

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.

As with Good Friday, this morning's liturgy has fixed readings each year, but an alternative second reading is available. Peter's speech in the first reading (Acts 10:34,37-43) describes the Church's foundation in the witness of the apostles and others to the resurrection of Christ crucified, and its mission to proclaim forgiveness of sins through him. This expression "forgiveness of sin", proclaimed in the institution narrative at Mass, should not be too greatly restricted to a purely spiritual meaning since its Aramaic form also translates as "remission of debt/penalty". As the mystery of the Incarnation itself indicates, there is a worldly engagement in this mission that is not restricted to the purely spiritual realm of sin—as if that does not have some effect in the world. The Exodus story, so crucial to Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Passover, should remind us that salvation history includes freedom from worldly ills, just as the people were rescued from worldly oppression and slavery in Egypt. There is no clear division that permits the relegation of the Church's activity to the purely private arena of the heart and mind and soul; there is no clear division between the secular and the sacred. Rather, as with the Incarnation, the one is manifested in the other, the one is touched through the other. Paul appears to contradict this, but that is a misreading. Both options for the second reading have been misused by people, each ripped from context and at times enshrined as if they were absolute rules. Whether the Eucharist is celebrated with leavened or unleavened bread, we are to be on guard for the contamination of sins that affects life in this world, here and now. And the thoughts of heavenly things must guide what we do now, that God's will be done on earth as in heaven.

The four gospels differ in their lists of who went to the tomb on the Sunday morning, but in varying ways all include Mary of Magdala – an enigmatic character who appears in the gospels only at the crucifixion and the empty tomb, except by Luke who names her among the women who provided for Jesus and his disciples during the Galilea ministry (Luke 8:2-3). Luke also added that seven demons had gone out of her, and conflation of that with other episodes and the later confusion of the gospels' many Marys led Western imaginations to recast her as a prostitute or woman of ill-repute – which cannot be sustained by the gospels themselves.

Today's gospel (John 20:1-9) is John's version of the first events on the Sunday morning in which Mary of Magdala is first to learn that the body of Jesus has gone, but John at first omits any detail of her seeing the empty space; it is merely implied in her report "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb." John also omits direct reference to others being present, but they may be implied in her saying "we do not know where they have put him." This allows John to emphasise Mary via a repetition typical of his peculiar style, so in the next section, 20:11-18 (which is read on Tuesday morning), she does look into the tomb and she sees the place where the body had been, but, with no reference to the binding cloths we are told she sees two angels. The already cited parts of her report are then repeated, with the Lord becoming my Lord and we becoming I. Then on encountering Jesus incognito, when she sees him yet sees him not, these repeat again, they becoming both you in "where you have put him" and I in "I will take him". Recognition comes to here only when he calls her by name; although she had seen the tomb empty she did not yet believe, but she believes now because she heard him whom she then saw. This progress in John slowly intensifies the encounter, making it more truly personal. It ends with Mary being the first to announce the resurrection when what she says to the disciples changes from "They have taken him... we know not where they put him" to "I have seen the Lord." This Mary is addressed today in the peculiar hymn called a Sequence that is sung before the gospel. In it she testifies that she has seen the risen Lord, leading to our response that we too know "Christ is truly risen from the dead."

In the meantime, that is, between the two reports about Mary of Magdala, Peter is first to enter the tomb to verify it is empty, and he sees the abandoned cloths, but he is closely accompanied by the Beloved Disciple who observes that someone had taken the trouble to roll up the headcover by itself; he saw and believed—or perhaps that should be reinterpreted: he did not see, that is, he saw the body of Jesus was not there, and he believed. Thus John (and also Luke) show us Mary of Magdala and Peter at that initial moment of incomprehension between seeing and understanding, when the mind cannot reconcile the contradictions between what it sees and what it already knows. Mary is led to knowledge, but Peter's status is left unclear. Between them is the Beloved Disciple who simply sees and believes; in him the threads of seeing and believing that run through the gospel are drawn together. His disposition finds a counterpoint later in the day (read next Sunday) in Thomas who in not seeing does not believe, and only on seeing the risen body does he believe, whence Jesus says "Since you have seen me you have believed; blessed are they who saw not and believed." The whole story is charged with that almost playful use of repetitions and reversals typical of John: first, disciples enter the tomb with its door already opened, and beholding its emptiness believe; then, Jesus enters the room with its door still closed, and beholding his presence the disciples believe.

John gives a nuanced range of reactions among the disciples, including Mary of Magdala, who do not attain the same faith response to the resurrection, yet each does come to believe and all are witnesses to the resurrection. Peter's speech in the first reading (Acts 10:34,37-43) describes the Church's foundation in these witnesses and its mission to proclaim Christ to others that they too may come to believe in him and "have their sins forgiven through his name."



Easter Offertory

For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son
parracatholic.org/easter-offertory
Your gift supports our parish to share Christ's message of love and salvation with all

GIVE TO YOUR PARISH

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

The Lord is truly risen, alleluia. To him be glory and power for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 10:34, 37-43

We have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead.

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.' Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses - we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end. Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.' **R.**

The Lord's right hand has triumphed; his right hand raised me up. I shall not die, I shall live and recount his deeds. **R.**

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes. **R.**

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Colossians 3:1-4

Look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is.

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Sequence

Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer sacrifice and praise. The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb; and Christ, the undefiled, hath sinners to his Father reconciled. Death with life contended: combat strangely ended! Life's own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign. Tell us, Mary: say what thou didst see upon the way. The tomb the Living did enclose; I saw Christ's glory as he rose! The angels there attesting; shroud with grave-clothes resting. Christ, my hope, has risen: he goes before you into Galilee. That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know. Victorious king, thy mercy show!

Alleluia, alleluia!

Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with joy in the Lord. Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 20:1-9

The teaching of scripture is that he must rise from the dead.

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia; therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.



Special Intentions

Recently Deceased:

Flora Paraan

Anniversary:

Elizabeth Newnes

Deceased:

Luz Borromeo

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.

Lucas Colleta, 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, Ben&Etta Benesa, Jonathan Gemin, Cesar De Jesus, Victor Pons, Florentina Elisura, Virginia Santos, Bev Lewis, Gloria Bueno, Jack Canlas, Raymond Lanzona, Gil Dormido Cristina Arceo, Jennifer Estrada, Manuel Sarris, Virgie Villanueva, Elsie Knapp, Rosanna Elizabeth Langley, Christina Properzi Emma Matoza, Ksenija Bosnic, Maria Romeo, Cathie Christie, Matteazi Family, Hilary Regan, Dudley Francis, Carrie Conolly, Jovita Castillo, Peter Dawson, Wally Atie, Barbara Thompson, John Pellissery, Carlo Bueno, Perla Magculang, Anna Sebastian, Lenka Olivier Talija, Pat Daly Jo Daly, Charlie Busutil, Susanne Krajanic, Louise Smith, Jerry Bondoc, Valeria Laureta, Elizabeth Candame

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

Jesus, hope of our hearts, you dwell in us and by your Gospel you tell each one of us: "Fear not, I am with you."

Brother Roger of Taizé

April Church Calendar

Mon	1	8:30am - Mass
Tues	2	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary prayer 7:30pm - Novena mass to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	3	9:15am - Mass
Thurs	4	9:15am - Mass
Fri	5	9:15am - Mass 7:30pm - Novena Mass to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Sat	6	9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	7	Divine Mercy Sunday 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

	2	9	16	23	30
Apr	Festejo	Vasram	Sebastian	Ring	Lali
May	7	14	21	28	
	Shalini	Sebastian	Shanti	Gan	
Jun	4	11	18	25	
	Erasmus	available	available	available	
Jul	2	9	16	23	30
	available	Tangunan	available	available	available
Aug	6	13	20	27	
	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/sdEMryVwvhUpNPnZ7>

Looking forward to meeting you ☺

First Communion

Parent Information Night

There will be a parent information evening for anyone wishing to enroll their child in our First Communion Program on **Wednesday 10th April at 7pm** in the Church. This for any children from Year 4 and above.



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.

scan the QR code



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

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.



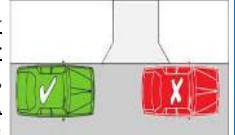
John McCabe
Karen Green
Julian Martin
Suni Fernando

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.

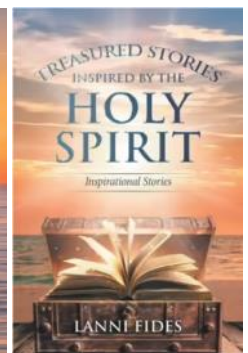
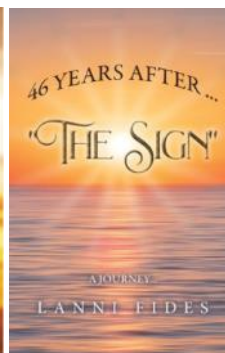
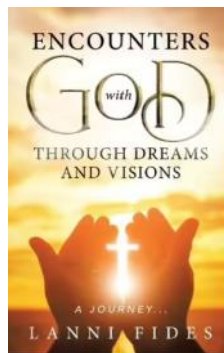
Book 2: 46 YEARS AFTER ... "THE SIGN" - author's remarkable revelation of her inspiring life story on faith, love, marriage, family, and purpose in life.

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 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



COLUMBARIUM

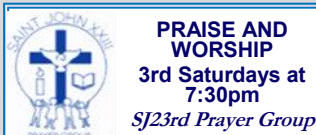
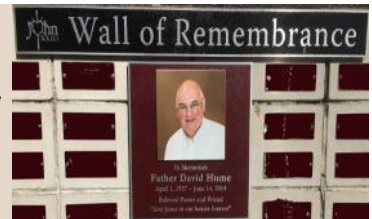
For our parishioners who are planning to buy a Niche, do so without delay, because we always want to prioritise members of our parish who wish to buy the Niches.

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 endeavour.

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**

THEY'RE BACK - INDONESIA SATAY

7TH APRIL after morning masses

The Indonesian Prayer Group is hosting a sumptuous Indonesian Food (Satay) on Sunday 7th April after 7.30am mass onwards.

Please support as funds raised will go to the church.



DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY WILL COMMENCE ON SUNDAY 7TH APRIL BETWEEN 4.30-5.30 PM FOLLOWED BY MASS



Young at Heart

The Young at Heart were very pleased with the attendance of about 35 seniors of our parish on the 20th of March at the Presentation on "Demystifying Dementia" by Donna Ward, Community Engagement and Program director of Group Homes Australia. The very interesting and informative talk covered several aspects of dementia in detail, effective strategies to prevent or at least dampen the condition in patients and valuable advice to carers of people with the condition. Concerns and questions of many were addressed and possible effective solutions suggested. The event was a pleasing success.

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

✉ celstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au

🌐 www.celstanhope.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.stjohn23.stanhope.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

What is Divine Mercy?

Divine Mercy, in General

Divine Mercy gets to the heart of Sacred Scripture. In fact, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners" (1849). Right there: That summarizes it. Divine Mercy is the Gospel. It's the good news. And so, it gets to the very center of our faith. Moreover, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "Divine Mercy is not a secondary devotion, but an integral dimension of Christian faith and prayer." Benedict even goes so far as to say, "[M]ercy is the central nucleus of the Gospel message."

Okay, so what is Divine Mercy? What is this thing that gets to the heart of Sacred Scripture and to the very center of our faith? To begin, mercy is "love's second name," as John Paul II said. It's a particular kind of love, a particular mode of love when it encounters suffering, poverty, brokenness, and sin. Divine Mercy is when God's love meets us and helps us in the midst of our suffering and sin. In fact, because this side of eternity we're all sinners and because suffering is our lot in life, God's love for us here always takes the form of mercy. It's always the Lord stepping out in compassion to help us poor, weak, and broken sinners. From our perspective, then, every good we receive is an expression Divine Mercy.

The Message of Divine Mercy

The message of Divine Mercy is something that's most associated with a Polish nun who died in 1938, about a year before the start of World War II. She's known today as St. Maria Faustina Kowalska. Saint Faustina was a mystic. In other words, she received extraordinary experiences of the Lord Jesus in prayer. In fact, Jesus appeared to her and even spoke with her.

Of course, Jesus didn't reveal some new Gospel when he appeared to St. Faustina. He already revealed everything He needed to say 2,000 years ago to the Apostles and through Sacred Scripture. So, why did He do it? Why did He appear to Faustina? Actually, why does He appear to any mystic for that matter?

God sometimes appears to mystics because He has a prophetic message for a particular time in history, and He uses particular men and women to share His message. Sometimes it's to remind us of something that's been forgotten. Sometimes it's a warning. At other times, it's a message of comfort. Or it may simply be a call to conversion. Whatever it is, it doesn't change the Bible. Rather, it brings us back to it at a certain time in history.

Okay, so what's the particular and important message that God wants to give to us in our modern time through St. Faustina? Simple. He wants to remind us of the heart of Sacred Scripture, namely, His mercy for us sinners. In fact, He's saying to us sinners, "Now is the time of mercy. Now is a time of extraordinary mercy! Now is a time when I want give especially great graces to the human race. I want to pour out My mercy in a big way."

Why would God say this? Why would He want to give such great graces in our time? Blessed John Paul II explained it best. First, he pointed out something we all know: namely, that there are all kinds of blessings in our contemporary society. For instance, modern technology has done so much to make life easier for us. Just think of e-mail, cell phones, smartphones, and air-conditioning. All these things are blessings. Yet, in the midst of these blessings and in some ways because of the very same advances in technology that brought them, John Paul would say that evil has a reach and power in our day like never before. Indeed, our time, sadly, is marked by unprecedented evil. Despite this, John Paul would also say, "Be not afraid." Why should we not be afraid? Because of what St. Paul writes in Romans, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (5:20). In other words, God is not outdone by evil. So, in a time of great evil, God wants to give even greater graces, and in our time, the graces are huge, precisely because there's so much sin.

<https://www.thedivinemercy.org/>

What is the Divine Mercy Chaplet?

The Origin of the Chaplet

In the 1930s, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina Kowalska, a humble and kind Polish nun, and revealed to her the depths of His mercy. St. Faustina entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in 1925, but she passed away just thirteen years later from tuberculosis in 1938. Throughout her life of holiness, she continually received revelations from Jesus and diligently wrote down what He told her in her diary. St. Faustina was canonized by St. (Pope) John Paul II on April 30, 2000.

In 1935, an angel appeared to St. Faustina, and she heard the call to pray for mercy. The next day, Christ appeared and urged her to pray the Chaplet herself and with others at the hour of death. She wrote down this revelation in her diary:

"Encourage souls to say the Chaplet which I have given you. Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death. When they say this Chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between My Father and the dying person, not as the just Judge but as the Merciful Savior. Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this Chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy. Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will."

St. Faustina's Diary

Praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet

The Divine Mercy Chaplet can be prayed with traditional Rosary beads, though to do so isn't necessary. The Chaplet only takes a few minutes, and thousands of Catholics around the world pray it every day to ask for God's mercy.

Why do we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet?

We pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for mercy — in our own lives and in our neighbors, too. And we also pray to remind ourselves that we must rely on God; we must recognize our weakness and replace our anxieties and worries with abounding trust in God. We pray so that we might honestly live out the words "Jesus, I trust in You."

"Those who sincerely say 'Jesus, I trust in You' will find comfort in all their anxieties and fears ... There is nothing more man needs than Divine Mercy — that love which is benevolent, which is compassionate, which raises man above his weakness to the infinite heights to the holiness of God."

Saint (Pope) John Paul II (Krakow, Poland – June 7, 1997)

When to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet?

You can pray the Chaplet at any time, but here are three times that are especially impactful when praying for God's mercy:

After Mass

The Divine Mercy is an intercessory prayer that extends the offering of the Eucharist, so it is especially appropriate to use it after receiving Holy Communion at Mass.

Before the Feast of Mercy

The Chaplet may be prayed at any time, but our Lord specifically told St. Faustina to recite it as a novena during the nine days before the Feast of Mercy (the first Sunday after Easter). He then added: "By this Novena, [of Chaplets] I will grant every possible grace to souls." (St. Faustina's Diary, 796)

At 3:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m. is known as the "hour of great mercy" in remembrance of Christ's death on the cross at 3:00 p.m. on Good Friday. Similarly, people often pray the Stations of the Cross at this time.

<https://ballow.com/blog/how-to-pray-divine-mercy-chaplet/>



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Holy Hour for Vocations

Please join the Diocesan Vocations Office and the young people of the Diocese of Parramatta to pray for Vocations. A Holy Hour will be led by the Blaze Youth of the parish, followed by a meal and fellowship.

Friday 19th April, starting **7pm** at St. John 23 Parish, Stanhope Gardens

All are welcome.

For more information, please call the Youth Leaders.

Daylight Saving Time Ends 7 April 2024

When local daylight time is about to reach

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clocks are turned backward 1 hour to

Sunday, 7 April 2024, 2:00:00 am local standard time instead



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



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Parramatta Way is to:

- ◆ Act with Justice, and state that we have a zero tolerance for any form of abuse or harm to children or any person
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