

# 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"*

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

19TH FEBRUARY 2023

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O Lord, I trust in your merciful love.  
My heart will rejoice in your salvation.  
I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.

## FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Leviticus

Lv 19: 1 - 2, 17 - 18

The Lord spoke to Moses; he said: 'Speak to the whole community of the sons of Israel and say to them: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

"You must not bear hatred for your brother in your heart. You must openly tell him, your neighbour, of his offence; this way you will not take a sin upon yourself. You must not exact vengeance, nor must you bear a grudge against the children of your people. You must love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord."

*This is the word of the Lord*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 102

**Response:** The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. (R.)
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and compassion. (R.)
3. The Lord is compassion and love,  
slow to anger and rich in mercy.  
He does not treat us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our faults. (R.)
4. As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins.  
As a father has compassion on his sons,  
the Lord has pity on those who fear him. (R.)

## SECOND READING

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

1 Cor 3 : 16 - 23

Didn't you realise that you were God's temple and that the Spirit of God was living among you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy him, because the temple of God is sacred; and you are that temple.

Make no mistake about it: if any one of you thinks of himself as wise, in the ordinary sense of the word, then he must learn to be a fool before he really can be wise. Why? Because the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As scripture says: The Lord knows wise men's thoughts: he knows how useless they are, or again: God is not convinced by the arguments of the wise. So there is nothing to boast about in anything human: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life and death, the present and the future, are all your servants; but you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.

*This is the word of the Lord*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Whoever keeps the word of Christ,  
grows perfect in the love of God.  
Alleluia!



## GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew  
Mt 5 : 38 - 48

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have learnt how it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to law and would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.

'You have learnt how it was said: You must love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say this to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike. For if you love those who love you, what right have you to claim any credit? Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not? And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? Even the pagans do as much, do they not? You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

*This is the Gospel of the Lord.*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

I will recount all your wonders,  
I will rejoice in you and be glad,  
and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

# St. Monica's Catholic Parish

Cnr Church Street and North Rocks Road, North Parramatta

<b>SUNDAY MASSES:</b>	Saturday Vigil - 5pm; Sunday - 9am, 11.30am (Cantonese/Chinese Mass) and 6pm
<b>WEEKDAY MASSES:</b>	Tuesday-Friday - 9.15am
<b>EXPOSITION:</b>	Every Thursday 8pm—9pm Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am,
<b>RECONCILIATION:</b>	Friday 10-10.30am, Saturday 4-4.40pm, 3rd Sunday of the month 10:15-11am, or on request
<b>MARRIAGES:</b>	Please contact the Parish Priest at least 12 months prior
<b>BAPTISMS:</b>	Please contact the Parish Office for appointment with the Parish Priest. Phone: 9630-1951
<b>ANOINTING OF THE SICK/ EUCHARIST AT HOME</b>	Please contact the Parish Office or Fr Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630-1951
<b>PARISH PRIEST/ CHINESE CHAPLAIN:</b>	Fr. Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630 -1951 Email: shingmanlam@gmail.com
<b>POSTAL ADDRESS:</b>	8 Daking Street, North Parramatta, 2151 Website: <a href="http://www.stmonicanp.org.au">http://www.stmonicanp.org.au</a>
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	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: stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

## COMMENTARY

### Warfare and the Church

'Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.' Is Jesus advocating rather static fault-less-ness? Not very appealing! No, the Greek word is closer to the idea of a perfect wine – one that has matured and has reached its full potential. So, Our Lord is saying, 'Be a person who is everything you are capable of being.'

Our Lord gives a striking example of the challenge. God does not withhold life-giving sun and rain from people because they are bad or dishonest, nor extinguish the life of human beings because they are evil, because they are enemies.

What are the implications for Church teaching on capital punishment or warfare? Note that Jesus' command: 'You must be ...' is directed to *You* in the plural. It is communal, social. The Church community must listen. Is the Holy Spirit moving us in a direction not experienced since its first three centuries?

We could pause for a moment to pray on behalf of those who want to do us harm, the better to hear: 'Blessed are the peacemakers.'

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### CALL TO WORSHIP...

God of Love, we need you now.  
Teach us to love  
those we have learned to hate.  
Teach us to pray for our enemies  
To love you even in those we despise.  
God of Peace, we need you now.  
Teach us how to reconcile.  
Teach us to speak  
when we are silenced.  
Teach us to give up power when our power  
renders others powerless, or mute.  
God of Joy, we need you now!  
Receive our burdens, they are many.  
Lift our spirits, they are weighed down.  
God of life, we need you now,  
Grant us grace where shame restricts us,  
Grant us life where pain takes hold,  
Grant us wisdom  
where we would settle for easy answers,  
Grant us love,  
rooted in the eternal, the living, in you!  
God bless us as we gather, in the name of  
the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.  
AMEN.

*Written to be said with the Gospel  
according to Matthew, 5:38-48*

### 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 Available)

English: 7pm

Chinese: 8pm

### FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

February 22, ASH WEDNESDAY  
February 23, St Polycarp

### 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, Odette Malouf

### MASS INTENTIONS

*Please refer to the notice  
board at the entrance.*

# PARISH ACTIVITES



**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** Every Wednesday from 10.00am to 12.00pm in the Parish Centre.  
Enquiries : Lynn McBride : 0423 696 961

**Christian Meditation** Every Thursday 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

**Remember the Deceased** There is an open diary and pens next to the Sacred Heart of Jesus statue and you are welcome to write down the names of your deceased loved ones or family members on the day of their anniversaries and we will pray for them.

**St Monica's Art Group** 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 130<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:write.the.word.2024@gmail.com)

**St. Monica's Sacraments**  
[stmonicasacraments@gmail.com](mailto: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.

**Special Religious Education (SRE) Volunteering**  
If you would like more information about helping out with Special Religious Education at the public schools, please contact Charles on 0476 948 459 or email: [contact@australianfloristnetwork.com.au](mailto:contact@australianfloristnetwork.com.au)

## 25th/26th February ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	K. Handcock G. Basha	M. Joseph P. Fleming	T. Jones O. Holsinger
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	M. Samson M. Woolridge	J. Skulander M. Joseph	
<b>Acolytes</b>	Patrick Senjak	Nishan Joseph	John Hilton

<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Julie Skulander/Maris Strong
<b>Counting</b>	Group 5 - Peter & Kris Handcock

## Fellow Human

Following God is not an easy road, and often times we come face to face with this reality when he calls us to be the bigger person in a situation. Today's reading challenges us to love even when we really don't want to, even when it seems like the hardest thing to do and especially when the other person is our enemy or just someone we don't really like at all that much.

Gandhi once said *"It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business"*

It seems to me that Gandhi understood the lessons that Jesus taught some 2000 years before, that it is easy to 'greet our brothers' and be nice to our friends for we already naturally get along and like these people. It is much harder to show kindness and love to our enemies when our initial reaction is to feel bitterness, hatred and resentment for the ones we dislike.

Enemies is a strong word, and if I were to ask you today if you had any, likely you would tell me that you don't really have enemies per se, but there are some people who are a challenge to get along with, or people who you just don't 'like as a person'. This is quite natural, for we all have different personalities, and God has given us freedom of thought and opinion.

The problem is, holding in all these negative sentiments towards another person is harmful (1) to yourself and (2) to other people around you who hear the way you talk about your enemy which either reinforces or turns them against your enemy too. This makes no one happy. Feelings of irritation, anger, and resentment can be normal reactions, and it isn't wrong to feel these at first if someone has really wronged you, but holding on to these is counterproductive. It is helping no-one, least yourself.

*"You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43-44).* Jesus is not asking us to love our enemies like we love our family, our friends, or our significant other. He is asking for the love we show for another fellow human being. Some might call it plain decency. It's the kind of love we see when a random stranger shows you kindness, the kind of non-romantic love that moves people to volunteer, and inspires one to act for the sake of the other from a standpoint of compassion, because life's already hard enough as it is. Every human suffers in some way or form, and if we can see this, why would we want to add to it. There is enough grief, sadness, and hurt in this world; there is no need for us to add to it. We pray for our enemies because they need it, and so do we.

- Abby

## 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.