

Celebrating the Easter Season Fifth Week of Easter

The wonderful story of the early church continues this week in Acts of the Apostles. We read of Paul and Barnabas preaching the good news to Gentiles. A major shift occurs after much discussion among the apostles, and they pray for guidance: should Gentiles become Jews before becoming Christians? Peter declared that Jews and Gentiles are both "saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus."

The weekday gospels continue with John's nuanced words reminding us again not to be troubled or afraid, but to remain in the love of Jesus. It is that message that we pray with this week as we continue our Easter celebration, filled with the joy of hearing Jesus tell us, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you."

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:

Please keep our *First Holy Communion Children* in your prayers as they embark on their Holy Communion Sacramental journey. We are praying for each of you, we pray that Jesus fills your heart with His love and that it will overflow to those around you.

MAY

Sunday, 15th May: National Families Week

Sunday, 22nd May: World Communications Day (Holy See)

Wednesday, 25th May: The Feast of St Madeleine Sophie Barat

Friday, 27th May: Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week

Saturday, 28th May, Sunday, 29th May: Bishop's Good Shepherd Appeal 2022

Sunday, 29th May: The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

Tuesday, 31st May: The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

May, the Month of Mary

Many things can be said about Catholics, but it can never be said that we don't honour our Mother! In addition to the myriad feast days honouring Our Lady in her many titles and virtues, the entire month of May is especially given to her praise.

In the words of Pope Paul VI, May is "a month which the piety of the faithful has long dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God."

So, how can you honour the Blessed Virgin Mary in a special way this month, and allow her to conquer your own heart? Here are nine ideas

1. Flower Your Mary Statue
2. Pray a Novena to Our Lady
3. Spread Devotion to the Rosary
4. Learn About a New Marian Devotion
5. Share the Miraculous Medal
6. Memorise a Marian Prayer or Hymn
7. Get Invested in the Scapular
8. Read a Book About Mary
9. Pray the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary



<https://www.goodcatholic.com/nine-ways-to-celebrate-the-month-of-mary/>



"The family that prays together, stays together, and if they stay together they will love one another as God has loved each one of them. And works of love are always works of peace." - Mother Theresa

St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin

168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777
PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777
Parish Office: 02 4754 1052



Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm
Parish Email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stchurchspringwood.org.au
Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Parish Priest: Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0418 461 316
Assistant Priest: Fr Shinto Francis - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0415 077 969

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

Rosary Devotion: Tuesday - Saturday 9.00 am
Adoration, Rosary & Chaplet: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, 7.30 - 8.30 pm
Intercession & Adoration: None until further notice

Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 10.30am and by appointment

Reconciliation: By request

Weddings: By appointment

Funerals: By appointment

A Poem to Sit With

*Jesus said: "My sheep hear my voice;
I know them, and they follow me." (Gospel)*

Structure

that inner
scaffolding
of things
whether
a grain of
sand
or dew bead
or skeleton
of a leaf
houses Spirit
which can teach
as lightning
what a life span
of study could
not absorb.

J. Janda

THE FIRST READING

Acts 14:21-27

*Paul and Barnabas proclaimed the good
news to that city.*

Paul
and Barnabas
roamed through the lands
as they spread the Good News.

Lord,
send us too.
Open your doors.
What we do, where we go,
what we say,
let it be us
proclaiming your love.

Let us
open the doors of faith
for all who want
to come
in.

Anne Osdieck

Today's Readings: Acts 14:21-27; Apocalypse 21:1-5; John 13:31-35

Entrance Antiphon: Oh sing a new song to the Lord, for He has worked wonders; in sight of the nations He has shown His deliverance, Alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 144:8-13. R. cf. v. 1

R. I will praise your name forever, my king and my God.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears the fruit in plenty. Alleluia.



Sick: Nathan Duffy, Baby Leonardo Diaz, Ross Baker, Roshan Rupesinghe, Susie Ziino, James Wallace, Mischa Damaguc and family, Margaret Day, Adam McCully, Christopher Coombs, Kate Moore, Luca Hurley and all Private Intentions.

Anniversary: Margarita Hill

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

Parish and Local Community News

If your loved ones no longer need prayer intentions for being sick, please contact the parish to let us know of their recovery, thank you.

CATHOLIC CARE DROP-IN CENTRE: Springwood is OPEN and looking forward to welcoming everyone again for a cuppa and chat, to register for one of our Wellbeing Groups or to access one of our many services, including: *Counselling – individuals, couples, kids, financial, gambling – free or sliding scale; Free fresh produce and pantry items; Free Digital Tech Support - Thursday afternoons; Community Women's Circle - every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month; Springwood Community Garden-Wednesday, and Saturday, working bees from 9.30am.* Volunteer opportunities are also available for Aged Care visitors, Driver to collect food once a week, and Reception Duties. If you have as little as 3 hours a week to spare and can offer a minimum 6 month commitment, we would love to chat to you about joining our friendly team of volunteers. Please [email springwood@ccss.org.au](mailto:springwood@ccss.org.au) or call 8843 2545 for more information.

POSITIONS VACANT: After more than 4 years service, Vic O'Callaghan and Kim Crawford are finishing their terms as STA reps on the Deanery Pastoral Council. There are 6 parishes in the Blue Mountains deanery with 2 reps from each parish. We have found the experience stimulating and enriching. Working with an enthusiastic team to implement the visions of Bishop Vincent and Pope Francis has certainly broadened our understanding of church. While Covid certainly was frustrating at times we managed to meet on-line and our work was book-ended by consultations for the Plenary Council and the more recent Catholics take Action gathering. These processes provided us with real experiences of hearing the voice of the Spirit in our communities. The latter gathering has been recognised within and beyond the diocese as a scaffold for others to adapt and adopt. In practical terms, the DPC meets each second Saturday 10-12pm, usually at Lawson, or Zoom if required. Over the last 4 years, friendships have been strengthened and the Beatitudes validated as we have tried to be improve communication within the diocese and build God's kingdom in the Mountains. Expressions of interest can be made to Fr Paul or Fr Shinto. Kim (0409676142) or Vic (0412703377) are happy to respond to any questions you may have.

TRIVIA NIGHT: SETSG is having a TRIVIA NIGHT at STA Primary School hall on Saturday, 21st May from 7.30pm. \$20 per head. Numbers will be limited to 100 participants. Call Dennis on 0425209840 to book a table of eight or reserve a ticket. Payments via credit card can be made on the night. Bring your own nibbles and drinks for another fun-filled evening in the best company possible. All funds raised will assist Timor's health and educational needs.

VOLUNTEER KNITTERS: St Thomas Aquinas Primary School would like to put a little call out for volunteer knitters who would be able to mentor some *aspiring junior knitters* every Friday from 1.30-2.15pm. If you are able to assist, please contact the school on 4723 3800 and leave a message for Virginia Fortunat.

SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH PILGRIMAGE: The Sisters of Saint Joseph have prepared an Australian Pilgrimage, "In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop" commencing in Melbourne on the 18th October, journeying through Victoria and South Australia, and ending at Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney on the 29th October 2022. During the pilgrimage we visit many places associated with Mary MacKillop's life and ministry. For further information email: national.pilgrimage@mmp.org.au or phone 8912 4848.

ST THOMAS AQUINAS FELLOWSHIP: All ladies are welcome to join the St Thomas Aquinas Ladies Fellowship for morning tea on Friday, 20th May following the 9.30am Mass at the Parish centre. For further information, please call Colleen Kime on 4754 4335.

FR SHINTO ON LEAVE: We wish Fr Shinto well on his trip back to India to visit his family during the end of May and early June. *Bon voyage and safe travels lovely Fr Shinto.* During his absence, please join us in welcoming the visiting Priests at each of the Masses. Names will be placed on the Church doors closer to each Mass.

READERS FOR MASS: Please help us by joining our [Mass Reading Roster](#). We would like to create a roster where we know in advance who is reading at each Mass. Please speak directly with the Parish office or send an email to springwood@parracatholic.org and let us know which Mass you would like to read at.

ADDITIONAL CARITAS DONATION: Thank you for the additional donation of \$58.75 which was received in a Caritas Box last week. This was banked into the Caritas Account on Tuesday of this week. That brings out total up to \$2516.30. Wow!!

Spirituality of the Readings - A love we can understand

Glory. We will hear about it in Sunday's [Gospel](#). God will be glorified and will glorify Jesus. But most of us admit that we do not understand what it means to "give glory" to God or to Jesus.

Let's look.

The word glory has been defined as "very great praise, honour, or distinction bestowed by common consent."

I was at a concert a few years ago in which the audience gave unrestrained, wild approbation to three performers, all of it deserved. We thundered appreciation and shouted and whistled after every song. The performers were not much past twenty years old, but they had complete musical mastery. Halfway through the concert I noticed that, without intending to, I had been smiling the whole time. When at last they tried to close the concert, the audience threatened to mob them. One of the performers called out, "everyone deserves this experience! We are going to line up the whole audience and each of you gets to come up here and have everybody go crazy over you!"

Maybe so, but would we deserve it? Members of *Nickel Creek* (the group I have been speaking about) had written a song that might show the real meaning of glory. It is called "The Hand Song."^{*} Here is the story.

A young boy breaks off some garden roses for his mother. Trouble is, she has been tending these roses with great care, and he has pulled them to pieces. The thorns dig into his hands as he brings his present to her. She lovingly extracts these thorny reminders of her roses,

and she knew it was love.
It was one she could understand.
He was showing his love
and that's how he hurt his hands.

Sometime later, held close on her lap, the boy listened to stories from the bible. He saw a picture of Jesus and cried out, Momma, he's got some scars just like me.

And he knew it was love.
It was one he could understand.
He was showing his love
and that's how he hurt his hands.

Finally grown up, the young man was called by Uncle Sam. His "number" was drawn, and he threw himself in front of a friend to shield him from gunfire. He gave his life, a deed he had learned from the roses and the cross. "And they knew it was love. It was one they could understand. He was showing his love, and that's how he hurt his hands."

Did the boy/man earn "glory" in the usual sense of the word? He learned what love was and he gave it on the battlefield. It is a small story, with no stadiums of people to give applause.

And yet, isn't love the very essence of human life? Jesus says so in this Sunday's [Gospel](#):

I give you a new commandment:
love one another.
As I have loved you,
so you also should love one another.

This is a love we can understand. Jesus shows it without reserve on the cross. It hurts his hands. It takes his life. The beauty of the pain and death he undertook for others is filled with quiet glory.

Can we love each other in this way? We may hurt our hands. But we will be enclosed in his glory.

^{*} [The Hand Song](#), by Sean Watkins and his friend David Puckett, Copyright © 2000. From the album Nickel Creek. Congratulations to these men, and on the beautiful words and music.

John Foley, SJ
Fr. John Foley, SJ, is a composer and scholar at Saint Louis University, Missouri