

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 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C

30TH MARCH 2025

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

FIRST READING Joshua 5:9-12

A reading from the book of Joshua

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you.'

The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening in the plain of Jericho. On the morrow of the Passover they tasted the produce of that country, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn, that same day. From that time, from their first eating of the produce of that country, the manna stopped falling. And having manna no longer, the Israelites fed from that year onwards on what the land of Canaan yielded.

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. Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free. (R.)
3. Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress. (R.)

SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here. It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on his reconciliation. In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. *The word of the Lord.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

I will rise and go to my Father and tell him:

Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of

debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and



against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening."

The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it is only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

You must rejoice, my son, for your brother was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.

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, temporarily serving Our Lady of the Angels Parish, Rouse Hill		
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

Truth and Reconciliation

For Jews, pigs are ritually unclean, so that living in a pig sty would make this young man unapproachable.

So, imagine the reaction of his Jewish audience when Jesus told the story of the father running to his son and embracing him still stinking of the pig sty, exclaiming, 'You were lost and now you are found.'

That is Jesus' portrayal of his heavenly Father's relationship with us.

Of course, sometimes we are the older brother, resentful that someone seems to have had too easy a time of God's forgiveness. Is this the attitude of many who challenge the emphasis by Pope Francis on Mercy as the core of God's relationship with us?

More often, we are like the younger brother who has strayed to a far off place, sometimes quite deliberately.

We could resolve to approach the Sacrament of Mercy during Lent, knowing that our heavenly Father will run towards us, embracing us, exclaiming, 'You were lost but now you are found.' That is worth a celebration!

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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

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.

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



PARISH ACTIVITIES



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

Please return the boxes with your donations before Good Friday, 17th April 2025. For details and donation online please use this QR code.



2025 Holy Week & Easter Mass Timetable

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

2025 Bishop's Good Samaritan Appeal

It's TODAY! Donations can be done using the special envelopes on the pews, or using this QR code to donate online.



Scripture: Luke 15:1-3. 11-32

Observation: This week we observe the parable of the lost son, a story that we should be all too familiar with. In this parable, an arrogant young son demands of his share of the family estate from his father, leaving him, his brother and the family servants to a distant country, rejecting the respectable life that had been set up for him by his family. Spending it all he finds himself at a position lower than the servants that his father had hired, amongst the pigs who were eating better than himself working for another man in a foreign land, pining for the food even pigs ate, as he had reached a point of starvation due to his own devices. Gaining cognizance of his status he seeks a return to his father's land. Upon his arrival, instead of being resented for his ignorance and disrespect, a welcoming party is held in his name, as the prodigal son had returned. Begrudgingly, the eldest son protests, reminding his father of his loyalty throughout the years that had gone unnoticed, only to be told to be glad, as the lost son has returned.

Application: Of this parable, there are multiple lessons to be learned for each person's perspective, from the son, the father and the eldest brother, that of resentment, forgiveness, humility and repentance. Firstly, from the eldest brother's perspective, we can almost understand him to be a non-believer. A sinner, who has left, done horrible things under the family's name, and all it takes for him to be celebrated once more upon his return, is his repentance? The simple answer is yes, which leads us to the father. From the father's point of view, we are reminded of God's love for us all. The story of the prodigal son is a picture of God's love for us as his children. God's love for us does not depend on our faithfulness; it is unconditional. Although his youngest son went and wasted his inheritance, and his eldest displayed signs of hostility, and resentment, aspects in the vein of sin, when we come to repent of our sins, He is willing to forgive us and welcomes us with open arms. And finally, the son's point of view, we are reminded of a life away from God. Once he had left the family, the more time he had spent away, the more he had spent, running out of resources. The same can be said when we spend time away from church. When we are away, we encounter a spiritual drought, unable to quench our spiritual thirst until we return.

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for the life that you have blessed us with and the opportunities that it comes with. We ask that you be with us in times of treachery, when we may stray off the path that has been intended for us, and help return us to your way, helping us to swallow our pride and to repent so that you may forgive and accept us. In God's name we pray. 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 4th 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 4th 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 28th November and return on the 4th December. The estimated cost at this early stage is \$2500-\$3000 total. Please contact Cheryl on 0481 507 169 for more information.

5th/6th April ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	E. Caruana C. Maxwell	A. Espiritu B. Hooker	S. Alemida C. Alemida
Extraordinary Ministers	M. Wilkinson M. Woolridge	M. Joseph J. Payra	
Acolytes	P. Senjak	P. Mooney	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group - 1 Chinese Chaplaincy (4th April)		
Children's Liturgy	Michelle / Maria Corera		
Morning Tea	Julie & Grazyna		
Counting	Group 1 - Jacob Payra		