



# ST MARTHA'S PARISH STRATHFIELD

**Parish Priest:** Father John Hayes

**Assistant Priest:** Father Liem Duong

**Administration Coordinator:** Nicolle Mazzaferro (Mon, Tues & Thurs) [admin@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:admin@stmarthas.org.au)

**Administration Support:** Larissa Argiro (Friday) [office@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:office@stmarthas.org.au)

**Sacramental Coordinator:** Linda Praum [sc@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:sc@stmarthas.org.au)

**Safeguarding Officer:** Dianne Dawson & Helen Williamson [safeguarding@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@stmarthas.org.au)

**Parish Ministries Coordinator:** Helen Williamson

**Music Ministry:** Marcella Ayoub

**Children's Liturgy Coordinator:** Alannah Hickry

**Plenary Council Ambassador:** Helena O'Neil

**'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up' ... John 2**

70 Homebush Rd Strathfield NSW 2135

**Phone:** 9746 6131 **Fax:** 9764 3040

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**Website:** [www.stmarthas.org.au](http://www.stmarthas.org.au)

**Parish Office Hours:**

Mon, Tues & Thurs 9am-5pm & Fridays 9am-3pm



**St Martha's School:** 9764 1184

**Email:** [info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au)

**Principal:** Carolyn Parsell

**Assist Principal:** Steven Belcastro

**Acting REC:** Cindy Ronzini

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**



*Please  
continue  
to support the  
St Vincent De Paul Society  
through the Church  
Poor Boxes.*

### **Mission:**

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

## **MASS TIMES**

**Tuesday:** 7.30am

**Wednesday:** 9.10am

**Thursday:** 9.10am

**Friday:** 9.10am

**Saturday:** 9.10am, 5pm Vigil Mass

**Sunday:** 8.00am; 10.00am & 6.00pm

**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month:**

8.30am Adoration followed by Mass

### **RECONCILIATION:**

Saturday after 9.10am Mass or by appointment.

### **SYDNEY MALAYALEE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Rosary, Mass & Adoration from 6.30pm to 8.00pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.

### **BAPTISM:**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 11.00am  
(One months' notice is required).

Baptism Preparation by appointment only.  
Contact the Parish office for more information.

**MARRIAGES:** By appointment only.

(6 months' notice is required).

### **ROSARY:**

Tuesday & Saturday after morning Mass

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 8.30am

7.30pm on Fridays in conjunction with Marian Movement of Priests  
Cenacle and Divine Mercy Chaplet.

### **PRAYER GROUP / ADORATION AT**

**ST MARTHA'S CHURCH:**

Mondays 10.30am – 11.30am (during the school term only)

**Please support our Catholic Press  
Copies of the Catholic Weekly \$2  
& Catholic Leader \$2.50 are available  
at the Church Entrance.**

## **SAFE GUARDING**



**A reminder to parents that the Notice-Board located at the side entrance contains various resources for children regarding Safeguarding.**

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY.**

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org)

You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

### **Commitment Statement**

The Archdiocese of Sydney is wholly committed to ensuring the safety, well-being and dignity of all Children and Adults at Risk, and it acknowledges its important legal, moral and spiritual responsibility to create a safe and nurturing environment for Children and Adults.



**Office of the  
Children's Guardian**

Please be aware that if you "TAG" St Martha's in photos on your Facebook page, the images also appear on an "unofficial" St Martha's Facebook page. This "unofficial" page was created automatically by Facebook and is not controlled by St Martha's. We kindly remind you to take care when uploading photos of any children without parent consent.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

**IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN IN - ACOLYTES; READERS; EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS; CHOIR; CHILDREN'S LITURGY (LEADERS & CHILDREN) & SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM (LEADERS & CHILDREN). SIGN IN FOLDERS ARE KEPT IN THE SACRISTY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.**

**ALTAR SERVERS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SACRISTY WITHOUT A PARENT/TEACHER. THE SIGN IN FOLDER IS LOCATED IN THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE SACRISTY.**

**GLUTEN FREE HOSTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ANY CELIAC PARISHIONERS. IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION PLEASE TELL THE CHURCH WARDEN OR SEE AN ACOLYTE IN THE SACRISTY PRIOR TO MASS.**



**WEEKLY REFLECTION: SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT:** If the world is one great classroom, then God is a fantastic teacher. We have all had experience of this: the firm and gentle way that God opens our minds and helps us to understand. Today's readings show three different ways that God tries to get through to



us. In the first reading, God sets some clear expectations for behaviour. They are all based around respect, both for the teacher and for those with whom we share the class! At the same time, God reminds us 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the house of slavery.' In other words, these are not random rules. They are designed to protect our deepest freedom. Disregarding them sends us back into captivity. In the Gospel, Jesus is annoyed by people who think they know everything but who have not properly understood the basic lesson about justice and reverence. 'Stop turning my father's house into a market.' Finally, St Paul speaks about wisdom. 'God's weakness is stronger than human strength.' This is another style again: inviting us into a mystery, almost using riddles to get us to think outside the box. It is no surprise that the Catholic community has always valued education and done a great deal to make it accessible for people around the world. Just as God teaches us, so too do we try to share the wonderful gift of learning with others. This week, Project Compassion brings us the story of Leaia, who lives in Samoa. With the support of Caritas Australia's local partner Caritas Samoa, a water tank was installed in Leaia's home to harvest rainwater. This means that her family can now have access to clean water to drink and bathe. The time that was previously spent walking to collect water in buckets from a neighbour down the street can now be used for other essential tasks and, most importantly, her children don't have to miss out on school. School is a doorway that opens onto a better world. The Gospel today says that Jesus knew what a person had in them. We should try to be the same: to see the potential, not just the surface.

## Boxes and Share Packs are still available in the Church foyer.



In today's Gospel we read about how Jesus overturned the tables of the merchants and the moneychangers in the Temple at Jerusalem. In order to understand the relevance of Jesus' action, we must learn more about the activities that were going on in the temple area. Worship at the Temple in Jerusalem included animal sacrifice, and merchants sold animals to worshipers. Moneychangers exchanged Roman coins, which bore the image of the Roman emperor, for the temple coins that were needed to pay the temple tax. Jesus' action at the Temple in Jerusalem is recorded in all four Gospels and is often understood to be among the events that led to Jesus' arrest and Crucifixion. The Gospel of John, however, places this event much earlier in Jesus' public ministry than do the Synoptic Gospels. In John's Gospel this event occurs at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, after his first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana. We must read the Gospel of John carefully, especially in its presentation of Jesus' relationship to Judaism. The Gospel of John tends to reflect greater tension and animosity between Jesus and the Jewish authorities than the Synoptic Gospels. The Gospel of John was the last of the four Gospels to be written, and its narrative reflects the growing divide between the Jewish community and the early Christian community. Thus, greater emphasis on the distinction between Christianity and Judaism is found in John's Gospel. Reflecting upon the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), John recalls Jesus' cleansing of the Temple and uses that story to interpret this later event. John explains to his audience, an early Christian community, that temple worship would no longer be necessary because it was surpassed in the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus. With greater frequency than the other Evangelists, John intersperses post-Resurrection reflections of this Christian community in his narrative. After clearing the Temple of the merchants and the moneychangers, John's Gospel tells us that the people asked for a sign of Jesus' authority to do such an audacious act. In response, Jesus predicted his death and Resurrection. Throughout John's Gospel, the language of signs is distinctive. Jesus' miracles are called signs, and the people look to these signs for proof of his authority. Here we learn that the sign par excellence will be Jesus' passion, death, and Resurrection. During Lent we reflect upon the meaning of this sign for us and for our world. We might take this opportunity to consider the quality of our prayer and worship. In our prayers we seek to deepen our relationship with the person of Christ. In our worship with the community, we gather to experience anew the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus and its significance in our lives. Christ promises to be present with us when we gather for prayer.

**Family Connection:** Today's Gospel invites us to reflect upon our worship of God. For Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, the Temple was an important, holy place where they gathered to worship God. The Christian understanding of worship was transformed in light of Jesus' Resurrection. In the Christian understanding, God is worshiped in a person, the person of Jesus Christ. As we read in today's Gospel, Jesus is himself the Temple that will be destroyed, but in three days God will raise him up again. As you gather as a family, talk about places and times when you have experienced God's presence. After his Resurrection, Jesus' disciples understood that Jesus was present with them as they gathered to pray and especially when they gathered to share a meal. Read together today's Gospel, John 2:13-25. Jesus teaches us in today's Gospel that he is God's presence with us. Thank God for Jesus' presence with us, especially in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

Easter is the largest liturgical celebration throughout the year and many volunteers are needed across all ministries. If you are on the regular roster and attending any of the Easter Liturgies, could you please consider volunteering. We are in need of Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Lectors, Altar Servers. Please write your name on the sheets on the rear table of the church or contact **Helen Williamson on 0408 970 120.**

**VOLUNTEERS ARE ALSO NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 'WASHING OF THE FEET' AT THE HOLY THURSDAY MASS. PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET AT THE REAR OF THE CHURCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER.**



**ACU Strathfield Campus will be celebrating Mass every Wednesday and Friday at 12:00pm. The Campus is located 25A Barker Road, Strathfield. Everyone is welcome.**

*by Ron Rolheiser*

**The most singularly consoling doctrine in all of religion is the Christian belief that Christ descended into hell.  
Christ descended into hell. What is meant by that?**

There is an old understanding that interprets the phrase this way: After the original sin of Adam and Eve, the gates of heaven were closed and nobody was able to go to heaven until Christ came and paid the price for our sin. But then, after Jesus died, in that time between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, he went to that underworld place where all the good people who had died since the time of Adam and Eve waited and he opened up for them the gates to paradise. Christ's going to that place of the dead (mythically imagined geographically, but theologically conceived of spiritually) was understood as Christ's descent into hell. However there is an even older understanding of this doctrine which, while not denying the essence of what was just said, interprets it this way: The descent into hell highlights something in the way that Jesus lived and died. First of all, we see this in the way that Jesus lived and revealed God's presence: We see in gospels, time and again, that Jesus goes into all the dark, taboo places and takes God's light and love there. The ultimate dark, taboo place of course is hell itself. And we see this most clearly in Jesus' death: When we look at the way that Jesus died, we see that in his death he "descended into hell", that he went into a place and space of utter alienation and complete darkness where he was, outside of everything except raw faith, completely cut off from community, life, and God. There, in that place where he was so utterly alienated and alone, he was able to breath out the spirit of God and of life. What does that mean for us? Let me try to explain by using a series of image: In the Gospel of John, the evangelist describes how the resurrected Jesus appeared to the disciples. He tells that the disciples were "huddled together in a locked room, in fear" and that Jesus (twice) came right through the locked doors, stood in the middle of them, and breathed out peace. These images are significant and powerful: "they were huddled in fear"; "Jesus entered through the locked doors"; "Jesus stood in the midst of them and said, 'Peace be with you'." In St. Paul's Cathedral, London, there hangs a famous painting, The Light of the World, by Holman Hunt. It shows Christ with a lantern, knocking on a door, waiting for it to be opened from the inside. A redacted version of this, made into a holy card, circulates in pious circles. It shows Christ, with a lantern, knocking on a door on which there is no door-knob on the outside. There is only a knob on the inside and there, huddled in fear, depression, and paranoia, stands a man who is obviously faced with the choice : Open the door and let Christ in or keep Christ waiting outside! The obvious implication is: Only you can open that door! The picture suggests that this particular man might be too depressed to be up to the task. There is a legitimate challenge in this image: There are certain doors that we must open in order to let Christ into our lives. In another sense however, this is a bad holy card. If it's right, then the Gospel of John is wrong because, after the resurrection, with the disciples huddled in fear inside of a room, Jesus does not stand and knock, waiting, saying: "Only you can open that door!" He comes right through the locked doors, stands in the middle of the circle of fear, breathes out the Holy Spirit, and says: "Do not be afraid! Peace be with you!" Several years ago, some family friends of mine had a 19 year-old daughter who became severely depressed and attempted suicide. They rallied round her, took her to the best doctors and psychiatrists, and tried every possible way of having their love break through the shell of her sickness and alienation. It didn't work. Eventually she killed herself. All the love in the world and all the best medicine and psychiatry could not any more penetrate inside her private hell. Her family could not "descend into hell" and open up for her the gates of life and community. They were helpless before her darkness, her hell. But Christ can descent into that, and into every hell that can be created. That's what the descent into hell means. There is no hell that Christ cannot penetrate, no locked door he cannot go through. When this young woman woke up on the other side of this life, I am certain that she found Christ standing in the middle of her huddled fear and loneliness breathing out the spirit of community and joy and saying: "Do not be afraid. Peace with you!" Sometimes you don't have to open the door!



**THE MUSTARD SEED  
BOOKSHOP**

**NOW OPEN  
SATURDAYS**

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ST MARTHA'S, 38 RENWICK STREET, LEICHHARDT**

**Parking: Monday - Friday.** We have parking available. Enter through the main gate and find positions 40 and 41. **Saturday** - Ample parking

**P: (02) 9307 8350 | [www.mustardseed.org.au](http://www.mustardseed.org.au)**

**New Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm & Sat 10-2pm**

The Mustard Seed Bookshop is an official not-for-profit work of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney.



**Sydney Catholic Schools Week**



**DOMREMY COLLEGE**

**OPEN DAY**

**Sunday 10 March**

**11.00am-3.00pm**

## 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> March

Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Peter McCluskey	Georgette Sahyoun	Anne Marrins	Ravi Family
	Marian McCluskey	Peter Yamin	Maria Soares	Ravi Family
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Helen Blefari	Paulina Roncevic	Mark Soares	Helen Williamson
	Patricia Saad	Robert Smith	Rachel Suriano	
Altar Servers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Celeste S.	Mary Louise I.	Bonett Family	Lawrence X.
	Jeff C.	Ryan W.	Bonett Family	Jayden Y.
	Matthew C.	Dylan W.	Suriano Family	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Suriano Family	Volunteer Needed
Wardens	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Edith Pun	Mary Cook	Trudie Rogers	Anthony Thurn

### MASS OFFERINGS

<b>Recently Deceased:</b>	Adam Coulson, Jessie Baird, Luke Davies, Sally Rippingale, Morna Marturia, Sr. Patricia Bundock, Gianluigi Pau, Joy Hocking, Elias Aslan, Frances Apps, Clare Ernst, John Quan, Anne Russo, Lidia Di Vito.
<b>Repose of The Soul:</b>	Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Br Ray Dowding, Francesco Campanale, Francis Doumit, Frederick McDowell, Dorothy Harris, Daniel Lucich, James Brady, Ken Fraser, Elizabeth Keating, John McManus, Aldo Amarino, Salvatore Puglisi, William & Dorothy Starr, Bruce & Estelle Thurn, Anne Cecilia Glass, Reginald & Agnes Glass, Gerald & Frances Gleeson, Faado & Alice Herro, Roger O'Reilly, Patrick & Janet Reynolds, Jim Reynolds, Ken Rich, Monica & Patrick Ryan, Francesco & Mary Sorbello, Betty Warbrick, Gerald Wilson, Dr Stephanie Winfield, Philip Winfield, Mary Trefle', Anne Trefle', Elie Sahyoun, Alan & Peg Bailey, Matteo & Caterina Genova, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, Lisa Cooke, Michael & Mary Cassar, Margaret Raeburn, Giuseppe & Romilda Reginato, Pasquale Taglini, Julian & Mabel Doyle, Gregory Doyle & Jim Bradbury.
<b>Anniversaries:</b>	Judith Mueller, James Henness, Suki Singarayar, Maureen Sarks, John Tandiono, Jim Hyland, Parwathy Raju, Liz Keating, Sandor Toth, Maureen & Edmund Duggan, Harry Russo, Nevenko Govorcin.
<b>Sick Intentions:</b>	Greg Glass, Dr Frank Hume, Patricia Wilson, Dareth Flavell, Rudy Raeburn, Carminella Tiberio, Theo McLean, Joseph Akkary, Sylvia Watson, Sheree Mouawad, Virgilio Lim, George Jabbour, Dr Maher Ishak Morian, Graham Byrnes, Stephanie Harrington, Phil Harriss, Sophie O'Donnell, Ken South, Ajith Antony, Pat Fraser, Siena Fabrie, Giuseppe Faraone, Joanna Jo, Simon Alam, Rosanne Sukkar, Henry D'Souza, Danielle Fabien, Pat Gurney.
<b>Special Intentions:</b>	Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order. Antonia, Giuseppe, Raffaele, Teresa, Matteo, Filomena & Maria Pagano, Caterina & Francesco Agostino, John, Pauline & Katherine Murphy.



You are all invited to St Martha's

# Playgroup

**Monday 19 February and  
Monday 4 March 2024**

From 9 am to 10 am  
in the St Martha's School Hall, Strathfield.

Please enter from the school office (88 Churchill Ave, Strathfield, NSW, 2135) to sign in.

**RSVP is greatly appreciated by email to:**  
[elena.razzoli@syd.catholic.edu.au](mailto:elena.razzoli@syd.catholic.edu.au)

Storytime is a great opportunity for children aged 0 to 5 y.o. to enjoy some books and craft activities and get to know each other.

Feel free to invite your friends too.

Sydney Catholic Schools Week

St Martha's  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
STRATHFIELD

# OPEN DAY

**Thursday 7 March**  
9.30am-11.00am

Register Now

[stmstrathfield.syd.catholic.edu.au](http://stmstrathfield.syd.catholic.edu.au)

PROUDLY PART OF THE COMMUNITY OF Sydney Catholic Schools