

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"

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR A

14TH DECEMBER 2025

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING

Is 35 : 1 - 6, 10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and 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 those the Lord has ransomed shall return.

They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy on their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 145

Response: Lord, come and save us.

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 bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. **(R.)**
3. It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **(R.)**

SECOND READING

Jas 5 : 7 – 10

A reading from the letter of St James

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. *The word of the Lord*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 11 : 2 - 11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.



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. Ambrose Owusu-Ansah 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	Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.com

St. Monica's School

School Principal: Fiona Bylsma

Phone: 8832 4100

Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

The Right Question

John was languishing in prison, held captive by the local agent of the Roman Empire. Perhaps he was looking for evidence that Jesus was the One who would throw off Roman despotism. In answer to his questing, Jesus replied that John should rather look at what was happening on the ground in His healing ministry and orientation to the poor. *Those are the signs that the reign of God has begun.*

I admire John the Baptist because he was prepared to seek and accept the answer to the question which was crucial to him, even though the answer might upset his preconceptions. He was a true seeker after Truth.

All our activities as a parish in building community, forming faith, serving the poor, participating in the liturgy, should be undertaken so that a seeker after Truth might see and hear the evidence of the presence and mission of the risen Lord Jesus Christ amongst us.

We could pause for a moment to simply pray in the spirit of Advent: 'Come, Lord Jesus' to satisfy the restlessness of the questing heart.

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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



SALE

\$10 for Christmas Cards in pack of ten

\$10 for 2026 St Columban Calendar

Please put the cash into the POOR BOX at the main entrance of the church to support the Vinnies.

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Please support the Vinnies Christmas Appeal to help families who are doing it tough this Christmas. Your donation will be a big difference and help them have a better Christmas!

The Vinnies Christmas Appeal special collections will be done this Saturday & Sunday. Online donation using this QR code is welcome.



VINNIES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS AND GIFTS COLLECTION

A Christmas tree near the St. Joseph statue has been set up where you could place any items which could be donated as part of the Christmas hampers to families in our parish area. Another Christmas tree will have tags of children for whom you could donate relevant gifts.

Please place your items and gifts by 21st December 2025.

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

Resume on 4 Feb 2026, then every Wednesday from 10.00am to 12.00pm in the Parish Centre. Enquiries: Lynette Iwachiw 0423 696 961



Christian Meditation

Resume on 12 Feb 2026, then every Thursday, at the Parish Centre. 6pm-6:25pm Gentle Exercises, 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

Resume on 16 Feb 2026, then 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 Supper Resume on 5th Feb 2026, 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.



St. Vincent de Paul Society

Please come to their monthly meeting on the last Wednesday of the month, 7pm, at the Parish Centre, or contact Jacob Payra 0431 881 697

Pray for the Sick: Joshua North, Marvin Ferrer

Christmas Mass Timetable

24th December 2025 (Wednesday)

6pm (English)
9pm (Chinese)

25th December 2025 (Thursday)

12am Midnight Mass (English, candlelight)

9am (English)
11:30am (Chinese)

Full timetable leaflets can be found near the main entrance of the church.



SOAP column: 14th December 2025

Scripture: Matthew 11:2-11

Observation: In this week's gospel reading, John the Baptist's disciples are trying to work out Jesus' identity and specifically want to find out if He is the promised Messiah. Jesus affirms that He is the promised Messiah as He can liberate people from their ailments, such as physical ailments and promises to bring new, eternal life to the dead. Jesus' mission is to bring hope to the suffering, sick and vulnerable. As the first reading from Isaiah points out, the Messiah's mission is to bring salvific hope to people and strengthen their sense of resolve and give them inner, spiritual strength. The physical ailments that Jesus says He will heal, such as deafness and being crippled, may also be interpreted metaphorically. Jesus comes to not only heal physical infirmities but also spiritual infirmities. Jesus also says that as the Messiah, He does not come with the trappings and appearances of earthly power, wealth and authority, such as fine clothing but comes with the authority of God in heaven.

Application: At many stages in our lives, we may be crippled by spiritual, mental and emotional ailments. We may feel anxious, depressed, pessimistic, experience doubts about our faith in God or become more lukewarm in our faith, and we may lack enthusiasm or motivation to help others. Our internal ailments can occur as a result of the challenges that we face in life and past experiences. However, this advent, it's important to remember that whatever the cause of our ailments, we can always bring them to Jesus with faith and humility and ask Him to heal us, as this is a part of His saving mission. When we experience Jesus' healing, we are given the strength and courage to experience a rich spiritual life. An important aspect of the rich spiritual life is rejoicing in God's healing, saving power that He brings to our lives. So next time, we experience spiritual ailments, let us bring these to God, trust in His power to heal, and embrace the graces that He gives us. The graces God gives us may include insight into how to say and act with wisdom, patience and kindness, or being like Christ in the way we perceive and treat others.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, you have revealed your salvific grace and mission to all people. You bring hope and joy to all people, particularly the weak, frightened and vulnerable. May we always remember your healing power and grace and turn to you in times of weakness, in challenging and difficult times. May we always invite you into our lives so we can be strengthened and emboldened to experience joyous, spiritual encounters with you every day. Amen.

Youth Announcements

Social Justice Month

This month is our social justice month where we will be selling some handmade body scrubs and polaroid photo frames decorated by our youth group. The proceeds will go to the Vinnies' Christmas Appeal. On the 14th Dec, we will be selling tickets for photoshoot which will take place on the 21st Dec. We will also be selling the body scrubs on the 21st Dec. There will be a limited number of spots for photos as each photo frame is a unique one-of-a-kind design so get in quick! Alternatively, you can purchase just a photo frame on its own. The prices are as follow:

**Photo + photo frame = \$10, Photo frame = \$5,
Body scrubs (coffee / green tea) = \$10**

Come help us support those in need in this time of advent, Christmas and thanks giving.

St Monica's Youth Group

Youth Group will continue each week in the community room, starting at 10:30AM! If you're 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 Raphael Cheung (0420 947 121).

20th/21st December ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	O. Meleca A. Bentley	A. Espirituh P. Fleming	T. Jones A. Cao
Extraordinary Ministers	K. Handcock A. O'Dwyer	M. Law C. Cheung	
Acolytes	P. Senjak	P. Mooney	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group - 2 Vera (19th December)		
Children's Liturgy	Resume in Feb 2026		
Morning Tea	Pinto Family		
Counting	Group 2		

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