

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 EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

07TH JANUARY 2024

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come;
and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Is 60:1-6

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples. Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness. Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried. At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you; the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and Dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 71

Response: Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. (R.)
2. In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds. (R.)
3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him. (R.)
4. For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

The word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

We have seen his star in the East;
and have come to adore the Lord .

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Mt 2:1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote: And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.



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

Stars and Seekers after Truth

Unlike the writers of the horoscope columns in our newspapers, these Wise Men were scholar astrologers, probably from Syria or Iraq. They believed that the stars controlled the destiny of human beings, but they were open enough to the Hebrew scriptures to be led to the amazing discovery of a star-child in Bethlehem.

They knelt before this baby, doing homage, because they realised that the stars did not control this infant, but that there was something of this baby which caused the night sky to respond! They preserved the child from the deadly schemes of Herod, and then they returned to their home country, 'by a different way'. They were on a different journey after encountering the Child.

Who can doubt that the Holy Spirit led these wise men from the East to the manger? In fact, the Holy Spirit is at work in every human being, prompting each and every one to become seekers after Truth.

As a person responds to this prompting and tries to lead a good humane life, then the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit can draw them into the saving life of God. Thus, billions in China and India who have never heard the Gospel, can be saved. But, such persons do not savour the fullness of Truth as we do with the privilege of having the scriptures and the sacraments. Where it is possible, we are obliged to offer them the road map to the Truth.

We can take a moment to affirm our faith in the baby in the manger as the One of whom Dante spoke: 'the Love which moves the sun and other stars'. Come, let us adore him.

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The Epiphany Proclamation (2024)

Know, dear brothers and sisters, that, as we have rejoiced at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus, Christ, so by leave of God's mercy we announce to you also the joy of his Resurrection, who is our Saviour.

On the **14th day of February**, will fall Ash Wednesday.

On the **31st day of March**, you will celebrate with joy Easter Day.

On the **12th day of May**, will be the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the **19th day of May**, the feast of Pentecost.

On the **2nd day of June**, the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

On the **1st day of December**, the First Sunday of the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ,

To whom is honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

Jan, 8 The Baptism of the Lord

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

Peter Handcock, John Hilton, 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 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.

MASS TIMETABLE

8th January 2024 (Mon)

Baptism of the Lord

9:15am (English Mass)

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 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 a NEW 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.



Tap & Go is now available for donation for ongoing Church building maintenance fund. Machine is placed near the Statue 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.



Youth Corner 7th January

Scripture: Matthew 2: 1-12

Observation:

This week's gospel depicts the visitation of the three wise men after the birth of Jesus. The events of the story itself are quite straightforward. The three wise men (Magi) come to Jerusalem in search of Jesus, the newborn king of the Jews, to pay homage, and Herod is threatened by this future king so sent the wise men to Bethlehem and orders them to return to him once they have found Jesus so that he could also go to pay homage, but in reality, he was plotting to end Jesus. The wise men followed the star, offered gifts, paid homage and in a dream, were told not to return to Herod. However, a closer look at this passage, several things are very important to understand. The first is the quoting of the prophecy told in the Old Testament, confirmation that Jesus is more than just the future king of the Jews, but the Shepherd to Israel, the promised Messiah. This is further supported by the actions of the wise men, who were overjoyed, knelt and worshipped Jesus.

Then there is the comparison and the actions of the wise men vs Herod. The foreign wise men travelled all the way to Jerusalem and Bethlehem so they could celebrate, offer gifts and worship Jesus. Herod said he also wanted to pay homage to Jesus, but he does not go himself, he orders the wise men to come back to him after they have found Jesus. We will later find out that Herod intends on killing Jesus as he wanted to hold onto power.

Application:

In this story, we can try to identify ourselves in the wise men and in Herod. The actions of the wise men were all guided by God in the form of the prophecy, the star, and the dream that warned them at the end. Herod's actions were guided by the desires and insecurities of mankind. The wise men demonstrated complete faith in God and thus in Jesus, choosing to go against the orders of King Herod the Great. All the pressure was on them to not go against Herod, he was the king of Judea.

In our own daily lives, how often have we done things because of self-interest, or simply crumple to societal and peer pressure? It takes great faith and strength to stand against such forces. We must learn to trust in God, be faithful to his teachings and use these to form our conscience, so that we may act accordingly. Strive each day to let God guide our actions, and fight worldly temptations that do not bring glory to God.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your wisdom and guidance in our lives. May we keep our hearts open to your teachings, and follow you faithfully despite all of the worldly temptations and self-desires that we may have or encounter. Give us the strength to uphold our faith in you, live and act in love, and continue to worship you. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

Chinese Chaplaincy Lunar New Year Banquet

Date: 3rd February 2024 (Saturday)

Time: 6:30pm

Place: Rhodes Phoenix Chinese Restaurant
(Waterside Shopping Centre, Rhodes)

Fully Licensed and BYO red/white wine, no corkage fee

Tickets: **\$80 (Adults)**
\$60 (Youth age 18 or under / Pensioners)
\$40 (Children age 12 or under)

Enquiries: 0411 192 278 (Chinese Chaplaincy Hotline)



13th/14th January ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	A. Bentley C. Maxwell	S. Joseph C. Cheung	M. Novak D. Llevado
Extraordinary Ministers	J. Knight L. Lemma	J. Skulander J. De Araujo	TBA
Acolytes	TBA	N. Joseph	TBA

Cleaning Group 1 - Vera (12th January)

Children's Liturgy School Holidays

Morning Tea Not provided

Counting Group 4 - Peter Mooney

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! 😊