



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

Administration Support: Larissa Argiro (Friday) office@stmarthas.org.au

Sacramental Coordinator: Linda Praum sc@stmarthas.org.au

Safeguarding Officer: Dianne Dawson & Helen Williamson 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

'He cured many who suffered from diseases of one kind or another' ... Mark 1

70 Homebush Rd Strathfield NSW 2135

Phone: 9746 6131 Fax: 9764 3040

Email: office@stmarthas.org.au

Website: 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

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

1st 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 2nd Saturday of each month.

BAPTISM:

2nd & 4th Sundays of the month at 11.00am

(One month's 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:

Resumes February 2024

**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 safeguardinginqueries@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.



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.



THANK YOU FATHER JOHN

January 28th marked the 3rd Anniversary of Fr John's arrival at St Martha's. We sincerely thank him for his sharing his pastoral gifts with our parish community and we wish him many blessings in return.

NOTE: Fr John will be away from the Parish from 5th – 17th February. He will be on a pilgrimage and hopes to bring back spiritual treasures to share.

We also welcome back Fr Liem who has been away with his family during January.

WE EXTEND OUR WARMEST BIRTHDAY WISHES TO FR REG HOWARD (COLUMBAN MISSION) WHO CELEBRATES 90 YEARS YOUNG ON TUESDAY 6TH FEBRUARY. MAY GOD BESTOW ABUNDANT BLESSINGS UPON YOU.



This week we welcomed back our School Community. We extend a very warm welcome to the new children, parents & teachers. Please keep the Kindergarten students in your prayers as they settle in.

Catechist Sunday

This Sunday, the 4th of February 2024 we celebrate Catechist Sunday. Please join in and celebrate the work of the catechists within our Parish. The ministry of the Word is a fundamental element of living our faith through all its stages, because it involves the proclamation of Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God. The work of a Catechist is a distinct and special ministry in the Church. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church makes clear, "Catechesis is intimately bound up with the whole of the life of the Church - her inner growth and correspondence with God's plan depend essentially on catechesis". This ministry of teaching in the name of the Church has a profound dignity, which is why catechists are formally commissioned by the Church. It is only fitting that we set aside a day to highlight this ministry and invite the entire church community to think about our responsibility to share our faith with others.

O Lord, you who have called and equipped the catechists in our community, we pray for them today. Watch over them, provide for them, guide them, sustain them. May you be their sun and shield, so that they might do the work that you have entrusted to them. In Jesus' name. Amen.

We are in need of additional Catechists to teach scripture in our local public schools. Please contact Lorraine Kazzi if you are interested on 0400 505 205.

i4give Sunday 4th February 2024



i4give Sunday serves to engage all Christian Churches in a shared embrace of the Christ-centred call to forgiveness. i4give Sunday presents the opportunity to engage in conversation around forgiveness and its power to heal and restore broken relationships, starting within and among churches and going out from there into the wider community. In an age that harbours resentment and vengeance, we are impelled to call society to return to the Face of forgiveness, Jesus Christ. By

turning back and gazing at His merciful Face, we hold onto a firm hope for a transformative culture that practices the timeless truth of forgiveness. Therefore, let us return our gaze to the crucified Christ, who asks the Father to forgive those who were committing a grave injustice against Him. From the Cross, we are invited to take the difficult step of also praying for those who wrong us, who have injured us. We are repeatedly invited to live in our prayers this same attitude of mercy and love with which God treats us. On this national day, people are encouraged to "find someone you can forgive, or ask for forgiveness."

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you"
Ephesians 4:32

2024 LENTEN PROGRAM (Wollongong Diocese Resource)

The program will commence on Monday 12th February in the Church from 10.30am to 11.30am. Everyone is warmly welcome to attend (booklets are \$10). We thank Sister Marilyn Farley and Anne Marrins for facilitating the program this year.



LENT 2024

THE SEASON OF LENT COMMENCES ON WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY.

ASH WEDNESDAY IS A DAY OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE.

**Mass Times & the Distribution of Ashes
7.00am, 9.10am & 6.30pm**

Boxes and Share Packs are now available
in the Church foyer.





Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press) Today we continue to read from Mark's Gospel, learning more about the ministry of Jesus. Jesus cured Simon's mother-in-law, and she immediately began to serve Jesus and his disciples. Jesus also cured many others who were brought to him, healing their illnesses and driving out demons. As we will see throughout Mark's Gospel, Jesus did not permit the demons to speak because they knew his identity and would have revealed it to those who were present. On the morning after this busy day, Jesus retreated in prayer, but was pursued by Simon and others who brought news that many people were looking for him. At this point in Mark's Gospel, we begin to see a distinct role for the inner circle of Jesus' disciples—they act as intermediaries between Jesus and the people. Jesus reports to his disciples that they need to leave Capernaum to preach in other places. Today's Gospel completes a picture of Jesus' ministry: preaching, curing the sick, driving out demons, and then moving on to continue this work in another place. Mark's Gospel tells us that Jesus did this throughout Galilee. Jesus' compassion and healing of the sick is a sign of the Kingdom of God. The Church continues to extend Christ's healing presence to others in its ministry to the sick. In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the Church prays for spiritual and physical healing, forgiveness of sins, and comfort for those who are suffering from illness. In today's Gospel we also notice the importance of prayer in Jesus' daily life. Jesus rose early in the morning, removed himself from the crowds, and went to a deserted place to pray. When the disciples found him, he told them that it was time to move on. We believe that in his prayers Jesus found guidance and direction from God. We also bring our decision-making to God in prayer, asking for his guidance and direction in our lives.

Family Connection: We know from last week's Gospel that Jesus gathered and prayed with the community in the synagogue. Today we learn that Jesus also took the time to pray alone. Following the example of Jesus, we also pray together with our community, and we take the time to pray alone. Our children observe our prayer with others. We might want to take the opportunity to talk with them about our private prayer, however, so that through our example, they may learn to make private prayer an important part of their daily lives. Gather as a family and talk about the ways in which your family prays together (at Mass, grace before meals, bedtime prayers). Invite each member of the family to talk about his or her private prayer: When do you pray? Where do you pray? How do you pray? What do you pray for? Jesus modeled for us a life of prayer. Read together today's Gospel, Mark 1:29-39. Talk about this Gospel with your family. Ask questions such as the following: What do you think Jesus was praying about in today's Gospel? What guidance have you received from God in prayer? Conclude by asking God to bless our times of prayer so that we can know and follow God's ways. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

The New January to July Roster is now available from the side entrance of the Church and on the parish website.

10th & 11th February

Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Peter McCluskey	Georgette Sahyoun	Anne Marrins	Elias Family
	Marian McCluskey	Peter Yamin	Maria Soares	Elias Family
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Helen Blefari	Paulina Roncevic	Mark Soares	Helen Williamson
	Patricia Saad	Robert Smith	Rachel Suriano	Volunteer Needed
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

Recently Deceased:	Clare Ernst, John Quan, Anne Russo, Lidia Di Vito, Arleme De Leon, George Bugeja, Brian Measey.
Repose of The Soul:	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, Rex Fernandes, Cecilia Bailey, Louis & Laura D'Souza, Kevin O'Connor, Norma & Lionel Anet.
Anniversaries:	Liz Keating, Sandor Toth, Maureen & Edmund Duggan, Harry Russo, Frances Bot, Efsio Piras, Dorothy Harris, Eliana Barnes, Antonio Iannella, John McManus, William (Bill) Starr.
Sick Intentions:	Greg Glass, 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.
Special Intentions:	Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order. Antonia, Giuseppe, Raffaele, Teresa, Matteo, Filomena & Maria Pagano, Caterina & Francesco Agostino, John, Pauline & Katherine Murphy.

Remembering someone with a Mass Intention honours them in a unique way – surrounding them with the warmth of God's love. A Mass may be offered for the living or deceased, for a Birthday, Anniversary, for somebody who is ill, or for a special intention. Mass Intention envelopes are available at the Church Entrance.

If you would like a Mass offered on a particular date, please contact the parish office to arrange this.

Reflection

WHEN WE DOUBT THE POWER OF PRAYER BY RON ROLHEISER

We need to pray even when that seems the most lifeless thing to do. That's a counsel from Michael J. Buckley with which we need to challenge ourselves daily. In the face of real life, prayer can often seem like the most lifeless thing to do. What difference does prayer make? I will pray for you! Please keep me in prayer! Know that you have my prayers! We use those expressions all the time. I suspect not a day goes by that most of us do not promise to pray for someone. However, do we really believe our prayers make a difference? Do we really believe that our prayers can stop a pandemic, ease tensions within our communities, erase centuries-long misunderstandings among various religious denominations, cure someone dying of a terminal disease, bring our children back to church, or help someone forgive us? What can prayer do in the face of our own helplessness in a situation? Jesus said there are certain demons that can only be cast out by prayer and fasting. I suspect that we find that easier to believe literally, in terms of an evil spirit being cast out of a person, than we believe that our prayer can cast out the more earthly demons of hatred, injustice, misunderstanding, division, war, racism, nationalism, bigotry, and bodily and mental illness. These are the real demons that beset our lives and even though we ask for God's help in prayer, we don't often do it with a lot of confidence that our prayers will make a difference. How can they? The long history of Judaism and Christianity has taught us that God is not in the easy habit of positively interfering in nature and human life, at least not in ways that we can see. Miracles do happen, perhaps by the millions in ways that we cannot perceive. But, if we cannot see miracles, how are they real? Reality has different modalities. There is the empirical and there is the mystical. Both are real, though both are not equally observable as an action of God in history. If a dead body rises from its grave (the Resurrection) or if a race of people walks dry shod through the Red Sea (the Exodus) that is clearly an intervention of God in our world, but if some world leader has a change of heart and is suddenly more sympathetic to the poor, how do we know what prompted that? Likewise, for everything else for which we pray. What inspired the insight that led to the discovery of a vaccine for the pandemic? Pure chance? A touch from above? You can ask that same question vis-à-vis most anything else we pray about, from the world situation to our personal health. What is the source of an inspiration, a restoration to health, a melting of a bitterness, a change of heart, a correct decision, or a chance meeting with someone that becomes a grace for the rest of your life? Pure chance, simple luck, or a conspiracy of accidents? Or does God's grace and guidance positively touch you because of prayer, someone else's or your own? Central to our faith as Christians, is the belief that we are all part of one mystical body, the Body of Christ. This is not a metaphor. This body is a living organism, just as real as a physical body. Inside of a physical body, as we know, all parts influence each other, for good and for bad. Healthy enzymes help the whole body to retain its health and unhealthy viruses work at sickening the whole body. If this is true, and it is, then there is no such thing as a truly private action. Everything we do, even in our thoughts, influences others and thus our thoughts and actions are either health-giving enzymes or harmful viruses affecting others. Our prayers are health-giving enzymes affecting the whole body, particularly the persons and events to which we direct them. This is a doctrine of faith, not wishful thinking. Earlier in her life, Dorothy Day was cynical about Therese of Lisieux (The Little Flower) believing that her isolation in a tiny convent and her mystical "little way" (which professed that our smallest actions affect the events of the whole world) was pious naiveté. Later, as Dorothy gave herself over to symbolic actions for justice and peace that in effect seemed to change very little in real life, she adopted Therese as her patron saint. What Dorothy had come to realize through her experience was that her small and seemingly pragmatically useless actions for justice and peace, were not useless at all. Small though they were, they helped open up some space, tiny at first, which slowly grew into something larger and more influential. By slipping some tiny enzymes into the body of the world, Dorothy Day eventually helped create a little more health in the world. Prayer is a sneaky, hidden antibiotic – needed precisely when it seems most useless.



Beyond Blue
P: 1300 22 4636
W: www.beyondblue.org.au



CatholicCare – Archdiocese of Sydney
P: 13 18 19
W: www.catholiccare.org



Call 1800 55 1800



Lifeline
Saving Lives
Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.
Lifeline
P: 13 11 14
W: www.lifeline.org.au



NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY AND
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P: 1800 737 732
W: www.1800respect.org.au