

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"

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A 22ND FEBRUARY 2026

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

FIRST READING

Gen 2 : 7-9; 3 : 1-7

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 50

Response: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
2. My offences truly I know them; my sin is always before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)
3. A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
4. Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise (R.)

SECOND READING

Rom 5 : 12-19

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man,

Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

GOSPEL

Mt 4 : 1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says: He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.' Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

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://stmonicanp.org.au
Office hours:	Tuesday-Friday 8.30am-2.30pm Phone:9630-1951 Sunday 9am-11am Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.com

St. Monica's School

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

COMMENTARY

It is Written

Jesus was offered three shortcuts for his ministry. Firstly, exceptional powers to satisfy his own needs (bread out of stones). Secondly, when he needed to take risks, angels to keep him safe. Thirdly, when he wanted to change the world, absolute political power.

These were the Temptations of Christ, but also for us. If you or I are tempted to sin, we will find the marks of this threefold pattern. We want the whole world to change to satisfy us, or we want to take stupid risks and come out unscathed, or we want to exercise total power over others.

How can we try to follow Jesus without the shortcuts of the fantasy world which the Devil may offer? Note that Jesus resisted each temptation with: 'It is written'. The forty days of Lent are a perfect opportunity to read what 'is written' in the Gospels about the episodes and pattern of the life of Jesus Christ.

We could pause for a moment to find what is written and to imitate what we find. That is how the Devil is defeated.

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Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our defence against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Project Compassion 2026

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 the QR code on those boxes.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

All Fridays from 20 February to 27 March 2026, 7:30pm
(Confession available)

APPRECIATION

Dear people of God, thank you to this wonderful community for your warm welcome, support and generosity during these few months with you. Your dedication to the St. Monica community, active participation and your prayers make this community a TRUE home. I am blessed to serve you as your assistant priest and look forward to keeping this union and family together. It is said "mountains do not meet but people do". We will surely be meeting again and again to share the love and the faith together

In a very special way I am so grateful to my Boss (Fr. Ephraim Lam) for every support and guidance, availability and dedication, your patience and presence. God richly blesses you and the entire ST MONICA COMMUNITY. THANK YOU.

FR. AMBROSE OWUSU-ANSAH

PARISH ACTIVITES

Youth + Corner



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: Lynette Iwachiw 0423 696 961



Christian Meditation

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

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

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

Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

Observations:

In this passage, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Notably, this occurs right after His baptism, revealing that spiritual affirmation is often followed by periods of testing. Each temptation appeals to human desire, including pleasure, pride and power. However, Jesus responds to the temptations with Scripture, declaring that "It is written", refusing to take shortcuts. The passage makes clear that while temptation is inevitable, faithfulness within it is what defines true discipleship.

Application:

In our lives, temptation rarely appears as something obviously evil. It often disguises itself as something reasonable: prioritising comfortability, proving ourselves to others, or gaining power. Like Jesus, we are tempted most when we are tired, hungry, or seeking affirmation. This passage challenges us to consider what we rely on when we are tested. Do we lean on our emotions and abilities, or are we grounded in God's Word? Jesus shows that spiritual maturity is not about avoiding struggle, but about responding to it with faithfulness. As disciples, we must build an interior life that can endure pressure; prayer, scripture and trust in God's providence are key.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

In moments of weakness and temptation, remind me of who I am in you. Strengthen me to choose obedience over comfort, trust over control, and faith over fear. Help me to rely on your Word as my foundation, and guide me through every wilderness I encounter. 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).

International Eucharistic Congress 2028

Beginning from 1st March 2026, SUNDAY, the whole Australia Catholic Church will formally start preparation of this solemn event. At our parish we shall have **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with Benediction, from 10am to 11am** on that day. Please come and pray.

For details of the Sydney 2028 International Eucharistic Congress, please go to their website:

<https://eucharist28.org/>



28th February / 1st March ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
Readers	C. Maxwell E. Caruana	S. Younes P. Fleming	M. Caga Anan M. Ellis
Extraordinary Ministers	A. Bentley M. Wilkinson	M. Joseph M. Law	TBA
Acolytes	P. Senjak	N. Joseph	A. Cheung
Cleaning	Group – 1 Chinese Chaplaincy (27 th February)		
Children's Liturgy	Maria F / Jesuina		
Morning Tea	Payra & Cheung		
Counting	Group 2		

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