

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."

Reflection

Paul, in the second reading (Rom 9:1-5), anguishes over so many of his Jewish compatriots not accepting Jesus as the Messiah; the Lectionary then skips most of this section (chapters 9-11), picking up only three brief excerpts from chapter 11 over the next two Sundays. Those who use Paul to foster anti-Jewish sentiment and actions violate the tenets of love of God and love of neighbour, and so do violence to Scripture. Paul observes that the Jews are God's children by adoption in Abraham their ancestor, and explains that Gentile Christians are also God's children by adoption, but in Jesus who is of course born of the "stock" of Abraham. In effect, Gentiles Christians are shoots grafted onto the Jewish stock, not replacing the original growth, but joining it. Thus he presents an equality of Jews and Gentile Christians, but he laments as waywardness when other Jews do not accept Jesus. A unannounced reading of this fed contentions between Jews and Christians over who has the legitimate claim as true Israel and heirs of Abraham. It took until last century's horrors in Europe to make clear where such false reasoning leads. That horror jolted church leaders in re-evaluating our rhetoric, and resulted in statements at Vatican II (Lumen Gentium 16; Nostra Aetate 4) to confirm that God does not repent of entering an enduring covenant with the Jews (cf. Rom 11:28-29). Homilists today have the opportunity of tackling the return in some places of irrational, anti-Jewish sentiment.

The first reading (1 Kgs 19:9, 11-13) and gospel (Matt 14:22-33) return to the common theophanic themes drawing from powerful element forces we experience in the world. There is hardly a more precarious place to be than in a boat in high seas. The power in the swell and wind reminds us of the danger of natural forces that easily overwhelm us. Jesus had sent the disciples ahead by boat while he went up into the hills to pray, and so from evening until shortly before dawn they battle heavy sea and strong wind; they were in darkness, wind, and waves. Like Genesis 1 with its watery chaos in the midst of darkness, the hovering Spirit, and the power of God's voice overwhelming and shaping the cosmos' chaos, the disciples in the midst of the darkness and chaos see Jesus and become agitated. This vision speaks, saying, Be not afraid. Some translations say Jesus called out, but the Greek is a neutral verb indicating simply the act of uttering, and is found several hundred times in the Septuagint,

especially in divine communications. Whether like thunder or whispering, this voice commands attention. Here the utterance begins with the same assurance (Courage!) found on the lips of Moses before dividing the sea (Exod 14:13) and at Sinai (Exod 20:20). It continues literally with I am, the reference to the unutterable name of God, followed by the consoling message, do not be afraid. The account is so like post-resurrection scenes that it is sometimes considered to have begun as one. Here, unique to Matthew, Peter responds in faith, but without the certainty he exhibits in John 21:7 where Peter leapt into the sea in his haste to reach the risen Lord on the shore; here he takes fright in the act of faith and, faltering, began to sink. The Lord takes his hand (a frequent gesture in healing accounts) and they get into the boat; the wind abates (employing the same word as the Septuagint when the waters of Noah's flood abate). The disciples are moved to call Jesus "Son of God", the title hitherto in Matthew used only by the tempter and demons. It is later used by the mockers at the cross, but finally in faith by the awe-struck Gentile centurion. This account weaves together various elements in Scripture pointing in the same direction: consolation in the midst of overwhelming crisis. Perhaps it was aimed at a community experiencing doubt in hardship and persecution; the community is reminded that God is experienced in the midst of awesome and frightening signs, and that Christ has been through the catastrophe of death, and from the resurrection he assures us that he is with us always.



The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

15th of August is a day of obligation.

We will have two masses celebrated.

Vigil Mass will be at 6:30pm on

Friday 14th August

and then the

Feast Day Mass on at 9:00am on

Saturday the 15th August.

Every parishioner is encouraged and requested to attend one of these Masses.

The Saturday evening Mass will be the Vigil Mass for Sunday, not of the Feast Day.



**SJXXIII Parish
Pastoral Council**

Dear Parishioners,

As we come to the end of the 3 year term for our present parish council, on behalf of the whole parish, I would like to thank them for their dedicated service, words of wisdom and hard work in making our parish a better community.

After reviewing the effectivity, a better functioning and the synodal way we will be having more representations. The next Pastoral council will be composed of all the ministry head, a few representatives from the young people and few appointees by the parish priest. It will a bigger term, then a Synodal way of functioning.

Thank you once again to our outgoing Council members for their faithful service to our community.

Fr Jolly

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.

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 <i>during school days</i>
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 <i>until 10.30am</i> 5:15 - 5:45pm <i>before the</i> <i>Vigil Mass or upon request</i>

Sacraments

Sun	12pm Baptism <i>by appointment</i>
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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
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



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/>

Entrance Antiphon

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

First Reading

1 Kings 19:9, 11-13

Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord God.

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he went into the cave and spent the night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' Then the Lord himself went by. There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 84:9-14

R. Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace. His help is near for those who fear him and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**

Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit. Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

Second Reading

Romans 9:1-5

I would willingly be condemned if it could help my people.

What I want to say is no pretence; I say it in union with Christ - it is the truth - my conscience in union with the Holy Spirit assures me of it too. What I want to say is this: my sorrow is so great, my mental anguish so endless, I would willingly be condemned and be cut off from Christ if it could help my brothers of Israel, my own flesh and blood. They were adopted as sons, they were given the glory and the covenants; the Law and the ritual were drawn up for them, and the promises were made to them. They are descended from the patriarchs and from their flesh and blood came Christ who is above all, God for ever blessed! Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

Ps 129:5

Alleluia, alleluia!

I hope in the Lord, I trust in his word. Alleluia!

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

Fr Eugene Stockton, William Pinheiro, Minda Cortez, Christopher Adamecki

Remembrances:

Death Anniversary

Rita Fernandes, Nigel Reynolds, Aubrey Athayde

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

Thanksgiving

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

Gospel

Matthew 14:22-33

Command me to come to you over the water.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord', he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon

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



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 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**

How to contribute

Be part of that good news. Let us be generous, cheerful and rejoice in the goodness of the Lord. For your donations:

- ★ Dedicated "Tap & go" machines at both entrances
 - ★ Bank transfer
Account name - Glenwood Stanhope Gardens St John 23rd Parish
BSB 067 950 **A/C** 100002469
Reference - BD (your name)
 - ★ BPOINT – For credit card donation visit
<https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/StJohnXXIIPGSG>
 - ★ scan QR Code
- Thank you for your support.

GOOD NEWS



Thank You!

FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT TO OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Your time, talents, prayers, and support are helping us build a stronger parish and a brighter future together.

PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING A BRICK BY SCANNING THE QR CODE ABOVE.



Dear Parishioners and friends,

As we begin the construction of our long-awaited parish hall and offices, our pathway from the main school and parking to the church will remain closed all the time from the 10th August until the construction is finished.

Our left side of the Church where the present deck is situated, this will be also locked. Those who will park in the school and parish parking area must use the pathway beside the main road to come to the church.

Few more steps of walking will strengthen our muscle power!

Sorry for the inconvenience.

Fr Jolly



New Parish Hall

New office and meeting Room

Air-conditioned Church

TARGET AMOUNT TO BE RAISED
\$1,000,000.00

MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE PARISH THROUGH DIFFERENT FUND-RAISING EFFORTS AND DONATIONS:
\$236,901.00

CASH NEEDED TO BE RAISED TO MEET OUR TARGET:
\$763,099.00

Together, we can build our future.
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT.

THANK YOU TO OUR 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
McGrath Northwest

McGrath



CLIMBING LADDERS
 Early Learning & Montessori Centre

Where the journey begins
 For children aged 6 weeks to 6

EXPLORE OUR LEARNING PLACES
 (02) 8610 3775 Stanhope Gardens
 (02) 8678 9149 Rouse Hill

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

☎ 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

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

www.celstanhope.catholic.edu.au

Holy Cross Primary

49 Meurants Lane, Glenwood

Principal: Attila Lendvai

☎ (02) 8664 7100

✉ holycross@parra.catholic.edu.au

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

www.stjohn23stanhope.catholic.edu.au

Praying together

When we come together in prayer, our faith is strengthened and our community grows closer.

Join us every Tuesday at 7:00 PM at SJ23rd Parish Church as we pray the rosary and a novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

This is an opportunity to deepen your faith and open your heart to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Rosary Statue Family Roster

Aug	4	11	18	25	
	Jacob	Meena B	Sebastian	Pangilinan E	
Sep	1	8	15	22	29
	Fernandes	Jakob B	Tangunan	Erasmus	Jayakoddy
Oct	6	13	20	27	
	Erasmus	Sebastian	Shalini	Ring	
Nov	3	10	17	24	
	Available	Available	Available	Available	

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

Rosary statue contacts Techie Sarlabus techie.sarlabus@gmail.com or
Melva Paguinto emipi85@yahoo.com.au



Diocesan News

Adult Confirmations 2026

The Office for Worship will host a Catechesis and Formation Day for those candidates (16+) interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation this year. This will be on Saturday 29th August, 9.30am – 2.00pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre in Blacktown. A light lunch will be provided on the day. It is recommended that all sponsors attend the catechesis day. A contribution of \$40 is suggested from the candidates to assist in covering the Catechesis Day.

The Confirmation will take place on Tuesday 1st September, 2026 at 7:30pm at the Cathedral. Please Note: Enrolment forms and a copy of Baptismal Certificates should be sent to OFW before Monday 18th August, 2026. For more information, please contact the Office for Worship ofw@parracatholic.org or 0460 037 795.

Natural Family Planning

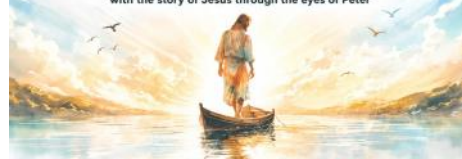
MET Natural Fertility: Sympto-Thermal Method (STM) Initial Instruction via Teams August 27

Tuesday 27 August, 7:30-8:30pm. The most important symptom alerting women to ovulation is used in all methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP). The Sympto-Thermal Method includes measuring your basal body temperature, which also confirms ovulation! This method is 99.6% effective in postponing pregnancy and helps couples identify the best time to achieve pregnancy! If you would like to refresh your knowledge and skills or begin NFP then this is the session for you! To register visit parracatholic.org/natural-fertility

SPECIAL EOYF / EARLY BIRD GROUP OFFER

Be The Witness

A powerful musical encounter
with the story of Jesus through the eyes of Peter



10-13 September 2026
**Riverside Theatres
Parramatta**

Group Bookings 10+ Concessions Available Limited Seats

Invite your parish, ministry, family and friends

Scan for
Group Bookings



www.bethewitness.com.au

With the support and
encouragement of
Bishop Vincent Long

Presented by
Mary, Queen of the Family Parish,
Blacktown

You are invited to attend a

Married Couples' RETREAT

"Reflect, Renew & Reconnect"

Saturday 5th September 2026
Bishop Bede Heather Centre,
1 Marion Street, Blacktown
8:30am to 4:30pm

\$45 per couple
Bookings essential
Places strictly limited
Register at:
parracatholic.org/marriedcouplesretreat/

Sessions
Expressions of Love
Living your Vocation of Marriage
7 Principles of making Marriage Work
Creating a Marriage First Aid Kit
Couple Prayer + Commitment Ceremony + Mass with Bishop Vincent

Included
Lunch + refreshments

Dear friends,



Fr Eugene Stockton, our Blue Mountains Hermit, and retired Parish Priest died peacefully today at Buckland Aged Care in Springwood. He was 91 years old.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday 14 August 2026 at 11 am at St Thomas Aquinas Parish, Springwood.

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of Fr Eugene and remember his loved ones in your prayers.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Peter Williams AM

Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

Diocese of Parramatta

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
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.



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 18 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 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 gnite.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*



	21 AUG	4 SEP
16 SEP		

Young at Hearts Seniors Group
Contact either of the following:

Frank Coleiro - 0459 504625
Trevor Coutinho - 0407 150399

Vinnies
join the good works

For more info contact
Debra Pitre
0412 570333

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.

Contact: Joyce Celestino

☎ 0450 001 047

✉ joyce_claire16@hotmail.com



RCIA Enquiry Session

The parish RCIA team is having the enquiry session on Thursday 20th August 2026 at 7.00pm in the Church kitchen area.

If you have family or friends or anyone who might be interested in understanding our Catholic faith, please invite them to this session.

The RCIA programme will commence on Wednesday, 2nd September 2026.



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.

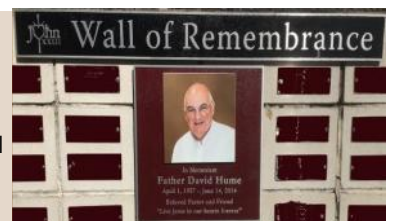


COLUMBARIUM

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



Community Events

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!



August Calendar

Mon	10	<i>Saint Lawrence (F)</i> 8:30am - Mass
Tues	11	<i>Saint Clare (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary Novena prayer <i>Our Lady of Perpetual Help</i>
Wed	12	9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
Thurs	13	9:15am - Mass
Fri	14	<i>Saint Maximilian Mary Kolbe (M)</i> 9:15am - Mass
Sat	15	<i>The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (S)</i> 9:15am - Mass 6:00pm - Mass
Sun	15	7.30am 9:00am 10:30am masses 6:00pm - Mass

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS



 Sate anyone? It's back. Join us for a day of delicious Indonesian sate (satay) dish with other savory and sweets.	30 August - Satay and others after the morning masses	Hosted by Indonesia Community
Father's Day celebration Celebrate Fathers with Us – A Dinner for a Cause!	18 September - The Hills Lodge	Hosted by OLPH prayer group



A **BOWL OF SOUP** can do more than warm your hands—it can warm a heart, lift a spirit, and bring hope to someone in need.

This weekend, the St Vincent de Paul Society Conference of Stanhope Gardens, invites you to our Soup Sale in the church foyer following the **Saturday Vigil 6.00 pm Mass and the Sunday 7:30, 9 and 10:30 am Masses.**

There will be a delicious selection of homemade soups prepared by members of the St Vincent de Paul Society Stanhope Gardens Conference.

For just **\$6**, enjoy a comforting homemade soup and a fresh bread roll, while helping bring hope, dignity, and support to local families and individuals facing hardship, homelessness, illness, unemployment, or mental health challenges.

As you leave Mass, we invite you to stop by and purchase a bowl of soup and bread roll.

The **Blaze Youth Leaders** would like to sincerely thank everyone who supported our soup fundraiser last weekend.

Your support means so much to us as we continue to prepare for our journey to World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul. Thank you for your kindness, encouragement and continued prayers. We are truly blessed to be part of such a caring and supportive parish community.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we prepare for this exciting pilgrimage and all that God has in store for us.

MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP PRAYER GROUP ST JOHN XXIII PARISH

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Celebrate Fathers with Us – Dinner for a Cause!

This September, join the OLPH Prayer Group as we honour and celebrate all fathers with a special event, "A Tribute to All Fathers", on 18 September 2026.

Treat your fathers with family and friends to an enjoyable evening of celebration at the Hills Lodge, Castle Hill.

Enjoy a two-course plated dinner with drinks, be entertained by live music to set the mood and there's an exciting surprise raffle draw where all attendees will have the chance to win!

With only 100 seats available, we encourage you to book early to avoid disappointment.

Come together to honour all fathers and father figures who have enriched our lives, create treasured memories and support a worthy cause. All proceeds from this special evening will go towards the ongoing hall project of St. John 23rd Parish.



Building Our Community Together

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:

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- 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.



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

The Ten Commandments: List, Biblical Origin, Meaning and Catholic Understanding

Stephen Spiewak

The Ten Commandments: Listed in Order

The Ten Commandments are as famous as they are powerful:

1. I am the LORD your God; you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. (via Catechism of the Catholic Church)

Even someone who has never opened a Bible has undoubtedly heard the phrase and could probably identify "Thou shall not kill" or "Thou shall not steal" as examples of some of the teachings.

The format—10 clear, simple directives—has proven so popular that we see its structure repeated constantly in everything from the 10 commandments of teaching and the 10 commandments of leadership to even something as trivial as the 10 commandments of baseball-watching etiquette!

To fully appreciate how important the Ten Commandments are to our prayer lives today, it's best to fully appreciate them in their full historical context.

Ten Commandments in the Bible

We receive the Ten Commandments, sometimes called the Decalogue ("ten words" in Greek), in Exodus 20, when Moses ascended up Mt. Sinai to meet God, who "descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly." (Exodus 19: 18)

The Revised Standard Version of the Bible lays out the Ten Commandments as follows:

1 Then God spoke all these words:

2 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3 you shall have no other gods before me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6 but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

12 Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

13 You shall not murder.

14 You shall not commit adultery.

15 You shall not steal.

16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

18 When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, 19 and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." 20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin." 21 Then the people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

So important were the Ten Commandments to the early understanding of natural law that Moses repeated them again in Deuteronomy.

But it's not until the New Testament that we entirely grasp the Ten Commandments.

Jesus and the Ten Commandments

As important as the Ten Commandments were in the Old Testament, we can't fully appreciate their meaning without understanding them in relation to Jesus.

As the Catechism tells us, "Beginning with the Old Testament, the sacred books refer to the 'ten words,' but it is in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ that their full meaning will be revealed."

Being a follower of Jesus means following, not forgetting, the commandments.

"The Law has not been abolished (Mt 5:17)," the Catechism teaches us, "but rather, man is invited to rediscover it in the person of his Master who is its perfect fulfillment."

The first three Commandments refer to love of God; the next seven, love of neighbor. When Jesus is challenged by the Pharisees in Matthew 22, he summarizes the Ten Commandments into two concise directives.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

These two instructions, sometimes called the Greatest Commandments, complement each other and beckon us to allow our love for God to move us to do His will and be His hands and feet here on earth.

"The love of God always comes first," writes Brother Silas Henderson, SDS. "Our response to that love should take us outside of ourselves as we are asked to share with others the love and compassion that we have received from God."

To understand the connection between the Ten Commandments and Jesus is to recognize God at work in humanity across thousands of years.

The Ten Commandments continue to be relevant, and popes through the years have helped guide us through a contemporary understanding of them.

The Ten Commandments and Pope Pius XII, Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI

Various popes throughout history have helped us give us new lenses through which to understand the 10 instructions given to us so long ago.

In 1944, Pope Pius XII beautifully spoke about the Ten Commandments, describing them as steps for Christians to climb, to draw closer to Christ and elevate man above the moral abyss, challenging us to "contribute to making men fit to receive this salvation, leading them to the mountain of the Lord."

Pope John Paul II beautifully described the Ten Commandments as "written in stone; but before that, they were written on the human heart as the universal moral law, valid in every time and place."

Describing the Commandments as signs from God that help us understand good from evil, Pope Benedict XVI said, "when man ignores the Commandments in his life, not only does he alienate himself from God and abandon the alliance with him but he also distances himself from life and lasting happiness."

The 10 Commandments also were something that captivated St. Augustine, who wrote about them in great detail.

Pope Francis's message around the Ten Commandments might be the most graceful of all.

The Ten Commandments as Loving Words

So how are we to understand the Ten Commandments in our modern world, which feels so far from Mt. Sinai?

In a 2018 general audience address, Pope Francis addressed the Ten Commandments and explored the etymology of the Decalogue ("ten words") term, characterizing the Ten Commandments as "loving words, not oppressive commands."

"A command is a communication that does not require dialogue. A word, instead, is the essential medium of relationship as a dialogue," Pope Francis said. "When someone speaks to our heart, our loneliness is over. It receives a word; there is communication, and the commandments are God's words: God communicates through these ten Words, and he awaits our response."

Pope Francis recognizes the Ten Commandments as a way to draw closer to God through dialogue—to allow our hearts to receive his words.

Ten Commandments and Prayer

How are God's words reaching your heart?

When we spend time with Scripture, through programs like Bible in a Year, we create a time and medium for God's words to mold our hearts. Lectio Divina is another great way to let God's words begin a dialogue within us.

Build a habit of daily prayer and listen to God's word. Let those words, like the Commandments, prompt a conversation where you respond to God.

<https://ballow.com/blog/10-commandments/>

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