

St. Monica's Parish

North Parramatta



"Our mission is to build up an active parish community with the Eucharist as the centre, fos-

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B

08TH SEPTEMBER 2024

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right;
treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

FIRST READING Isaiah 35:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Say to all faint hearts,
'Courage! Do not be afraid. 'Look, your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy; for water gushes in the desert, streams in the wasteland, the scorched earth becomes a lake, the parched land springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 145

Response: Praise the Lord, my soul!

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bound down,
the Lord who loves the just,
the Lord, who protects the stranger. (R.)
3. The Lord upholds the widow and orphan,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

SECOND READING James 2:1-5

A reading from the letter of St James

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats'; then you tell the poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest.' Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that?

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him.

The word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick. Alleluia!



GOSPEL Mark 7:31-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said 'he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

The Gospel of the Lord

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living 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 4-4.30pm, 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 (temporarily serve at St. Nicholas of Myra Parish, Penrith) Phone: 4721 2509		
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: stmonicasparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

Ephphatha

As we began to welcome the Gospel, we made the sign of the Cross on our foreheads, on our lips and over our hearts. It is meant to be accompanied by the thought: 'May the Gospel be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.' It wouldn't be enough to mentally recite that little prayer. We have to do something physical.

Jesus could not have been more physical than in the story of today's Gospel. He stuck his fingers in the man's ears and touched the man's tongue with spittle, saying the Aramaic word 'Ephphatha', 'Be opened'.

Our Lord could have healed this man with a simple prayer. But he acknowledged the sheer physicality of the person to be cured. We are not angels, but ensouled bodies and that is how our Lord particularly related to this man in need of healing.

It is in the sacrament of Baptism that we imitate the Ephphatha incident in today's Gospel. At one stage, the priest lightly touches the ears and then lightly touches the mouth of the person being baptised. This brings the baptised person into a community formed by hearing and speaking the Word in faith.

We could take a moment to recall the Ephphatha dimension of our baptism. Take your thumb and lightly touch your ears (a parent could do this for an infant) making a prayer along the lines of our baptism: 'The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the mute speak. May He again touch my ears to receive His Word and my mouth to proclaim His faith to the glory and praise of God the Father. Amen.'

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PRAYER FOR THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN

O God, who always guide Your people on their pilgrim way, accompany us as we embark upon the path of discipleship towards greater communion, participation and mission. Enable us to journey with all people and lift them up by the hope of a world made new. Attune our ears to the cry of the earth and the voice of the poor. Give us new hearts as we respond to the signs of the times and become more effective instruments of Your Gospel. Form us into a community of mutual empowerment and credible witness by deep listening, learning and discernment. May we all embrace our baptismal call, and enliven Your Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ, who is with us until the end of the ages, and continues to guide Your Church, to the fullness of your Kingdom, now and forever. Amen

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

Sept 13, St John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor of the Church

Sept 14, The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

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.



Remember the Deceased There is an 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.

St. Monica's Sacraments

stmonicasacraments@gmail.com

SACRAMENT of 1st RECONCILIATION

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

14th/15th September ROSTERS

	6pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	A. Bentley G. Basha	S. Joseph J. Jacob	O. Holsinger D. Cruz
Extraordinary Ministers	M. Wilkinson A. Bentley	M. Joseph J. Payra	
Acolytes	P. Handcock	I. Goldthorpe	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group 2 - Vera (13th September)		
Children's Liturgy	Maria/Chidinma		
Morning Tea	Julie & Grazyna		
Counting	Group 2 - Bernadette Fraser & Brigid McGettigan		

Youth + Corner

SOAP Reflection 08th September

Scripture: Mark 7:31-37

Observation: - In today's Gospel, we see another of Jesus' miracles unfold: Jesus heals a deaf and mute man. Part of Jesus' ministry was not only to teach people about the Kingdom of God but to also provide spiritual and physical healing to those suffering. In this way, Jesus directly fulfils the prophecy of God's work in the Old Testament; "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy" (Isaiah 35:5-6). This miracle reinforces Jesus' healing power, in completely restoring all our ailments. Another important aspect of today's reading was the people's total faith in Jesus and their compassion towards the deaf man. As you may imagine, the deaf and mute man was probably isolated from society and had no way of hearing or knowing about Jesus. And yet, for no gain of their own, they brought forward a man unable to hear and speak and begged Jesus to place His hand on him.

Application - Mark's recount of Jesus' miracle shows us two important teachings. First, Jesus heals in many different ways, not one is the same. For the deaf and mute man, Jesus puts His fingers in the man's ears so he could hear Jesus speak to him. In a similar way, we each receive spiritual grace and healing from God in unique ways. Ultimately, it is God who knows what is best for us. So when we face adversity and hardship we offer the troubles in our heart to God and trust in Him for healing. It could be instant for some or gradual for others, either way God's healing will be revealed - just not always in the way we expect it should. Secondly, we are encouraged to emulate the compassion shown by the people who brought the man to Jesus. As Catholics, part of our ministry is bringing people closer to God, especially those who are isolated and unable to hear or see God's mercy and healing. We must be the working hands of Jesus' love and compassion to those who need spiritual healing. We can show this in many ways - one simple gesture could be listening to one's struggles or reaching out to someone who may be lonely. It does not have to be a grand act of kindness, because it is in our intentions and the simple acts of love which reveal Christ.

Prayer - Dear God, thank you for continuing to reveal Your love and healing to us. Please fill us with the Holy Spirit to be empathetic towards those in need of God's guidance and healing. Give me strength to help those who do not see or hear You and help me to reveal Your love to them. We ask this in Your son's name, 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! In the coming months, we will be talking about what a Jubilee year is (psst... its next year!).

Monthly youth social

We will have our usual social hangout after youth mass on the 4th Sunday of this month (22nd September)! Come talk to one of the leaders if you want to come or would like further details.