

# 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"*

**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C**

**23RD MARCH 2025**

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

## FIRST READING Exodus 3:1-8. 13-15

### A reading from the book of Exodus

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. 'I must go and look at this strange sight,' Moses said, 'and see why the bush is not burnt.' Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. 'Moses, Moses!' he said. 'Here I am' he answered. 'Come no nearer' he said. 'Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father,' he said 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God.

And the Lord said, 'I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.'

Then Moses said to God, 'I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you." But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?' And God said to Moses, 'I Am who I Am. This' he added 'is what you must say to the sons of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.'

*The word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 102

### Response: The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name. My soul give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. **(R.)**
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. **(R.)**
3. The Lord does deeds of justice, gives judgement for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses and his deeds to Israel's sons. **(R.)**
4. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. For as the heavens are high above the earth so strong is his love for those who fear him. **(R.)**

## SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

### A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

I want to remind you how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in

this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert.

These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer.

All this happened to them as a warning and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall.

*The word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL

### ACCLAMATION

*Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!*

Repent, says the Lord; the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

*Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!*

## GOSPEL

Luke 13:1-9

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

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.



# 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 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>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, temporarily serving Our Lady of the Angels Parish, Rouse Hill		
<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

### Politics, Economics, and the Gardener

There was a terrible disaster when a building fell down killing eighteen people. Some said, 'Oh, those killed must have been sinners, they or their parents.' Jesus repudiates that notion: 'No, it wasn't for anything they did.' It was clear to Jesus that they were the victims of poor construction and conditions at Siloam. Look at the builder.

Responsibility needs to be brought home to those who would otherwise hide behind a religious ideology, or the sheer self-interest of evading blame for a situation.

To identify those really responsible may well require major changes to the way society is organised.

Does it all seem too difficult? Jesus helps us with a metaphor:

You are like a fig tree which may not be bearing much fruit just now, but, I am a terrific gardener:

I will water you, dig around you, make sure you are well nourished so that you will bear the fruits I desire.

Our Lord does that by:

watering us with the waters of baptism; pruning us, especially during Lent; nourishing us with the bread of life in Holy Communion.

We might pause at various times during Lent to allow Our Lord to garden us so that he may create a heavenly botanical garden, a new Eden, of the whole of humanity.

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## 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

25 March, The Annunciation of the Lord

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

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, 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

## Sacramental Programs for Baptized Children

Confirmation—Year 5, First Holy Communion—Year 4  
Reconciliation—Year 3



← Information for parents can be obtained by scanning this QR code, or send an enquiring email to [stmonicasacraments@gmail.com](mailto:stmonicasacraments@gmail.com).



For enrolment please come to the office at our working hours or using this QR code →



# 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, at the Parish Centre. 5:25pm-6:25pm Tai Chi, 6:30pm-7:30pm Christian Meditation.  
Participation via zoom is available. Enquiries: Patricia Brown, email:pabrown02@bigpond.com



**Catholic Women's League St Monica's Branch**  
Every 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 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 school covered playground. Fr. Ephraim will talk about interesting topics from the Bible. All are welcome.



**Bible Supper** 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.



**Children's LITURGY** Every Sunday at 9am Mass (during School Terms)  
Young children haven't received Holy Communion are welcome to join.

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2025

Every Friday during Lent, 7pm (Confession available).

## Project Compassion 2025

The boxes are available at the main entrance of the church. Please return the boxes with your donation before Good Friday. For details and donation online please use this QR code.



## The Annunciation of the Lord

Mass, 25th March (Tuesday) 9:15am, 7:30pm

## 2025 Holy Week & Easter Mass Timetable

Please take a leaflet at the tables near the main entrance of the church.

# Youth + Corner

**Scripture:** Luke 13: 1-9

**Observation:** In today's passage, Jesus first tells us the importance of repentance. He highlights that everyone is a sinner despite their fate or circumstances of their death. And whilst we might think bad things might only happen to bad people, he points out that bad things happens to everyone, whether they were killed at the hands of Pilate or by some disaster such as the fall of the Siloam tower. This is a human flaw in thinking those who suffer must be great sinners. Then Jesus says this in regard to everyone, "unless you repent you will all likewise perish". This is a warning to all of us, that unless we repent, we will die in sin, which is an eternal death. We will not get to be with the Father in eternal life as we move on from this world. This sounds harsh but in the next passage (verse 6-9), Jesus illustrates God's grace in his judgement. The man in this parable is the figurative God and we are the fig tree. Fig trees that do not bear fruits are basically useless, but the man gives them a second chance, and he fertilize and care for it to give it the best chance of bearing fruits. God doesn't give up on us even when we fail, but he tries even harder to bring us back up and heal us. That is the beauty of God's graces.

**Application:** This short passage has some very important lessons for all of us. Firstly, when we see someone who is suffering or when we are suffering, we shouldn't think "oh what have they done or what have we done to deserve this". We live in a broken world, bad things will happen. Instead focus on things you can repent for. It is almost impossible for us to have nothing to repent about, we are humans. This brings us back to the examination of conscience and confession. Do it, or you will not have eternal life. And secondly, we can think of what we are trying to achieve in this world. We are judged by the fruits we bear. Fig trees bears figs. So what about us, what are our fruits? As Catholics, the fruits we bear are already summarized for us as the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. This is the starting point and the foundation of what kind of person you become, and so lets us all strive to live in holiness and bear the fruits of the Spirit.

**Prayer:** Dear heavenly Father, thank you for your grace even in your final judgement, that you will not simply abandon us but nurture us so that he may have a second chance to repent. Thank you for the gift of reconciliation, that we can live free from the bondage of sin because of your power and sacrifice. I pray that we can learn from your words and be guided so that we may bear your fruits. And I pray for all those who are suffering that you continue to be a source of comfort and healing. Amen

## Youth Announcements



### Youth Camp 2025 with Simon Carrington

This year, we have the privilege of hosting Simon Carrington as a guest speaker at our youth camp! Simon is the co-founder of Fire Up Ministries and a well-known speaker on chastity, dating, theology, of the body and masculinity. He will be hosting an information session on 4<sup>th</sup> May on what we can expect at this year's camp. This is truly a unique opportunity for our youths and we invite ALL parents to come along to the information session.

### Youth Mass (4th Sunday)

Youth mass will now be held at 10:15 AM on the 4th Sunday of each month. It will be held entirely in English.

### St Monica's Youth Group (SMYG)

Youth Group will continue each week in the community room, starting at 10:30AM! If you are year 6 and up, come hang out for some games, make new friends and learn about God together! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of our leaders Rebecca Cheung on 0449 055 395. On the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, youth group will start at 11:30AM after Youth Mass.

### Australian Catholic Youth Festival 2025

Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) will take place in Melbourne this year from 30/11 - 2/12. We're looking to take a group of St Monica's youths down to Melbourne and are now taking expressions of interest for youths aged 15 and over. We will be aiming to travel to depart Sydney on 28<sup>th</sup> November and return on the 4<sup>th</sup> December. The estimated cost at this early stage is \$2500-\$3000 total. Please contact Cheryl on 0481 507 169 for more information.

## 29th/30th March ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	J. Whippy B. Basha	J. Jacob S. Jacob	T. Jones M. Ellis
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	M. Samson J. Knight	J. Skulander S. Joseph	
<b>Acolytes</b>	P. Handcock	N. Joseph	J. Hilton
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group - 1 Chinese Chaplaincy (28th March)		
<b>Children's Liturgy</b>	Tresa / Maria Fleming		
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Cheung & Payra Families		
<b>Counting</b>	Group 5 - Kris & Peter Handcock		