

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

Children's Liturgy Coordinator: Alannah Hickry



'A sower went out to sow' ... Matthew 13

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:

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

Contact: Info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au

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

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 at Risk, and it acknowledges its important legal, moral and spiritual responsibility to create a safe and nurturing environment for Children and Adults.



**Office of the
Children's Guardian**

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.

Father Liem will return to the parish on 14th July. We wish him safe travels home.

New sets of 2026/27 Planned Giving Envelopes are now available for collection in the Church Foyer. We encourage all Parishioners to join the giving system by either Weekly Envelope or Monthly Credit Card as this is the main income of the parish, by means of which we run everyday expenses, funds projects and plan for the future. Tax deductibility is 30%. If you would like to join, please complete a form in the Church Foyer which can be returned via any collection plate or directly to the parish office.

UPCOMING ALTAR SERVER TRAINING SESSIONS — Children who have received their First Holy Communion (approximately 8 year olds and over) are eligible to train for altar serving at St Martha's. The next round of training will be on 2 consecutive Thursdays 23rd July and 30th July at 3.30pm in the Church. The sign-up sheets are located in the church foyer. Parental consent and support is required so please take home and complete the consent form. Once trained, the children will be included on the weekend Mass roster so please nominate your preferred Mass time.



The annual Holy Father's Appeal is still running this weekend. This appeal, also known as Peter's Pence, is a gesture of solidarity with the universal Church to support the works of the Holy Father Pope Leo. Cash and envelopes donations can be placed in the Church Foyer Donation box. No cash or envelopes can be placed in the Church Foyer Donation box. Scan the QR code to donate online.
<https://www.ourfaithourworks.org/give-holy-fathersappeal/>



Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press) Today's Gospel marks the beginning of the third long discourse given by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Over the next few weeks, the Gospel readings will consist of the entire 13th Chapter of Matthew's Gospel, a lengthy teaching discourse. Throughout this discourse, Jesus will offer several parables to illustrate for his listeners what he means by the kingdom of heaven. He begins with the parable of the sower, which appears rather straightforward—of course seeds grow best in good soil. Seeds that miss the soil, are sown on rocky ground, or are sown among other plants will not grow. The surprise in the parable is the enormous yield of the seed that is sown on good soil. Jesus then explains his use of parables. Jesus seems to suggest that he uses parables to teach because the meanings of parables are not self-evident. The hearer must engage in some degree of reflection in order to comprehend the message of a parable. In this way, the medium—the parable—models the point of the parable of the sower. Those who are willing to engage themselves in the effort to understand will be rewarded by the discovery of the message and will bear fruit. To bring home the point, Jesus interprets the parable of the sower to his disciples. The different types of soil in which the seeds are sown are metaphors for the disposition with which each individual hears the teaching about the kingdom of heaven. Some will be easily swayed away from the kingdom of heaven. Some will receive it for a time but will lose it when faced with difficulties. Some will hear the word but will then permit other cares to choke it out. Yet some will receive it well, and the seed will produce abundant fruit.

Family Connection: Today's Gospel reminds us that in order for God's Word to take root in us and produce abundant fruit, we must endeavor to be like good soil. Families, in particular, hold the responsibility for "preparing the soil" so that the seeds of God's Word can grow strong. There are many ways in which families do this—family traditions in which faith is celebrated, prayer and reading of Scripture, and instruction on the faith. In these ways, parents fulfill the promises they made at their child's Baptism. Gather together as a family and reflect together on the Sacrament of Baptism. Tell the story of the Baptism of each child, showing any pictures that were taken. If you have your child's Baptism candle or gown, share these as well. Recall together that one of the promises that parents make at their child's Baptism is to bring them up in the practice of our faith. Talk together about the importance of this promise to your family. Then read together today's Gospel, Matthew 13:1-23. Reflect together on the ways in which your family practices your faith (daily prayer, Mass attendance, religious instruction, etc.). Remind one another that we do these things as a family so that God's Word can take root in our lives and produce abundant fruit. Conclude in prayer together by praying today's Psalm, Psalm 65.



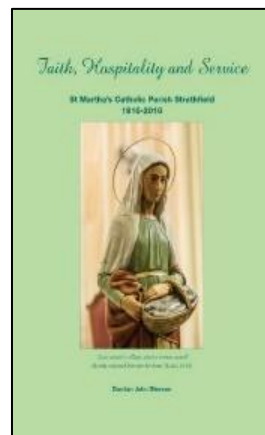
The Church is preparing to celebrate the 6th World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, on Sunday, 26th July 2026. The theme chosen for this year's celebration by Pope Leo XIV is: "I will never forget you" (Is 49:15) which aims to emphasise how God's love for each person never fails, even in the fragility of old age. Taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah, the chosen verse is intended to be a message of consolation and hope for all grandparents and the elderly, especially those who live in solitude or feel forgotten. At the same time, it is a call to families and ecclesial communities not to forget them, recognising them as a precious presence and a blessing. The World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, established by Pope Francis in 2021, is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of July and is an opportunity to bring the Church closer to the elderly and to value their contribution to families and communities. This year, the date coincides with the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, Sunday 26 July, and the Holy Father invites everyone to celebrate the Day with a Eucharistic liturgy in the Cathedral Church of each diocese.

2025/2026 TAX RECEIPTS, ARE NOW AVAILABLE TO COLLECT IN THE CHURCH FOYER



The Parish Mass to celebrate the Feast Day of St Martha, our patron saint, will be at 9.10am on Wednesday 29th July

The parish is offering copies of the Parish History Book, written by Dr Damian John Gleeson, at a reduced rate of \$10. The Book was published to commemorate the Parish Centenary in 2016. Discover the history of St Martha's Parish Strathfield in this skilfully written, carefully researched book that includes a large number of historic photographs, illustrations and documents. Find out the story of the Parish, the evolution of its identity as a unique Catholic community, its beliefs, relationships and challenges. Copies will be available in the Church Foyer for the next few weeks. Payment can be placed in the secure box.



18th & 19th July

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

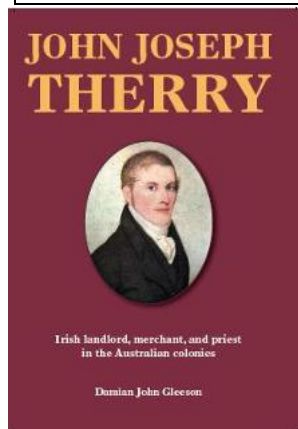
Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Peter McCluskey	Georgette Sahyoun	Elias Family	Mary L'Estrange
	Marian McCluskey	Volunteer Needed	Ivanna Siu	Volunteer Needed
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Patricia Saad	Maria Yu	Elias Family	Melanie John
	Lisa Dennis	Volunteer Needed	Chelsea Valentin	Volunteer Needed
Altar Servers	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Saad Family	Mary Louise I.	Alysha N.	Volunteer Needed
	Jeff & Rolon C.	Archie S.	Aidan M.	Volunteer Needed
	Matthew Z.	Volunteer Needed	Elias Family	Volunteer Needed
Wardens	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Joy Li	Mary Daley	Trudie Rogers	Anthony Thurn
Acolytes	5PM	8AM	10AM	6PM
	Tyrone Peters	Anton Ravi	Roger Bonett	Joseph Samarasinghe

Reflection: Our Fear of Hell (By Ron Rolheiser)

Hell is never a nasty surprise waiting for a basically happy person. Hell can only be the full-flowering of a pride and selfishness that have, through a long time, twisted a heart so thoroughly that it considers happiness as unhappiness and has an arrogant disdain for happy people. If you are essentially warm of heart this side of eternity, you need not fear that a nasty surprise awaits you on the other side because somewhere along the line, unknowingly, you missed the boat and your life went terribly wrong. Unfortunately for many of us, the preaching and catechesis of our youth sometimes schooled us in the idea that you could tragically miss the boat without knowing it and that there was no return. You could live your life sincerely, in essential honesty, relate fairly to others, try your best given your weaknesses, have some bounce and happiness in life, and then die and find that some sin you've committed or mistake you'd made, perhaps even unknowingly, could doom you to hell and there was no further chance for repentance. The second of your death was your last chance to change things, no second chances after death, no matter how badly you might like then to repent. As a tree falls so shall it lie! We were schooled to fear dying and the afterlife. But, whatever the practical effectiveness of such a concept, because it really could make one hesitate in the face of temptation because of the fear of hell, it is essentially wrong and should not be taught in the name of Christianity. Why? Because it belies the God and the deep truths that Jesus revealed. Jesus did teach that there was a hell and that it was a possibility for everyone. But the hell that Jesus spoke of is not a place or a state where someone is begging for one last chance, just one more minute of life to make an act of contrition, and God is refusing. The God whom Jesus both incarnates and reveals is a God who is forever open to repentance, forever open to contrition, and forever waiting our return from our prodigal wanderings. With God we never exhaust our chances. Can you imagine God looking at a repentant man or woman and saying: "Sorry! For you, it's too late! You had your chance! Don't come asking for another chance now!" That could not be the Father of Jesus. And yet, the Gospels can give us that impression. We have, for example, the famous parable of the rich man who ignores the poor man at his doorstep, dies, and ends up in hell, while the poor man, Lazarus, whom he had ignored, is now in heaven, comforted in the bosom of Abraham. From his torment in hell, the rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to him with some water, but Abraham replies that there is an unbridgeable gap between heaven and hell and no one can cross from one side to the other. That text, along with Jesus' warnings about that the doors of the wedding banquet will at a point be irrevocably closed, has led to the common misconception that there is a point of no return, that once in hell, it is too late to repent. But that's not what this text, nor Jesus' warning on the urgency of repentance, teaches. The "unbridgeable gap" here refers, among other things, to a gap that remains forever unbridged here in this world between the rich and the poor. And it remains unbridged because of our intransigence, our failure to change heart, our lack of contrition, not because God runs out of patience and says: "Enough! No more chances!" It remains unbridged because, habitually, we become so set in our ways that we are incapable of change and genuine repentance. Jesus' story of the rich man and Lazarus actually draws upon a more ancient, Jewish, story that illustrates this intransigence: In the parallel Jewish parable, God does hear the rich man's plea from hell for a second chance and grants it to him. The rich man, now full of new resolutions, returns to life, goes immediately to the market, loads his cart with food, and, as he is driving home, meets Lazarus on the road. Lazarus asks for a loaf of bread. The rich man jumps off his cart to give it to him, but, as he pulls a huge loaf of bread from his cart, his old self starts to reassert itself. He begins to think: "This man doesn't need a whole loaf! Why not just give him a part! And why should he have a fresh loaf, I'll give him some of the stale bread!" Immediately he finds himself back in hell! He still cannot bridge the gap. Kathleen Dowling Singh submits that in making a series of mental contractions we create our own fear of death. That's true too for the afterlife: By making a series of unfortunate theological contractions we create our own fear of hell.

Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased:	Sunil Swaris, Margaret Bouffler, Justin Mahoro, Father John Thomas Hayes, Ron Weaver, Marion Li, Dilki Peiris.
Repose of The Soul:	Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Kevin Bouffler, Anne Burton, Br Ray Dowding, Francesco & Sarina Campanale, Daniel Lucich, Stefano, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, Pat (Ivy) Killalea, Mena Tarzia, 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, Olga Chidiac, Joseph & Charbel Mannah, Bruan O'Hare, Diedre Banks, Pauline Gibson.
Anniversaries:	Reg Jones, Henry O'Hara, Samir Hakim, Elie Sahyoun, John McNamara, William (Bill) Starr, Gladstone Jebanasam, Lachlan Graves, Antonio Truscello, Frank Hickey, Charlie Isaac, Margaret Hetherton.
Sick Intentions:	Ajith Antony, Simon Alam, Amy Scott, Dareth Flavell, Dan Deehan, Patrick Connolly, Paul Woodbury, Geoff Sims, Cameron Stacy, Helen McAlister, Elliot Leahy, Norma Habib, Joe Everitt, Ann Cincotta-Tangey, Mark Samaha, John Weitering, John Hay, 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, Rosanne Sukkar, Henry D'Souza, Danielle Fabien, Maroun Moussa, Stephen Chase (snr), Ajay Babu Avirneni & Baby Mia Valente, Helene Hussein.
Special Intentions:	Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order & St Vincent de Paul Society. Roger O'Neill.



New Biography challenges century-long clerical interpretations of Irish Australian pioneer

By Damian John Gleeson, PhD
A4 Format • 265 pages
Comprehensive indexing and referencing

John Joseph Therry: Irish landlord, merchant and priest in the Australian colonies offers the

most comprehensive assessment to date of Fr Therry's religious, commercial, and personal affairs. New research drawing on thousands of previously unpublished Irish and Australian manuscripts reveals that **Fr John Joseph Therry** — long celebrated as the saintly founder of Australian Catholicism — accumulated a vast property portfolio and regularly engaged in unethical commercial dealings in the penal colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. Written by award winning historian Dr Damian John Gleeson, this first lay-authored biography of Therry overturns more than a century of traditional inaccurate hero-style narratives. Orders: colonialpressorders@gmail.com



With the support of Bishop Vincent Long, Mary Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown, together with more than 100 volunteers from across the Diocese, is bringing Jimmy and Carol Owens' musical **Be The Witness** to the stage. It tells the story of Jesus through the eyes of St Peter and the disciples.

This is a new opportunity to bring the Gospel to people. Please support this endeavour.

Performances are scheduled at

📍 **Riverside Theatres, Parramatta**

📅 **10–13 September 2026**

🎫 **Tickets are now on sale**

- For **Groups (10+)** – [Book via our Group Link](#) and access **early bird concessions (valid**

up to 10th July)

- For Individual bookings and further information visit our website bethewitness.com.au or Riverside Theatre's Ticketing Page - [Be the Witness - The Musical < Riverside Theatres](#)