

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 B

18TH FEBRUARY 2024

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 Genesis 9:8-15

A reading from the book of Genesis

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 24

Response: Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

1. Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. (R.)
2. Remember your mercy, Lord,
and the love you have shown from of old.
In your love remember me,
because of your goodness, O Lord. (R.)
3. The Lord is good and upright.
He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble in the right path;
he teaches his way to the poor. (R.)

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

1 Peter 3:18 – 22

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he

went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects. *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 Mk 1:12-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

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

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/ EUCARIST 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: Fiona Bylsma

Phone: 8832 4100

Fax: 8832-4199

Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

The Rainbow

The Rainbow is God's signature to a treaty with humankind. On God's part, material forces will never be sent to annihilate human beings as a punishment for wrongdoing. On our part, as humans made in the likeness of God, we are to image God's rainbow relationship to nature.

This is the Divine Treaty basis of our responsibility for the environment. We undertake not to engage in practices or support policies which could severely damage the fragile ecology which supports life on our planet. The deforestation of the slopes of the Himalayas, leading to floods which kill thousands, is a catastrophic example.

And, gazing at the rainbow, we can pray for our planet, for the human beings and all other creatures who inhabit it, and quite often for ourselves at a deep personal level. For we know that, just as after a storm and dark clouds, light penetrates the misty sky and the beautiful bow of colour appears, the same phenomenon can occur in our own lives.

We could take a moment to pray that the rainbow will appear, perhaps for ourselves, perhaps for others we know who are going through a stormy time.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

St. Monica's Sacraments stmonicasacraments@gmail.com



SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION

Registration Mass (Mandatory)

Sat. 17th Feb 5.00pm or
Sun. 18th Feb 9.00am

Commitment Mass (Mandatory)

Sat. 24th Feb 5.00pm or
Sun. 25th Feb 9.00am

Parent ONLY Zoom Meeting (Mandatory)

Mon. 26th Feb 7.00pm
(Zoom link will be given at registration)

4 Candidate Sessions

3:30pm Start then 5pm Mass

- 1st - Sat 2nd March
- 2nd - Sat 9th March
- 3rd - Sat 16th March
- 4th - Sat 23rd March

RECONCILIATION & REHEARSAL

(Mandatory)

Sat 11th May - 2.00pm (Church) -

Candidate **MUST** attend with Godparent/
sponsor

CEREMONY

Fri 17th May at 5.30pm (Photographs)
7.00pm Mass Start

*Note: Candidates **MUST** attend all 4 lessons and Masses after lessons to be eligible to receive the sacrament. There will be **NO** catchup/makeup lessons available.*

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

Feb 22, The Chair of Saint Peter, apostle

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.*

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



CHILDREN'S LITURGY
From 18th Feb, then every Sunday at 9am Mass (during School Terms)
Young children haven't receive Holy Communion are welcome to join.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2024

Every Friday from 16th February to 22nd March
English: 7pm Chinese: 8pm
Confession is available from 7pm to 8:45pm

Half Day Retreat for Adults

(hosted by Fr Ephraim Lam)

Date & Time: **2nd March 2024, Saturday, 9am-12pm**
Place: **Holy Innocent Chapel**
Ellerstone Ct, Kellyville, NSW 2155

Registration please call the parish office **9630 1951** or using the QR code.



*Inspiration talks,
silent prayer time, Mass.*

Project Compassion 2024

Please take a box at the main entrance of the church, or make your donations using the QR code on the boxes.
The boxes with the donations can be returned to the parish by Good Friday, 29th March 2024.

24th/25th February ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	K. Handcock A. Bentley	M. Joseph S. Joseph	M. Novak D. Cruz
Extraordinary Ministers	M. Samson K. Handcock	S. Joseph B. Hooker	
Acolytes	P. Senjak	P. Mooney	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy (23rd February)		
Children's Liturgy	Maria/Tresa		
Morning Tea	Julie & Grazyna		
Counting	Group 5 - Peter & Kris Handcock		



SOAP Reflection 18th February

Scripture: Mark 1:12-15

Observation- Mark's gospel reading about the temptation of Jesus is short and concise, much unlike the other Synoptics of Matthew and Luke which detail conversations between Jesus and the devil. The first week of Lent takes us back to the opening chapters of Genesis, where Adam and Eve are driven out of the garden in a similar manner to Jesus; yet what differs in this present account is that the latter is willing to confront and resist temptation in order to fulfill God's plan for humanity. We are reminded of this by the end of the reading- Jesus exclaims "The time has come.... the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" Mark notes that Jesus was in the 'wilderness' and amongst 'wild beasts', implicative of a barren wasteland with little to no providence. This is also where Christ finds us at the beginning of Lent- a place of confusion, suffering and sin. Jesus offers a message of hope and comfort as he overcomes the devil's temptations, even shortly after baptism. He is found to be 'with' the wild animals, as opposed to Adam, who later became afraid of God's creation. Interestingly, parallels can be drawn between both the Old and New Testament scriptures.

Application- Temptation is something every Catholic will encounter, often on a daily basis. We can be tormented by evil thoughts, negative behaviour and sinful actions which only drive us further away from Christ, whom if we place our trust in, will lead us to good. Mark shows us that whilst temptation is an integral part of the Christian life, it can be just a fleeting component of our lives if we are willing to repent, conquer the struggle and become part of the Kingdom of God by believing in the good news. Seeking repentance and going to confession is a gift from God- it is the truth, as it tries to see things as they really are. It is an opportunity for us to begin again, and open our hearts to the Lord. Attending the Stations of the Cross every Friday night is a great opportunity to start practicing this habit.

Prayer- Heavenly Father, as we approach this time of the year again, please give me the gift of wisdom, introspection, and self-awareness to understand my weaknesses, flaws, and sins. Remind me of your strength and resilience in overcoming the devil's temptations for forty days, and that I am capable of doing this too, because I know that you are with me, and that with you anything is possible. May these next few weeks be a period of reflection which allow me to grow closer to you as a child of God. Help me to recognize the importance of repentance by seeking the sacrament of Penance whenever and wherever possible. Free me from the shackles of sin and shame and I welcome you into my heart. 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! 😊

