THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME **25 OCTOBER 2026**



Welcome to the community of the Catholic Parish of St John 23rd Glenwood-Stanhope Gardens where the love of Christ is shining in so many ways.

PARISH 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*

PARISH OFFICE

Office Hours
Tue - Fri 8.30 - 4.00pm
Office Contacts
☎(02) 8883 5981
⚲ 160 Perfection Avenue, Stanhope Gardens NSW 2768
🖂 PO Box 23, Stanhope Gardens, NSW 2768

CLERGY

Parish Priest: Fr Jolly Chacko
jolly@john23rd.org.au
0417 541 637 (*emergency only*)
Asst 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:

Maintenance issues: David Gorkic
maintenance@john23rd.org.au
Columbarium queries:
columbarium@john23rd.org.au

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, NSW
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

GOSPEL REFLECTION

It is easy at times to lose track of where our Lectionary has taken us in the Hebrew Scriptures as we move about in it erratically, following perceived links to the day's gospel reading. This emerges from our understanding that the Hebrew Scriptures are to be read in the light of Christ, that is, as oriented to him. In today's first reading (Exodus 22:20-26) we are back in that part of the Exodus where the tenets of the newly made Covenant are being listed, ready to be given to the people. In this section the Hebrews are reminded of where they have been; they were molested foreigners in the land of Egypt, and are to be mindful that they not do the same to others. In effect, they should treat others as they themselves would wish to be treated, not as they were treated; they should love, that is, cherish or act well towards others, especially those in need. The responsorial psalm picks up the corollary, Love God, in preparation for the gospel in which we have another encounter between Jesus and some Pharisees. There is also a clue that we have missed something, since reference is made to Jesus having silenced the Sadducees. That encounter (Matt 22:23-33), concerning belief in the resurrection, is omitted from the Lectionary for Year A (Luke's version is read in Year C).

As the tension rises, this series of confrontations with various groups unfolds in the Temple, between the delivery of two sets of parables. Here we are back to the Pharisees in what seems a rather benign encounter, but we do not hear the end of this confrontation, when Jesus questions the Pharisees in return, and silences them too. In this part, although the Pharisees attempt to disconcert Jesus, there is no disagreement over his response that the Law is summarised thus: Love the Lord your God with your whole being, and your neighbour as your own self. Though people often credit this summarising combination as a particular insight of Jesus, it is a standard construction within Jewish thought that is well attested elsewhere. Such misconceptions often prove extraordinarily tenacious, so homilists would do well not to perpetuate the false claim that it is the invention of Jesus, or that it represents an approach that transcends the Law and a superiority of Christianity over Judaism. Jesus is referred to several times by others as Teacher (or Master, in our translation), because he was recognised as a teacher of the Law.

The various confrontations over interpretations of the Law fit within the broader context of differing schools of thought. Beyond their opposing beliefs concerning resurrection, the Sadducees and Pharisees had significantly divergent interpretations of some laws, and the Sadducees completely rejected the Pharisees use of Oral Law. Jesus has much in common with the Pharisees, but he rejected their strict interpretations that impossibly bound people. Little is said in the Gospels and Acts about the Sadducees, yet they seem (as reported elsewhere) to have shared Jesus' rejection of severe Pharisaic scrupulosity and obsession with purity, but as Roman collaborators they were disturbed by his threatening of the status quo. The Sadducees are the ones who were most critically involved in bringing about his execution. Turning back to the teaching, the second law concerns the arena in which the first is put into practice. Three practical examples are given in the first reading, one regarding foreigners, one compatriots, and one unspecified. The examples given throughout the Law very clearly indicate that neighbour means all others, not just compatriots, and even your enemies. Some extend even to your enemy's livestock (see Exodus 23:4-5). These, and those in the first reading, should be read as examples rather than as restrictive rules; it does not intend to say that you may molest compatriots, but not foreigners, nor that you may play the usurer with poor foreigners but not with a poor compatriot. The second summarised law is often misconstrued as "love others in the same way that you love yourself", but that is not the point; it is to love the other as though yourself. We find the highest example of this in Christ himself, who, just as the head loves the body, loves his Body, the Church.

MASS TIMES

Mon	8:30am
Tues-Fri	9:15am
Sat	9.00am, 6pm Vigil
Sun	7:30am 9am 10:30am 6pm
2nd Sat	7:30pm Indonesian Mass

DEVOTION AND PRAYERS

Tues	7:00pm Rosary | novena prayers (*Church*)
1st Tues	7.30pm Novena Mass *Our Lady of Perpetual Help*
1st Fri	7:30pm Novena Mass *Sacred Heart of Jesus*
Thurs	7:00pm Lectio Divina
Fri	6.30pm *Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group (office)* Pauline Camilleri 0407 417039

EXPOSITION + BENEDICTION

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

SACRAMENTS

Reconciliation *After the weekday masses*
Sat after 9am mass to 10.30am
5:15 - 5:45pm before the Vigil Mass or upon request
Baptism *by appointment*
Sun 12pm Baptism

SPECIAL BLESSINGS

Blessings during masses

1st Sun	Birthday celebrants
3rd Sun	Wedding anniversary

HOMEBOUND?

Homebound and would like to receive Holy Communion please contact the parish office or 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

Please inform the acolyte before mass if you are gluten intolerant so that you may still receive communion with a low gluten host.

JOIN & BE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Welcome pack at the church foyer or scan
Be part of our mailing list,
Communications@john23rd.org.au

Entrance Antiphon

Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice; turn to the Lord and his strength;

First Reading — *Exodus 22:20-26*

If you are harsh with the widow or the orphan, my anger will rage against you.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."'

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Responsorial Psalm — *Ps 17:2-4, 47, 51*

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength, my rock, my fortress, my saviour. My God is the rock where I take refuge; my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold. The Lord is worthy of all praise: when I call I am saved from my foes. **R.**

Long life to the Lord, my rock! Praised be the God who saves me. He has given great victories to his king and shown his love for his anointed. **R.**

Second Reading — *1 Thessalonians 1:5-10*

You turned away from idols to serve God and await his Son.

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread - and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Acclamation — *John 14:23*

Alleluia, alleluia!
All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them. Alleluia!

Gospel — *Matthew 22:34-40*

You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Communion Antiphon

We will ring out our joy at your saving help and exult in the name of our God.



Hall | Office 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 progress with the construction of our Parish Hall/Office. 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/StJohnXXIIIPGSG*
- can QR Code

Thank you for your support.
Parish fund raising, finance, Building committees and Fr. Jolly

SBS SECURE BUILDING SOLUTIONS

WEEKLY UPDATE REPORT
5 October to 10 October

Milestone Summary
✓Contract Award 6/07/26
✓ Building Permit Issued 22/07/26
✓ Commencement On Site 10/08/26
☺ Practical completion 5/02/27

Completed Items this period

- Install Agg line and Waterproof – RW3
- Back fill – RW3
- Formwork and steel reinforcement - Columns
- Pour Columns & BW1 core fill – 02/10 (Pending weather)
- Block Delivery

Activities being completed this week onsite

- Install Stage 1 Scaffold
- Install formwork GF Slab
- Reinforcement steel delivery
- Electrical service pathways
- Hydraulic & drainage rough-in
- Start GF Slab reinforcement





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 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

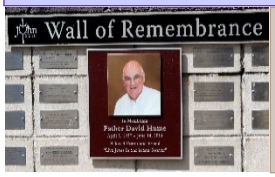
OCT	**6**	**13**	**20**	**27**	
	Erasmo	*Sebastian*	*Shalini*	Ring	
NOV	**3**	**10**	**17**	**24**	
	Barnouti	Tina B.	Meena B	Jacob	
DEC	**1**	**8**	**15**	**22**	**29**
	Shalini	Paguinto	*Available*	Fernandes	Fernandes
JAN	**5**	**12**	**19**	**26**	
	Available	*Available*	*Available*	Cayas	

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

If you want to be included in the roster for the Rosary statue, please contact: Techie Sarlabus *techie.sarlabus@gmail.com* or Melva Paguinto *emcipi85@yahoo.com.au*

COLUMBARIUM
Considering purchasing a niche? Spaces are still available. These are open to parishioners, families, friends & our neighbouring parishes.
Please contact the Parish Office.





MEMORIAL WALL
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

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

Evelyn Datoc, Remedios Munoz, Veronica GamboaYu-Asensi, Luigi (Gino) Bruzonne, Fr Sunny Ner

Remembrances:

Death Anniversary

Michelle Tereza Mendes, Felina Maglaya, Ramona Bautista

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

Thanksgiving

Renato Pangilinan

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

Diocesan News

Music Workshop for Advent - November 5

All musicians in the diocese are invited to attend the Office for Worship's upcoming music workshop on November 5th.
Mr Eric Grella will focus this workshop on choosing music that is suitable for the liturgical season of Advent and will be present to answer any questions you may have. To register
https://parracatholic.org/events/music-workshop-for-advent/#register

It will be held on Thursday 5th Nov at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre from 7pm-8:30pm.

FaithFEED Echo - November 6

Looking for a space that brings together creativity, music and meaningful conversations? Searching for a place where gifts among those in their 20s, 30s and 40s can be celebrated and empowered?
TFF ECHO brings together creativity, music and meaningful conversations that echo the God who works in us, among us and around us!
Register for TFF ECHO – an experience from The FaithFeed. Food, drink and live music provided! Doors open at 7pm with live music from a 7:30pm start.
Note: This is an 18+ event only.
Register online at: The FaithFeed ECHO (6 November) | Diocese of Parramatta

Diocesan Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass - November 15

The annual Diocese of Parramatta Wedding Anniversary Mass will be held on Sunday 15 November at 2:30pm at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta.
Fr Fernando Montano VG, will celebrate Solemn Mass, followed by afternoon at the Cathedral Hall.
Couples celebrating a significant wedding anniversary will receive a certificate.
Couples and their families are warmly invited to light refreshments in the Cathedral Hall after Mass.
Please register online at: Diocesan Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass (15 November) | Diocese of Parramatta
You can also register via email mailto:marriage@parracatholic.orgor phone 0408 233 478, please include full names, years of marriage and number of family attending.

Good to Know (cont'd)

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Modern Apparitions

In the last century, Our Lady has continued to appear to her beloved children and guide them through the dark times in which we are living. She appeared as Our Lady of All Nations to a young nun, Sister Agnes Sasagawa of the Handmaids of the Eucharist, in Akita, Japan in 1973. She appeared as Reconciler of Peoples and Nations to Maria Esperanza of Betania, Venezuela beginning in 1976. She appeared in San Nicolas, Argentina beginning in 1983 as Our Lady of the Rosary to an ordinary housewife with very little education named Gladys. From 1981-1989, our Blessed Mother appeared to a group of children in Kibeho, Rwanda, one of which later died a martyr during the genocide. Each of these apparitions came with dire warnings for their respective nations and the world. But the messages also came with hope. In every instance, the Blessed Mother called urgently for repentance, prayer, and penance. She especially urged daily rosaries and fasting to be offered as penance for sinners. As at Fatima, she frequently promised that in the end, her Immaculate Heart would triumph.

Living Your Life in Union with Mary

St. Louis De Montfort, in his zeal, developed a method of consecration to Jesus through Mary revealed in his writings True Devotion to Mary and Secrets of Mary. Consecration involves intentional prayers accepting Mary as mother with the goal of a life of union with Mary. On earth, Mary was a woman immersed in daily life, a mother who cared for her family, and a faithful servant who answered God's call with courage and humility. Her life looked ordinary in many ways, and yet it was extraordinary in her perfect surrender to God's will. As Queen of the Lord's Table, her guiding hand and nourishment of grace allow her children to daily conform to God's plan even when it's difficult as she lovingly forms us into the Body of Christ. Mary shows us that sanctity is not about extraordinary deeds, but about extraordinary love.
In his book Life in Union with Mary, Rev. Emile Neubert, S.M. writes, "After a short time the soul notices that the Mother unites it more closely to the Son, and this realization strengthens its union with both of them. The soul will make a distinct advance in this double union when it discovers from its union with Mary that imitation of the Mother must consist not so much in reproducing her actions and virtues as in copying her interior dispositions." St. Louis De Montfort emphasizes, "This devotion is an easy, short, perfect and secure way of arriving at union with our Lord, in which the perfection of a Christian consists."
Mary is not just a distant figure in heaven; she is a mother who cares for her children and intercedes for them. As we journey through life, let's devote ourselves to Mary with trust and love, confident she will unite us to her Son. Just as Mary sat with the apostles awaiting Pentecost, confidently expecting the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, Mary now patiently waits for us to entrust ourselves into her care, and enable her to shower us with His Holy Spirit.
https://covenantcatholic.org/marian-devotion/understanding-marian-devotion/

Diocesan News



MET Pastoral Formation

OFFICE FOR WORSHIP
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA

the well

DIOCESE of PARRAMATTA

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!

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



November is traditionally a month of remembrance and prayer for our dearly departed. The month begins with the Solemnity of All Saints on 1 November, followed by the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day) on 2 November. Although these are no longer Holy Days of Obligation in Australia, the Church continues to encourage the faithful to pray for those who have died.

Throughout November, a **Book of Remembrance** is usually placed near the sanctuary, allowing parishioners to write the names of their departed loved ones. These names are remembered in the prayers of our parish community as we entrust our dearly departed to God's loving mercy and eternal peace.

October Calendar		
MON	**26**	8:30am - Mass
TUES	**27**	9:15am - Mass 7:00pm - Rosary | Rosary Prayer *Our Lady of Perpetual Help*
WED	**28**	*Saints Simon & Jude (F)* 9:15am - Mass 8:00pm - Holy Hour
THURS	**29**	9:15am - Mass
FRI	**30**	9:15am - Mass
SAT	**31**	9:15am - Mass 3:30pm - Holyween Celebration 6:00pm - Mass
NOVEMBER		
SUN	**1**	*All Saints (S)* 7.30am 9:00am 10:30am masses 6:00pm - Mass

YARD SALE

"Yard sale' after the morning masses on the **8th November '26**.
Things on sale will be unused items, homeware, organ (the size that is like the one in church and will have to be picked up) and other miscellaneous items.

CALLING ALL YOUTHS YEAR 6 –12

We are excited to share that SJ XXIII Blaze Youth in collaboration with Mary Immaculate Youth are planning a "Living in Christ" Youth Retreat for young people in Year 6 to 12 on Saturday, 12 December 2026.
We are currently gathering expressions of interest to help us with our planning and to gauge how many young people are interested in attending.
If your child is interested in attending, please scan the QR Code and complete the form. Kindly forward any questions to Ellena on 0478685191.
God Bless,

SJ23 BLAZE YOUTH GROUP

A BIG THANK YOU FROM THE CATHOLIC MISSION

Your donation last week supports the people of Malawi in a big way. Our donation, $6000, provides money for 30 classrooms. It is our love for the church in action.

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:

- 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 planned giving option
02 8883 5981 accounts@john23rd.org.au
Support can be provided via the Registration forms are available at the church foyer or from the website or scanning the QR Code

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.

- **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, & 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 in being involved in 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	**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.
ALTAR SERVERS	**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	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	Ushers & Greeters Greet and assist parishioners, helping to create a warm and welcoming environment. Open to men, women, and children aged 12 and above.

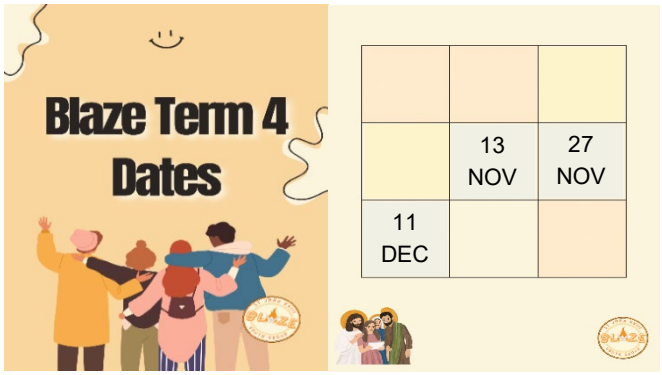
YOUTH | YOUNG ADULT GROUPS

BLAZE YOUTH
Year 7 to 12
WHEN: 7:00 - 9:00pm
WHERE: St John XXIII College (C Block Bell space)
For any queries:
blaze@john23rd.org.au or
@blazeyouthsj23 on Insta|FB
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:
Ignite.stjohn23@gmail.com
@ignite_sj23 on Insta|FB

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

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





"The BLAZE and Ignite Youth leaders would like to kindly thank everyone who supported our Bake sale fundraiser last Sunday, 18 October! Whether you donated baked goods, volunteered your time, or purchased a treat, your generosity helped make the fundraiser a wonderful success.

The funds raised will go towards supporting our Youth ministry and assisting our pilgrims as they prepare for their World Youth Day journey to Seoul in 2027. In recognition of Catholic Mission Appeal Sunday last week, we also donated a portion of the proceeds to the Catholic Mission Church Appeal, supporting the Church's mission to share Christ's love with those who need it most.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued generosity and encouragement! Thank you for supporting our young people and helping us live out our faith through service, generosity and love."

God bless,

BLAZE and Ignite Youth Leaders

FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

If you would like to make flower donations for the church altar, please contact:
James David on 0413 787596



YOUNG AT HEART SENIORS CLUB

Contact either:
Frank Coleiro - 0459 504625
Trevor Coutinho - 0407 150399

Vinnies
join in the good works

Please contact:
Debra Pitre - 0412 570 333



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.

Marian Devotion and Conversion of Heart

Marian devotion, giving honor and veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is foundational in the life of every Catholic because it facilitates the Blessed Mother's unique work of uniting our hearts to the Heart of God. All through Sacred Scripture God speaks of the value He places on the heart. The heart symbolizes affection, love and the desire to be united to the one who is loved. Consider Matthew 15:8 when Jesus quotes Isaiah saying, "'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'" Or when God speaks through Jeremiah saying, "I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart."

Mary's great desire and universal calling is to vivify and strengthen the hearts of her Children with the holy flame of charity allowing the Divine Indwelling to bear more fruit and transform her children into channels of God's grace to the whole world.

In Luke 2:35, Simeon prophesied Mary's shared ministry with her son, that a sword would pierce her soul too so that the hearts of many would be laid bare. When we devote ourselves to her, she will lay bare our soul, revealing to us hidden wounds and patterns of sin that keep us from conforming completely to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mary Magnifies the Lord

Having devotion to Mary isn't meant to elevate Mary to the level of God. In Mary's Magnificat given in Luke 1:46-55, Mary asserts that while she is nothing on her own, God raises up the humble and exalts those who fear Him. Far from detracting from God, Her exalted position magnifies Him.

To magnify means to make something appear larger or more significant. Mary, by her very life and actions, amplifies God's presence and glory. Her acceptance of God's will, her role as the Mother of Jesus, and her unwavering faith all serve to highlight God's greatness and His plan for humanity. Through Mary's "yes," the Incarnation was made possible, bringing Jesus, the Savior, into the world.

Meditating on Mary's life reveals her deep faith and trust in God. In her, we see a model of discipleship that is entirely focused on God. Her humility is revealed in her complete willingness to be an instrument of God's will, and her Magnificat beautifully articulates her recognition of God's mercy, strength, and providence.

Mary does not seek to magnify herself but to point all glory and honor to God. She stands as a mirror reflecting God's grace and love, teaching us how to live in a way that glorifies Him. Through Mary, we learn to see the greatness of God more clearly and to love Him more deeply.

Mary and the Interior Life

When the angel appears at the Annunciation, the angel does not address Mary by the name we call her. Instead, the angel calls her, "full of grace." What does it mean to be so full of grace that Heaven uses this moniker as a title? St. Louis De Montfort wrote in True Devotion To Mary, "God the Father made an assemblage of all the waters, and He named it the sea (Mare). He has made an assemblage of all graces, and He called it Mary (Maria)."2 To understand Marian devotion, we must understand grace and how this fullness of grace became a fount of God's mercy to the world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines grace as: "The free and undeserved gift that God gives to us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love.

As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces (charisms, the grace of one's state of life) are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation."

St. Louis De Montfort also wrote, "She was full of grace when she was saluted by the archangel Gabriel, and she was superabundantly filled with grace by the Holy Ghost when He covered her with His unspeakable Shadow."4 Mary, in consenting to become Mother of God and our Mother, consented to this unique and elevated role to work in complete union with the Holy Spirit to form not just the head of the Church, but also the Body.

The Catechism states,

"This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven, she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation…Therefore, the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix."

The Church honors Mary with the title Mediatrix of Grace. This does not mean she initiates grace, but rather that we receive the sustenance and care of God's grace through her loving hands. Our Holy Mother shines the light of God's grace into our hearts, revealing where we most need His attention, mercy, and sustenance. These graces enlighten and strengthen us. They are the tools needed to cultivate a garden of virtues within our souls, to resist the encroachment of sin, and to respond wholeheartedly to God's salvific plan.

Marian Prayers and Devotions

Understanding our human need to learn through all the senses, the Blessed Mother has appeared throughout the centuries in locutions, visions, and even apparitions to give us art, music, prayers, sacramentals, novenas, feasts, processions, and even pilgrimages. These devotions come with promises of special graces. She knows we all have different learning styles, different vocational paths, different vices to overcome, and different virtues to attain. She understands knowledge enters the heart through experience and longs for us to experience God. Devotions allow us this experience.

Marian Prayers

Prayers form the backbone of any form of devotion. The "Hail Mary," "The Angelus," "Regina Coeli," "Hail Holy Queen," and various prayers of consecration to Mary are some of the many prayers that devotees often recite. These prayers not only express love and veneration for Mary but also seek her intercession.

The Holy Rosary

Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1214 to give him the Holy Rosary as a weapon against the heresy of his day. Since then, in several apparitions, the Blessed Mother has asked for the recitation of the Rosary to make reparation for the sins of the world, fight heresy, and bring peace. The many miracles of the Rosary and the support of various Popes and Saints have brought the Rosary to the forefront of Catholic devotion to Mary.

The Rosary is not just a prayer of petition and intercession, but also an instrument for spiritual growth and transformation. It invites us to learn from Mary's example of faith, obedience, and surrender to God's will. Through this prayer, we are reminded of the power of Mary's intercession, the grace of God, and the profound love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

The Seven Sorrows

Devotion to the Seven Sorrows utilizes its own special set of prayer beads similar to the rosary. Instead of five mysteries, there are seven meditations on the seven profound sorrows in Mary's life. The devotion invites the faithful to walk with Mary through these moments and to unite their own sufferings with those of Mary, seeking her intercession and support in their trials.

The devotion can be used in conjunction with the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15th or prayed as a special novena. This devotion was revealed to St. Bridget of Sweden in the 14th century but fell out of favor last century. Then, in the Apparition at Kibeho, Rwanda, the Virgin Mary urged Marie-Claire Mukangangous to spread the devotion once more and have the world pray it.

Marian Feasts & Processions

Throughout the year, the Church celebrates eighteen feast days dedicated to Mary. The readings focus on aspects of Mary we see in scripture, and then we feast with her at the Eucharistic table. Three of these feast days are considered so crucial by the Church that they are Holy Days of Obligation. These include:

- The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (January 1)
- The Feast of the Assumption (August 15)
- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8)

These feast days provide a special opportunity for the faithful to show their devotion to her.

Processions, an ancient way of celebrating Feast Days, enable the Eucharist to process from the Church and bless our community, homes, businesses, and land. They often involve statues being carried behind the Blessed Sacrament, reminding us how Heaven lives among us. The primary statue or image following and protecting the Eucharist is always the Blessed Mother who never leaves the mission of her Son. Some processions express our penitence, build reverence and seek intercession, while others are jubilant, expressing our joy and gratitude for God's salvific work.

The Feast of The Immaculate Heart of Mary

The feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was declared a feast on May 4, 1944, by Pope Pius XII. On that day, he consecrated the whole world to her Immaculate Heart in supplication for "peace among nations, freedom for the Church, the conversion of sinners, the love of purity and the practice of virtue."6 This feast is the culmination of devotional work by many Saints and Doctors of the Church through the ages.

In the readings7 for this Feast, we celebrate her heart's one and only desire: to see God exalted through all the nations and the complete unity and revelation of her Son's Kingdom. This victory of Christ's Kingdom is referred to as the Triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart. Isaiah 61:11 promises, "For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden cause what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations."

Marian Iconography

Many people keep iconography of the Blessed Mother in their homes just as they would keep pictures of other loved ones. Iconography provides a focus for mental prayer. Many icons have particular stories and titles that help us understand Mary or celebrate moments she protected us as her children.

The image of Our Lady of Good Counsel miraculously appeared on the Feast of St. Mark, on April 25, 1467. The 4th-century church had been undergoing restoration when funding ran out. The image appeared miraculously, was imprinted on something that should have deteriorated but miraculously did not, and miraculously survived bombings in WWII. This image reminds us how she always works to build Christ's Church, unifying us to each other and uniting us to Christ.

The Brown Scapular

According to tradition, Mary appeared to St. Simon Stock, a Carmelite friar, in 1251, and gave him a brown scapular, a garment to be worn by religious orders, promising all the grace needed for salvation to those who wear it with faith. Eventually, lay people took the worn-out scapulars cast off by the religious, cut them into small brown cloths, attached strings to hold them over the shoulders, and wore them under their clothes as sacramentals.

This devotion has been upheld in Marian apparitions, including Fatima. The Brown Scapular has become known as the shield to Mary's Rosary, the sword. It is also referred to as the garment of grace. Today, many lay people around the world wear the Brown Scapular, often embroidered with an icon of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel holding the baby Jesus, as a sign of their devotion to Mary and a reminder of her promised graces.

The Miraculous Medal

In 1830, the Blessed Mother appeared to a young nun in the Daughters of Charity who chose to remain anonymous until after her death. St. Catherine Labouré saw Mary standing on a globe, her foot crushing a serpent, and her hands extended outward, dispersing rays of brilliant light from rings on her fingers. However, some of the rings did not shine. She told St. Catherine that these dull rings were the graces that remained unasked for and unclaimed.

She asked St. Catherine,

"Have a medal struck upon this model. Those who wear it will receive great graces, especially if they wear it around the neck. Those who repeat this prayer with devotion will be, in a special manner, under the protection of the Mother of God. Graces will be abundantly bestowed upon those who have confidence."

Known only to her superiors, St. Catherine worked within the church to have the medal made and distributed. Those who accuse the Church of stunts to make money off the gullible often point to necklaces of the Miraculous Medal, but they miss the fact that the Church distributed and continues to distribute millions of free medals every year. The devotion grows not from gullibility but from the countless and elaborate miracles, conversions, and healings that regular people have experienced since 1832, when the medal was first distributed in Paris.

Marian Apparitions

Throughout history, there have been numerous apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, including John's vision recorded in the Book of Revelations, like the ones mentioned above which led to significant devotions. She often appears to individuals or groups of people, usually with a message of prayer, penance, and reconciliation. She has even appeared in the United States. Her continued Apparitions have led to miracles, repentance, and conversion as she guides her children, and the pilgrimage sites where she has appeared continue to yield the fruit of conversion.

Our Lady of Guadalupe

One of the most famous Marian apparitions occurred in Mexico in 1531. Mary appeared to a native man, Juan Diego, and requested a chapel be built on the site. The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe miraculously appeared on Juan Diego's cloak as a sign to the local Bishop. Before the image appeared, the indigenous people of the Americas were uninterested in the religion of the foreign monks and priests. After the image appeared, ten million were converted. The priests and bishops of that era could not understand how Our Lady of Guadalupe had communicated and united the hearts of these people with her Son. Only in our century has archeology uncovered exactly how the people of the Americas understood and received her message communicated specifically to their culture through the image. Like the image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe has miraculously withstood the march of time despite the frail fabric and withstood explosive attacks on the parish where it is displayed.

Our Lady of Fatima

In 1917, in Fatima, Portugal, Mary appeared to three shepherd children, Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta, with a message of prayer and penance for the conversion of sinners and the peace of the world. She confirmed this message through the Miracle of the Sun in which the sun danced in the sky, witnessed by 70,000 people, including many atheists who immediately converted. This apparition led to the First Five Saturdays devotion as well as the Fatima Prayer being added to the Rosary. It is commemorated worldwide on May 13, the anniversary of the first apparition. As a pilgrimage site, Fatima is visited by hundreds of thousands of pilgrims each year.

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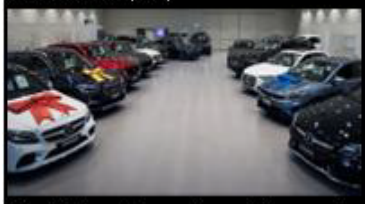
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