



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



'Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights' - Matthew 4

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

Acting Principal: Steven Belcastro

Acting Assistant Principal: Chelsea McKeown

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**

Mission:

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

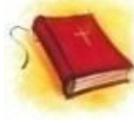


Tuesday: 7.30am
Wednesday: 9.10am
Thursday: 9.10am
Friday: 9.10am

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: Info@stmstrathfield.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:

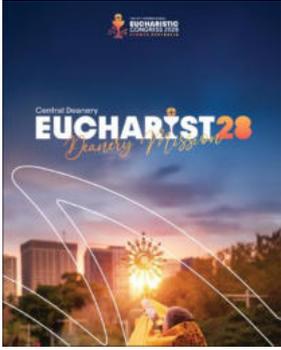
IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN IN - ACOLYTES; READERS; EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS; CHOIR; CHILDREN'S LITURGY (LEADERS & CHILDREN) & SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM (LEADERS & CHILDREN). SIGN IN FOLDERS ARE KEPT IN THE SACRISTY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

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

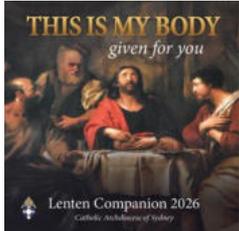
GLUTEN FREE HOSTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ANY CELIAC PARISHIONERS. IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION PLEASE TELL THE CHURCH WARDEN OR SEE AN ACOLYTE IN THE SACRISTY PRIOR TO MASS.

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

**Fr John will be away from the Parish from 23rd February to 12th March.
We wish him safe and happy travels.**



Dear Parishioners,
As part of preparations for the Eucharistic congress in 2028, at which Pope Leo XIV has now confirmed he will attend, our Deanery has been asked to host the First Eucharistic Mission. Fr Josh Miechels of Berala Parish has generously organised this event on behalf of the 16 parishes of our Deanery. It will take place from 27th February – 1st March 2026. We are encouraged to actively participate in this Eucharistic Mission, especially in the Procession at 3.00pm. Please see the flyers and posters in the Church foyer for more details. Everyone is welcome.



**Go Make Disciples – Lenten Companion 2026.
A limited number of free copies are available in the Church foyer to
take home along with copies of Archbishop Anthony's Lenten Penance.**



Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press): In each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew, and Luke), after Jesus' baptism by John, Jesus is reported to have gone to the desert to fast and pray for 40 days. In each case, while in the desert, Jesus is tempted by the devil. Matthew and Luke give more detail than Mark does, but each one tells how the devil tempts Jesus in the desert. In Matthew, as in Luke, the devil presents three temptations to Jesus. The devil tempts Jesus to use his power to appease his hunger; he tempts Jesus to put God's promise of protection to the test; and he offers Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship the devil. In each case, Jesus resists the temptation, rebuking the devil with words from Scripture. The account of Jesus' temptation in the desert is filled with allusions and parallels to the Old Testament, including the story of the people of Israel. The Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert in Exodus, for example, and Jesus spends 40 days in the desert. As the Israelites were tempted during the Exodus, so too is Jesus tempted. Each temptation offers insight into both God and the human condition. Jesus' rejection of the temptations shows that he will not put God to the test. Grounding himself on the word and authority of Scripture, Jesus rebukes the devil, confident in God's protection and faithfulness. As we start our journey through Lent, our Sunday readings call us to adopt the same confidence that Jesus had in the face of temptation: God's word alone will suffice; God's promise of protection can be trusted; God alone is God.

Family Connection: When Jesus resists the temptations presented to him by the devil, he draws on his religious upbringing and tradition. Jesus is able to quote from Scripture because he is the Son of God and because he was a human person who lived his Jewish beliefs fully. We who are responsible for raising children are also called upon to immerse them fully in our Catholic Christian tradition so that they too will be able to draw upon this tradition to resist the temptations they will face in their lives. Use this Sunday as an opportunity to call your family's attention to the importance of Scripture in our lives. Gather your family around the family Bible and read today's Gospel, Matthew 4:1-11. Recall that Jesus rebuked the devil's temptations by quoting Scripture. Take some time as a family to talk about the words that are found in the Bible and the importance of Scripture to our faith. Perhaps the older members of the family can share a favorite Scripture passage with everyone. Younger family members can tell their favorite story from the Bible and be shown where that story can be found. In each case, encourage a deeper sharing of faith by asking each person to tell why the Scripture passage shared is important to him or her. Conclude your time together by again reading Jesus' reply to the devil found in Matthew 4:4 ("One does not live by bread alone . . .") and praying 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, Acolytes & Wardens. Please write your name on the sheets on the rear table of the church or contact **Helen Williamson on 0408 970 120.**

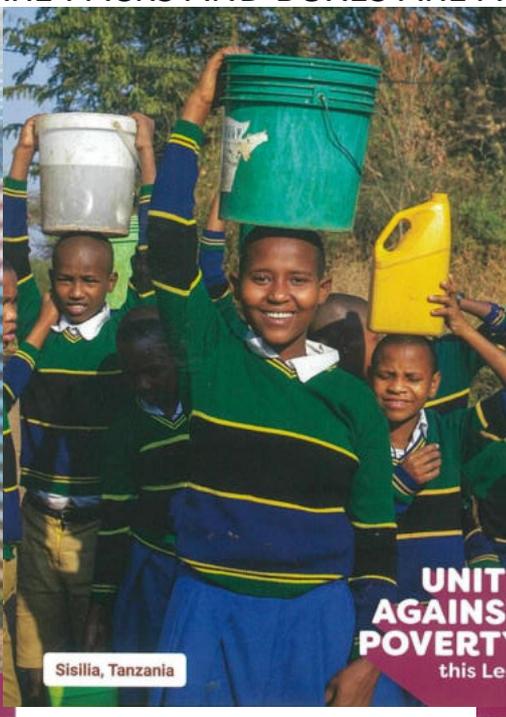
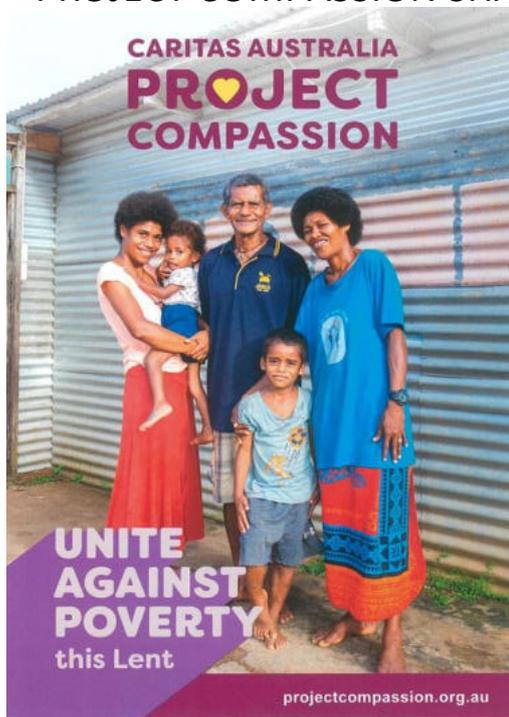
VOLUNTEERS ARE ALSO NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 'WASHING OF THE FEET' AT THE HOLY THURSDAY MASS. PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET AT THE REAR OF THE CHURCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER.



Family Group Event - Fr Brian Traynor CP will be facilitating a day for Family Group people and for those interested in Family Groups on Saturday the 28th February at St Brigid's, Marrickville. Please register your attendance or to receive a copy of the Event flyer with more details. Ph 85775683 or email nswfamilygroups@gmail.com **Annette and Tony Guterres Passionist Family Group Movement (PFGM) Sydney Diocesan Co-ordinators.**

***Lenten Devotion: Stations of the Cross
Every Friday of Lent at 7pm***

PROJECT COMPASSION SHARE PACKS AND BOXES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE FOYER.



PROJECT COMPASSION LENTEN PRAYER

God of all love,
 We remember that on the night before he died
 Your son, Jesus, prayed
 that his friends 'may all be one.'
 Yet we see so much division in the world.
 War, conflict, violence and hatred
 must all distress you.
 Millions of people suffer
 when they don't have peace and respect.
 They lack the necessities of life: food, water,
 health, education and security.
 We pray that we may all
Unite Against Poverty this Lent.
 May our support for **Project Compassion**
 be a sign to ourselves and others,
 of our hope for a better world.
 This Lent, we pray that our dedication
 to prayer, fasting and almsgiving
 will help restore your vision of justice and peace.
 Guided by the Holy Spirit,
 we pray in Jesus' name,
Amen



28th Feb / 1st March

IF YOU CANNOT FULFIL YOUR ROSTER DUTY PLEASE ORGANISE A REPLACEMENT.

Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Tandiono Family	Yvonne Martins	Anne Marrins	Andrew Bova
	Tandiono Family	Lilly Ravi	Rita Piras	Volunteer Needed
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Natalie Baini	Daniel Martins	Maria Battikha	Andrew Chasle
	Maria Soo	Volunteer Needed	Rachel Suriano	Volunteer Needed
Altar Servers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Hayden M.	Jacob M.	Beatrice L.	Volunteer Needed
	Zachary A.	Christian C.	Holly C.	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Ryan W.	Bonett Family	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Dylan W.	Bonett Family	Volunteer Needed
Wardens	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Vince Blefari	Abhoud Baladi	Trudie Rogers	Theresa Kuk

Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased:	Nancy Au, Grace Maria Rumore, Andre Miguel Marquez, Swady Anne Hanna, Fr Glynn, Brother Julian (Maurice) Quinlan, Frank Burriss, Trudie O'Neil, Pierantonio Deidda, Laurice Touma Sassine, Carmel Nelson, Milagros Manipis, Olga Chidiac.
Rest of The Soul:	Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Kevin Bouffler, Br Ray Dowding, Francesco & Sarina Campanale, Daniel Lucich, Stefano, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, 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, Filomena & Giuseppe Pagano, 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, Jenny Indriani, Pauline Gibson & Robert Rumore.
Anniversaries:	Mark Kelly, John Tandiono, Sagaya Sargunam, James Henness, Grace Hunt, Maureen Sarkis, Margaret McGannon, Richard Sullivan, John Tandiono, Mark Kelly, Dorothy Harris, Elizabeth Keating, Sandor Toth, Maureen & Edmund Duggan, Eliana Barnes, Minter Antoun, Frances Bot, Harry Russo, Jim Bradbury, Julian & Mabel Doyle, Harry Thorpe, Daniel Dillon, Antonio Iannella.
Sick Intentions:	Amy Scott, Dareth Flavell, Baby Mia Valente, Geoff Sims, 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, 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 Avimeni.
Special Intentions:	Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order & St Vincent de Paul Society. Harry Ama;n & David Russell.



Entering Lent by Ron Rolheiser

Sometimes the etymology of a word can be helpful. Linguistically, lent is derived from an old English word meaning springtime. In Latin, lente means slowly. Etymologically, then, lent points to the coming of spring and it invites us to slow down our lives so as to be able to take stock of ourselves. That does capture some of the traditional meaning, though the popular mindset. It understands lent mostly as a season within which we are asked to fast from certain normal, healthy pleasures so as to better ready ourselves for the feast of Easter. One of the images for this is the biblical idea of the Desert. Jesus, we are told, in order to prepare for his public ministry, went into the desert for forty days and forty nights during which time he fasted and, as the Gospel of Mark tells us, was put to the test by Satan, was with the wild animals, and was looked after by the angels. Lent has always been understood as a time of us to imitate this, to metaphorically spend forty days in the desert like Jesus, unprotected by normal nourishment so as to have to face “Satan” and the “wild animals” and see whether the “angels” will indeed come and look after us when we reach that point where we can no longer look after ourselves. For us, “Satan” and “wild animals” refer particularly to the chaos inside of us that normally we either deny or simply refuse to face – our paranoia, our anger, our jealousies, our distance from others, our fantasies, our grandiosity, our addictions, our unresolved hurts, our sexual complexity, our incapacity to really pray, our faith doubts, and our moral secrets. The normal food that we eat, distracted ordinary life, works to shield us from the deeper chaos that lurks beneath the surface of our lives. Lent invites us to stop eating whatever protects us from having to face the desert that is inside of us. It invites us to feel our smallness, to feel our vulnerability, to feel our fears, and to open ourselves up to the chaos of the desert so that we can finally give the angels a chance to feed us. That’s the Christian ideal of lent, to face one’s chaos.

To supplement this, I would like to offer three rich mythical images, each of which helps explain one aspect of lent and fasting: In every culture, there are ancient stories, myths, which teach that all of us, at times, have to sit in the ashes. We all know, for example, the story of Cinderella. The name itself literally means, the little girl (puella) who sits in the ashes (cinders). The moral of the story is clear: Before you get to be beautiful, before you get to marry the prince or princess, before you get to go to the great feast, you must first spend some lonely time in the ashes, humbled, smudged, tending to duty and the unglamorous, waiting. Lent is that season, a time to sit in the ashes. It is not incidental that we begin lent by marking our foreheads with ashes.

The second mythical image is that of sitting under Saturn, of being a child of Saturn. The ancients believed that Saturn was the star of sadness, of heaviness, of melancholy. Accordingly they weren’t always taken aback when someone fell under its spell, namely, when someone felt sad or depressed. Indeed they believed that everyone had to spend certain seasons of his or her life being a child of Saturn, that is, sitting in heaviness, sitting in sadness, waiting patiently while some important inner thing worked itself out inside the soul. Sometimes elders or saints would put themselves voluntarily under Saturn, namely, like Jesus going into the desert, they would sit in a self-induced heaviness, in the hope that this melancholy would be means to reach some new depth of soul. That too is the function of lent.

Finally there is the rich image, found in some ancient mythologies, of letting our tears reconnect us with the flow of the water of life, of letting our tears reconnect us to the origins of life. Tears, as we know, are salt-water. That is not without deep significance. The oceans too are salt water and, as we know too, all life takes its origins there. Hence, we get the mystic and poetic idea that tears reconnect us to the origins of life, that tears regenerate us, that tears cleanse us in a life-giving way, and that tears deepen the soul by letting it literally taste the origins of life. Given the truth of that, and we have all experienced its truth, tears too are a desert to be entered into as a Lenten practice, a vehicle to reach new depths of soul.

The need for lent is experienced everywhere: Without sublimation we can never attain what is sublime. To truly enter a feast there must first be a fast. To come properly to Easter there must first be a time of desert, ashes, heaviness, and tears.



Sydney
Catholic
Schools
Week

OPEN DAY
Thursday 5 March
9.00-11.00am



St Martha's
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
STRATHFIELD

**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