

Celebrating the Easter Season Fourth Week of Easter

We celebrate this week of the Easter season by entering more deeply into the stories of the early followers of Jesus. All week in Acts, we will read of an increasing boldness by the disciples, and the beginning of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.

John's gospels continue to draw us into the image of Jesus as our shepherd, loving us with an individual tenderness. Jesus continues to tell us that he and the Father are one. Like his followers, we sometimes simply can't see it.

This is a week to pray with joy for the love God showers on us and for the presence of Jesus' warm caring for us in our everyday lives. We are not perfect. But we are loved by our Risen God - and that is what we celebrate in this season.

MOTHER'S DAY 2022

Our Mother's, grandmothers, and special mother figures - they are ALL the pillars of strength, the centre of our universes, and the heartbeat of our homes. A mother's love is one of the most cherished things in life. Once experienced, you'll never forget it. It's warm, comforting, and welcoming.

This special bond between a mother and child, teaches us right from wrong and how to care and love others in turn. Whether you're a boy or a girl; whether your mum was there always or just sometimes; whether they passed on too soon or lived long enough to watch their grandchildren grow up: every person deserves to know this one-of-a-kind love.

Mother's Day reminds us all just how amazing mothers truly are. This Mother's Day remember to tell your mum how much you love her and how much she means to you.

To all mothers we wish you every blessing this Mother's Day. Thank you for the love you share with your children, for the life lessons you have given and just for being you.

Thank you – Update on our Caritas Collection

CARITAS AUSTRALIA : PROJECT COMPASSION 2022

With your support, Caritas Australia has been able to support vulnerable communities around the world to tackle poverty, food security, education, water & sanitation and disaster risk reduction. This year St Thomas Aquinas Parish was able to send two collections to Caritas. Our first donation was **\$1,912.00 AND** then last week we deposited a further **\$545.55 into Caritas Australia's Bank Account. That is a TOTAL OF \$2,457.55.** A truly magnificent effort.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:

A reminder to all families that the parent meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10th May, 7.00pm at St Thomas Aquinas Church. Please bring along your enrolment form and \$15 per child for Sacramental Program costs. We look forward to welcoming you on that evening.



“Mary means Star of the sea, for as mariners are guided to port by the ocean star, so Christians attain to glory through Mary's maternal intercession.”

- St. Thomas Aquinas

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)*

Memories of Emmaus

cold black earth
breathing its best life
delicate white
Christ prevailing

is/now

after ashes

Wednesday

Because of an
Easter morning

“Didn't you know”
he had asked.

J.Janda

The Gospel

John 10:27-30

No one can take them out of my hand.

Good
Shepherd,
let us hear you
in the beauty of our world,
in your poor, and in one another,
on the rocky and rough roads we travel.

Please pick us up
when our legs can walk no more.
Pull us from the brambles that snarl us:
climate, racism, divisions, Ukrainian suffering.
Carry all our brothers and
sisters to safety.

Good Shepherd,
hold us close,
in your arms.

Speak to our
hearts.

Anne Osdieck

Today's Readings: Acts 13:14, 43-52; Apocalypse 7:9, 14-17; John 10:27-30

Entrance Antiphon: The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, Alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 99:1-3, 5

R. We are His people, the sheep of his flock.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep and mine know me. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for His sheep and willingly died for His flock, Alleluia.



Recently Deceased: Fr Roy Weaver, Catherine Meade

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:email.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.

Spirituality of the Readings - Knowing from the Heart

Shepherds were extremely important to the well-being of a flock. They guided the sheep, made them safe, led them to food and drink. Today, Jesus said sadly that the people looked like "sheep without a shepherd." Let us take this opportunity to reflect on animals and their humans. Look at the endearing way domestic beasts recognise their owners. Dogs collapse into a frenzy of delight when you come home, even if you have been gone only for an hour. Hysterics are the least they can do. Somewhere there may be a cat like this, but most of them have the opposite reaction to the heartsick dogs. "Oh, it's you again."

I know one exception. One of my cousin's cats' models indifference with most people, but when I am in the house this cat makes a quiet bee-line to where I am sitting, making no secret of how it enjoys being petted by me. I am not sure whether to be complimented or not, nor can I explain it. There might be months between visits and still the cat makes its way to the petting machine, with both dignity and craving.

Did Jesus notice such things? He watched life around him carefully, judging from his stories. He certainly watched the relationship between shepherds and their flocks. So, what does he mean by his brief remarks about his sheep this Sunday?

In the Jerusalem of Jesus' day various flocks of sheep would arrive with their respective shepherds, only to be turned into the same sheepfold together. This made for a rather large gang of sheep, and there wasn't any practice of branding or marking to tell which was which. You can see the practical problem right away. Sheep, unlike dogs, do not rejoice themselves into knots when their shepherd shows up. Then how does each shepherd get his own sheep back?

Two ways. One, the shepherd knows all his own sheep by heart. He has a special name for each character in the flock. And second, the sheep themselves know their master's voice unmistakably. When he calls out, they simply get up and come to him. They follow him out through the sheep-gate. No mistake about it.

And that is Jesus' reference in Sunday's short Gospel. "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me," he says. You and I are the sheep he is talking about. He says we "shall never perish," because he holds us in his own hands. In fact, it was the Father who gave us to Jesus, and no one can ever take us out of the Father's hands.

Think about it. Have you ever longed for someone who could make things alright, who could help lift the responsibility from your shoulders? Someone who knows you by name and cares about you?

Maybe you do recognize Jesus' voice when you hear it. It might be in the Gospel at Mass. Or when you receive the bread of everlasting life and the cup of salvation—not as a stranger might, but as a member of the well-fed and greatly cared for flock.

This Sunday, what about trying to notice how your spirit automatically inclines to Jesus? How you settle into his grasp for petting. How your soul seeks him. And finds him.

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

MAY

Sunday, 8th May: World Day of Pray for Vocations (Holy See); Good Shepherd Sunday;
Sunday, 8th May: MOTHER'S DAY
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