



St Mary's Parish Concord

31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A

5 November 2023

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Malachi 1:14-2:2,8-10

You have strayed from the way, you have caused many to stumble by your teaching.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 130

In you, Lord, I have found my peace.

SECOND READING: Thessalonians 2:7-9, 13

We were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our lives as well.

GOSPEL: Matthew 23:1-12

They do not practice what they preach.

FIRST READING: Exodus 22:21-26

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for peace in the world and especially for people suffering because of war and violence.

We pray for reconciliation between all people who share this land, especially with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We pray for communities facing bush fires and for those whose homes have been destroyed.

We pray for Kim Wright, Flavio Sanseverino (Italy), Mario Bregolin (Canada), Rachela Halicka-Funkowska, Fr Ken Sargent and all those who have died recently; we pray Anya Krzanowski, Mario Sanseverino, Silvio Barbalich, Vincenzo Pappalardo, Antonio Bonaccorso, Nancy Corso, Elsie Guinness and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time; we pray for those who are remembered in November Masses and for all our deceased family members and friends.

CHARITABLE WORKS FUND

The second CWF Appeal for the 2023-2024 financial year is now being held. The funds raised by the CWF appeals support various agencies of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Your generous support allows the Church in Sydney to provide help and support to those in need.

Your contribution to the CWF is 100% tax deductible Envelopes are available at the end of the pews and may be placed in the parish collection buckets. Please print your name and address on the envelope if you wish to claim a tax deduction. If you wish to donate by credit card, please include the current expiry date. Without that date your contribution cannot be processed.

Donations can also be made via the parish website. Go to the SUPPORT US button top right of the home page. In the drop-down menu please add CWF in the "donation type" box and fill in all your details.

If you do not require a tax receipt, it will help us to meet our parish quota if you are able to make an extra donation to the parish second collection. **Your support is greatly appreciated.**

FIRST RECONCILIATION: Today we welcome at the 9.30 am Mass the children preparing for their First Reconciliation. They will be celebrating Reconciliation on Wednesday 8 November

MORNING TEA: The parish Social Committee will hold morning tea in the Parish Hall after the 9.30 am Mass this Sunday.

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Wangal people of the Eora nation, the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

NOVEMBER MASSES: November is traditionally the month of the Holy Souls. Praying for those who have died is an ancient custom in the Church. It is also a long-established custom that all parish Masses during November are offered for those who have died.

November Mass envelopes are available on the table at the back and in the side porch of the Church for those who wish to have their deceased relatives and friends included in the November Masses.

The envelopes may be placed in the basket that remains at the front of the altar during November.

The offerings made for November Masses are combined to determine the number of Masses to be offered. As there are more Masses than can be celebrated at St Mary's, November Mass offerings are also sent to priests working in the Missions who will offer Masses for the deceased members of our parish community.

In recent years many of the November Mass offerings given by parishioners have been sent to the Bishop of Iquitos, Peru. Fr John Andersen, a Sydney priest, has been working in Iquitos for over 30 years. Our offerings are distributed to the local priests working in the poorer parish communities. In return for our assistance those priests pray for our deceased family and friends in their Masses.

ST MARY'S PLAYGROUP is held each Friday 9.30am to 10.45am in the Parish Hall during school term. All families are welcome to join with their pre-school aged children. It is a wonderful opportunity to engage with other families and have fun with your child. Access is from Burton St via the Bell Tower courtyard between the church and St Mary's Villa. Contact the parish office for further information.

AGEING WELL: You are invited to register for Aging Well Masterclasses to help senior members of our community to improve their wellbeing. A collaboration between CatholicCare Sydney, Catholic Healthcare and Grief Care, the series is presented by a team of clinical experts in the field of ageing.

The FREE sessions will be held on Tuesdays beginning 7 November in St Patrick's Parish Hall, Mortlake. See the notice board for details.

Bookings are limited. Please register your interest by emailing parish@stpatsmortlake.or.au or call 97451017.

CHURCH MUSIC THROUGH THE YEAR

St Mary's Cathedral Singers will present a program of liturgical choral music in the magnificent St Mary's Cathedral at **7.00 pm on Friday 17 November 2023.**

Tickets: \$15-\$35. Concessions available and under 16 years free. **Register at**

<https://www.trybooking.com/1097546>

PURGATORY

At the General Audience in the Vatican on 12 January 2011, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on the life of St Catherine of Genoa. Born in Genoa in 1447, Catherine was married at age 16. In 1473 she had a conversion experience. She died in 1510.

Pope Benedict noted that she was known particularly for her vision of Purgatory and that is what had prompted him to reflect on her mystical experience.

Pope Benedict went on to speak about her understanding of Purgatory that was described in a treatise published about her in 1551:

"We heard of the moment of conversion when Catherine suddenly became aware of God's goodness, of the infinite distance of her own life from this goodness and of a burning fire within her. And this is the fire that purifies, the interior fire of purgatory. Here too is an original feature in comparison with the thought of her time.

In fact, she does not start with a description of the torments of purgatory in the afterlife, as was the custom in her time and perhaps still is today.... Rather our Saint begins with the inner experience of her own life on the way to Eternity.

The soul, Catherine says, presents itself to God still bound to the desires and suffering that derive from sin and this makes it impossible for it to enjoy the beatific vision of God. Catherine asserts that God is so pure and holy that a soul stained by sin cannot be in the presence of the divine majesty (cf. *Vita Mirabile*, 177r).

We too feel how distant we are, how full we are of so many things that we cannot see God. The soul is aware of the immense love and perfect justice of God and consequently suffers for having failed to respond in a correct and perfect way to this love. Love for God itself becomes a flame, love itself cleanses it from the residue of sin."

Pope Benedict went on to say, "It is important to note that Catherine, in her mystical experience, never received specific revelations on Purgatory or on the souls being purified there. While Purgatory is a central element in the writings inspired by our saint, her description of it has characteristics that were original in her time.

The first original passage concerns the 'place' of the purification of souls. In her day it was depicted mainly using images linked to space: a certain space was conceived of in which Purgatory was supposed to be located.

Catherine, however, did not see Purgatory as a scene in the bowels of the earth. For her it is not an exterior but rather an interior fire. This is Purgatory: an inner fire."

This edited article, quoting from Pope Benedict's Audience, was first published in the Parish Bulletin in 2014 when All Souls Day (2 November) was a Sunday.

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH There are many ways parishioners continue to support the Mission and work of the parish: the Planned Giving program, Tap n' Go donations and cash donations placed in the collection buckets each Sunday.



For your convenience this QR Code allows secure credit donations to be made to the parish through the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

The QR Code will take you directly to

the Donation Page on our parish website. If you select the default option (Sunday collections) your donation will automatically be split between the normal parish 1st and 2nd collections. Alternatively, you can scroll down for other options.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding Office provides support and training for parish communities to ensure that our communities offer a safe and caring environment. The Safeguarding Office also provides support for those who have suffered abuse. If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Archdiocese of Sydney, the Safeguarding Office will listen to you respectfully, offer support and discuss the options available to you. Please contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on phone: 9390 5812.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body entrusted with the task of reflecting on the parish's vision and mission. In a spirit of service to the community the Pastoral Council works with the parish priest to foster and support appropriate pastoral action. Members serve a four-year term with half the Council changing every two years. Any active parishioner 18 years of age or older may be nominated or may nominate his/herself. If you are interested, please contact Fr Paul. For more information go to the "Our Parish" tab on the Home Page of the parish website www.stmarysconcord.org.au

St Mary's Church Concord

The painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary that is the dominant image of Mary in the church is a copy of *The Immaculate Virgin of Los Venerables* painted by the Spanish artist Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1618-1682) in about 1678.

It is believed that the original painting was commissioned from Bartolomé Esteban Murillo by Justino de Neve, who was ecclesiastical president of the *Hospital de los Venerables* in Seville. He later donated it to the chapel at the hospital. The original painting is now in the Prado Museum in Madrid.

In this painting Murillo combined two different iconographic traditions: the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption.

The title of *Immaculate Virgin* reflects the belief that Mary was without sin from the first moment of her being. Although it was only officially declared a dogma of the Church in 1854, belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary had been a popular devotion in Spain since the 16th century. The Assumption of Mary was only declared to be a dogma in 1950. It too had been a popular devotion for many centuries.

The parish's copy was cleaned and restored in February 2020 to mark the Sesquicentenary of the founding of St Mary's Parish (1870-2020)



HOW DO I BECOME A CATHOLIC? Adults who have not been baptized and wish to become part of the community of the Catholic Church receive the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA).

The RCIA presumes that there is an extended period of formation and preparation, usually leading to the celebration of Baptism at Easter.

Baptised members of other Christian Churches who wish to become members of the Catholic Church do so through *Reception into Full Communion*.

If you are interested, or if you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a Catholic, please contact Fr Paul or the Parish Office tel 9747 4210 or email

parish@stmarysconcord.org.au

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE FOODBANK

The JRS continues to support those seeking asylum and temporary migrants in Australia, as they remain excluded from all forms of Federal government support. This has meant that people who were once working and self-sufficient have had to rely on charities, like JRS, for rent, medication, bills and food. To help keep everyone fed, we are asking those who can to donate one item a week (1 or 2 Kg bags of Basmati Rice, Tuna in oil, Cooking Oil (750ml/1L/2L bottles), tinned tomatoes, tinned lentils, chickpeas, red kidney beans, pasta (spaghetti, penne, spiral) but please not tinned spaghetti. Donations can be placed in the blue bin on the table at the back of the church.

PARISH HERITAGE SIGNS

In 2020 St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the founding of the parish in 1870. They can be seen in the Church Forecourt and recall historical parish buildings that once existed on the parish site: the first church (1845), the second church (1874), the presbytery (1882), the first school building (1894) and the convent (1898). The signs have been placed close to the original locations of the buildings.

THE FIRST CHURCH

The first church built on the St Mary's Parish site was blessed and opened by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845.

Prior to European settlement, the Burwood-Concord district was occupied by the Wangal clan. They called themselves the Eora, meaning 'the people' and they had been living in the Sydney area for at least 10,000 years.

The British colony of New South Wales had been established in January 1788 with the arrival of the

First Fleet under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip.

In late 1788 a small settlement was established at Parramatta and by 1791 a bush track had been built between Sydney and Parramatta that became what is now Parramatta Road. In 1793 some free settlers received grants in the area then named Liberty Plains. In that same year, land grants were made to six non-commissioned officers in the district that came to be known as Concord.

The Concord-Burwood district continued to grow and in 1844 land was purchased by the Catholic Church on Parramatta Road at Concord for the site of a church and school.



The First Church 1845

The painting is based on a photograph taken in 1917 when the hall was under construction behind the first church. That painting now hangs in the parish hall

THE PRESBYTERY

When Father McCarthy was appointed parish priest in 1870, he lived in a cottage on the Burwood side of Parramatta Road until the Presbytery (the priest's residence) was built in 1882. It stood on the northern side of the 1874 church facing Burton Street.



The Presbytery c 2003

The original building was extended several times as the needs of the parish changed. As well as providing a residence for the priests, it also served as the office

for the parish until 1994 when the Parish Office was relocated to a cottage at 4 Ada Street. The Presbytery continued to be the residence for the priests of the parish until 2002.

In 2002 the residence for the parish priest was relocated to a cottage at 6 Ada Street that the parish had purchased in 1995.,



In 2008, as part of the strategic plan for the development of the parish site, the Presbytery, the Convent and the 1950s school building were all demolished to make way for the new St Mary's Villa.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL

The 1845 church also served as a hall and from 1846 as a classroom for a one-teacher school with John Clancy as the first schoolmaster.

When John Clancy retired due to ill health in 1858, he was followed by a series of lay teachers. Records are unclear about the school's operation in the 1860s but when St Mary's Parish was established in 1870, the existing one-teacher school became part of St Mary's Parish.

When the New South Wales Colonial Government withdrew funding for denominational schools in 1879, it became more difficult for the parish to pay the salary of the teacher and to maintain the school.

Fr Callaghan McCarthy, the first parish priest, asked the Sisters of Charity to take charge of the school and in 1883 the Sisters began travelling each day from Ashfield to teach in the school-hall



The photo of the 1894 school was taken 1917 as the hall was under construction (on the left).

The first school building was erected on the parish site in 1894. It stood on the western side of the present Church Forecourt on what is now the "grass" area within the school precinct. The foundation stone laid by Cardinal Moran can now be seen on the western side of the church steps

St Mary's School continued to expand. In 1940 a new infants' school was built facing Burton Street and in 1956 a Commercial College for girls was built on the site of the second church. When more classrooms were needed in the 1970s, the first school building was demolished to make way for a new block of classrooms that were blessed and opened by Archbishop James Freeman on 3 September 1972. They became the Kindergarten block until almost forty years later in 2011 when another classroom block was built for Kindergarten along the Parramatta Road boundary of the school precinct on the western side of the hall.



The 1972 classroom block was then demolished to create the present "grass" area.