard: 29 August 2026, 11am Mass. Please see the poster on the noticeboard for RSVP instructions.

Is God calling you? Are you ready, to say, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening," and to begin listening to know if God may be calling you to be a priest, deacon or religious? To begin that journey of discernment contact the Director of Vocations Lismore | E vocations@lismore.catholic.org.au | M +61 0494 656 854 | P 02 6621 9444. Please take a prayer card from the entrance of the church.

Catholic Youth Lismore Launch: please see the noticeboard for the poster titled 'The Gathering' with a QR code.

Diocesan Investment Fund Interest rate 4.15% effective 1/8/26: For further information and our current interest rate, please visit our website www.dif.org.au or contact us on 1800 802 516.

SOUPER SUNDAY SINGALONG was a great success! So much fun and lots of yummy food! Many thanks to all who contributed in so many ways. We raised over \$200 for the Parish Environment Fund.

Diocesan Art Prize: please see the noticeboard for a poster with a QR code to submit entries.

Yamba Ladies Morning Tea: will be held Wednesday 19 August after the 9.30am Mass.