

St Thomas Aquinas Parish

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Parish Email: email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stchurchspringwood.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.

The Conqueror enters Jerusalem

In 2000 Hollywood released the epic historical/drama film 'Gladiator' starring heavyweight actors such as Russell Crowe and Joaquin Phoenix. The film is set around 180AD during the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius, the stoic philosopher. For those who have seen the movie you'll know it's one of epic proportions, from the story, set and character development, this film really has it all. One scene I found striking is the Emperor's grand entrance into Rome. Following the murder of his father Marcus Aurelius, Commodus ascends to the throne and seizes power. Unaware of his betrayal, Rome welcomes him with open arms as their new sovereign. Commodus is dressed in the finest armour and enters Rome riding a magnificent chariot pulled by four grand horses. His grandeur is only matched by his arrogance as he enters Rome like a conqueror; one who has won the hearts of the people and now portrays himself as their saviour. This scene is in stark contrast to our celebration today. As Commodus enters Rome dressed in the finest clothes and riding the finest chariot, Our Lord enters Jerusalem without any regalia. Christ enters the Holy City riding a donkey... of all creatures a donkey; it is a strange sight. The King of the Universe, the one to free humanity from the bond of sin and death enters the great city of Jerusalem riding a donkey. Why? What significance does his simple entrance hold for us as we enter into Holy Week?



Recognise the manner with which Jesus enters the city, he is swarmed by the masses who proclaim him as the Messiah yet he arrives on a donkey. While the above scene contrasts greatly from our Gospel, Jesus, like Commodus, enters Jerusalem as a conqueror. Don't be fooled by his appearance; Our Lord is entering the city to do battle with the Devil as evident by his Passion and Death on Good Friday. This may seem a strange thought however, the donkey is key to our understanding. A donkey is a humble animal, one who when put to work labours hard without complaint. Our Lord enters Jerusalem not like the ancient conquerors who used force to achieve victory, he enters in this manner to highlight his weapon of choice: love, mercy and humility. Our Lord did not conquer the Devil through the might of the angelic hosts, nor did arrive with thunder and lightning to express his divinity. He enters Jerusalem in his humble state to show that his love for the human race goes beyond mere affection; he willingly enters the city to die so that we may be redeemed. Our patron St. Thomas Aquinas defined love as 'willing the good of the other, as other.' Our Lord through his Paschal Sacrifice wills our highest good as now we are able, through his mercy, to enter into Eternal Life.

Dear friends, with this in mind may we recognise the gravity of this day: we now enter into the holiest week in the liturgical year. We enter into the drama of Holy Week where Our Lord Jesus Christ, armed with the divine love, mercy and humility conquers the Devil, sin and death. May we enter into every liturgy this week with hearts on fire for the love of God as it is through him we have gained redemption. Hosanna to the King! Hosanna to OUR KING! Hosanna in the Highest!

Wishing you a blessed remainder of Lent,

Fr. Chris



Entrance Antiphon *Cf John 12: 1, 12-13; Ps 23: 9-10*

Six days before the Passover,
when the Lord came into the city of Jerusalem,
the children ran to meet him;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:

* Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant
mercy!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!
Who is this king of glory?
He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

* Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant
mercy!

First Reading *Isaiah 50:4-7*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*I did not cover my face against insult and I know I
will not be ashamed.*

The Lord has given me
a disciple's tongue.
So that I may know how to reply to the wearied
he provides me with speech.
Each morning he wakes me to hear,
to listen like a disciple.
The Lord has opened my ear.
For my part, I made no resistance,
neither did I turn away.
I offered my back to those who struck me,
my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;
I did not cover my face
against insult and spittle.
The Lord comes to my help,
so that I am untouched by the insults.
So, too, I set my face like flint;
I know I shall not be shamed.

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 21:8-9. 17-20. 23-24. R. v.2*

(R.) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

1. All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.' (R.)
2. Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet.
I can count every one of my bones. (R.)
3. They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me! (R.)
4. I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.' (R.)

Second Reading *Philippians 2:6-11*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

*He humbled himself to become like us and God raised
him on high.*

His state was divine,
yet Christ Jesus did not cling
to his equality with God
but emptied himself
to assume the condition of a slave,
and became as men are,
and being as all men are,
he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death,
death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name
which is above all other names
so that all beings
in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld,
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus
and that every tongue should acclaim
Jesus Christ as Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation *Philippians 2:8-9*

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
Christ became obedient for us even to death
dying on the cross.
Therefore God raised him on high
and gave him a name above all other names.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel Mark 14:1-15:47

Narrator:	The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark
Narrator:	It was two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread ... by some trick and have him put to death. For they said,
Crowd:	It must not be during the festivities, or there will be a disturbance among the people.
Narrator:	Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper ... and poured the ointment on his head. Some who were there said to one another indignantly,
Crowd:	Why this waste of ointment? Ointment like this could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor;
Narrator:	and they were angry with her. But Jesus said,
Jesus:	Leave her alone. Why are you upsetting her? ... she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. I tell you solemnly, wherever throughout all the world the Good News is proclaimed, what she has done will be told also, in remembrance of her.
Narrator:	Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve ... and he looked for a way of betraying him when the opportunity should occur. On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him,
Crowd:	Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?
Narrator:	So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,
Jesus:	Go into the city and you will meet a man ... He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.
Narrator:	The disciples set out ... and prepared the Passover. When evening came he arrived with the Twelve. And while they were at table eating, Jesus said,
Jesus:	I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me, one of you eating with me.
Narrator:	They were distressed and asked him, one after another,
Other:	Not I, surely?
Narrator:	He said to them,
Jesus:	It is one of the Twelve ... but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!
Narrator:	And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them, saying,
Jesus:	Take it; this is my body.
Narrator:	Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them,
Jesus:	This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.
Narrator:	After psalms had been sung ... And Jesus said to them,
Jesus:	You will all lose faith ... However after my resurrection I shall go before you to Galilee.

Gospel Mark 14:1-15:47 (continuation)

Narrator:	Peter said,
Other:	Even if all lose faith, I will not.
Narrator:	And Jesus said to him,
Jesus:	I tell you solemnly ... before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.
Narrator:	But he repeated still more earnestly,
Other:	If I have to die with you, I will never disown you.
Narrator:	And they all said the same ... and Jesus said to his disciples,
Jesus:	Stay here while I pray.
Narrator:	Then he took Peter and James and John with him ... And he said to them,
Jesus:	My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here, and keep awake.
Narrator:	And going on a little further ... pass him by. He said,
Jesus:	Abba (Father)! ...away from me. But let it be as you, not I would have it.
Narrator:	He came back and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter,
Jesus:	Simon are you asleep? ... The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.
Narrator:	Again he went away ... He came back a third time and said to them,
Jesus:	You can sleep on now... Let us go! My betrayer is close at hand already.
Narrator:	Even while he was still speaking ... Now the traitor had arranged a signal with them. He had said,
Other:	The one I kiss, he is the man. Take him in charge, and see he is well guarded when you lead him away.
Narrator:	So when the traitor came, he went straight up to Jesus and said,
Other:	Rabbi!
Narrator:	and kissed him. The others seized him ... and cut off his ear. Then Jesus spoke,
Jesus:	Am I a brigand that you had to set out ... laid hands on me. But this is to fulfil the scriptures.
Narrator:	And they all deserted him and ran away ... Some stood up and submitted this false evidence against him.
Crowd:	We heard him say, 'I am going to destroy this Temple made by human hands, and in three days build another, not made by human hands'.
Narrator:	But even on this point ... before the whole assembly and put this question to Jesus,
Other:	Have you no answer to that? What is this evidence these men are bringing against you?
Narrator:	But he was silent ... The high priest put a second question to him,
Other:	Are you the Christ the Son of the Blessed One?
Narrator:	Jesus said,

Gospel Mark 14:1-15:47 (continuation)

Jesus:	I am, and you will see the Son of Man ... and coming with the clouds of heaven.
Narrator:	The high priest tore his robes, and said,
Other:	What need of witnesses have we now ... What is your finding?
Narrator:	And they all gave their verdict ... blindfolding him, began hitting him with their fists and shouting.
Crowd:	Play the prophet!
Narrator:	And the attendants rained blows on him ... She saw Peter warming himself there, stared at him and said,
Other:	You too were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.
Narrator:	But he denied it, saying
Other:	I do not know, I do not understand what you are talking about.
Narrator:	And he went out into the forecourt. The servant-girl saw him and again started telling the bystanders,
Other:	This fellow is one of them.
Narrator:	But he again denied it. A little later the bystanders themselves said to Peter,
Crowd:	You are one of them for sure! Why, you are a Galilean.
Narrator:	But he started calling curses on himself and swearing,
Other:	I do not know the man you speak of.
Narrator:	At that moment the cock crew ... They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him,
Other:	Are you the king of the Jews?
Narrator:	He answered,
Jesus:	It is you who say it.
Narrator:	And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again,
Other:	Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!
Narrator:	But to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply ... When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them,
Other:	Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?
Narrator:	For he realised, it was out of jealousy ... Then Pilate spoke again.
Other:	But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?
Narrator:	They shouted back.
Crowd:	Crucify him!
Narrator:	Pilate asked them,
Other:	Why? What harm has he done?
Narrator:	But they shouted all the louder,
Crowd:	Crucify him!

Gospel **Mark 14:1-15:47 (continuation)**

Narrator:	So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd ... And they began saluting him.
Crowd:	Hail, King of the Jews!
Narrator:	They struck his head with a reed ... The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said,
Crowd:	Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!
Narrator:	The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said,
Crowd:	He saved others, he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.
Narrator:	Even those who were crucified with him taunted him ... And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
Jesus:	Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?
Narrator:	This means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said,
Crowd:	Listen, he is calling on Elijah.
Narrator:	Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying,
Crowd:	Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.
Narrator:	But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

All kneel and pause a moment.

Narrator:	And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said,
Other:	In truth this man was a son of God.
Narrator:	There were some women watching from a distance ... He then rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joset were watching and took note of where he was laid.

Communion Antiphon **Matthew 26:42**

Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it,
your will be done.



**Recently Deceased: Lynette Boyd**

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.

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news of the passing of our dear parishioner Lynette Boyd. We request that you remember her with fondness and send her off with fervent prayers. Details of her funeral service are:
Date: 26th March 2024; Time: 11:30 am
Place: St Thomas Aquinas Parish, Springwood

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



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.

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.



MOUNT SCHOENSTATT SHRINE TIME HOLY HOUR FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS:

The Mount Schoenstatt community invite teens and young adults for Holy Hour every fourth Sunday of the month from 7pm to 8pm at the Mt Schoenstatt Shrine, 230 Fairlight Road, Mulgoa, followed by a social gathering afterwards. There will be opportunities for praise and worship, prayer, reflection, confession and benediction. For more information, please contact Sr M Rita on 0493 026 628 or srrita@schoenstatt.org.au

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.

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.

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: James Costigan C: Debbie Breytenbach	Phil Saville

Music: Chris Wilson

8:00 AM	Marek Grus	Loida Derbyshire	Tanya Graham	N: John Belfanti O: Kim Crawford C: Tanya Graham	Tom Horsfall
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Music:

9:30 AM	Bernard Ellis	Margaret Hickey	Peta Sparkes	N: Matt Aldous O: Steve Bishop C: Katherine Mahns	Steve Bishop
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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