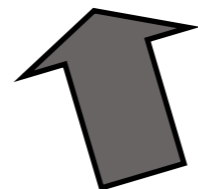


Reading Roster

Date:	18th/19th February 2023		
Mass Time:	VIGIL	8.00AM	9.30AM
Priest:	Fr Paul	Fr Paul	Fr Paul
Acolyte:	Ian Miles	Randall Noney	Richard Merchant
Commentator:	Margaret Smith	Jim Gresser	Domhnall MacCormac
First Reading:	Wilhelmina de Raadt	Cecilia Hunt	Phil Saville
Second Reading:	Colleen Baker	Kim Crawford	Matt Aldous
Music:			Chris Wilson

Date:	25th/26th February 2023		
Mass Time:	VIGIL	8.00AM	9.30AM
Priest:	Fr Shinto	Fr Shinto	Fr Shinto
Acolyte:	Ian Miles	Bernard Ellis	John Belfanti
Commentator:	Colleen Baker	Kim Crawford	Katherine Mahns
First Reading:	Margaret Smith	Jim Gresser	Margaret Hickey
Second Reading:	Lynette Boyd	Jim Gresser	Ingrid Merchant
Music:			Streeters

**Children's Liturgy starts
back Sunday, 19 Feb,
9.30am Mass
Every 3rd Sunday
(Except for Easter Sunday)**

**St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin**

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



Parish Email: 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
Parish Pastoral Council: email - springwoodppc@gmail.com
Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5.00 pm, Sunday 8.00 am and 9.30 am
Weekday Mass: Tuesday - Saturday 9.30 am
Healing Mass: 1st Friday of the month, 9.30am
Rosary & Devotions: Monday-Saturday 9.00am
Adoration, Rosary: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, 7.30 - 8.30 pm
Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 10.30am and by appointment
Reconciliation: Please Contact the Parish Office
Weddings: By appointment
Funerals: Please Contact the Parish Office

REFUGEE FOOD DRIVE - LENTEN GIVING

Are you able to contribute food or household items this Lent?

Drop off at St Thomas Aquinas Church 25th or 26th February 2023

House of Welcome is part of St Francis Social Services and provides services to support families seeking asylum. It receives support from many parishes throughout the Parramatta Diocese. Their Foodbank provides household necessities for asylum seekers with limited or no income. If you can make a donation of any items listed below, it would be greatly appreciated. No contribution is too small!

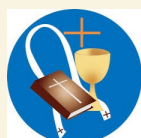


Requested Food Items: Canned Tuna in oil; Cooking oil; Tea & Coffee; Sweet biscuits; Honey/ Jam; Basmati rice; Crushed Tomatoes with ring pull; Cereal; Raw lentils; Salt, pepper & spices; Instant noodles (chicken flavour); Sweet corn kernels; Tinned fruit; Flour; Sugar.

Requested Household Items: Deodorant; Cleaning products; Sanitary pads (not tampons); Body soap, body wash; Toothpaste/toothbrush; Shampoo/Conditioner; Toilet rolls; Dish cloths; Toilet cleaner; Dishwashing liquid; Laundry powder; Nappies (large sizes 5/6)

PLEASE NO SOUP, BAKED BEANS OR TINNED SPAGHETTI

---- **Drop off at any Mass on the weekend of 25th and 26th February 2023** ----

2023 COMBINED First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Sacramental Program

This weekend we welcome our First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion children to each of our weekend Masses.

Please join with our parish community in praying for a beautiful faith-filled journey as they each complete these Sacraments.

*Loving God,
Pour out your blessing upon our beautiful children,
That during this time of Sacramental preparation
they may grow closer to you, and come to know your special love for them.
May this time of preparation be a time of blessing
For our families and our community
And unite us all in your great love.
Amen.*

ASH WEDNESDAY - 22 February

On Wednesday we celebrate our relationship to dirt, yes DIRT! Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return! The name Adam comes to us from the Hebrew adam"man," literally meaning "(the one formed from the) ground". For the ancient Hebrews, the name Adam was not just a really cool way to name the first man; it also served as a definition for all of humanity and a reminder of our humble origins. It is also a reminder that we make up the Body of Christ.

Armed with this knowledge, how do we in the present age remind ourselves of our humble origins and our deep connectedness to the human family? One way we express this solidarity is by marking our bodies with ashes - a reminder that we all share in that humble origin story that marked the first man. Marking our bodies with ashes reminds us, if only for a day, that we are called to embrace our connectedness to the human family, our family, and work together to help ease the pain of those who suffer.

If we are *children of Adam*, I suggest that Lent should be a time of downward mobility - a time to reflect on the humbleness of our own creation and the connectedness that we have with the human family. We humans are so used to thinking about rising above the "mud" of our lives, that we forget about our humble origins and unintentionally "rise above" our sisters and brothers in need. Lent helps us focus our gaze and attune our vision from things "on high" to the muddy realities where the lost and forgotten toil and suffer. Indeed, if our Lenten journey is anything, it is an invitation to remind ourselves of our connectedness to each other through our humble origins as we seek to be transformed as the Body of Christ.

Ash Wednesday VIGIL, Tuesday 21 February at 7.00pm (7.00pm at Lawson)
Ash Wednesday Mass, Wednesday 22 February at 9.30am (5.00pm at Lawson)

Rev. Patrick Rogers, S.J.
Executive Director, The Jesuit Centre

Today's Readings: Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 3:16-23; Matthew 5:38-48

Entrance Antiphon: O Lord, I trust in your merciful love. My heart will rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 102:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13. R. v. 8

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Whoever keeps the word of Christ, grows perfect in the love of God. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: I will recount all your wonders, I will rejoice in you and be glad, and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.



Recently Deceased: Lorna Lyons, Bruce Clark

Sick: Ray Lyons, Lally Sabater, Baby Leonardo Diaz, Susie Ziino, James Wallace, Mischa Damaguc and family, Margaret Day, Adam McCully, Christopher Coombs, Kate Moore, Luca Hurley and all Private Intentions.

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 DIOCESAN NEWS

STA CHILDREN'S LITURGY: Commencing this Sunday 19th February at the 9.30am Mass and ALL primary school children are welcome. The Children's Liturgy Ministry will be held on the **3rd Sunday of the month**. We are looking forward to seeing all you wonderful young people.

STA EARTH CARE TEAM: Several Parishioners have already indicated they will be attending the *STA EARTHCARE Clean Up Australia* event on Sunday 5th March. You simply need to turn up ready to improve the local environment for about one hour. Be sure to wear a hat, enclosed shoes, bring gloves and water bottle. Collection bags will be provided. You will be given a specific area to clear up any non-natural litter. Come along and register your attendance between 9:00am and 10:45am at the STA EARTHCARE gazebo, situated near the carpark.

ONLINE RETREATS FOR LENT:

<https://www.iscglasgow.co.uk/lent23.html>

Each day of Lent we offer: A reading from Scripture, Music to inspire (on the web and App), A short reflection

<https://dSPACE2.creighton.edu/xmlui/handle/10504/92581>

A Lenten Retreat by Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J. (Year A)

<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/LentOnlineRetreat/>

This Lenten Online Retreat is taken from the 34 week Online Retreat on the Online Ministries web site. It is abbreviated to be used during the Lenten Season. It begins the week Lent starts - the Sunday of the week that includes Ash Wednesday. It continues through Easter Week and the Second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy week).

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

The SRE (Special Religious Educators) are incredibly grateful to you, our parishioners!

We think it made the parishioners feel good to be asked to support the SRE's to keep spreading our faith in the public schools, in particular, to the children who often have not heard a lot about our faith, so to be able to tell them is quite special. *To sow the seeds of their faith is priceless.*

Would you believe that we raised \$1843.00? Absolutely amazing.

Be assured that your donations are being wisely spent and only on the work we do for our catholic children in the public schools. So far we have ordered the yearly activity books and new teachers manuals and last year, at one of our meetings, it was agreed that we needed more large books with bible stories, especially for Easter, so now we can go and buy them! We have already started teaching at Winmalee High, Winmalee and Ellison Public Schools.

If you would like to join the team, you are very welcome!

Many thanks again, Wilhelmina de Raadt (current SRE Coordinator), Tel 47513319

Keep the SRE teachers in your prayers for we cannot do this alone.

This Sunday at our 9.30am Mass, Fr Paul will be blessing the SRE Team.

When do I fast?

Catholics, as a group, are obliged to fast and abstain on two days of the year - Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (Catholics aged 18-59). **On these days, fasting means something very specific - no meat.** It is not recommended that anyone with impaired health (i.e. diabetes), pregnant or nursing mothers should fast in any way. In all cases, common sense should prevail. It is also important to note that everyone who fasts should drink enough fluids on a fast day. Sundays are not fast days.

WHAT CAN I DO BEFORE LENT BEGINS?

Anything worth doing is worth preparing for.

Just imagine that this Lent is going to be different from every other Lent we've experienced. Imagine that there will be many graces offered me this year. Let's even imagine that God is going to help transform our lives, with greater freedom, greater joy, deeper desires for love and service. If we want it, we will choose it.



Lent will be this wonderful season of grace for us if we give ourselves to it. And, we will give ourselves to it to the degree we really want it badly. So, in these days before Lent, we need to prepare our hearts. We need to prepare by realising how much we want to grow in freedom, how much we need to lighten our spirits and experience some real joy, and how much some parts of our lives really need changing.

So, preparing our hearts is a process of preparing our desires. This means practicing our sense of anticipation. If I imagine Lent as an "ordeal" or a time I dread in some way, then I've already pre-disposed myself to not get very much out of it. These days before Lent are a time to start anticipating something wonderful that is about to happen.

Our Focus: On what God wants to give us.

Our sense of excitement and anticipation will grow more easily if we begin to imagine what God wants to give us. There is really something coming that we can truly look forward to. If we get too focused on ourselves, and what we are going to do or not do, we could risk missing the gift God wants to give us. We have to keep aware of the fact that grace comes from God. This is about God's great desire to bless us. Then, it is easier for us to imagine that what we really *want* to do is place ourselves in a space to *receive* what God wants to give us.

Taking some time to get ready for Lent will ensure that we aren't going to miss the first week or two of Lent, because we are just getting started. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, but we want to be ready to really take off on that day, rather than just beginning to think about Lent on that day. Part of what makes a vacation or a special anniversary so special is the build-up to it.

Before we get to Ash Wednesday, we should start asking ourselves some questions and we should start with some preparations. "What does God want to give me this year?" This question may require that I slow down a bit and *listen* to my inner spirit. Too often, Ash Wednesday is like every other day, except that I manage to get to church and get ashes on my forehead. Is there anything else I can do on Ash Wednesday? How will fasting and abstaining happen for me, for my family on that special day?

Lent is not something I need to do alone.

The anticipation and the preparation is transformed with the companionship of family and close friends. We shouldn't be deterred by the fear that our spouse or children or friends "won't be into it." Jesus said, "Fear is useless; what's needed is trust." Let's help support others' expectations. Let's help others see that Lent doesn't have to be something I avoid, and certainly can't be reduced to "giving up candy." We can help our loved ones to begin to imagine what they could receive from God in these days.

It doesn't take a lot of time to prepare for the beginning of Lent. **It just takes desire and focus.** God can do so much with that. We can give God more of a space to touch our hearts if we begin to establish some simple patterns. We could wake up each morning, and for something like a half a minute to a minute, stand by the edge of our beds, and just ask the Lord for the grace to let this day be one in which I long for the beginning of Lent. Perhaps we need to ask for specific helps or graces to get ready to begin Lent. Whatever we try to say, our Lord can understand the Spirit trying to speak through our simple words. And all it takes is the time to find and put on our slippers. And each night, in the days ahead, we can practice giving thanks to God before I go to bed. This simple pattern, in the morning and evening can stir our spirits to look forward to and prepare for Lent, as a season of grace.

May God bless us all on this journey ahead.

<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/before-lent.html>