



**St Mary's Parish Concord**  
**The Ascension of the Lord**  
Year B  
16 May 2021

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**FIRST READING:** Acts 1:1-11

*As the disciples were watching, Jesus was lifted up.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Ps 47

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

**SECOND READING:** Ephesians 4:1-13

*We build up the body of Christ.*

**GOSPEL:** Mark 16:15-20

*The Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.*

**PRAYER INTENTIONS**

We pray for Frances Capizzi, Tommaso Di Giovanni, David O'Reilly (Ireland) and all those who have died recently.

We pray for Kath Travers, Antonietta Cartiere, Concetta Demasi, Leonie Crotty, Gregory & Patricia McCue and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

We pray for all our deceased family members, friends and parishioners.

We pray for those in India and in many other places who have died of the COVID-19 virus, for their families and all who mourn for them.

**WEEKDAY MASSES:** Please note that there will be no Mass on Friday 21 May. A Communion Service will be held at 8.30 am.

Due to Fr Paul's absence on his annual leave, a Communion Service will replace the 8.30 am Monday to Friday Mass from Tuesday 25 May to Friday 18 June.

**CONFIRMATION**

*We congratulate the members of our parish community who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation this Saturday and Sunday*

**CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

All are welcome to join us at our Sunday and weekday Masses. No bookings are required.

**The most recent changes to the Government restrictions require those attending church services this weekend to wear a mask.**

Churches are required to observe the 2 sq m rule that limits the capacity of any particular building. Under that rule the capacity of St Mary's Concord is 350. All pews are now available. However, those who do not belong to the same household must maintain social distancing by sitting 1.5m from others.

**All those attending must still register using the QR Code.** To use the QR Code you first need to download the Services NSW App to your phone.

Those who do not have a smart phone must record their name and contact details (phone or email) on the forms provided at the church doors. Please write clearly. It is very important that your details are accurately recorded.

**SCHOOL ENROLMENT 2022:** St Mary's School is now enrolling students for Kindergarten in 2022. An application form is available from the school office or phone 9744 0260 or email your request to [info@stmconcord.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@stmconcord.catholic.edu.au) Visit the school website for more information [www.stmconcord.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stmconcord.catholic.edu.au).

We look forward to welcoming new families into the school and parish communities.

**Acknowledgement of Country**



**We acknowledge the Wangal people of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of this land.**

**PASTORAL LETTER:** Archbishop Anthony Fisher has written a Pastoral Letter for Pentecost. Copies are available for the table at the back of the church and in the side porch. The Archbishop's Letter encourages all those who can return to Sunday Mass to join us at Mass. Many parishioners are still reluctant to return because of the COVID restrictions. **We are fortunate that St Mary's Church is large enough to welcome all who wish to join us at our Sunday Masses without the need to book.**

There are also cards available that you are encouraged to take and give to family and friends as an invitation to come and join us.

A copy is also available online on the *Go Make*

*Disciples* website: [www.gomakedisciples.org.au](http://www.gomakedisciples.org.au)

### PARISH COMMUNITY AFTER COVID

The Parish Pastoral Council is currently reflecting on *Go Make Disciples*, the Mission Plan for the Archdiocese of Sydney. Their aim is to set our goals for the future. One of the foundation areas of the Mission Plan is Community.

As we slowly emerge from the COVID pandemic lockdown, one of the challenges we face is the rebuilding of our parish community.

Many of the things that we took for granted in the past still cannot happen. In preparation for Confirmation, we would normally invite our candidates and their families to join us on this Sunday for an enrollment ceremony within the 9.30 am Mass. Unfortunately, that cannot happen at present.

We then would have gathered for a morning tea. Our monthly morning teas remain suspended.

We also need to rebuild our teams of volunteers who regularly took Holy Communion to the Sick. Many of our older parishioners are still not confident to come back to Mass.

They are a few examples of the challenges we face. If you are interested in being part of this important reflection, come and join the Pastoral Council. New members are welcome. Speak to Fr Paul or contact the Parish Office for more details.

**PLAYGROUP:** A Playgroup for pre-school aged children began in September 2019 and like many other activities it was forced to close in March 2020 due to COVID. The Playgroup is an initiative of St Mary's School and is organized by Leeanne Favotto, the Family Educator at the school.

**The playgroup meets in the Parish/School Hall on Fridays from 9.30 to 10.45 am and is held each Friday during the school term.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Playgroup will **not meet** on 21 May (due to the school sports carnival) and 11 June (Staff Development Day - school is closed).

If you wish to attend with your child, please contact the school office 9744 0260 or email [leeanne.favotto@syd.catholic.edu.au](mailto:leeanne.favotto@syd.catholic.edu.au)

**SOCIAL JUSTICE SURVEY** The Justice and Peace Office is an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney which promotes, justice, peace ecology and development according to the social teaching of the Catholic Church. To better undertake our work, which includes supporting parish social justice groups to engage in charitable and social justice works, we would like to find out what issues are of most concern to the people in our parishes. If you could take a few minutes to fill out the survey at this link, it would be appreciated:

<https://forms.gle/ButTM6mZMmpTkCoD9>

If you have any questions please email [jpinfo@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:jpinfo@sydneycatholic.org).

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** at 9.30 am Mass to assist with the livestreaming and the projection of the words of prayers and hymns. Training is available and the aim is to create a roster to share these new roles within the parish community. Please speak to Fr Paul after Mass or email [parish@stmarysconcord.org.au](mailto:parish@stmarysconcord.org.au)

**LIVE STREAMING MASS:** The 9.30 am Sunday Mass each week is now being live streamed to the parish YouTube channel:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL0awxfUmJ6XjHJZcqsR2\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL0awxfUmJ6XjHJZcqsR2_A)

It is also possible to view the Mass on the parish Facebook page: St Mary's Parish Church Concord.

**GO MAKE DISCIPLES** Archbishop Anthony Fisher has launched a new Archdiocesan Mission Plan *Go Make Disciples*. The new plan is aimed at renewing parishes as places of encounter with the living Christ and centres of outreach to our community in love and mercy.

**To find out more about the Mission Plan go to** <https://www.gomakedisciples.org.au/>

**VINNIE'S NSW FLOOD APPEAL:** The St Vincent de Paul Society has been helping Australians in crisis for nearly 140 years. To supply evacuees with food, clothing, household goods, and longer term recovery, we need your help. Vinnies has a network of members living in these communities across NSW who are ready to provide people with practical assistance and emotional support. If you are able to help, please donate to the Vinnies NSW Flood Appeal. Donations can be made by calling 13 18 12, at [www.vinnies.org.au/NSWFloodAppeal](http://www.vinnies.org.au/NSWFloodAppeal) or at any Vinnie's store.

**GIFT OF BREAD:** The *Gift of Bread* program has created a donation page called "**Who gives a loaf? You can.**" The banner photo on the donate page is the team from St Mary's Concord in the parish hall. The program needs cash donations to keep their outreach services operational. If you can support this program, please go to:

<https://www.givenow.com.au/givealoaf>

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Children's Liturgy is part of the 9.30 am Mass on Sunday. The children go aside to listen to the Gospel reading of the Sunday and share prayers and reflections. All children of primary school age are invited to attend.

## THE EASTER SEASON

The Easter Season extends from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. This period of seven weeks or fifty days has its origin in *The Acts of the Apostles* (2:1-11) which 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 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. It is also why no other feast can take precedence over the Sundays of Easter.

This year ANZAC Day falls on a Sunday and although it is an important celebration in the Australian community, the Mass on 25 April will be that of the Fourth Sunday of Easter. The one exception is the *Ascension of the Lord*. In many countries it is moved from the Thursday of the sixth week to the seventh Sunday of Easter

The three-year cycle of readings continues during the Easter Season and this year we continue to follow the Year B readings. Across the three year cycle, the first reading is always taken 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 Gospel readings on the Sundays of Easter are taken from *John's Gospel* which presents an account of the teachings of Jesus that is different from that found in the other three Gospels.

Another sign of the unity of the season is the Easter Candle, an image of the risen Lord. It remains near the altar until the evening of Pentecost Sunday. It is lit during all Masses throughout the Easter 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.

Paul Crowley

**RACHEL'S VINEYARD RETREATS** offer healing and hope to women and men hurt by an abortion experience. For more information go to [www.rachelsvineyard.org.au](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org.au)

**PARISH COLLECTIONS:** We are still not able to pass around the plates for the traditional parish collections. If you are able to continue your support of the parish's Mission through the collections, buckets are available on the table at the back of the church and near the side entrance. They are marked 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. The station inside the main entrance is set for \$10 and the side entrance for \$5. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for donations and the transactions cannot be reversed

### ST VINCENT DE PAUL - MEMBERS NEEDED:

The St Mary's Concord SVdP Conference is seeking new members. If you are interested in joining or in hearing more about their important ministry, please call or text Poppy on 0438430347 or email [poppy@archb.com.au](mailto:poppy@archb.com.au) to express your interest. The Concord Conference meets in the parish hall once a fortnight on Wednesday evening for about an hour. Between meetings members also help to distribute emergency assistance in the local area.

**MEALS ON WHEELS:** Volunteers are needed to assist with the delivery and/or packing of meals. If you can help or need more information, please contact: 9747-1135 or [delivery@bcw.org.au](mailto:delivery@bcw.org.au)

### JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE FOODBANK

Right now, JRS is feeding 1000 people a week and the demand for help keeps growing. COVID-19 has disproportionately affected the lives of people seeking asylum and temporary migrants in Australia, as they remain excluded from all forms of Federal government support. 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.

**PRIVATE PRAYER IN THE CHURCH:** The church will be open for private prayer on Sunday after the 9.30 am Mass after the 6.00 pm Mass and on Monday to Friday from 9.00 am until 12 noon. All those entering the church must record their name and contact details.

### 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 you have available to you. Please contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on phone: 9390 5812.

**CARE SUPPORT WORKERS:** CatholicCare are seeking applicants with a Certificate III in Aged Care (or similar) and relevant experience to join their team of Community Support Workers who provide home care to our clients across Sydney.

The role includes assisting Seniors with the following service requirements: accompanying clients on errands and appointments; domestic assistance; meal preparation; personal care; social support. They are also recruiting Greek and Italian speaking Care Support Workers. If you are a carer with the relevant qualifications and speak one or both of these languages, we encourage you to apply. Find out more by visiting [www.catholiccare.org/jobs](http://www.catholiccare.org/jobs) Or call our CCareline team - 8am to 6pm weekdays on 13 18 19.

**ONLINE MARRIAGE SEMINAR:** The Marriage Kit – Online Seminar is a six week workshop series for married couples wanting a lasting, passionate relationship. Facilitated through the SmartLoving learning platform, from the privacy of your home, the course includes self-directed learning with your spouse that you complete together. Four facilitated Zoom meetings will provide you with opportunities to ask questions, share your insights and connect with other couples in the course. For more information go to:

<https://members.smartloving.org/rockhampton-marriage-kit-seminar/>

## Australians' Spiritual Practices in a year of crises

NCLS Research is a world leader in research focused on connecting churches and their communities.

Decades of rigorous and thoughtful research has examined wellbeing, spirituality and church health. The most well known five-yearly project is called the **National Church Life Survey**, which has had millions of participants. Cooperating denominations, including Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants, are a network for sharing practical resources to help churches and communities.



Life changed significantly for Australians in 2020, with bushfires, floods and then the COVID-19 pandemic. Many church services went online, people stayed home and zoom meetings became commonplace.

In this context, we asked Australians about their experiences of stress, wellbeing, spirituality and church, in the 2020 Australian Community Survey. Nearly seven in 10 Australians say that spirituality is important in personal wellbeing, in the context of events including bushfires and COVID-19. The greatest stressors listed are family relationships and social isolation.

Just under half of Australians report personally drawing on spiritual practices during the year, with 15% of those people increasing the level of their practice in 2020. While fewer Australians participated in religious services after March 2020 than before, a moderate proportion of Australians engaged in other spiritual practices.

Spending time in nature or outdoors; listening to music; and praying and meditating are the spiritual practices of most appeal.

As we approach Christmas, around four in ten Australians say they are open to being invited to church by family and friends.

**For more information about the work of NCLS go to <http://www.ncls.org>.**

**HERITAGE SIGNS:** St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the parish. They have now been installed 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). They have been placed close to the original locations of the buildings.



## THE FIRST CHURCH OPENED IN 1845

The first church built of the St Mary's Parish site was blessed and opened by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845. The painting that now hangs in the parish hall is based on a photograph taken in 1917 when the hall was under construction.

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 stood in the present Church Forecourt in front of the parish hall. It was blessed by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845.

At that time there was no resident priest. A priest came from Parramatta, where the parish of St Patrick's had been established in 1827. When the parish of Petersham (now Lewisham) was established in 1851, the church at Concord became part of Petersham parish. St Mary's Concord became a parish in 1870.

The first church was also used as a hall and a school. A Catholic School, operating with Government funds, had begun operating on the parish site in 1846.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2020-21

The ACBC Office for Social Justice have released the Social Justice Statement for 2020-21, entitled To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today. This year's Statement encourages faith communities, governments, and each one of us to make mental health a priority. It is a timely message in a year where we have experienced bushfires, floods and the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has also influenced the way in which the Statement and associated materials are being distributed this year. The Social Justice Statement and prayer card for 2020-21 have been made available online as free downloads. To download your copies now, please visit <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

## CELEBRATING AT HOME

We can be united with each other in prayer by setting aside a time when we can pause and read the Word of God and share our reflections. Many find it helpful to create a "prayer space" that helps us to focus. We can also find those places where the Mass is being televised or live streamed. For those who have access to the Internet there are many places that offer prayers and resources to help us. Those listed below are some examples

**LITURGY BRISBANE** offers a range of resources that are updated each week. They can be found on the Liturgy Brisbane website at <https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/>

The Brisbane Liturgy website gives the Sunday readings with associated commentaries and prayers. It is suggested that families gather to read the Scriptures aloud together.

**FAMILY PRAYER**  
WEEK BY WEEK

The second resource is designed for families with young children. An extract from the Sunday gospel is provided, along with some reflection questions, a family activity and a worksheet for children.

We invite you to share these resources with anyone who may find them useful.

**SACRED SCRIPTURE** Set aside a time each day to read the Bible by taking a book, such as one of the Gospels or the Psalms, and working your way through it together. Pause and reflect on the passage. Use *Lectio Divina* when reading a bible text – this is explained in **Universalis** (see below) and also on the Jamberoo Abbey website.

**THE ROSARY** is a prayer that a family can easily recite together or can be said by those living alone.

**The Examen** is a daily reflection that aims to help us to review how God is present in the ordinary moments of life. It is done at the end of the day and is inspired by the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola.

Search iTunes or other platforms for the following podcasts:

***The Examen with Fr James Martin SJ***

This 18 minute Podcast offers a guided reflection from the American Jesuits.

### **Are you struggling in this time of crisis?**

Depression. Anxiety. Loneliness. Conflict. Stress. CCareline 13 18 19 is a free and confidential helpline for counselling, relationships, parenting, ageing, disabilities, addictions and mental health. For help finding help, call CCareline on 13 18 19



## **HOUSE OF WELCOME FOODBANK APPEAL**



Foodbank provides household necessities for people seeking asylum who have limited or no income. People can access groceries on a weekly basis to alleviate the cost of living. The Foodbank program is largely stocked through the generosity of people in the community. No contribution is too small.

**Contact: [office@houseofwelcome.com.au](mailto:office@houseofwelcome.com.au)**

**197 The Trongate, Granville**

**Ph: 02 9727 9290**

**[stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome](http://stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome)**