



## St Mary's Parish Concord

### Fourth Sunday of Easter

Year B

21 April 2024

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING:** Acts 4:7-12

*There is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Psalm 117

**The stone rejected by the builders has become the corner stone.**

**SECOND READING:** 1 John 3:1-2

*We will see God as he is.*

**GOSPEL:** John 10:11-18

*The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.*

#### PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for those who continue to suffer because of war and violent conflicts.

We pray for communities in many places recovering from recent natural disasters.

We pray for those who are sick, especially those who have no one to care for them.

We pray for Manuel Becerra, Patricia Fraser, Salvatore Dragotto and all those who have died recently; we pray for Matthew Bolton, Nita Licciardello, Mavis Hewish and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time; for all our deceased family members and friends.

#### CONFIRMATION 2024

Confirmation will be celebrated at 11am on Sunday 26 May. **Registrations will close on Monday 29 April.** To register please email the parish office and include your child's name, school and year to request enrolment. A registration form and information letter will be sent via return email.

#### ANZAC DAY

Each year we join with the wider Australian community to pray for those who have served in the Australian Defense Forces, particularly those who have been killed or injured in war.

ANZAC Day always falls in the Easter Season, a time when we remember that the Resurrection of Jesus has opened for us the way to eternal life.

**The parish ANZAC Day Mass on Thursday 25 April will be at 8.30 am.**

#### NEW TAP & GO TERMINALS

Thank you to all who donate to the parish through our Tap & Go terminals. New eftpos terminals are in place this week at the doors of the church. The new terminals allow you to choose your donation by selecting one of the preset amounts or by entering your own donation amount. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for eftpos donations and transactions cannot be reversed.

#### EASTER OFFERINGS

Envelopes are available on the pews. Easter Offerings, together with your contributions throughout the year to the first collection, go to the support of the clergy. Your contributions not only support our parish priest here at St Mary's Concord but also assist those smaller parishes where the local community cannot support a priest. It is one of the ways that we as a community help to support struggling parishes.

#### 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.

#### BLESSING OF A HOME AT EASTER:

Families are invited to take Easter Water from the blue container in the side porch. A simple prayer, *Blessing of a Home at Easter*, is also available.

## JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Each year on this fourth Sunday of Easter we read from chapter 10 of John's Gospel where Jesus declares that he is the Good Shepherd.

The image calls to mind the parable of the lost sheep that we find in Luke's Gospel (Lk 15:3-17) where the shepherd searches for the lost sheep and when he finds it, he places it on his shoulders and carries it home.

That led to the popular image of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, with a sheep across his shoulders. However, John's Gospel presents a more profound message. While still using the metaphor of the shepherd, the focus for John's Gospel is not the lost sheep but the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep.

The passage that we have heard this Sunday (Jn 10:11-18) is about the relationship between Jesus and the Father and how we are drawn into that relationship. It helps us to understand our relationship with God.

Brendan Byrne notes in his commentary on this passage: "Readers of the gospel are being prepared here for the way in which they are to view the events of the passion: not as a brutal execution of a helpless captive but as the enactment in love of the divine shepherding role." (*Life Abounding* p 174).

In John's account of the Passion, Jesus is the one in control. His life is not taken from him; he freely lays down his life to take it up again in the resurrection. He can only do that because he and the Father are one. His acceptance of his death as the Father's will is the culmination of the love that exists between the Father and the Son.

We become sharers in that act of divine love through the gift of the Holy Spirit. By becoming one with Jesus in the Eucharist, we become one with him in his self-offering to the Father.

Next Sunday we will continue to explore what it means to abide in that relationship with Jesus in the image of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8).

*Paul Crowley*

## PROJECT COMPASSION

Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2024 Lenten appeal. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, for all future generations. If you still have a box or envelopes at home, [we encourage you to return them next Sunday](#). Donations can still be made by calling 1800 024 413 or at [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion)

**THE EASTER CANDLE:** Each year the Easter Vigil begins with the entry into the darkened church of the new Paschal Candle, the symbol of Risen Christ, the Light of the world. The 2024 Paschal Candle has been made by the Benedictine nuns of Jamberoo Abbey.

## THE EASTER SEASON

The Easter Triduum is the most solemn period in our liturgical calendar. It extends from Holy Thursday evening to Easter Sunday, which marks both the end of the Triduum and the beginning of the Easter Season.

The unity of the Easter Season, as an extended time of rejoicing, is also indicated by the fact that this Sunday is called the Second Sunday of Easter and not the first Sunday after Easter.

The Easter Season extends to Pentecost Sunday. This period of seven weeks or fifty days has its origin in *The Acts of the Apostles* (2:1-11) where Luke describes the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles on the Jewish feast of Weeks (Shavuot). That feast was also known by the Greek name "Pentecost" because it was celebrated fifty days after the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The three-year cycle of readings continues during the Easter Season and this year we continue to follow Year B.

The first readings are from *The Acts of the Apostles*. Written by St Luke, it is the story of the growth of the early Christian communities and the role of the apostles as witnesses of the resurrection. The second readings in Year B are from the First Letter of John.

The Gospel readings on the Sundays of Easter are mainly taken from *St John's Gospel* which presents a different account of the ministry of Jesus from that found in the other three Gospels. The two exceptions will be the Third Sunday when we listen to Luke's account of the appearance of Jesus to the disciples after his resurrection and the Ascension when we will hear Mark's account.

As another sign of the unity of the season, the Easter Candle, a symbol of the risen Lord, remains near the altar until the evening of Pentecost Sunday. It is lit during all Masses throughout the season.

To highlight the festive nature of the season many traditional prayers are also changed. The *Angelus* is replaced by the *Regina Caeli* and Alleluia is added to many prayers. There is also an ancient tradition that there is no kneeling during the Easter Season.

*Paul Crowley*

## IMPORTANT DATES for 2024

**Friday 16 August Parish Dinner**

The Parish Dinner will be our opportunity to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the parish. The 2020 Sesquicentenary celebrations were cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. Further details will be available in the coming weeks.

The dinner will also be one of the opportunities for the parish community to celebrate Fr Paul's Golden Jubilee of Ordination (7 September 1974).

**ST MARY'S PLAYGROUP** will not be meeting during the school holidays. Playgroup will recommence **Friday 5 May 9.30am** in the parish hall.

## 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, has been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding & Ministerial Integrity Office: phone 02 9390 5810 or [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org) You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese of Sydney has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

**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.

**PARKING FOR MASS:** On-site parking is only available in the Church Forecourt via the Parramatta Road gates. Please park your vehicle rear to the buildings to avoid reversing after Mass and drivers please be patient as you leave. Do not move your vehicle while people are still exiting from the church.

**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.

**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. Baptised members of other Christian Churches, who wish to be 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.

## 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.