

# 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"*

**TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B**

**25TH AUGUST 2024**

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me;  
save the servant who trusts in you, my God.  
Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

## FIRST READING Joshua 24:1-2. 15-18

### A reading from the book of Joshua

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem; then he called the elders, leaders, judges and scribes of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. Then Joshua said to all the people: 'If you will not serve the Lord, choose today whom you wish to serve, whether the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are now living. As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.'

The people answered, 'We have no intention of deserting the Lord and serving other gods! Was it not the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery, who worked those great wonders before our eyes and preserved us all along the way we travelled and among all the peoples through whom we journeyed. We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God.'

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 33

### Response: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times,  
his praise always on my lips;  
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.  
The humble shall hear and be glad. (R.)
2. The Lord turns his face against the wicked to  
destroy their remembrance from the earth. The  
Lord turns his eyes to the just  
and his ears to their appeal. (R.)
3. They call and the Lord hears  
and rescues them in all their distress.  
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;  
those whose spirit is crushed he will save (R.)
4. Many are the trials of the just man  
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.  
He will keep guard over all his bones,  
not one of his bones shall be broken. (R.)
5. Evil brings death to the wicked;  
those who hate the good are doomed.  
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.  
Those who hide in him shall not be  
condemned. (R.)

## SECOND READING Ephesians 5:21 – 32

### A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would

be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body – and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

*The word of the Lord*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your words, Lord, are spirit and life:  
you have the words of everlasting life. Alleluia!

## GOSPEL John 6:60-69

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

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?

'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

'But there are some of you who do not believe.'

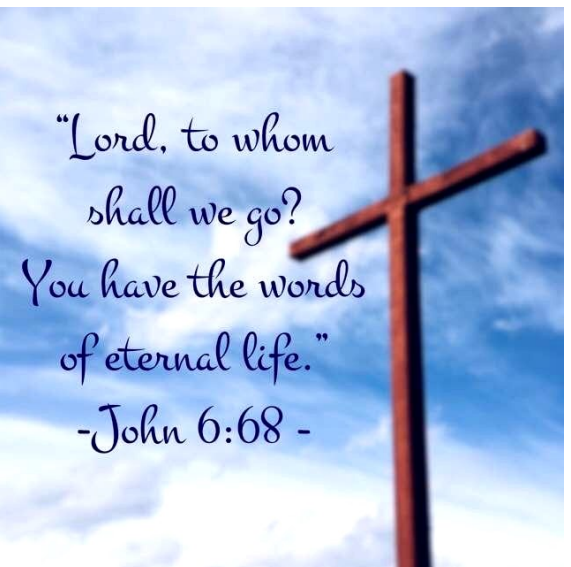
For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

*The Gospel of the Lord*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The earth is replete with the fruits of your work,  
O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to  
cheer the heart.



# 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 4-4.30pm, 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>ANOIDING OF THE SICK/ EUCARIST 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 (temporarily serve at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish, Penrith) Phone: 4721 2509
<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: <a href="mailto:stmonicanp@bigpond.com">stmonicanp@bigpond.com</a>

## St. Monica's School

School Principal: Fiona Bylsma Phone: 8832 4100 Fax: 8832-4199 Email: [stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au)

## COMMENTARY

### The Word of Eternal Life

I remember seeing a James Bond film in which the Voodoo priest could summon the Living Dead – called Zombies – people hovering between life in the grave and life above ground level, but ultimately trapped as human beings living a grave-dominated existence.

There are billions of the Living Dead around the world. People, apparently like you and me, but in fact living with the belief that the grave will mark the extinction of their life.

But our ears are attuned to pick up words which sound the possibility of a different destiny, a different reality. We have heard a voice which speaks the truth, a voice which speaks of a more beautiful reality. That voice says that you and I, individually, personally, are star dust with a marvellous destiny: a destiny that will see our ensouled bodies transformed, transfigured, translucent with Divine Light and energy.

The voice is that of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We hear that voice from within the Church, which has transmitted the tradition of 'The Voice' for twenty centuries.

Heeding that Voice, I move from the company of the Living Dead to the companionship of the Conqueror of Death. I am no longer a 'Dead Man Walking' but a man alive with the reality of eternal life already within me.

That is why when I hear the challenge: 'Do you also wish to go away?' I enter into that tradition and answer with St Peter, I answer in the company of billions of others over twenty centuries: 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.'

We could pause for a moment and pray that, living in the tradition of the Church, I may hear the Word in the Gospel and take that Word within myself in Holy Communion so that I might be no longer a 'Dead Man Walking', but a human being alive with the reality of eternal life already within me.

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## St. Monica's Sacraments [stmonicasacraments@gmail.com](mailto:stmonicasacraments@gmail.com)

### SACRAMENT of 1st RECONCILIATION

**COMMITMENT MASS: (Mandatory)**  
5pm Mass on 31st August 2024 (Saturday), or  
9am Mass on 1st September 2024 (Sunday)

**PARENT ONLY SESSION: (Mandatory)**  
via Zoom at 7:30pm on 2nd September (Monday)

**4 Lessons (Mandatory)**  
Lesson 1 Saturday 7th September - 3.30pm  
Lesson 2 Saturday 14th September - 3.30pm  
Lesson 3 Saturday 21st September - 3.30pm  
Lesson 4 Saturday 26th October - 3.30pm

All above lessons are compulsory with 5.00pm Mass attendance on the same day.

**Note: There will be no catchup/makeup lessons available**

### Clivia for Sale

On 1st September 2024 (Sunday), there are Clivia (in pots) for sale at the side door of the church after the Masses. It is to raise funds for the maintenance of our church buildings. Cash and credit cards are accepted.

### 2024 Father's Day Appeal

There will be a special collection at every Mass on 31st August and 1st September 2024 to support all the retired clergies in the diocese. Cash or Credit Card donations can be done using the special envelopes, or scan the QR code attached for online donations.



## FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

August 27, St Monica

August 28, St Augustine, bishop and doctor of the Church

August 29, The Passion of St John the Baptist, martyr

**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 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 book near the altar of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

## 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: Patricia Brown, email:pabrown02@bigpond.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. New workshops are available each week. Please contact Vera (WhatsApp 0402936947) for details.



**Bible Brekkie** Every FIRST 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.

### A Prayer to St. Monica

**Blessed Monica, mother of St. Augustine, we give thanks to our Father in Heaven Who looked with mercy upon your tears over your wayward son. His conversion and heroic sanctification were the fruit of your prayers.**

**Dear St. Monica, we now ask you to pray with us for all those sons and daughters that have wandered away from God, and to add your prayers to those of all parents who are worried over their children.**

**Pray also for us that, following your example, we may, in the company of our children, one day enjoy the eternal vision of our Father in Heaven. Amen.**



The St Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank for all the parishioners who have supported their 2024 Winter Appeal.

# Youth + Corner

## SOAP Reflection 25th August

**Scripture:** John 6:60-69

**Observation:** The passage in today's Gospel details an event where a large proportion of Jesus' followers desert him. The context for this is found in the earlier parts of the Chapter. In John chapter 6 Jesus first feeds the 5000, then walks on water, then reveals that the only way to reach salvation is to eat his flesh and drink his blood. It's that last thing that made many leave Jesus. The idea that to reach salvation one would have to eat another human was seen as barbaric. As a result, despite many people seeing first-hand the miracles of Jesus they still reject him because they couldn't possibly eat his flesh. And what Peter says in the Gospel when Jesus questions if he will leave, Peter says "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life". Peter understands that Jesus is the true God, thus even though he may or may not be initially uncomfortable with eating Jesus' flesh and drinking Jesus' blood he knows that Jesus is the only path to true salvation and that God would never instruct him or anyone to do something if it weren't for their benefit.

### **Application:**

In today's world it can be challenging to be a Catholic. Catholic beliefs are often criticised by others for being too backwards or "not keeping up with the times". What we should take from this Gospel is that this is not necessarily something new. Christian and Catholic beliefs have been criticised for being strange since before the Catholic Church was instituted. It was also true then as it is true now that when being a Catholic comes with doing hard things people lose faith and they reject it, not necessarily because they believe God is evil or bad but because it is difficult. But we must remind ourselves to be like Peter and understand; one, God is our only way to eternal happiness and salvation and so giving that up for some short term gratification would be imprudent. And two, God would never call us to do something if it weren't for our benefit, God wouldn't ask us to consume his flesh and blood if it didn't help us get to eternal life and happiness. So if you as a young Catholic find some parts of being a Catholic difficult whether that be avoiding sin, receiving anger towards you etc you must stay firm in your beliefs. Exhibit the virtue of fortitude, to do what is right even if it is difficult.

### **Prayer:**

Jesus, I pray that as I continue to grow deeper in my faith and love with you I do not falter in my conviction to love and be with you for eternity. I pray that you grant me with the virtue of fortitude to remain firm in my love and adoration for you. And I thank you for all you have given me and all which you have done to save us from the everlasting pain of being separated from you. In your name I pray. Amen

### 31st/Aug 01st/Sept ROSTERS

	6pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	E. Caruana C. Meleca	B. Hooker A. Espiritu	T. Jones M. Novak
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	K. Handcock M. Woolridge	J. Skulander S. Joseph	
<b>Acolytes</b>	P. Handcock	N. Joseph	A. Cheung
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 1 - Chinese Chaplaincy (30th August)		
<b>Children's Liturgy</b>	Sheryl/Maria		
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Pinto Families		
<b>Counting</b>	Group 5 - Kris & Peter 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! 😊

- **Nursing Home Visit**

This month instead of our usual social hangouts, we will be going to Goodnee Aged Care Home to spend time with the elderly. We will be singing a few songs for them, please have a listen to the Spotify Playlist beforehand! If you don't have access to it or have any questions, then please speak to one of the leaders!