

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"

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR B

10TH DECEMBER 2023

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard.
in the joy of your heart.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
Is 40:1-5. 9-11

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 84

Response: Lord, let us see your kindness,
and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. (R.)
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. (R.)
3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him

SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St Peter
2 Pet 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the

elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
all people shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
Mk 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.



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
ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST	Fr Pio Jang Phone: 9630 -1951 Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.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: stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

Two Gospels

John immersed, baptised, his followers in water, symbolising the washing away of the sins of the *past*. But he could not empower people by drenching them in the dynamic life of God. John anticipates 'Someone' (not named!) who *does* have the power to inundate, baptise, people with the Holy Spirit.

From the heading of St Mark's Gospel, we know that that 'Someone' is 'Jesus Christ, Son of God' who came to flood our lives with that Divine Power which can effect a completely new *future* for humanity.

That is why St Mark took the term 'gospel' (good news) which was used on inscriptions announcing an Emperor's birth or victory, and used it to describe his inspired rendering of the mission of Jesus Christ, which was to inaugurate the 'Kingdom of God', overcoming the pretensions of all Emperors of any kind throughout history.

We could pause for a moment to thank God for the Good News of our being baptised with *water* in the 'Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'

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O Lord, Forgive!

My failure to be true even to my own accepted standards: O Lord, forgive!

"My self-deception in the face of temptation: O Lord, forgive!

My choosing of the worse when I knew the better: O Lord forgive!

My failure to apply to myself the standards of conduct that I demand of others; Lord forgive!

My blindness to the suffering of others and my slowness to be taught by my own: O Lord, forgive!

My complacency toward wrongs that do not touch my own case and my over sensitiveness to those that do: O Lord, forgive!

My slowness to see the good in my fellows and to see the evil in myself: O Lord forgive!

My hardness of heart toward my neighbour's faults and my readiness to make allowance for my own: O Lord, forgive!

My unwillingness to believe that You have called me to a small work and my brother to a great one: O Lord, forgive!

**Please take a leaflet at
the main entrance of
the church for the
Mass Time during the
Christmas Season
2023.**

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

Dec 13, St Lucy, virgin martyr

Dec 14, St John of the Cross, priest

**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, Gesualda
Borg, Monica Teresa &
Fernanda Carigliano, Margaret
Dorahy, Heidi Ellich, Josie
Esteria, 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 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 It will be resumed on 8 Feb 2024, then every Thursday, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm.
Participation via zoom is available.
Enquiries: Nathan Cook, email:cookn4@gmail.com



Catholic Women's League St Monica's Branch
Last Monday 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



St Monica's Art Group It will be resumed on 13 Jan 2024, then every Saturday, 6pm–8pm, the Art Group will gather at the Parish Centre. Mini workshops are available in Feb 2024. Please contact Vera (WhatsApp 0402936947) for details.



Bible Brekkie It will be resumed on 4 Feb 2024, then 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.



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.



SOAP Reflection 10th December

Scripture- The Gospel for this week is Mark 1:1-8, the first 8 verses of Mark, the first of the 4 Gospels. Mark opens his Gospel with the line " The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." In this he outlines the purpose of his entire piece of writing and his core belief. First, his writing is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Gospel meaning good news. The good news in question is the salvation that Jesus, the Son of God will give to humanity for our sins. Then Mark writes on the preparation of the coming of Jesus through the arrival of John.

Observation- After his core statement Mark writes about John the Baptist. At this point in time, though, John is a wild man who baptises people in the desert, the purpose of which was for repentance for sins. Before this the customary way of atoning for sins was through the sacrifice of an animal such as a lamb. John, a crazed wild man who eats locusts and honey, is the one that the prophet Isiah foretold would be the angel that shall prepare the way for the coming of the Son of God. This seems unconventional given that this is the coming of the Son of God, why would God send a crazed wildman to do this. Why not a well respected high priest. The reason is because of what God was preparing the people for which was not a salvation from occupation by the Romans as many hoped, instead it was salvation from the tyranny of sin. God did this by spreading the Gospel (the good news of repentance) through a humble man from Nazareth. By sending someone with little social status to prepare the people God is communicating to the people saying, that the material is not what will bring salvation and that the most fortunate aren't the most treasured by God. In fact your material or social status has nothing to do with the coming of the Messiah because the coming is for the repentance of sins. Even someone with as little social standing as a man who eats locusts and wears camel's hair in the wild is held in such high esteem that the great Prophet Isiah foretold him to be the angel who shall prepare thee.

Application- How can we apply this Gospel to our daily lives? What is most immediate for me is the use of John the baptist to convey the idea that the material is of little requirement for salvation. Often we may be caught up with the material and may "lose the plot", we lose what we really should be focusing on, Jesus. Our lives should be aimed towards preparing ourselves for Jesus Christ the Son of God. So in this next week we should try and be more like John, devote your work to God. We don't have to go to the extreme of John but just by simply dedicating our work to God we can honour him and make our work less about how it materially is better for us but how it can be a form of worship. We can also use the Gospel as a reminder to seek penance and to apologise for our sins. Despite having been baptised we still must seek forgiveness as although many of us have been baptised in water we must continually be Baptised by Jesus with the Holy Spirit, so in the next week consider going to confession.

Prayer - Dear Lord, I pray that I can be more like your servant John the Baptist and devote as much as I can to you and to preaching your name. I pray for forgiveness for my misdoings and sins against you, Baptise me with the Holy Spirit so that I may be ready to receive you and may be prepared for when you come again. In your name I pray. Amen

Raphael

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2023

1 **Christmas cards and Columban calendars** are for sale at the Piety Stall. Please place the money into the Poor Box.

2 Take a tag at the **Gift Tree** at the main entrance and prepare a gift according to the details on the tag. Place your gift with the tag at the Christmas Tree beside the St. Joseph statue before 17th December.

3 **Donations of Hampers Items** are most welcome! Please place them at the Christmas Tree beside the St Joseph statue before 17th December.

4 **Cash donations** will be collected on 16th & 17th December during all Masses.

Your support will be highly appreciated.

16th/17th December ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	A. Bentley K. Handcock	J. Pinto B. McGettigan	O. Holsinger D. Cruz
Extraordinary Ministers	M. Woolridge A. Hernandez	J. DeAraujo S. DeAraujo	
Acolytes	P. Senjak	P. Mooney	J. Hilton
Cleaning	Group 2 - Vera (15th December)		
Children's Liturgy	School Holidays		
Morning Tea	Pinto Families		
Counting	Group 5 - Peter & Kris Handcock		

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! Our new topic for December is Social Justice. 😊
- **Christmas Party**
We will be having our annual Christmas party on the 16th December (Saturday night) at 6PM in the hall! Come along for a fun night as we reflect on the past year