

## Celebrating the Easter Season

### Sixth Week of Easter

In this week of Easter, we continue to let the joy of the Easter Season deepen in us. Perhaps we ask bigger questions. Perhaps we let the good news of the gift of new life enter into those places where we struggle. We are listening to the story of the early community's recognition of the presence of the Holy Spirit with gentiles. We hear the rest of Jesus' last words to his disciples at his last supper with them. In the fifteenth chapter of John's Gospel, we read some of the deepest things Jesus says directly to us. We can hear him now, with the faith of the resurrection and gift of the Holy Spirit.

This is a week when we can begin to long for and pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Easter's blessings come alive when we let them deeper into the reality of our everyday lives and when it leads to a deeper desire for the gifts of the Holy Spirit within us and among us.

### 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, 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/>

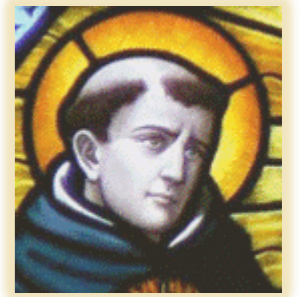


Fr Paul has decided to hold a session for enrolment into the Brown Scapular as there have been a few inquires about it from parishioners. If you would like to be a part of this and to be enrolled, please contact the parish office to let us know.

*"Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness."*

- Pope Francis

## 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](mailto:springwood@parracatholic.org)  
**Parish Website:** [www.stachurchspringwood.org.au](http://www.stachurchspringwood.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

*"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (Gospel)*

Vermillion  
 beneath gold leaf -  
 the masters  
 knew vermilion  
 beneath  
 gold leaf makes  
 all gold glow  
 worn paintings  
 affirm their belief.

J. Janda

### THE FIRST READING

*Acts 15:1-2, 22-29*

*It is the decision of the Holy Spirit and of us not to place on you any burden.*

Come, O Holy Spirit.  
 Lead us to your home, the one within us.  
 Discern for each of us, as you did for each  
 apostle,  
 untold truths.  
 Be the fire that never dies,  
 the wind that lifts us - raising us high,  
 on wings that set us  
 free.

Anne Osdieck

**Today's Readings:** Acts 15:1-2, 22-29; Apocalypse 21:10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29

**Entrance Antiphon:** Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, Alleluia.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 66:2-3, 5-6, 8. R. v. 4

**R. O God, let all the nations praise you!**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them. Alleluia!

**Communion Antiphon:** If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, Alleluia.

*We acknowledge the Darug and Gundugarra people, the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to elders both past and present.*



**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.

*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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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, 21<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:national.pilgrimage@mmp.org.au) or phone 8912 4848.

**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](mailto:springwood@parracatholic.org) and let us know which Mass you would like to read at.

**2022 SAFEGUARDING CHAMPION:** Each Parish Priest has been asked to nominate a Safeguarding Champion for the 2022-2023 year from their Parish. Each Parish Safeguarding Champion will be commissioned by Bishop Vincent during the Safe Parishes Week Luncheon on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June at St Andrew's Hall, Breakfast Road, Marayong. It is for an initial 12-month appointment. Please go to [www.stachurchspringwood.org.au](http://www.stachurchspringwood.org.au) for further information.

**BISHOP VINCENT PRESENTS SR PATRICIA FOX NDS:** Friday May 27, 7-9pm, Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1 -5 Marion Street Blacktown. Ministering to the poor and marginalised in the Philippines for close to 30 years, Sr Pat Fox was arrested at her convent in northeast Manila and accused by the Filipino president of taking part in illegal political activities and of speaking out against the government. Join us for her compelling presentation, a short response from Bishop Vincent Long, Q&A and light canapes and drinks. **LIMITED SEATS** - Bookings essential via email at [met@parracatholic.org](mailto:met@parracatholic.org)

## WHAT IS AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY LIFE

At the heart of our community life is the presence of Jesus who promised to be with us until the end of time. I believe that the heart of our community life is when we come together to celebrate and worship at Mass.

It is in this wonderful prayer that we have the closest contact with our God available to us in this life. It is also the prayer that Jesus invited us to "do this in memory of me." In this community prayer which represents for us what Jesus did at the Last Supper and through his sacrifice on the Cross at Calvary, we have a wonderful opportunity to encounter Jesus, to pray with Jesus, to be taught by Jesus through the Sacred Scriptures, to offer our lives with the offering of Jesus himself, and the opportunity to be totally united to Him and to each other. The Mass is the place we come together as members of God's family at our heavenly Father's invitation, to spend time with him and the place where we grow as a Christian community. It is a family gathering. From the Mass, we are sent out to serve our God and our brothers and sisters, week after week, and to share the wonderful news of God's love with all we meet

We are very fortunate to have other encounters available to us through the Sacraments of the Church. A sacrament is always an encounter with Jesus Christ through the Ministry of the Church. The sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. In the Sacrament of Baptism we are welcomed into the Community of the Church and we become members of God's family receiving special gifts to help us to live as members of God's family. In Confirmation we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit which empower us to take ownership of our faith and to approach in a positive manner, with God's help, whatever we experience in life. Through our relationship with the Holy Spirit and by activating the gifts of the Holy Spirit each day of our lives, we have the necessary to live the Christian life and grow to our full God-given potential. We have already spoken about the importance of the celebration of the Mass where we receive the Body and Blood of Christ in our reception of Holy Communion.

We also have special Sacraments of forgiveness, healing, strengthening and growth. The most common of these is the Sacrament of Penance. Through this sacrament, Christ not only forgives us, he also heals us and he transforms us. As a result, in the sacrament of Penance we have an essential means of opening ourselves to the transforming power of Christ. The Sacrament of Penance is a contact with the merciful Christ, who came not to look after only the just, but to seek and help sinners. It is a form of prayer and not just something mechanical where we go through the motions. It is a means of restoring us to God's friendship and knowing where we stand with him. It is a means to peace of mind. It is a means to make a new start in our faith journey.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick provides an encounter with Christ for people in very special situations. This sacrament is for people who are experiencing a serious illness and for people who are suffering the infirmity of old-age. This is a sacrament of healing and forgiveness. One of the effects of the sacrament is that it strengthens us and gives us the inner peace to endure the suffering that comes with sickness and old age. This sacrament also helps a person to regain mental and physical health if this is God's will for us at this moment in time. This Sacrament always lead to the health of the soul. Another effect of this Sacrament is that it helps a person to prepare for death if that is approaching.

We also have sacramental encounters with Jesus to strengthen us for special vocations of our lives such as Marriage and for those who choose the Priesthood as their mission in life.

Reference: <https://parracatholic.org/our-faith/>

## The Perspective of Justice - A Better World

No celebration of Easter would be complete without a reference to the peace brought to us by the Paschal mystery. Today's liturgy provides us with that reference: 'Peace' is my farewell to you, my peace is my gift to you. Peace is what Jesus gave us in his redemptive acts of dying and rising.

The early Christian communities experienced dissension and controversy. The reading from Acts documents the manner in which the leaders of the church resolved those conflicts and brought peace to the Church.

There is a lesson for us in the elements of their peaceful settlement: the exercise of responsible leadership, respect for all the members of the community, and the decision "not to lay on you any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary."

"O God, let all the nations praise you!" for you have rescued them from death and offered them the gift of peace through your resurrection.

The perfect world, we Christians believe, is beyond the horizon, in an endless eternity where God will be all in all. But a better world is here for human hands and hearts and minds to make.

For the community of faith, the risen Christ is the beginning and end of all things. For all things were created through him and all things will return to the Father through him.

U.S. Bishops, [The Challenge of Peace](#), 1983: 337-39.

*Gerard Darring*  
Gerard Darring is an adjunct instructor of theology at Spring Hill College, Alabama