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| Date: | 29th Mar/30th Mar 2025 | | Fourth Sunday of Lent | |
| Mass Time: | Acolyte | First Reading & Responsorial Psalm | Second Reading & Prayer of the Faithful | Music |
| Vigil: 5:00 PM | Ian Miles | Margaret Smith | Felix Kobus | No One |
| 8:00 AM | Marek Grus | Kim Crawford | Loida Derbyshire | |
| 9:30 AM | Bernard Ellis | Phil Saville | Steve Bishop | Couples for Christ |
| Morning Tea: | Couples for Christ | | | |

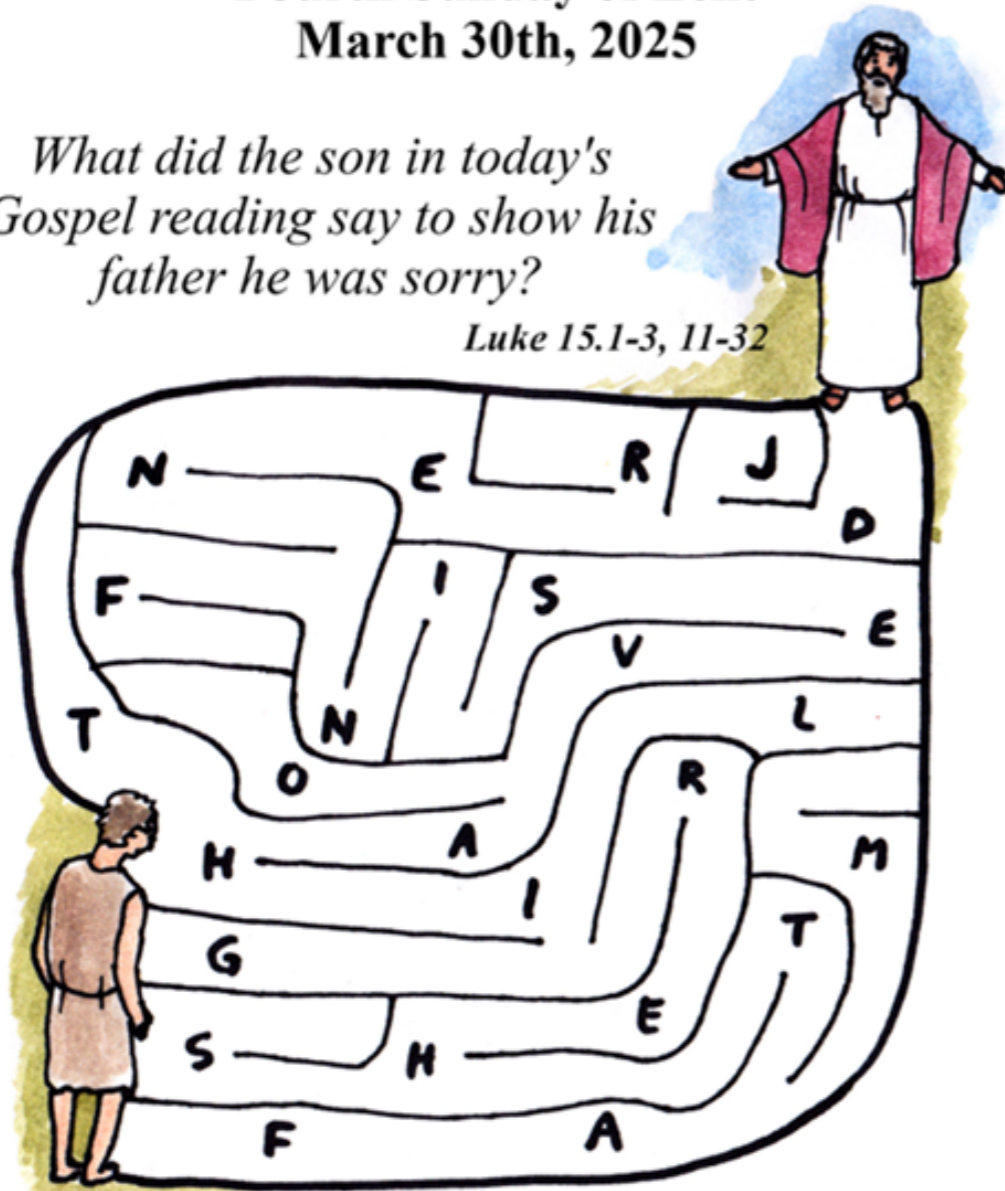
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|-----------------------|----------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Date: | 5th Apr/6th Apr 2025 | | Fifth Sunday of Lent | |
| Mass Time: | Acolyte | First Reading & Responsorial Psalm | Second Reading & Prayer of the Faithful | Music |
| Vigil: 5:00 PM | Ian Miles | Margaret Smith | Anne Maureen Scarff | Andrew Wilson |
| 8:00 AM | Randall Noney | Georgia Cook | Tanya Graham | |
| 9:30 AM | Bernard Ellis | Anne Edwards | Brian Edwards | Chris Wilson |

KID'S CORNER

**Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 30th, 2025**

What did the son in today's Gospel reading say to show his father he was sorry?

Luke 15.1-3, 11-32



As you go through the maze, use only the letters in the right path to fill in the blanks:

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St Thomas Aquinas Parish

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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 5:30 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.

Gospel Reflection by Pope Francis

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of the father and the two sons better known as the Parable of the "Prodigal Son" (Lk 15:11-32) is proclaimed. This passage of St Luke constitutes one of the peaks of spirituality and literature of all time. Indeed, what would our culture, art and more generally our civilization be without this revelation of a God the Father so full of mercy? It never fails to move us and every time we hear or read it, it can suggest to us ever new meanings. Above all, this Gospel text has the power of speaking to us of God, of enabling us to know his Face and, better still, his Heart. After Jesus has told us of the merciful Father, things are no longer as they were before. We now know God; he is our Father who out of love created us to be free and endowed us with a conscience, who suffers when we get lost and rejoices when we return. For this reason, our relationship with him is built up through events, just as it happens for every child with his parents: at first he depends on them, then he asserts his autonomy; and, in the end if he develops well he reaches a mature relationship based on gratitude and authentic love.

In these stages we can also identify moments along man's journey in his relationship with God. There can be a phase that resembles childhood: religion prompted by need, by dependence. As man grows up and becomes emancipated, he wants to liberate himself from this submission and become free and adult, able to organise himself and make his own decisions, even thinking he can do without God. Precisely this stage is delicate and can lead to atheism, yet even this frequently conceals the need to discover God's true Face. Fortunately for us, God never fails in his faithfulness and even if we distance ourselves and get lost he continues to follow us with his love, forgiving our errors and speaking to our conscience from within in order to call us back to him. In this parable the sons behave in opposite ways: the younger son leaves home and sinks ever lower whereas the elder son stays at home, but he too has an immature relationship with the Father. In fact, when his brother comes back, the elder brother does not rejoice like the Father; on the contrary he becomes angry and refuses to enter the house. The two sons represent two immature ways of relating to God: rebellion and childish obedience. Both these forms are surmounted through the experience of mercy. Only by experiencing forgiveness, by recognising one is loved with a freely given love a love greater than our wretchedness but also than our own merit do we at last enter into a truly filial and free relationship with God.

Dear friends, let us meditate on this parable. Let us compare ourselves to the two sons and, especially, contemplate the Heart of the Father. Let us throw ourselves into his arms and be regenerated by his merciful love. May the Virgin Mary, *Mater Misericordiae*, help us to do this.



Entrance Antiphon Cf Isaiah 66:10-11

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

First Reading Joshua 5:9-12

A reading from the book of Joshua

The people of God went to the promised land and there kept the passover.

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you.'

The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening in the plain of Jericho. On the morrow of the Passover they tasted the produce of that country, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn, that same day. From that time, from their first eating of the produce of that country, the manna stopped falling. And having manna no longer, the Israelites fed from that year onwards on what the land of Canaan yielded.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 33:2-7. R. v.9

(R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad. (R.)
2. Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free. (R.)
3. Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress. (R.)

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

God reconciled us to himself through Christ.

For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here. It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on his reconciliation. In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God.

Gospel Acclamation Luke 15:18

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
I will rise and go to my Father and tell him:
Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel Luke 15:1-3. 11-32

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Your brother here was dead and has come to life.

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening."

'The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it is only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

Communion Antiphon Luke 15: 32

You must rejoice, my son,
for your brother was dead and has come to life;
he was lost and is found.



Recently Deceased: Kathleen Belfanti, Margaret Munro; **Commemorative Deceased:** Aleksandra Betkowski
Sick: Ishbel MacArthur, Michelle Thomas, Colleen Baker, John Hunia, Eva Fitzgerald, Philip Coggan, James Connor, Richard Ford, Julie Somerville, Fr Bob Bossini, Dane San Pedro, Marama Watson 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: Please support our Parish and its projects.

- **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.

FIRST COLLECTION: This goes to the Board of Management. 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.

MASS OFFERING ENVELOPES are also available which can be used to express your ongoing generosity and support. Thank you.

WE ARE NOW ON INSTAGRAM: For all the latest information and updates about our parish, please follow our page @stthomasaquinas_springwoodnsw



Irene lives in the Kongolo Region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and faced immense challenges after losing her father to war and raising her children in poverty. With support from Caritas Australia, Irene received vocational training in sewing and farming and can now support her whole family.



Photo credit: Arlette Bashizi/Caritas Australia

Please donate today.
You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code above.
Or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion
Or by calling: 1800 024 413 413.

ST THOMAS AQUINAS EXERCISE CLASS

has been running. See the Parish Notice Board for more information.



LIVE-IN CARER OPPORTUNITY Our beautiful 96 year old father lives at home. He is of Anglo-Indian decent, speaks English and is still mobile. We are looking for a special person to help home care for him in either a full-time or part-time capacity. He lives in The Hills area and has family support next door. The job would suit a nursing student or someone that is good with people. If you would like more information, please contact Jason on jason@jjmail.me or 0414 987 206.



Stations of the Cross is on Friday **4th April 2025** at **5pm** and is followed by First Friday Adoration. Everybody is welcome to attend!

Readers wanted for our Lenten services. Anyone interested please contact the office on 02 4754 1052 or email: springwood@parracatholic.org

St Thomas Aquinas Parish
2025 Confirmation Sacramental Program

Have you registered your child for the Sacrament of Confirmation? Registration closes on **30th April 2025**. All parents with children in Year 5 and older in 2025, who have not yet received Confirmation but have received Reconciliation and Holy Communion are asked to register their children for the Sacrament of Confirmation in May 2024. Register your child by filling in the form available at the back of the church, parish office and our website. This must be returned to the parish office prior to the first Parent Information Meeting 30th April. For more information, visit our website: www.stchurchspringwood.org.au

SPRINGWOOD CATHOLIC YOUTH would love to welcome anyone between 18 and 35 yrs of age to come to our Young Adults group from **5-7 pm on a Sunday evening**. It is on every week and is a wonderful opportunity to meet other young Catholics, share about the faith and enjoy a community of prayer. Anyone interested please contact Noah Tabone on 0493 490 960.

We welcome into our Catholic Christian family the following children:

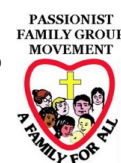


Oliver Izaak Boersma
Samuel Lloyd Cramer
Sophie Grace Cramer

who were recently baptised here.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS: When local daylight time is about to reach Sunday, 6th April 2025, 3:00am clocks are turned backward 1 hour to **Sunday, 6th April 2025, 2:00am** local standard time instead. Sunrise and sunset will be about 1 hour earlier on 6 April 2025 than the day before.

AN INVITATION TO YOU: Some Parish Family Group members will be going to historic "Winbourne" Mulgoa on Sunday 6th April for a picnic. They want you and your family to come along too. Simply bring a bit of food and drink and meet there at 12:30pm. You and they will be in good company. It is a time to enjoy each other's company and share in the recent developments at this beautiful site. If you have children, they will love the open spaces with plenty of play areas and room for bike riding. Also being the Jubilee Year, this is an ideal site to contemplate the Edmund Rice icon as an aid to our own faith life. The address is Edmund Rice Conference Centre, 1315 Mulgoa Road. A BBQ, tea and coffee will be available. Transport can be arranged if required. Contact Elizabeth and Dennis Farrar 0425209840



STA EARTHCARE is focusing on RECYCLING this year. Anyone with old **spectacles, sunglasses or lens or frames** can place them in the **Recycling box** this weekend after the Sunday 9:30am mass. Alternatively they can be taken to the Parish Office on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday.

LOST PROPERTY: We have a range of lost items that have been left behind in the church. Please see office staff to check if any items belong to you. If items are unclaimed by the end of next week we will be donating them to St Vinnies.