

Daily Prayer This Week:

“Comparisons are odious,” is a well known piece of wisdom. It is helpful to be reminded by Jesus this week that to be his disciples is not about comparing ourselves with each other. It is not about a competition to be greater than another. It is about being servants of each other. It is about being like him, who came to give his life away. As we pray this week, in the background of our daily lives, we can reflect upon all the relationships in our lives and ask for the grace to come to know the needs of each person in my life and for the grace to be servant as Jesus is servant.

The parable of the sower can be a wonderful source of reflection this week. We can do it in a variety of ways, but it might be helpful to just take one kind of soil to reflect on each day. Each day we can begin - as we first get out of bed, in the shower, while dressing, eating, driving, walking from one place to another, shopping - by asking for the grace to understand how parts of me are like this soil.

Seed sown on the hard path, I can ask to know how the Word is simply stolen away from my heart. What is hard hearted in me? What hardens me? How am I not open? What saps my spirits, my hope, my faith?

Seed sown on rocky ground. I can ask for the grace to know how I initially receive the Word readily, even with joy, but my lack of deep roots lead to my losing heart, when troubles come? When do I lose courage? How do I believe the Word but fail to pay the price for living it? How can I develop deeper roots?

Seed sown on rich soil. I can ask for the grace to hear the Word and understand it and to bear much fruit. What will help me, prepare me to be more receptive? What environment, activities, service will help?

Each night, we can give thanks for these reflections that help us examine our daily lives and grow in love, in freedom and in fruitfulness.



St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin



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Parish Website: www.stachurchspringwood.org.au
Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Parish Priest: Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052. **Emergency:** 0418 461 316
Assistant Priest: Fr Michael Gathuku - 4754 1052. **Emergency:** 0474 272 605
Parish Pastoral Council: Email - springwoodppc@gmail.com
Parish Office Hours: Tuesdays to Fridays 8.30 am - 3.30 pm

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5.00 pm, Sunday 8.00 am and 9.45 am
Weekday Mass: Tuesday - Saturday 9.30 am

Rosary & Devotions: Tuesday - Saturday 9.00 am
Adoration, Rosary & Chaplet: No Adoration or Devotions until further notice
Intercession & Adoration: None until further notice

Baptisms: Will restart 2nd & 4th Sundays from July by appointment
Reconciliation: By appointment
Weddings: By appointment - restricted numbers
Funerals: By appointment - restricted numbers

This Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time we are reminded that God has sown good seed, but, of course, an enemy has sown weeds in the same field. We are not supposed to go out there judgmentally pulling up weeds, but to leave judgment to God. The way the Kingdom of God grows is the way tiny seeds grow and the way yeast makes dough rise; it is surprising and slow and almost imperceptible. If we have ears, we ought to hear.

Wednesday we remember St Mary Magdalene. Saturday is the feast of St James the Apostle. Both days have their own special readings.

The first readings this week, except for the feasts, are from the **Book of the Prophet Micah** and end on Saturday with readings from the **Book of the Prophet Jeremiah**, through next week and into the week afterwards.

We’ll continue to read from **Matthew’s Gospel** this week. The Scribes and Pharisee ask Jesus for a sign to prove his credentials. He says that the only sign will be his death and resurrection. Jesus tells his disciples the parable of the sower. When asked why he speaks in parables and Jesus answers that the simple and those with open hearts will hear and understand. Then Jesus explains the parable: the importance of rich soil. Just so, the Son of Man “did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. “On the Feast of St James, we hear how that the apostles miss the message of Jesus and are arguing about who is the greatest. He says, “Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.”

Today’s Readings: Wis 12:13, 16-19; Rom 8:26-27; Mt 13:24-43

Entrance Antiphon: See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 85:5-6, 9-10, 15-16. R. v. 5

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him..

Next Week: 1 Kg 3:5, 7-12; Rom 8:28-30; Mt 13:44-52



Recently Deceased: Luigi Ricci, James Camilleri, Huw Patrick Kemmis, Marie Gray

Sick: Diana Donnelly, Kate Moore, Eva Fitzgerald, Pamela Pereira, Nicholas Zdon, Melissa Baxter, Mary Ellen Schell, Sue Downes, Joan Eastwood, Gwen Daly, Kerry Aitken, Anthony O'Connell, Wal & Anne Knoke, Angela Brown, Lea Dardenne, Matthew Christie, Nathan Duffy, Francisco Robles, Teresita Robles, Susie Ziino, Patricia Duffy, Sarah Walke, Jackie Davies, Kimberly Cusack, Carole & Brian Proops, Margaret Healy, Colleen Lusty, Lorna Lyons, Christopher Coombs, Lucinda Goodwin, Angela Coombs, Leila Baker, Mary Coombs, Slawcia Pisarska, Luca Hurley (Child), Joan Lohrey, Sarah & Thomas McGoram, Frances Hinder, Shirley Anderson, Peter Doherty, Val Hardy, Carmel Chetcuti, Liz Miles, Emile Amine, Taunu Gaitau, Janice Glassington, Helen Meville, Susan Solomon, Thomas Glavas, and all Private Intentions.

Due to the strict privacy laws, names of the deceased and sick can only be included in the Bulletin with the permission of the immediate family. Thank you.

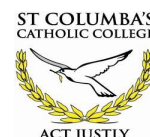


Schools in our Parish



St Thomas Aquinas Primary School

Principal - Ms Marina Hardy 4723 3800



Principal - Mr Paul Ryan 4754 1022

Blue Mountains Deanery News

1. Some clergy changes are happening in the Blue Mountains. Frs. Carlos and Omar have moved from Katoomba to Rouse Hill parish. Fr. John McSweeney has been appointed PP of the Upper Blue Mountains parish from September 12. Until then Fr. Bob Anderson will be parish administrator.

With the retirement of Fr. Bob Sheridan, Fr. Jolly Chacko, PP of Glenbrook, has been appointed moderator of Blackheath parish for the rest of this year.

We thank each of them for their ministry and wish them well as they change postcodes.

2. Many thanks for generous donations of non-perishable food and toiletries which were delivered to the Jesuit Refugees Service HQ at Westmead on Wednesday. This is an ongoing commitment by the Mountains parishes and we will be reminded when the next trailer-load of goodies is to be forwarded.
3. COVID-19 has obviously affected many planned activities and programs. The Plenary gatherings have been effectively pushed back 12 months with the Adelaide gathering October 3-10, 2021 and Sydney July 4-9, 2022. Plenary President, Archbishop Tim Costelloe says 'Prayer, dialogue and discernment have been foundational pillars of the Plenary Council journey and will continue to be. I encourage everyone to read the discernment papers (*available @ plenarycouncil.org.au and click on thematic papers*) and to take some time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to continue to guide our path toward the assemblies and beyond.'

Vic and Kim (Parish Deanery Council reps)

Confirmation will take place on Tuesday, 8th September at 7.00 pm

The first **compulsory** Parent Meeting is on Tuesday, 28th July at 7.00 pm AND the second **compulsory** meeting on Tuesday, 4th August at 7.00 pm, both in the Church.

Thought for the Week:

Finding Our Way Back Home Getting Un-Stuck in our Prayer Life

There are times in our lives when we simply need to start something with a fresh outlook. Periodically, we need to begin again – a routine, a resolution or a relationship might need a new view. Our relationship with God is one of those things that we all need to refresh from time to time.

We often make our prayer lives quite complicated, but in many ways, our relationship with God is very much like a relationship with the people we love in our lives. Whether it is a spouse, a friend or a favorite sibling, there are times when we seem out of touch, not sure what the other is thinking or feeling. How do we adjust this? We get in touch with our loved one, making plans for a nice dinner together, a cup of coffee or a phone call.

How are you? What is going on in your life? Let me tell you what I am wrestling with. Let me share what makes my life joyful, sad, confused or angry.

The very instincts we rely on to get back in touch with our loved ones are the same ones that can reconnect us with our loving God. It starts with a little time. Our lives are hectic, rushed and busy, and too often we work hard to keep them that way. In our busy-ness, we can sometimes pretend that we are not feeling lost or empty. The first step to finding our way home to God begins with a little time.

Our prayer lives can seem complicated, but they don't need to be. Too often, we arm our prayer lives with books, theories and beautiful prayers we have known since childhood. These are all good things, but sometimes these good things may become routine and can move us into thoughts in our heads rather than feelings in our hearts. Prayer is a conversation from my heart to God's and our God is waiting with delight to talk with us and to hear us share our lives.

We might begin with just five minutes a day, choosing our own best time of day. If I am a morning person, I make a commitment to rise five minutes earlier each morning to talk with God. If I am better at night, I resolve to take the last five minutes of my day for prayer.

Where do I start? A good way to re-energize our life with God is to simply start with a quiet place, an empty lap and open hands. It also helps if we remember the wonderful news that our God absolutely delights in us and is thrilled that we are taking the time to get back in touch.

We can use our own words to begin to speak to God in our hearts. "I haven't been in touch for a while but I want to. Help me start again." We can let God know what is deepest in our hearts.

I am so excited about this upcoming pregnancy. I am in such grief about my father's death. I am angry because my sister's cancer returned, and I think I am angry at you. We can tell God exactly what has been locked in the silence of our hearts.

Why do we have trouble doing that sometimes? Because we don't always trust God's love for us. We can't seem to feel that we deserve to be loved in the unending way God loves us. We don't always trust or believe the depth of that love, especially a love that deep for me, personally. We look at God's love and compare it to our own limited love and can't seem to believe that God could love us. We know we are sinners and deep down, we don't believe we are worthy of God's love. The Good News of Jesus is that it doesn't matter whether we deserve it or not. We have that love already. We speak to God as we would to a friend.

After we have spent a few minutes sharing our lives with God, we take a little time to sit in silence and listen. We can get antsy about sitting in silence, but it is in that profound quiet that God speaks to us. Wordlessly and lovingly, God begins to heal our grief or sadness and to rejoice with us in our happiness. Most of all, God wants us to feel deeply his love for each one of us individually.

If we have trouble hearing God speak, we can try to read from Isaiah 43 and simply say in our hearts what God has been telling us: "I have called you by name, ____." We use our own name as we whisper aloud God's words of love.

Do not fear, _____. I have called you by name. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned. If your life takes you through raging waters, you will not be swept away. I am with you. I have called you by name, ____.

Simply saying those words from Isaiah 43 slowly and with feeling, is a wonderful beginning.

I thank God for the few minutes we spent together and sit gratefully, committed to meeting up with God again tomorrow.

Renewing our prayer lives is not a project to be crossed off the To Do list. It is a meeting with a friend who cares for me, as if over a cup of coffee.

Our God loves us and calls to us, inviting us to draw closer.

Taken from Creighton's Online Ministries Web site: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>.

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