

ST MARTHA'S PARISH STRATHFIELD



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'I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate' ... John 14

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THE PARISH OF ST MARTHA'S ACKNOWLEDGES THE WANGUL PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH THE CHURCH IS BUILT

Vision:

**Welcoming
Eucharistic
Transformed by the Word
Full of Grace
Proclaiming Good News**



Mission:

**Alive with the Spirit
Inspired by St Martha
We Celebrate & Witness
God's love
Using our Gifts & Talents**



*In the Spirit of St Martha,
let us continue to help others and
Carry Hope Everywhere.*

"Hope does not disappoint, it is not an illusion, it is a hope. Beside each other, in love and patience, we can prepare a better time in these days." Pope Francis (source CNA)



The HOPE Keepsakes are available outside the Church or by contacting the Parish Office.

**Don't forget to upload your images to the
St Martha's Facebook Page with #carryhope**



ST MARTHA'S CHURCH WILL REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. ALL MASSES, ROSARY, RECONCILIATION, BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS, SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS AND NON ESSENTIAL GATHERINGS IN THE CHURCH ARE NOW CANCELLED. FUNERALS WILL BE PERMITTED UNDER THE STRICT SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES.

The St Martha's 10.00am Mass is streamed live every Sunday
via the Parish Facebook Page <https://fb.me/stmarthasparishstrathfield>
and YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHB3kQG9jVI&t=1842s>

Our Parish relies heavily on the contributions received during Masses via the collections and planned giving envelopes, therefore we have had to find alternative ways to keep running during these extraordinary times of COVID-19.

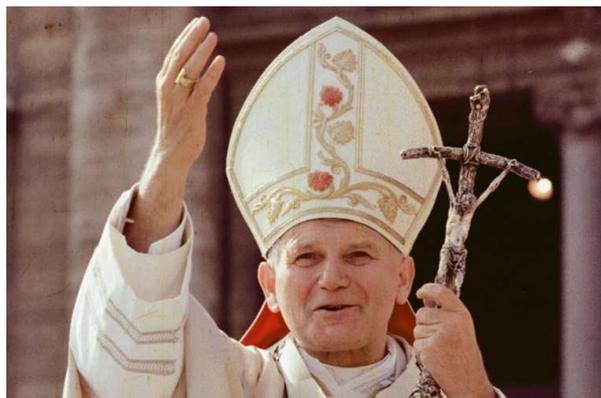
Ways that you can contribute:

1. Donations can now be made directly via the parish website by clicking the link on the homepage. These donations are not tax deductible.
2. Planned giving envelopes and cheques can be dropped into the parish between 9am & 3pm Monday - Thursday.
3. Monthly credit card donations are processed in the 3rd week of each month. If you wish to join or change to monthly giving, the credit card authority form can be downloaded from the website and returned to the parish office.

May is the Month of the Rosary. How to Pray the Rosary Cards are available outside the Church.



***Saint John Paul II 100th Anniversary
of Birth Monday 18th of May***



THE SILENCE OF LIFE by Ron Rolheiser

Meister Eckhard once suggested that nothing so much resembles the language of God as does silence. That challenges us on many levels: What language will we speak in heaven? We don't know, but if, as scripture tells us, heaven will be where we know and are known perfectly, love and are loved perfectly, and understand and are understood perfectly, I suspect that words will be superfluous. We will speak the language of silence. So it is wise that, already now, we begin more and more to learn the language of silence, not just for later on, after death, but especially so that already in this life we can begin more to connect ourselves to our deepest roots. Raimon Panikkar, in a recent book, *The Experience of God*, makes a distinction between what he calls "the silence of life" and "a life of silence". They aren't the same thing. His words, while not always easy to grasp, are deeply insightful and worthy of meditation, so I quote him at length: "The silence of life is not necessarily identical with a life of silence, like the silent life of desert monks.

The life of silence is important to realize our objectives, to plan our actions or develop our relations, but it is not the same as the silence of life. The silence of life is the art of making silent the activities of life that are not life itself in order to reach the pure experience of life itself. We frequently identify life itself with the activities of life. We identify our being with our feelings, our desires, our will, with everything that we do and everything that we have. We instrumentalize our life while forgetting that it is an end in itself. Plunged into the activities of life, we lose the faculty of listening, and we alienate ourselves from our very source: silence, God. Silence appears at the moment when we position ourselves at the very source of being." He goes on to suggest that our striving to attain the silence of life should not take away from the importance of our everyday activities – eating, working, socializing, healthy recreation. But there must be times when we also practice a healthy life of silence, when our bodies, hearts, and minds must be stilled enough so that, somehow, we can sense what lies beyond our activities and is the source of them, life itself, God. How do we get there? That is exactly what every spirituality worthy of the name is trying to teach us. While there are many differences in the roads they suggest, there are a number of things upon which they all agree: First, all the great traditions of prayer tell us that the road is simple, but not easy! Next, each, in its own way, tells us what Jesus told us, namely, that the road that takes us to genuine depth, to an experience of God, is not so much dependent upon any particular prayer practice, but upon "purity of heart" (Matthew 5, 8), that is, upon a certain moral condition, an unselfishness, that takes us beyond the tyranny and idolatry of the ego. And, how do we do that?

Every spirituality has its own route, but, again, they all agree on a number of non-negotiable elements: Any journey that takes you towards God will demand, at a point, some vigorous asceticism, some real fasting, a real purification and a disciplined ordering of the countless, obsessive feelings and desires that act through us. We must break what some spiritual masters call "the tyranny of the ego" and Panikkar calls "the idolatry of the ego". We will not get in touch with the deep source of our lives if the activities of our life are so consuming and obsessive that we can never find an identity and meaning in something beyond them. That is the ultimate reason behind asceticism and fasting of all kinds, we renounce something, even if it is good, in function of getting in touch with its deeper source, life itself, God. And this asceticism, through which we are trying to come to the silence of life will require too, at some point, a life of silence, a deliberate, disciplined effort (not to stop thinking and feeling since this is impossible) but to put ourselves in touch with what is beyond our thoughts and feelings at their origins. A Hindu text tells us that God is found in "nourishment", in what is seen, heard, and understood, but adds immediately that we only experience our activities as bearing God if we also, at times, deliberately halt those activities and go into silence so that we can see what's behind them. The practices of meditation and contemplation, no matter what particular technique we use, have this precisely as their aim, namely, to practice a little bit "a life of silence" so as to sit for a while in "the silence of life." Nothing so much approximates the language of God as does silence. It's a language we need to practice.



Background on the Gospel 6th Sunday of Easter (Loyola Press)

Today's Gospel is a continuation of last week's Gospel: Jesus is speaking to his disciples at the Last Supper. In today's reading Jesus offers encouragement to his disciples, who will soon see him crucified. He reassures them that even though he will leave them, he will not abandon them. Instead he will send them the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, through whom the disciples will continue to live in union with Jesus. Jesus uses the term Advocate to describe the Holy Spirit, whom the disciples will receive. Another word used to describe the Holy Spirit is Paraclete, a legal term meaning "one who offers defense for another." Note that Jesus says that he will send "another Advocate." Jesus himself is the first advocate, interceding for his disciples with the Father. In today's reading Jesus contrasts his impending departure with the permanence of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will leave to return to the Father, but the Holy Spirit will remain with the disciples. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the disciples will come to know and appreciate the unity of the Son and the Father. They will also understand that they too participate in the communion between the Father and the Son: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you" (John 14:20). Today's reading is one example of the contrast that John's Gospel presents between the community of disciples, to whom God will reveal himself, and the unbelieving world, which will remain in darkness. The unbelieving world cannot accept the "Spirit of truth," whom the disciples will receive. Only through the Spirit will God's revelation and love be known.