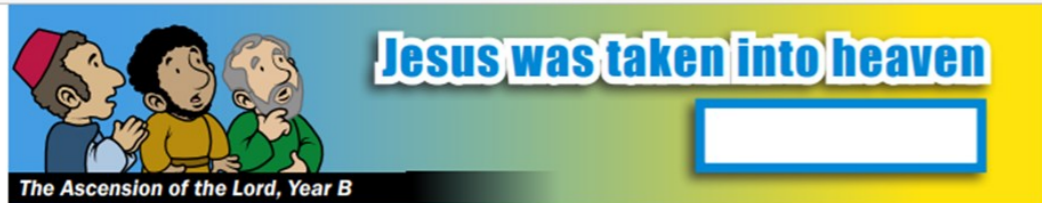


Date: 11th/12th May 2024 <i>The Ascension of the Lord</i>				
Mass Time:	Acolyte	First Reading & Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading & Prayer of the Faithful	Music
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ed Junis	Tanya Baldwin	Margaret Smith	Chris Wilson
- Celebrant: Fr Noel Custodio				
8:00 AM	Marek Grus	Kim Crawford	Vicky Walker	
9:30 AM	Richard Merchant	Margaret Hickey	Matt Aldous	Streeters
Date: 18th/19th May 2024 <i>Pentecost</i>				
Mass Time:	Acolyte	First Reading & Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading & Prayer of the Faithful	Music
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ian Miles	Neil Kirby	Felix Kobus	No one
8:00 AM	Randall Noney	Tom Horsfall	Tanya Graham	
9:30 AM	John Belfanti	Steve Bishop	Domhnall MacCormac	Chris Wilson
Morning Tea: Parish Choir				

Kid's Corner



Draw Jesus saying goodbye to his friends and promising to be with them always.



Gospel

Mark 16:15-20

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptised is saved; he who does not believe will be condemned. These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.



What are some special things we can do for others because of our belief in Jesus?

The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.

St Thomas Aquinas Parish

168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777
 PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777
 Phone: 02 4754 1052; *Emergency ONLY:* 0474 631 168



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.

The Joy of the Ascension



Growing up I struggled to understand the Solemnity of the Ascension. This day marks the end of Jesus' earthly life as 'he was lifted up while they (Apostles) looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight.' Whilst I can only imagine Our Lord's desire to be united with the Godhead and the Communion of Saints in his Heavenly homeland, I can't help but feel humanity being short changed with his departure. Wouldn't it benefit the faithful more if he remained here on Earth? Does his absence allow us to be more effective disciples? Are we able to live out his mission to proclaim the Gospel with him in Heaven? If this event is a cause for joy, why does it seem that Christ has abandoned us by Ascending to Heaven? These questions arise when one first considers the mystery of the Ascension.

Throughout the Gospels Christ, on occasion, hints at his eventual departure from this world: During the Transfiguration St. Luke notes the topic of conversation between Jesus, Moses and Elijah - they speak of his departure which he is to accomplish in Jerusalem. This sentiment is made more frequently during Jesus' farewell discourse in John's Gospel as he frequently speaks of his departure. Like the above questions his words trouble the disciples as St. John relates they are filled with grief upon hearing of his eventual absence. It is clear that all parties concerned desire for Christ to remain here on Earth. However, note the promise coupled with Jesus' eventual departure: 'But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.' Who is this Advocate? Catholic Doctrine understand that this Advocate is the same Holy Spirit who is part of the Holy Trinity - it is the same eternal Spirit who is the bond of love between the Father and the Son. With this in mind the Holy Spirit gives richer meaning to the Ascension. Yes, this day marks an end to Our Lord's earthly life but it also highlights Christ's eternal presence in the lives of his faithful. Through the Holy Spirit, the eternal bond of love between the Father and the Son, all the faithful now partake in this divine relationship; we are made co-heirs in the life of Christ. Jesus is not limited to one place in space and time, he is ever present in all who follow his ways; in short, the Ascension transcends Christ's presence in all the faithful. His promise in St. Matthew's Gospel rings true: "I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Dear friends, today's Solemnity of the Ascension is cause for great joy. On this day Christ ascends to the heights of Heaven and promises us the gift of the Holy Spirit. He does not abandon humanity as the Holy Spirit, the bond of love and third person of the Holy Trinity, will be the eternal and unyielding presence of God throughout human history. Additionally, the promised Spirit will also transform the lives of the faithful as God will work through them to proclaim his message of love and peace. May we all approach this day with joy and thanksgiving - Christ's Ascension marks our transformation.

Happy Ascension Day to all,

Fr Chris

[At the Vigil Mass](#)**Entrance Antiphon** Ps 67: 33,35

You kingdoms of the earth, sing to God; praise the Lord, who ascends above the highest heavens, his majesty and might are in the skies, alleluia.

[At the Mass during the Day](#)**Entrance Antiphon** Acts of the Apostles 1:11

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia.

First Reading Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus has been taken into heaven.

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is,' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

Responsorial Psalm Ps 46:2-3, 6-9. R. v.6

(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

1. All peoples, clap your hands, cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, great king over all the earth. (R.)
2. God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God, sing praise, sing praise to our king, sing praise. (R.)
3. God is king of all the earth. Sing praise with all your skill. God is king over the nations; God reigns on his holy throne. (R.)

Second Reading Ephesians 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

He made Jesus to sit at his right hand in heaven.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 28:19, 20

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

Gospel Mark 16:15-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The Lord Jesus was taken into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God.

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptised will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned. These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.

[At the Vigil Mass](#)**Communion Antiphon** cf. Heb 10:12

Christ, offering a single sacrifice for sins, is seated for ever at God's right hand, alleluia.

[At the Mass during the Day](#)**Communion Antiphon** Matthew 28:20

Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia.



Sick: Precious Tamayo, 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? 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.



Fr Chris will be the Master of Ceremonies this Saturday at Glenwood-Stanhope Gardens as Menard Gaspi will be ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, Bishop of Parramatta in front of family, friends and supporters. Fr Noel Custodio will be celebrating our Vigil Mass for our parish. Please make him feel welcome.

GREAT SAINTS OF ITALY: Join Fr Christopher Del Rosario on a breathtaking pilgrimage on the footsteps of some of Italy's most well-known saints. Follow their paths etched into our faith heritage, from the great Christian centre of Rome to sacred towns made famous by Padre Pio, St Francis, St Clare, St Catherine, and St Anthony. This is an amazing opportunity to deepen our faith and explore the rich tapestry of culture, art, and history that Italy has to offer. Pilgrimage commences 21 October 2024. For more details scan the code or visit harvestjourneys.com/Italy



BIGGEST MORNING TEA: Please save this date: Friday 17th May from 10:30 am for Australia's Biggest Morning Tea conducted by the STA Ladies Fellowship. This will be held in the Parish Centre. It was a great social success last year for Parishioners attending as well as raising funds for a worthy cause - the CANCER COUNCIL of Australia. We all know someone who has been effected by cancer. Hope to see you there! For catering purposes please RSVP to Colleen Kime - 0407 125 427

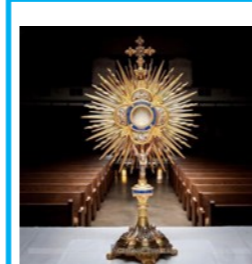
25TH ANNIVERSARY TRIVIA NIGHT: An invitation from Springwood East Timor Support Group to join an evening of fun on Saturday 18th May at St Thomas Aquinas School Hall, 168 Hawkesbury Rd, Springwood 7pm for a 7:30pm start. Please see STA Notice Board for more details.

Happy Mother's Day!

Lord God, we lift up all mothers to You. Grant them the strength to face the daily challenges with courage and the wisdom to guide their children towards a life of faith and service. Encourage them when they are weary and inspire them when they feel overwhelmed. Bless them with Your peace and love, now and forever. Amen

SYNOD 2023 UPDATE - LOCAL THINK TANK

SESSIONS: Parishes and other local faith communities across the diocese are holding local Think Tank Sessions, giving local leaders and anyone involved in ministry to offer feedback on the Draft of the Diocesan Plan for a Synodal Church and contribute ideas for the practical implementation of our Diocesan Plan. Six Synod themes will be the focus of six local sessions. Penrith Parish has been assigned Theme 5: A Church that Reaches to the Margins to be held on Wednesday 29th May, 6:30pm - 9pm. Anyone interested in the local Think Tank Sessions may visit: <https://parracatholic.org/thinktanks> or parracatholic.org/synod for more information.



4321, 0450 821 812 or email galbert.albino@parracatholic.org

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

- 17 MAY: Please join us across the Diocese to pray for more vocations to the priesthood. Join us at St Thomas Aquinas Parish, Springwood with Fr Chris del Rosario, on Friday 17 May from 7pm. If you are interested in becoming a priest or would like more information, please contact our Director for Priestly Vocations, Fr Galbert Albino on (02) 4773

**2024 Sacrament of CONFIRMATION**
Only one week before this sacrament begins:

FIRST MEETING - Tuesday 21st May, 7.00pm. Parents only session.

SECOND MEETING - Tuesday 28th May, 7.00pm. Parents only session.

THIRD MEETING - Saturday 8th June, 11.00am. Children and parents session.

FOURTH MEETING - Saturday 15th June, 11.00am. Children and parents session plus confirmation practice.

Confirmation will take place on Wednesday 19th June at 7.00pm.

Please see link below for further information on our Confirmation program.

<https://stachurchspringwood.org.au/>