



Cnr Perfection Ave and Bentwood Tce, Stanhope Gardens

<http://john23rd.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish/>



**Twenty Seventh  
Sunday of  
Ordinary Time  
6 October 2019**

### Reflection on the Readings

The loving gaze of a mother towards her newborn simply gives rise to the obligation to feed the baby. There is no special reward for doing her motherly duty. This is how Jesus sees 'good works'. If we perceive our relationships with people correctly, then so-called 'good works' are no more than our duty and don't deserve special congratulatory access to Heaven.

If we saw human beings as 'formed from the dust of the earth, . . . a manifestation of God in the world, a sign of his presence, a trace of his glory' (St John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* 34.2), then that perception leads to certain ways of relating which are obliging. Like the servant in the story, we will have done no more than our duty.

We might take a moment to pause to get our perception of human beings correct so that our response may prepare us for the free gift of heavenly life.

© Fr Michael Tate



The **Columban Calendar 2020** now available at the front foyer. The cost is \$10.00. Please place the money in the suggestion box next to the calendars. If you have already taken your calendar please place the money in the suggestion box.

Please note the **Parish office has a new telephone** number 8883 5981

The **Youth Ministry of SJXXIII** which consists of a range of youth groups like Blaze, CRL, and YFC has one mission and that is to facilitate the understanding and growth of the faith of teens and young adults by means of music, games, discussion, prayer and reflection while exploring the catholic perspective on social issues representing the cultural diversities within our parish

We're aiming to have a central hub for the young people of our parish. A place where the various youth groups can run their youth nights out and a place where a community of young people can continually grow. To achieve this, with the blessings from Fr John McSweeney and the parish council, we have begun raising funds to renovate the space below our church to create a youth hub.

**Please check out this link** <https://www.gofundme.com/sj23-youth-space> and help us to achieve this goal.

### 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 with Exposition of  
the Blessed Sacrament &  
Benediction**

2nd Tue 7:30pm  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help  
1st Fri 7:30pm  
Sacred Heart of Jesus

**Exposition of the Blessed  
Sacrament & Benediction**

Fridays after the 9am Mass

**Rosary & Novena prayer**

Tues 7:00pm except for 2nd Tues  
as this will be a novena mass

**Sacrament of the Sick**

1st Sat 9:00am Mass or upon  
request

**Divine Office**

Sun 8:15am after 7.30am Mass  
Mon 7:30pm Christian Meditation  
Group in Parish Office Conference  
Room led by Frances Pegrem  
(0417 406715)  
Fri 6:30pm led by Christ Catholic  
Community Prayer Group in the  
Parish Office Conference Room

**Praise & Worship**

3rd Sat 7:30pm SJ23rd Prayer Group

### 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."*



OCT	THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH
Mon 7	<i>Our Lady of the Rosary (M)</i> 9.00am - Mass 7:30pm - Christian Meditation in Parish Office Conference Room
Tue 8	9.00am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary and Novena Mass to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed 9	9.00am - Mass
Thu 10	9.00am - Mass
Fri 11	9.00am - Mass 7:30pm - First Friday Novena Mass to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Sat 12	9.00am - Mass
Sun 13	12:00pm - Baptism please pray for Isabella & Charli

### Entrance Antiphon

Within your will, O Lord, all things are established, and there is none that can resist your will. For you have made all things, the heaven and the earth, and all that is held within the circle of heaven; you are the Lord of all.

### First Reading

*Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4*

*The just will live by faithfulness.*

How long, Lord, am I to cry for help while you will not listen; to cry 'Oppression!' in your ear and you will not save? Why do you set injustice before me, why do you look on where there is tyranny? Outrage and violence, this is all I see, all is contention, and discord flourishes.

Then the Lord answered and said,

'Write the vision down, inscribe it on tablets to be easily read, since this vision is for its own time only: eager for its own fulfilment, it does not deceive; if it comes slowly, wait, for come it will, without fail. See how he flags, he whose soul is not at rights, but the upright man will live by his faithfulness.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

*Ps 94:1-2, 6-9*

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who saves us. Let us come before him, giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord. **R.**

Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand. **R.**

O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert when your fathers put me to the test; when they tried me, though they saw my work.' **R.**

### Second Reading

*2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14*

*Never be ashamed of witnessing the Lord.*

I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God.

Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. You have been trusted to look after something precious; guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Gospel Acclamation

*1 Peter 1:25*

Alleluia, alleluia!

The word of the Lord stands for ever; it is the word given to you, the Good News. Alleluia!

### Gospel

*Luke 17:5-10*

*If you had faith!*

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.' The Lord replied, 'Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it would obey you.

'Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, "Come and have your meal immediately?" Would he not be more likely to say, "Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards"? Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, "We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty."' "

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Communion Antiphon

The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to the soul that seeks him.



## 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](mailto:FrJohn@john23rd.org.au)

### Asst. Priest:

Fr Thomas Bui

✉ [FrThomas@john23rd.org.au](mailto:FrThomas@john23rd.org.au)

### Deacon:

Rodrigo Rupac

✉ [DeaconRudy@john23rd.org.au](mailto:DeaconRudy@john23rd.org.au)

## PARISH OFFICE

### Office Hours

Tue - Fri 8.30 - 4.00pm

### Office Contacts

(02) 8883 5981

(0423 160 567 AH Emergency)

## STAFF

### Secretary

Tanya Gatt

✉ [secretary@john23rd.org.au](mailto:secretary@john23rd.org.au)

### Finance:

Renuka Soosaipillai

✉ [accounts@john23rd.org.au](mailto:accounts@john23rd.org.au)

### Sacramental Coordinator:

Helen Zammit

✉ [admin@john23rd.org.au](mailto:admin@john23rd.org.au)

### Business Manager:

John McCartney (*pro bono*)

✉ [businessmanager@john23rd.org.au](mailto: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](http://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.

## Plenary Council 2020

The Plenary Council invites people to continue to participate in the journey towards the Council sessions in 2020 and 2021. The "Listening and Discernment" phase recently opened and a guide has been developed to encourage groups to take part in communal discernment on the National Themes for Discernment. Learn more about the Christian practice of discernment and download the guide "Let's Listen and Discern" at [www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au)

## Diocesan Forum Resources

You are invited to view the resources from the recent Diocesan Forum at [www.parracatholic.org/forum2019](http://www.parracatholic.org/forum2019). Read the address from Bishop Vincent Long, materials prepared for the forum, data collated from the forum and images from the day. There will be further opportunities to engage in deanery and diocesan initiatives following the Forum as we continue to go out into the deep to become the community Christ calls us to be.

## CatholicCare Blacktown Neighbourhood Aid Volunteers Needed

Blacktown Neighbour Aid, a program with CatholicCare, is looking for volunteers to support our senior clients in the Blacktown area to remain living independently in their own home. If you feel you would like to make a positive difference to other's lives in this way, please contact the Manager, Deb Woolacott on 0418 114055 or email [deb.woolacott@ccss.org.au](mailto:deb.woolacott@ccss.org.au).

## Upper Blue Mountains Adoration Chapel

Beginning Tuesday 24 September, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Parish in the Upper Blue Mountains is opening an Adoration Chapel at St Canice's Church, Katoomba. If you would like further information or would like to sign up for a weekly hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, please call the parish office on 02 4782 2804.

## 27 October: Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass

All married couples and their families are warmly invited to the Diocese of Parramatta's Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral on 27 October at 11am. Bishop Vincent will celebrate Mass and will join couples and their families for a light lunch in the Cathedral Hall afterwards. Please register your names, number of years married, and the numbers attending the lunch by contacting the Life, Marriage & Family Office on 8838 3460 or email [lmf@parracatholic.org](mailto:lmf@parracatholic.org).

## 8 - 10 November: Alpha Program Weekend Training

The Pastoral Planning Office is running a training course in the Alpha Catholic program at the Institute for Mission, Blacktown. A sample Alpha evening will be held on Friday 8 November from 7pm to 9pm, before full-day training sessions on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 November. Morning and afternoon tea and lunch will be provided. To register, and for more information, please contact Lisa in the Pastoral Planning Office on 8838 3497 or [lisa.bright@parracatholic.org](mailto:lisa.bright@parracatholic.org)

## Other Notices

### Positions Vacant - Broken Bay Diocese

- Retired Priests Care Coordinator (Part-time)

- Clergy Development Officer (Part-time)

For more details, please contact Kelly Paget on 02 8379 1612 or [kelly.paget@bbccatholic.org.au](mailto:kelly.paget@bbccatholic.org.au)

- Mission Coordinator (Part-time) - Sisters of Mercy Parramatta

For more details, please contact Anthony Spata at REACH Human Resources, on 0402 210 055.

### 11-12 October: Broken Bay Bible Conference

The Broken Bay Diocese Bible Conference - 'The Holy Spirit Through the Pages of Scripture' - will be held from 11 to 12 October at the Caroline Chisholm Centre, Pennant Hills. \$88 for the conference, or \$44 per day. Lunch and morning/afternoon tea is included. RSVP 4 October through [www.trybooking.com/BCKBE](http://www.trybooking.com/BCKBE). For enquiries contact Tania Rimac on 02 8379 1629, [faith.formation@bbccatholic.org.au](mailto:faith.formation@bbccatholic.org.au) or visit [www.bbccatholic.org.au/bible](http://www.bbccatholic.org.au/bible)

### 13 October: Youth PoWR Southern Sydney Consultation Session

Youth PoWR (Parliament of the World's Religions) is travelling across the four corners of Sydney, calling on young people to generate The Sydney Statement - an interfaith statement that will help build bridges between different religions. The Southern Sydney consultation session will be held on 13 October at the LMA Function Centre in Lakemba. For more info and to register, visit [events.humanitix.com.au/youth-powr-2019-south](http://events.humanitix.com.au/youth-powr-2019-south)

### 15 October: Spirit of Jesus Community Healing Mass

The Spirit of Jesus Community, part of the Jesus Light of the World Communities, are hosting a Healing Mass on 15 October from 7pm at St Aidan's Church, Rooty Hill. For more information, please contact Luming on 0406 587717 or Anita on 0451 832977, email [jlowcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:jlowcommunity@gmail.com) or visit [www.jlowcom.org](http://www.jlowcom.org)

### 17 October: Spirit of Jesus Community Healing Mass

The Light of Jesus Family Sydney, part of the Jesus Light of the World Communities, are hosting a Healing Mass on 17 October from 7.30pm at St Patrick's Church, Blacktown. For more information, please contact Jaime on 0410 292047 or Hydie on 0430 671918, email [jlowcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:jlowcommunity@gmail.com) or visit [www.jlowcom.org](http://www.jlowcom.org)

### 25 - 27 October: Healing after Abortion

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat offers a sanctuary in which to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion in a safe, supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment. Rachel's Vineyard offers a confidential voicemail number 0400 092555 or email [info@rachelsvineyard.org.au](mailto:info@rachelsvineyard.org.au). The retreats for 2019 will be held at Varroville, NSW on Oct 25-27. Brochures are in the church or see the website [www.rachelsvineyard.org.au](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org.au)



**FAITH FORMATION**

⇒ **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**

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

We continue to ask for host families to pray the rosary at home and request our Blessed Mother's intercessions. Pick up the statue and pass on to the next family after a week.

- 7:00pm Tuesday nights - Rosary and novena prayers at church. Join us and take part in reciting the rosary and novena prayers
- 7:30pm **2nd Tuesday each month - Novena mass** after rosary prayers with exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Families on the roster, please remember your roster. If unable to pick up please don't hesitate to contact Bart or Melva.

*"Mary joins us, she fights at our side. She supports Christians in the fight against the forces of evil. Especially through prayer, through the Rosary. Hear me out, the Rosary. ... Do you pray the Rosary each day?" Pope Francis*

⇒ **Praise & Worship**

7:30 pm every 3rd Saturday after the vigil mass at the St John 23rd Parish Church Stanhope Gardens.

Join us for a night of inspired devotion to our Lord through song and praise. We have special guest to lead us through prayers. **Everyone is welcome.**



**RCIA**

⇒ **RCIA Enquiry**

If you, a family member or someone you know would like to learn more about the Catholic faith, please email [rcia.sj23rd@gmail.com](mailto:rcia.sj23rd@gmail.com) or call Parish Office (Tues - Fri) on (02) 98520580



**Chairman**

Gary Lee

**Dep Chairman**

Bernadette Virwani

**Secretary**

Julienne Crasto

**Members**

Bing Catabas

Chris Drummond

Nanette Gamboa

Margaret Harrison

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

**Collection process FOR COLLECTORS:**

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

**Rosary Statue Family Roster for Tuesday Nights**

	1	8	15	22	29
Oct	Wicks	Sebastian	Richards	Ramirez	Jacob
Nov	5	12	19	26	
	Javier C	Javelosa	Peiris	Jacob	
Dec	3	10	17	24	31
	Paguinto S	Drummond	Pangilinan	Sebastian	Sebastian
Jan	7	14	21	28	
	Lopez	Lozada	Jacob	Tanganan	
Feb	4	11	18	25	
	available	Sebastian	available	Jacob	
Mar	3	10	17	24	31
	available	available	available	Jacob	available

If you want the opportunity of having the statue of Our Lady visit your home contact Bart Sarlabus [bart.sarlabus@gmail.com](mailto:bart.sarlabus@gmail.com) or Melva Paguinto [emcpi85@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emcpi85@yahoo.com.au)

**CHILDRENS LITURGY**

⇒ **Children's liturgy facilitators required**

We are fortunate in our parish to have children's liturgy available to children who are school aged and not yet made the sacrament of First communion.

However, we have only a few facilitators able to take these Sunday sessions.

If you are able to assist in facilitating these 15-20mins sessions during the 10.30am mass, please contact Helen Zammit on 9852 0583. Thank you

**SCHOOL ENROLMENT**

⇒ **St Mark's Catholic College - Year 2021 Enrolment**

**Applications Open Monday, 21st October, 2019.**

Please visit the website to download an application <http://www.clestanhope.catholic.edu.au/en/Enrol-Now> or collect an enrolment pack from the College Office.

**Applications close Friday, 15th November, 2019.**

⇒ **Holy Cross Primary**

<http://www.hcglenwood.catholic.edu.au/Enrol/How-to-enrol>

Enrolment packages containing the Enrolment Instructions and Application Forms are also available from the school office. Contact our school by email or call 8664 7100 weekdays between 8:30am and 3:30pm

**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.

## Special intentions

### Recently Deceased:

Agripino Lloso, Ramon Escanan,  
Milica Illic, Rosie Sarabia, Chris King,  
Manuel (Sonny) Barcelon

### Deceased:

Narcellana Families, Jesus, Anecita,  
Noicas, Babina, Elistorio, Clarke,  
Gaudisco, Rogelio, Lydice, Rosaly

### Anniversary:

Ricky Cornelio, Amada Abellana,  
Bernardo & Gloria Gaitzch,  
Joseph Cassar, Aproniano Estoque,  
Juliet Festejo

### Sick: Names published with permission.

Colleen McCunnie, Deidre Thomson,  
Benjamin Munson Jr, Deacon Rudi,  
Jim Daley, Virginia Santos, Fr John,  
Gloria Buosi, Anshu Mala Nand,  
Pat Doyle, Kim Greg Marcellana,  
Deidre Thomson, Hazel Masher,  
Praba Daniel, Florentina Elisura,  
Violeta Javate, Ramon Minosa,  
Elmo Joachim, Kalayani, Dung Phan,  
Bernie Presto, Norbert Mascarenhas,  
Lino Matteazi

### Thanksgiving:

## Church Funnies

The Stewardship Committee's latest  
idea for helping to raise the annual  
church budget



## OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

### Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Marina Hardy

☎ (02) 8664 7100

✉ [holycross@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto: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](mailto:stmarks@parra.catholic.edu.au)

### Catholic Early Learning Centre

160 Perfection Ave, Stanhope Gardens

☎ (02) 9852 0585

✉ [celcstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:celcstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au)

[www.celcstanhope.catholic.edu.au](http://www.celcstanhope.catholic.edu.au)

## In Memoriam

### ⇒ COLUMBARIUM

We have opened this up to parishioners  
from other parishes so there is an  
opportunity for them to have their ashes  
placed in church grounds, beside a  
church where family and friends may  
conveniently visit after mass.

There are still opportunities to sponsor  
items for the garden eg plants and other  
landscaping costs.

### ⇒ MEMORIAL WALL PLAQUES

The wall in front of the church is  
devoted to the memory of our deceased  
family and friends, especially if they are  
overseas. The plaques cost \$250.00.

Please email for any queries to

[businessmanager@john23rd.org.au](mailto:businessmanager@john23rd.org.au)



## Message from Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv



**Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM**  
Conv DDL STL

**Bishop of Parramatta**

Level 2, 12 Victoria Rd, Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box 3066, North Parramatta, NSW 1750

☎ 02 8838 3400 ☎ 02 9630 4813

✉ [bishop@parracatholic.org](mailto:bishop@parracatholic.org)

🌐 [Parracatholic.org](http://Parracatholic.org)

27 September 2019

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Despite the objections and concerns from many citizens, including Church  
leaders, the Abortion Law Reform Act 2019 has passed the NSW Legislature.

We, as Catholics, continue to believe that all humans are made in the image of  
God and that each and every person matters.

The Catholic Church maintains the vigorous defence of the dignity of the human  
person. As followers of Jesus Christ, this will always include the protection of life  
from conception to natural death.

We, as the face of Christ, must make as our priority a renewed commitment to  
help vulnerable women in these complex situations.

In our diocese, our CatholicCare offers comprehensive and welcoming pregnancy  
support for women and families that are expecting a child.

May Christ give us the courage to remain committed to care for the vulnerable  
and protect the precious gift of human life.

Yours in Christ,

*+ Vincent Long*

Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen  
OFM Conv Bishop of Parramatta

## Pope establishes Sunday of the Word of God

1 October 2019

Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter, *Motu proprio "Aperuit illis,"* published on 30 September, establishes that "the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God."

The timing of the document is significant: 30 September is the Feast of Saint Jerome, the man who translated most of the Bible into Latin, and who famously said: "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." This year also marks 1600 years since his death.

The title of the document, "*Aperuit illis*," is equally important. They are its opening words, taken from St Luke's Gospel, where the Evangelist describes how the Risen Jesus appeared to His disciples, and how "He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."

### A response to requests

Recalling the importance given by the Second Vatican Council to rediscovering Sacred Scripture for the life of the Church, Pope Francis says he wrote this Apostolic Letter in response to requests from the faithful around the world to celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God.

### An ecumenical value

In the *Motu proprio* (literally, "of his own initiative"), Pope Francis declares that "the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God." This is more than a temporal coincidence, he explains: the celebration has "ecumenical value, since the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity."

### A certain solemnity

Pope Francis invites local communities to find ways to "mark this Sunday with a certain solemnity." He suggests that the sacred text be enthroned "in order to focus the attention of the assembly on the normative value of God's Word." In highlighting the proclamation of the Word of the Lord, it would be appropriate "to emphasise in the homily the honour that it is due," writes the Pope.

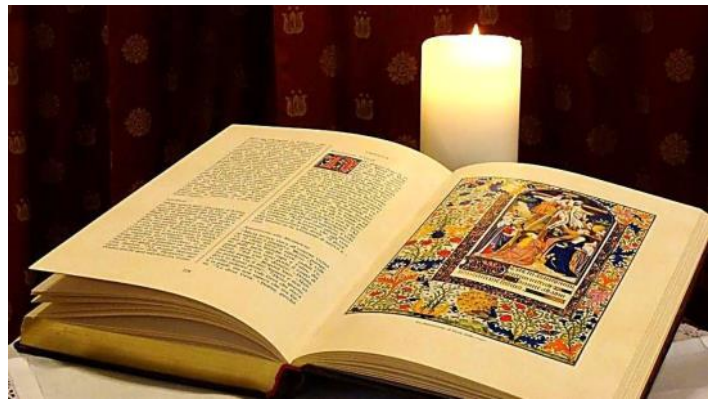
"Pastors can also find ways of giving a Bible, or one of its books, to the entire assembly as a way of showing the importance of learning how to read, appreciate and pray daily with Sacred Scripture."

### The Bible is for all

The Bible is not meant for a privileged few, continues Pope Francis. It belongs "to those called to hear its message and to recognise themselves in its words." The Bible cannot be monopolised or restricted to select groups either, he writes, because it is "the book of the Lord's people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division towards unity."

### The importance of the homily

"Pastors are primarily responsible for explaining Sacred Scripture and helping everyone to understand it," writes Pope Francis. Which is why the homily possesses "a quasi-sacramental character." The Pope warns against improvising or giving "long, pedantic homilies or wandering off into unrelated topics."



Rather, he suggests using simple and suitable language. For many of the faithful, he writes, "this is the only opportunity they have to grasp the beauty of God's Word and to see it applied to their daily lives."

### Sacred Scripture and the Sacraments

The Pope uses the scene of the Risen Lord appearing to the disciples at Emmaus to demonstrate what he calls "the unbreakable bond between Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist." Since the Scriptures everywhere speak of Christ, he writes, "they enable us to believe that His death and resurrection are not myth but history, and are central to the faith of His disciples."

When the sacraments are introduced and illumined by God's Word, explains the Pope, "they become ever more clearly the goal of a process whereby Christ opens our minds and hearts to acknowledge His saving work."

### The role of the Holy Spirit

"The role of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures is primordial," writes Pope Francis. "Without the work of the Spirit, there would always be a risk of remaining limited to the written text alone." The Pope continues: "This would open the way to a fundamentalist reading, which needs to be avoided, lest we betray the inspired, dynamic and spiritual character of the sacred text." It is the Holy Spirit who "makes Sacred Scripture the living word of God, experienced and handed down in the faith of His holy people."

Pope Francis invites us never to take God's Word for granted, "but instead to let ourselves be nourished by it, in order to acknowledge and live fully our relationship with Him and with our brothers and sisters."

### Practicing mercy

The Pope concludes his Apostolic Letter by defining what he describes as "the great challenge before us in life: to listen to Sacred Scripture and then to practice mercy." God's Word, writes Pope Francis, "has the power to open our eyes and to enable us to renounce a stifling and barren individualism and instead to embark on a new path of sharing and solidarity."

The Letter closes with a reference to Our Lady, who accompanies us "on the journey of welcoming the Word of God," teaching us the joy of those who listen to that Word – and keep it.

With thanks to **Vatican News**, where this article originally appeared.

## 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.**

### 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](mailto:youth@john23rd.com.au).**

### CRL (Community of the Risen Lord)

**When:** 3rd Sunday  
Praise & Worship

**Time:** 4.00pm to 5.30pm

### YFC (Youth for Christ)

**When:** 3rd Sundays of the month

✉ For all youth ministry enquiries, email us at [youth@john23rd.com](mailto:youth@john23rd.com)



## Kids' Corner



How many words can you make from the letters in the words MUSTARD SEED?

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

Bigger
duty
faith
meal
mulberry
ocean
roots

Seed
servants
sheep
tree
welcome

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**Thursday at 7:00pm**

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contact Madeline Huang  
[cakeangels.stjohn23@gmail.com](mailto:cakeangels.stjohn23@gmail.com)

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SJ 23

**BLAZE**  
YOUTH GROUP