



Parish of Baulkham Hills

Second Sunday of Easter - 16th April 2023



PARISH NOTES

Dear Parishioners,

We hope you have had a nice Easter, and that the joy of the Risen Christ continues to be with you and your families.

FAREWELL FR CHADI

It is with great sadness for our parish community that we have to advise that Bishop Vincent has appointed Fr Chadi to be administrator of the Holy Name of Mary Parish, Rydalmere, effective from next Saturday, 22nd April.

In his short time with us, Fr Chadi has made a great hit, not only because of his outgoing personality and multi-lingual abilities, but more so for his ministry as a priest, his stimulating homilies and celebration of Mass, in introducing *lectio divina* and high fiving the St Michael's School children (and their parents!). We will miss him but wish him God's blessings in his ministry in his new parish.

Will we ever look at an iPad again, and not think of him?

Due to electrical work being done in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Wednesday's (19 April) morning Mass will be celebrated in the Parish Office.

MASS LINK FOR SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

The Mass link for this Saturday at 6pm for **Second Sunday of Easter - Year A** and available on YOUTUBE after that is -- https://youtube.com/live/ORF-XevA_8w. Please copy the link into browser if it does not immediately work.

Mass is live streamed on Saturday evening at 6pm from Our Lady of Lourdes, and available for viewing afterwards via the link. We are also using FACEBOOK links via the Parish of Baulkham Hills FACEBOOK page. Thank you to Jim and Brian for your help with this every week.

Thank you to all those who emailed and thanked us for providing the Easter ceremonies. Please keep liking us on Facebook.

LISTENING CIRCLES – last call

Members from both Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael's Communities are invited to attend a session of Listening Circles, designed for people to listen and talk about how they have been impacted by an event or incident that has affected people in the community.

In this case the event is the dissolving of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, South Baulkham Hills in March 2014. For some, the decree has had little impact; for others, the change has brought distress, confusion, for others alienation. The Listening Circles provide an opportunity to listen.

The Listening Circles will be held at 2.30pm on Saturday, May 6 at Our Lady of Lourdes parish Hall.

We need to finalise arrangements, so would those who wish to be involved either from St Michael's or Our Lady of Lourdes, please advise Fr Wim (wimh@parishofbaulkhamhills.org.au) before Wednesday 20 April, else we will need to cancel this opportunity.

MACKILLOP HOUSE – CALL FOR VISITATION TEAM

Fiona Smith – Chaplain at MacKillop House Aged Care Facility writes:

On the 2nd of May at 6pm we invite any interested volunteers to join us for a training that will be held here at MacKillop house over three weeks. The commitment involved would be three nights for 1.5 hours, the dates would be the 2nd of May, the 9th of May and the 16th of May.

All volunteers will need a police check done (if there is a cost, we will cover that) and they will need to be up to date with Covid Vaccinations as well as the Flu vaccination.

If you'd like to join this team of volunteers and have not yet let Fr Wim know, please contact him..

INVITATION TO REGISTER FOR CPR TRAINING – a Diocesan Initiative

You are invited to register for an accredited CPR Course being offered by Surf Life Saving NSW as part of a project being offered by The University of Sydney, Westmead Applied Research Centre.

The course runs for 2.5 hours and will be presented at two locations across the Diocese.

1. St Thomas Aquinas Springwood on Saturday 13th May beginning at 10am, or
2. Bishop Bede Heather Centre Blacktown on Monday 5th June at 4pm.

Please contact the Parish Office for information on how to register for the venue of your choice.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE DIOCESE

CCD St Matthew's Gospel Series: Starting 28 April

CCD is hosting Dr Laurie Woods presenting A Study of St Matthew's Gospel - April 28; May 5, 12, 19 & 26. 10 am to 2pm at Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. To book please email Maree Collis ccd.training@parrcatholic.org

MET FaithLIFE Scripture Course: Starting 2 May

Want to learn more about different ways to pray? Sign up for the FaithLIFE 3-night short course on "Prayer" with Br Barry Donaghue, brought to you by the Mission Enhancement Team (MET). 6:30PM to 8:30PM on three Tuesday: 2 + 9 + 16 May. Downstairs at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1-5 Marion Street, Blacktown. RSVP via <https://pffarra.org.au/faithlife/>

MET Worship Liturgical Music Workshop: 4 May

Musicians, Clergy & Liturgy Planners are invited to attend a Music Workshop Presented by Eric Grella on Singing the Psalms & Chant on Thursday 4 May from 7pm to 8:30pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. RSVP by 1 May to hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org

POPE FRANCIS AND THE PASSION FOR EVANGELISATION

After a few weeks' absence due to Easter, we resume Pope Francis' his cycle of catechesis on *The passion for evangelization: the apostolic zeal of the believer*, focusing on the theme: "Witnesses: Saint Paul".

A summary of his catechesis is provided here, and the full text is attached to these notices.

Dear brothers and sisters: In our continuing catechesis on apostolic zeal, we now consider some of the great men and women in the history of the Church whose lives exemplify love for Christ and passion for the spread of the Gospel. We begin, naturally, with the Apostle Paul. Paul's encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to

Damascus transformed his zeal for the Law, which had led him to persecute Christians, into a consuming desire to proclaim the Gospel of God's loving mercy, revealed in the paschal mystery. Paul's conversion was truly a profound experience of death and resurrection; reborn in Christ, he became a "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17), now filled with zeal to carry the good news of our salvation to all the nations. Paul's example shows us that at the heart of all missionary zeal is a living encounter with the risen Lord. It also shows us that zeal for the Gospel can never justify violence or persecution in the name of the God of mercy, who invites us freely to accept his gift of new life by believing in the Gospel of Jesus his Son.

THE DECEASED

Please also remember those for whom prayers have been requested, especially for:

Recently deceased: Ricardo Vila

Anniversaries: Giuseppe Pizzolato

Fr Wim

SUPPORT DONATIONS

We really appreciate your continued support. To assist with the proper recording for the second collection, please include your envelope number if you have one.

For EFT to the First Collection - supporting the priests

BSB	067 950
Account No	000004265
Account Name	Diocesan Clergy
Reference	6001 your name

For EFT to the second (envelope and loose)

Collection – for support of the Parish,

BSB	067 950
Account No	000000214
Account Name	St Michael's Baulkham Hills
Reference	Envelope Number or Your Name

If you wish to pay by credit card, please use this link

<https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/stmichaelsparishbaulkhamhills>

POPE FRANCIS AND THE PASSION FOR EVANGELISATION

Today, in his cycle of catechesis on *The passion for evangelization: the apostolic zeal of the believer*, Pope Francis focuses on the theme: "Witnesses: Saint Paul".

Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." And they glorified God because of me. (Bible reading: Gal 1:22-24).

Catechesis of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

In the path of catechesis on apostolic zeal, let us start today to look at some figures who, in different ways and times, bore exemplary witness to what passion for the Gospel means. And the first witness is naturally the Apostle Paul. I would like to devote these two catecheses to him.

And the history of Paul of Tarsus is emblematic in this regard. In the first chapter of the Letter to the Galatians, as in the narration of the Acts of the Apostles, we can see that his zeal for the Gospel appears after his conversion, and takes the place of his previous zeal for Judaism. He was a man who was zealous about the law of Moses for Judaism, and after his conversion, this zeal continued, but to proclaim, to preach Jesus Christ. Paul loved Jesus. Saul – Paul's first name – was already zealous, but Christ converts his zeal: from the Law the Gospel. His zeal first wanted to destroy the Church, whereas after it builds it up. We might ask ourselves: what happened, that passed from destruction to construction? What changed in Paul? In what way was his zeal, his striving for the glory of God, transformed? What happened there?

Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that passion, from the moral point of view, is neither good nor evil: its virtuous use makes it morally good, sin makes it bad.^[1] In Paul's case, what changed him is not a simple idea or a conviction: it was the encounter, this word, it was the encounter with the risen Lord – do not forget this, it is the encounter with the Lord that changes a life – it was the encounter with the risen Lord that transformed his entire being. Paul's humanity, his passion for God and his glory was not annihilated, but transformed, "converted" by the Holy Spirit. The only one who can change our hearts, change, is the Holy Spirit. And it was so for every aspect of his life. Just as it happens in the Eucharist: the bread and wine do not disappear, but become the Body and Blood of Christ. Paul's zeal remains, but it becomes the zeal of Christ. It changes direction but the zeal is the same. The Lord is served with our humanity, with our prerogatives and our characteristics, but what changes everything is not an idea, but rather the very life itself, as Paul himself says: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" – it changes you from within, the encounter with Jesus Christ changes you from within, it makes you another person – "the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). If one is in Christ, he or she is a new creation, this is the meaning of being a new creation. Becoming Christian is not a masquerade, that changes your face, no! If you are Christian,

your heart is changed, but if you are a Christian in appearance, this will not do: masquerading Christians, no, they will not do. The true change is of the heart. And this happened to Paul.

The passion for the Gospel is not a matter of comprehension or studies – you can study all the theology you want, you can study the Bible and all that, and become atheist or worldly, it is not a question of studies; in history there have been many atheist theologians, no! Study is useful but it does not generate the new life of grace; rather, to convert means going through that same experience of "fall and resurrection" that Saul/Paul lived and which is at the origin of the transfiguration of his apostolic zeal. Indeed, as Saint Ignatius says: "For it is not knowing much, but realizing and relishing things interiorly, that contents and satisfies".^[2] Every one of us, think. "I am a religious" – "Fine" – "I pray" – "Yes" – "I try to obey the commandments" – "Yes" – "But where is Jesus in your life?" – "Ah, no, I do the things the Church commands". But Jesus, where is he? Have you encountered Jesus, have you spoken with Jesus? If you pick up the Gospel or talk with Jesus, do you remember who Jesus is? And this is something that we very often lack; a Christianity, I would say, not without Jesus, but with an abstract Jesus... No! How Jesus entered your life, how he entered the life of Paul, and when Jesus enters, everything changes. Many times, we have heard comments on people: "But look at him, he was a wretch and now he is a good man, she is a good woman... who changed them? Jesus, they found Jesus. Has your Christian life changed? "No, more or less, yes...". If Jesus did not enter your life, it did not change. You can be Christian only from the outside. No, Jesus must enter and this changes you, and this happened to Paul. It is finding Jesus, and this is why Paul said that Christ's love drives us, it is what takes you forward. The same thing happened, this change, to all the saints, who went forward when they found Jesus.

We can reflect further on the change that takes place in Paul, who from a persecutor became an apostle of Christ. We note that there is a sort of paradox in him: indeed, as long as he feels he is righteous before God, he feels authorized to persecute, to arrest, even to kill, as in the case of Stephen; but when, enlightened by the Risen Lord, he discovers he was a "blasphemer and persecutor" (cf. 1 Tim 1:13) – this is what he says of himself, "I formerly blasphemed and persecuted" – then he starts to be truly capable of loving. And this is the way. If one of us says, "Ah, thank you Lord, because I am a good person, I do good things, I do not commit major sins...", this is not a good path, this is the path of self-sufficiency, it is a path that does not justify you, it makes you turn up your nose... It is an elegant Catholic, but an elegant Catholic is not a holy Catholic, he is elegant. The true Catholic, the true Christian is one who receives Jesus within, which changes your heart. This is the question I ask you all today: what does Jesus mean for me? Did I let him enter my heart, or do I keep him within reach but so that he does not really enter within? Have I let myself be changed by him? Or is Jesus just an idea, a theology that goes ahead... And this is zeal, when one finds Jesus and feels the fire, like Paul, and must preach Jesus, must talk about Jesus, must help people, must do good things. When one finds the idea of Jesus, he or she remains an ideologue of Christianity, and this does not justify, only Jesus justifies us. May the Lord help us find Jesus, encounter Jesus, and may this Jesus change our life from within and help us to help others. Thank you.

Second Sunday of Easter

Entrance Antiphon

Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk, that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.

First Reading

Acts 2:42-47

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

Responsorial Psalm

(R) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting .

1. Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.' Let the sons of Aaron say: 'His love has no end.' Let those who fear the Lord say: 'His love has no end.' (R.)
2. I was thrust, thrust down and falling but the Lord was my helper. The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour. There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the just. (R.)
3. The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes. This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad. (R.)

Second Reading

1 Pet 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!

Alleluia!



Gospel

Jn 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me,
so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,
they are forgiven;
for those whose sins you retain,
they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

Communion Antiphon

Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.

Next Sunday: Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14, 22-33; 1 Pet 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

BY BRENDAN BYRNE SJ

It is understandable that the Church should celebrate the octave of Easter by reading each year the episode in the Fourth Gospel where the risen Lord appears to Thomas 'eight days later' (20:19-31).

This is preceded, appropriately enough, by a **First Reading** from the Acts of the Apostles (2:42-47) describing the life of the disciples in the very early days of the Church. The summary gives a rather idealised view of early Church life, one not destined to continue in all its details. What it chiefly communicates is the sense that the power of the Spirit, so evident in the ministry of Jesus and later at Pentecost, continues in the subsequent life of the church.

One sign of the Spirit's presence is the continuing increase in numbers of converts, drawn by the sheer attractiveness of the communal life of believers and the spirit of joy and thanksgiving palpable among them. At one level they continue to be devout Jews, frequenting the Temple daily. But other practices reflect a new direction: daily instruction from the Apostles and meals shared in common, the climax of each being the eucharistic commemoration of Jesus ('the breaking of the bread').

The sharing of material goods denoted by 'having all things in common' was destined to last in Christianity only in the monastic tradition. But beyond the material sense, we should be aware of an axiom pervasive in Greco-Roman society that 'friends have all things in common'. What is being indicated, then, is that the early disciples were a community of friends. They shared friendship with the Lord Jesus and because of that they were friends with each other. This is the essential meaning of the Greek word *koinōnia* – a difficult word to translate, though 'communion' is preferable to 'fellowship'. *Koinōnia* denotes the bond created between individuals on the basis of a common participation in some other thing (here the friendship of Jesus). This rich idea remains, of course, central to the Church's sense of its own identity.

The attractive **Second Reading** from the beginning of the First Letter of Peter (1:3-9) complements much of this, especially in its sense of a hope held in common. The beautiful expression with reference to Jesus towards the end – 'You did not see him, yet you loved him' – aptly prepares the way for the 'blessing' Jesus will pronounce at the close of today's Gospel on those who 'have not seen, yet believe' (see below).

Gospel (John 20:19-31): Thomas is one of the most clearly defined characters in the Fourth Gospel. Born loser, realist, pessimist, he has missed out on the Easter night

appearance of Jesus. He won't believe in the resurrection simply on the other disciples' claim 'we have seen the Lord'. He lays down his explicit, highly 'physical' conditions.

With the divine 'courtesy' that seems to be a feature of the risen Lord in all the appearance stories of the gospels, Jesus is prepared, eight days later, to meet Thomas' conditions exactly. Before the risen Lord in person, however, Thomas abandons them and makes the most exalted act of faith contained in the gospel: 'My Lord and my God!'. The confession takes us back to the Prologue: '... the Word was with God and the Word was God' (1:1); 'No one has ever seen God; it is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known' (1:18). At this climactic moment of the gospel it is Thomas, the late-comer, the obtuse one, the doubter, who proclaims the full identity of Jesus.

But that is not the end. Jesus adds a comment that brings us into the picture too. Thomas has believed because, like Mary Magdalene (20:16) and the other disciples present in the room, he has seen the risen Jesus. Others – succeeding generations of believers – will not see Jesus. Unlike Thomas, they have to believe simply on the report handed down in the Church's preaching: 'We have seen the Lord'. On them – on us, that is – Jesus pronounces a blessing: 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe'. Why 'blessed'? Because from them/from us a faith greater than that of Thomas and the others will be required: the greater the faith the more scope for the power of God.

So the first 'edition' of John's Gospel (chapters 1-20) ends with this solemn assurance that believers of all subsequent generations are in no way at a disadvantage compared to the original disciples who saw and heard and touched the Lord. The written gospel imparts to us all the knowledge necessary for a life-giving encounter with the risen Lord.

From LiturgyHelp



Second Sunday of Easter

“When the disciples said: ‘We have seen the Lord’, Thomas answered: ‘Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands...I refuse to believe.’...There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. They are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing this, you may have life through his name.” John 20, 19-31



I have long believed that Thomas has been an undeserved target of commentators intent on presenting him as a well-intentioned disciple of Jesus but one whose faith didn't measure up. But there is something about Thomas' directness and matter-of-fact honesty that I find appealing. Moreover, his refusal to believe the testimony of Mary Magdalen and his brother disciples that they had had encounters with the risen Christ is a reminder to me that nobody comes to faith merely by being instructed by somebody else. When Mary Magdalen, under instructions from the risen Jesus, went to the disciples who had hidden behind locked doors, and announced: "I have seen the Lord!", they remained locked away in fear of the Jews. Mary's experience of the risen Jesus was not contagious. It could not transfer to the disciples simply through the telling. In similar fashion, the elation of the other disciples as a result of Jesus appearing to them and breathing the Holy Spirit on them, was not transferable to Thomas. Put simply, Thomas had to experience a personal encounter with the risen Jesus. Mary couldn't experience the resurrected Jesus for the frightened disciples and they could not experience the resurrected Jesus for Thomas. The paradox lies in the fact that that it is really faith that kept Thomas longing for a personal encounter with the resurrected Jesus, not doubt.

But there is something else that is worthy of our close attention in this part of today's gospel-reading. For the very first time in my reading of today's gospel (and I can recall reading it several times every Easter over the last 63 years) I found myself asking: "Why on earth did ten of the disciples remain locked in fear behind closed doors for another week after the risen Jesus had visited them and breathed the Holy Spirit on them?" I can accept that, in the prevailing culture, the testimony of women was regarded as unreliable. So, Mary Magdalen's report might have been easily dismissed. But they had experienced their own encounter with the resurrected Jesus and were still tightly gripped by fear. I can only conclude that they were not convinced that even the resurrected Jesus would be able to come to their help if the Jews who had murdered Jesus put their minds to murdering them too. And then the penny dropped for me, too. I had to admit that there are times when I, too, don't act as though I really believe that the resurrected Jesus and the God he worshipped can and will help me in my struggles, disappointments, griefs and failures.

That realisation fronts me with the questions: What do I really mean when I say I place my faith in God? What do I know of the God in whom I say I believe? Do I treat God like a predictable slot machine that I can control?

As I stayed with those questions, I recalled something from the *Letter to the Hebrews* which stopped me in my tracks: "It is impossible to please God apart from faith. And why? Because anyone who wants to approach God must believe that God exists and cares enough to respond to those who seek him (sic)." (*Hebrews 11: 6*) If I am not careful, I can delude myself into accepting that regular participation in religious practices helps me to manage God, to settle into being comfortable with God., to thinking that I know God. By going that route, I can forget that God is totally free, beyond the grasp of human knowledge. A logical consequence of that kind of thinking can lead one into fundamentalism or literal translation of Scripture.

A corollary of this is that rigid, systematic practice of religion risks breeding a sense of certainty in people who come to see themselves as believers in God. As a result, they start to act as though they think they know what is in the mind of God and how God will deal with those who are unfaithful.

In the wake of a 9.1 magnitude earthquake in the Indian Ocean in 2004, a disastrous tsunami with 9 metre high waves wreaked havoc in the eastern coastlines of India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The death toll was estimated to be in excess of 225,000. This prompted some religious leaders to state categorically that this was God's way of punishing humanity for its immorality. In more recent times, a religious member of the Israel Knesset (parliament) gratuitously proclaimed that an earthquake that shook Jerusalem was a punishment from God for the Israeli attorney general's having given gay and lesbian couples the right to adopt children. With equal certainty, people volunteering to be suicide bombers in different countries throughout the Middle East state that what they are planning to do is in accord with the "will of God".

On the other side of the ledger, Abraham Lincoln pointed out to the people of America that those from the North and South who were engaged in the Civil War both "read the same Bible and pray to the same God and each invokes God's aid against the other...The prayers of both could not be answered."

Can any of us seriously state that we believe in a God whose will and motives are crystal clear? The language of faith and religion is rich in symbols. In an article written by the scholarly Rabbi Daniel Polish and published in the Catholic journal *America* in February 2009, there is the sobering statement: "Faith, if it takes its symbols literally" becomes idolatrous." ("A Little Unbelief...is not always a bad thing, Daniel F. Polish, *America*, February 02, 2009) The Rabbi went on to quote another Jewish philosopher and scholar, Martin Buber (1878-1965) who wrote: "People draw caricatures and write 'God' underneath."

Back now to the Thomas of today's gospel. This was a disciple of Jesus who dared to speak openly and honestly rather than quietly pretend that he understood things that bewildered him. This was the Thomas who struggled to understand some of the poetic language Jesus used in his speech of farewell to his disciples before he went to his death. Jesus, attempting to assure his disciples, had said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places;...I am indeed going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me... You know the way that leads to where I go." This was just too much for Thomas, who interrupted Jesus: "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (John 14: 1-5) A little earlier, when Jesus had announced his plans to return to Bethany where an attempt had been made to kill him, Thomas effectively had said to the other disciples: "The boss has a death-wish. He's out of his mind. He's going back there to be killed. So, we had better humour him, and go with him to our deaths, too." (cf John 11: 16)

Let's not overlook the fact, that Thomas had ventured out of the locked room. If not, he would have been there when the resurrected Jesus appeared first to the disciples. Fear had not gripped him as it had his companions. But he did want proof for himself, and, it is clear that he did want Jesus. So, when Jesus came a second time and invited Thomas to inspect the wounds that were proof of his love, Thomas saw immediately that the conditions he had laid down were non-sensical. The presence of the resurrected Jesus led him to make a profession of faith that had been made by no other follower of Jesus. No one else had actually acknowledged that Jesus was truly divine, that Jesus was God. Thomas' words: "My Lord and my God" constitute the supreme expression of faith, the climax of John's entire Gospel. Can my faith come even close to his?

Julian McDonald cfc.AO



CHILDREN'S LITURGY IS BACK!

Hello Parishioners of St Michael's,

My name is Karina. Louise and Julie have passed on the coordination of Children's Liturgy to me after their years of faithful service. I am very much looking forward to coordinating Children's Liturgy as I have very fond memories of attending as a child at St Michael's.

I am excited to announce that we will be recommencing Children's Liturgy on Sunday 30th April. There is a wonderful team of volunteers who are looking forward to breaking open 'The Word' with the children of the Parish each Sunday at 10.00am Mass. We can't wait to see all school aged children at Children's Liturgy after the school holidays.

If you would like to volunteer to help with running the weekly Sunday sessions, we would love to have you on board! Please contact the Parish Office for further information.

MISSION: ONE HEART, MANY VOICES

CONFERENCE: WED 3 - FRI 5 MAY



Catholic Mission and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) invite you to save the date for the sixth biennial national Mission Conference. Three days of professional and personal development focused on mission. Date: Wednesday 3 May to Friday 5 May 2023. Venue: SMC Conference & Function Centre, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney.

For more information, visit www.mohmv.com.au.

MET FAITHLIFE SCRIPTURE COURSE: STARTING TUESDAY 2 MAY

Want to learn more about different ways to pray? Sign up for the FaithLIFE 3-night short course on "Prayer" with Br Barry Donaghue, brought to you by the Mission Enhancement Team (MET). 6:30PM to 8:30PM on three Tuesday: 2 + 9 + 16 May. Downstairs at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1-5 Marion Street, Blacktown. RSVP via <https://pfparra.org.au/faithlife/>



- **Policy Coordinator** – Diocese of Parramatta
- **Communications and Digital Manager** – Diocese of Parramatta
- **Communications Assistant** – Diocese of Parramatta

More details at: parracatholic.org/employment

Toongabbie Parish is hiring! Parish Secretary and Bookkeeper

St Anthony of Padua Parish, Toongabbie, is looking for a Parish Secretary and Bookkeeper. This is a permanent part-time position with 30 hours per week worked over five days. Please forward applications and resumes to the Parish secretary at secretary@stanthonyschurch.org.au by 18 April 2023. If you would like more information regarding this position, please contact the office on (02) 9631 3316.

Faith in Marriage Seminar : Friday 19 May
The annual Diocesan Faith in Marriage Seminar returns in 2023 with Chris Padgett, American Speaker, Musician, Author and Professor of Theology. This free event will be held on Friday 19 May at 7:30pm at St Paul the Apostle Church, 40 Buckleys Road, Winston Hills. Please register your attendance at marriage@parracatholic.org

ST BERNADETTE'S LALOR PARK WEDNESDAY EVENING DEVOTIONS

St Bernadette's Parish, Lalor Park, is hosting weekly devotions to Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette every Wednesday evening at 6.30pm with Adoration and Rosary and special prayers, followed by Mass at 7.30pm. All are welcome. For more information, contact the parish office on (02) 9672 4037 or admin@stbernadetteslalorpark.org.au

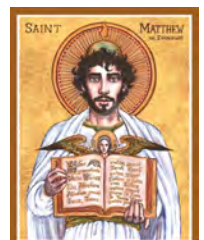


'ANOINTED' MGL SISTERS PENTECOST INTENSIVE RETREAT: 24-28 MAY

Deepen in your anointing as a Christian called to intentional relationship with the Trinity, radical discipleship, generously sharing the charismatic gifts and a life of mission and service through inputs, discussion and practical workshops. Join us for 5 days live-in at Carmel House, Varroville. More info & register: www.trybooking.com/CFBRF

CCD ST MATTHEW'S GOSPEL SERIES: STARTING 28 APRIL

CCD is hosting Dr Laurie Woods presenting A Study of St Matthew's Gospel - April 28; May 5, 12, 19 & 26. From 10 am to 2pm at Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. To book please email Maree Collis ccd.training@parracatholic.org





PARISH OF BAULKHAM HILLS

2023 Sacramental Programme Details for The Sacraments of Initiation and the Sacrament of Reconciliation for Children of Catechetical Age who have been baptised.

St Michael's Church ~ 1 Chapel Lane, Baulkham Hills
Our Lady of Lourdes Church ~ 1 Canyon Road, Baulkham Hills

Term 3 Sacrament of Reconciliation ~ children must be 7.5 years before the celebration
Online Registration : Friday 16 to Friday 30 June
Parents' Information Evening : Monday 17 or Tuesday 18 July
Celebration : Monday 21 to Friday 25 August (venue, dates & times to be advised)

Term 4 Sacrament of Eucharist ~ children must be 8.5 years before the celebration
Online Registration : Friday 1 to Friday 15 September
Parents' Information Evening : Monday 18 or Tuesday 19 September
Celebration at St Michael's :
Friday 10 November / 17 November ~ 7.30pm,
Saturday 11 November / 18 November ~ 2.30pm
Sunday 12 November / 19 November ~ 12noon and 2.30pm
Celebration at Our Lady of Lourdes :
Friday 24 November ~ 7.30pm
Saturday 25 November ~ 2.30pm
Sunday 26 November ~ 9.30am





Parish of Baulkham Hills



PARISH STAFF

Parish Priest Father Wim Hoekstra
Assistant Priest Father Jessie Balorio
 Father Chadi Ibrahim SDB
Assistant Deacons Deacon Roque Dias
Youth Ministry Kimberley Almeida

St Michael's Parish Centre (02) 9639 0598
Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm
Office Administrator Monica O'Callaghan
Assistant Secretary Betty Cheung

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Centre (02) 9639 8385
Mon/Tues 1.30pm - 4.30pm; Wed-Fri 9.30am - 4.30pm
Secretary Louise Ryall

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

1 Chapel Lane, Baulkham Hills, NSW 2153
 PO Box 702, Baulkham Hills 1755
 Email: admin@parishofbaulkhamhills.org.au
 Homepage: www.parishofbaulkhamhills.org.au

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

1 Canyon Rd, Baulkham Hills, NSW 2153
 Email: lol@parishofbaulkhamhills.org.au
 Homepage: www.parishofbaulkhamhills.org.au

CURRENT LITURGY SCHEDULE

ST MICHAEL'S WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 5.30pm
Sunday: 8.00am, 10.00am and 6.00pm
Mon - Fri: 9.15am **Sat:** 9.00am
ROSARY: Mon - Fri 8.50am, Sat 8.45am

ADORATION OF BLESSED EUCHARIST

Tuesday 9.45am - 10.45am

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 9.30am - 10.30am, 4.45 - 5.15pm

OUR LADY OF LOURDES WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 6.00pm
Sunday: 9.30am, 11.30am (Korean)
Wed - Fri: 9.30am

ADORATION OF BLESSED EUCHARIST

Friday 8.50am prior to 9.30am Mass

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 5.00 - 5.30pm

BAPTISMS and MARRIAGES (by appointment only)

Please contact the appropriate Parish Office

KOREAN CHAPLAINCY

1 Canyon Road, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153
Chaplain Fr. Pio Yong Ho Jang
Secretary Rita Ryou

Mass Times	LECTORS THIS WEEK 16 APRIL 2023	LECTORS NEXT WEEK 23 APRIL 2023
Saturday 5.30 pm	E. Riches, P. Sladen, C. Vella	N. Donnelly, L. Gonsalves, C. Ryan
Sunday 8.00 am	A. Mendes, N. D'Lima, J. Kerr	M. McLoughlin, V. Diago, A. Sullivan
Sunday 10.00 am	C. Burton, A. Mantaring, S. Mantaring	S. Anderson, L. Tedesco, B. Fabri, M. Rutkin
Sunday 6.00 pm	N. Redden, G. Tamayo, R. Borg	A. Goonan, A. Hay, I. Lazer
Mass Times	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS 16 APRIL 2023	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS 23 APRIL 2023
Saturday 5.30 pm	K. McElduff, A. Mascari, L. Domanillo, R. Gosper	G. Rodrigues, D. Ridrigues, L. Karam, E. Riches
Sunday 8.00 am	C. Palmer-Burton, M. Palmer-Burton, M. Cameron, B. Smith	C. Palmer-Burton, M. Palmer-Burton, S. Espiritu, C. Harding
Sunday 10.00 am	D. Warren, M. Ignacz, S. Malinis, C. Vella	J. Banayos, D. Warren, C. Malinis
Sunday 6.00 pm	N. Redden, A. Hay, S. Stagnitta	P. Finnerty, E. Lee, R. Borg
ROSTERS:	WEEK BEGINNING 16.04.23	WEEK BEGINNING 23.04.23
COUNTERS	Counters 16.04.23 : Team 5 : P. Waite	Counters 23.04.23 : Team 6 : K. Cope
FLOWER MINISTRY	Saturday 22.04.23 : M. Medvidovic, R. O'Donnell	Saturday 29.04.23 : L. Laksana, M. Medvidovic
PROJECTOR	Weekend 22nd/23rd April 2023 - Masses: Sat 5:30pm: L. Fernandes Sun 8am: D. Grech 10am: M. Almeida 6pm: Y/T Menezes	



In your mercy, please remember those for whom prayers have been asked

Recently Deceased:

Ricardo Vila, victims of the Corona Virus pandemic in NSW and around the world and those who have died in wars and natural disasters

Anniversary:

Giuseppe Pizzolato

Sick:

Baby Carter McGhie, Joey & Noah, Mimi Yeung, Nicholas Tadros, Cathy Vella, Kong Su Chong, Judy Poon, Jamal Kairouz, Bridgette & Gabriella Boldt, Ocean Dumlaio, Debra Price, Mary Burns, Marie Bolton, Cynthia Gomes, Salma Lattouf, Jane Gibson, Ino Parisotto, Gizzella Gherm, Frank Jacobs, Hazel Clasquin, Jacinta Hollins, Joe Maroun, Florgina Henry, Joseph MacDermid, Catherine Hemmings, Baby William Merhi, Richard Miranda, Rev Dr. Richard Waugh QSM