

Date:	16th/17th March 2024		Fifth Sunday of Lent		
Mass Time:	Acolyte	First Reading	Second Reading	Prayer of the Faithful	Music
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ian Miles	Anne Maureen Scarff	Wilhelmina de Raadt	Margaret Smith	No One
8:00 AM	Randall Noney	Cecilia Hunt	Jim Gresser	Kim Crawford	
9:30 AM	John Belfanti	Phil Saville	Margaret Hickey	Matt Aldous	Chris Wilson
Morning Tea:	Passionist Family Group				

Date:	23rd/24th March 2024		Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord		
Mass Time:	Acolyte	First Reading	Second Reading	Readers of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ	Prayer of the Faithful
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ed Junis	Colleen Baker	Felix Kobus	N: Anne Maureen Scarff O & C: Debbie Breytenbach	Katherine Mahns
Music:	Chris Wilson				

8:00 AM	Marek Grus	Loida Derbyshire	Tanya Graham	N: John Belfanti O & C: Kim Crawford	Tom Horsfall
Music:					
9:30 AM	Bernard Ellis	Margaret Hickey	Peta Sparkes	N: Matt Aldous O & C: Katherine Mahns	Steve Bishop
Music:	Streeters				

Date:	28th March 2024		Holy Thursday		
7:00 PM	Acolytes	First Reading	Second Reading	Prayer of the Faithful	
	John Belfanti Richard Merchant Marek Grus	Kim Crawford	Wilhelmina de Raadt	Tom Horsfall	
Music:	Choir / Chris Wilson				

Date:	29th March 2024		Good Friday, Passion of the Lord		
Stations of the Cross	Acolytes	First Reading	Second Reading	Gospel Readers	Music
10:00 AM	Ian Miles				Chris Wilson
Passion of the Lord					
3:00 PM	Randall Noney Ed Junis	Loida Derbyshire	Margaret Hickey	N: Tom Horsfall O: Phil Saville C: Steve Bishop	Andrew Wilson
The Solemn Intercessions:	Debbie Breytenbach				

Date:	30th March 2024		Holy Saturday		
7:00 PM	Acolytes	First Reading	Second Reading	Obligatory Readings	Epistle Reading
	Marek Grus Bernard Ellis	Anne Maureen Scarff	Felix Kobus	a.) Tanya Baldwin b.) Tamsyn Baldwin c.) Wilhelmina de Raadt d.) Katherine Mahns	Colleen Baker
Music:	Choir / Chris Wilson				

Date:	31st March 2024		Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord		
Mass Time:	Acolyte	First Reading	Second Reading	Prayer of the Faithful	Music
8:00 AM	Randall Noney	Kim Crawford	Jim Gresser	Phil Saville	
9:30 AM	Richard Merchant	Katherine Mahns	Peta Sparkes	Steve Bishop	Streeters

N: Narrator
O: Other Single Speaker
C: Crowd or more than one other Speaker
Helper: Debbie Breytenbach

Thank you to all who volunteer to be a part of our Holy Week Liturgical Celebration!

HOLY WEEK LITURGICAL CELEBRATION

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD: 23rd March Saturday Vigil 5:00 pm & 24th March Sunday 8:00 am and 9:30am
THURSDAY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: 28th March 7:00 pm / Altar of Repose: Church will remain open until 12:00 am
FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD: 29th March Friday 10:00 am Stations of the Cross / 3:00 pm Passion of the Lord
HOLY SATURDAY: 30th March Saturday Easter Vigil 7:00 pm
EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD: 31st March 8:00 am and 9:30 am
RECONCILIATION: 26th March Tuesday 7:00 pm—8:00 pm and 29th March Friday 11:30 am—12:30 pm

St Thomas Aquinas Parish

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Parish Email: email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stachurchspringwood.org.au
Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Parish Administrator: Rev Christopher del Rosario (E: christopher.del-rosario@parracatholic.org)
Parish Pastoral Council: Email suggestions to springwoodparishpc@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: Monday - Saturday 9:30 am
Adoration: Monday - Saturday from 8:15 am - 9:15 am
First Friday Adoration: Every first Friday of the month 7:00 pm
Reconciliation: Saturday after 9:30 am Mass and 4:00-5:00 pm before the Vigil Mass
Children's Liturgy: 3rd Sunday of every month, 9:30 am
Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 11:00 am and by appointment
Weddings: By appointment
Funerals: Please Contact the Parish Office

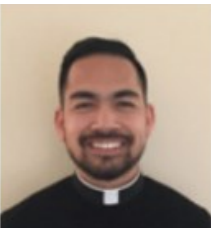


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We respect the Darug people and their elders both past and present, as the traditional custodians of this land on which we celebrate the Eucharist.

Simple Yet Significant

If you're a cradle catholic like me and have done your absolute best not to miss Sunday Mass you're probably familiar with most hymns sung during the liturgy. Christ be our Light, The Lord is my Shepherd, I am the Bread of Life, or more traditional hymns such as Be Thou my Vision are only a few etched into the minds of the faithful. Today's Gospel calls to mind one of those well loved and known hymns - after a few words one will recognise the tune:



'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.'

If you're scratching your head wondering which hymn I'm referring to it's 'Unless a Grain of Wheat' by Bernadette Farrell. This hymn comes directly from our Gospel and is commonly used as a Communion hymn throughout the liturgical year. Its simple yet effective tune allows the congregation to easily join in and reflect on the gift of the Eucharist. However, like all things familiar one can easily lose sight of the significance of Our Lord's words. With only a week remaining until Holy Week what can we learn from our Gospel?

Have you ever wondered why we use bread and wine during Mass? Out of all the offerings one could use during Mass why bread and wine? The obvious answer is Jesus Christ: He used both components during the Last Supper. The bread and wine however are a much more ancient symbol. In the fourteenth chapter of Genesis the high priest Melchizedek, after bringing out bread and wine, blesses Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth - in short, its use goes beyond the Last Supper. This however doesn't answer our question. Bread and wine, as simple as they are, are actually reflections of Jesus Christ and his Passion. Our Gospel for today highlights the sacrificial nature of the grain of wheat - through its altruistic destruction a rich harvest bursts forth. So too the bread and wine are direct products of wheat and grapes. Each gives their lives so the simple yet significant offerings of bread and wine can be presented to God Most High; wheat and grapes undergo a Passion like Our Lord. This understanding gives context for our Gospel. As Christ comes to the end of his earthly ministry, he again points to his Passion and Death as his moment of glory. While the Cross may frighten us, and his sufferings accuse us, it is the 'yield' that gives us peace; 'And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.' The Crucifixion, as harrowing as it is, yields life in abundance; without it we are forever lost to the wiles of Satan.

Dear friends, with Holy Week only a week away may we receive the graces from Our Lord's words. Our Gospel for this Sunday is a reminder of our ever-growing appreciation of Christ's sacrifice; his glory gives rise to our glory. May we never take it for granted. As each day passes, even beyond the Lenten and Easter season may we always give thanks to God for his Passion and Death. Whilst the crucifixion is a reminder of our transgressions, it shows the power of God's love: it destroys sin and opens the way to Eternal Life. Truly it doesn't get better than this.

With every blessing in this Lenten season,

Fr. Chris

Entrance Antiphon Cf Psalm 42:1-2

Give me justice, O God,
and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless.
From the deceitful and cunning rescue me,
for you, O God, are my strength.

First Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

The days are coming when I will make a new covenant with Israel and I will forgive their iniquity.

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who speaks – when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive – it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, ‘Learn to know the Lord!’ No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest – it is the Lord who speaks – since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 50:3-4, 12-15. R. v.12

(R.) Create a clean heart in me, O God.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
2. A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
3. Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me, that I may teach transgressors your ways and sinners may return to you. (R.)

Second Reading Hebrews 5:7-9

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

He learnt to obey and became for all the source of eternal salvation.

During his life on earth, Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

Gospel Acclamation John 12:26

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
If you serve me, follow me, says the Lord;
and where I am, my servant will also be.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel John 12:20-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest.

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, ‘Sir, we should like to see Jesus.’ Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

‘Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!’

A voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’

People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, ‘It was an angel speaking to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

‘Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.’

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

Communion Antiphon John 12: 24

Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.



Sick: Aurea Hernandez, Julie Somerville, Fr Bob Bossini, Dane San Pedro, Marama Watson, Margaret Munro, 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

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING OUR PARISH AND ITS WORKS: There are a variety of ways you can support our Parish and its Mission:

- **QR Code:** located on the Bulletin Front Page.
- **EFTPOS Machines:** located at the back of the Church.
- **Direct Debit:** Please contact the Parish Office for more details.
- **Direct Deposit:** Details are as follows:
Bank Account Name: Springwood; BSB: 067-950
Bank Account Number: 00000560
Reference: Your name in full.

Thank you for your continued support for the Parish and its works. A few parishioners have questioned where the money of each collection goes. Does it go to the Diocese? The Parish? Fr. Chris? Here’s a simple explanation of our collections:

First Collection: This goes to the Diocesan Clergy Fund. The fund supports the living expenses of the priests within our Diocese.

Second Collection: This goes to our Parish of St. Thomas Aquinas – directly funding operational costs, pastoral activities and various programs that enrich our community.

PALM SUNDAY GET TOGETHER: To celebrate the commemoration of the Lord’s entrance into Jerusalem, we are organising a Sausage Sizzle (for \$3) Night after the 5pm Vigil Mass and a delicious Bacon N Egg (for \$5) Breakfast after the Sunday Masses. Let us come together to make this event a joyful and memorable occasion for our parish community.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: The next meeting for the PPC is on Tuesday 19th March. If you would like to include any items to the agenda, please send an email to: springwoodparishpc@gmail.com

2024 ST THOMAS AQUINAS CONFIRMATION SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

Parent Information Sessions:
Tuesday 21st May at 7:00 pm, St Thomas Aquinas Church
Tuesday 28th May at 7:00 pm, St Thomas Aquinas Church



Children & Parent Information Sessions:
Saturday 8th June at 11:00 am, St Thomas Aquinas Church
Saturday 15th June at 11:00 am, St Thomas Aquinas Church (and practice)
Confirmation will take place on Wednesday 19th June 7:00pm at St Thomas Aquinas Church
For any enquiries please contact our parish office on 02 4754 1052 or email: springwood@parracatholic.org

PLEASE DONATE TO PROJECT COMPASSION: The work of Caritas Australia is only possible with generous supporters and the dedication, passion and tenacity of our local partners who implement the programs. They are the heroes on the ground working tirelessly behind-the-scenes every day to create a better future for their communities. **Please donate to Project Compassion 2023.** Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, **for all future generations.** You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS is held every Friday during Lent at 6pm. All are welcome to participate.

ST THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH CHOIR is currently looking for more singers, of ALL VOICE TYPES. If you enjoy singing and would like to join this happy group, we practice most Monday nights weekly in the church at 168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood at 7.30pm to 9pm. For Enquiries call Chris Wilson 0425 290 952 or Margaret Hickey 02 4751 2343 (*answering machine if unattended*).

CHILDREN’S LITURGY AT 9:30am MASS: All children aged between 4-12 are invited to join our Children’s Liturgy. They will be called forward and sent with a blessing over to our Parish rooms for a Gospel lesson and will return to their families in church after the Creed, as the Offertory and Liturgy of the Eucharist begin.

STA PARISH OFFICE EASTER CLOSURE: Our Parish Office will be closed from Monday 1st April to Friday 5th April and will re-open on Tuesday 9th April. Adoration & Masses will continue as normal during this period.

A BIG THANK YOU FROM OUR SRE TEACHERS: We wish to thank a very kind parishioner who handed in \$250 last Saturday, a donation that goes toward the cost of our Student Activity Books. We humbly ask our parish community to hold our SRE Teachers in your prayers, which can provide them with the encouragement and support they need. It is a role that requires patience, commitment and love for both teaching and the gospel and we are incredibly grateful for the time and energy our SRE Teachers devote to this important task.

HOLY LAND GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION 29TH MARCH 2024: The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land will take place on Good Friday, 29th March. This collection promotes the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land by providing welfare assistance to local Christians in areas such as health, education, employment, housing, Parishes and orphanages. It is also used to maintain over 70 churches and shrines associated with the life of Jesus. Please remember the Christians of the Holy Land on Good Friday. Thank you.