

# 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"*

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A

26TH FEBRUARY 2023

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

When he calls on me, I will answer him;  
I will deliver him and give him glory,  
I will grant him length of days.

## FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Genesis

Gen 2: 7 - 9; 3: 1 - 7

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

*The word of the Lord*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 50

**Response:** Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
2. My offences truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)
3. A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
4. Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise. (R.)

## SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Rom 5 : 12 - 19

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the

gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

*The word of the Lord*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!  
No one lives on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!



## GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew  
Mt 4 : 1 - 11

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,  
and they will support you on their hands  
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,  
and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

# 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

### It is Written

Jesus was offered three shortcuts for his ministry. Firstly, exceptional powers to satisfy his own needs (bread out of stones). Secondly, when he needed to take risks, angels to keep him safe. Thirdly, when he wanted to change the world, absolute political power.

These were the Temptations of Christ, but also for us. If you or I are tempted to sin, we will find the marks of this threefold pattern. We want the whole world to change to satisfy us, or we want to take stupid risks and come out unscathed, or we want to exercise total power over others.

How can we try to follow Jesus without the shortcuts of the fantasy world which the Devil may offer? Note that Jesus resisted each temptation with: 'It is written'. The forty days of Lent are a perfect opportunity to read what 'is written' in the Gospels about the episodes and pattern of the life of Jesus Christ.

We could pause for a moment to find what is written and to imitate what we find. That is how the Devil is defeated.

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Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.  
- James 1:12

*Lord Jesus,  
You have overcome every  
Enemy I will ever face.  
You defeated the devil when You died  
on the Cross and rose from the dead.*

*Thank you that I don't have to  
take him on!  
I know that when I submit to You  
in obedience and  
say "No" to temptation,  
I can defeat his power in my life.*

*Almighty, Ever-living God,  
the most Merciful and Compassionate,  
we thank You for Creation  
and the life You have given us.  
conflicts. so that we may discover  
Your Divine Presence in each other.  
to freely choose what is right  
and just to make this world  
a better place to live.*

Amen

## FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

**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.*

## LENT 2023

### Stations of the Cross


Every Friday from 24th February to 31st March  
(Sacrament of Reconciliation Available)

English: 7pm

Chinese: 8pm

# 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** 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


 **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 this weekend Only - **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.

 **VINNIES NEWS — Christmas Appeal** - we thank you once again for your ongoing support to help the needy of our area to enjoy the Christmas festivities. Together with the Schools contribution we collated up to 100 Food/Gift Parcels. These were distributed to the applicable families who were most grateful.  
Funds raised in our Christmas Appeal was \$1,090 of we were very appreciative.

With Thanks SVDP

## 4th/5th March ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	K. Hancock G. Basha	God's Gift S. Joseph	V. Cruz M. Novak
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	K. Hancock L. Iemma	J. De Araujo S. De Araujo	
<b>Acolytes</b>	Peter Hancock	Rashane Joseph	Adrian Cheung
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy		
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Angel & Michael Falamich		
<b>Counting</b>	Group 1 - Jacob Payra/Joel Pinto		

## Why do Catholics fast and abstain during Lent?

Lent (sometimes called the 'Great Fast') is the 40 days before Easter in which Catholics pray, fast, contemplate, and engage in acts of spiritual self-discipline. Catholics do these things because Easter, which celebrates the Resurrection of Christ, is the greatest holy day of the Christian year (even above Christmas) and Catholics have recognized that it is appropriate to prepare for such a holy day by engaging in such disciplines.

The reason Lent lasts 40 days is that 40 is the traditional number of judgment and spiritual testing in the Bible. It mirrors the same 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting in the desert before entering into his public ministry (Mt 4:1-11). Catholics imitate Christ by spending 40 days in spiritual discipline before the celebration of Christ's triumph over sin and death.

Fasting is a biblical discipline that can be defended from both the Old and the New Testament. Christ expected his disciples to fast (Mt 9:14-15) and issued instructions for how they should do so (Mt 6:16-18). Catholics follow this pattern by holding a partial fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Abstinence from certain foods is also a biblical discipline. In Daniel 10:2-3 we read, "In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks." Catholics use a practice similar to Daniel's when, as a way of commemorating Christ's Crucifixion on a Friday, they abstain from eating meat on that day of the week during Lent. The only kind of flesh they eat on Friday is fish, which is a symbol of Christ.

Even the Ash Wednesday practice of having one's forehead signed with ashes has a biblical parallel. Putting ashes on one's head was a common biblical expression of mourning (1 Sm 13:19, Est 4:1, Is 61:3; see also Est 4:3, Jer 6:26, Ez 27:30, Dn 9:3, Mt 11:21, Lk 10:13). By having the sign of the cross made with ashes on their foreheads, Catholics mourn Christ's suffering on the cross and their own sins, which made that suffering necessary.

*A small prayer as we enter into Lent: Dear Heavenly Father, as we enter this Lent season, we want to recognize the somber nature of this season. Lord, you gave everything for us, and we want to, even if for a short period of time, give up something to remember the sacrifice you made for us. May we remember the period of time where you fasted in the desert, choosing to avoid whatever temptations the Devil set before you. In addition to our church-ordained Lent traditions, may we recognize what areas in our lives we have devoted more time to than necessary. May we observe what has taken us away from you, and give up such practices or unnecessary items to focus on you this season. Remind us that we are but dust and that we need to rely solely on you for our salvation. In Jesus' holy and precious name, Amen*

## 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 😊 Nex month's topic will be Homosexuality, led by Rebecca and Brian!