

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"

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR C

08TH DECEMBER 2024

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O people of Zion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

FIRST READING Baruch 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'. Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them. Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory. For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 125

Response: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, it seemed like a dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, on our lips there were songs. **(R.)**
2. The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels the Lord worked for them!' What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad. **(R.)**
3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land. Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. **(R.)**
4. They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seed for the sowing; they come back, they come back, full of song, carrying their sheaves. **(R.)**

SECOND READING Philippians 1:3 - 6. 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite

certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 3:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the



wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

The Gospel of the Lord

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from 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 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	Phone: 9630 -1951	
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

We are John the Baptists

Do we have to be like John the Baptist, eccentrically dressed and scavenging for food, to prepare the way of the Lord? No. You and I are called to be a John or Joan the Baptist, preparing people's hearts in our own time and place.

But we have to allow God to prepare our hearts for this role. John the Baptist challenges us to 'Repent', i.e. to turn around our own lives seeking God's forgiveness. John then challenges us to see the big picture which is that 'All who live shall see the salvation of God'.

Pope Francis is the exemplary universal pastor inspiring us to become 'les mercifuls sans frontieres'. And young people through social media are already saying 'We are one community of human beings on this fragile planet'.

The challenge for most of us is more immediate and apparently of smaller scope. The challenge this Advent is to identify the one person whose heart you can help prepare to celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus in three weeks' time. The best method is to let that person see your faith and joy centred on that little Jewish baby lying in a manger.

Do that, and who knows what may happen because that little baby is in fact the Sovereign Lord of history and of the whole cosmos. With God's grace, you don't have to be as eccentric or bizarre as John the Baptist to play your part in changing the course of history!

We could take a moment to pray that, repenting of our own sins where necessary, we may prepare the heart of at least one person so that the Lord Jesus may enter in this Christmas, helping him fulfil his mission that all who live shall see the salvation of God.

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**Solemnity of
the Immaculate Conception of
the Blessed Virgin Mary
9th December 2024 Monday
English Mass at 9:15am.**

**Mass Timetable of
Christmas 2024 is available
at the main entrance of the
church. Please take one.**

The Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven, may the faith
you have given us in your son, Jesus
Christ, our brother, and the flame of
charity enkindled in our hearts by the
Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed
hope for the coming of your Kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of
the Gospel. May those seeds transform
from within both humanity and the
whole cosmos in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil
vanquished, your glory will shine
eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a
yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread the joy
and peace of our Redeemer throughout
the earth. To you our God, eternally
blessed, be glory and praise for ever.
Amen*

FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

Dec 9, The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Dec 13, St Lucy, virgin and martyr

Dec 14, St John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church

**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 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
Third Monday of the month at 10.30 am 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 - 6.15 pm
Sunday 8.40 - 10.15 am
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 Resume on 2nd March 2025, then 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.



Bible Supper Resume on 6th February 2025, then every FIRST & THIRD Thursday of the month, 8pm-9pm, via Zoom.
Fr. Ephraim will introduce every book from the Bible. All are welcome. To get the Zoom Link please scan the QR code on the left.

VINNIES CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

- * 2025 Calendars now on sale, \$10 each
- * Christmas Cards on sale, \$5 per pack
- * Please place proceeds of sales in Poor Box
- * Christmas Appeal envelopes has be placed on Church Pews and the donations can be put in any collection bag at the Masses

Your traditional generosity of Food /Gifts will be accepted up until 14th/15th December, this will allow for collation and delivery of Hampers before Christmas. It would be appreciated if your food donations could include some Christmas oriented items e.g. Christmas Cake/Puddings, tinned Ham, Christmas lollies etc as well as the usual goodies. We thank you for your generosity as always. S.V.D.P.



Our Special Religious Education Teachers, also known as Catechists, are entrusted with the religious education of Catholic students in our local Government Primary and Secondary Schools. Sharing our Catholic faith with our children and young people is a rewarding experience. Volunteers are always welcome. If you are interested in becoming a SRE teacher (catechist) or a helper, please contact our SRE Co-Ordinator, Thomas, on 0413 304 285 or email: tmt889900@gmail.com.

14th/15th December ROSTERS

	6pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	A. Bentley J. Whippy	S. Jacob	D. Cruz
Extraordinary Ministers	J. Knight A. Bentley	J. DeAraujo S. DeAraujo	
Acolytes	P. Senjak	N. Joseph	J. Hilton
Cleaning	Group 2 - Vera (13th December)		
Children's Liturgy	Maria Corera / Sheryl		
Morning Tea	Pinto Family		
Counting	Group 5 - Kris & Peter Handcock		

Youth + Corner

Scripture - Luke 3:1-6

Observation

There are two pertinent messages coming out of this Gospel reading. One, a more direct interpretation, Luke establishes John's ministry in which he is preparing the people of Israel for the coming of Christ by reminding them of their sin and their need for repentance through baptism. While baptism was not a new idea at the time, what was different about John's baptism was that it was for all people, Jews and Gentiles, because Jesus' salvation was for all sinners.

The remainder of the passage describes the transformative consequences of preparing for Jesus' arrival where every mountain is made low and crooked road made straight. It invites us to prepare our own hearts and allow God to work through us. To let every hollow chasm and crevice be filled and brokenness be healed by God's overwhelming love and grace for us.

Application

While the ministry of John the Baptist dates back to the early 1st century, the message remains the same because of the existence of sin. How easy is it for us to be swept up by our schooling/work life while keeping up relationships and meeting our personal goals and aspirations. How easy is it for us to normalise sin in our life and let it fester within us? We may not actively acknowledge it, but we sin every day but how often do we seek repentance and God's forgiveness? John's ministry reminds us that now is the time to turn away from sin, go to reconciliation and heal our relationship with God. Finally, the last line "all will see God's salvation", promises salvation for all who seek it, not just for Christians, but every single one of us made in His image.

Prayer

Dear Lord,
Please grant me the fortitude to face sin in my life and repent. I pray that I may be able to reflect your unconditional love for us in my own actions and may you work through me to share the good news of your salvation with others.
Amen.

Youth Announcements



Christmas Fundraiser

Christmas is a time of charity and many families aren't as fortunate as ourselves in this season of joy. To give back and provide support to those who need it most, this past month, St. Monica's Youth Group have been putting together origami flower bouquets and special (waterfall) cards. These will be sold on 8th and 15th December. All proceeds will be going towards Vinnie's Christmas Appeal. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Christmas Carols

We will be singing Christmas Carols this year on 15th and 22nd. Carolling on the 15th is to be confirmed. And on the 22nd, we will be going to Goondee Nursing Home in Strathfield. Please contact Cheryl (0481 507 169) or Brian (0491 138 451) for more details.