



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

'They left everything and followed him'... Luke 5

70 Homebush Rd Strathfield NSW 2135

Phone: 9746 6131 Fax: 9746 3040

Email: office@stmarthas.org.au

Website: www.stmarthas.org.au

Parish Office Hours:

Mon, Tues & Thurs 9.00am-5.00pm



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.

Wishing you Happy Lunar New Year.

May the new year bring you prosperity and good health.

Many cultures and religions have the snake in their mythology and theology. Whilst our Judeo-Christian story paints the snake in a very negative light, other cultures and religions may differ. Chinese culture actually sees the snake from both positive and negative points of view. One of the more positive sees the shedding of a snake's skin as a sign of renewal, rebirth and good luck. May our seeking bring positive results in this Jubilee Year.



Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press): Last Sunday, we heard how Jesus was rejected in his hometown of Nazareth. In the verses that follow, Jesus travels to the town of Capernaum and begins his ministry of teaching and healing. While in Capernaum, Jesus cures a man possessed with a demon and heals Simon's mother-in-law. After spending some time there, Jesus prepares to preach in other places. The fact that Jesus had previously been in Simon's home and healed his mother-in-law suggests that this encounter is not the first between Jesus and Simon Peter. We can read today's Gospel, therefore, as a description of the developing relationship between Jesus and Simon Peter. In today's

Gospel, Jesus teaches from Simon's boat. Jesus turns to Simon and instructs him about where to lower the fishing nets. Simon and others have been fishing throughout the night and have not caught anything. Simon protests, claiming that such an effort would be futile. Simon ultimately obeys Jesus and lowers his nets into the deeper water as directed. Notice here that Peter calls Jesus by the title "master." He already recognizes Jesus as a person of authority. They catch so many fish that the nets begin to tear; Jesus' presence has created abundance out of scarcity, just as it did at the wedding feast at Cana, which we heard at Mass just a few weeks ago. Simon Peter becomes a follower of Jesus immediately. He calls Jesus "Lord"—the title given to Jesus after his Resurrection—and protests his worthiness to be in Jesus' presence. Today's Gospel, therefore, marks a turning point in the relationship between Jesus and Peter. Two of Simon's partners are also named as witnesses to the event described in today's Gospel: Zebedee's sons, James and John. Yet Jesus' words are addressed only to Simon. Jesus gives Simon a new job, telling him that he will become a different kind of fisherman. No longer will he catch fish; instead he will catch people. In these words, we hear the beginning of the leadership role that Peter will have within the community of disciples. Peter was chosen for this role. His task will be to bring others to Jesus. Already he is doing so; the Gospel tells us that all the fishermen with Peter also left their nets and followed Jesus. We continue to speak of Peter's leadership and influence in the Church today when we call the pope the "successor of Peter." We participate in the mission of the Church when we bring people to Christ through the example and positive influence of our lives.



Background on the Gospel Reading: In the people whom Jesus chose to be his closest friends—his disciples—we see many of the characteristic foibles of ordinary human beings. We also see the ways that God uses the gifts he gave us to transform us into new people, the agents through whom God will lead others to Jesus and to his kingdom. Let's consider the person Jesus chose to be a leader among the disciples and whom he sent to "catch people." Based on the evidence found in Scripture, we can imagine what Peter must have been like:

- Peter seems unafraid to speak his mind, yet he is also able to take direction. In today's Gospel, Simon Peter lowers his nets as Jesus commands, but not before reminding Jesus that he and his partners have been fishing all night and haven't caught anything.
- Peter is a leader, a spokesperson for others. Today's Gospel suggests that Simon Peter was a leader in his fishing business. When Simon Peter chooses to follow Jesus, others become Jesus' disciple as well.
- Peter's personality and charisma seem to make him the center of attention; yet Peter learned to be transparent, to let others see Jesus through him.
- Peter possesses a dynamic and open relationship with Jesus. Peter often approaches Jesus and speaks what is in his heart.

Gather as a family and spend some time imagining the person of Simon Peter. Encourage family members to tell details about Simon Peter that they recall from Scripture. Consider these questions: Is Peter someone you would like to be friends with? Why or why not? Do you consider Peter a good leader? Why or why not? Read aloud today's Gospel, Luke 5:1-11. Jesus chose Simon Peter to be the leader of the disciples. Peter continued to be a leader in the early Christian community; we continue to speak of Peter's leadership when we call the pope the successor of Peter. Discuss the role of the papacy and of other leaders in the Church. In what ways do we participate in the mission of the Church by leading people to Christ ("catching people")? Pray for those who lead the Church. Pray together the Prayer to St. Joseph, the Protector of the Church.

**Father, you entrusted our Saviour to the care of Saint Joseph.
By the help of his prayers may your Church continue to serve its Lord,
Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**



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).



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

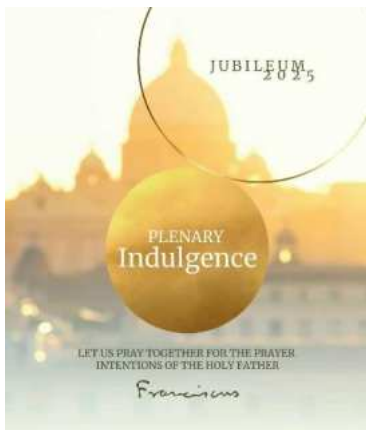
7.00am, 9.10am, 11.40am (School Mass) & 6.30pm

Readers, Special Ministers, Acolytes & Altar Servers are needed for each Mass.

The sign-up sheet is in the Church Foyer.

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.

Continue the Marist Spirit at St Patricks - Sunday February 23 - We invite you to be part of an important conversation on how we can continue the Marist Spirit in St Patricks Church Hill community. With the Marist Fathers set to leave St Patrick's in December 2025 after 157 years, this is an opportunity to reflect on their legacy and explore ways to develop the Marist spirit. Join us for a discussion led by Marist Laity Australia as we discern the future of the Marist presence at St Patrick's. Time 10am to 11am in the Crypt of St Patrick's Church Hill. All are welcome! For more information - www.maristlaityaustralia.com



JUBILEUM 2025

**Copies of the Decree on the
Proclamation of Places of Pilgrimage in
the Archdiocese of Sydney on the
occasion of the Jubilee Year of Our Lord
2025 are available to take home in
Church Foyer.**



Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased:	Paul Pickering, Mary Henry, John Butcher, 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, 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, Fonda Cummins.
Anniversaries:	Maureen Sarks, Margaret McGannon, Richard Sullivan, John Tandiono, Grace Hunt, Mark Kelly, 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, Margaret Harrington, Mark Samaha, John Weitering, Willie Quan, John Hay, 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.

15 th & 16 th February				
IF YOU CANNOT FULFIL YOUR ROSTER DUTY PLEASE ORGANISE A REPLACEMENT.				
Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Lisa Dennis	Georgette Sahyoun	Rachel Suriano	Kynetha Torcato
	Joanne Touma	Peter Yamin	Maria Soares	Volunteer Needed
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Maria Soo	Paulina Roncevic	Mark Soares	Andrew Chasle
	Volunteer Needed	Robert Smith	Merlyn D'Souza	Volunteer Needed
Altar Servers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Grace T.	Ryan W.	Marcus V.	Volunteer Needed
	Peter T.	Dylan W.	Elijah M.	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Wardens	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Edith Pun	Mary Daley	Trudie Rogers	Volunteer Needed

Carrying Our Cross

By Ron Rolheiser

Among Jesus' many teachings we find this, rather harsh-sounding, invitation: Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. I suspect that each of us has a gut-sense of what this means and what it will cost us; but, I suspect too that many of us misunderstand that Jesus is asking here and struggle unhealthily with this invitation. What, concretely, does Jesus mean by this? To answer that, I would like to lean on some insights offered by James Martin in his book, *Jesus, A Pilgrimage*. He suggests that taking up our cross daily and giving up life in order to find deeper life means six interpenetrating things: First, it means accepting that suffering is a part of our lives. Accepting our cross and giving up our lives means that, at some point, we have to make peace with the unalterable fact that frustration, disappointment, pain, misfortune, illness, unfairness, sadness, and death are a part of our lives and they must ultimately be accepted without bitterness. As long as we nurse the notion that pain in our lives is something we need not accept, we will habitually find ourselves bitter – bitter for not having accepted the cross. Second, taking up our cross and giving up our lives, means that we may not, in our suffering, pass on any bitterness to those around us. We have a strong inclination, almost as part of our natural instincts, to make others suffer when we are suffering: If I'm unhappy, I will make sure that others around me are unhappy too! This does not mean, as Martin points out, that we cannot share our pain with others. But there's a healthy way of doing this, where our sharing leaves others free, as opposed to an unhealthy kind of sharing which subtly tries to make others unhappy because we are unhappy. There's a difference between healthily groaning under the weight of our pain and unhealthily whining in self-pity and bitterness under that weight. The cross gives us permission to do the former, but not the latter. Jesus groaned under the weight of his cross, but no self-pity, whining, or bitterness issued forth from his lips or his beaten body. Third, walking in the footsteps of Jesus as he carries his cross means that we must accept some other deaths before our physical death, that we are invited to let some parts of ourselves die. When Jesus invites us to die in order to find life, he is not, first of all, talking about physical death. If we live in adulthood, there are a myriad of other deaths that we must undergo before we die physically. Maturity and Christian discipleship are about perennially naming our deaths, claiming our births, mourning our losses, letting go of what's died, and receiving new spirit for the new life that we are now living. These are the stages of the paschal mystery, and the stages of growing up. There are daily deaths. Fourth, it means that we must wait for the resurrection, that here in this life all symphonies must remain unfinished. The book of Proverbs tells us that sometimes in the midst of pain the best we can do is put our mouths to the dust and wait. Any real understanding of the cross agrees. So much of life and discipleship is about waiting, waiting in frustration, inside injustice, inside pain, in longing, battling bitterness, as we wait for something or someone to come and change our situation. We spend about 98% of our lives waiting for fulfilment, in small and big ways. Jesus' invitation to us to follow him implies waiting, accepting to live inside an unfinished symphony. Fifth, carrying our cross daily means accepting that God's gift to us is often not what we expect. God always answers our prayers but, often times, by giving us what we really need rather than what we think we need. The Resurrection, says James Martin, does not come when we expect it and rarely fits our notion of how a resurrection should happen. To carry your cross is to be open to surprise. Finally, taking up your cross and being willing to give up your life means living in a faith that believes that nothing is impossible for God. As James Martin puts it, this means accepting that God is greater than the human imagination. Indeed, whenever we succumb to the notion that God cannot offer us a way out of our pain into some kind of newness, it's precisely because we have reduced God down to the size of our own limited imagination. It's only possible to accept our cross, to live in trust, and to not grow bitter inside pain if we believe in possibilities beyond what we can imagine, namely, if we believe in the Resurrection. We can take up our cross when we begin to believe in the Resurrection.



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
P: 13 11 14
W: www.lifeline.org.au



1800RESPECT
P: 1800 737 732
W: www.1800respect.org.au