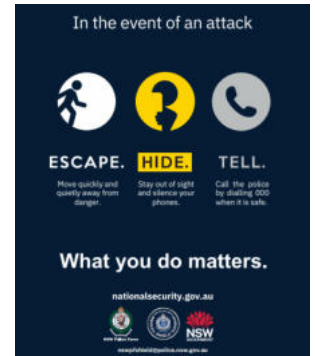




ST MARTHA'S PARISH STRATHFIELD

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



'After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them' ... John 20


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


 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 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 safeguardingenquiries@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. It is a fundamental legal, moral and spiritual responsibility of the Archdiocese to ensure the safety and well-being of 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.

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

PARISHIONERS. IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION PLEASE TELL THE CHURCH WARDEN OR SEE AN ACOLYTE IN THE SACRISTY PRIOR TO MASS.

Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press) The Gospels tell us that Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions after they discovered that his tomb was empty. Part of the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is that he appeared to his disciples not as a spirit but in bodily form. The bodily form was not one that the disciples recognized though. In John's Gospel, Mary of Magdala does not recognize that the figure standing before her is Jesus until he speaks to her. In Luke's Gospel the disciples who meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus do not recognize him until he breaks bread with them. The resurrected Jesus had a physical presence, but the disciples couldn't recognize Jesus unless he allowed them to. His resurrected body, nonetheless, showed the marks of his crucifixion. From readings such as today's Gospel, we also see that in his resurrected body, Jesus seems to be free of physical constraints. He appears to the disciples despite the fact that the doors were locked. Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, Jesus commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." During the meeting, Jesus also shows the integral connection between forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The story of Thomas illustrates our Christian experience today: We are called to believe without seeing. In fact, all Christians after the first witnesses have been called to believe without seeing. Thomas's doubt is hardly surprising; the news of Jesus' appearance was incredible to the disciples who had seen him crucified and buried. Thomas's human nature compelled him to want hard evidence that the Jesus who appeared to the disciples after his death was indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified. Thomas is given the opportunity to act on that desire. He is our witness that Jesus is really risen. Our faith is based on the witness of the Church that has preceded us, beginning with Thomas and the first disciples. Through Baptism we receive the same Holy Spirit that Jesus brought to the first disciples. We are among those who are "blessed" because we believe without having seen.

Family Connection: Many of us can relate to Thomas's response to the news that the disciples had seen Jesus. We want to see for ourselves too, but we grow in faith, trusting the experience and knowledge of others. Many of us have heard the saying "Seeing is believing." As your family gathers, take some time to consider what that saying means. What are some things we believe because we see them? Is there anything we believe without seeing? Today's Gospel reminds us that faith sometimes asks us to believe things we cannot see with our eyes. Read today's Gospel, John 19:19-31, with your family. Think about Thomas's response to the reports about the risen Lord. Is Thomas's doubt reasonable? How does Jesus respond to Thomas? Jesus grants Thomas the evidence that Thomas needs to believe, but Jesus also affirms the faith of those who will be called upon to believe without first-hand experience. We are among those whom Jesus calls blessed. Discuss with your family the basis of each member's faith in Jesus—the witness of the first disciples, the Gospels, the continuing activity of the Holy Spirit, the community of the Church. Pray together that your faith in Jesus will be strong. Pray an act of faith together.

Divine Mercy Prayer Group – Every Thursday morning after Mass.

Divine Mercy Sunday is celebrated on the second Sunday of Easter and is a religious observance celebrated mostly among Catholics. This year, it takes place on April 12. It is a significant time for reflection on the Christian faith. As Pope John Paul II stated, "It is a time where we are blessed with divine mercy as it reaches us through the heart of Christ crucified." Divine Mercy Sunday focuses on the gifts that flowed from Christ's death, burial, and resurrection — his mercy and love that were so freely given to humanity after such a betrayal. Divine Mercy Sunday concludes the Easter celebrations and welcomes the ultimate gift that Christ gave after his crucifixion.

REFLECTION ON DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY by Deacon Bill Polingue

In the Roman Catholic Church, Easter has always been a celebration of the great love that God has for His Creation. A love that was shown when the Divine Son became incarnate and dwelt among us, sharing in our lot, showing us the way to the Father, and making the perfect offering in atonement for our sins. On the First Sunday after Easter the Church celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday, a feast based upon the private revelations of Jesus to St. Faustina. In extending this Feast to the entire Church, Pope John Paul II re-emphasized the resurrection context of Easter, citing St. Faustina's diary: "Humanity will never find peace until it turns with trust to Divine Mercy." In describing this feast, Blessed John Paul II says: "Divine Mercy! This is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ, a gift which it offers to all humanity." The first epistle of St. John declares to the entire world that "God is love;" and in his encyclical letter Rich in Mercy, Blessed John Paul II wrote, "Mercy is love's second name." If we understand mercy in the Biblical sense, then without any fear of error contrary to the faith, it can be said, as John Paul II said, that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. This Biblically formulated relationship between love and mercy is expressed by St. Faustina when she says: "Love is the flower, mercy the fruit." Divine Mercy is the form that God's eternal love takes when He reaches out to us in the midst of our misery and our brokenness. Whatever the nature of our need might be — sin, guilt, suffering, or death — He is always ready to pour out His merciful, compassionate love for us, to help us. Where there was only despair, loneliness, and heartache before, comes joy, fruitfulness, and abiding love. The message of Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us and wants us to approach Him in constant prayer, repenting of our sins while asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world. He wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others, extending our love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us. We must realize that God does not do anything in portions. He is infinite and the amount of His Divine Mercy available to us is infinite. The only limiting factor is us. The more we trust in Jesus, the more graces we will receive and the more all will come to share His joy. This is the message Jesus is giving us through today's devotion to his Divine Mercy, a mercy that he tells us is unfathomable and which he wants us to spread throughout the world through our own actions and love for others.

Enrolling @ St Martha's Primary School

Kindergarten Enrolments for 2027 are now being taken. Years 1-6 anytime of the year. Please contact the School Office on 9764 1184 for an Enrolment Pack or a personalised tour. All enrolments are welcome.



Reflection for Divine Mercy Sunday *(Young Catholics)*

Peace and Forgiveness

In the gospel for Divine Mercy Sunday Year A, the disciples are hiding in fear after Jesus' crucifixion. They are scared and uncertain about their future. When Jesus appears to them, His first words are "Peace be with you." This is more than a greeting. It is a message of comfort and reassurance. Jesus offers them peace to calm their fears and remind them that He is with them.

Jesus then shows them His wounds. These wounds are proof of His suffering, but they are also a sign of forgiveness. Despite being abandoned by His closest friends during His crucifixion, Jesus does not hold their fear or doubt against them. He forgives them and gives them peace. This shows that His mercy is greater than their failures. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A reminds us that Jesus offers us the same peace and forgiveness. No matter what mistakes we have made, Jesus is ready to forgive us. He invites us to come to Him with our fears, doubts, and sins. We don't need to be perfect to receive His mercy. We are also called to share this peace and forgiveness with others. Just as Jesus forgave His disciples, we are asked to forgive those who have hurt us. By doing this, we bring His peace into our relationships and our world. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A challenges us to be instruments of peace and mercy.

Doubting Thomas

Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared. When they told him that they had seen the Lord, he doubted their words. Thomas wanted proof. He said he would not believe until he saw and touched Jesus' wounds. This moment of doubt is not about weakness but about honest questioning. Thomas wanted to be sure that it was truly Jesus. When Jesus appears again, He invites Thomas to see and touch His wounds. This act of love and patience helps Thomas move from doubt to faith. Thomas then makes a bold declaration of faith, calling Jesus his Lord and God. His doubt leads him to a deeper and stronger belief. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A shows that doubt is part of the journey of faith. Jesus does not reject Thomas for his doubts. Instead, He meets him where he is and helps him believe. This teaches us that questioning and seeking are normal in our faith journey. Jesus is patient with our struggles and invites us to come closer to Him. Jesus also blesses those who believe without seeing. This blessing is for all of us who have not seen Jesus in person but still believe in Him. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A encourages us to trust in Jesus' presence and love, even when we don't have physical proof.

The Scars Remain

When Jesus appears to His disciples after His resurrection, He still has the scars from His crucifixion. These scars are a reminder of His suffering and sacrifice. But they are also a sign of victory because they show that He has overcome death. Jesus carries His scars with Him, even in His risen body. This teaches us that resurrection does not erase suffering. Jesus is alive, but the marks of His pain remain. He does not hide them but shows them to His disciples. By doing this, He invites them to see His love and sacrifice. He also shows them that suffering is part of the path to new life. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A reminds us that we, too, carry our own scars. These scars may come from physical pain, emotional wounds, or struggles in life. Following Jesus does not mean our pain is erased. But it does mean that our suffering can lead to new life and hope. Jesus understands our pain because He went through it Himself. He invites us to bring our wounds to Him and find healing. Our scars become a part of our story of faith. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A encourages us to trust that Jesus can bring good even from our deepest wounds.

The Importance of Community

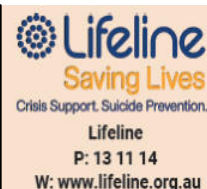
The first reading and the gospel for Divine Mercy Sunday Year A both highlight the importance of community. The early Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teachings, fellowship, and prayer. They shared their resources and took care of each other's needs. This strong sense of community helped them grow in faith and in number. In the gospel, the disciples are gathered together in fear and uncertainty. Jesus appears to them as they are united in one place. His presence brings them peace, courage, and purpose. Thomas misses the first encounter because he is not with them. But when he joins the community, he experiences the risen Lord and moves from doubt to faith. This shows that faith is not meant to be lived alone. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A teaches us that community is essential for growing in faith. We support each other, learn from each other, and share our joys and struggles. Being in community helps us encounter Jesus in new ways. We are called to build and strengthen our faith communities. This means being present for one another, praying together, and sharing what we have. Divine Mercy Sunday Year A invites us to create communities of mercy, love, and hope, just as the early Christians did.

Reflection Questions

1. How can I accept Jesus' peace in my heart and life?
2. Do I believe in Jesus' forgiveness, even when I feel unworthy?
3. How can I show mercy and forgiveness to others?
4. What doubts do I struggle with in my faith journey?
5. How can I grow in faith without needing physical proof?
6. What scars am I carrying, and how can I find healing in Jesus?
7. How can my own struggles help me grow closer to Jesus?
8. Why is community important in my faith journey?
9. How can I better support my faith community?
10. What does God's mercy mean to me, and how can I share it with others?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, on this Divine Mercy Sunday Year A, we thank You for Your mercy and love.
Help us to receive Your forgiveness and to forgive others.
Give us the courage to trust in You, even when we have doubts.
Unite us as a community of faith and love. Amen.



Understanding Scripture (Liturgia)

UNBELIEVING THOMAS

The gospel story is usually called the story of 'doubting Thomas.' Indeed, this characterisation of Thomas effects the translation of verse 27: 'Do not doubt, but believe' (NRSV). Read in this way, the story describes Thomas' movement from doubt to faith and leads us to set up doubt and belief as opposites. This creates two problems. First, doubt is not the opposite of faith and one does not preclude the other. For example, in the Gospel of Matthew the disciples meet the risen Jesus in Galilee just before his ascension. Matthew says of the disciples, 'When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted' (28:17). Apparently, they believed enough to worship Jesus, but some doubts persist. Doubt and faith can co-exist. The second problem with the traditional reading is this: it misrepresents the theology of the Evangelist. Jesus responds to Thomas' assertion, 'I will not believe' (20:25) by chiding him, 'do not be unbelieving, but believe' (20:27). In other words, the issue is not that Thomas doubted, but that he did not believe. The story, then, recounts a remarkable transformation from unbelieving to believing. This happens when Thomas 'sees' the risen Jesus. But now that Jesus has ascended, the opportunity to see Jesus or the signs he performed is no longer possible. Therefore, the Evangelist hopes that the signs he carefully reports in his gospel will help readers 'come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God' (20:31). In other words, the belief he hopes to inspire will be based on people reading his words, not on seeing signs. This is reinforced by the words of Jesus: 'Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed' (20:29). According to the Evangelist, readers 'who have not seen' cannot be like Thomas who saw Jesus; but they (and we!) can be like Thomas by believing. Though the way in which people come to believe may be different, the belief is the same: Jesus is 'Lord and . . . God.' And the goal of believing is the same: 'life in his name.'

Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased:	Pat (Ivy) Killalea, Peter Cranny, Ana Adaman, Anne Burton, Matthew Quan, Nancy Au, Grace Maria Rumore, Andre Miguel Marquez, Swady Anne Hanna, Fr Glynn, Brother Julian (Maurice) Quinlan, Frank Burriss, Trudie O'Neil.
Repose 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 & Slainan 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, Pauline Gibson, Robert Rumore, Elize Castelino, Jim Bradbury, Julian & Mabel Doyle, Olga Chidiac, Joseph & Charbel Mannah.
Anniversaries:	Damia Bains, James Webb & Wajih Saliba, Mary Colletta Saverimuthu, Padma Rajah & Teresa Sittampalam, Bridie McWilliams, Patricia Gurney, Simon Zouki, Bridget Collits, Patrick Marrins, Monica Connolly, Maud Soares, Francesco & Mary Sorbello, Paul Duggan, Peter Turpin, Andrew Coote.
Sick Intentions:	Amy Scott, Dareth Flavell, Paul Woodbury, Baby Mia Valente, Geoff Sims, Cameron Stacy, Helen McAlister, Elliot Leahy, Norma Habib, Joe Everitt, Alf Buda, Ann Cincotta-Tangey, Mark Samaha, John Weitering, John Hay, Ajith Antony, 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.

18th & 19th April

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

	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Special Ministers	Beatrice Bonett	Gian Surjadinata	Jackie Romanous	Kynetha Torcato
	Vince Blefari	Artha Surjadinata	Helen Williamson	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Readers	Helen Blefari	Robert Smith	Anne Marrins	Andrew Chasle
	Maria Soo	Volunteer Needed	Steven Doumit	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Altar Servers	Marissa B.	Ryan W.	Jay L.	Volunteer Needed
	Olivia B.	Dylan W.	Jarvis L.	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Courtney O.	Volunteer Needed
	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Charlize O.	Volunteer Needed
	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
Wardens	Linda Praum	Peter Yamin	Trudie Rogers	Anthony Thurn