

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

History is helpful for understanding such feasts as the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. After Saint Helena is claimed to have found the True Cross in AD 326, Emperor Constantine the Great, her son, ordered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (or of the Resurrection, in Greek) to be built at the site. It was consecrated on 13 September 335, and on the following day, today, Helena's Cross was publicly shown for veneration. This observance spread in various forms and is still observed in all three ancient branches of the Church (Catholic, Orthodox, and Eastern Orthodox), all focusing on the veneration of the cross itself as the sign of salvation. While the feast has a focus on the cross, like a second Good Friday, it can also be considered a global celebration of Jerusalem's main church, similar to our observance of the dedication of Rome's cathedral, the Lateran Basilica. The first reading was chosen for an obvious reason: it is referred to in today's Gospel that says the Son of Man would be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert (John 3:14). The Hebrew does not say directly that Moses lifted the bronze serpent, but it is implied by its being placed on a standard or pole that it might be seen. The Gospel reading (John 3:13-17) refers to the Son of Man's being lifted up, but it is found not only here, early in John, but also in 8:28 and 12:32, 34 (following the entry into Jerusalem, with a comment in between that this signified how he would die). This image is peculiar to John, but in this chapter alone it is associated with today's first reading, Numbers 21:4-9. However, John's use of it appears to be related also to the interpretation in Wisdom 16:5-14. There the raised serpent is explained as the symbol of deliverance in the Greek, or the sign of salvation in the Latin (v.6). That author said that whoever turned to the sign was saved, not by what was seen, but by God, Saviour of all (v.7), and that they were healed not by any medicine but by the Word of God, which heals all things (v.12). Only God has power over life and death, the capacity to lead

anyone to the gate of death (or Hades) and to lead back again (v.13). Humans may through malice kill, but they cannot bring the dead to life. It is easy to see how this passage in Wisdom was seen by early Christians, perhaps especially in the Johannine community, as a prophecy of Christ, the Word made flesh, who died and was raised to life. John emphasises what is only implied in Numbers, and entirely absent from Wisdom, that this sign is lifted up. The verb used in Greek (hypsō) is also synonymous with exalt or glorify, both used of Christ in his death and resurrection. The sole instance of a compound form of the same verb (hyperypsō) is employed in today's second reading (Philippians 2:6-11). Various linguistic elements reveal this to be a poetic hymn that Paul borrowed, and its very existence testifies to a creative vibrancy within the infant Christian communities, which were already expressing themselves in new ways of worship. It is called the Kenotic Hymn, after its key word, he emptied (v.7), and it praises God the Father who "super-exalted" the self-humbled Jesus from death, making him the object of veneration by all in the realms of heaven, and earth, and death. The text appears to have much in common with Johannine expression, but Paul added his own comment in the middle, identified by the way it interrupts the clear poetic structure: "even death on a cross". This reference to the cross is a particularly Pauline concern; indeed Paul is the New Testament writer who mentions it most. Returning to the first reading, the appearance of the fiery serpents is in response to the people's complaining about the lack of bread and water, and saying they loathe this "unsatisfying food", more directly translated as "bland bread", referring to the manna. In answer, the cross, as it is expressed in the liturgical hymns for Good Friday, offers the new medicine that truly saves, the Bread of life that truly satisfies.

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

#### Exposition + Benediction

<b>1st Fri</b>	after 9.15am, 7.30pm
<b>Wed</b>	8:00pm Holy Hour

#### Reconciliation

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

#### Sacraments

<b>Sun</b>	12pm Baptism <i>by appointment</i>
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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 ( <i>office</i> ) Pauline Camilleri 0407 417039

#### Special Blessings

<b>Blessing during masses</b>	
<b>1st Sun</b>	Birthday celebrants
<b>3rd 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)

### 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  
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)

### Entrance Antiphon

We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection, through whom we are saved and delivered.

### First Reading

*Wisdom 9:13-18*

*When those that were afflicted looked upon it, they were healed.*

On the way through the wilderness the people lost patience. They spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? For there is neither bread nor water here; we are sick of this unsatisfying food.'

At this God sent fiery serpents among the people; their bite brought death to many in Israel. The people came and said to Moses, 'We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you. Intercede for us with the Lord to save us from these serpents.' Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord answered him, 'Make a fiery serpent and put it on a standard. If anyone is bitten and looks at it, he shall live.' So Moses fashioned a bronze serpent which he put on a standard, and if anyone was bitten by a serpent, he looked at the bronze serpent and lived.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Responsorial Psalm

*Ps 77:1-2, 34-38*

**R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!**

Give heed, my people, to my teaching; turn your ear to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable and reveal hidden lessons of the past. **R.**

When he slew them then they would seek him, return and seek him in earnest. They would remember that God was their rock, God the Most High their redeemer. **R.**

But the words they spoke were mere flattery; they lied to him with their lips. For their hearts were not truly with him; they were not faithful to his covenant. **R.**

Yet he who is full of compassion forgave their sin and spared them. So often he held back his anger when he might have stirred up his rage. **R.**

### Second Reading

*Philippians 2:6-11*

*He humbled himself, therefore God had exalted him.*

The state of Jesus was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of the Father.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Gospel Acclamation

*Accl*

Alleluia, alleluia!

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your cross you have redeemed the world. Alleluia!

### Gospel

*John 3:13-17*

*The Son of Man must be lifted up.*

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

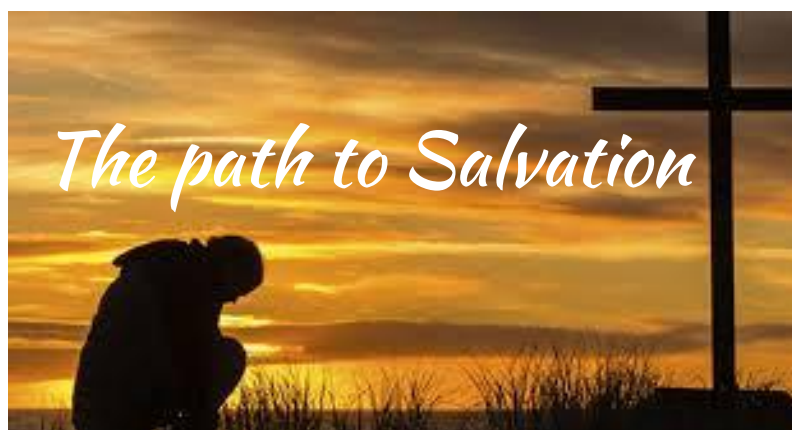
'No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven; and the Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.'

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

### Communion Antiphon

When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself, says the Lord.



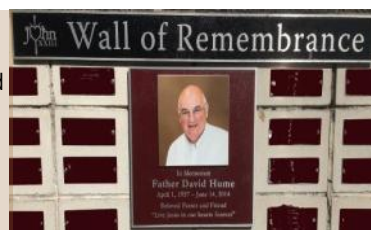
### COLUMBARIUM

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  
[cakcangels.sj23rd@gmail.com](mailto:cakcangels.sj23rd@gmail.com)



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



**Young at Hearts Seniors Group contacts**  
Contact either of the following:  
Frank Coleiro - 0459 504625  
Trevor Coutinho - 0407 150399



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

## 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



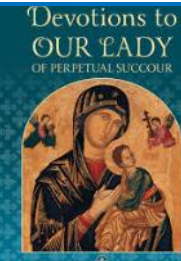
### Office for Safeguarding Parramatta Way is to:

◆ 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.*



### Rosary | novena prayers

Tuesday at 7:00PM and

**Novena mass**

**First Tuesdays 7:30pm**

Rosary statue roster

contacts Techie Sarlabus

[techie.sarlabus@gmail.com](mailto:techie.sarlabus@gmail.com) or

Melva Paguinto

[emcipi85@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emcipi85@yahoo.com.au)

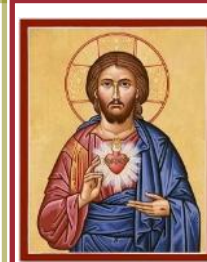
### HOLY OUR

Eucharistic

Adoration

Wednesdays

8:00PM



### Novena Mass

**Our Sacred Heart**

**of Jesus**

First Fridays

7:30PM with

exposition and

adoration

Sacrament.

### Rosary Statue Family Roster

Sep	2	9	16	23	30
	Hala	Valdez	Tanganun	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
	Cruz CG	Barnouti	Sebastian	Paguinto	Paguinto
Jan	6	13	20	27	
	Ruggiero	available	available	Tanganun	

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

### PRAYING in the SILENCE of the HEART with Brother

Roger of Taizé

Holy Spirit, breath of

God's loving, our prayer

may be very humble, yet

by the Gospel we

understand that you are

praying even in the silence

of our hearts.

### PRAYER FOR THE BEGINNING TO COMPLETION OF OUR NEW PARISH OFFICE & HALL

Almighty God, we thank you for your many blessings to our parish and to each of us.

We pray for your guidance and wisdom as we prepare ourselves to begin the construction. May your Holy spirit be with all our Engineers, architects, builders and all involved in this project. Protect them from harm and grant them skill and diligence. May this hall be a place of unity, fellowship and faith formation for our community, a space where we can grow in faith and serve others.

Bless all our sponsors, donors and each of us who contribute in our own humble ways and means.

Whatever we do, may we do it for your glory.

St. Joseph, the patron of families and workers, Pray for us

St. John XXIII, Patron of our parish, Pray for us

ST. Vincent Ferrer, Patron of all builders, Pray for us

### Ways we can help

- Make a personal or family donation;
- Pledge a regular amount for this project over the next 12 months;
- Be a general sponsor or of a specific area;
- Organize an event that could raise some funds;
- Share the campaign with family, friends or local business.

We are the stewards of our parish, and we are not just building a hall, we are building the heart of our thriving parish Community. Ideally, if we can find 350 people with a gift of \$3000 each, we can achieve this. In saying this we also invite gifts of any amount, according to your giving ability and most importantly to give with a happy heart. Let us all dream together as Father jolly always says.

### FROM THE PARISH FINANCE

#### COMMITTEE

Ways to donate

#### Bank transfer

Account name : Blessed John XXIII Parish

BSB : 067 950

A/C : 00000313

Reference: BD (your name)

#### BPOINT

For credit card donation visit

<https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/StJohnXXIIIPGSG>

or scan the QR code



## 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** provides for the running costs of our church, ministry 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.**



## 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.

## September Calendar

Mon	15	<i>Our Lady of Sorrows (M)</i> 8:30am - Mass 7:00pm - Mass
Tues	16	<i>Saints Cornelius &amp; Ciprian (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary & novena prayer Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	17	9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
Thurs	18	9:15am - Mass
Fri	19	9:15am - Mass
Sat	20	<i>Saints Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang &amp; companions (M)</i> 9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	21	7:30, 9:00, 10:30am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass

# UPCOMING Community

We hope all our dads enjoyed Father's Day celebrations last weekend. Our parish had a wonderful time too!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported our Father's Day sausage sizzle, helping us raise \$806.

We are especially grateful to our generous donor, Minchinbury Fruit Market, for providing the sausages & onions, to Bernadette Virwani for the bread rolls, and to the Awesome Ladies for their hard work in cooking and serving.



**Saint John XXIII Church Feast 2025**

Cnr Perfection Ave & Bentwood Tce, Stanhope Gardens  
<http://john23rd.com/> | <https://www.facebook.com/john23rdparish/> | [www.instagram.com/sj23rdstanhope](https://www.instagram.com/sj23rdstanhope)

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.

**Parish Feast Celebrations!**

**OCTOBER 12 SUNDAY**

Mass at 10:30am followed by celebrations

**SAVE THE DATE**

Festivities begin with the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Tuesday, 7th October, followed by daily events, and conclude with the Feast on Sunday, 12th October.

Stay tuned for more details!

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

### PARENT MEETING

Thursday 23rd September

7pm in the church.

Children who are baptised Catholic and are in Year 3 or above are welcome to enroll.



## WATCH THIS SPACE



## Cake Angel's Kitchen

To support our parish fundraising, our Cake Angels will be offering delicious food for purchase.

More details to follow.

## 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

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We would like to extend our gratitude to those who continually support and donate flowers for the altar.



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*

Regina V Agbulos, Efren Pineda, Greg Whitby, Merita Fernando, Neville Maitland, Charlie Kirk

### Remembrances:

Maligaya Morales, Diana Chan, Carlito Songco, Theodore Buot, Jovenal Buot Sr, Jean Young, Nonila Enriquez, Ignacio Enriquez, Victor Machacon, Simplicia Villarba

### Anniversary:

Emelyn Moyano, John Cherry, Ariel Bautista, Melonia Guerrero, Fatima Lizi

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

### Thanksgiving

Chan, Guerrero & Family

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

## 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 [blaze@john23rd.org.au](mailto:blaze@john23rd.org.au) or DM @blazeyouthsj23 on Insta | FB



### IGNITE YOUNG ADULTS

**WHO:** 18 - 35 years of age

**WHEN:** First Sundays each month

**TIME:** 7:00 - 9:30pm

**WHERE:** St John XXIII Staffroom

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



## MORE YOUTH GROUPS

**CRL** (Community of the Risen Lord)

Rojith de Silva 0405 9563210

Nimeshi Fernando 0417 101009

**YFC** (Youth for Christ)

Dominic Lim 0468 826253 Australia

Ronan Limuangco 0478 629629 International



## Feast of Exaltation of the Cross

**Quote:** *But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.* ~Galatians 6:14

**Reflection:** The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, also known as the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, commemorates three historical events: the discovery of the True Cross in 326, its initial exaltation for public veneration in 335, and the recovery of the Cross from the Persians in 628. Nowadays, this feast also celebrates the boundless impact of Christ's Cross upon all of creation.

The Edict of Milan, issued in 313, granted religious freedom across the Roman Empire. This was a mutual agreement between Roman Emperors Constantine I in the West and Licinius in the East. Before this edict, Christians had endured various state-sponsored persecutions over the prior two and a half centuries.

After the Edict was signed, from 314 to 324, Constantine and Licinius were in continual conflict. The tension escalated when Constantine accused Licinius of plotting against him. In 324, Constantine defeated Licinius in battle and subsequently executed him on charges of conspiracy. This made Constantine the sole ruler of the Roman Empire, including Jerusalem, which had previously been under Licinius's control.

In 326, Constantine's mother, Saint Helena, a devout Christian, embarked on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Her mission was to identify significant sites from Christ's life and establish churches at those locations. In Jerusalem, she aimed to find the True Cross and to build a church over the sites of Mount Calvary and Jesus' tomb, known as the Holy Sepulchre. Upon identifying Mount Calvary and the empty tomb, she discovered three discarded and buried crosses. After an investigation, the local bishop confirmed they were the crosses used to crucify Jesus and the two thieves. Since Helena did not know which cross was Christ's, she arranged for a sick woman to touch all three. The woman was immediately healed upon touching one of them, indicating that it was the True Cross.

Following the discovery of the True Cross, Mount Calvary, and Christ's tomb, Emperor Constantine ordered the construction of a church to encompass these sites and house the True Cross. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was erected and dedicated on September 13, 335. As the legend goes, the following day, Christ's Cross was brought outside the newly built church for the faithful to venerate. Thus, the first showing, or Exaltation of the Holy Cross, might have occurred on September 14, 335. Over the next three centuries, because liturgical celebrations were not widely centralized, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was likely celebrated annually in Jerusalem and varied in other ecclesiastical jurisdictions.

In 614, the Persians invaded Jerusalem and took the True Cross as a trophy. The Persians, primarily followers of the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism, were not Christians. Allowing the Holy Cross to remain in their possession was seen as sacrilegious. Eight years later, in 622, Eastern Roman Emperor Heraclius initiated military campaigns to recapture Jerusalem and the True Cross. Finally, in 628, he triumphed, and the following year, Emperor Heraclius entered Jerusalem with the True Cross, restoring it to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. After that, the Feast of the Holy Cross became a universal celebration within the Church, starting in Rome and subsequently spreading throughout the entire empire, and has been celebrated annually on September 14 ever since.

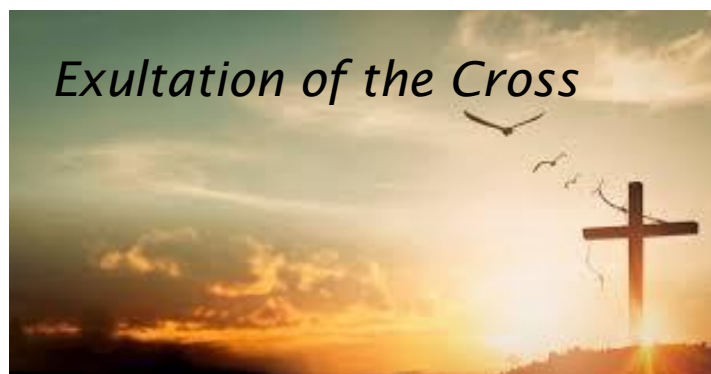
Although we commemorate these three historical events today, the core of our celebration is not the physical wood of the Cross or the holy sites where Jesus died and was buried. Our primary focus is the infinite love shown through the selfless and perfect Sacrifice of the Son of God and the boundless mercy that has poured forth upon the world as a result. The Cross itself is a cruel instrument of torture and death. The fact that it is now the symbol of God's perfect love only further magnifies that love and showcases God's infinite power to use the worst for the best: to use death to bring life and to transform the greatest act of cruelty ever known into the greatest act of mercy ever bestowed upon the world.

The Cross of Christ must permeate each one of us, transforming us and making us new. First and foremost, this happens when we open ourselves to the infinite mercy of God flowing from that selfless Sacrifice. It also occurs when we allow every one of our sufferings, the injustices we endure, the crosses, hardships, and most undesirable aspects of our lives to share in the redemptive power of Christ. We do this when we embrace Jesus' commands to share in His sufferings, unite them with His own, and allow Him to bear an abundance of good fruit through us. "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (*Matthew 16:24–25*).

As we commemorate the triumph of Christ's Cross, call to mind the crosses you bear each day. More often than not, when faced with crosses, we seek a way out, succumb to self-pity, and are often tempted by anger and despair. Instead, try to allow Jesus to enter those crosses, transform them, and use them for His glory, your good, and the good of others. Crosses in life should not be avoided; they must be transformed. Although the suffering may remain, it must become redeemed suffering, thus bearing an abundance of good fruit in ways that only God can accomplish.

**Prayer:** *Most glorious and triumphant Lord, You gave Your life for the salvation of my soul, using the most horrific act of cruelty as the means of Your redeeming grace. I open myself to that grace today and pray that You bestow it in superabundance. I also pray that I will have the courage and wisdom to embrace my crosses every day of my life, uniting them to Your Cross, and trusting that You will use these sacrifices as a means of the further bestowal of Your love on the world. Saving Cross of Christ, have mercy on me. Jesus, I trust in You.*

<https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-liturgical-year/september-14the-exaltation-of-the-holy-cross-of-our-lord-jesus-christ/>



## Exultation of the Cross



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

### 23 September - NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING Initial instruction - Zoom

An Introductory Session for the Billings Ovulation Method will take place on Tuesday, 23 September at 7:30pm. This session offers guidance on understanding your fertility, managing conception, and naturally spacing pregnancies through the Billings Ovulation Method.

Private and confidential instruction is also available. For more information and to register, please [CLICK HERE](#).

### 26 October - WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS




You are warmly invited to attend the annual Wedding Anniversary Mass to be held Sunday 26th October. Please join us for 2pm Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta celebrated by Bishop Vincent followed by afternoon tea at the Cathedral Hall. All couples celebrating a significant wedding anniversary will receive a certificate from Bishop Vincent.

Please register your name, years of marriage and numbers attending to [marriage@parracatholic.org](mailto:marriage@parracatholic.org) by 15th October. Family and friends are welcome.

### 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/acyf/> or email [hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org](mailto:hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org)

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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*

### REMINDER FOR BISHOP'S FATHER'S DAY APPEAL

Bishop's Father's Day Appeal – supporting our senior priests as they continue to serve.

This Father's Day, as we thank the father figures in our lives, let's also honour our spiritual fathers — the priests who nurture our faith. Even after stepping back from administration, they continue to serve in faithful ways: offering sacraments, celebrating Masses, hearing confessions, assisting at services, and serving as chaplains in aged care. Your generosity helps ensure our ageing priests receive the care, comfort, and dignity they deserve in this next chapter of their lives.

Please give generously at [parracatholic.org/fathersdayappeal](https://parracatholic.org/fathersdayappeal) or scan the QR code.  
Thank you.





## Indonesian Mass



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

Please come and celebrate  
The Eucharist together  
(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  
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us to have.



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