

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 ASCENSION OF THE LORD – YEAR A

17TH MAY 2026

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia.

FIRST READING

Act 1: 1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.' *The word of the Lord*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 46

R: *God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.*

All people, clap your hands, cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, great king over all the earth **(R.)**

God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God, sing praise, sing praise to our king, sing praise. **(R.)**

God is king of all the earth; Sing praise will all your skill. God is king over the nations; God reigns on his throne. **(R.)**

SECOND READING

Eph 1 : 17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will

inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation. *The word of the Lord*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 28 : 16-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

The Gospel of the Lord

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia.



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 & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: | Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am Every 3rd Sunday of the month 10:15-11am | | |
| 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 |
| Postal Address: | 8 Daking Street, North Parramatta, 2151 | | Website: https://stmonicanp.org.au |
| Office hours: | Tuesday-Friday Sunday | 8.30am-2.30pm 9am-11am | 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

Where is the Body?

Our Risen Lord Jesus Christ could have continued to appear to groups of followers, century after century – until now!

But, he didn't, because the disciples had to be weaned of his Risen-mode of appearance among them lest they think that the victory over Death is meant for human beings alone. But, as St Paul says, the Risen Lord is the One who 'fills all creation' with His power radiating out from his Risen Humanity.

However, dis-appearance is not the same as absence. We believe that Our Risen Lord is present in many modes, including as St Paul says '... the Church which is His Body'. That is why the figures in white rebuke the disciples: 'Why do you stand looking into Heaven?'

The Disciples had, rather, to ready themselves to be the Spirit-filled body of Jesus Christ in their own time and place. As we do.

We might pause for a moment to stop staring into Heaven, to ready ourselves to receive the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost in order to be 'The Church which is His Body.'

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Eucharistic Congress 2028 Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for the gift of your real presence in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Grant us the grace to receive you reverently, worship you truly and serve you with hearts renewed. By the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen us, so that as you gave yourself to the Father and to us, we too may offer our lives to God and to others. Inspire and help us to serve you in those who are in need, especially the defenceless and homeless, the lonely and lost. Unite us with your sacrifice of the Mass, so that we may truly become what we have received, the Body of Christ. Amen

Special Mass on 25th May 2026, Monday, 9:15am
The Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians,
Patron Saint of Australia
ALL are welcome.

Youth Announcements

World Youth Day bake sale – 31st May

World Youth Day 2027 will be held in Seoul, South Korea and 7 of our youths will be going on this pilgrimage. On the 31st May, we will be hosting our first fundraiser event which will be to help sponsor and provide financial aid to the youths go onto their pilgrimage and encounter God.

World's Greatest Shave – 14th June

For those who don't know, World's Greatest Shave is an initiative by The Leukaemia Foundation with the aim of raising money to support blood cancer research, help subsidize expensive treatment costs, and improve accessibility to treatment for people with blood cancers. We invite EVERYONE in the congregation to take part and join our effort to give back to those in need. For people who wants to support by shaving or cutting their hair, there will be a registration link/QR code on our poster at the entrance of church. The event will take place on 14th June in the hall where we will shave our heads together. Father Lam will also take part! We will also have a QR code for donation. Please refer to the poster for details.

Youth Camp – 7th to 10th July

This year our youth camp will be held from 7th to 10th July. It will be a 4-day camp in Katoomba. This year, our theme will be Pokemon! We will explore all the fruits of the holy spirit and learn how to catch them all! Come along for fun, laughs, growth, friendship, fellowship and memories. Please contact Brian Wong (0491 138 451) or Raphael Cheung (0420 947 121) for a registration form.

PARISH ACTIVITES



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 via ZOOM
Every FIRST & THIRD Thursday of the month, 8pm-9pm, 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 or send an email to Fr Ephraim.



St. Vincent de Paul Society
Please come to their monthly meeting on the last Wednesday of the month, 6.30pm, at the Parish Centre, or contact Jacob Payra 0431 881 697



Sacramental Program for Baptized Children 2026
Please send an email to our coordinator for details: stmonicasacraments@gmail.com

2026 Bishop's Appeal
For our *Seminarians at the Holy Spirit Seminary.*
Please use the special envelopes on the pews or donate online using the QR code.



Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

Observation

This Gospel passage is often called "The Great Commission." It is the moment where Jesus gives His disciples their mission before ascending into heaven. One detail that stands out is that the disciples worshipped Jesus, "though some hesitated." Even after witnessing the Resurrection, some clearly still struggled with doubt and uncertainty.

I think many of us can relate to that. A lot of us think being a "good Catholic" means having everything figured out, never questioning anything, and always feeling close to God. But this passage reminds us that faith isn't about being perfect. Jesus still chose the disciples, even when they were unsure, nervous, or confused.

Jesus continues by exhorting his disciples to: "make disciples of all nations." Though that sounds like an intimidating and daunting task, it doesn't necessarily mean standing on a street corner preaching to strangers (at least not for all of us). Most of the time, being a disciple is about how we live day to day. It's choosing kindness instead of gossip, showing patience when someone annoys us, or being there for a friend who's struggling.

Application

This week, let us challenge ourselves to reflect on what it means to live as disciples in everyday life. Jesus may not be asking us to travel across the world, but He does ask us to witness to Him wherever we are.

One practical way to live this Gospel is through courage. If there is a moment when someone is being excluded, bullied, or treated unfairly, choose kindness and stand up for them. If a friend is struggling, be willing to listen and support them. Small acts of love can become powerful ways of sharing Christ with others.

Another challenge for this week is to spend intentional time with God. Since Jesus promises to remain with us always, we should make room to recognise His presence. Try setting aside a few quiet minutes each day for prayer, Scripture reading, or simply talking honestly with God about your worries and hopes.

Finally, remember that faith is a journey. Like the disciples, we may sometimes hesitate or doubt. But Jesus still calls us forward. He invites us not to be perfect, but to trust Him and continue walking with Him each day.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for remaining patient with us in moments of doubt and uncertainty. Help us to remember that we do not need to be perfect to follow You. Teach us to trust in Your presence and to recognise that You walk with us each day. Guide us to reflect Your love through simple acts of kindness, compassion, and faith. May we continue to grow closer to You, even in the small and ordinary moments of life. Amen.

| 23 rd /24 th May ROSTERS | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | 6pm Easter Vigil | 9am | 6pm |
| Readers | A. Meleca B. Meleca | A. Espiritu S. Jacob | E. Saleh N. Sindayen |
| Extraordinary Ministers | B. Meleca C. North | P. Hourigan M. Law | TBA |
| Acolytes | P. Senjak | I. Goldthorpe | A. Cheung |
| Cleaning | Group 1 – Chinese Chaplaincy (22 nd May) | | |
| Children's Liturgy | Julie / Sheryl | | |
| Morning Tea | Jason & Beth | | |
| Counting | Group 4 | | |

Catholic Women's League 2026 Mother's Day Raffle Winners

1st RED D85 2nd BLACK B30
3rd BLACK B63 4th PINK D100
5th GREEN D33 6th PINK D96

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