

St. Monica's Parish

North Parramatta

"Our mission is to build up an active parish community with the Eucharist as the centre, foster deeper prayer and spirituality and reach out as a witnessing community"



THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - YEAR B 27TH DECEMBER 2020

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant
lying in a manger.

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Genesis

Gen 15: 1-6. 21: 1-3

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great'.

'My Lord', Abram replied, 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless...' Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.' And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be one of your own flesh and blood.' Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants,' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised.

Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

This is the word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works! (R.)
2. Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face. (R.)
3. Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose. (R.)
4. He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac. (R.)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Heb 11:8. 11-12. 17-19

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be

counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.
This is the word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Alleluia!

In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets;
now he speaks to us through his Son.
Alleluia!



GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke Lk 2: 22-40

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.' As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

St. Monica's Catholic Parish

Cnr Church Street and North Rocks Road, North Parramatta

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| SUNDAY MASSES: | Saturday Vigil - 5pm; Sunday - 9am, 11.30am (Cantonese/Chinese Mass) and 6pm | |
| WEEKDAY MASSES: | Tuesday-Friday - 9.15am | |
| EXPOSITION: | Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am, | |
| RECONCILIATION: | Friday 10-10.30 am Saturday - 4-4.40pm or on request | |
| MARRIAGES: | Please contact the Parish Priest at least 12 months prior | |
| BAPTISMS: | Please contact the Parish Office for appointment with the Parish Priest. Phone: 9630-1951 | |
| ANOINTING OF THE SICK/ EUCARIST AT HOME | Please contact the Parish Office or Fr Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630-1951 | |
| PARISH ADMINISTRATOR/ CHINESE CHAPLAIN: | Fr. Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630 -1951 | Email: shingmanlam@gmail.com |
| POSTAL ADDRESS: | 8 Daking Street, North Parramatta, 2151 | Website: http://www.stmonicanp.org.au |
| OFFICE HOURS: | Tuesday-Friday 8.30am-2.30pm | Phone: 9630-1951 Fax: 9630-8738 Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.com |

St. Monica's School

School Principal: Lisa Howell

Phone: 8832 4100

Fax: 9683-4984

Email: stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

REFLECTION

The Liberation of Women

In today's Gospel, Mary, having given birth, is regarded as ritually unclean. She could not take part in public worship until she was 'purified'. This involved offering up a couple of pigeons which she and Joseph had to buy.

No wonder that, at the Cleansing of the Temple, Jesus shatters the cages in which the pigeons were kept! He was angry with a Temple system which saw Mary that way, which thought of all women giving birth that way. Indeed, his whole ministry is full of instances when women breach religious and cultural taboos in his presence, because of his presence.

This Feast of the Holy Family gives us the opportunity to thank God for our mothers who, like Mary, helped fulfil God's plan for humankind by birthing us into the world.

We could pause for a moment to pray that the Church changes rules and structures which confine women in cages built from ideologies foreign to the Gospel, lest those rules become swords which pierce Mary's soul.

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Pope Francis proclaims "Year of St Joseph"

With the Apostolic Letter "Patris Corde" ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a "Year of Saint Joseph" from, 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.



Prayer to St. Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace,
mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil.

Amen.

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

December 28, THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS
January 01, MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD.
Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
January 02, Sts Basil the Great &
Gregory Nazianzen

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THOSE
OF OUR PARISH FAMILY WHO ARE SICK.
ESPECIALLY

Paul Chiu, John Rodrigues,
Dave & Fan Lin Wilson,
Francis Lee, Jerry A, Michelle Barnes,
Levi Bell, Grace Boitano,
Gesualda Borg, Monica Teresa
& Fernanda Carigliano,
Veronica Coorey. Antoinette Coorey,
Margaret Dorahy, Heidi Ellich,
Josie Estera, Philippe Kalife,
Tim Kelly, Mary Korunic,
Lillian Leigh, Monique Malouf,
Tina de Larrazabal, Rosa Santos,
Maria Itang Tagle,
Llave Family, Sheila Watts,
Gloria Cherote,

MASS INTENTIONS

PARISH ACTIVITES



St. Monica is on Facebook! Please join and get updates of the Parish during this current period. Please like our page : **St Monica's North Parramatta**



Sunday Mass is live streamed on Saturday at 5.00 pm (English) and Sunday at 11.30 am (Cantonese) Please add Fr Lam (**Shing-man Lam**) as a friend on Facebook to watch the Live stream Masses.



Christian Meditation Will Resume in the 2nd week of February 2021. Every Friday from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Enquiries/facilitator : Patricia Brown, 0418 406 661 or email: pabrown02@gmail.com.



St Monica's Parish Rosary Group will resume after the Holiday break on the 3rd of February 2021



Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God
1st January 2021 (Friday)
9am Mass (English)

St. Monica's Sacraments

stmonicasacraments@gmail.com



Registration dates for 2021 :

For **Confirmation** 20/21 February
(The child is eligible to receive this sacrament if he/she has received the sacrament of First Holy Communion and is in year 5 or above)

For **First Holy Communion** 29/30 May
(The child is eligible to receive this sacrament if he/she has received the sacrament of First Reconciliation and is in year 4 or above)

For **First Reconciliation** 31 July/1 August
(The child is eligible to receive this sacrament if he/she has received the sacrament of Baptism & is in year 3 or above)

****A copy of the Baptism certificate is required and an Administration fee of \$30/- payable at the time of registration.**

Holiday Office Hours:



It is highly recommended to please call the office on 02 9630 1951 prior to visiting the Parish office during the school holiday break

02nd/03rd January ROSTERS

| | 5pm Vigil | 9am | 6pm |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Readers | K. Handcock T. Wehbe | A. Dolahenty E. Calabria | TBA TBA |
| Acolytes | TBA | TBA | John Hilton |
| Cleaning | Group 1 Chinese Chaplaincy | | |

Youth + Corner

The Book of Genesis

While December is at the end of the calendar year, throughout this month we have, ironically, been exploring the beginning of the Bible. The Book of Genesis is the first book in the Bible, and one of the longest to boot – and it's no wonder why, since it covers everything from the creation of the world, to the eventual descent of Joseph into Egypt. This includes the fall of Adam and Eve, the story of Noah and the Ark, the history of Abraham and his descendants, and so much more, with each section being foundational to our faith. However, when reading Genesis, there are a few things to keep in mind, not only because it is one of the longest books in the Bible, but also because it is conceptually dense, thematically complex and is the book that sets up the redemptive arc of the Bible.



The first thing about reading Genesis is to not read it first. When first reading through the Bible, it is recommended to start in the New Testament. Though this seems counterproductive, it is something that will allow you to fully understand the teachings of Genesis as a whole. Before understanding the finer points of our faith and its origins, it is essential that you understand the core concepts – concepts which are most easily understood through Jesus's teachings.

The next thing to keep in mind is that not everything that is written in Genesis should be taken literally. Yep, Genesis is not historical, and that's a hard thing to get your mind around. But that being said, it doesn't mean that Genesis is a lie, or that our faith is a lie. In fact, the people who wrote it used the book to portray – in excellent detail – the nature of our relationship with God. For example, while the personas of Adam and Eve may not have existed, they can be used to represent humanity as a whole, and through the tale of Noah, we get to see just how far God is willing to go for a people so heavily entrenched in sin.

In general, the stories of Genesis seem to showcase one thing in particular – how often we as humans fail. And while at first glance it may seem depressing, it is anything but. Remember how the Book of Genesis sets up the redemptive arc of the Bible – an arc which eventually culminates in Jesus's sacrifice? Well, if you were to get only one thing out of Genesis, it should be an understanding of the extent God is willing to go to save us.

When Adam and Eve fell to temptation, he punished them but still allowed them to live. When the people were so depraved that only a flood could cleanse them, God still put his hopes in us through Noah. And these examples are only from the first few chapters of Genesis. The true purpose of Genesis is to set up and highlight the nature of our relationship with God, a relationship that has remained throughout the ages.

- Rashane

Youth Announcements



St. Monica's Youth Group (FYRE)

FYRE youth group gatherings are online! Join us on Sat 8pm on Zoom using the link: <https://uni-sydney.zoom.us/j/93935934337>. Follow us on Instagram @fyrestmonicas to keep track of the latest FYRE news and events! Wishing you all a happy new year :)