



Cnr Perfection Ave and Bentwood Tce, Stanhope Gardens
<http://john23rd.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish/>



Fourth Sunday of Advent 23 December 2018

From the Pastor's desk

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

In a few days we will celebrate the Birthday of Christ Jesus! This time of the year sees families come together and celebrate the gift which is each other. For some, however, it can be a time of pain as loved ones may be absent. Nevertheless, we all rejoice that Christ has come into our world to offer us salvation and eternal life. Let us thank God for the great Gift of His Son; and let us give of our love and service to all at this special time!

On behalf of Fr Thomas, Deacon Rudy and the Parish Team may I wish you all wonderful and fulfilling Christmas season!

Thanks to each and everyone of you for what you do and as every member of this community, is essential to the growth of God's Kingdom in this part of the world!

May the New Year bring joy, peace and an increase in that Divine Love which transform us all into the likeness of Christ Jesus, born for us again this Christmas!

God's blessing always

Fr John



Mass Times

Mon - Fri 9:00am
 also Wed 10:00am
 Holy Cross Primary *school term only*
 Sat 9:00am, 6:00pm (Vigil)
 Sun 7:30am, 9:00am,
 10:30am, 6:00pm (Youth)

Devotions & Prayers

Novena Masses

Tue 7:30pm
 Our Lady of Perpetual Help
 1st Fri 7:30pm
 Sacred Heart of Jesus

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Tue after the 7:30pm novena mass
 1st Fri 6:30pm followed by
 7:15pm Benediction
 Sat 8:00 - 9:00am (*Vocations*)

Sacrament of the Sick

1st Sat 9:00am Mass or upon request

Divine Office

Fri After 9:00am Mass and Benediction
 Sun 8:15am

Praise & Worship/Prayer Group

2nd Sat 7:30pm led by CRL
 (*Community of the Risen Lord*)
 3rd Sat 7:30pm led by SJ23rd Prayer Group
 Mon 7:30pm led by Frances Pegrem on 0417 406715. Christian Meditation Group
 Fri 6:30pm led by Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group at the Parish Office's kitchen

Our Parish Mission

The parish of St John XXIII is a faith community with the Eucharist as its heart. Inspired by John XXIII's prophetic opening of the windows of the Church, we welcome the fresh air of the Holy Spirit, inviting every person to share in the responsibility of enriching the life and faith of our community by sharing their gifts and talents."



DEC THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon 24	6:00am - Mass of the Rooster 6:00pm - Family Vigil 9:00pm - Christmas Vigil 12:00 Midnight Mass
Tue 25	<i>The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) S</i> Mass Times - 7.30am, 9.00am, 10.30am NO EVENING MASS
Wed 26	9.00am - Mass
Thu 27	9.00am - Mass
Fri 28	9.00am - Mass
Sat 29	9.00am - Mass
Sun 30	

This will be the last bulletin for the year. We will be back on the 20th of January 2019

Entrance Antiphon

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

First Reading

Micah 5:1-4

Out of you will be born the one who is to rule over Israel.

The Lord says this:

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel; his origin goes back to the distant past, to the days of old. The Lord is therefore going to abandon them till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth. Then the remnant of his brothers will come back to the sons of Israel. He will stand and feed his flock with the power of the Lord, with the majesty of the name of his God. They will live secure, for from then on he will extend his power to the ends of the land. He himself will be peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 79:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us, shine forth from your cherubim throne. O Lord, rouse up your might, O Lord, come to our help. **R.**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. **R.**

May your hand be on the man you have chosen, the man you have given your strength. And we shall never forsake you again: give us life that we may call upon your name. **R.**

Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-10

I am coming to do your will.

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world:

You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation, prepared a body for me. You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin; then I said, just as I was commanded in the scroll of the book, 'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.'

Notice that he says first: You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them; and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 1:39-44

Why should it happen that I am honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?

Mary set out at that time and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

*I am the servant of the Lord:
may His will for me be done.*



OFFICE

160 Perfection Avenue,
Stanhope Gardens, 2768
(next to St Mark's College Admin Office)

MAILING

PO Box 23, Stanhope Gardens,
NSW 2768

SACRAMENTS

Baptism *by appointment*

Sun 12:00pm

Reconciliation (First Rite)

Sat 5:00 - 5:45pm

And after any weekday masses

CLERGY

Parish Priest:

Fr John McSweeney

✉ FrJohn@john23rd.org.au

Asst. Priest:

Fr Thomas Bui

✉ FrThomas@john23rd.org.au

Deacon:

Rodrigo Rupac

✉ DeaconRudy@john23rd.org.au

PARISH OFFICE

Office Hours

Tue - Fri 8.30 - 4.00pm

Office Contacts

(02) 9852 0580

(0423 160 567 AH Emergency)

STAFF

Secretary

Tanya Gatt

✉ secretary@john23rd.org.au

Finance:

Renuka Soosaipillai

✉ accounts@john23rd.org.au

Sacramental Coordinator:

Jill Franco

✉ admin@john23rd.org.au

Business Manager:

John McCartney (*pro bono*)

✉ businessmanager@john23rd.org.au

NEW TO OUR PARISH?

Welcome to our parish community!

Please take a welcome envelope pack from the front entrance.

Also visit our website or like our Facebook page

www.facebook.com/john23rdparish



Welcome to the community of the Catholic Parish of St John 23rd Glenwood Stanhope Gardens where the love of Christ is shining in so many ways.

SUGGESTION BOX
We welcome your comments and constructive suggestions.

PARISH NEWS

WE GIVE THANKS TO ...

♥ so many columbarium supporters ...

- The Villafana, Van Dort, Joseph, Bonaccorso, De Jesus families for sponsoring a bench in the Garden of Remembrance
- The Sarlabus, Sultana, Surjanto, families for sponsoring a wall plaque
- The Pangilinan family for donating the St. John XXIII camellia tree
- Joy Sullivan for donating towards the cross
- Rivers Edge Turf for sponsoring 100m2 of turf
- Anh Nguyen and Mantis Landscape for constructing the altar platform and many other tasks

... and, of course, all the columbarium niche purchasers

♥ generous supporters of the Vinnies' Christmas appeal and the ongoing replenishment of the Vinnies pantry. So many families in need will be having a good Christmas celebration

♥ to all our volunteers, for another year of continued support to our parish. Your presence is indeed a present from above. THANK YOU

COLUMBARIUM UPDATE

Four more walls now approved

With the St John XXIII and St Mary MacKillop walls sold out, the next four walls are now available for purchase. Yes, the next FOUR walls – Sts Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. St Matthew and St Mark will be completed mid-December and St Luke and St John will be completed in February next year.

Cost for 2019 are as follow:

1st niche 2,750

2nd niche 2,200

3rd & subsequent niches 1,980

We will have a sales weekend at all masses early in the new year but, in the meantime, register your interest with your name and number of niches, via email to businessmanager@john23rd.org.au

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULES

(All Masses in Church)

24th DECEMBER Christmas Eve

6.00pm Family Vigil

9.00pm Christmas Vigil

12.00 Midnight Mass

25th DECEMBER Christmas Day

7.30am

9.00am

10.30am

NO EVENING MASS

SUGGESTION BOX RESPONSES

Our suggestion box in the foyer gathers a number of comments and suggestions from parishioners. As most are anonymous we aren't able to respond directly, so in this new column we will endeavour to address many of those contributions.

COELIACS Those who are gluten intolerant may receive communion with a gluten low host. Please inform the acolyte before Mass.

Changes to our collection

First Collection will occur after the Homily and which will be brought to the altar during the offertory procession. The **Second Collection** will occur after the offertory and will be brought forward during the Holy, Holy.

Paying our debt together

First Collection – for the diocese. This is used for the support of the Bishop and priests of the Diocese.

Second Collection – for the parish. This is used to meet our parish running costs of the church and provide for ministry expenses.

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM If you would like to be a part of the church's plan giving program, which goes to the second collection, an **SJ23rd form** is available at the church foyer or contact the parish office. We would encourage instead of the envelope system to either direct debit or credit card deduction.

FAITH FORMATION

⇒ **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**

We continue to ask for host families to pray the rosary at home and request our Blessed Mother's intercessions. Tuesday nights beginning with Evening Prayer at 6.30pm, Rosary at 7.15pm, Mass and Novena prayers at 7:30pm with sung Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament after the novena mass.

If you want the opportunity of having the statue of Our Lady visit your home contact Bart Sarlabus bart.sarlabus@gmail.com or Melva Paguinto (*after novena mass*).

Pick up the statue after the novena mass and return a week after, before the start of the novena mass.

"A family that prays together, stays together - Fr Patrick Peyton"

LITURGY

⇒ **Seeking Audio/Visual Operators**

The Liturgy Team is seeking anyone interested in learning to operate the A/V System. We plan to roster one person for each weekend Mass and especially during January, when choirs usually take a break. You will be required to operate slides & play corresponding CD music. Interested? Training will be provided. Call Bob Agbulos on 0422106525 or email bragbulos@gmail.com

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

⇒ **Food Pantry**

Vinnies Stanhope Gardens Conference is starting a **"Non-perishable Food Drive"** to help feed the needy in the community. When we get calls for assistance with food, we help out with a bag of groceries and a food voucher to buy fresh meat etc. At the moment, our cupboard is looking bare for some items and we are asking for help. We believe that if every family was to contribute one item of **non-perishable food a month** our cupboard would never go bare. At present, we need **long life milk, cereal, pasta sauce, tinned vegetables, tinned meat and tinned fish**. We will have a labelled plastic bin in the church foyer for your donations. We will advise you every month as to what food item is running low. Thank you very much for all the help you have given our Vinnies Conference so far. God bless you all.

Rosary Statue Family Roster for Tuesday Nights

	4	11	18	25	
Dec	<i>Paguinto S</i>	<i>Drummond</i>	<i>Richards</i>	Paguinto M	
Jan	1	8	15	22	29
	Shalini	Lozada	Thirimanne	Olan	Sebastian
Feb	5	12	19	26	
	Manoj	Sebastian	Blasonato	<i>available</i>	
Mar	5	12	19	26	
	Paguinto R	Jacob	Shalini	Reodique	
Apr	2	9	16	23	30
	Lequin	Olan	Pangilinan E	Sebastian	Shalini
May	7	14	21	28	
	Drummond	Viola	Shalini	<i>available</i>	

RCIA

We are blessed with eight enquirers in this journey into the Catholic faith ***Danielle Morias, Rita Ly, Robyn Perera, Tracey McClifty, Kumi Molligodde, Les Flood, Vernon Gnanakan and Louise Savio.***

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) sessions will resume on January 30.

At the Vigil mass, the Church receives Kumidhini Molligodde, Leslie Flood and Vernon Gnanakan into the fullness of the Christian life.

In the Sacrament of Baptism, they are asked to walk by the light of Christ and to trust in His wisdom and become disciples of Jesus. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, they are "sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" and are strengthened for service to the Body of Christ. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, they partake in Real Presence of the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ.

Please pray for **Kumi, Les and Vernon** as they are united with the Church community..



Chairman	Members
Bart Sarlabus	Members
Dep Chairman	Bernadette Virwani
Chris Drummond	Gary Lee
Secretary	Julienne Crasto
Nanette Gamboa	Nidarshi Fernando

If you or any family member is homebound and would want to receive communion in your home please contact the parish office.

Special intentions

Recently Deceased:

Norma Damasco, Dhananji
Kadawatharachie

Deceased:

Jeffrey Turner

Anniversary:

Paul Camilleri, Jose Mari Dela Cruz,
Pedrito 'Sonny' Dlaes, Nancy Cabral,
Irene & Cherry & Ershh Sancouci

Sick:

Names will normally only be published in the bulletin with an individual or family member's permission.

Ronelle, Giuseppe David LoRusso,
Sonia Sampaio, John Wormald,
Jesse Perrone, Edmond Rizon,
Fe Suderio, Ariel Ignacio, Lolita Diaz,
Liezl Sultana, Patricia Maldonado,
Kayla Tourner, Jose Mari Samson,
Clare Pineda, Inneke Halim,
Madz Aguas, Rosanne Castillo,
Sole Espiritu, Sonia Mikac, Izide
Surdic, Connie Facchin, Nalini Dias

Thanksgiving:

Miguel & Monica Cobarrubias,
Gaetan & Lilette Autrey,
Ronald, Kristine, Maria, Ramon and
Vincenzo Zamora

Church Funnies



OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Marina Hardy

☎ (02) 8664 7100

✉ holycross@parra.catholic.edu.au

John XXIII and St Mark's College

160 Perfection Ave, Stanhope Gardens

Principal: Dr Peter Webster

☎ (02) 9852 0500

✉ stmarks@parra.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Early Learning Centre

160 Perfection Ave, Stanhope Gardens

☎ (02) 9852 0585

✉ celcstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au

www.celcstanhope.catholic.edu.au

Diocesan News

Thank You for Showing the Compassionate Face of Christ to Homeless Young Mothers and children in crisis

Bishop Vincent, Parramatta Catholic Foundation, CatholicCare and Houses to Homes thank you for supporting the Bishop's Christmas Appeal. Thanks to your kind-hearted generosity, Houses to Homes can provide more homeless mothers with the shelter, support, independent living and parenting skills programs they desperately need.

Please pray for the wellbeing of all mothers and children in Houses to Homes' care. If you haven't had a chance to donate, please visit yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal

Time is running out for Plenary Council 2020

Submissions to Plenary Council 2020 close on Ash Wednesday, 6 March 2019.

YOUR voice matters! Make a personal submission now or join a small group. Our question is for everyone: "What you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" To make a submission or to find out more visit: <https://parracatholic.org/haveyoursayplenary2020/>

The Epiphany Pilgrimage: the journey of the Magi

The Epiphany Pilgrimage is a not-for-profit event of the Diocese of Parramatta and an outreach of the Blue Mountains Deanery. Beginning at Emu Plains on 2 January and finishing 7 days later at Bell, pilgrims walk through the beautiful Blue Mountains bushland and join parishioners in daily Mass, Adoration, prayer, catechesis and fellowship.

To register for all or part of the pilgrimage visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org. For updates and to follow the journey see www.facebook.com/epiphanypilgrimage

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Parish, Upper Blue Mountains

We will be celebrating two special Masses early next year:

Sunday 20 January Santo Niño holy Mass and celebration according to the Filipino tradition (English language). The Mass will take place at St Canice's Church, Katoomba at 12pm, followed by refreshments. All are welcome.

Sunday 10 February Holy Mass in Spanish. The Mass will take place at St Canice's Church, Katoomba at 12pm, followed by refreshments. All are welcome.

Other News

29 DEC - Feast of the Holy Family

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth cordially invite family and youth (age 18-35) to join us for a Celebration Vigil for the Feast of the Holy Family. Saturday 29 December 2018 at 3:00pm. Join us also for pizza at 5:30pm. 116-132 Quakers Road, Marayong. RSVP to Sr Paula by 27 December via vocationscsfn@gmail.com or 0449 656 406.

Los Angeles Religious Education Congress 2019: Thirsting for Justice

A wonderful opportunity for a faith formation experience for parishioners, leaders, teachers, catechists ... all people in ministry and all people who would like to enrich their faith! Join this pilgrimage group to attend the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress 18-30 March 2019. Cost of pilgrimage \$4350 for 12 days with some additional expenses. Please contact Lisa Bright on 9622 1125 or lbright@mqofblacktown.org.au for an information pack.

Grief to Grace – Healing the Wounds of Abuse

This is a spiritual retreat for anyone who has suffered degradation or violation through physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse. The retreat will be held May 26 – 31 2019. To request an application contact Anne by emailing info@griegtograces.org.au or phone 0478 599241. For more information visit www.griegtograces.org

For more news check out

<https://parracatholic.org/#LATESTNEWSEVENTS>

<https://catholicoutlook.org/>

Pope Francis has spoken of the need to engage in the world and respond in faith. He said:

"The defining aspect of this change of epoch is that things are no longer in their place. Our previous ways of explaining the world and relationships, good and bad, no longer appears to work. The way in which we locate ourselves in history has changed. Things we thought would never happen, or that we never thought we would see, we are experiencing now, and we dare not even imagine the future. That which appeared normal to us – family, the Church, society and the world – will probably no longer seem that way. We cannot simply wait for what we are experiencing to pass, under the illusion that things will return to being how they were before."

The journey toward the Plenary Council will help us to prepare to listen to God by listening to one another. We invite all people to engage, to be a part of the listening and dialogue encounter in the next two years.

WHAT IS A PLENARY COUNCIL

A Plenary Council is the highest formal gathering of all local churches in a country. Our Plenary Council 2020 is being held so that we can dialogue about the future of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Plenary Council will be held in two sessions. The first will be held in late 2020 (possibly October) and the second session will be held in mid-2021 (possibly in May).

**WATCH
LISTEN
READ
HAVE YOUR SAY -
Respond Online
PRAY**

Plenary Council 2020



WHEN IS THE PLENARY COUNCIL

The Council will be held in two sessions in order to enable to deeper discernment, further learning, dialogue and listening where it may be needed and to write or rewrite anything in response to the dialogue of the first session.

Most importantly, the time in between will allow us to ensure we are listening "to what the spirit is saying". Rev 2:7

Submissions to Plenary Council 2020 close on Ash Wednesday, 6 March 2019.

YOUTH CORNER

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13

BLAZE

BLAZE Youth Group is a fun and exciting way for youths in Years 7 and up to learn about their faith and how to handle the struggles of being a teen. BLAZE runs during **Friday nights**, weeks 1,3,5,7 and 9 of the school term. Session **starts at 7:15 till 9pm.**

CRL (Community of the Risen Lord)

When: 2nd & 4th Saturdays

Praise & Worship

Time: after 6:00pm vigil mass

YFC (Youth for Christ)

When: 3rd Sundays of the month

Youth Ministry

SJXXIII Youth is looking for volunteer youth facilitators who are can commit to assisting with our BLAZE fortnightly sessions. Any enquiries can be sent to youth@john23rd.com.au.

✉ For all youth ministry enquiries, email us at youth@john23rd.com

Kids' Corner

When Mary heard that her much older cousin Elizabeth was with child, she hurried to Elizabeth and Zechariah's house in the hills of Judea. Can you help Mary find the correct path to her cousin Elizabeth?



The Lord will keep his promise

WORD SEARCH

P	B	O	A	N	C	N	H	Y	B	A	B	U	C	S	F	B
Z	O	H	V	U	T	W	G	T	X	E	Z	M	H	R	G	G
F	O	T	V	G	N	I	T	E	E	R	G	A	O	N	O	R
L	F	Q	N	F	D	U	O	L	Q	B	P	Q	R	V	Y	H
M	A	P	P	U	Q	M	G	I	U	P	A	D	A	I	E	F
P	S	X	H	I	B	I	F	X	Y	Y	D	Z	W	W	C	D
U	A	S	H	E	A	R	D	Q	W	H	A	Z	I	Z	M	H
Q	P	H	U	T	D	B	E	L	I	E	V	E	D	L	U	Z
Y	W	W	G	Q	T	T	N	Q	O	B	Q	E	G	R	E	L
X	M	E	R	Y	B	G	C	M	L	A	C	E	R	X	R	W
U	I	G	F	P	R	D	H	E	I	C	N	I	U	C	O	E
L	Z	H	R	K	D	A	S	N	B	T	E	K	R	E	O	B
R	P	Q	S	H	N	S	M	A	R	D	O	X	B	R	P	A
J	X	D	Q	T	E	G	G	M	K	L	V	E	P	A	Z	O
H	R	T	E	D	Z	T	Y	O	P	M	S	Z	O	I	W	W
I	H	N	G	M	Q	Z	X	W	H	W	C	P	B	A	F	S

Baby believed blessed Elizabeth greeting happy
 heard hurried loud Mary moved woman



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