

# 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"*

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR B**

**28TH APRIL 2024**

## ENTERANCE ANTIPHON

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

## FIRST READING Acts 9:26-31

### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 21

**Response:** I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

1. My vows I will pay before those who fear him. The poor shall eat and shall have their fill. They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him. May their hearts live for ever and ever! **(R.)**
2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him. They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. **(R.)**
3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him. They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn: 'These things the Lord has done.' **(R.)**

## SECOND READING 1 John 3:18-24

### A reading from the first letter of St John

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are the children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus

Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

*The word of the Lord*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; my branches bear much fruit. Alleluia!

## GOSPEL John 15:1-8

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

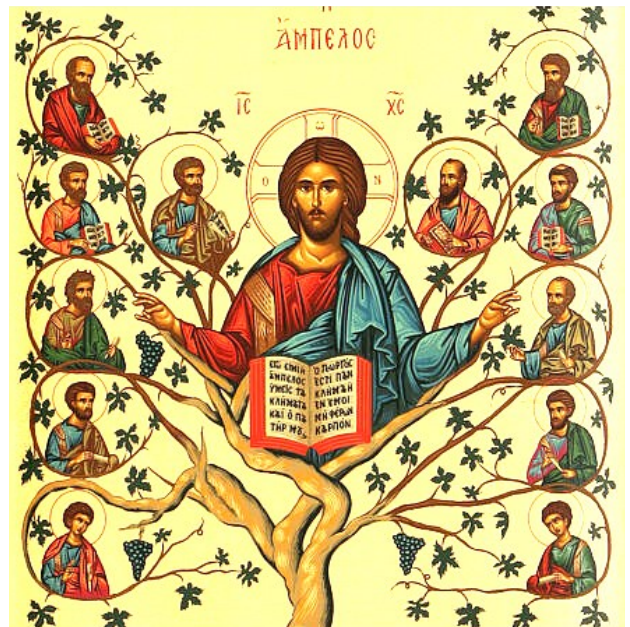
'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.'

*The Gospel of the Lord*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.



# 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: stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

## COMMENTARY

### Spiritual Drink

We are too familiar with today's gospel. Christ is the vine and we are the branches, sometimes in need of a good pruning. But God's purpose is not to produce a perfect vineyard. It is to produce a full-bodied wine at the end of history.

There is a foretaste of this at every Mass. The wine we offer – 'fruit of the earth and work of human hands' – becomes the spiritual drink which best serves the purpose of our Heavenly Father. How does this happen?

For the Jewish people observing an animal whose throat is cut, it is obvious that the life drains out with the blood. 'Life' and 'blood' became synonyms. So, when the Jewish Jesus says of the wine in the chalice at the Last Supper: 'This is my blood', amongst other things he is saying: 'This is my life force, this is my very life given unreservedly for you.'

So, when we drink from the chalice at Holy Communion, the life of the Risen Lord courses through our bodies just as the sap of the vine courses through its branches. We share the same ultimate vitality so that our bodily existence builds into the Body of Christ. He becomes truly 'full-bodied' as the Divine Vignerone desires.

We could take a moment to pray that we respond to the pruning and the tending and the pressing by our Heavenly Father so as to contribute our distinctive character to the vintage at the end of history, the spiritual drink of the Kingdom of Heaven.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

### St. Monica's Sacraments

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

#### SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION

#### 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



### FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

April 29, St Catherine of Siena, virgin & doctor of the Church

May 2, St Athanasius, bishop & doctor of the Church

May 3, St Philip & St James, apostles

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

Peter Handcock, 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.

Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful.  
And kindle in them  
the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and they shall be created.  
And you will renew  
the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light  
of the Holy Spirit  
you have taught  
the hearts of your faithful.  
In the same Spirit  
help us to relish what is right  
and always rejoice  
in your consolation.  
We ask this  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## 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** 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.

**Catholic Women's League - Mothers' Day Raffle.**  
Tickets on sale after all Masses today.  
Cost is **three tickets for \$5**. Cash only.  
Thank you for your generous support.

### Half Day Retreat for Adults

(hosted by Fr Ephraim Lam)

Date & Time: **4th May 2024, Saturday, 9am-12pm**  
Place: **Holy Innocent Chapel**  
**8 Greyfriar Pl, Kellyville, NSW 2155**

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



*Inspiration talks,  
silent prayer time, Mass.*

### 04th/05th May ROSTERS

	6pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	A. Bentley E. Caruana	A. Espiritu B. Hooker	M. Novak D. Llevado
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	M. Samson M. Wilkinson	J. Skulander S. DeAraujo	
<b>Acolytes</b>		P. Mooney	J. Hilton
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy (03rd May)		
<b>Children's Liturgy</b>	Chidinma/Trinette		
<b>Morning Tea</b>			
<b>Counting</b>	Group 5 - Peter & Kris Handcock		

# Youth + Corner

## SOAP Reflection 28th April

**Scripture:** John 15:1-8

### Observations:

In this vineyard, God is the vinegrower, Jesus is the true vine and we are the branches; the vines grown by the vinegrower are the life source of the branches. Jesus who is sent by God to die for our sins, gives us life through His sacrifice. Yet, it is important to recognise that this is not a one-sided relationship, in fact, He tells us to “abide in me as I abide in you”. It is easy enough to understand the importance of abiding to God’s will and truth, but I wonder, what does it mean for God to abide in us, His children? The word “abide” in itself implies companionship, the branches cannot bear fruit if it is separate from the vine. It is impossible for us to deepen our faith and lead holy lives without the guidance of Jesus. In other words, going to mass, for example, without the true intention of celebrating and connecting with God is insufficient and in such a case, the vinegrower will eventually prune these branches. More importantly, God abides in those who seek to love him - it is a potent reminder that we are not alone in our journeys.

### Applications:

The word “abiding” has also been associated with connotations of stagnancy for me, perhaps like “sticking together”. However, we are clearly told to glorify and abide on the Lord by bearing fruit and becoming His disciples. We are told to take action by “bearing fruit”. Whilst the specifics of bearing fruit is not quite defined, I’d like to think that it is referring to growth. Whether it is spiritual growth in our own faith, or spreading the love of God to those around us as we are called to, it is a call for unity and collective growth and a reminder that through God, all things are possible.

### Prayer:

Heavenly father, thank you for your love and your guidance. In times where I am lost, I am grateful that your vine keeps me grounded and steadfast in my faith. May I continue to abide in You as your Word abides in my heart so that all my actions may be guided by your love and your will. By your spirit, produce the fruit of love, joy and peace in me so that it can be shared to those around me and I pray that I will continue to live out your will with love. 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! Over the next few months, we will be talking about the theology of the body. 😊

