

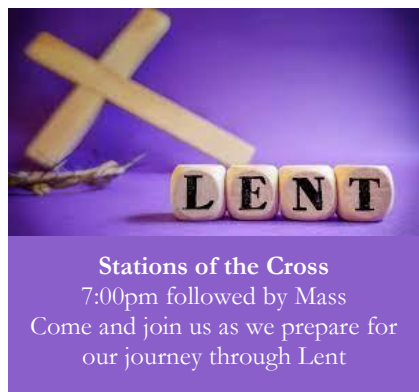
Welcome to the community of the Catholic Parish of St John 23rd Glenwood-Stanhope Gardens where the love of Christ is shining in so many ways.

The first reading (Gen 9:8-15), an excerpt from the Noah story, points to a mythological explanation of a cosmological feature: the rainbow. That explanation is located within another mythological story about a catastrophic flood. These are among the characteristics of primitive mythologies, such as we find in Aboriginal Dreamtime stories. They often bear testimony to prehistoric earth-shaping events, such as volcanic activity, that we relative newcomers to this continent are surprised to learn about since we find it hard to imagine the land having been anything other than as we have found it. Such stories may also bear testimony to creatures long lost to extinction that we newer comers think predate human presence. The Aboriginal stories remember.

But the other characteristic of mythologies is inventive explanation for various cosmological observations, such as why frogs croak, why the moon changes, and why rainbows appear. The Noah story, along with related myths from the area of Asia Minor, appear to testify to a cataclysmic flood that was, as such events usually were, explained as a divine punishment inflicted on the world for some imagined wrongdoing. Though we now eschew such explanations they do express an understanding of the place of humans within the world—humans are not separate from the world, and the world bears the consequences of human actions. In the Noah story, the covenant is not only for humankind but for all creatures. The wondrous rainbow that is visible to all creatures with the eyes to see it is explained as the sign to recall the covenant; never again will a flood be sent to destroy all flesh. The purpose for including this story in the Lenten cycle is to evoke the later Christian interpretation of this flood as pointing symbolically to baptism; just as sin was washed from the earth by the flood, so too in baptism sin is washed from the spiritual landscape of the heart.

The second reading is our earliest testimony to Christian use of this Noah story to understand baptism. It introduces the peculiar word, “type”, used to indicate a biblical event that was later understood to have prefigured or symbolically predicted what was to come later and was openly revealed by Christ. It actually uses the Noah story not only to refer to the absolution of baptism, but also to explain how the Christ event saves those who came beforehand. In this view of the world, all things and all times are woven as one so that later events affect prior ones, and what affects one may affect all. It points to a cosmological understanding of the salvific work of Christ, and to a worldview in which humans are not separate or abstracted from the world; sin and salvation are expressed and manifested in the very stuff of creation. This worldview is hard for modern Western people to grasp at times because we have come to see ourselves as separate from and above the world; we live much of our time in our minds instead of in the world. But trying in a homily to open people to this understanding would also be a heady exercise, one that would fail with most people. We can still seek to remind congregations that things have several layers of meaning, that things reveal something of our place in the world, and that God is encountered in the material world—which is at the heart of our sacramental system.

In the gospel acclamation today we hear that “No one lives on bread alone”, or in the Communion antiphon that “One does not live by bread alone”, and they go on to say “but on/by every word that comes (forth) from the mouth of God.” But what is bread? Something you eat? Yes, yet more: it is fruit of the earth and work of human hands. To eat it is to eat the earth and to honour the work of other people. So too with wine, so too with oil, and candles, and everything we use— even water that is collected and piped. And when we are conscious of the earth and of all things coming forth by the creative power of God, then we remember that it is by God we are and live.



Stations of the Cross
7:00pm followed by Mass
Come and join us as we prepare for
our journey through Lent

Church Painting and Repair of the Cracked Ceiling

There is a great need to repair the cracked ceiling and repaint the interior and external of our church.

We have received a number of quotes and the best option is selected. The total cost of the project is \$30,000.

We have raised 10% of the total cost; the Cake Angels have raised \$1,993.00 and another \$1,020 from other raised funds. This totals to \$3,013. We need to raise a further \$27,000.

This is critical so as to prevent bigger damage to the church and it will have a better appearance.

If you are able to assist with a big or small contributions, it will be greatly appreciated.

Fr. Jolly

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."

Mass Times

Mon	8:30am
Tues-Fri	9:15am
Sat	9.00am, 6pm Vigil
Sun	7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, 6pm
Holy Cross Primary School	
Thurs	9:15am during school days

Masses of Devotion

1st Tues	7.30pm Novena Mass <i>Our Lady of Perpetual Help</i>
1st Fri	7:30pm Novena Mass <i>Sacred Heart of Jesus</i>

Exposition + Benediction

1st Fri	after 9.15am 7.30pm
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Reconciliation

After the weekday masses	
Sat	after the 9am mass until 10.30am 5:15 - 5:45pm before the Vigil Mass or upon request

Sacraments

Sun	12pm Baptism by appointment
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Prayers

Mon	7.30pm Christian Meditation <i>Frances Pegram 0417 406715</i>
Tue	7:00pm Rosary and novena prayers (<i>Church Tabernacle</i>)
Fri	6.30pm Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group <i>Pauline Camilleri 0407 417039</i>

Praise & Worship

Fri	7:30pm Risen Lord Comm
3rd Sat	7:30pm SJ23rd Prayer Grp

Special Blessings

Blessing during masses	
1st Sun	Birthday celebrants
3rd Sun	Couple's Wedding anniversary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Catholic Parish of St John XXIII and the Diocese of Parramatta sits, the land of the Darug and Gundungurra people. We would like to pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders past, present and future for they hold the traditions, memories and wisdom of Mother Earth on which we place our feet upon today.

Entrance Antiphon

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

First Reading

A reading from the book of Genesis 9:8-15

I will recall the covenant between myself and you ... the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: nothing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31:1-2, 5, 11

R. Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths. Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour.

R.

Remember your mercy, Lord, and the love you have shown from of old. In your love remember me, because of your goodness, O Lord. **R.**

The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray, he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor. **R.**

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of St Peter 3:18-22

The water of the flood is a type of the baptism which saves you now.

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 4:4

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 1:12-15

He was tempted by Satan, and the angels looked after him.

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Communion Antiphon

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will trust.



Special Intentions

Recently Deceased:

Charlie Cutajar, Mario Ackermans

Anniversary:

Vences Fernando, Warlito Leonardo,
Gertrude Silva, David Kisnorbo, Max Cerdor

Deceased:

Mary TJ Nelson

Sick: Names published with permission.

Lord Jesus, heal me. Heal in me whatever You see needs healing. Heal me of whatever might separate me from You. Heal my memory, heal my heart, heal my emotions, heal my spirit, heal my body, heal my soul. Lay Your hands now gently upon me and heal me through Your love for me. Amen.

Stella Drummond, Jovita Castillo, John Tipton
Geoffrey Robinson, Wally Atie, Cindy Dadivas
Isagani Ocampo, Marilyn Nalapo, Helen West,
Obet Dionisio, Emma Q. Fernando, Fr Joseph
Cesar De Jesus, Virginia Santos, Theda Ojastro
Gil Dormido, Jennifer Estrada, Emma Matoza
Louise Smith, Paco Matias, Ben&Etta Benesa,
Cristina Arceo, Cathie Christie, Jackson Canlas
Perla Magculang, Anna Sebastian, Elsie Knapp
Peter McArdle, Victor Pons, Jonathan Gemin,
Christina Properzi, Bev Lewis, Matteazi Family
Virgie Villanueva, Adrian Gould, Manuel Sarris
Barbara Thompson Charlie Busuttil, Pat Daly,
Raymond Lanzona, Ksenija Bosnic, Zoey Illic
Lenka Olivier Talija, Dudley Francis, Jo Daly,
Valeria Laureta, John Pellissery, Maria Romeo,
Gloria Bueno, Florentina Elisura, Hilary Regan
Jerry Bondoc, Rosamma Elizabeth Langley,
Dr Bronwyn Andrews, Jakov & Marija Franich
Carrie Conolly, Peter Dawson Jovita Castillo,
Elizabeth Candame, Susanne Krajancic

Thanksgiving:

Josephine Apap

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

PRAYING in the SILENCE of the HEART

Breath of the Love of God, Holy Spirit,
At times we are quite taken aback to discover
how close you are to us.

To each one you say: surrender yourself very
simply in God; your little faith is enough.

Brother Roger of Taizé

February Church Calendar

Mon	19	8:30am - Mass
Tues	20	9:15am - Mass 7:30pm - Novena Mass to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	21	9:15am - Mass
Thurs	22	The Chair of Saint Peter (F) 9:15am - Mass
Fri	23	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm—Station of the Cross Followed by Mass
Sat	24	9:15am - Mass 6:00pm - Vigil Mass
Sun	25	7:30, 9:00, 10:30am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass

Praying together

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Prayer

O Mother of Perpetual Help, grant that I may ever invoke your powerful name, the protection of the living and the salvation of the dying. Purest Mary, let your name henceforth be ever on my lips. Delay not, Blessed Lady, to rescue me whenever I call on you. In my temptations, in my needs, I will never cease to call on you, ever repeating your sacred name, Mary, Mary. What a consolation, what sweetness, what confidence fills my soul when I utter your sacred name or even only think of you! I thank the Lord for having given you so sweet, so powerful, so lovely a name. But I will not be content with merely uttering your name. Let my love for you prompt me ever to hail you Mother of Perpetual Help. Mother of Perpetual Help, pray for me and grant me the favour I confidently ask of you. (Then say three Hail Marys).



Novena mass - 7:30pm every First Tuesday

Join us for rosary and novena prayers every Tuesday, 7:00pm

For the opportunity of having the statue of Our Lady visit your home, please contact Bart Sarlabus bart.sarlabus@gmail.com or Melva Paguinto emcipi85@yahoo.com.au.

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

You may invite either Fr Jolly or Fr Zvonimir to join you in prayers at home.

Please organise with the parish office.

Rosary Statue Family Roster

Feb	6	13	20	27	
	Gan	Ring	Tina B	Meena	
Mar	5	12	19	26	
	Cruz	Dennis	Jacob	Shalini	
Apr	2	9	16	23	30
	Festejo	Vasram	Sebastian	Ring	Lali
May	7	14	21	28	
	Shalini	Sebastian	Shanti	Gan	
Jun	4	11	18	25	
	available	available	available	available	

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

ALPHA PROGRAM

- ? Looking for a welcoming space to ask your life and faith questions?
- ? Interested in meeting other people in the parish?
- ? Want a space where you can invite your family and friends into the parish community?

St John XXIII's Alpha program is a great next step for you! We meet weekly, always with food, lots of laughter and wholesome life and faith conversation!
For program schedule or to express your interest, contact Mei and Donnie on



0432 042140 or fill up the form or scan the QR code

<https://forms.gle/sdEMryVw>

Looking forward to meeting you ☺

Sound System

Many of you have asked us about the progress of our Sound System. We want to assure you it is on it's way. We are still waiting for the final details of the AV, technicians and their availability and date.

Let us be patient. We believe it won't be long.

Finance Committee

Paying our debt together

We are very grateful to all our parishioners who always generously support our Parish.

FIRST COLLECTION supports the priests and deacons of the Diocese.
SECOND COLLECTION goes to the running costs of our church, ministry expenses and specially to pay off our church mortgage.
A Planned giving Program is in place to help with the planning/budgeting of church expenses. The Parish Finance Committee encourages parishioners to register for direct debit or credit card deductions instead of the envelope system. An SJ23rd registration form is available at the church foyer or from the website.

Parishioners who want to make a financial contribution are encouraged to use the TapnGo machines by the entrances or online via BPoint.

scan the QR code



Pastoral Ministries

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. Mahatma Gandhi
We are in urgent need for volunteers to assist in the different pastoral ministries in our Parish.



WE NEED YOU

⇒ SRE Teachers

If you could spare an hour during weekdays to spread God's word teaching the scriptures to children, **WE NEED YOU**. We currently have 4 public primary schools and a high school in our parish where we hold scripture classes during school hours for 30 minutes during Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. For more information please call Asoki 0430 020265 or Renuka 0414 795814. Training and resources will be provided.

⇒ GARDENERS AND CLEANERS

Now that the church is open for celebrations, its floors need to be swept of dust, cobwebs brushed off, candle stands cleaned and garden kept green. We would like to request all our volunteer cleaners and gardeners to come back and continue their ministry. For more information contact maintenance@john23rd.org.au or the parish office.

⇒ MUSIC MINISTRY

If your passion is music and are interested to assist with the music ministry, you are most welcome to join and make our liturgy celebrations more alive.

Please contact Neil Mascarenhas, our music ministry coordinator via email neil.mas@gmail.com



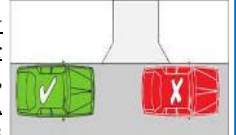
John McCabe
Karen Green
Julian Martin
Suni Fernando

Mei Velasco
Ajith Lobo
Helen Festejo
Rebecca Reynolds

DRIVEWAY/CARPARK SAFETY

For everyone's safety, please park at least 1.8 meters from the church's driveway entrance.

Your parked vehicle must not block the flow of traffic or impair the vision of other drivers getting into or out of the parking lot, basically impeding vehicles from entering, exiting or turning into or from the church's driveway.



Vehicle safety is more than just staying alert when parking your car. Let us not become a danger to other road users.

Remember to please always use the footpath on both sides of the church car park when walking around the church parking lot, again for safety reasons.

Please make sure when you come to Mass, let us consider our neighbours. Do not block the neighbours' driveway.



GOD LOVES US ALL!

Be inspired and liven up your spirit through Lanni Fides Books

Book 1: ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD THROUGH DREAMS AND VISIONS - author's testimonials of God's messages in sleep.

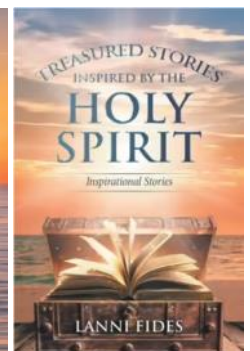
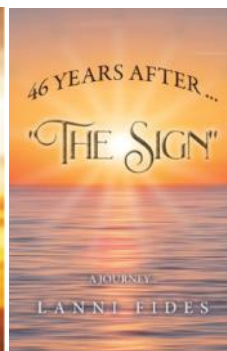
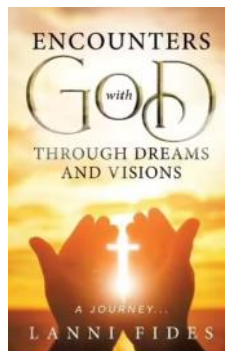
Book 2: 46 YEARS AFTER ... "THE SIGN" - author's remarkable revelation of her inspiring life story on faith, love, marriage, family, and purpose in life.

Book 3: TREASURED STORIES INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT - inspirational stories of 22 different people in all walks of life, who experienced God's loving hands.

"Nihil Obstat" Published with Ecclesiastical Approval by Fr Wim Hoekstra, Censor Deputatus, Diocese of Parramatta

Now on sale at amazon.com.au / search lanni fides books or order directly from the author via email on lynpanqi@outlook.com. Only books 1 & 2 are in her stock, first come, first served basis applies.

Cost/book \$20. A portion of sales goes to Parish SS Project. Author's website: www.lannifides.com.au



FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

If you wish to donate flowers for the altar, please phone James David on 0413 787 596



We still have aprons for sale \$30.00
Please contact Techie on 0438 201436 or the parish office for orders.
Proceeds goes to our church funds



COLUMBARIUM

For our parishioners who are planning to buy a Niche, do so without delay, because we always want to prioritise members of our parish who wish to buy the Niches.

For further information please contact the Parish Office.

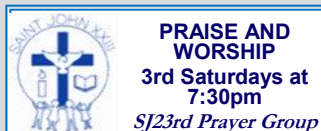
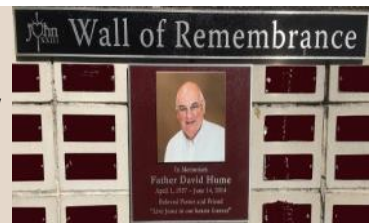


MEMORIAL WALL

The wall in front of the church is devoted to the memory of our deceased family and friends, especially if they are buried overseas.

For any enquiries please email columbarium@john23rd.org.au

The plaques cost \$500.00



Community Events



Building our Community
TOGETHER

We are organizing some mini events to contribute to our much needed church funds but **most especially** to boost our parish community engagements. It's about time to get together, know each other and begin to build up our Parish Community of St John 23rd.

We invite our different cultural community to host a Saturday Vigil or Sunday mornings mini event after our mass celebrations for a full community involvement. We encourage our parish community to support these mini endeavours.

Any other suggestions for church fanfare, activities or just availability of support are most welcome and greatly appreciated. Please contact either Nanette - 0404 465600 or Techie - 0439 201436.

**JOIN US,
ENJOY WITH US
UPCOMING
EVENT/S
Save the dates in
your diary**



Thank you, our parishioners, once again for your unending support of our Cake Angels stall.

Of course, a very special gratitude goes out to our organizers and contributors of the yummy treats. What a great group effort in helping to raise \$1,993.50 for our church.

Again, thank you to all who have supported the first 2024 fundraiser. We are so blest to have a caring and supportive community here at Saint John 23rd Parish.

TO THE SENIORS OF OUR PARISH

Come and join! "Young at Hearts Seniors Club" invites you to join in a special presentation on **"Demystifying Dementia"** led by Donna Ward, Community Engagement and program Director, Group Homes Australia (GHA), who will be sharing valuable insights and a deeper understanding of dementia.

You'll also learn how to reduce risk factors and gain practical tips and strategies to support your loved ones and others in the Community to live well with dementia.

Following mass and morning tea,

WHEN: Wednesday 20th March 10.15am-11.30am

WHERE: Catholic Parish of St John 23rd

To register your interest, (after the 16th of February) please contact either Frank 0459 504625 email frank.coleiro@gmail.com or Trevor on 0407 150399



St John XXIII Parish Retreat

Theme: "Enlighten our spirit and renew our love" based on the Gospel reading, John 3:14-21

Dates:

Friday, 8 March starting at 7pm (includes Stations of the Cross, First Friday Mass and Reflection)

Saturday, 9 March starting at 10am, concluding at 5pm

Guest speakers for the retreat will include:

Sr Katherine from the MGL Sisters,

Colin Calmiano from Bangalore and

Alison from Parramatta Diocese, Mission Enhancement Team.

To register your attendance please RSVP at <https://qrco.de/sj23retreat> or scan the QR code



YOUTH MINISTRY

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



For all youth ministry enquiries

✉ blaze@john23rd.org.au

Follow us

www.facebook.com/blazeyouthsj23/

<https://www.instagram.com/blazeyouthsj23/>

REGISTRATION FORM

BLAZE youth group is an initiative from Stanhope Parish to encourage community amongst the youth. It is a space for encouragement and open faith talk. Our sessions focus on one relevant theme each term. We start the night with casual conversation and dinner followed by games and then a faith-based talk, concluding with a discussion.

We encourage all youth from Year 7 to Year 12 to join in on the fun, meet like-minded people and gain a deeper understanding of their faith.

Sessions run from 7pm to 9pm every second Friday throughout the school term at St John XXIII College, C block.

If you would like to come along to one of our sessions, please contact the team at blaze@john23rd.org.au

OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

Catholic Early Learning Centre

160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens

☎ (02) 9852 0585

✉ celcstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au

🌐 www.celcstanhope.catholic.edu.au

Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Louise O'Donnell

☎ (02) 8664 7100

✉ holycross@parra.catholic.edu.au

🌐 www.hcglenwood.catholic.edu.au

St John XXIII Catholic College

160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens

Principal: Dr Peter Webster

☎ (02) 9852 0500

✉ stmarks@parra.catholic.edu.au

🌐 www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au

MORE YOUTH GROUPS

CRL (Community of the Risen Lord)

Rojith de Silva
0405 9563210

Nimeshi Fernando
0417 101009

YFC (Youth for Christ)

Vince Erasmo (International)
0406 253698

Jonathan Montaos (Australia)
0401 478733

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross, Via Crucis, and Via Dolorosa (Latin for Way of Sorrows), is a devotion that reflects on Jesus' final days on Earth—from being condemned to death to dying on the cross and being placed in the tomb. The Stations of the Cross consist of a series of 14 artistic renderings that typically line the interior walls of every Catholic Church. These illustrations capture key moments during Jesus' journey to His death on Good Friday. It's often said that you must walk a mile in someone's shoes to understand what they are going through. The goal of this devotion is to "walk" in Jesus' shoes by praying and meditating on each of the events (stations) that Jesus experienced.

History of the Stations of the Cross

The history of the Stations of the Cross dates back to the 4th century when Christians were allowed to legally practice their faith in the Roman Empire after 250 years of persecution. In 335 AD, Emperor Constantine built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at what is believed to be Jesus' burial site. Soon after, worshippers began taking pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to the church on Good Fridays to retrace the final journey of Jesus.

Pilgrims developed stops along the way to Calvary to note specific events that took place (Jesus falls the first time; Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem, etc.) Pilgrims could only guess where some of the incidents took place because Jerusalem had been almost completely destroyed by Roman armies in 70 AD.

The practice of incorporating artistic renderings of the Stations of the Cross in churches didn't begin until around 1686, when Pope Innocent XI allowed Franciscan friars to adorn their churches with the different stations. In 1731, Pope Clement XII allowed all churches to have stations and to practice this devotion.

The Stations of the Cross are typically practiced on Fridays during the Lenten season, but can be performed any time of year at home.

What Do We Get From Praying the Stations of the Cross?

The Stations of the Cross continue to be a vital Catholic devotion 1,681 years later and counting, and according to Pope Francis, there are many reasons why praying the Stations of the Cross matters.

They involve us in the story

"How many people were with Jesus on the way to Calvary: Pilate, Simon of Cyrene, Mary, the women? Sometimes we can be like Pilate, who did not have the courage to go against the tide to save Jesus' life, and instead washed his hands...The Cross of Christ teaches us to be like Simon of Cyrene, who helped Jesus to carry that heavy wood; it teaches us to be like Mary and the other women, who were not afraid to accompany Jesus. Who are you like? Like Pilate? Like Simon? Like Mary?"

They allow us to place our trust in Him

"The Cross of Christ contains all the love of God, His immeasurable mercy. This is a love in which we can place all our trust, in which we can believe...let us bring to Christ's Cross our joys, our sufferings and our failures. There we will find a Heart that is open to us and understands us, forgives us, loves us, and calls us to bear this love in our lives, to love each person, each brother and sister, with the same love."

They remind us God triumphs over all evil

"With Him, evil, suffering, and death do not have the last word, because He gives us hope and life: He has transformed the Cross from an instrument of hate, defeat, and death into a sign of love, victory, and life."

They show us how much God loves us

"It (the Cross) gives us a treasure that no one else can give: the certainty of the unshakable love which God has for us. A love so great that it enters into our sin and forgives it, enters into our suffering and gives us the strength to bear it." St. Paul put it best in his letter to the Romans, "you might sacrifice your life for someone who was good or just. Yet, Christ sacrificed His life while we were sinners for our salvation." (Romans 5:7-8)

Jesus led by example and the Stations of the Cross are one of the great many tools for living Jesus leaves for us. By meditating on each of the stations we increase both our sorrow for our sins against God and our need for His help in bearing our own crosses. When we meditate on the Stations of the Cross, we can learn the true meaning of love, perseverance, obedience, humility, and patience.

<https://www.catholicfaithstore.com/daily-bread/what-are-the-stations-of-the-cross/>

What are the Stations of the Cross?

Station 1: Jesus is condemned.

Consider how Pilate condemned the innocent Jesus to death, and how my Redeemer submitted to this sentence, to free me from the sentence of everlasting death.

Station 2: Jesus receives the cross.

Consider how Jesus took the cross upon His shoulders, which my many sins made so heavy.

Station 3: Jesus falls for the first time.

Consider how Jesus, overcome by weariness and pain, fell to the ground under the weight of the cross.

Station 4: Jesus meets his mother.

Consider the anguish which filled the hearts of Jesus and Mary at this sorrowful meeting. It is my sin which caused the Son and the Mother of this pain.

Station 5: Simon helps Jesus carry the cross.

Consider how His enemies, seeing that he was no longer able to drag his cross, compelled Simon of Cyrene to carry it after him.

Station 6: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

Consider how this woman tried to lessen the sufferings of Jesus, and how he rewarded her by leaving the print of his Sacred face on the towel she had in her hands.

Station 7: Jesus falls the second time.

Consider the sufferings Jesus endures in this second fall. I have been the cause of them, by my frequent relapses into sin.

Station 8: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.

Consider how Jesus exhorts these women to weep, not for Him but for themselves; teach me to weep more for my sins than for His sufferings.

Station 9: Jesus falls the third time.

Consider how Jesus falls the third time, enduring excruciating pain, to atone for my obstinacy in continually committing new sins.

Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his clothing.

Consider the shame Jesus endured in being stripped of his garments, and the bitterness of the wine mixed with myrrh and gall, which they caused Him to drink. In this He atone for my immodesty and my intemperance in eating and drinking.

Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross.

Consider the dreadful suffering Jesus endured, when His enemies stretched His bleeding body and fastened it to the cross with nails through His sacred hands and feet.

Station 12: Jesus dies.

Consider how Jesus, after three hours of agony, dies on the cross for my salvation.

Station 13: Jesus is taken down from the cross.

Consider the grief of the Mother of God when she received in her arms the body of her divine son, all pale, covered with blood, and void of life.

Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb.

Consider how the most sacred body of Jesus was laid, with the greatest reverence, in the new grave prepared for it.



For more events please go to <https://parracatholic.org/connect/events/> or <https://catholicoutlook.org/>



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Celebrating Holy Week: Formation for Ministers of the Altar: 9 March

Celebrating Holy Week- a workshop for current Acolytes and Ministers at the Altar will be held on Saturday 9 March 2024, 9:30 – 3:00 PM by the Office for Worship at the Bede Heather Centre 1-5 Marion St Blacktown (formerly known as the IFM). To register or for more information, please contact lucy.woodbury@parracatholic.org or call 8838 3456 by 5 March 2024.

DATE: Saturday, 9 March

LOCATION: Bishop Bede Heather Centre 1-5 Marion St Blacktown

TIME: 9.30am

The FaithFeed - Friday, 15 March

Interested in live music + curious conversations + life & faith stories from those in their 20s, 30s 40s? Sign up for The FaithFeed, Friday 15 March 2024 – doors open 7pm with live music from 7:30PM.

[Click here to RSVP](#)

DATE: Friday, 15 March

LOCATION: Downstairs @ Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1-5 Marion Street, Blacktown

TIME: Doors open 7pm



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER GATHERING

Friday 1st March at 6pm,

St John XXIII Church, Stanhope Gardens, everyone is welcome.

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement that brings Christians of many traditions together to observe a common day of prayer each year. Through preparation and participation in the worship service, we can learn how our sisters of other countries, languages and cultures understand the Biblical passages in their context. We can hear their concerns and needs and can join in solidarity with them as we pray with and for them. In this way, it is possible to enrich our Christian faith as it grows deeper and broader in an international, ecumenical expression. For further details go to www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org.



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**Tuesday 12 March 2024
3:45PM – 5:15PM**

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Office Contacts

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(AH Emergency)

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✉ jolly@john23rd.org.au

☎ 0417 541 637 (emergency only)

Assistant Priest:

Fr Zvonimir Gavranovic

✉ Zvonimir@john23rd.org.au

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