



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

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 & Marion Li

Children's Liturgy Coordinator: Alannah Hickry

Plenary Council Ambassador: Helena O'Neil



'My eyes have seen your saving power... Luke 2

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



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 at 9.10am.

Divine Mercy Prayers recited every Thursday after 9.10am mass. We welcome and encourage you to come along.



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

RECONCILIATION:

Saturday after 9.10am Mass or by appointment.

BAPTISM:

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

Please introduce yourself to Father after Mass to request a Baptism Information pack. 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.

ST MARTHA'S PRAYER GROUP:

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

PLAYGROUP:

St Martha's Primary School Playgroup is a great opportunity for children aged 0 to 5 years to enjoy some books and craft activities and get to know each other. From 8.50am to 10.00am in the upstairs school hall.

Playgroup runs every Monday during the school term only.

Contact: elena.razzoli@syd.catholic.edu.au

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 safeguardinginquiries@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.

Please support our Catholic Press
Copies of the Catholic Weekly are in the Church Foyer \$2.

THANK YOU FATHER JOHN

January 28th marked the 4th Anniversary of Fr John's arrival at St Martha's as our Parish Priest. We sincerely thank him for his pastoral ministry and spiritual guidance to our parish community.



*Gracious and loving God,
We thank you for the gift of our Father John.
Through him, we experience your presence in the sacraments.
Keep him strong in his vocation. Set his soul on fire with love for your people.
Grant him the wisdom, understanding, and strength he needs
to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.
Inspire him with the vision of your Kingdom.
Give him the words he need to spread the Gospel.
And allow him to experience joy in his ministry.
Help him to become an instrument of your divine grace.*



We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest. Amen.



FARWELL LARISSA

Last week we said goodbye to Larissa after 5 years of service to the St Martha's Parish Community. Larissa joined St Martha's in December 2019 in the position of Administration Support and she has been a very valuable member of the team. Her warm, bright and bubbly personality will be greatly missed and we sincerely thank her for all her hard work, support and friendship. We are sorry to see her go but we wish her good luck and every success for the future. We have followed her journey through her studies and after graduating last year she is ready to commence her teaching career at Riverwood Primary School as a Year 1 teacher. We congratulate her on her appointment and we know that she will thrive in her new professional role. May the Lord Bless and watch over her always.



Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press): Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. The Presentation, which is celebrated 40 days after Christmas, is not mentioned in the other Gospels. Only Luke tells the story, most likely because he writes for Gentile Christians who are not familiar with the Jewish rite of presentation and purification. In addition, the intent of Luke's Gospel is to show that God's promise to Israel, fulfilled in Jesus, extends to Gentiles. Luke recognizes Joseph and Mary as faithful Jews who bring Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. Here they present their firstborn son to the Lord. Jesus is thus consecrated as required by the Law of Moses. Present in the temple at this time are Simeon and Anna. Both are awaiting the restoration of God's rule in Israel. Simeon had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would see Christ the Lord, the Messiah, before he died. The holy man immediately recognized the infant Jesus as the promised Savior, a "light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." Anna also recognized Jesus as the fulfillment of the promise of redemption and spoke about him to all.



Background on the Gospel Reading: Today we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Discuss with the family the persons of Simeon and Anna as they meet Jesus. (Luke 2: 25-40) Because Simeon and Anna lived lives of prayer and fasting in the Temple, they were filled with the Spirit of God. That is why they were able to identify Jesus as the Savior even though Jesus was only a baby. To these two holy people, he was recognizable as the Redeemer who had been promised. Simeon described Jesus as "a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." We too are called to recognize Jesus as Lord. Together as a family discuss ways to recognize Jesus as Lord by praying and attending Mass, fasting, and serving others. As a family, decide on one specific sacrifice you can make in order to alleviate the suffering or need of someone you know.



A Call for Catechists We are in need of additional Catechists to teach scripture at Homebush Public School. Classes are on Wednesday from 11:15 to 12pm. All training will be provided. Please contact Lorraine Kazzi if you are interested on 0400 505 205.

PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY OF GOOD SUCCESS AT ST JOACHIM'S CHURCH LIDCOMBE ON SUNDAY 2ND FEBRUARY. MASS AT 7.00PM FOLLOWED BY THE PROCESSION AT 8PM.



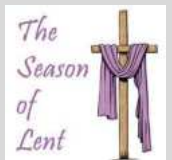
LENT 2025

THE SEASON OF LENT COMMENCES ON WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH.

ASH WEDNESDAY IS A DAY OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE.

Mass Times & the Distribution of Ashes

7.00am, 9.10am & 6.30pm

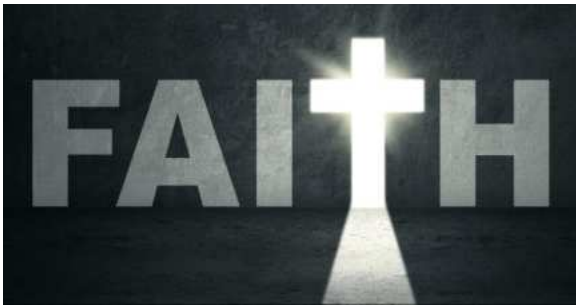


2025 LENTEN PROGRAM

(Wollongong Diocese Resource)

The program will commence on Monday 3rd March in the Church from 10.30am to 11.30am. Everyone is warmly welcome to attend (booklets are \$10).





A Crisis of Imagination

By Ron Rolheiser

J. R. Tolkien, the famous novelist, was one of the persons who helped C.S. Lewis to accept Christianity. As a man of considerable imagination he was not one to easily denigrate this faculty. Yet he clearly knew its limits. One night, after hours of listening to Lewis object to certain aspects of the faith, Tolkien suggested to him that his resistance was not so much a question of belief as it

was of imagination: “Your inability to understand stems from a failure of imagination on your part.” There is something very important in that statement. It tells us that the seat of our faith does not lie within our imaginations and that we cannot sustain our faith by our imaginations. To forget this can leave us open to a dangerous confusion. Let me try to explain this by way of an example:

Recently, at a retreat, a woman approached me for spiritual counsel. Her’s was a curious quandary: She felt both full of faith and full of doubt all at the same time. She began by telling me that she was, in her mind, a very orthodox Roman Catholic; somewhat pious even. Yet, try as she might, she could not believe that Christ physically rose from the dead, nor that we will one day rise from the dead, “I believe that Christ lived on after his death, in some way, but his body rotted in the grave. I don’t believe the tomb was empty. Likewise with us. I believe in immortality, but not in resurrection. If I can’t believe that, and I can’t, and I know I never will, does that make me an atheist? Am I losing my faith? Looked at superficially, it might appear that she is losing her faith, at least in that she is unable to believe in some non-negotiable part of the creed. Such a judgment, though, can be quite simplistic. My suggestion to her was somewhat in the line of Tolkien’s comment to C. S. Lewis. Her struggles were much more with her imagination and its incapacity to give her a mental construct of resurrection than they were with believing in the resurrection. What is the difference?

Contrast these two scenarios:

Imagine yourself lying in bed some night. You have just had a very good time of prayer. You are flooded with feelings and images about God. You have strong, clear feelings that God exists. On that particular evening you have no faith doubts – you can feel the existence of God. Now ... imagine another night, a darker one. You wake up from a fitful sleep and are overwhelmed by the sense that you don’t believe in God. You try to convince yourself that you still believe, but you cannot. Every attempt to imagine that God exists and to feel his presence comes up empty. You feel empty and you feel the emptiness of the world itself. Try as you like, you cannot shake the feeling that you no longer believe. Try as you like, you can no longer regain the solid ground you once stood on. Try as you like, you can no longer make yourself feel the existence of God. Does this mean that on one of these nights you have a strong faith and on the other you have a weak one? No! On the one night you have a strong imagination and on the other you have a weak one. On the one night you can imagine the presence of God and on the other night you cannot imagine it. Imagination is not faith. Daniel Berrigan, in his usual colourful manner, states the issue laconically, crassly, but accurately: Where does your faith live? In the head? In the heart? Your faith, he assures us, is rarely where your head is at, just as it is rarely where your heart is at. Your faith is where your ass is at! Where are you living? What are you doing? These things – our actions, our charity, our morality – are what determine whether we believe or not. Passing strange, and strangely true, the posterior is a better indication of where we stand with these than are the head and the heart. For we all have the experience of being within certain commitments (a marriage, a family, a church) where, at times our heads and our hearts are not there – but we are there!

The head tells us this doesn’t make sense; the heart no longer has the type of feelings that would keep us there; but we remain there, held by something deeper, something beyond what we can explain or feel. This is where faith lives and this is what faith means. The woman who sought spiritual counsel from me did believe in the resurrection because, by almost all indicators, she lived her life in function of it. Her problem was that her imagination could not picture it. She, like all of us, suffers the poverty of a finite imagination trying to picture the infinite. This, however, should never be confused with the loss of faith.

The February to August Roster is now available from the side entrance of the Church and on the parish website.

| 8th & 9th February | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| IF YOU CANNOT FULFIL YOUR ROSTER DUTY PLEASE ORGANISE A REPLACEMENT. | | | | |
| Special Ministers | 5PM | 8AM | 10AM | 6PM |
| | Beatrice Bonett | Gian Surjadinata | Jackie Romanous | Theresa Kuk |
| | Volunteer Needed | Artha Surjadinata | Rita Piras | Volunteer Needed |
| Readers | 5PM | 8AM | 10AM | 6PM |
| | Donald Bonett | Greg Glass | Anne Marrins | Owen Loney |
| | Volunteer Needed | Sonia Gomez | Steven Doumit | Volunteer Needed |
| Altar Servers | 5PM | 8AM | 10AM | 6PM |
| | Marissa B. | Archie S. | Jay L. | Volunteer Needed |
| | Olivia B. | Shannon D. | Jarvis L. | Volunteer Needed |
| | Volunteer Needed | Volunteer Needed | Volunteer Needed | Volunteer Needed |
| Wardens | 5PM | 8AM | 10AM | 6PM |
| | Linda Praum | Georgette Sahyoun | Trudie Rogers | Anthony Thurn |

Reflection - The Presentation of the Lord

mycatholic.life



Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews who obeyed the Law of Moses. Jewish Law prescribed that two ritual acts needed to take place for a firstborn son. First, the mother of a newborn son was ritually unclean for seven days, and then she was to "spend thirty-three more days in a state of blood purity" (Leviticus 12:2-8). During these forty days she was not to "touch anything sacred nor enter the sanctuary till the days of her purification are fulfilled." For this reason, today's feast has at times been called the "Purification of Mary." Second, the father of the firstborn son was to "redeem" the child by making an offering to the priest of five shekels so that the priest would then present the child to the Lord (see Numbers 18:16). Recall that the firstborn male of all the Egyptians, animals and children, was killed during the tenth plague, but the firstborn males of the Israelites were spared. Thus, this offering made for the firstborn son in the Temple was a way of ritually redeeming him in commemoration of protection during that plague. Since Jesus was presented in the Temple for this redemption, today's feast is now referred to as the "Presentation in the Temple." "Candlemass" is also a traditional name given to today's feast because as early as the fifth century, the custom of celebrating this feast with lighted candles had developed. The lit candles symbolized Simeon's

prophecy that Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles." Lastly, this Feast has been referred to as the "Feast of the Holy Encounter" because God, in the Person of Jesus, encountered Simeon and Anna in the Temple. Today's feast is celebrated in our Church forty days after Christmas, marking the day that Mary and Joseph would have brought Jesus into the Temple. Though Mary was pure and free from sin from the moment of her conception, and though the Son of God did not need to be redeemed, Mary and Joseph fulfilled these ritual obligations. At the heart of this celebration is the encounter of Simeon and Anna with the Christ Child in the Temple. It is in that holy encounter that Jesus' divinity is manifested by a human prophet for the first time. At His birth, the angels proclaimed His divinity to the shepherds, but in the Temple, Simeon was the first to understand and proclaim Jesus as the Saviour of the World. He also prophesied that this salvation would be accomplished by a sword of sorrow that would pierce the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Anna, a prophetess, also came forward and "gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38). Thus, these ritual acts were also a moment in which Jesus' divine mission was made manifest to the world. As we celebrate Mary's ritual purification and Jesus' ritual redemption, we should see them as acts in which we are called to participate. First, each of us is unworthy of entering the true Temple of the Lord in Heaven. Yet we are invited to enter that Temple in union with Mary, our Blessed Mother. It was her consent to the will of God that opened the door of God's grace to us all, enabling us to spiritually become Jesus' "mother" by allowing Him to be born in our hearts by grace. With her, we are now able to appear before God, purified and holy in His sight. We must also see Saint Joseph redeeming us as he presented Jesus in the Temple. In offering Christ Jesus to the priest to offer Him to the Father, Saint Joseph also presents all who strive to live in union with Jesus. The hope is that, like Simeon and Anna, others will see God alive within us and experience the Saviour of the World through us. Ponder, today, your soul being the new temple of the Lord, and acknowledge your need to be purified and offered to the Father in Heaven. As Christ continues to enter into the temple of your soul, pray that He will shine forth for others to see so that, like Simeon and Anna, they will encounter our Lord within you.

Prayer:

My saving Lord, your loving parents offered You to Your Father in the Temple in accordance with the Law You revealed to Moses. In that offering, our souls are purified and we are offered to Your Father with You. I thank You for the gift of salvation and pray that my soul will always radiate Your light as You dwell within me. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.

Mass Intentions

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Recently Deceased: | Ann Hoban, Michael Seuy Peng Ng, Paul Pickering, Peter Harrington. |
| Rest of The Soul: | Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Fr Mark Baird, Elias & Julia Georges, Alfredo Pjanic, Kevin Bouffler, Br Ray Dowding, Sr Audette Mansour, Francesco & Sarina Campanale, Daniel Lucich, Stefano, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, Filomena & Giuseppe Pagano, Matteo & Caterina Genova, Caterina Guarnia, Frances Doumit, Frederick McDowell, Dorothy Harris, James Brady, Elizabeth Keating, Anne Cecilia Glass, Reginald & Agnes Glass, Gerald & Frances Gleeson, Elias & Julia Georges, Joseph Tannous, Faado, Alice & Slaiman Herro, Aldo & Fiorella Amarino, Salvatore Puglisi, Roger O'Reilly, Monica & Patrick Ryan, Elie Sahyoun, Christopher John Stewart, Stephen Maxwell Stewart, Margaret Raeburn, Francesco & Mary Sorbello, Bruce & Estelle Thurn, Gerald Wilson, Lisa Cooke, Michael & Mary Cassar, Giuseppe & Romilda Reginato, Rosalie Quito-an, Sylvia Tagalog, Winne Byrne, Saad Saad, Michael Issa, Gertrude Adelaide Daley, Dorothy & Carl Butler, Harold Bryan Smith, Joseph Sellathamboo, Teresa Moses, Margaret Hetherington, Mabel Doyle, Greg Doyle & Jim Bradbury, John, Pauline & Katherine Murphy, Virginia Ramos, Pasquale Taglini, Joseph Francis, Rex Fernandes. |
| Anniversaries: | Dorothy Harris, Elizabeth Keating, Sandor Toth, Maureen & Edmund Duggan, Eliana Barnes, Anne Russo, Harry Russo, Elias Aslan, Antonio Iannella, Dower family, Daniel Dillon, Michael D'Cunha, Gerald Gleeson Snr, Sarina Campanale, Filomena Pagano, George Bugeja, James Webb & Wajih Saliba. |
| Sick Intentions: | Giuseppe Mazzaferro, Ann Cincotta-Tangey, Mark Samaha, John Weitering, Willie Quan, John Hay, Margaret Harrington, Ajith Antony, Rudy Raeburn, Robert Rumore, Carminella Tiberio, Theo McLean, Joseph Akkary, Sylvia Watson, Virgilio Lim, George Jabbour, Dr Maher Ishak Morian, Stephanie Harrington, Phil Harriss, Sophie O'Donnell, Ken South, Siena Fabrie, Joanna Jo, Simon Alam, Rosanne Sukkar, Henry D'Souza, Danielle Fabien. |
| Special Intentions: | Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order. Kathy, Zoe & Max Stephens, Jonathan Fernandes and family. |

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.



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



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



kidshelpline
Anytime Any Reason
Call 1800 55 1800



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



1800RESPECT
NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE
1800RESPECT
P: 1800 737 732
W: www.1800respect.org.au