



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.

**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.

**Gospel Reflection**

Have you noticed how some of our Scripture readings throughout the weeks of this Easter season are set on the day of Easter? And how some, like today's first reading from Acts of the Apostles, are set on the day of Pentecost? This is a powerful reminder to us that what we celebrate during this season is not the chronological unfolding of a story but various reflections upon the one mystery: Easter and Pentecost are interwoven realities and we celebrate both together each day of our fifty-day season.

The first letter of Peter sums up this Easter mystery, saying that Christ died 'so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness'. Easter is about living the new life of conversion. It echoes Peter's address in Acts of the Apostles about repentance: baptism is for the forgiveness of sins and receiving the Spirit. It is not a one-off event, but something that is lived out day by day. Just as Easter is the victory of life over death in the person of Jesus, it is the victory of belonging and purpose over being lost and alone. The first letter of Peter describes this new reality with a metaphor: 'You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd'.

The shepherd image is, of course, the constant and powerful image for this Sunday in Easter. I remember reading somewhere once that in the first half of the twentieth century, Psalm (129)130, the De profundis, 'Out of the depths', was the psalm with which most Christians identified. It is one of the psalms of lamentation that emphasises human helplessness and longing. Perhaps the experiences of the two world wars during those decades make this an understandable choice. In the second half of the twentieth century, the same account continued, Psalm (22)23, 'The Lord is my shepherd', became more popular. It speaks of care and protection, of richness and fullness. Chapter 10 of John's Gospel, which we read over the three-year period of the lectionary cycle for this Sunday in Easter, takes up this pastoral image.

Today's particular extract from chapter 10 of John speaks more about the pen or enclosure, and Jesus speaks of himself as the gate of the pen. The proper way in or out is through him.

In early Christian catacomb art in Rome, the image of the shepherd with a sheep slung over his neck was a popular one. It was probably even a pre-Christian image that Christians adopted. Its use in funerary art is easy to explain. The last lines of the psalm say: 'In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever'. The idea of the shepherd leading us into eternity is clear. In chapter 10 of John the idea of eternal life was also found by early Christians. In one of his homilies on this gospel, St Augustine of Hippo noted some sixteen hundred years ago that the gospel says that Jesus leads the sheep in and out through the gate and that he has come to say that people may have life and have it to the full. Augustine could see two realities here. Coming into the gate was baptism and the pen was life in the church. Coming out of the gate was death and entry to the pastures of eternity, and the fullness of life. This is what Augustine said: 'For he seems to me to have meant that they may have life going in, and have it more abundantly going out. For no one can go out through the gate—that is by Christ—to that eternal life which shall be face to face, unless by the same gate—that is, by the same Christ—he has entered his church, which is his fold, to the temporal life, which is lived in faith' (In Euangelium Iohannis Tractatus 45).

So today we are thankful that God has called us to join this flock; we are thankful that, through baptism and the gift of the Spirit, we belong. We are thankful that Jesus is our shepherd who comforts us with crook and staff. We are thankful that the shepherd will one day lead us out into the eternity of the Lord's house. We are thankful to share in this meal of bread and wine, which is a foretaste of the banquet prepared for us in the sight of our foes. We are an Easter people and alleluia is our song.

*Geoffrey D Dunn*



*Join us in celebrating the Ordination to the Diaconate of our very own seminarian, Jeff Hood, 26<sup>th</sup> April, Sunday during the 6PM mass.*

*Come and witness this special and grace-filled occasion as he take this important step in his journey of faith, service and dedication to the Church.*

**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 <i>during school days</i>
<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
<b>Wed</b>	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**

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

**Special Blessings**

**Blessing during masses**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sun** Birthday celebrants  
**3<sup>rd</sup> 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  
Or if you would like a visit from the Vincentians, please contact the Parish Office or share the relevant contact details with us.

**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](mailto:Communications@john23rd.org.au)

**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/>

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Catholic Parish of St John XXIII and the Diocese of Parramatta sits, the land of the Darug and Gundungurra people. We would like to pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders past, present and future for they hold the traditions, memories and wisdom of Mother Earth on which we place our feet upon today.

### Entrance Antiphon

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

### First Reading

Acts 2:14, 36-41

*God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.*

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22:1-6

**R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. **R.**

You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. **R.**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. **R.**

### Second Reading

1 Peter 2:20-25

*You had gone astray but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.*

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

### Special Intentions *Names published with permission*

*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*

#### Born to eternal life

Juan Redoblado, Roberto Mamaril, Roselily Leonardo, Imelda Escordial

#### Remembrances:

#### Death Anniversary

Regalado Morales, Maligaya Morales, Rustico Reyes, Natividad Reyes

#### Sick

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

#### Thanksgiving

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

### Gospel Acclamation

John 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me. Alleluia!

### Gospel

John 10:1-10

*I am the gate of the sheepfold.*

Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them.'

I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

### Communion Antiphon

The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.

## The Good Shepherd



**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 via the following methods:

- direct debit arrangements to your nominated bank account or credit card
- Regular bank transfers set up at your end to the parish bank account  
 Account name - Glenwood Stanhope Gardens St John 23rd Parish  
 BSB - 067 950 A/C - 100002469 Reference: PG (your initial and family name)
- Donating through cash or using the "Tap & go" machines which are available by the entrances.

Please contact the parish office to update us with your preferred giving option. Either by phoning 02 88835981 or emailing [accounts@john23rd.org.au](mailto:accounts@john23rd.org.au).



Support can be provided via the registration forms are available at the church foyer or from the website or scan the QR Code

**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 XX111, Patron of our parish, **Pray for us**  
 St. Vincent Ferrer, Patron of all builders, **Pray for us**

**Church building project - Ways to donate**

- ★ Dedicated "Tap & go" machines
  - ★ Bank transfer  
**Account name** - Glenwood Stanhope Gardens St John 2  
**BSB** 067 950 **A/C** 100002469  
**Reference** - BD (your name)
  - ★ BPOINT - For credit card donation visit <https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/StJohnXXIIIPGSG>
  - ★ scan QRCode
- Thank you for your support!



**THANK YOU TO OUR DINNER DANCE SUPPORTERS**



Trust the sale of your home with your local Parishioner and award-winning licensed real estate agent, **John Irudayaraj.**

A member of your church who believes in the power of giving back, mention this advert and if John sells your home he will make a donation directly to the Church.

0433 969 731  
[johnirudayaraj@mcgrath.com.au](mailto:johnirudayaraj@mcgrath.com.au)  
 McGrath Northwest



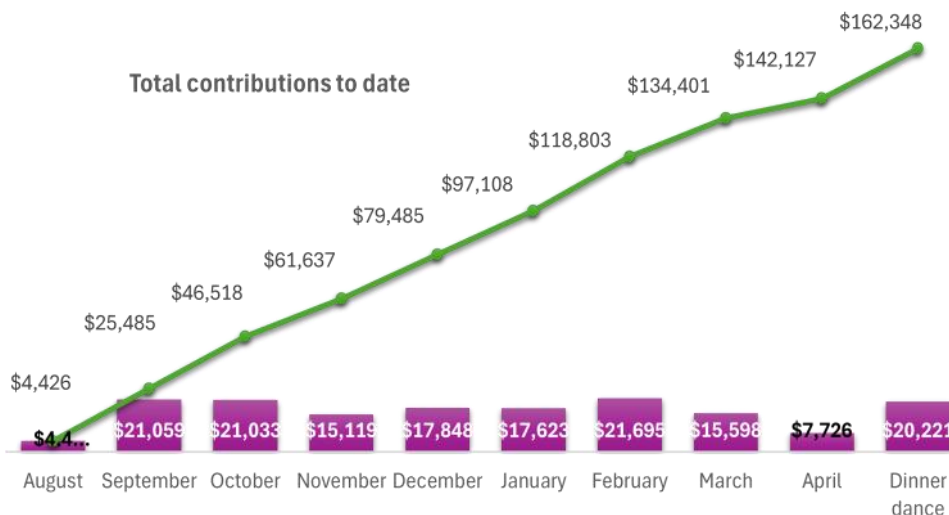
**BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE**

We have now invited tenders for our building project and received submissions from four builders. We anticipate finalising our selection and accepting a tender by 15<sup>th</sup> of May.

The successful builder is expected to take possession of the site by 25<sup>th</sup> of May. Please continue to keep this project in your prayers and support it through your generous financial contributions.



**EXPLORE OUR LEARNING PLACES**  
 ☎ (02) 8610 3775 Stanhope Gardens  
 ☎ (02) 8678 9149 Rouse Hill  
 ☎ (02) 9629 4444 North Kellyville  
 🌐 [www.climbingladders.com.au](http://www.climbingladders.com.au)



**CONTACTS**

**PARISH OFFICE**

**Office Hours**  
Tue - Fri 8.30 - 4.00pm  
**Office Contacts**  
☎ (02) 8883 5981  
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  
✉ [chukwn@john23rd.org.au](mailto:chukwn@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)

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



**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  
✉ [bolycross@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:bolycross@parra.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.hcglenwood.catholic.edu.au](http://www.hcglenwood.catholic.edu.au)

**St John XXIII Catholic College**  
160 Perfection Ave Stanhope Gardens  
Principal: Frank Chiment  
☎ (02) 9852 0500  
✉ [stjohn23stanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:stjohn23stanhope@parra.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au)

**Praying together**

*When we pray together, our faith is strengthened and our community is drawn closer. Join us to deepen your faith and open your heart to the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

Rosary Statue Family Roster					
Apr	7	14	21	28	
	Jacob	Sebastian	Ring	Shalini	
May	5	12	19	26	
	Ruggiero	Sebastian	Tina B	Mandapat	
Jun	2	9	16	23	30
	Hala	Mina B	Deang	Erasmus	Available
Jul	7	14	21	28	
	Tambolero	Available	Available	Available	

*"A family that prays together, stays together - Fr Patrick Peyton"*  
Rosary statue contacts Techie Sarlabus [techie.sarlabus@gmail.com](mailto:techie.sarlabus@gmail.com) or  
Melva Paguinto [emcipi85@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emcipi85@yahoo.com.au)



**Try Alpha?**

**EXPLORE FAITH WITH YOUR ST JOHN XXIII COMMUNITY.**

Alpha is a series of sessions that allows people to connect, discover more about their faith and answer life's biggest questions.

We invite you to join us as we go on this journey together.



**REGISTER TODAY**

Dates: 16 Apr to 25 Jun 2026  
Time: Thursdays, 7.15pm to 9.15pm  
Food: Dinner will be provided  
Cost: Free  
**THERE'S STILL TIME TO JOIN**

**Eucharist28 Update – Renewal has begun!**

The International Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in 2028 ('Eucharist28') will be a global gathering of the Church centered on the Eucharist, the source and summit of our Christian lives, culminating in a Papal Mass with Pope Leo XIV. It will be a festival of faith, rich with worship, prayer, testimonies, art, music – a truly 'once in a lifetime' experience, and a transformative moment for our nation.

But this is more than an event in Sydney. It is a national journey, an invitation to renewal for the whole Church, wherever we are. The journey begins now, in our own hearts, in our own parishes.

Across the Easter weekend, thousands of catechumens and candidates throughout Australia were baptised and received into full communion with the Church. Our churches were alive with faith—pews filled, hearts renewed.

It was a beautiful witness to what the Church is called to be every week, not only at Christmas and Easter.

The great gift of the Eucharist is that it is not merely a story remembered over a few sacred days. At every Mass, we encounter the reality itself: we offer ourselves to God alongside Christ, truly present in our midst.

How wonderful it would be to see our pews full every week—because people have truly encountered the living Lord in the Eucharist!

For more information and regular updates, please register on the website: [eucharist28.org](http://eucharist28.org)



*"We are an Easter people, and Alleluia is our song!"*  
— Pope Saint John Paul II

**Diocesan News**



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

## 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.

#### ⇒ CLEANERS AND GARDENERS

As we give our heartfelt thanks to the wonderful volunteers who faithfully keep our church clean, our gardens green, and our surroundings welcoming, we also invite others to join this valued ministry. A few more helping hands would make a great difference in caring for our shared spiritual home. If you are able to assist, please contact Tanya at the parish office.

#### ⇒ CAKE ANGELS

If anyone is interested to be involved and take leadership of this fun loving dynamic group please contact Tanya at the parish office or Techie at 0438 201436.



#### ⇒ Liturgical Ministry

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest."* Luke 10:  
The St. John XXIII Parish Liturgy Team warmly invites parishioners to serve and contribute in the following ministries below

**Training sessions are planned for late April to early May.**

Please contact Parish Office if you are interested or for additional information.



#### Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Assist in the distribution of Holy Communion during liturgies and bring Communion to the sick and homebound.

Open to men and women aged 18 and above.

#### Lectors

#### Ministers of the Word

Proclaim the Scriptures and offer commentary during liturgies.

Open to men and women aged 18 and above.



#### Junior Servers

Assist the Celebrant, Deacons, and Acolytes during liturgical celebrations.

Open to boys and girls aged 10 and above who have received First Holy Communion (Confirmation preferred)



#### Tech Ministry

Support and coordinate technical aspects of the liturgy, including sound systems and projection.

Open to men and women aged 16 and above. No prior experience is required.



#### Ushers & Greeters

Greet and assist parishioners, helping to create a warm and welcoming environment.

Open to men, women, and children aged 12 and above.

## YOUTH/YOUNG ADULT GROUPS

#### BLAZE YOUTH 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 or Contact Ellena - 0478 685 191

#### IGNITE YOUNG ADULTS 18 - 35 years of age

**WHEN:** First Sundays each month 7:00 - 9:30pm

**WHERE:** St John XXIII Staffroom

For any queries please either email [ignite.stjohn23@gmail.com](mailto:ignite.stjohn23@gmail.com) or

DM on @ignite\_sj23

#### 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*



#### Young at Hearts Seniors Group

Contact either of the following:

Frank Coleiro - 0459 504625

Trevor Coutinho - 0407 150399



## Vinnies

join the good works

Message Rose Franco 0401 387427

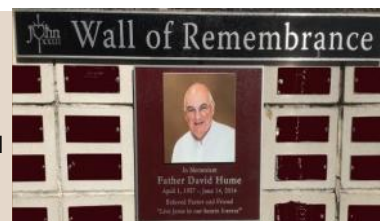


## COLUMBARIUM

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



**Community Events**

# UPCOMING 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 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 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!

**A Friendly Reminder to Our Parish Community**

We kindly ask all parishioners to help care for our church by tidying up after Mass. Simple gestures - such as disposing of rubbish properly and returning items like bulletins (if not taking them home) make a meaningful difference. Together, let us keep our church clean, welcoming, and ready for all who enter. Thank you for your care and consideration in looking after our shared spiritual home.

**April Calendar**

Mon	27	8:30am - Mass
Tues	28	<i>Saint Peter Chanel (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary/Novena Prayer <i>Our Lady of Perpetual Help</i>
Wed	29	<i>Saint Catherine of Siena (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour

Thurs	30	9:15am - Mass
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**May Calendar**

Fri	1	9:15am - Mass 7:30pm - Novena Mass <i>Sacred Heart of Jesus</i>
Sat	2	<i>Saint Athanasius (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	3	7.30am 9:00am 10:30am masses 6:00pm - Mass

**YAHS CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

15 <sup>th</sup> May, Friday, 11:30am	Mother's Day lunch, The Fiddler RSVP 8 <sup>th</sup> May
10 <sup>th</sup> July, Friday after mass	Morning tea

**For all inquiries/confirmation/RSVPs please call or text Frank 0459 504 625 or Trevor 0407 150 399**

**Mother's Day Stall**  
Save the date, 10<sup>th</sup> May, Mother's Day!  
Proceeds to go towards the hall project.



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**Sunday 31 May 2026 | 2pm**  
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Please bring a plate of afternoon tea to share  
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Two common questions I had growing up as a Catholic were: “What is prayer?” and “How do I pray?” Fast-forward to today, when I am an ordained priest. And whether I’m on a retreat, at church after Mass, or really just about any other place (including getting a drink with friends!), I get these same questions.

Why do these questions keep coming up? Because they are great questions! They speak to our longing to grow closer to God, to be in a relationship. Prayer is an essential means to cultivating our relationship with God.

So let’s explore the fascinating topic of prayer. This article will explore both of these essential questions: What is prayer? And how do I pray?

### What is prayer?

To begin, what is prayer? A lot of people understand prayer as asking God for things, what is often called petitionary prayer. Throughout Christian history, believers have encouraged each other to pray for their own needs as well as the needs of others. A mother prays for the healing of her sick child; a church prays for the comfort and security of a war-torn nation; a child asks for a good grade on a test, while an elderly person asks that God grant them a peaceful death. We pray for all sorts of things: safe travel, good physical health, financial security. At its best, this form of prayer acknowledges our limitations and our real need for God.

But can prayer look differently? As a kid, I remember asking my mom what prayer was and she had a helpful response: prayer is a conversation with God.

When we pray, we are entering into a conversation with God. We are building up and engaging in a relationship with God. We are living out our deep desire to grow closer to God and to receive what God longs to give all of us: God’s unconditional love, which is always available, always freely offered, and always life-giving.

Another helpful way of understanding prayer comes from the Jesuit theologian Walter Burghardt, who once expressed contemplation/prayer as “taking a long, loving look at the real.” Let’s break this definition down into parts.

First, prayer begins with taking a long look. It’s looking at reality like slow-motion cameras at a sporting event. We get the chance to slow down and to take a closer look, which may reveal to us things we might have otherwise missed in our fast-paced lives.

Second, prayer is also a long, loving look. When I reflect on reality, do I look with harsh, judgmental eyes, or with the loving, tender, and merciful eyes of God?

Lastly, in prayer we look lovingly at the real: the reality of my life and the world. We start with reality because God does so through the Incarnation. God undertakes the work of salvation not by fleeing human reality, but by entering into it. In the ultimate act of solidarity, God became one of us in the person of Jesus. And Jesus experienced all that reality encompasses: from joy and laughter to suffering and death. So we know that God can hold the messiness of our reality and of our world. God can handle whatever we express in prayer. Because love holds all things.

How do I pray?

So prayer is a conversation with God. This understanding of prayer gives me both a great sense of freedom...and nervousness.

I feel free because prayer does not have to be a formula. I don’t have to “have it all together” when I take time to pray. In fact, sometimes I may not know what to say at all. I may be at a complete loss for words. Thankfully the Church has collected and provided prayers over its long history to help us express to God the deepest parts of our heart. Just think of the Our Father, given to us by Jesus himself. Or the Hail Mary. These prayers remind us of Jesus’ reassurance to be direct in what we are seeking and that sometimes we don’t need to use so many words.

But I also feel nervous about prayer, since prayer is not limited to following a single formula. All kinds of doubts and questions can come to my mind. “Am I doing this right?” “Does God really care about what I have to share?” “My life isn’t as bad as others. God has enough to deal with.” But where are these feelings coming from? Certainly not from God! We know that God wants to be in relationship with us, and always welcomes our prayers.

So let’s not forget the other side of this relationship. If prayer is supposed to be a conversation, we need to remember that it should include both speaking and listening. This may seem obvious, but how often do we forget it! How often do I jump into prayer just to list all the intentions I have and the people I want to pray for, and then I end with a sign of the cross and move on!

Prayer, then, is the courage to listen to the gentle voice of love. Listening means allowing God space to speak to us: through the quiet of prayer, in our own deep desires, through the Scripture, or through the words of someone meaningful in our lives. As in any relationship, I am invited not only to speak, but also to listen with an open mind and heart.

### Tips for Praying

There is no simple formula for praying, but here are a few tips for preparing yourself to enter into prayer.

First, what we do before praying is very important. Usually it’s not helpful to rush into prayer. Perhaps spend a few moments quieting down and settling into a prayerful and comfortable position.

Second, finding a good, comfortable space where you are free of distractions can make a real difference. Silence and solitude can help us focus on reading a Scripture passage, or looking back on moments from my day/life, and then reflect on how God may be speaking to me through them. A quiet place can help with that deeper listening to God’s presence, as well as notice our response.

Lastly, let’s admit that we might not always be able to set up for a good prayer period. We might not have time to quiet down and find a good, comfortable space. But we can trust that God meets us where we are. That means God can speak to us in the noise and confusion of our day. If you only have time to stop for a moment, call to mind God’s presence, and speak a petition...that’s prayer. And God delights in it!

### Methods of Prayer

Over the centuries, the Christian understanding of prayer has developed and deepened. Through all those years, the Catholic Church has discovered that there’s no one-size-fits-all method of prayer. As a result, several different methods of prayer have been experienced and developed, which countless numbers of people have benefitted from in their journey of faith.

Here are a few classic methods of prayer that you might want to investigate more and consider putting into practice in your own prayer life.

- **The Rosary:** This popular devotional prayer invites us to meditate on the saving mysteries of Jesus’ life and the faithful witness of Mary, our Mother in faith.
- **Lectio Divina:** In this prayer of “divine reading,” we listen to how God speaks to us through slowly reading and contemplating Scripture or other texts.
- **Centering Prayer:** We focus silently on a sacred word that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God’s presence within us.
- **Ignatian Contemplation:** We use our imagination to place ourselves in a scene from Scripture using all our senses and take notice of how God may be speaking to us.
- **The Ignatian Examen:** An opportunity for us to prayerfully review our day in the presence of God.

\*\*\*\*\*

When I was a novice about to start my 30-day silent retreat doing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, my Director of Novices encouraged me to start each prayer period by first imagining God gazing upon me with loving eyes. And he said to do this for the length of an “Our Father” (which, said at a gentle pace, can be about 30 seconds). That was the context from which everything else flowed.

Prayer is about being in relationship with God. It’s not always easy, but it can be full of grace. When we take a long, loving look at the real we have the opportunity to behold ourselves and the world as God does—with tender mercy, compassion, and love. Knowing the truth of God’s love for us in prayer can be a game-changer.

God is always reaching out to us. Prayer is our response.

<https://thejesuitpost.org/2022/05/catholic-101-what-is-prayer-how-do-i-pray/>

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