

**Cnr Perfection Ave & Bentwood Tce, Stanhope Gardens**

<http://john23rd.com/> | <https://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish/> | [www.instagram.com/sj23stanhope](http://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.

**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.

**Gospel Reflection**

The tempting of Jesus that unfolds in the post-baptismal retreat into the wilderness is the focus of the first Sunday in Lent every year. The accounts in Matthew, Mark and Luke all mention the Spirit, the wilderness, forty days, the tempter and temptations. Mark has no specifics concerning the temptations, while Matthew and Luke have the same three in variant orders. The reference to the forty days influenced the development of our Lent, and hence the account always marks its beginning. How exactly we may count the forty days has always been a quirky affair – and it still varies between the three major traditions of the Ambrosian, Roman and Byzantine rites. Examining the various calculation methods may prove for many people more effective in inducing sleep than mentally counting sheep. Suffice it say Lent is a significant penitential period marked by practices informed by excerpts from the Sermon on the Mount that were read on Ash Wednesday: fasting, praying, and almsgiving.

Another relevant count of forty is the post-Exodus number of years in the wilderness before the Hebrews entered the Promised Land. Our first reading (Deuteronomy 26:4-10) does not mention that period, but it stipulates the rite for offering the first fruits once the land was entered and cultivated. It recalls the history of oppression in Egypt, and the rescue by God; it acknowledges the presence of God with them in time of trouble. The response in the attached psalm picks up that idea, but the second and third stanzas contain the reference to the angels being charged with guarding and bearing that is misappropriated by the devil in Luke's third temptation. The changing voice in the psalm is a little confusing; the first stanza speaks about one who abides with God, the second and third speak to that person, and in the fourth God speaks, declaring the intention to save that person.

In the second reading Paul freely cites Deuteronomy 30:14, from Moses' exhortation shortly before the people are to cross the Jordan into Canaan to which they had journeyed for

forty years; he urged them to keep the Law so as to live. This citation is therefore associated with the first reading which is also from Deuteronomy, the whole of which work is placed at the end of the forty year journey and on the verge of entry to the Promised Land. Paul's citation closely follows the Hebrew, but it is also close to the proclamation of Jesus that Matthew and Mark report soon after his baptism as he begins his public ministry, "The Kingdom of Heaven/God is near". Paul, however, goes on to point out that "the word" is the faith we proclaim, the confession of Christ Jesus as Lord, crucified and risen. In this way Paul is surprisingly close to John acclaiming that Jesus is "the Word" amongst us in the flesh. But Paul is making another point; the full realisation of the utterance of Moses, "The word is very near to you", comes not by Hebrew descent and the reception of the Covenant's Law but with confession of Christ. In this way Jews and Gentiles are united in Jesus as they could not be under the Law.

Those who now begin the final journey to baptism, the catechumens, are preparing to confess Christ publicly, ritualised in the handing on of the Creed and in the act of baptism itself. The rites that accompanying them, the Scrutinies, are to strengthen them against the temptations that may lead them astray before completing that journey. The language of the prayers (sometimes lost in translation) recalls both the forces pursuing the people in their flight to the Red Sea, and the accompanying protective deeds of God. For those already baptised, it becomes a time to examine our own hearts and deeds, to better understand the temptations to which we fall prey. And we should take solace in the realisation that a temptation is not a sin; Jesus too was tempted, but he did not sin. Temptations are properly the subject of spiritual direction, the spiritual director in his or her wisdom drawing forth lessons from them; sins are properly the subject of the Sacrament of Penance and the recollection of God's mercy.

**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
- 2nd Sat** 7:30pm Indonesian Mass

**Masses of Devotion**

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

**Exposition + Benediction**

- 1<sup>st</sup> 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

**Special Blessings**

- Blessing during masses**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sun** Birthday celebrants
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun** Wedding anniversaries

For further updates on parish activities

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

If you want to be part of our mailing list please email

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

## CONTACTS

### PARISH OFFICE

#### Office Hours

Tue - Fri 8.30 - 4.00pm

#### Office Contacts

☎ (02) 8883 5981

(AH Emergency)

☎ 0434 033 326

160 Perfection Avenue,  
Stanhope Gardens NSW 2768

### MAILING

PO Box 23, Stanhope Gardens,  
NSW 2768

### CLERGY

#### Parish Priest:

Fr Jolly Chacko

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

☎ 0417 541 637 (emergency only)

#### Assistant Priest:

Fr Bartholomew Chukwu

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

### STAFF

#### Secretary:

Tanya Gatt

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

#### Finance:

Renuka Soosaipillai

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

#### Sacramental Coordinator:

Helen Zammit

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

### OTHER CONTACTS

#### Parish Council:

John McCabe

✉ [johnmccabe5@gmail.com](mailto:johnmccabe5@gmail.com)

#### Maintenance issues:

David Gorkic

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

#### Columbarium queries:

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

### Never miss our Bulletin

If you would like to be included in  
our mailing list

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

### NEW TO OUR PARISH?

Welcome to our parish  
community!

Please take a welcome pack from  
the church foyer

Visit our website

<http://john23rd.com/>

Like our Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/john23rdparish](http://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish)

### COELIACS

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

### HOMEBOUND

Homebound and would like to  
receive Holy Communion please  
contact the parish office or send  
text message to Rose Franco on  
0401 387427



Office for Safeguarding  
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

◆ Act with justice and ensure that  
laws and obligations are upheld,  
and safety is paramount  
<https://safeguarding.org.au/>

## Praying together

*Praying together provides a lot of benefits like strengthening our faith and uniting hearts in our community. Join us and enrich your faith and let the Holy Spirit come to you.*

### NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

#### Our Lady of Perpetual Help Prayer

*O Mother of Perpetual Help, grant that I may ever invoke thy most powerful name, which is the safeguard of the living and the salvation of the dying. O Purest Mary, O Sweetest Mary, let thy name henceforth be ever on my lips. Delay not, O Blessed Lady, to help me whenever I call on thee, for, in all my needs, in all my temptations I shall never cease to call on thee, ever repeating thy sacred name, Mary, Mary.*

*O what consolation, what sweetness, what confidence, what emotion fill my soul when I pronounce thy sacred name, or even only think of thee. I thank God for having given thee, for my good, so sweet, so powerful, so lovely a name. But I will not be content with merely pronouncing thy name: let my love for thee prompt me ever to hail thee, Mother of Perpetual Help. (Then say three Hail Marys).*



Rosary and novena prayers  
every Tuesday at 7:00PM and  
Novena mass every  
First Tuesday 7:30pm

please contact either

Techie Sarlabus [techie.sarlabus@gmail.com](mailto:techie.sarlabus@gmail.com) or  
Melva Paguinto [emcipi85@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emcipi85@yahoo.com.au)

for the opportunity of having the statue of Our  
Lady visit your home, and be included in a roster  
below.

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

If you would like to invite Fr Jolly or Fr Menard to  
join you in prayers at home, please organise with  
the parish office.

### Rosary Statue Family Roster

	4	11	18	25	
Mar	Paguinto	Hala	Lali	Barnouti	
Apr	1	8	15	22	29
	Deang	Ring	Sebastian	Shalini	Jacob
May	6	13	20	27	
	Dennis	Sebastian	Ruggiero	Available	
June	3	10	17	24	
	Available	Available	Ruggiero	Available	
Jul	1	8	15	22	29
	Available	Available	Ruggiero	Available	Available

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

### HOLY HOUR

Spend an hour in prayer and meditation with  
the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Eucharistic Adoration every Wednesday  
at 8:00PM



### NOVENA TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Novena Mass to Our Sacred Heart of Jesus  
every first Friday of each month at 7:30PM  
with exposition and adoration of the  
Blessed Sacrament.

### PRAYING in the SILENCE of the HEART

*with Brother Roger of Taizé*

Holy Spirit, filling the universe,  
as a breath of silence you tell  
each of us: "Be afraid of nothing.

Deep within you in the  
presence of God; seek, and you  
will find."

## 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.

To help with the planning/budgeting of church expenses, we have a Planned Giving Program. We encourage parishioners to register for direct debit or credit card deductions as alternative to an envelope system. Support can be provided via the registration forms are available at the church foyer or from the website or scan the QR Code.

scan this



TapnGo machines available by the entrances.

## OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

### Ambrose Early Learning

160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens

☎ (02) 9852 0585

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

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

### Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Attila Lendvai

☎ (02) 8664 7100

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

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

### St John XXIII Catholic College

160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens

Principal: Frank Chiment

☎ (02) 9852 0500

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

🌐 [www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au)

### 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

*Deuteronomy 26:4-10*

*The confession of faith of the elect.*

Moses said to the people: "The priest shall take the pannier from your hand and lay it before the altar of the Lord your God. Then, in the sight of the Lord your God, you must make this pronouncement:

"My father was a wandering Aramaean. He went down into Egypt to find refuge there, few in numbers; but there he became a nation, great, mighty, and strong. The Egyptians ill-treated us, they gave us no peace and inflicted harsh slavery on us. But we called on the Lord, the God of our fathers. The Lord heard our voice and saw our misery, our toil and our oppression; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. He brought us here and gave us this land, a land where milk and honey flow. Here then I bring the first-fruits of the produce of the soil that you, Lord, have given me." You must then lay them before the Lord your God, and bow down in the sight of the Lord your God.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

*Ps 90:1-2, 10-15*

**R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.**

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High and abides in the shade of the Almighty says to the Lord: 'My refuge, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!' **R.**

Upon you no evil shall fall, no plague approach where you dwell. For you has he commanded his angels, to keep you in all your ways.

**R.**

They shall bear you upon their hands lest you strike your foot against a stone. On the lion and the viper you will tread and trample the young lion and the dragon. **R.**

His love he set on me, so I will rescue him; protect him for he knows my name. When he calls I shall answer: 'I am with you.' I will save him in distress and give him glory. **R.**

### Second Reading

*Romans 10:8-13*

*The confession of faith of the believers in Christ.*

Scripture says: The word, that is the faith we proclaim, is very near to you, it is on your lips and in your heart. If your lips confess that Jesus is Lord and if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, then you will be saved. By believing from the heart you are made righteous; by confessing with your lips you are saved. When scripture says: those who believe in him will have no cause for shame, it makes no distinction between Jew and Greek: all belong to the same Lord who is rich enough, however many ask for his help, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

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

*Luke 4:1-13*

*Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus was led by the Spirit through the wilderness where he was tempted.*

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.' But Jesus replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone.'

Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, 'I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms, for it has been committed to me and I give it to anyone I choose. Worship me, then, and it shall all be yours.' But Jesus answered him, 'Scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then he led him to Jerusalem and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said to him, 'throw yourself down from here, for Scripture says:

He will put his angels in charge of you to guard you,

and again:

They will hold you up on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

But Jesus answered him, 'It has been said:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him to return at the appointed time.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

### Communion Antiphon

One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.



## What Is Lent? It's Meaning and Importance Explained

*Lent offers us an opportunity to come to terms with the human condition we may spend the rest of the year running from.*

Lent is a 40-day period leading up to Easter that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The word "lent" comes from the old English word *lencen* which means lengthen - referring to the season of spring and longer daytime. The length of Lent represents the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness before beginning his ministry. Lent is a time of spiritual renewal and reflection in preparation for observing Good Friday, the death of Jesus, and celebrating Easter, the resurrection of Jesus.

The purpose of Lent is to draw closer to God through prayer, repentance, and self-examination. During Lent, many Christians fast or give up certain indulgences as a form of self-discipline and penance. This may include abstaining from certain foods, activities, or habits.

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. Matthew 4:1-2*

### What is the Meaning of Lent?

Just as we set aside time to spiritually prepare for Christmas Day, it makes sense to set aside time to prepare for the two most important days of the Christian year - Good Friday and Easter. Lent is a time that offers us an opportunity to come to terms with the human condition we may spend the rest of the year running from, bringing our need for a Savior to the forefront. Lent is a time to open the doors of our hearts a little wider and understand our Lord a little deeper so that when Good Friday and Easter come, it is not just another day at church but an opportunity to receive the overflowing graces God has to offer.

Lent is more frequently observed as a solemn time of preparation for remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter. From the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday till Lent ends on Easter Sunday, Lent is traditionally a time of fasting or giving something up, known as abstinence. Lent gives us time to prepare our minds and hearts for remembering the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Prayer is a significant focus during Lent. During the 40 days, we seek God's forgiveness, accept his love and mercy, and repent or turn from our sins. Fasting or abstaining from something, like our favorite food or activity, not only gives us time to pray but reminds us of Jesus' suffering and sacrifice.

### When Does Lent Start?

Every year, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. The Lent season is a 40-day long (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

In 2025, Ash Wednesday falls on February 14, which means Lent will begin on that day. Therefore, Lent in 2025 will go from March 5th to April 19th, with Easter Sunday celebrated on April 20th, 2025.

### Practicing Lent Traditions

You can benefit from celebrating Lent even if your church does not formally do so. Here are some of the key elements of the Lenten season and some of the symbolism that comes with it. Many of these practices can be celebrated both individually and as a community:

- **Purple:** Like Advent, the official color for Lent is purple. Usually, churches celebrating Lent choose the deepest, darkest shade of purple for this special season. They may also strip their churches bare of some of the usual decorations adorning the walls. Purple is the color of repentance for sins and also symbolizes the state of our souls outside the light of Christ. During this time, pray for those who do not know Christ and for those who have sinned gravely against Him.
- **Confession:** As mentioned above, Lent is a penitential season or expressed sorrow and repentance... The 40 days are set aside to examine areas of recurring sin in our lives that prevent us from conforming to God's Will. An excellent way to start an examination of conscience is by praying **Psalm 139, verses 23-24:** "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*"
- **Fasting and Prayer:** Fasting is a practice that has really gone by the wayside in many Christian circles. Yet, if done correctly, it can be a powerful time to renew your relationship with God. Fasting can be found in both the Old Testament and the New, with Moses (*Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9,18*), Elijah (*1 Kings 19:8*), and our Lord (Matthew 4:2) all participating in 40-day fasts. Fasting is a way of denying ourselves the excesses of life so that we might be more attuned to the Lord's voice.

It is also a way of disciplining yourself, strengthening your "spiritual muscles," so to speak, so that when temptations arise in life, you are already used to saying "no" to your desires. And finally, fasting is also a way of participating, in a small way, in the sufferings of Christ and can be particularly powerful when accompanied by prayer and confession.

- **Meditating on Christ's Sacrifice for Mankind:** In addition to periodic fasting and prayer, our scriptural meditations typically turn to the salvation offered to us through Christ's suffering. Read Old Testament Scriptures prophesying the suffering of Christ and the New Testament Gospel accounts.
- **Charity/Almsgiving:** A very important element of the Lenten season is becoming aware of not only the suffering and sacrifice of Christ but also the suffering of others. Between now and Good Friday, choose one way you can increase your giving to those in need. It could be through extra financial offerings, donating goods you no longer need or use to charity, or increasing your personal time commitment to a ministry or cause close to your heart.

### Important Days of Lent

The key events of Lent include Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

At the start of Lent, on **Ash Wednesday**, many Christians get a cross on their foreheads from the ashes during a church service. The ashes symbolize grief and the acceptance of our sinful state.

**Palm Sunday** remembers the entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, where He was welcomed as King just days before His crucifixion.

**Maundy Thursday** is recognized as the day before Jesus is crucified. It is believed to be the day Jesus celebrated Passover with his disciples and, most notably, washed their feet as a display of humility and love.

**Good Friday** is the day we remember the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the cross. It is called "good" because it is part of God's plan for our salvation. God's good plan to redeem us from sin included the suffering of Jesus.

**Holy Saturday** is the day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday in Christian tradition. It commemorates the day when Jesus Christ's body was laid in the tomb after his crucifixion, and it is a day of reflection and anticipation of his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

**Easter Sunday** is often referred to as the most important day in Christian history. Three days after his death, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus rose again, conquering sin and death. Through Jesus, we have the opportunity to have eternal forgiveness for our sins, a relationship with God, and eternity in heaven.

### The History and Origin of Lent

So where does Lent come from, and how do we "do" Lent? The Lenten season developed as part of the historical Christian calendar and is typically celebrated by Catholics and some mainline Protestant churches that follow a liturgical calendar. Although its format has varied throughout the centuries and throughout different cultures, the basic concept remains the same: to open our hearts to God's refining grace through prayer, confession, fasting, and almsgiving as we anticipate Holy Week. Lent traditionally lasts forty days, modeled after Christ's forty-day fast in the desert, and ends on Good Friday. In the Western Church, Lent officially begins with a reminder of our mortality on Ash Wednesday.

### What to Give Up for Lent

Fasting is an important practice during Lent. Traditionally, people choose to give up certain indulgences or habits as a form of self-discipline to focus on spiritual growth and closeness to Christ. Are you looking for some ideas of what to give up for Lent? Here are some ideas for things that Christians might consider giving up for Lent:

**Sweets and Desserts:** Many people choose to give up sweets, chocolates, or desserts as a way to practice self-discipline.

**Social Media:** Taking a break from social media can provide more time for prayer, reflection, and personal connection. It also reduces distractions and allows for a quieter, more focused Lenten season.

**Television and Entertainment:** Cutting back on TV or entertainment can create more time for prayer, Bible study, and other spiritual practices.

**Caffeine or Coffee:** Giving up caffeine or coffee can be a physical sacrifice and a reminder to focus on spiritual needs rather than relying on external stimulants.

**Meat:** Abstaining from meat on certain days or throughout the Lenten period is a common practice, symbolizing solidarity with Christ's sacrifice.

## Community Events



Building our Community  
**TOGETHER**

As a 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 and encourage our parish community to support these mini endeavour.

Any other suggestions for church fanfare, fundraising activities or just availability of support are most welcome and greatly appreciated. Please contact either Nanette - 0404 465600 or Techie - 0438 201436.

## March Calendar

Mon	10	8:30am - Mass
Tues	11	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm—Rosary prayers Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	12	9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
Thurs	13	9:15am - Mass
Fri	14	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Stations of the Cross 7:30pm - Mass
Sat	15	9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	16	7:30, 9:00, 10:30am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass

# UPCOMING Community EVENTS



**Cake  
Angels**

16<sup>th</sup> March after morning masses

If you would like to provide support or assistance please contact

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

## Community



Come along and join us

22nd March 2025

8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

St John XXIII College Carpark  
(pick up area)

From pg 4

## What is Lent

**Negative Speech or Gossip:** Giving up negative speech, gossip, or critical comments can foster a more positive and uplifting environment.

**Alcohol:** Abstaining from alcohol during Lent is a way to practice self-control and redirect the focus on spiritual matters.

**Shopping or Impulse Buying:** Cutting back on unnecessary spending and material consumption can help shift the focus from material possessions to spiritual priorities.

**Excessive Use of Technology:** Reducing the time spent on smartphones, tablets, or computers can create a more contemplative and focused Lenten experience.

**Complaining:** Giving up the habit of complaining and cultivating a spirit of gratitude can lead to a more positive and thankful outlook on life.

It's important to note that giving up something for Lent is not simply to abstain from a particular pleasure but to use the opportunity for spiritual reflection, growth, and drawing closer to God. Individuals may replace what they give up with acts of kindness, prayer, or other positive habits to deepen their Lenten experience.

### Why We Celebrate

Unlike the childlike joy associated with the season of Advent, with its eager anticipation of the precious baby Jesus, Lent is an intensely penitential time as we examine our sinful natures and return to the God we have, through our own rebelliousness, hurt time and again. Lent is also an opportunity to contemplate what our Lord really did for us on the Cross - and it wasn't pretty. Ultimately, the purpose of Lent does not stop at sadness and despair - it points us to the hope of the Resurrection and the day when every tear will be dried (Rev. 21:4).

*And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachtani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Matthew 27:33-49*

Although the nature of suffering is not one that offers itself to easy explanations or pat answers, the answers we seek seem to make the most sense in light of the Cross. There is nothing in the world - no religion, philosophy, or material comfort - that offers such a powerful answer to

life's toughest questions as the two slabs of wood on which our Savior died.

Although I was drawn to Christianity in search of joy, the Cross keeps me returning each day, year after year. It is this time of year, known as Lent, that I am reminded of what Jesus did for me.

When I look into the eyes of our suffering God, I'm in awe - suddenly, the complexity of our Lord, the love of our Lord, the humanity of our Lord shows through. I realize God is not just some nebulous energy source or a grandfather sitting in the clouds - He is so much more. The Cross is where our faith stands when all other faiths fail. Christ's sacrifice and his subsequent resurrection are the true "cruxes" of the Christian faith. Without one, there would be no salvation. Without the other, there is no hope. This is why Good Friday and the following Easter Sunday are the most important dates on the Christian calendar - even more so than Christmas.

### Bible Verses for Lent

**Philippians 3:10-11** - "I want to know Christ, yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participate in his sufferings, becoming like him in death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

**Joel 2:12-14** - "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate.

**Matthew 6:16-18** - "when you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites...but when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

**1 Peter 5:6** - Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/lent-101-honoring-the-sacrifice-of-jesus-1382259.html>

## 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](mailto:maintenance@john23rd.org.au) or the parish office.

### ⇒ Grief and Bereavement Support Ministry. (Shalom)

We are looking for members to be part of this great counselling and comforting ministry. If you want to be part of this, a training course will be provided.

For more information please contact the parish office or get in touch with Fr Jolly.

### ⇒ MUSIC MINISTRY

Calling all singers and musicians!

Do you have a love for singing and want to use your voice to enhance worship in our parish? We are looking for parishioners, young and old alike to join our Music Ministry. You can either start a new choir group or join existing choirs.

If you're interested in being part of this wonderful group, please reach out to Neil Mascarenhas: 0422 445152 | [neil.mas@gmail.com](mailto:neil.mas@gmail.com)



John McCabe  
Karen Green  
Julian Martin  
Suni Fernando

Mei Velasco  
Ajith Lobo  
Helen Festejo  
Rebecca Reynolds

## Special Intentions

### Born to eternal life:

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen*

Ophelia Paraan, Norma Sinclair

### Remembrances:

Venido Tria Angeles

### Anniversary:

Flora Paraan, Alfonso Alonzo Ronquillo, Zenaida Amio

### 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.*

Brian McCunnie, Geoff Roney, John Todhunter, Dr Bronwyn Andrews, Rosanna John Pellissery, Cindy Dadvias, Christina Properzi, John Tipton, Elizabeth Candame, Jovita Castillo, Ryan Dixon, Margaret Harrison, Carlo Bueno, Peter Dawson, Emma Matoza, Lino Matteazi, Isagani Ocampo, Florentina Elisura, Peter McArdle, Melissa Nava Cathie Christie, Jerry Bondoc, Elizabeth Langley, Geoffrey Robinson, Obet Dionisio, Bev Osborn, Maria Romeo, Louise Smith, Raymond Lanzona, Jonathan Gemin, Joshua McCarroll, Troy James Lucas Colleta, Adrian Von Hart, Ksenija Bosnic, Charlie Busuttill, Perla Magculang, Hilary Regan, Marilyn Nalapo, Dudley Francis, Manuel Sarris, Virginia Santos, Carrie Conolly, Natasha Leitao, Victor Pons, Jerwin McCarron, Valeria Laureta, Bev Lewis, Lenka Olivier Talija, Myrna Manalili, Mary Phillips, Helen West, Emma Q Fernando, Zoey Illic, Jakov & Marija Franich, Elsie Knapp, Brendan Prideaux, Ben Benesa, Imelda Vinluan, Jude Newnes, Barbara Thompson, Fausto Bayot Alvin

### Thanksgiving:

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

### ALPHA PROGRAM

*I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them.*

*... The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.' Pope Francis - Evangelii Gaudium #3*

Register now - <https://tiny.cc/AlphaStJohnXXIII>

Feel free to call Mei 0410 040 434 or email

[mei.donnie.velasco@gmail.com](mailto:mei.donnie.velasco@gmail.com) for any queries.



### FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

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



Let's make a joyful noise together and lead the congregation in deepening their faith through music!



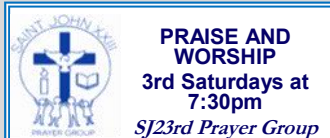
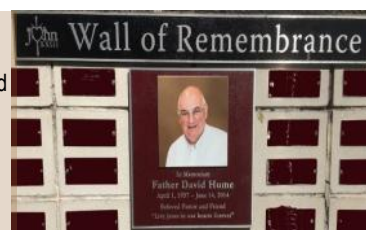
### COLUMBARIUM

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](mailto:columbarium@john23rd.org.au)  
The plaques cost \$600.00





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

**Blaze and Ignite youth groups** are participating in CYP's **Lifted Sports Day on Saturday 15th March.**

We are looking for anyone over 16 who are keen to join our team J

If you know how to play volleyball, soccer, basketball or touch footy and are interested to join our group, please see one of our Ignite leaders after Mass or send us a message on our insta @ignite\_sj23.

"Would you like to be a part of a fulfilling ministry, shaping the future of young Catholics?"

**BLAZE Youth Group** are looking for more youth leaders to help us run our sessions fortnightly!

If you would like to contact us, please feel free to do so via email or Instagram!

Proverbs 22:6 *"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it."*

CONTACT US IF YOU ARE INTERESTED!  
 Email: blaze@john23rd.org.au  
 Instagram: @blazeyouthsj23

**Calling All Young Singers!**

Do you have a love for singing and want to use your voice to bring joy to our church? We are looking for children aged **6–12 years** to join our **St John 23rd Children's Choir!**

If you're interested in being part of this wonderful group, please reach out to **Maria** at **0416 228 705** | [mariajohn14@hotmail.com](mailto:mariajohn14@hotmail.com)

Alternatively contact our Music Ministry Lead **Neil Mascarenhas** at **0422 445152** | [neil.mas@gmail.com](mailto:neil.mas@gmail.com)

Let's make a joyful noise together!

**Community Yard Sale**

**Saturday 22nd March**  
**8:30 am - 1:30 pm**

- Food • Plants •
- Household Items •
- Clothing • Books •
- and many more •

**Venue**  
**St John XXIII Catholic College**  
**Student Pick-Up Point/ Carpark**

Inviting parishioners to be part of the yard sale (as sellers).

For more details contact:  
 Nanette: 0404 465 600  
 Agnes: 0438 487 050

**YOUTH**

**BLAZE YOUTH**  
**WHO:** Year 7 to Year 12  
**WHEN:** 7:00 - 9:00pm  
**WHERE:** St John XXIII College (C Block Bell space)

Please use the QR code to register. For any queries please email on [blaze@john23rd.org.au](mailto:blaze@john23rd.org.au) or DM @blazeyouthsj23


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

**IGNITE YOUNG ADULTS**  
**WHO:** 18 - 35 years of age  
**WHEN:** First Sundays of the month  
**TIME:** 7:00 - 9:30pm  
**WHERE:** St John XXIII College Staffroom

Please use the QR Code to register for our sessions. For any queries please either email [ignite.stjohn23@gmail.com](mailto:ignite.stjohn23@gmail.com) or DM on @ignite\_sj23

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

**Indonesian Mass**  
 Every Second  
 Saturday, 7.30pm  
 St John 23<sup>rd</sup> Church



Please come and celebrate  
 The Eucharist together  
 in Bahasa (Indonesian Language)

**Risen Lord Community  
 Praise & Worship Night**  
 7.30pm  
**FRIDAYS,  
 St John 23<sup>rd</sup>  
 College Hall**



Come join us for an evening of deep intimacy with the Lord. Learn about the abundant and victorious life that Jesus died and purchased for us to have.

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