

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

Today's gospel (Luke 12:32-48) extends last Sunday's theme of treasuring heavenly above earthly things in a different direction as it turns to readiness. But the text is somewhat disjointed as variously related elements are grouped together. The shorter form (Luke 12:35-40) retains the awkwardness of a sudden change of focus as it is the householder who becomes the one who must be vigilant for the unexpected and improper burglary, rather than the servants who await an expected return. We have a clumsy merger of two parables of vigilance, but, from whichever perspective, the point is the same: be vigilant. However, the shorter form omits the three opening verses (12:32-34) with the memorable saying, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also". This saying not only connects us back to last Sunday's reflection but today is its sole occurrence in the Sunday Lectionary, and thus it is proclaimed only once every three years. In general, shorter forms of readings should be used only in genuine need. The emphasis in the merged parables in this section is entirely on vigilance, whereas the longer form (12:32-48) turns to the qualities of the first parable's steward, who is entrusted with the running of the household in the master's absence.

The development on personal qualities comes after Peter asks to know for whom the parable is meant, though it takes some time before his question is actually answered. What the master expects a good steward to be is one who uses the authority entrusted to him not for his own benefit but to care for those in the household under his supervision. Any steward who has contempt for the other servants and mistreats them, and consumes the master's goods for his own pleasure, invalidates his commission and is unfit for the job, but, what is more, he stands opposed to the master. The need for vigilance against such false stewards has always been with the Church. Laws were needed once to try to prevent aristocrats from appointing their own children, especially younger and illegitimate sons, to church positions, whence they might treat diocese and parishes as their personal fiefdoms. This type of corruption at times reached even the highest echelons as not a few popes were utterly contemptible in their behaviour. But there have been other less obvious forms of this lack of care for those entrusted to them. The lack of care for those abused by clerics and other leaders reveals a

lamentable misunderstanding of the steward's, or shepherd's, commission. Some have treasured more highly the hierarchy's earthly esteem than the care of the master's servants. When Peter's question is answered, it is with a "both and": it is intended both "for us" (the apostles) and for everyone, but those in the first group have more expected of them.

Readiness is part of the first reading too, though only by recalling its point of reference, the night of the first Passover: in Exodus 12:11 the people were told to eat the Passover standing, "with a girdle round your waist" ("your loins girded" in the NRSV). The same phrase in the Septuagint is used in Luke 12:35, but now translated as "dressed for action" (also in the NRSV). This opens another interpretive aspect, for this vigilance is focused not on someone's return, but on a coming saving act. When we hear the gospel's call to readiness for the master's return, what do we think of if not when Christ "will come (again in glory) to judge the living and the dead"? And yet this teaching is given on the way to the cross. This is part of the paradox of the genre of the gospels, for they relate not merely past events and episodes of teaching, but comment on the post-resurrection community. Thus today's gospel of collected teachings was both a preparing of the first disciples for what was to come—that is, of both Christ's shocking arrest (for the defence against which the disciples were ill-prepared) and the wondrous saving work of the death and resurrection—and a reminder to us now of his coming again. The vigilance required is for all manifestations of God's saving work in the here and now, as well as in the distant future.

#### 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

<b>Mon</b>	8:30am
<b>Tues-Fri</b>	9:15am
<b>Sat</b>	9.00am, 6pm Vigil
<b>Sun</b>	7:30am 9am 10:30am 6pm
<b>Holy Cross Primary School</b>	
<b>Wed</b>	9:15am during school days
<b>2nd Sat</b>	7:30pm Indonesian Mass

#### Masses of Devotion

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

#### Exposition + Benediction

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Fri</b>	after 9.15am, 7.30pm
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#### Reconciliation

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

#### Sacraments

<b>Sun</b>	12pm Baptism by appointment
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#### Prayers

<b>Tue</b>	7:00pm Rosary and novena prayers ( <i>Church Tabernacle</i> )
<b>Fri</b>	6.30pm Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group parish office Pauline Camilleri 0407 417039

#### Special Blessings

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

Join & be part of our community.  
scan the QR code



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

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



#### FILM SCREENING

#### GLORIOUS LIVES. MARY MACKILLOP

St John XXIII Parish welcomes you to the screening of a documentary film exploring the life of Australia's First Saint.

Come experience the inspiring life of Mary MacKillop presented by the Shalom World (Shalam Media)

**Date: 16th August**

**Time: 7.15pm (after the 6pm Vigil Mass)**

**Venue: St John XXIII Church Stanhope Gardens**

All are welcome entry is free.

Bring your family and friends for an evening of faith, reflection and inspiration.

#### FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION

**Friday 15th August 2025**

It is a day of obligation and everyone is encouraged to come.

#### Mass Times

9.15am
11.15am (School Mass)
7.00pm



### Entrance Antiphon

Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.

### First Reading

*Wisdom 18:6-9*

*Just as you struck our enemies, you made us glorious by calling us to you.*

That night had been foretold to our ancestors, so that, once they saw what kind of oaths they had put their trust in, they would joyfully take courage. This was the expectation of your people, the saving of the virtuous and the ruin of their enemies; for by the same act with which you took vengeance on our foes you made us glorious by calling us to you.

The devout children of worthy men offered sacrifice in secret and this divine pact they struck with one accord: that the saints would share the same blessings and dangers alike; and forthwith they had begun to chant the hymns of the fathers.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Responsorial Psalm

*Ps 32:1, 12, 18-20, 22*

**R. Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; for praise is fitting for loyal hearts. They are happy, whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his own. **R.**

The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine. **R.**

Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you. **R.**

### Second Reading

*Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-12*

*We will look for the city designed and built by God.*

Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen. It was for faith that our ancestors were commended.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. By faith he arrived, as a foreigner, in the Promised Land, and lived there as if in a strange country, with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. They lived there in tents while he looked forward to a city founded, designed and built by God.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Gospel Acclamation

*Matthew 24:42, 44*

Alleluia, alleluia!

Be watchful and ready: You know not when the Son of Man is coming. Alleluia!

### Gospel

*Luke 12:32-48*

*See that you are prepared.*

Jesus said to his disciples: "There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom.

"Sell your possessions and give alms. Get yourselves purses that do not wear out, treasure that will not fail you, in heaven where no thief can reach it and no moth destroy it. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

"See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Peter said, "Lord, do you mean this parable for us, or for everyone?"

The Lord replied, "What sort of steward, then, is faithful and wise enough for the master to place him over his household to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? Happy that servant if his master's arrival finds him at this employment. I tell you truly, he will place him over everything he owns. But as for the servant who says to himself, "My master is taking his time coming", and sets about beating the menservants and the maids, and eating and drinking and getting drunk, his master will come on a day he does not expect and at an hour he does not know. The master will cut him off and send him to the same fate as the unfaithful.

"The servant who knows what his master wants, but has not even started to carry out those wishes, will receive very many strokes of the lash. The one who did not know, but deserves to be beaten for what he has done, will receive fewer strokes. When a man has had a great deal given him, a great deal will be demanded of him; when a man has had a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him."

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

### Communion Antiphon

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.



## 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.*

### OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

*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  
Bartholomew to join you in prayers at your home,  
please organise with the parish office.

### Rosary Statue Family Roster

Aug	5	12	19	26	
	Jacob	Tanganan	Sebastian	Pangilinan E	
Sep	2	9	16	23	30
	Hala	Valdez	Tanganan	Ring	Barnouti
Oct	7	14	21	28	
	Valdez	Richards	Jacob	Nobleza	
Nov	4	11	18	25	
	Deang	Sebastian	Hala	Festejo	
Dec	2	9	16	23	30
	Siu SG	Barnouti	Sebastian	Paguinto	Paguinto

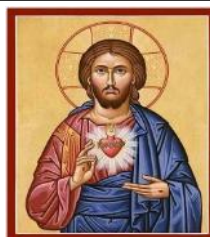
*"A family that prays together, stays together - Fr Patrick Peyton"*

### HOLY HOUR

Eucharistic Adoration

every Wednesday at 8:00PM

**Eucharistic Adoration will be moved  
to 6-7pm ONLY on the following  
Wednesday date 6<sup>th</sup> August**



### 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*

God of mercy, you shed an  
unexpected light within our souls.

By it we discover that, while a  
portion of darkness may remain in  
us, there is above all in everyone the  
mystery of your presence.

## Caring for our parish 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.

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

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

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

### Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Attila Lendvai

☎ (02) 8664 7100

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

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

### St John XXIII Catholic College

160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens

A/Principal: Frank Chiment

☎ (02) 9852 0500

✉ [stjohn23stanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:stjohn23stanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au)

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



## Community Events



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.

## August Calendar

Mon	11	<i>Saint Clare (M)</i> 8:30am - Mass
Tues	12	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary & Novena prayer Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	13	9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
Thurs	14	<i>Saint Maximilian Mary Kolbe (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass
Fri	15	<i>The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (S)</i> 9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Mass
Sat	16	9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	17	7:30, 9:00, 10:30am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass

# UPCOMING Community

## Proposed Church Extension

Please pray for the realization of our proposed parish office and extension and gathering hall. Below pictured is an updated proposed plan.



CHURCH AND HALL EXTENSION - MAIN ENTRY



CHURCH AND HALL EXTENSION - WESTERN FACADE



HALL EXTENSION - SOUTH ENTRY



HALL EXTENSION - OFFICE NORTH ENTRY

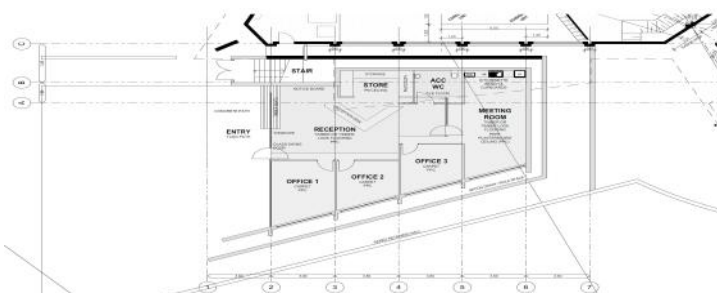


HALL INTERIOR - VIEW TOWARDS CONGREGATION AREA



HALL INTERIOR - VIEW TOWARDS CONGREGATION AREA

Upper deck area next to the church foyer.



Below deck area next to the garden where the office will be assigned.

## 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.

### FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

For donation, please contact James David on 0413 787596



### ⇒ 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	Mei Velasco
Karen Green	Ajith Lobo
Julian Martin	Helen Festejo
Suni Fernando	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*

Violeta Laraya, Trinidad Reloba, Rita Fernandes, Sheadon Trek, Francis Flannery, Engracia Matapac

### Remembrances:

Nigel Reynolds

### Anniversary:

Antony Desos, Alfredo Cruz, Maligaya Morales

### 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, Valeria Laureta, Lucas Colleta, Dr Bronwyn Andrews, Rosanna John Pellissery, Cindy Dadivas, Christina Properzi, John Tipton, Margaret Harrison, Emma Matoza, Bev Osborn, Florentina Elisura, Peter McArdle, Melissa Nava Cathie Christie, Jerry Bondoc, Elizabeth Langley Maria Romeo, Louise Smith, Raymond Lanzona Elizabeth Candame, Ryan Dixon, Peter Dawson Isagani Ocampo, Geoffrey Robinson, Zoey Illic, Hilary Regan, Jakov&Marija Franich, Bev Lewis, Lenka Olivier Talija, Manuel Sarris, Ryan Dixon, Obet Dionisio, Jonathan Gemin, Carrie Conolly, Rosie Carbonel, Virginia Santos, Imelda Vinluan Ksenija Bosnic, Myrna Manalili, Chet Catapang, Charlie Busuttil, Perla Magculang, Fausto Bayot, Marilyn Nalapo, Jerwin McCarron, Troy James, Mary Phillips, Elsie Knapp, Barbara Thompson, Carlo Bueno, Joshua McCarroll, Dudley Francis, Jude Newnes, Marcelino Matteazi, Zena Samar, Helen West, Brendan Prideaux, Natasha Leitao, Emma Q Fernando, Victor Pons, Lily Camilleri, Alvin, Babies with Blister disease

### Thanksgiving:

Ravi & Bernadette Virwani

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



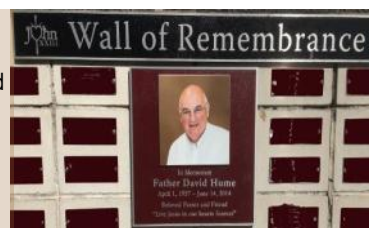
### COLUMBARIUM

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



Join and be part of the  
**Cake Angels**  
contact Madeline Huang  
[cakeangels.mjohn23@gmail.com](mailto:cakeangels.mjohn23@gmail.com)



**PRAISE AND WORSHIP**  
3rd Saturdays at 7:30pm  
**SJ23rd Prayer Group**



**Young at Hearts**  
**Seniors Group contacts**  
[theyoungatheart@john23rd.org.au](mailto:theyoungatheart@john23rd.org.au)



**Vinnies**  
join the good works  
Message Rose Franco 0401 387427

## ABOUT FORGIVENESS

**What does the Catholic Church teach about forgiveness?**

The Church draws its teachings on forgiveness from Jesus, who spoke frequently about forgiveness in a religious culture that punished sin heavily.

It is easy to know what Jesus taught about forgiveness because his followers asked Him explicitly about it. Here is His exchange with His disciple Peter in Matthew's gospel.

*"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."* Matthew 18:21-22

What does Jesus mean by this? Most understand Jesus to be telling Peter to forgive his brother an unlimited number of times. This is, of course, a difficult teaching and a real test of our human capacity to love others.

Jesus goes on to cement this teaching in the most famous Christian prayer, the Our Father, which includes these lines:

*"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us"*. Matthew 6:12

Here, Jesus makes a connection between God the Father's mercy and forgiveness to us and how this is an example of how we should love those who sin against us. Catholics experience God's forgiveness and mercy directly and powerfully through the sacrament of confession.

This extraordinary depth of forgiveness characterises Jesus' ministry. Many stories feature this, but perhaps the most famous is the story of the woman caught in adultery (meaning that she has had an affair) who will be stoned as a punishment for this sin.

Jesus says to the crowd:

*"Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her."* John 8:7

When no one does, He turns to the woman and says:

*"Has no one condemned you? ... Neither do I condemn you; go and do not sin again."* John 8:10-11

Here we can see clearly that Jesus does not dismiss sin, telling her directly to not sin again, but also inspiring those who would punish her to be forgiving.

This hard teaching of forgiveness reaches its most difficult and most powerful form in Jesus' teaching to love even your enemy.

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"*. Matthew 5:43-48

Whilst this is very challenging, it has also been the foundation for great social change and was a great inspiration for Martin Luther King Jr.'s peaceful campaign for the Civil Rights of black Americans.

*"This command is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization. Yes, it is love that will save our world and our civilization, love even for enemies."* Martin Luther King Jr.

<https://www.catholiclisteners.com/answers/what-does-the-catholic-church-teach-about-forgiveness>

**5 Myths About Forgiveness: A Catholic Perspective**

As Catholics, we understand that there is a Gospel call toward forgiveness - yet forgiveness is never an obligation, but a creative act of possibility and grace. This is especially important on a restorative justice journey.

Together, we can work to dispel common myths about forgiveness and open up new possibilities for reconciliation and healing.

**Myth #1: Forgiveness means forgetting the past.**

As theologian Fr. Robert Schreiter writes, *"In forgiving, we do not forget; we remember in a different way"* (The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies).

Indeed, in our forgiveness journeys, we cannot and should not forget the history of violence and harm. Rather, we must learn to let go of the anger and hatred that feeds the cycle of violence. This release of

negative emotions through forgiveness allows us to build, in the words of Pope Francis, *"a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance"* (Fratelli Tutti, 226).

**Myth #2: Forgiveness is incompatible with justice.**

On the contrary, justice and forgiveness are intimately linked. When someone forgives, they do not give up their right to seek justice.

In Dives In Misericordia, St. John Paul II says that without the presence of merciful love, justice gets distorted into revenge. (Think: *"An eye for an eye."*) The end goal of mercy is true justice, which addresses harm while also affirming the human dignity of all persons impacted.

To Pope Francis, mercy and justice are two dimensions of a single reality, working together towards the fullness of God's love. *"God's justice,"* Francis writes, *"is his mercy given to everyone as a grace that flows from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ"* (Misericordiae Vultus, 21).

*"Forgiveness is precisely what enables us to pursue justice without falling into a spiral of revenge or the injustice of forgetting"* (Fratelli Tutti, 252).

**Myth #3: Forgiveness is weak.**

Experientially, we know that forgiveness is challenging and can require inner strength and external support. St. Thomas Aquinas speaks of God's mercy as a sign of his strength: *"It is proper to God to exercise mercy, and he manifests his omnipotence particularly in this way"* (Summa Theologiae).

An ancient collect of the Mass offers a similar insight: *"O God, who reveal your power above all in your mercy and forgiveness..."* (Misericordiae Vultus, 6).

Recognizing that forgiveness is difficult and that it is understandable that some people are unable to forgive, Pope Francis states that forgiveness *"shows its strength by refusing to take revenge"* (Fratelli Tutti, 243).

For Fr. Schreiter, the vulnerability that love and mercy require is a sign of strength. Vulnerability is not weakness or *"an unwanted deficit of power,"* but a freely chosen stance of trust and love (The Ministry of Reconciliation).

**Myth #4: Forgiveness demeans victims of harm or negates the harm done to them.**

Forgiveness is compatible with seeking justice for the survivors of wrongdoing and does not negate their pain and suffering. Forgiveness is not demeaning but a free choice by the survivor, through which survivors reclaim personal agency and redefine their relationship to the past.

As Pope Francis explains, *"Free and heartfelt forgiveness is something noble, a reflection of God's own infinite ability to forgive. . . Those who truly forgive do not forget. . . They break the vicious circle; they halt the advance of the forces of destruction."* (Fratelli Tutti, 250-251)

In justice, no one can or should be forced to forgive, and no other person can justly forgive on behalf of victims.

**Myth #5: Forgiveness cannot happen unless the perpetrator repents.**

The truth is that, as an act of freedom and renewed personal agency, survivors can and do forgive without regard to the attitudes of the wrongdoer. It is possible for survivors to let go of their anger, to envision and create a future not controlled by the past, without first reconciling with the perpetrator of the harm they suffered.

Consider the words of St. Paul: *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

In the salvific plan of God, love precedes repentance. People must know their innate dignity as children of God, prior to being called to transformation.

Love, including in the form of forgiveness, has a transformative power which can help move people who have caused harm to repentance.

<https://catholicismobilizing.org/resource/top-5-myths-about-forgiveness-a-catholic-perspective/>





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

## 7 - 25 September 2025 - ADULT JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE




Led by Rachael, a passionate Lay Augustinian and seasoned pilgrimage leader, this journey is deeply enriched by her personal connection with Pope Leo XIV - the first Augustinian Pope. With special access to the Augustinian house in the Vatican and reflections shaped by years of ministry and friendship, this pilgrimage offers more than just travel - it's a spiritual encounter.

Register <https://parracatholic.org/events/jubilee-pilgrimage-2025/> or download a copy of the itinerary <https://parracatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Adult-Jubilee-Pilgrimage-Itinerary-Harvest-NO-QR-CODE.pdf>. Payment due 7 July

## 30 November to 2 December - AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL

The Diocese of Parramatta will be joining the Australian Church at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) in Melbourne from 30 November to 3 December 2025!

Join thousands of young Catholics from across Australia for an unforgettable festival featuring inspiring guest speakers, artists, and musicians. For more details and to express your interest, <https://parracatholic.org/connect/acfy/> or email [hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org](mailto:hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org)

IN THIS YEAR OF JUBILEE

We celebrate all those involved in Music Ministry across the Diocese of Parramatta

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# MASS FOR MUSICIANS

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To be celebrated by  
Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv DD STL

WEDNESDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER 2025  
7:30PM

St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta  
1 Marist Pl, Parramatta

RSVP by 19 September, 2025  
[ofw@parracatholic.org](mailto:ofw@parracatholic.org) | 0460 037 795

*with the number of guests attending for seating and catering purposes*

## Register for the 2025 Greater Sydney Community Sleepout

### Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August



### It's all about locals supporting locals

Help Vinnies break the cycle of homelessness by joining our Greater Sydney Vinnies Community Sleepout and braving the cold for one night.

#### Event Details

**When:** Fri, Friday 29 August 2025  
**Venue:** Western Sydney University, Parramatta South Campus (Rydalmere)  
**Event Coordinator:** Kate Conroy  
**E:** [kate.conroy@vinnies.org.au](mailto:kate.conroy@vinnies.org.au) **M:** 0403 241 966  
**What to Expect:** Inspiring guest speakers sharing real stories of homelessness, addiction, and recovery. Small group discussions & Trivia. Simple dinner: a cup of soup. Experience sleeping rough with just cardboard, a pillow, and a sleeping bag. Light breakfast in the morning.  
**Where Does the Money Go?** Funds raised from the 2025 Greater Sydney Community Sleepout will directly support local services including: Maternal Heart Conference, Vinnies Support Centres, the Cumberland Vinnies Van, Woy Woy Vinnies Van and the Vinnies Broken Bay DV Fund. Your support helps ensure these vital services continue to make a difference in the lives of those doing it tough in our communities.

#### Did you know?

Vinnies in Greater Sydney has provided the following assistance over the past 12 months:

- 37,842 people** assisted (7% increase)
- \$5,478,600** financial and material assistance provided (20% increase)
- 31%** seeking assistance for the first time
- 49%** experiencing housing stress
- 21%** are experiencing homelessness or are in temporary accommodation

#### How you can get involved:

- Register as an individual or team
- **Dollar for Dollar Sponsor** - Sponsor provides a donation and over a 24 hour period, all public donations are matched until the sponsored amount has been exhausted.
- Other event sponsorship opportunities are available.

To register, scan the QR code or visit:

[my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/greater-sydney-vinnies-community-sleepout-2025](http://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/greater-sydney-vinnies-community-sleepout-2025)





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 Instagram: @blazeyouthsj23

## Youth Ministry

### BLAZE YOUTH

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

For any queries, please email us at [blaze@john23rd.org.au](mailto:blaze@john23rd.org.au) or DM @blazeyouthsj23 on Insta and FB



**BLAZE SESSIONS**  
 Welcome all children  
 Years 7-12



26 July

8 August

22 August

8 September

19 September



### MORE YOUTH GROUPS

#### CRL

(Community of the Risen Lord)  
 Rojith de Silva  
 0405 9563210  
 Nimeshi Fernando  
 0417 101009

#### YFC

(Youth for Christ)  
 Dominic Lim Australia  
 0468 826253  
 Ronan Limguangco International  
 0478 629629



### IGNITE YOUNG ADULTS

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

For any queries please either email [gnite.stjohn23@gmail.com](mailto:gnite.stjohn23@gmail.com) or DM on @ignite\_sj23





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