

Cnr Perfection Ave & Bentwood Tce, Stanhope Gardens

<http://john23rd.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish/> www.instagram.com/sj23stanhope

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 festival mentioned in the opening of the gospel (*John 12:20-33*) had earlier (*11:55 and 12:1*) been specified as the Passover. John has a peculiar habit of repeating: a series of units is not always truly sequential chronologically but are perhaps different aspects of a single episode, often threaded together by key phrases that may appear in other episodes too. Sometimes the Lectionary brings them together. Thus last Sunday's phrase "the Son of Man must be lifted up" (*3:14*) reappears today as "when I am lifted up" (*12:28*) and will be heard on Tuesday this week in "when you have lifted up the Son of Man" (*8:28*), but a variant echo early in today's pericope—"for the Son of Man to be glorified"—belongs to the pattern of overlapping nuances of verbs offer, lift up, and glorify; see also the reflection for the Second Sunday of Lent B. The last arises again near the end of today's reading with the voice from heaven saying "I have glorified [it] and again shall glorify [it]." The interweaving does not stop there; whereas the other gospels (except Luke's story of the twelve year old Jesus) mention Passover only in the final scenes, reference to it threads throughout John. And in today's pericope John also places both an element akin to the voice from heaven that the others have only at his baptism and transfiguration, and an echo of Jesus' anguish that the others place in Gethsemane. Thus in his own way John weaves here the theophanies at the baptism and transfiguration to prelude that which will unfold, whereby the single grain "dies" in order to bear many more.

The second reading (*Heb 5:7-9*) fore-echoes the gospel's Gethsemane element, the prayer to be saved from death, so it is surprising that the Lectionary does not include the other link to the gospel, Hebrews 5:5, "So also Christ did not glorify himself to become high priest, but he who had said to him 'You are my Son ...'". Perhaps, however, it was to avoid the complication that would arise from the references to being "a priest in the order of Melchizedek" in v.6 and 10. Nonetheless, these two readings go hand in hand this Sunday to point to the approaching commemoration of Jesus' death, evoking as it does the old designation of Passiontide, which used to begin on this Sunday.

The first reading (*Jer 31:31-34*) takes us back instead to the giving of the Covenant during the Exodus, which we encountered two weeks ago. Jeremiah alludes to the Decalogue, carved in stone, but does so obliquely in indicating a new one will be put deep within the people's hearts, thus to be written in flesh. This fleshy image provides a tenuous link to the second reading's opening phrase, for although our Lectionary has "During his life on earth, Christ...", the Greek directly translates as "[He,] who in the days of his flesh..."; he who is the Word made flesh and thus already bears the Law in his heart "submitted... humbly" and "obey[ed] through suffering", in contrast to those Jeremiah mentioned who by disobedience broke the Covenant, but who will have the Law written on their hearts.

In the gospel there remains the odd business of the Greeks whose request to see Jesus leads to the soliloquy that seems to have nothing to do with them. Philip and Andrew, the two disciples with Greek names, have prior history in introducing others to Jesus: Andrew introduced Peter (*John 1:40-42*), and Philip introduced Nathanael (*1:43-51*). They are also the only two named with roles in the feeding of the 5,000 (*v.5-9 of 6:1-14*). Each time they appear together they are intermediaries. We come then to the crunch as these various threads are drawn together: in John's gospel Philip and Andrew are servants of Christ's presence, but he is the presence of the Father; when he is lifted up, he will draw all people to himself, with no need of intermediaries, with none to say to another "Learn to know the Lord!"

EASTER TRIDUUM MASS TIMES

22nd March 2nd Rite of Reconciliation 6pm Church

28th March Holy Thursday 7.30pm School hub

29th March Good Friday

Stations of the Cross 10am School grounds

Veneration of the Cross 3pm School hub

30th March Easter Vigil 7.30pm Church

31st March Easter Sunday
Regular mass times
7.30am 9am 10.30am 6pm

19th March - FEAST OF ST JOSEPH

There will be a special Mass at 7.30pm.
We encourage you to attend the Holy Mass.



Church Painting and Repairs



We are certain you all appreciate a clean newly painted, and all the cracks in the ceiling fixed in the Church. It has a better look now, including the toilets, sacristy and kitchen area. The total cost of the project is \$30,000. While we had the scissor lifts around we changed all the damaged or to be damaged fire sensors which was also a absolute necessity. We have so far raised 40% of the total cost, we need to raise the remaining 60% of the cost. Please continue your support, so we can pay the painters.

Thank you very much for your continued support.

Finance Committee & Maintenance

Visit the parish website and donate through BPOINT or scan the QR code for BPOINT.

Or via bank transfer:

Account name : Blessed John XXIII parish
BSB : 067 950 A/C : 00000313
Ref : SS (and your name)

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

Wed 9:15am during school days

Masses of Devotion

1st Tues 7.30pm Novena Mass
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
1st Fri 7.30pm Novena Mass
Sacred Heart of Jesus

Exposition + Benediction

1st Fri after 9.15am 7.30pm

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

Prayers

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

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

Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

First Reading

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are coming when I will make a new covenant with Israel and I will forgive their iniquity.

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks - since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 50:3-4, 12-15

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. **R.**

A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **R.**

Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me, that I may teach transgressors your ways and sinners may return to you. **R.**

Second Reading

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 5:7-9

He learnt to obey and became for all the source of eternal salvation.

During his life on earth, Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.



*'I have glorified it,
I will glorify it again.'*

Gospel Acclamation

John 12:26

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

If you serve me, follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, my servant will also be.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 312:20-30

If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest.

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!'

A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.'

People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.'

'Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.'

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Communion Antiphon

Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis



Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
Fast from worries and have trust in God.

Fast from complaints, contemplate simplicity.
Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
Fast from bitterness, fill your hearts with joy.
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate.
Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
Fast from word; be silent and listen.

Flora Paraan's Funeral 19th of March, at 11.30am.
Please include her in your prayers.

Special Intentions

Recently Deceased:

Flora Paraan, Kathy Hamori, Patrick Jones

Anniversary:

Clarence Duncan

Deceased:

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

Thanksgiving:

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*

Holy Spirit, consoling Spirit, receive our very simple prayer as we seek to entrust everything to you and to rejoice at what you accomplish in our souls.

Brother Roger of Taizé

March Church Calendar

Mon	18	<i>Saint Patrick (S)</i> 8:30am - Mass
Tues	19	<i>Saint Joseph (S)</i> 9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary and Novena prayer to Our Lady of Perpetual Help 7:30pm - Mass
Wed	20	9:15am - Mass
Thurs	21	9:15am - Mass
Fri	22	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Station of the Cross followed by Mass
Sat	23	9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Vigil Mass
Sun	24	<i>Palm Sunday</i> 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

Mar	5	12	19	26	
	<i>Cruz</i>	<i>Dennis</i>	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	
	Erasmus	<i>available</i>	<i>available</i>	<i>available</i>	
Jul	2	9	16	23	30
	<i>available</i>	Tangunan	<i>available</i>	<i>available</i>	<i>available</i>

"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/sdEMryVwvhUpNPnZ7>

Looking forward to meeting you ☺

St John 23rd RCIA Programme

This year our Parish is blessed to have 2 catechumens who are in their final weeks of preparation to be baptized in the Church.

Paula Prats, Hadi Yazdi

They will receive the other sacraments, together with **William Bokenham**, as we pray for them each day in their final preparation in the faith journey and for their families.

May they be strengthened and blessed with graces to grow in the knowledge and in faith.

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

FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

If you wish to donate flowers for the altar, please phone James David on 0413 787596



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

"Lent is a time to focus on prayer, to open our hearts and minds to God who loves us."

YOU are invited to experience God's Peace and Love by slowing down and reflecting in a small group each week.
EVERY FRIDAY EVENING at 7 pm at the Parish staff meeting room.
Call Pauline on 0407417039 for any inquiries.



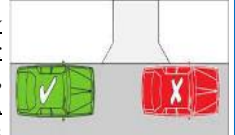
John McCabe
Karen Green
Julian Martin
Suni Fernando

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.

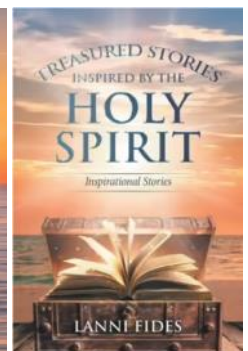
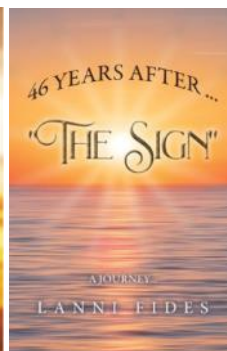
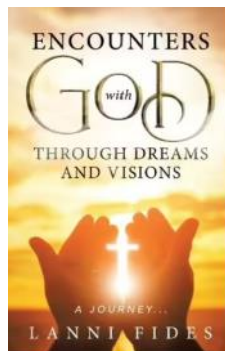
Book 2: 46 YEARS AFTER ... "THE SIGN" - author's remarkable revelation of her inspiring life story on faith, love, marriage, family, and purpose in life.

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 lynpangi@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



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.

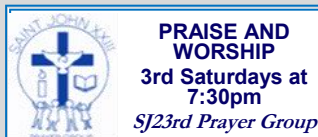
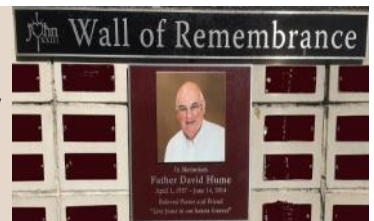
For further information please contact the Parish Office.

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



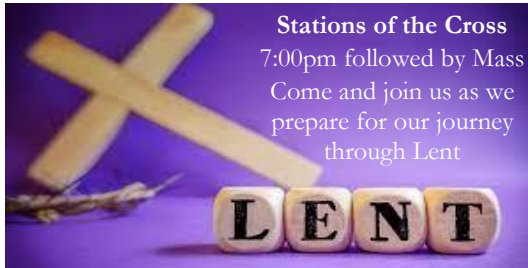
Building our Community
TOGETHER

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**



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

The Parish of SJ23rd would like to invite Parishioners interested to take part as an "Apostle" for the Washing of the Feet for the 7.30pm Holy Thursday mass celebration.

This will take place at the school Hub.

Please contact Frank by Monday the 25th March on 0459504625.



Stay With Me
Stay with me, remain here with me.
Watch and pray, watch and pray.

We are looking for volunteers to keep watch with the Lord during Holy Hour at the Altar of Repose on Holy Thursday for the hours between 9:00pm and midnight. Sign up sheets will be available at the church foyer from Saturday, 09 March for the hours of 9-10pm, 10-11pm, and 11pm to midnight. The last hour is the most important as the numbers tend to dwindle towards the end.

Matt: 26: 40 "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour."

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



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

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

Youth Coordinator	Asst Youth Coordinator	Youth Leaders		
Amanda Lee 0413 545 318	Caitlin Green 0425 579 594	Taylor Coutinho Natasja Surjanto Brendan Weber	Charlotte Todhunter Anna Todhunter	Johnathan Soosaipillai Earl Carvalho

MORE YOUTH GROUPS

CRL (Community of the Risen Lord)		YFC (Youth for Christ)	
Rojith de Silva 0405 9563210	Nimeshi Fernando 0417 101009	Vince Erasmo (International) 0406 253698	Jonathan Montaos (Australia) 0401 478733

Parish Retreat



RETREAT REFLECTION

Enlighten our Spirit - Renew Our Love was the theme of the parish retreat that concluded last weekend. When I signed up for the retreat, all I knew was that it was a parish retreat and being the season of lent, we as a family decided to attend the retreat over the course of 2 days. Friday started off with the way of the cross and Holy Mass. We were then introduced to the inspirational passage for the retreat - John 3: 14-21.

Personally for me it was the verse "Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God." (John 3: 20-21) that spoke to my heart. When we sin, by hiding away from God we continue to dwell in that darkness. Instead, we need to receive the light of Jesus and come out into the light by professing our sins and accepting the flowing grace of forgiveness that God gives to us through Jesus.

Cont'd 7



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



Do you find life & faith inspiration by listening to the experiences of others?

The Mission Enhancement Team's *Soul Food Podcast* features life & faith stories of people from our diocesan family. Listen now for FREE via our website or on Spotify: <https://pjparr.org.au/soulfood/>

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On Saturday, Sr Katherine Stone spoke to us about God's immeasurable love for us. Sr Katherine highlighted how in the Old Testament, God was looked upon as an authoritative father who is a law giver. But through Jesus, we see the true nature of God, how he is looking for an intimate relationship with us. And for those who have turned away, He is just looking and waiting with open arms for their return. As humans we have a desire to experience being loved, it is only then that we are able to love someone back.

This paved the path to the talk by Colin Calmiano, about how we share God's love to those around us and create a Christ centered community, "... because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5). The personal challenge I drew from this is, now that I am loved by God, and his love is within me, how do I show this love to those around me?

The closing talk by Alison Ryan was about how as Christians, we are Jesus' disciples and we are called to follow him passionately and learn from one another. Most importantly how we can take this light of Jesus out into our community to take our relationships to the next level by having that personal relationship with one another. In this world, we are God's hands, feet and eyes. Are we doing justice to this in the way we live? Alison also left this thought in my mind to ponder on "You know what you value by looking at where you spend your time and money".

In summary, we need to look into those dark places in our lives and accept and invite Christ to shine his light in our lives. Through Christ we learn about God's unconditional love for us. Once we experience this love, how do we share God's love that we have received in our lives with one another and be advocates for Jesus? The retreat was a good reflection for me personally as to how I could be involved in building a stronger church here at St John XXIII. A church is not the building but rather the people and the bonds that are created and sustained with one another. How do I start building this Christ focused community? Can I catch up with someone for a coffee? Or maybe there is someone who needs help with a meal this month? Or maybe it is as simple as praying together with someone?

~ Gillian Dass



CYP GOOD FRIDAY NIGHT WALK (29th March)

Dear Parents,

I hope you've been well! I wish to invite you to CYP's annual Good Friday Night Walk! This event is held every year and offers an opportunity for you and your family to reflect on Jesus' journey during the lead up to Holy Week and Easter alongside others. This pilgrimage invites you to walk from Blacktown to Parramatta, passing through many churches, where we will engage in music, reflection and prayer. It will be held on Good Friday, the 29th of March at 10pm and will end on the 30th of March at 7am. The BLAZE leaders will be attending this event and we encourage you and your children to join us! All details can be found here: <https://parracatholic.org/events/gfnw/>. If you would like to register, please do so on the link provided. We would love for you and your family to join us, and if you do, please let us know. We would love to walk alongside you as a community of St John XXIII Parish. If your children are attending alone, please let us know as well so we can look out for them and accompany them throughout the night. I strongly encourage you and your children to experience this heartfelt and moving pilgrimage. Let us honour the life of our Lord together, through sacrifice and companionship.

God Bless, *Amanda*

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