



ST MARTHA'S PARISH STRATHFIELD

Parish Priest: Father John Hayes

Assistant Priest: Father Liem Duong

Administration Coordinator: Nicolle Mazzaferro admin@stmarthas.org.au

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

Safeguarding Officer: Dianne Dawson safeguarding@stmarthas.org.au

Parish Ministries Coordinator: Helen Williamson

Music Ministry: Marcella Ayoub & Marion Li

Children's Liturgy Coordinator: Alannah Hickry



'When Jesus was Baptised, the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God came upon him' - Matthew 3

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 9.00am-5.00pm



St Martha's School: 9764 1184

Email: info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au

Principal: Carolyn Parsell

Assist Principal: Steven Belcastro

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

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.

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

6.00pm on Fridays in conjunction with Marian Movement of Priests Cenacle and Divine Mercy Chaplet.

ST MARTHA'S PRAYER GROUP:

Resumes 9th February 2026

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 **2nd Monday** during the **school term only**.

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

Mission:

Alive with the Spirit

Inspired by St Martha

We Celebrate & Witness

God's love

Using our Gifts & Talents

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.

Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press): The baptism of Jesus is attested to in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The account that appears in Matthew is the only one to include the dialogue between Jesus and John, however. Another difference in Matthew's presentation of this event is the announcement made by the voice from heaven, which says, "This is my beloved son . . ." In Mark and Luke, this voice addresses itself to Jesus: "You are my beloved son . . ." The baptisms that John performs prefigure Christian Baptism. John baptizes for repentance from sin. In accepting this baptism, Jesus unites himself with all sinners even though he is sinless. In Matthew's Gospel, John the Baptist distinguishes his practice of baptism from the Baptism that the Messiah brings: "I am baptizing you with water . . . He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11). The baptism of Jesus is another manifestation of Christ, another epiphany. Christ's baptism inaugurates his mission. In an analogous way, our Baptism inaugurates our mission as Christians. This Sunday marks a transition from the Christmas season to Ordinary Time. In a way, today's feast is the high point of the Christmas season. Before Jesus' birth, angels announced to Mary and to Joseph who Jesus would be. At his birth, the shepherds and the Magi recognize Jesus as the Messiah. At his baptism, Jesus accepts that he is God's son and inaugurates that mission.

Family Connection: At Jesus' baptism, God affirms his Son's mission for salvation. God announces his pleasure with Jesus and, in Matthew's Gospel, announces to all that, "This is my beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17). With this affirmation, Jesus is able to resist the temptations described next in Matthew's Gospel and to begin his public ministry. As family members, we can support one another in our Christian living by affirming the importance of each person in our eyes and in God's. Confident that through our Baptism we too were made children of God, we can resist temptation and share in Christ's mission. Gather as a family to read today's Gospel, Matthew 3:13-17. Recall that God's message about Jesus was meant for us, "This is my beloved Son." It was also an affirmation for Jesus about his role in God's plan. Place each family member's name on a slip of paper and put the names in a bowl. Invite each person in the family to choose another family member's name and to prepare a message for that person, affirming their importance in God's eyes and in your family life. Pray together that your family will continue to support one another in your baptismal promises to be disciples of Jesus and then invite each person to read aloud the message they prepared. Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

The new Ministries Roster commencing January 2026 is now available from the church side entrance or via the parish website.

17 th & 18 th January				
IF YOU CANNOT FULFIL YOUR ROSTER DUTY PLEASE ORGANISE A REPLACEMENT.				
Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Peter McCluskey	Gina Surjadinata	Elias Family	Kynetha Torcato
	Marian McCluskey	Artha Surjadinata	Ivenna Siu	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Readers	Maria Soo	Robert Smith	Elias Family	Andrew Chasle
	Patricia Saad	Volunteer Needed	Chelsea Valentin	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Altar Servers	Celeste S.	Ryan W.	Alysha N.	Volunteer Needed
	Thomas S.	Dylan W.	Aidan M.	Volunteer Needed
	Jeff C.	Matthew C.	Elias Family	Volunteer Needed
	Matthew Z.	Volunteer Needed	Elias Family	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Wardens	Linda Praum	Georgette Sahyoun	Trudie Rogers	Anthony Thurn

If you are an Acolyte; Reader; Eucharistic minister or in the Music Ministry you are required to sign in – (red folders are kept in the sacristy). The altar servers sign in folder is located in the side corridor.

BECOME A CATECHIST in 2026 - DURING THE SCHOOL TERM ONLY.
 We are in urgent need of 3 additional Catechists in 2026 to teach scripture in our local public schools. **Homebush Public & Marie Bashir on Wednesday mornings.** All training and teacher resources & support will be provided.
 Please contact Lorraine Kazzi on 0400 505 205.

St Martha's Piety Stall
 located in the Church foyer has a wide variety of sacramental and religious goods such as devotional candles, statues, rosaries, cards, and other devotional items. Please see the warden after Mass if you would like to purchase an item.



The new 2026 Columban Art Calendar is still available for \$10.
Please continue to support the St Vincent De Paul Society through the Church Poor Boxes



The Baptism of the Lord Year A (Fr Gerry O'Shaughnessy SDB)

Today we celebrate the feast of Baptism of Jesus, which might seem strange. I remember an old Bishop getting up to preach on this feast when I was at school; "we don't know why Jesus was baptised," he began, "but thank God he was!" Funnily enough I cannot remember anything else about the sermon, but it did make me wonder why the perfect one needed a baptism of forgiveness. In Matthew's account in today's Gospel, we are presented with the great Advent Saint, John the Baptist. He recognises that the request of Jesus is totally unusual: Jesus should be baptising him! The incarnation shows that the God of life does not follow the same rule book. Incarnation proves that we have not always done things 'this way'! Today we are presented with the sense of 'expectancy' which is so typical of this time of year. We are excited to think of the new possibilities that we might be able to share. If you are like me, then you realise all the wonderful opportunities that we wasted in 2025, and we pray that 2026 will be so much better. With the people of Judea, we can share a sense of excitement and potential. John is seen as the humble one, not even worthy to undo the sandal straps of Jesus. He symbolically uses water as sign of the refreshing forgiveness of God, while the Messiah will bring the gift the Holy Spirit to transform the world. In the meantime, Jesus, the sinless one enters the water and fully identifies with those seeking forgiveness from God. This is a true sign of the strength of incarnation. These past few weeks have been a non-stop rollercoaster of Christmas, but now, as the decorations come down, with no tinsel or lights to distract us, we can really concentrate on the reality of incarnation in our lives. God does not stand on the side-lines or on the banks of the Jordan, but chooses to be fully involved and immersed in the life of the world. Jesus did not sin but needed to identify himself with all of humanity — all of humanity, not just all the good things in the world, but the burden of all sin, wars, desolation, pandemics, and all the awful things that have happened down through the centuries — he carries that with him. He will be one with human beings, sharing in their greatness, but also in their grief. He does that, so that walking out of the water, he has accepted our humanity and shares with us his divinity. He is the Son, our brother; we are the daughters and sons of a loving Father. In that rising out of the water, his Father can look down and exclaim, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." In this feast we have yet another Epiphany or revelation of who Jesus is: the BELOVED of God who invites us all in to share that love. Today is that challenge for each of us to be equally involved in the life of the world. Sadly, there are those Christians who can only see the world as some sort of evil place that we should have nothing to do with. With such an attitude, Church then becomes some sort of sanctuary, a 'spiritual Disneyland' where we can escape to on a Sunday. Genesis, the very first book of the bible reminds us of the GOODNESS of creation. We are called to share that goodness with those we meet during this week. Please do not stand on the side-lines this week—get involved. The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is a day for us to give thanks to God for all his wonderful gifts. We thank him above all for the gift of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ; for all his redeeming work; for the gift of our baptism into him. Today is an ideal time to renew, as a family, your baptismal vows—so often made for us when we were infants. Share with your children and grandchildren the beauty of their baptismal day—bring out the photographs and remind them who their Godparents are. If you are a Godparent, why not contact your God-child—show them that that you still care. After mass today why not visit the baptismal font, usually found at the entrance of your church as a symbol of welcome into the community. You can always place a bowl of water on your home altar if you are joining online. Today is also an occasion for us to renew our resolution not to cast all these gifts away; not to be careless with the treasures we have received. Today we commit ourselves once again to conversion of heart; to putting away from us our habits of sin; to live as befits the blessed children of God. We need to be in dialogue with the global community more than ever in these days as we move on—we can only progress together. Pope Francis encourageD this approach: This is important: to get to know people, listen, expand the circle of ideas. The world is crisscrossed by roads that come closer together and move apart, but the important thing is that they lead towards the Good.

Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased:	Carmel Nelson, Milagros Manipis, Olga Chidiac, Charbel Mannah, Martha Lynch, Emged Rizkalla.
Repose of The Soul:	Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Fr Mark Beard, Elias & Julia Georges, Luke Manassa, Alfredo Pjanic, Kevin Bouffler, Br Ray Dowding, Francesco & Sarina Campanale, Daniel Lucich, Stefano, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, Filomena & Giuseppe Pagano, Matteo & Caterina Genova, Caterina Guarnia, Frances & Harry Doumit, Frederick McDowell, Dorothy Harris, James Brady, Elizabeth Keating, Anne Cecilia Glass, Reginald & Agnes Glass, Giuseppe Mazzaferro & Salvatore Corelli, Gerald & Frances Gleeson, Joseph Tannous, Nejia Tannous, Faado, Alice & Slaiman Herro, Aldo & Fiorella Amarino, Salvatore' Puglisi, 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, Gladstone & Noel Jebanasam, Salvatore La Cava, Pauline Gibson, Novak Victor Cujic, Caterina Severino, Narcisa Saya, Tom Antony & Dr Dexter Ekanayake, Pauline, John & Katherine Murphy.
Anniversaries:	Michael D'Cunha, Alice Herro, Des McNamara, Dorothea Starr, Warren Stephens, Norma McMillan, Gerald Gleeson, George Bugeja, Des McNamara, Emily Mattar, Ethan Yan, Phil Robinson, Peter Khoury, Rose Russo, Beryl Erskine, Stella Yih Juan Lim, Yang Sa Wong, Gloria Abrahams, John St George, Veronica & Margaret Riordan, John Harrington.
Sick Intentions:	Dareth Flavell, Micah Kim, Baby Mia Valente, Geoff Sims, Corrina Abraham, Cameron Stacy, Helen McAlister, Sr Marilyn Farley, Elliot Leahy, Toni N, Norma Habib, Joe Everitt, Alf Buda, Ann Cincotta-Tangey, Mark Samaha, John Weitering, , 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, Maroun Moussa, Stephen Chase (snr), Ajay Babu Avirneni.
Special Intentions:	Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order & St Vincent de Paul Society.

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 for the Baptism of the Lord Year A *(Young Catholics)*

The Baptism of the Lord Year A invites us to reflect on the beginning of Jesus' mission and what it means for our lives. Through His baptism, Jesus shows us humility, obedience to God, and the call to live as light for others. These reflections will help us think about how the readings connect to our own faith and baptismal promises.

Jesus as the Son of God

The Baptism of the Lord Year A shows us the moment when Jesus is revealed as the Son of God. In the Gospel, God's voice declares, "This is my beloved Son," to all who are present. This public affirmation makes it clear that Jesus has been chosen to fulfill God's mission.

This moment tells us who Jesus is and why He has come. He is not just a teacher or a prophet. He is the Son of God, sent to bring salvation to the world. The baptism marks the beginning of His mission, showing that He is ready to follow the Father's plan.

For us, this reminds us of our own identity as God's children. Just as Jesus received the Father's love and approval, we are loved by God too. This encourages us to trust in God's plan for our lives and live in a way that honours Him.

Called to Be a Light

The Baptism of the Lord Year A calls us to reflect on how baptism sets us on a path of righteousness. Jesus says He is baptized for "righteousness," showing His obedience to God and His mission to save others. In the first reading, Isaiah describes the servant who brings light to the nations, a role that Jesus fulfills.

At our own baptisms, we were given the light of Christ, symbolized by the baptismal candle. This light is not just a symbol but a mission. We are called to bring hope and goodness to those around us. We do this by showing kindness, standing up for what is right, and sharing our faith. Baptism is not just a one-time event but a way of life. It reminds us to follow Jesus and shine His light in our homes, communities, and workplaces. When we live this way, we fulfill our baptismal call and become lights for the world.

The Role of the Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Lord Year A highlights the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life and mission. When Jesus is baptized, the Spirit descends upon Him like a dove. This shows that the Spirit gives Him the strength and power to carry out His mission.

In the second reading, we hear how Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit to bring peace and healing. The Spirit was with Jesus every step of the way. This reminds us that the Holy Spirit is with us too, guiding us in our daily lives.

The Holy Spirit helps us to make good choices and to stay faithful to God. Through prayer and the sacraments, we can grow closer to the Spirit and receive the strength we need. The Baptism of the Lord Year A encourages us to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit and trust in His guidance.

The Baptism of the Lord Year A reminds us of who Jesus is and what He came to do. It also calls us to follow His example in bringing light, love, and hope to the world. May these reflections inspire us to live faithfully and share Christ's light with others.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for the gift of Jesus and His example of humility and service. Help us to live out our baptismal call by sharing Your light with others. Guide us through the Holy Spirit to follow You each day. May we always trust in Your plan and grow in faith. Amen.



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



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



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