

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

In each year in our three-year lectionary cycle John the Baptist appears on this Sunday in the gospel reading as the voice crying "Prepare a way for the Lord". This year we read more of John's message than in the other years, and it sounds severe, even frightening, as he talks of a coming retribution. Some people may read today's passage (Matt 3:1-12) as supporting that penitential, quasi-Lenten view of Advent to which I objected last Sunday. Those thoroughly familiar with the book of Isaiah, as first century Christians were, should recognize that the quote "A voice cries..." (Isaiah 40:3) that is used in all four gospels belongs to a passage joyfully proclaiming to the Babylonian exiles the imminence of God's saving intervention – it does not announce a damning retribution. The lectionary itself reminds us of this context as each year the first reading chosen to accompany this account of John the Baptist is a passage of hopeful expectation, from Isaiah in years A and B, and from Baruch in year C. The Lectionary devisers chose not to use the close parallel in Malachi (3:1) that heads a negative message. That passage in Malachi is read on December 23, but with the most of the attached negative portion omitted as the pericope jumps to the promise of Elijah's return for a ministry of reconciliation.

Note also in today's gospel that until John turns on the Pharisees and Sadducees, calling them a brood of vipers, there is no hint of negativity, no suggestion that the people already seeking baptism from him are anything other than genuinely responding to his call to repentance, and there is no indication that he did not receive them gracefully. Why indeed would anyone call others to repent unless harbouring a sincere goodwill or affection toward them and a desire that they should willingly change? Prophets who radiate hostility to their audience do not attract or keep followers, and, as it is said, you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. And yet both honey and vinegar have their place if wisely applied, one soothing or luring, the other biting and cleansing. There is in John an unpretentious concern for God's people, but severe criticism for those the evangelists later identify in their gospels as pretentiously self-righteous; John's ministry is a consolation to the contrite and a castigation to the conceited. The role of the prophet may be both to give comfort to the humble and oppressed, and to speak truth unflinchingly to power.

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

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

Exposition + Benediction

1st Fri	after 9.15am, 7.30pm
Wed	8:00pm Holy Hour

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

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

Special Blessings

Blessing during masses
1st Sun Birthday celebrants
3rd Sun Wedding anniversaries

Homebound?

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

COELIACS

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

Join & be part of our community.
Welcome pack at the church foyer or scan the QR code



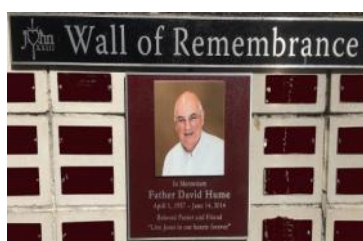
If you want to be part of our mailing list please email

✉ Communications@john23rd.org.au

MEMORIAL WALL (WALL OF REMEBRANCE)

Our parish has a memorial wall dedicated to honouring our beloved deceased family members and friends, especially those who are buried overseas or in distant places where visiting their graves is difficult. This memorial wall offers us a space to remember them with love and keep them in our prayers.

If you would like to place a plaque in memory of a departed family member or friend, please contact Tanya at the parish office.



OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

Ambrose Early Learning
160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens
☎ (02) 9852 0585
✉ celcstanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au
🌐 www.celcstanhope.catholic.edu.au

Holy Cross Primary
49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood
Principal: Attila Lendvai
☎ (02) 8664 7100
✉ bhycross@parra.catholic.edu.au
🌐 www.bcglenwood.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
🌐 www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au

Entrance Antiphon

O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

First Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10

He judges the poor with justice.

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, a scion thrusts from his roots: on him the spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. (The fear of the Lord is his breath.) He does not judge by appearances, he gives no verdict on hearsay, but judges the wretched with integrity, and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land. His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless; his sentences bring death to the wicked.

Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them. The cow and the bear make friends, their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like the ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole; into the viper's lair the young child puts his hand. They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain, for the country is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

R. Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement. **R.**

In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails: He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds. **R.** For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. **R.**

May his name be blessed for ever and endure like the sun. Every tribe shall be blessed in him, all nations bless his name. **R.**



Second Reading

Romans 15:4-9

Christ, the hope of all people.

Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. And may he who helps us when we refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you to treat each other in the same friendly way as Christ treated you. The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for his mercy, as scripture says in one place: For this I shall praise you among the pagans and sing your name.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 3:1-12

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This was the man the prophet spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Communion Antiphon

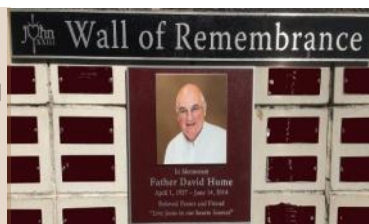
Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

COLUMBARIUM

If you are considering purchasing a niche, we still have spaces available. These are open to parishioners, families, friends and our neighbouring parishes. For more information, please contact the Parish Office.

MEMORIAL WALL

The wall in front of the church is devoted to the memory of our deceased family and friends, especially if they are buried overseas. For any enquiries please email columbarium@john23rd.org.au The plaques cost \$600.00



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

☎ 0417 541 637 (emergency only)

Assistant Priest:

Fr Bartholomew Chukwu

✉ chukwu@john23rd.org.au

STAFF

Secretary: Tanya Gatt

✉ secretary@john23rd.org.au

Finance: Renuka Soosaipillai

✉ accounts@john23rd.org.au

Sacramental Coordinator:

Helen Zammit

✉ sacramental@john23rd.org.au

OTHER CONTACTS

Parish Council:

John McCabe

✉ johnmccabe5@gmail.com

Maintenance issues:

David Gorkic

✉ maintenance@john23rd.org.au

Columbarium queries:

✉ columbarium@john23rd.org.au

John McCabe
Karen Green
Mei Velasco
Julian Martin
Suni Fernando
Helen Festejo
Ajith Lobo
Rebecca Reynolds

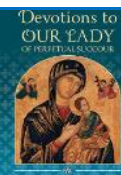


Office for Safeguarding
Parramatta Way is to:

- ◆ 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
Rosary | Novena
mass
First Tuesdays
7:30pm

Rosary statue roster contacts
Techie Sarlabus
techie.sarlabus@gmail.com or
Melva Paguinto
emcipi85@yahoo.com.au

Rosary Statue Family Roster

	2	9	16	23	30
Dec	Cruz CG	Barnouti	Sebastian	Paguinto	Paguinto
Jan	6	13	20	27	
	Ruggiero	Ring M	Barnouti	Tangunan	
Feb	3	10	17	24	
	Erasmio	Available	Jacob	Ruggiero	
Mar	3	10	17	24	31
	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

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

HOLY HOUR

Eucharistic
Adoration
Wednesdays 8:00PM

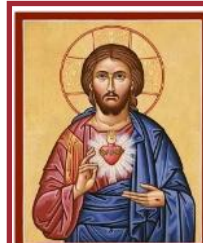


SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

This week only: Wednesday, 10 Dec at
7:00pm (usually Thursday), in the church.

Lectio Divina

Moderator - Jeff Hood



Novena Mass
Our Sacred
Heart of Jesus
First Fridays
7:30PM with
exposition and
adoration
Sacrament.

Pastoral Ministries

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. Mahatma Gandhi

We are in need of volunteers to assist in the different pastoral ministries in our Parish.



WE NEED YOU

⇒ SRE Teachers

If you could spare an hour during weekdays to spread God's word teaching the scriptures to children, **WE NEED YOU**. We currently have 4 public primary schools and a high school in our parish where we hold scripture classes during school hours for 30 minutes during Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. For more information please call Asoki 0430 020265 or Renuka 0414 795814. Training and resources will be provided.

⇒ GARDENERS AND CLEANERS

Now that the church is open for celebrations, its floors need to be swept of dust, cobwebs brushed off, candle stands cleaned and garden kept green. We would like to request all our volunteer cleaners and gardeners to come back and continue their ministry. For more information contact maintenance@john23rd.org.au or the parish office.

December Calendar

Mon	8	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (S) 8:30am - Mass
Tues	9	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary & Novena Prayer Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wed	10	9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
Thurs	11	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Lectio Divina
Fri	12	9:15am - Mass
Sat	13	Saint Lucy (M) 9:00am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	14	7:30, 9:00, 10:30am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass

Diocesan News



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

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

TapnGo machines available by the entrances.



HALL PROJECT

Prayer

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

Let's Build our future together

Dear Parishioners,

Our Parish Extension Project Is Underway!

This year continues to be a time of great blessings for our parish and our homes. We are now process for our long-awaited Parish Extension Project!

With our parish community growing and our ministries flourishing, this project will provide much-needed space to support parish our mission. The development includes the construction of a new parish office and a multipurpose hall, which will not only expand our church's capacity when required but also serve as a welcoming centre for fellowship, meetings, youth gatherings, family and faith formation programs, and community outreach. The new hall will comfortably accommodate up to 180 people.

The total project cost is approximately \$4.2 million. Through your generosity and careful financial stewardship, our parish has \$3.1 million in savings. We have received Bishop Vincent's blessing and approval with completion anticipated by October 2026.

We are inviting everyone to join us in bringing this vision to fruition. **Our goal is to raise \$1 million**, and with your generous support, we can make this dream a reality. 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. Every contribution, every prayer, and every act of cooperation helps us build not only new facilities but also a stronger, more connected parish family rooted in faith and service.

Ideally, if 350 parishioners or families are able to contribute \$3,000 each, we will reach our goal. Of course, every gift matters — no matter the amount. What's most important is that each offering comes from the heart and reflects the joy of giving.

Together, let us continue building the future of our parish — one that reflects our shared faith, unity and hope.

God bless

Fr Jolly

Ways to donate

Bank transfer

Account name: Blessed John XXIII Parish

BSB : 067 950 A/C : 00000313

Reference: BD (your name)

BPOINT

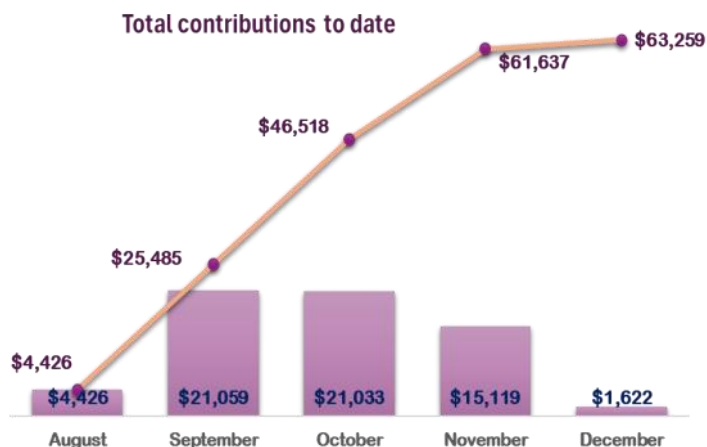
For credit card donation visit

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

or scan the QR code



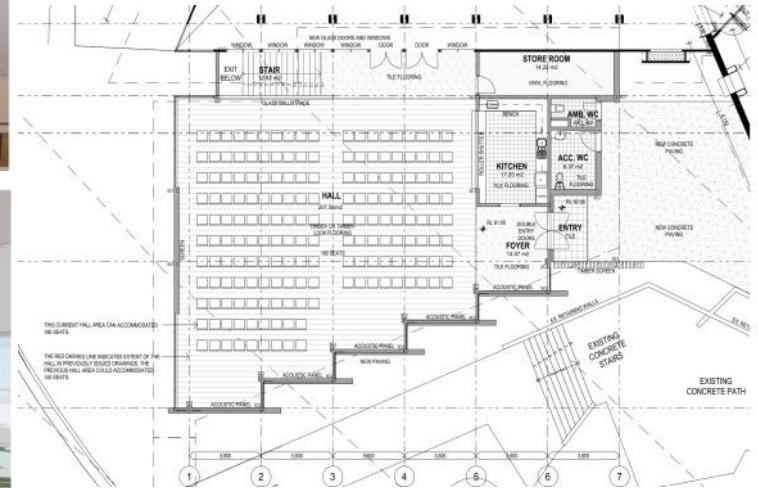
CONTRIBUTION UPDATE



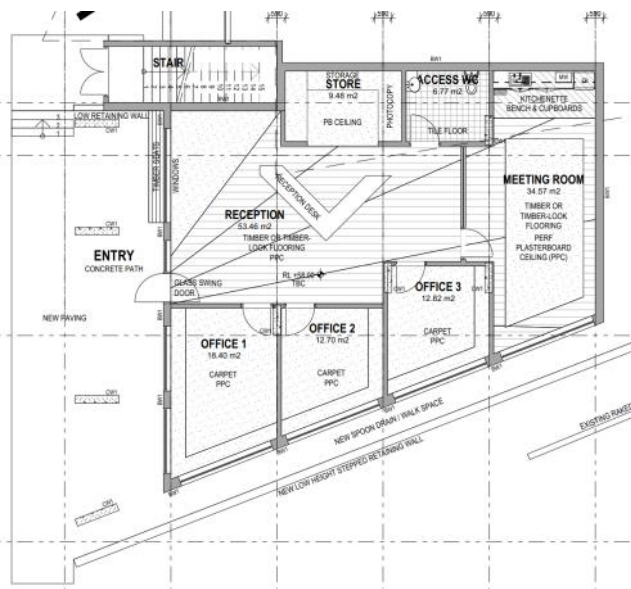
Parish Hall/Office Project Plan



Hall Floor Plan



Office Floor Plan



Community Events



Building our Community TOGETHER
Please contact either
Nanette - 0404 465600
Techie - 0438 201436

As a vibrant community of St John XXIII Parish, we warmly invite our various cultural groups and ministries to take part in our parish life by hosting a Saturday Vigil or Sunday morning mini-event after our Mass celebrations. These gatherings are a wonderful way to share your culture, connect with others and strengthen our sense of family and belonging within the parish. We encourage everyone to come along, participate and support these community-led activities. We also welcome suggestions for future events, fundraising ideas, or any offers of help — your creativity and support are always appreciated and play an important part in making our parish life joyful and thriving!

Community EVENTS



Be Part of Our Parish Christmas Nativity Play

As we approach the festive season, we're thrilled to continue our cherished Christmas tradition. This year promises to be even more memorable, with plenty of opportunities for children and families to get involved and share in the joy of the occasion.

The Nativity Play is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the birth of Jesus through story, song and fellowship, and is a highlight of our festive celebrations.

Calling All Children – Join Our Nativity Play

Preparations for our Christmas Nativity Play are now underway, and we invite all children aged 5 and above to take part in this special tradition in our parish. Everyone is welcome to join. Kids can take on roles such as angels, shepherds, wise men, narrators, choir singers, and more. We're excited to see our children light up the stage and share the Christmas story with the community. Parents are also invited to help out with the production.

How to Get Involved

Please contact Helen Festejo 0401 671 665.

Key Dates and Details

Rehearsal Weekends: 14 and 21 December 2025 (TBA) at the Hub Nativity Play and Family Mass: 24 December 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Hub

St John XXIII Catholic Church

Rooster Masses

6:00 AM 16 Dec 2025 - 23 Dec 2025
Church

Christmas Masses

24 Dec 2025 - Christmas Eve
6:00 PM Family Mass with Nativity School Hub
9:00 PM Christmas Eve Mass Church
12:00 AM Midnight Mass Church

25 Dec 2025 - Christmas Day
9:00 AM Christmas Day Mass Church
10:30 AM Christmas Day Mass Church

New Year's Masses

31 Dec 2025 - New Year's Eve
8:00 PM Holy Hour Church
9:00 PM New Year's Eve Mass Church

1 Jan 2026 - New Year's Day
9:15 AM New Year's Mass Church

2026

Sausage Sizzle

Join us for a sausage sizzle at our morning masses this 7th December.

Vinnies Shoes and Bags Bonanza

Grab a bargain just in time for Christmas! Purchase a pair of new shoes/sandals or a beautiful bag available after every morning Mass next Sunday, 14th December. **Nothing over \$10.**

All proceeds go towards the St. John XXIII Building Fund. Do your bit to help the parish community.



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

Coralie Mahoney, Joy Sullivan

Remembrances:

Lolita Ludovice, Alfredo Pangilinan Sr

Anniversary:

Anthony Fernandes

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, John Tipton, Valeria Laureta, Bev Osborn, Lucas Colleta, Florentina Elisura, Peter McArdle Emma Matoza, Cathie Christie, Melissa Nava, Imelda Vinluan, Cindy Dadvias, Rosanna John Pellissery, DrBronwyn Andrews Dudley Francis, Marilyn Nalapo, Jude Newnes, Myrna Manalili, Mary Phillips, Isagani Ocampo Manuel Sarris, Elsie Knapp, Christina Properzi Carlo Bueno, Emma Q. Fernando, Bev Lewis, Lenka Olivier Talija, Helen West, Victor Pons, Perla Magculang, Natasha Leitao, Troy James, Charlie Busuttill, Zoey Illic, Margaret Harrison, Ryan Dixon, Elizabeth Candame, Zena Samar, Lily Camilleri, Ksenija Bosnic, Rosie Carbonel, Marcelino Matteazi, Elizabeth Langley, Noah, Louise Smith, Joshua McCarroll, Fausto Bayot, Hilary Regan, Maria Romeo, Jerwin McCarron, Babies with Blister disease Raymond Lanzona, Jonathan Gemin, Carrie Conolly, Mr Thomas, Barbara Thompson, Gerald Simbulan, Brendan Pridaux, Mary Bormate

Thanksgiving

Sarah-Grace Paguinto-Siu, Amelia Supe

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



Mass of the Rooster
16th to 24th December at 6:00am

Nine-day novena Masses that builds up to the Christmas Eve service.
Bring a plate for sharing for breakfast

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 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 ignite.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 Limguangco 0478 629629 International

THANK YOU PARISH VOLUNTEERS

To express our heartfelt and profound gratitude to all our Church Ministry Volunteers, we held a Thanksgiving celebration last Saturday. Our parish would not be the vibrant and caring community it is today without their unwavering commitment, generous hearts, and dedication to serving others.

The evening was filled with joyful thanksgiving—singing, dancing, delicious food, and lively games—all in honour of the many ways they share their time, talents, and love with our parish. It was truly a special moment to celebrate our unity, our ministries, and the continued growth of our parish family.

With grateful hearts, we thank each one of you once again for your faithful service, your spirit of generosity, and your ongoing contribution to our parish community. Your service is a blessing to us all.



THANK YOU AGAIN

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Risen Lord Community Praise & Worship Night

7.30pm

FRIDAYS,

St John 23rd
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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Richard Spiteri on 02 9659 0900
(340 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill)

Richard Spiteri (General Manager)



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CEO | Principal

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Drive Finance Solutions
creyes@drivefinance.com.au
Mobile: 0416 092 728

CODE: CRD

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the road sooner. Contact Ravi Virwani, your local
parishioner on 0421 876 584.

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