

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"

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

12TH FEBRUARY 2023

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Be my protector, O God,
a mighty stronghold to save me.
For you are my rock, my stronghold!
Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ecclesiasticus

Sir 15: 15 - 20

If you wish, you can keep the commandments, to behave faithfully is within your power. He has set fire and water before you; put out your hand to whichever you prefer. Man has life and death before him; whichever a man likes better will be given him. For vast is the wisdom of the Lord; he is almighty and all-seeing. His eyes are on those who fear him, he notes every action of man. He never commanded anyone to be godless, he has given no one permission to sin.

This is the word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 145

Response: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

1. They are happy whose life is blameless,
who follow God's law!
They are happy those who do his will,
seeking him with all their hearts. (R.)
2. You have laid down your precepts
to be obeyed with care.
May my footsteps be firm
to obey your statutes. (R.)
3. Bless your servant and I shall live
and obey your word.
Open my eyes that I may consider
the wonders of your law. (R.)
4. Teach me the demands of your statutes
and I will keep them to the end.
Train me to observe your law,
to keep it with my heart. (R.)

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

1 Cor 2 : 6 - 10

We have a wisdom to offer those who have reached maturity: not a philosophy of our age, it is true, still less of the masters of our age, which are coming to their end. The hidden wisdom of God which we teach in our mysteries is the wisdom that God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began. It is a wisdom that none of the masters of this age have ever known, or they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory; we teach what scripture calls: the things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things beyond the mind of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him.

These are the very things that God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God.

This is the word of the Lord

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew
Mt 5 : 17 - 37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish them but to complete them. I tell you solemnly, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law until its purpose is achieved. Therefore, the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of heaven.

'For I tell you, if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

'You have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you: anyone who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court; if a man calls his brother "Fool" he will answer for it before the Sanhedrin; and if a man calls him "Renegade" he will answer for it in hell fire. So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. Come to terms with your opponent in good time while you are still on the way to the court with him, or he may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. I tell you solemnly, you will not get out till you have paid the last penny.

'You have learnt how it was said: You must not commit adultery. But I say this to you: if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye should cause you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of you than to have your whole body thrown into hell. And if your right hand should cause you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of you than to have your whole body go to hell.

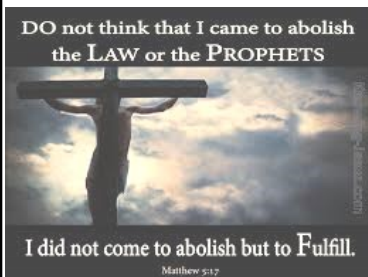
'It has also been said: Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a writ of dismissal. But I say this to you: everyone who divorces his wife, except for the case of fornication, makes her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

'Again, you have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say this to you: do not swear at all, either by heaven, since that is God's throne; or by the earth, since that is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, since that is the city of the great king. Do not swear by your own head either, since you cannot turn a single hair white or black. All you need say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the evil one.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

They ate and had their fill,
and what they craved the Lord gave them;
they were not disappointed in what they craved.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessed are you, Father,
Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little
ones the mysteries of the
kingdom. Alleluia!

St. Monica's Catholic Parish

Cnr Church Street and North Rocks Road, North Parramatta

SUNDAY MASSES:	Saturday Vigil - 5pm; Sunday - 9am, 11.30am (Cantonese/Chinese Mass) and 6pm
WEEKDAY MASSES:	Tuesday-Friday - 9.15am
EXPOSITION:	Every Thursday 8pm—9pm Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am,
RECONCILIATION:	Friday 10-10.30am, Saturday 4-4.40pm, 3rd Sunday of the month 10:15-11am, 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/ EUCHARIST AT HOME	Please contact the Parish Office or Fr Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630-1951
PARISH PRIEST/ 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 Crampton

Phone: 8832 4100

Fax: 8832-4199

Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

Truth-Telling

We have just heard the least observed command of Our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. Referring to oaths he taught, 'Do not swear at all ... instead let your "yes" mean yes and your "no" mean no. Whatever goes beyond these simple words is from the Evil One.'

This is strong language. Why does Our Lord say this?

In the same Sermon on the Mount, he teaches us the proper use of God's name: 'Our Father'. It is our privilege as adopted children of God to use God's name in that way. The use of God's name for oath-swearing is an *abuse*.

Our Lord was trying to establish a new sort of society (The Kingdom) within which truth-telling was of paramount importance, where there is no two-tiered way of speaking the truth.

Truth telling should issue simply from the character of the person – the truthful person truths.

We know this at the very private level of intimate relationships. As a Church, we need to heed this passage and listen to the epistle of St James recalling this passage almost verbatim. (James 5:12-13)

We could pause for a moment to pray that the Church herself heeds the Great Commission: 'Teach them to keep *all* that I have commanded you.' (Matthew 28:20)

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"Dear God,
I know I'm a sinner,
and I ask for your forgiveness.
I believe Jesus Christ is Your Son.
I believe that He died for my sin
and that you raised Him to life.
I want to trust Him as my Savior
and follow Him as Lord,
from this day forward.
Guide my life
and help me to do your will.
I pray this in the name of Jesus.

Amen."

LENT 2023

Ash Wednesday 22nd February (Day of Abstinence & Fasting)

English Mass: 9:15am, 7pm

Chinese Mass: 8pm

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday from **24th February to
31st March**

(Sacrament of Reconciliation is available)

English: 7pm

Chinese: 8pm

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

February 14, Sts Cyril & Methodius

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,
Margaret Dorahy, Heidi
Ellich, Josie Estera, Philippe
Kalife, Tim Kelly, Mary
Korunic, Lillian Leigh,
Monique Malouf, Maria
Itang Tagle, Sheila Watts,
Tina de Larrazabal, Rosa
Santos, Llave Family,
Gloria Cherote

MASS INTENTIONS

Please refer to the notice
board at the entrance.


PARISH ACTIVITIES




 **Silent Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**
Every Thursday from 8pm–9pm.
Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am.
All are welcome.


 **St Monica's Parish Rosary Group** resumes on Wednesday, 1st February from 10.00am to 12.00pm in the Parish Centre. Enquiries : Lynn McBride : 0423 696 961


 **Christian Meditation** resumes on Thursday, 2nd February from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. Participation via zoom is available. Enquiries/facilitator: Patricia Brown, 0418 406 661 or email:pabrown02@gmail.com


 **Catholic Women's League St Monica's Branch** resumes on Monday, 27th February at 10.30am in the Parish Centre. Enquiries : Julie Skulander on 0411 988 361

 **St Monica's Piety Stall** (open alternate weeks)
Stall is open on Saturday 4.40 - 6.15pm
Sunday 8.40 - 10.15am
Contact : Julie Skulander on 0411 988 361

 Please kindly return your old palms by 19th February 2023 in preparation for Ash Wednesday. Please place them in the box provided at the entrance to the Church.

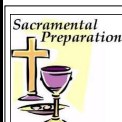
 **St Monica's Art Group** Resuming on the 4th February. Every Saturday, 6pm–8pm, the Art Group will gather at the Parish Centre. Mini workshops are available. Please contact Vera (WhatsApp 0402936947) for details.

 Tap & Go is now available for donation for ongoing Church building maintenance fund. Machine is placed near the Statute of Saint Joseph. Envelopes are also available on the tables at the entrance to the Church if you wish to donate via cash/credit card. Your donation is greatly appreciated.

 **Bible Brekkie** Every FIRST and LAST Sunday of the month, 10.15am - 11am, at the Blue Room. Fr. Ephraim will talk about interesting topics from the Bible. All are welcome.

Write the WORD 2022-2024

To anticipate the celebration of the 130th anniversary of this parish, everyone is invited to join in "Write the WORD" to increase our familiarity of the Holy Scripture. For details you can take a leaflet at the main entrances of the church, or call the Parish Office (9630 1951), or send an email to write.the.word.2024@gmail.com



St. Monica's Sacraments
stmonicasacraments@gmail.com

Sacrament of Confirmation (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)

Registration will take place on the **25th February after 5pm Mass and 26th February after 9am Mass**. A donation of \$30/- is payable at registration. Please bring in a photocopy of the child's Baptism Certificate if First Holy Communion was completed at another Parish.

Compulsory Zoom Parent Session : Wednesday 8th March at 7pm.

First Lesson : Saturday, 11th March at 4pm at the Parish Centre.

Children will proceed to 5pm Mass after each lesson.

Confirmation Mass : Friday, 26th May at 7pm.

18th/19th February ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	C. Meleca S. Meleca	B. Hooker A. Espiritu	M. Novak D. Cruz
Extraordinary Ministers	L. lemma M. Wilkinson	J. Payra B. Hooker	
Acolytes	Peter Handcock	Peter Mooney	Adrian Cheung
Cleaning	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy		
Morning Tea	De Aruajo & Pinto Families		
Counting	Group 4 - Peter Mooney & Michael Falamich		

The importance of reading God's word

As Catholics, we are called to meditate upon God's word daily and reflect on what He might be saying to us, and how we can apply it to our daily lives. Yet more often than not, we find ourselves neglecting this invitation from God- before you even begin, it's good to start off with *why* Bible reading is necessary and vital to our faith and spiritual development.

What you read impacts you. Think about how you feel when you read your news feed. Reading the Bible on a regular and consistent basis has several benefits. First, the Bible shows us God's character and provides us God's revelation of himself to his people. In each section of the Bible, we see God's holy, unchanging, faithful, gracious and loving character.

Second, 2 Timothy 3:16–17 when discussing the topic of Scripture says that it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness." The next verse goes on to say that this leads to the completeness and equipping "for every good work" (ESV). Third, regularly reading God's word reorients our thinking so that we can grow in maturity, which is part of the Christian calling (Ephesians 4:14–16; Romans 12:1–2). Have you ever met a mature Christian who did not regularly read the Bible? These three things are really just the beginning, this list could include dozens of reasons why you should read the Bible on a regular basis.

Reading the Bible is a spiritual discipline, which means that we need to be disciplined in how we approach it. If you lack the desire to read the Bible, pray and ask that God would give you a desire for his word. Then, build a time into your day to read Scripture and make this time a priority. You should then find people to hold you accountable to a reading plan. Maybe even start a reading plan with someone.

While reading the Bible on a regular basis is a great start, it is also important to approach the Bible in a proper manner. It is easy to get into a habit of trying to focus only on application when reading the Bible. It is absolutely necessary for the Christian to apply the Bible to his or her life, but sometimes we can make applications that are forced or unintended.

In order to avoid misapplication of texts, it is good to read whole biblical books and try to understand the text in light of both its immediate context and in light of the entire biblical book. Always ask what the text says about the character and nature of God.

Adapted from Daniel Diffey from Grand Canyon University

Youth Announcements



St Monica's Youth Group (FYRE)

Youth group continues for another month in the community room, starting at 10:30AM! Feel free to drop by for some games and friendly chats 😊 In February we will be looking at Gender Fluidity, led by Samuel and Charlotte.