

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHN'S CHURCH



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ST JAMES CHURCH

Parish Administrator: Father Roland Agrisola
2 McIntyres Lane Maclean NSW 2463
Email: office@stmarysparish.org.au

Postal: PO Box 19 MACLEAN NSW 2463
Tel: 02 66 451188 **ABN** 43 360 517 680
Web: stmarysparish.org.au

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A: 9 AUGUST 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, God has revealed himself to humanity gradually: first through creation, then through Abraham, the patriarchs, Moses, the priests, the kings, and the prophets. In the Old Testament, he made himself known in many partial and varied ways. When the appointed time came, God sent his own Son into the world and made him known.

In the first reading, 1 Kings 19:9-13, the Lord manifests himself to the prophet Elijah in a new way, unlike the manifestations associated with pagan gods and unlike what even Israel had come to expect. On Mount Horeb, where Elijah was, there came a mighty wind, then an earthquake, and then a fire. Elijah might have expected to find God in these powerful signs, because in the past God had revealed himself through such dramatic events. Even when God revealed himself to Moses, his presence was accompanied by spectacular signs in nature. Yet Elijah discovers, to his surprise, that the Lord is not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire, but in the sound of a gentle breeze.

By revealing himself in this new way, the Lord shows Elijah that his understanding of God must be continually purified and deepened. Elijah's earlier images of God may have been helpful, but they were not complete. His knowledge of God had to grow beyond what he had previously imagined and firmly believed. Such a change would not have been easy for him to accept, especially because this quiet manifestation was so different from the ways he had expected God to appear.

Indeed, while we walk by faith, our personal images of God will always remain imperfect. They need to be progressively purified as we grow in our knowledge of divine revelation and in our communion of love with God. Only when we enter into definitive communion of life and love with him will we see God face to face and know him fully, as he fully knows us.

In the Gospel, Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus takes a further step in revealing who he is to his disciples. As he walks on the water and enables Peter to do the same, the disciples come face to face with God's power and

presence in the person of Jesus. Their first reaction is fear, because they think they are seeing a ghost on the water. Yet this fear also points to an encounter with God. Reverential fear, or wonder and awe, often accompanies a theophany: a dramatic encounter in which God's power and presence are tangibly revealed.

To calm their fears, Jesus approaches the disciples and says, "It is I." On one level, these are words of reassurance, identifying him as their Master. On another level, they are words of divine revelation. Jesus' declaration echoes the "I AM" by which God revealed his identity in the Old Testament. In this way, Jesus is not merely comforting the disciples; he is revealing his divine identity through language already familiar from Scripture.

Since Jesus is God made man, he is not only able to walk on water, but he also has the power to make others walk on water. This is another level of the revelation of his identity as God. Peter asks Jesus to call him out of the boat. When Jesus complies, he climbs out of the vessel and begins to walk on the water toward Jesus. In other words, with those who entrust their minds and hearts to him, he shares his divine life and power. Faith is this act of freely entrusting one's life to Jesus. As long as one is united with Jesus through a living faith, one can do by grace what one can never do by one's natural human ability. In the case of Peter, when he took his eyes from the Lord Jesus, and is left to rely on his own feeble power, he began to sink into the depths.

The final response of the disciples experiencing this theophany is to bow before Jesus and confess their faith in him: "Truly, you are the Son of God." Their knowledge of him begins to go deeper. They begin to see that Jesus is acting as only God can act, doing what only God can do.

Let us pray in this Mass that we too may grow in our personal knowledge of Jesus as the eternal Son of God made man.

Fr Roland

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God, whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father, bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters, that we may merit to enter into the inheritance which you have promised. 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*1 Kings 19:9.11-13*

A reading from the first book of the Kings

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he went into the cave and spent the night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' Then the Lord himself went by. There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8*

(R.) *Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.*

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. (R.)
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. (R.)
3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. (R.)

SECOND READING*Romans 9:1-5*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

What I want to say is no pretence; I say it in union with Christ – it is the truth – my conscience in union with the Holy Spirit assures me of it too. What I want to say is this: my sorrow is so great, my mental anguish so endless, I would willingly be condemned and be cut off from Christ if it could help my brothers of Israel, my own flesh and blood. They were adopted as sons, they were given the glory and the covenants; the Law and the ritual were drawn up for them, and the promises were made to them. They are descended from the patriarchs and from their flesh and blood came Christ who is above all, God for ever blessed! Amen.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION*Psalm 129:5*

Alleluia, alleluia!

I hope in the Lord, I trust in his word.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL*Matthew 14:22-33*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord,' he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, to accept the offerings of your Church, for in your mercy you have given them to be offered and by your power you transform them into the mystery of our salvation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE VII: SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the communion in your Sacrament that we have consumed, save us, O Lord, and confirm us in the light of your truth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Elijah's experience occurred on the mountain of God. Though in one tradition this mountain is Sinai (see Ex 19:1-6), this tradition identifies it as Horeb (see Dt 4:10-15a). Such a theophany was accompanied by spectacular phenomena. Perhaps the Israelites described it in this way to show that their God, not the god of the Canaanites, governed the powers of nature. Elijah witnessed the phenomena, but did not experience God within it. It was only when he heard a tiny whispering voice that he was gripped with the realisation of God's presence. No divine words were delivered. The voice itself was the experience. This suggests that the insignificant events of life can be the stage upon which God is revealed.

The psalm presumes a community waiting for a prophetic oracle that will announce peace (v.9). The people's confidence in God rests in the conviction that they are God's own people. There is great expectancy here. The people have done what they can to get God's attention. The next move is God's. Lovingkindness, truth, justice and peace (v.11) are characteristics of the covenantal relationship. When they meet and embrace each other, salvation is complete, truth springs up from the earth, and justice comes down from heaven. All of creation, from earth to sky, shares in the benefits of the salvation by God.

Paul speaks of his ardent attachment to his Jewish compatriots. Though he devoted himself to the conversion of the Gentiles, he never ceased loving the people from whom he came. Distressed that they did not accept Jesus as messiah, he is willing to be considered cursed (anáthema) and cut off from Christ for their sake. Paul was not the first leader to be willing to forfeit his future with God for the sake of his own people. Moses made the same offer (see Ex 32:32). Paul lists seven prerogatives that his people enjoy as the chosen people of God. Interestingly, the greatest boast is that the Christ, the anointed one of God, came from their line.

In the gospel account, Jesus addresses the terror that the disciples experienced in seeing him walking toward them on the water with a typical divine response: Do not be afraid! To this he adds the theophanic exclamation: It is I; I am (ego eimi)! By

walking on water, Jesus assumes the role of the creator-god who alone governs chaotic waters. Peter's faith is not strong enough to overcome his fear of such waters, and so he sinks. Thus he is a model of both faith and lack of faith. Ultimately, it was faith that won out, for Peter is saved when he cries out to Jesus. Those in the boat then pay Jesus homage, identifying him as the Son of God. The entire event was a manifestation of the extraordinary power that resided in Jesus.

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EUCHARIST28 *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.

St Mary of the Cross (Feast: 8 August)

Oh, Father, I cannot tell you what a beautiful thing the will of God seems to me. For some years past, my Communion, my prayers, my intentions have all been for God's will to be done. I can never pray for a particular intention, a particular person, or anything particular about our own Institute, but in God's loved will, that is - whilst I desire with all my heart to pray for these, I cannot help at the same time desiring that He only use my prayers for the intention that His own will most desires at this time. Thus I feel a joy when things go well, for I see His will in this, and an equal joy when they seem to go wrong or against our natural desire, for there again I see His will, and am satisfied that He has accepted my prayers and those of many more for some other object at the time nearer to His adorable will.

To me, the will of God is a dear book which I am never tired of reading, which has always some new charm for me. Nothing is too little to be noticed there, but yet my littleness and nothingness has often dared to oppose it, and I am painfully conscious that in many ways I still in my tepidity offend against it without perceiving what I am doing. But such dear lessons as you gave me the other evening then come to my aid and encourage me, for the love of my sweet Jesus is too strong, too beautiful, and His merits too great, for me not to cling to Him.

From her letter to Msgr Kirby

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:** Audrey Hancock. **Anniversary:** 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: 15/16 AUGUST 2026

Readers: Yamba: B Montgomery/R Tory; Maclean: A Smith/C Newton; Iluka: T Sullivan. **Commentators:** Yamba: M Dee; Maclean: S Winter, Iluka: I Durham. **E Communion:** Maclean: J de Roos. **Count team:** Neander.

READINGS: 15/16 AUGUST 2026

First: Isaiah 56:1. 6-7; **Second:** Romans 11:13-15. 29-32; **Gospel:** Matthew 15:21-28.

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 candidates as they prepare for their First Holy Communion.

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 I P 02 6621 9444

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

Assumption Day Mass: Saturday 15 August at 11.30am, St Mary's Maclean.

The Australian National Census is coming up. All baptised Catholics, whether you attend Mass every week or only occasionally, are strongly encouraged to tick 'Catholic' on the religion question. Government funding for Catholic schools, hospitals, aged care, and social welfare agencies relies directly on this data. If you belong to an Eastern Rite community (e.g. Maronite, Syro-Malabar, Ukrainian), please select 'Other' and write your specific rite. Stand up and be counted to help us plan for the future of our faith community.

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.

Office closed Monday 10/8 and Wednesday 12/8.