



## St Mary's Parish Concord

### 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

28 January 2024

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING:** Deuteronomy 18:15-20  
*I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Ps 95  
If today you hear God's voice,  
harden not your hearts.

**SECOND READING:** 1 Corinthians 7:32-35  
*Lead the life that the Lord has assigned.*

**GOSPEL:** Mark 1:21-28  
*A new teaching with authority.*

#### PRAYER INTENTIONS

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

We pray for our country; may all Australians renew their commitment to work for reconciliation

We pray for those in many places who have been affected by fires, storms, floods and other natural disasters; may they receive the help they need.

We pray for Wayne Smith and for all who have died recently; for Ilario Tassone and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time; we pray for all our deceased family members and friends.

#### IMPORTANT DATES

**Tuesday 30 January:** Schools reopen.

**Thursday 8 February:** 9.30 am St Mary's School  
Opening Mass

**Wednesday 14 February:** Ash Wednesday

**MARRIAGE:** Are you planning to celebrate your Marriage in 2024. Many couples begin their planning by booking a venue for the reception. If you are hoping to celebrate your marriage in a church, it is important to confirm your date with the church and with a priest before committing yourself to a reception or any other booking.

For information about celebrating your Marriage in St Mary's Church, please contact the parish office. To give priority to our own parishioners, we only accept a booking from a couple outside the parish 12 months prior to their marriage.

**LIVE STREAMING MASS:** We began live streaming the parish 9.30 am Mass in December 2020 after the first COVID lockdown. When we were confronted with the second COVID lockdown from June to October 2021, the live streaming provided a valuable link for our parish community.

The very professional coverage is made possible because someone is directing the video cameras. We thank Angela Kwa and James Kennedy, our two video directors, who share that role.

In 2024 we need to expand our team. We also need more volunteers to operate the PowerPoint presentation that provides the words of the hymns each Sunday at 9.30 am Mass.

**Are you interested in becoming part of the roster for the 9.30 am Mass?** Please speak to Fr Paul or contact the parish office.

The 9.30 am Sunday Mass can be viewed on the parish YouTube channel and on the parish Facebook page (St Marys Parish Church Concord).

#### 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.

# PRAYER IS LIFE



## NEW PODCAST ON PRAYER

Majellan Media has launched a new podcast series titled ***Prayer is Life*** featuring Redemptorist priest David Hore CSsR.

Fr Hore believes whether you're a person of faith, or simply someone at a 'crossroads in life', the podcasts can offer a deep reflection on how prayer can lead us to more "responsive and fulfilling lives, embodying the notion that prayer is life".

Topics will include new ways of praying; simplifying prayer; how God presents to us in our daily lives; the challenges of praying; God's need for our love; how do we know if we are praying properly and tips on how families can be more fully engaged in prayer.

Fr Hore says praying is simply a conversation with God. "Praying can take place anywhere and at any time. A prayer can last a few seconds while walking along a street, sitting in a park, gazing at a waterfall or soaking in a beautiful sunset. But prayer is also about listening and importantly how we listen and interact with God?"

A person's life and prayer can't be separated. "Prayer becomes the 'workshop of life'. In this sense work and prayer are intertwined.

It's also about a deeper journey of discovery and not just saying a prayer but having a greater appreciation and understanding of our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others, and with the world around us."

Majellan Media hopes ***Prayer is Life*** will also interest people of no faith. It began developing the idea of the series before Pope Francis announced a 'Year of Prayer' in 2024. It is a wonderful coincidence.

Pope Francis says a 'Year of Prayer' will lead the Catholic Church into its Jubilee Year in 2025, calling on the faithful to pray for Christian unity and world peace.

The first 15-minute podcast titled, **Introduction to Prayer**, is now available at

<https://majellan.media/prayer-islife-podcast/>

or on Spotify

<https://open.spotify.com/show/5vRkRYt6h8wIBGelpg7SNt>

as well as Apple and other podcast outlets.

Sourced from [www.majellan.media](http://www.majellan.media)

## SUNDAY and ORDINARY TIME

The Liturgical Year of the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church is framed by the two great feasts: Easter and Christmas. The Liturgical Year begins with Advent, the season when we prepare for Christmas. Lent, which this year begins on 14 February (Ash Wednesday), will then lead us to the Easter Triduum and the Easter season.

In between the Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter seasons are what we call the Ordinary Time. It is a short-hand name for *Ordinary Time throughout the Year* (in Latin *tempus per annum*).

We have become familiar with the term *Ordinary Time* for these "in between" Sundays. Yet the English word "ordinary" can also give the impression that these Sundays are not important. One consequence has been a tendency to introduce theme Sundays such as "Social Justice Sunday" and "Marriage & Family Sunday" into the Church calendar.

While there are many important issues on which we need to reflect, the danger is that we lose sight of the essential meaning of Sunday.

The various feasts and seasons that we celebrate today took several centuries to develop. In the first century, the focus for the Christian communities was Sunday. Those early Christian communities gathered on Sunday to celebrate the Eucharist because that was the day of the Resurrection.

In the New Testament we are told that the Resurrection took place on the first day of the week. At that time the "first day in the week" was also called by its Roman name, "Sunday" and it was a normal workday.

In Jewish society Saturday was the sabbath, the day of rest. Therefore, the Christian community would gather in the evening of the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). It was only in the fourth century that the Roman Emperor Constantine declared Sunday to be a day free from work.

In his First Letter to the Corinthians (11:17-35), St Paul criticizes some in the community for their behavior at the communal meal during which they celebrated the Lord's Supper. That seems to have led to the later separation of the Lord's Supper from a communal meal.

The Christian name for Sunday became "The Lord's Day" (in Latin *dies dominica*), flowing from the fact that it was the day on which the Lord's Supper was celebrated.

That Christian name for Sunday is still reflected in the present day Romance languages: *domenica* (Italian), *domingo* (Spanish) and *dimanche* (French).

Paul Crowley  
Parish Priest



## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR 2024

Each week the Parish Bulletin gives the references for the Sunday readings. This year is *Year B* of the three-year cycle of Sunday readings.

### *The Lectionary*

The Lectionary is the book containing the Scripture readings to be read at Mass. On Ordinary Sundays the first reading is always taken from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and is chosen to reflect on the Gospel reading for that Sunday. The Responsorial Psalm is chosen to respond to the message of the first reading.

The second reading is not connected with the first reading or the Gospel. It is an opportunity for us to read from the other books of the New Testament, particularly the Letters of St Paul. This Sunday and for the next four Sundays (until Lent begins) we will read from the **First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**. St Paul was writing from Ephesus in late 56 or very early in 57. Therefore, his letter to the Corinthians was written more than ten years before Mark wrote his Gospel.

### *St Mark's Gospel*

This year we will follow what is called a semi-continuous reading of Mark's Gospel. That is, one Sunday usually begins where the previous Sunday's Gospel concluded. However, because Mark's Gospel is the shortest of the four Gospels, on some Sundays the Lectionary turns to John's Gospel. The Second Ordinary Sunday is an example. Later in the year (July-August) we will read chapter 6 of John's Gospel over 8 Sundays.

Most scholars accept that Mark's Gospel was the first of the four Gospels to be written and it is dated between the years 70 and 75. That date is suggested by Mark's awareness of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70AD.

It is also accepted that Mark was not an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus. He represents the second generation of disciples who had received various oral accounts from those who were eyewitnesses.

Like the other evangelists, Mark wrote his Gospel for a particular community. Scholars believe that his Gospel was written for a community that had undergone persecution and was struggling to hold on to the message of Jesus.

We also know that Mark's Gospel, like all the books of the New Testament, was written in Greek. From his writing style we believe that Mark was a native Greek-speaker. However, his familiarity with the Roman world and his concern for the Mission to the Gentiles suggests that he was a member of the early Christian community in Rome.

*Paul Crowley,  
Parish Priest*

## PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding & Ministerial Integrity Office: [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org) or phone 02 9390 5810. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

**VOTIVE CANDLES:** A long Christian tradition has linked the lighting of a candle to prayers of petition. When we pray for a particular intention or for someone who has died, lighting a candle is visible expression of our prayer.

That is also why we give a donation so that it becomes "my candle" that I am offering to God as a sign of my prayer.

For safety reasons many churches have moved to electric votive candles. We have two electric votive candle stands to give parishioners an opportunity to "light" a candle. You simply need to touch the button in front of the candle.



In 2018 we also added a new votive candle stand in the shrine of **S Maria Vergine Annunziata** at the back of the church. It offers parishioners an opportunity to light a specially designed candle that fits into a glass holder.

If there are no candles in the glass cups, simply place the candle into the cup and use the lighter that is provided. Please do not lift the glass holders out of the stand. A donation can be placed in the box at the front of the stand.

The parish buys the special candles for that stand and your donations also help to cover the cost of the candles.

**BAPTISM OF CHILDREN 2024** Parents wishing to present a child for Baptism please note that Baptism is not celebrated at St Mary's Concord during the season of Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 14 February. Please contact the parish office for a booking.

**COLLECTIONS:** The practice of passing around the collection plates during Mass remains suspended. There are two containers at the back of the church and at the side door marked 1st and 2nd Collection. Your regular donations can be placed in the appropriate containers. For your convenience "Tap and Go" stations are available at the doors of the church. Tap to donate the set amount. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for donations and the "Tap & Go" transactions cannot be reversed.

**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 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> collections. Alternatively, you can scroll down for other options.

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:** New members are needed for 2024. 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 Parish Pastoral Council works with the parish priest to foster and support appropriate pastoral actions. Members serve a four-year term with half the Council changing every two years. The Pastoral Council meets on the first Tuesday of every second month from February to December. Any parishioner 18 years of age or older may be nominated or may nominate his/herself. If you are interested, please contact Fr Paul.

### 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, but please not tinned spaghetti. Donations can be placed in the blue bin on the table at the back of the church.

## 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)



## 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 Villa Residential Aged Care 2010*

## 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.