

# 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"*

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B**

**10TH MARCH 2024**

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.  
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;  
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

## FIRST READING 2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23

### A reading from the second book of Chronicles

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.'

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: 'Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up."'

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 136

**Response:** Let my tongue be silenced, if ever I forget you!

1. By the rivers of Babylon there we sat and wept,  
remembering Zion;  
on the poplars that grew there  
we hung our harps. (R.)
2. For it was there that they asked us,  
our captors, for songs, our oppressors, for joy.  
'Sing to us,' they said, 'one of Zion's songs.' (R.)
3. O how could we sing the song of the Lord  
on alien soil? If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither! (R.)
4. O let my tongue cleave to my mouth  
if I remember you not, if I prize not Jerusalem  
above all my joys! (R.)

## SECOND READING Ephesians 2:4-10

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

*The word of the Lord*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!  
God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,  
that all who believe in him might have eternal life.  
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

## GOSPEL Jn 3:14-21

### A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to Nicodemus:  
'The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God's only Son. On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.'

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one together.  
It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,  
to praise the name of the Lord.



# 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>ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST</b>	Fr Pio Jang	Phone: 9630 -1951	Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.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: Fiona Bylsma

Phone: 8832 4100

Fax: 8832-4199

Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

## COMMENTARY

### God's Works of Art

How does God picture us? St Paul reveals one of God's favourite ways of regarding us. 'We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus, to live the good life as from the beginning He had intended us to live it.'

Just as an artist respects the medium he or she is working in, whether it be oils or crayon, so too God respects us as human beings with free will. Which is why His works of art don't always look the way He intended!

Now, if one has a work of art in the house, a picture or print that means a lot to you, or perhaps the first sketch by a child, do you put it in the darkest corner of the room? Or do you allow just enough light to fall on it so as to reveal how terrific it is, why it gives you pleasure? Of course, the latter.

Now, if you and I are God's work of art, God wants exactly the same. He wants us to be revealed in the light. What sort of light? Christ our Light.

Of course, it might be necessary for the Light to dispel some darkness, some shadow dimension of our lives. In this regard Christ is a healing Light, but this is so that he might illuminate us in a way which more clearly reveals the love which the Divine Artist has for His creation.

We might take a moment to pray for the courage to expose ourselves to Christ's healing light this Lent to be more beautifully illuminated at Easter.

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## St. Monica's Sacraments

[stmonicasacraments@gmail.com](mailto:stmonicasacraments@gmail.com)



### SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION

#### 4 Candidate Sessions

**3:30pm Start then 5pm Mass**

- 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

**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.*

## 2024 Holy Week & Easter

### Liturgy Timetable

**is available at the main entrance of the church. Please take one and join our celebrations.**

## 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**  
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

### Special Masses during Lent 2024

#### St. Patrick's Feast Day

18th March (MON) 9:15am (English)

#### St. Joseph's Feast Day

19th March (TUE) 9:15am (English)  
7:30pm (English & Chinese)

### 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.

### 16th/17th March ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	C. Maxwell K. Handcock	A. Espiritu J. Pinto	O. Holsinger D. Cruz
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	M. Woolridge J. Knight	J. DeAraujo S. DeAraujo	
<b>Acolytes</b>	P. Senjak	P. Mooney	
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 2 - Vera (15th March)		
<b>Children's Liturgy</b>	Jesuina/Trinette		
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Pinto Families		
<b>Counting</b>	Group 3 - Maria David & Tibu Corera		



## SOAP Reflection 10th March

**Scripture:** from the Gospel of John, particularly 3:14-21.

### Observation:

From a quick glance, one of the first things you'd observe is that this passage contains one of the most famous and oft quoted lines from the whole bible, 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son.' In a way it is a summation of the whole Bible, and a reminder of just how simple things truly are. In this one verse, we are brought right back to the core of our existence – we exist and we persevere because we are loved by God, and even when the worries of the material world seem insurmountable, this love continues. This particular verse is preceded by reference to the story of Moses and the snake all the way in the book of Numbers and calls us back to just how everlasting God's love is – he commanded Moses to raise the snake so that the people in the wilderness may live and in a similar way much later, he sent Jesus so that we could be free of sin. Even today, there are plenty of signs that God is with us, it is just up to us to recognise these signs and take solace in them.

The passage continues, comparing Jesus to the light of salvation and states that 'Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.' On the surface it may seem like this is condemning sinners to forever wallow in their evil nature, but it is important to remember that God always gives us a choice. While stepping into the light does mean that we will be exposed with all our faults laid bare, it also means that we cast away the things that give us an excuse to hide from the truth of God's love.

### Application:

Applying this to our daily lives simply involves recognising that we are truly and unequivocally loved. It is as simple as that. We may have times when we, by virtue of our own sinful acts, blind ourselves to this light, but it is there regardless. While full acceptance does take some work on our part, God is always waiting for us. Finally, no matter how complex our lives become, or how burdened we feel by work, school and so on, we should always remember that these things are not the be all and end all. In fact, we, as part of the world, are loved so much that God sent down his own son to save us.

### Prayer:

I pray that we always seek out the light. While it times it may be daunting to lay ourselves bare and witness the depths of our sin, let us always remember that it is through our willingness to approach God in such a way that we can be truly saved. We are given a chance to be saved and avoid condemnation, so please give us the strength to act on this chance and live in a way befitting of the gifts given to us by Our Father. 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! This month, we will be talking about what it means to live out our faith. 😊

### Youth Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross will be run by youths on Friday 22nd March. It will start at 7pm and 8pm. Please come and participate if you can!