

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 HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH — YEAR A

28TH DECEMBER 2025

ENTRANCE ANTIphon

The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

FIRST READING

Sirach 3 : 2-6. 12-14

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons. Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune. Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays. Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life. Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength; for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten but will serve as reparation for your sins. *The word of the Lord*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 127

Response: Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper. (R.)
2. Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. (R.)
3. Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life! (R.)

SECOND READING

Col 3 : 12 – 21

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

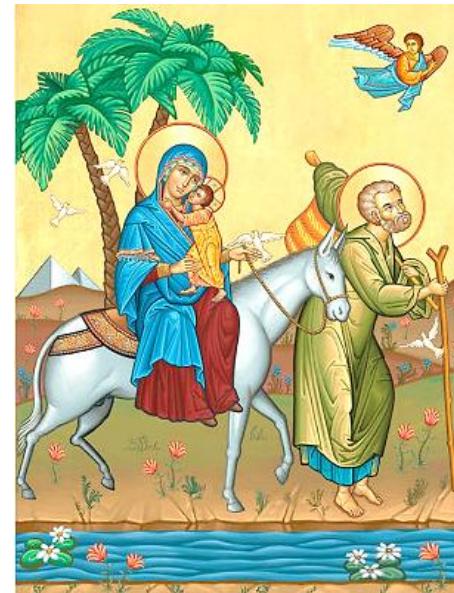
Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

The word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you. Alleluia!



GOSPEL

Mt 2 : 13 – 15. 19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled:

He will be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIphon

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

St. Monica's Catholic Parish
Cnr Church Street and North Rocks Road, North Parramatta

Sunday Masses	English: Saturday Vigil - 5pm; Sunday - 9am, 6pm Cantonese: Sunday 11.30am
Weekday Masses	English: 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: https://stmonicancp.org.au
Office hours	Tuesday-Friday 8.30am-2.30pm Phone:9630-1951 Sunday 9am-11am Email: stmonicancp@bigpond.com

St. Monica's School

School Principal: Fiona Bylsma Phone: 8832 4100 Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

COMMENTARY

Two Holy Families

Herod is seeking to annihilate all the male children in Bethlehem. The child Jesus is in mortal danger. 'Arise, take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt.' And Joseph did so. That night and by night, such was the urgency.

Have you ever thought: What if Egyptian border guards had turned back this refugee family? What if, instead of finding safe haven and sanctuary, this desperate family had been denied entry? The Divine plan to rescue Jesus from a murderous tyrant depended not only on Joseph but, also, on the Egyptian people.

And so we discover two Holy Families in this Gospel episode. One is the little Holy Family with Joseph, Mary and Jesus. The other is the larger Holy Family of humanity embodied in those Egyptians who provided sanctuary, who opened their land to allow Joseph, Mary and Jesus to settle out of danger.

We might pause for a moment to ask: Can we be as hospitable and open as the Egyptians of today's Gospel? Another baby in another family of refugees may depend on our answer!

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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

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 Resume on 31 Jan 2026, then 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

03rd/04th January ROSTERS			
	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	S. Meleca C. Meleca	J. Jacob J. Nguyen	M. Novak D. Llevado
Extraordinary Ministers	C. North K. Handcock	P. Hourigan C. Cheung	TBA
Acolytes	P. Senjak	I. Goldthorpe	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group - 1 Chinese Chaplaincy (2 nd January)		
Children's Liturgy	Resume in Feb 2026		
Morning Tea	Resume in Feb 2026		
Counting	Group 4 (4 th January)		

Youth Corner

Scripture: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Observation: Today's Gospel recounts the Holy Family's escape to Egypt and their subsequent return to Nazareth. Though fairly short, the passage hints towards Jesus' status as our saviour. The escape to Egypt is not simply just about escaping the tyranny of Herod, but also a recounting of Israel's history, like the Israelites once were, Jesus, Mary and Joseph are forced out of their home and wind up in Egypt, though the nature of the time spent in Egypt obviously differs from the Israelite's time as slaves.

The subsequent return, draws parallels to Moses' exodus, and through this, Jesus is painted as the new Moses - one who will lead God's chosen peoples out of the grasp of Sin.

Additionally, this passage also serves to highlight the providence of God. Of course, going to Egypt was not in Joseph's plan for his family, and yet it was exactly what God had planned. Even their eventual settling in Nazareth served to ready Jesus for his eventual role.

Analysis: We can learn a few things from the Gospel today. Perhaps most importantly, and similar to what I touched on above, is the idea of obedience even in the darkest moments. When Joseph was told to flee, he was likely terrified, confused and uncertain, but despite all that he did not hesitate. He did what was told of him despite being unable to see the full picture. Likewise, we are often presented with opportunities in our daily lives, big and small. The true measure of our faith is not in understanding why we are faced with these circumstances, but rather our willingness to go forth, trusting in God.

Another key part of the passage was the settlement in Nazareth. It was here that Jesus grew up in general peace. Similarly, we often go through periods of 'silence' where it may seem like nothing is really happening. However, instead of sitting idle, we should take this time to prepare ourselves and strengthen our faith. These quiet moments are perfect for contemplation and meditation, so don't let them go to waste!

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for your unceasing guidance. Even when we do not see the path you have chosen for us, you stay by our side and lead us to greater things. Please continue to watch over us and help us to always find the courage to step into the unknown, if it be your will. Amen.

Youth Announcements

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).

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The logo for MSQS, featuring the letters 'MS' and 'QS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, each enclosed in a separate gold-colored square. The 'MS' square is positioned above the 'QS' square.

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The logo for 'Floral Expressions' is set against a background of a repeating pattern of black five-pointed stars. In the top left corner, there is a cluster of three red flowers with green stems and leaves. The text 'Floral Expressions' is written in a bold, red, serif font, with 'Ph: 02 9683 1116' in a smaller red font directly below it. To the right of the phone number, the address 'Shop 7, 2 Campbell Street, Northmead' is written in a black, sans-serif font. Below the address, the text 'Flowers/ plants/ gift wares/ balloons/ hampers for all occasions.' is written in a black, sans-serif font. Underneath that, 'The Supplier of Flowers at St Monica's Church.' is written in a black, sans-serif font.

A cartoon illustration of a painter wearing a blue cap, blue overalls, and a white t-shirt. He is holding a paintbrush in his right hand and a red paint can in his left hand, with a paintbrush resting on his shoulder.

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A promotional graphic for Agius Property Group. On the left, the text 'SELLING OR LEASING YOUR PROPERTY?' is displayed in large, bold, black capital letters. Below it, a smaller line of text reads 'CONTACT YOUR LOCAL AGENT FOR A COMPLIMENTARY MARKET APPRAISAL!'. In the center, there is a circular portrait of a woman with long dark hair, smiling, wearing a dark top and a patterned scarf. To the right of the portrait is a QR code with the text 'SCAN ME!' above it. Below the portrait, the text 'Arianne Fontanilla' is in large, bold, black capital letters, followed by 'LICENSED REAL ESTATE AGENT' in a smaller, regular black font. At the bottom left, the Agius Property Group logo is shown, featuring a stylized 'A' icon followed by the word 'AGIUS' in large letters, with 'PROPERTY GROUP' in smaller letters below it. At the bottom right, there is contact information: a phone icon followed by the number '0410 202 550', an envelope icon followed by the email address 'arianne.fontanilla@agiuspropertygroup.com.au', and a small 'www' icon followed by the website 'agius.com.au'.