



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

*"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."*

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills. NSW. 2147

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**Parish Priest:** Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran  
**Parish Deacon:** Deacon Thong Nguyen  
**Parish Office Team:** Rosie Sadipoor, Kim Dang Jane Nguyen  
**Office Hours: Monday-Friday:** 9am - 3.00pm  
**WEEKDAY MASS:** Tues, Wed, Fri. 8.00am  
Thursday 9.00am  
**WEEKEND MASS:** Saturday Vigil 6pm  
Sunday 8am & 9.30am

**Parish School:** OLOL 8869 6800  
**Principal:** Ms Keiran Byrnes  
**Reconciliation:** Saturday 4:30-5:30pm  
**Baptismal Preparation:** 21st February 2024  
**Baptism:** 25th February 2024  
**Sacrament Co-Ordinator:** Mrs Artelle Lenthall  
**Parish Website:** [www.lol7hills.com.au](http://www.lol7hills.com.au)  
**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 18th February 2024 • Year B



### Let us Pray for the Sick

Leonila Ahillon, Mary Attard, Cynthia Avery, Rosella Booth, Barrie Chamberlain, Penny Briscoe, Para Dias, Gerard Noval, Anthony Janicska, Blago Milicevic, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Carlos Moreno, Maricar Poblete, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan, Guza Schembri, Sue Tipaldo, Natalie Woodward.

If you would like to add to our Sick List or know of any Parishioner who is unwell please contact Father Henry or email the Parish Office: [secretary@lol7hills.com.au](mailto:secretary@lol7hills.com.au)  
We can also arrange for Holy Communion or a visit if required.

### Let us Pray for the Deceased

**Recently Deceased:** Anastacia Monica Cormio, Gloria Hansen, Cathy Howard, Mark Jim Racuya, Vinnie Zahra.

**Anniversaries:** Fredy Alphonse, Carsal & Tamasin Castana, Conception, Dominic & Monica D'Souza, Joe Falzon, John Fernando, M.A Fernando, E & Sheela Franklin, Emily Galea, Josephine Gomez, Harold Lafleur, Jason Muscat, Mile Perak, Cordula Paiva, Maria Reyes, Jose Reyes, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Helen Tanti, Alison Vella, Melchor Usman.

**Remembrance:** Neil Amaratunga, Carmen Attard, Sydney Azie, Roy, Mary & Des Barney, France Angseeing, Miriam Busutill, John Cini, & Cini Family, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Carmen DeGuarie, Joe & Launcer Deguarie, Jimmy Deguarie, Tony DeGuarie, Tania Deguire, Maximilian & Julian Epondulan, Melvyn Fernandes, Mary Galea, Sam Gabo, Jean, Elsie, Karl & Gervais Garrick, Tino & Mana Kama, Elizabeth Jean Hancock, Selvam Irudayaraj, Norma Lorenzo, Apolinario and Felina Maglaya, Mangion Family, Tania McGove, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Pauline Meilak, Mary Mifsud, Emilia & William Mifsud, Anton & Lourda Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Mary & Francis Muscat, Elizabeth Pinter, John & Roseline Ratnam, Jonathan Tek Kie, Shane Vaz, Jim & Alison Vella.

### Funeral Notices

Vinnie Zahra

Monday 19th February 2024, 10am at  
St Patrick's Church 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown  
*May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen*

### THE PILGRIM STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The Statue of Virgin Mary is available for home visitation and will reside with you for a week, being Sunday to Saturday. If you are wishing to participate, please leave your name and address at the Parish Office or contact Maryse Augseeing on 0467 701 010.

### Our Lady of Lourdes

Ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my needs, my troubles, my sufferings; cast on me a look of pity.  
By appearing in the grotto of Lourdes, you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary, from which you dispense your favours, and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their infirmities, both spiritual and physical.  
I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence to implore your maternal intercession.  
Obtain most loving mother, my requests, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.  
*Amen.*



### REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second

**FIRST COLLECTION and Matt's Point** is for the support of Priests throughout the Diocese.

#### ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

**Account name:** Parramatta Diocesan Clergy  
**BSB:** 067 950  
**ACC:** 00 00 4265  
**Reference:** Seven Hills - 6035

### SECOND COLLECTION or Planned Giving Program

On behalf of the Parish Community, I would like to thank you very much for your ongoing support, which has been absolutely vital in keeping our Parish going strong. Projects completed include the Hall Kitchen renovation, Parish Meeting Room painting, Parish Office and Meeting Room Roof painted, Church roof cleaned and ceiling repaired and painted.

#### ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

**Account Name:** Seven Hills Catholic Church.  
**BSB:** 067 950  
**ACC:** 000552  
**Reference:** (Your *Planned Giving envelope number* or for a one off donation, 'DONATION')

#### IN-PERSON BANK DEPOSIT (at a Bank Inst / Branch)

**Account Name:** Seven Hills Catholic Church  
**BSB:** 062 315  
**ACC ID #** 00901486  
**AGENT #** 660



### KEEP UP TO DATE

By visiting our parish website with news, the bulletin, prayers and much more - a great way to stay up to date with what's on in our parish Visit [www.lol7hills.org.au](http://www.lol7hills.org.au)

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**FIRST READING** A reading from the book of Genesis 9:9-15

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

The Word of the Lord.

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**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

**(R)** Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

1. Lord, make me know your ways.  
Lord, teach me your paths.  
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:  
for you are God my saviour. **(R.)**

3. The Lord is good and upright.  
He shows the path to those who stray,  
he guides the humble in the right path;  
he teaches his way to the poor. **(R.)**

2. Remember your mercy, Lord,  
and the love you have shown from of old.  
In your love remember me,  
because of your goodness, O Lord. **(R.)**

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**SECOND READING** A reading from the first letter of St Peter 3:18-22

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

The Word of the Lord.

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**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!  
No one lives on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

**GOSPEL** A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

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Dear friends,

As we know, the length of Lent is 40 days and some people wonder why it has to be 40 days, and not 30 or 60. Well, the answer is that because 40 is a scripturally-inspired number related to lot of significant moments both in the Old and New Testament.

In the Old Testament, the great Flood in the time of Noah prolonged for 40 days, meant to purify human wickedness; then the Israelites had to wander in the deserts for 40 years before they were allowed to enter the land God had promised to give them due to their failures to put their trust in him, and prior to his

acceptance of the tablets of the Ten Commandments, Moses had to spend three consecutive periods of 40 days and nights on Mt Sinai, and in time of the prophets later on, Elijah had to walk for 40 days and nights to get to Mt Horeb.

In the New Testament, 40 days is the period from Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension, and prior to Jesus' public ministry, Jesus went into a retreat in the wilderness for 40 days living with the wild beasts and was tempted by Satan as the writer of Mark's Gospel recounts in his narrative today. Though being alone in the wilderness, Jesus actually was not lonely at all, because he had by his side the angels who were there to look after him.

When his retreat time ended Jesus came out to start his public ministry proclaiming God's Good News. He asked his contemporary to repent and believe the Good News of faith and love as their way to welcome the kingdom of the God, the time of God.

Significantly the short and sweet message that Jesus preached to the crowds is the highlight both of the Gospel's account this Sunday, and of the entire season of Lent before us. It re-echoes the message you heard last Wednesday when you came up to receive your ashes asking each of us to turn away from the wrong path of sins and show our faith in God by means of hearing Jesus' teachings, ultimately summed up in two parts or two commandments if you like, meaning the love of God and the love of humanity asking us to love God and others, and putting them into practice.

Let us draw from the wellspring of the Eucharist today the grace to help us identify the areas of our weakness and turn away from them, and be more committed in bearing witness to the Gospel by the ways we love God and those around us.

Have a charity-oriented week,

*Fr Henry*

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## PARISH NEWS...

### PARISH FEAST DAY THANK YOU

Thank you to all for enthusiastically joining our Parish community both in the Thanksgiving Mass and the lovely festivities following in the hall. Thank you especially to our Parish force of volunteers led by Evelyn Beed for providing an abundant variety of international dishes and help to serve them with love, and also spectacular entertainments.

### CHILDREN'S LITURGY

All children from ages 5 yrs and up are invited to join in the Children's Liturgy during this Sunday's 9.30am Mass.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday during lent at 7.30pm.

### PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Our PPC met last week and as usual Council members dedicated some time to go through the recent document called Fiducia Supplicans (The Supplicating Trust) recently released by the dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and discussed the point about the non-liturgical blessing for people in irregular relationships. The Council also talked about the possibility to introduce the Family group to our Parish community. We are interested in hearing from you of any experience you might have about this group.

### CANDLE WAX ON THE CHURCH CARPET

Please do not try to remove candle wax on the church carpet by yourselves, for you might make it worse. Instead let our staff know and we ask our carpet cleaners to treat it.

### PARISH BIN ROSTER - VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

We are seeking volunteers to assist 4 times a year to place the Parish bins on the kerbside (Grantham Road) once a week on Tuesday. Please contact the Parish Office if you are able to help out. *Thank you.*

### PARISH ANNUAL RETREAT

Many thanks to Br Barry Donahue for leading our Parish retreat this year, to our generous volunteers for supplying food and drinks and to those who spared their precious time to join in this annual spiritual exercise of our Parish.

### CATECHIST MEETING

First meeting for all catechists will be on Tuesday the 20th of February at 10am in the parish meeting room. Due to urgent matters, please spare time to attend. For further enquires or if you are unable to attend, please contact Deacon Thong or Anne McNally through the parish office.

### CATECHIST ORIENTATION

There is an orientation meeting for those who are interested in teaching children at local public schools about the love of Jesus. The meeting is at 10am, Thursday 22nd February, in the Parish Office. Everyone is most welcome to attend. For further information, please contact our parish office.

### LENTEN BOOK CLUB

A group of parishioners are gathering for an hour on five Tuesday evenings during Lent to share thoughts on "Opening Doors - A Seeker's Reflection on the Rooms of Christian Living" by Dr Kevin Treston, an author and educator living in Brisbane. We start in the Meeting Room on Tuesday 20th February at 7.30pm. Zoom also available. If you would like to join us please call Adrian on 0408 649 327

### THE PILGRIM STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Thank you to the wonderfully pleasant families who have graciously had The Statue of Virgin Mary reside in their homes. For those still wishing to participate, please contact the Parish office or Maryse Augseesing on 0467 701 010 .



## DIOCESAN NEWS

### NEW Diocesan website launched

The new [parracatholic.org](http://parracatholic.org) website is now here with exciting new features and functionality including a comprehensive 'Find a Mass' function which includes Daily and Weekend Masses, Reconciliation and Adoration times; a centralised event calendar; Daily Mass readings and different ways you can contribute to the Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Check it out today!

### Youth Mass 'Round the Diocese: 25 February

Looking for some young adults to worship with? Hunting for an excuse to catch up with Jesus and friends? Wondering what goes on around our Diocese? Mass 'Round the Diocese is just that! Our young people are visiting different churches around the Diocese for Mass and fellowship afterwards with new and known friends. The next Mass will be at Our Lady, Queen of Peace Parish, Greystanes, on Sunday 25 February for 6pm Mass. For more information, please contact Laura on [laura@stbernadette.org.au](mailto:laura@stbernadette.org.au)

### Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend: 24 – 25 February

How prepared are you for marriage? Engaged Encounter provides you with deeper insights into each other and into married life. We give you a chance to spend time together to strengthen and enrich your relationship. The next Engaged Encounter Weekend will be held on 24 and 25 February, with future dates in May, August and November 2024. For further information and to register, visit [www.engagedencounter.org.au/](http://www.engagedencounter.org.au/)

### Catholic Youth Parramatta 2024 LIFTED Launch: 29 February

LIFTED Launch 2024 is here! Join young people from across our Diocese for an evening of faith, live music, formation, and announcements. Learn about ways you can meet, connect and 'walk with' other young people | West HQ Rooty Hill, 29 February 2024, 7pm to 9:30pm. Register [www.parracatholic.org/liftedlaunch](http://www.parracatholic.org/liftedlaunch)

### Grace & Silence Retreat for Young Women: 3 March

The Mount Schoenstatt Girls and Young Women ministry invite single women aged 20 to 40 discerning a vocation to marriage and family, single life or consecrated life to a series of silent retreat days beginning Sunday 3 March from 9.30am to 4.30pm at Bethany, 301 Fairlight Road, Mulgoa. Remaining sessions are 7 April, 5 May and 2 June. Cost is \$25 per day or \$90 for the full series. For catering purposes, registrations close a week prior to each event. For details, contact Hannah on 0433 443 384.

### Celebrating Holy Week: Formation for Ministers of the Altar: 9 March

The Office for Worship presents 'Celebrating Holy Week' – a workshop for current Acolytes and Ministers at the Altar presented by Chris Ohlsen. It will be held on Saturday 9 March from 9:30am to 3pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. To register or for more information, please contact [lucy.woodbury@parracatholic.org](mailto:lucy.woodbury@parracatholic.org) or call (02) 8838 3456 by 5 March 2024.

### Marriage Preparation Courses in 2024

Getting married in 2024? Let the Diocese of Parramatta help you prepare. Visit [www.parracatholic.org/celebrate/marriage/marriage-preparation](http://www.parracatholic.org/celebrate/marriage/marriage-preparation) to view weekend course dates in the New Year, to book and pay. An online preparation called *SmartLoving* can also be booked via the website. For more information, email [marriage@parracatholic.org](mailto:marriage@parracatholic.org) or Marisa on 0412 280 017.

### Diocesan Lent & Holy Week Scripture Reflection Evening: 20 March

Looking for a way to reflect on your experience of Lent as we enter Holy Week? Interested in praying with the Scripture readings for Holy Week? Register for the Diocesan Lent & Holy Week Scripture Reflection Evening Wednesday 20 March 2024 – 6:30PM to 8:30pm. RSVP via QR or get in touch with the team via [met@parracatholic.org](mailto:met@parracatholic.org)



### Light to the Nations (LTTN) Easter Youth Pilgrimage: 28 – 31 March

LTTN is an Easter Pilgrimage event held biannually for Catholics (singles and families) aged 16+. Camp under the open skies with up to 1,000+ as we celebrate the Easter Triduum. The event will be held on the grounds of Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville from 28 – 31 March 2024. Visit [www.lttan.org.au](http://www.lttan.org.au) for more information and register today. Contact [rego@ltn.org.au](mailto:rego@ltn.org.au) or ring Therese MGL on 0432 228 250.



### First Sunday of Lent 17 & 18 February



This year, Project Compassion brings you the stories of three resilient women: Ronita from the Philippines, Leaia from Samoa and Memory from Malawi. While from three different corners of the world and facing vastly different challenges, they are all united by one dream: to create a better world for all future generations.

#### Please donate to Project Compassion.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.

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## POPE FRANCIS' ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*



Today's Gospel presents us with the healing of a leper (cf. *Mk* 1:40-45). To the sick man, who implores Him, Jesus answers: "I will; be clean!" (v. 41). He utters a very simple phrase, which He immediately puts into practice. Indeed, "immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean" (v. 42). This is Jesus' style with those who suffer: few words, and concrete deeds. Many times, in the Gospel, we see Him behave in this way towards those who suffer: deaf mutes (cf. *Mk* 7:31-37), paralytics (cf. *Mk* 2:1-12), and many others in need (cf. *Mk* 5). He always does this: He speaks little and His words are followed promptly by actions: He bows, takes by the hand, and heals. He does not waste time with discourses or interrogations, much less in pietism or sentimentalism. Rather, He shows the delicate modesty of one who listens attentively and acts with solicitude, preferably without being conspicuous.

It is a wonderful way to love, and how it would do us good to imagine it and assimilate it! Let us also think of when it we happen to encounter people who act like this: sober in words, but generous in action; reluctant to show off but ready to make themselves useful; effective in helping because they are willing to listen. Friends to whom one can say: "Do you want to listen to me? Do you want to help me?", with the confidence of hearing them answer, almost with Jesus' words: "Yes, *I will*, I am here for you, to help you!". This concreteness is so much more important in a world such as our own, in which an evanescent virtuality of relationships seems to be gaining ground. Let us listen instead to how the Word of God provokes us: "If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled', without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?" (*James* 2:15-16). The Apostle James says this. Love needs tangibility, love needs presence, encounter, it needs to be given time and space: it cannot be reduced to beautiful words, to images on a screen, momentary selfies and hasty messages. They are useful tools that can help, but they are not enough for love; they cannot substitute real presence.

Let us ask ourselves today: do I know how to listen to people, am I ready to meet their requests? Or do I make excuses, procrastinate, hide behind abstract or useless words? In real terms, when was the last time I went to visit someone who was alone or sick – everyone can answer in their heart – or when was the last time I changed my plans to meet the needs of someone who asked me for help?

May Mary, solicitous in care, help us to be ready and tangible in love.

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### After the Angelus

Today, María Antonia de Paz y Figueroa was canonized: an Argentine saint. A round of applause for the new saint! Today, on the memorial of the Blessed Virgin of Lourdes, we celebrate World Day of the Sick, which this year draws attention to the importance of *relationships* in sickness. The first thing we need when we are ill is the proximity of loved ones, of healthcare professionals and, in our heart, God's closeness. We are all required to be a neighbour to those who suffer, to visit the sick as Jesus teaches us in the Gospel. Therefore, today I wish to express my closeness, and that of the entire Church, to all those who are sick or frail. Let us not forget God's style: proximity, compassion and tenderness. But on this Day, brothers and sisters, we cannot remain silent about the fact that there are many people today to whom the right to care, and thus the right to life, is denied! I am thinking of those who live in extreme poverty; but I am also thinking of those who live in war zones: fundamental human rights are violated there every day! It is intolerable. Let us pray for Ukraine, for Palestine and Israel, let us pray for Myanmar and for all peoples who are tormented by war. I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the faithful of Moral de Calatrava and Burgos, Spain, those from Brasília and Portugal; the Youth Choir and Orchestra of Mostar; the School of Vila Pouca de Aguiar, Portugal. I greet the faithful of Enego and Rogno, volunteers from the Shrine of Sant'Anna of Vinadio, the Choir of Eraclea and the Santa Paola Frassinetti Association of San Calogero. I greet the young people of Lodi, Petosino and Torri di Quartesù; confirmands from Malta, Lallio and Almenno San Salvatore; students of the "Sant'Ambrogio" Salesian Institute of Milan and the Children's Choir of Piovène Rocchette; as well as the "Radio Mater" group, on the occasion of their thirtieth anniversary. I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci*.

### POPE FRANCIS' HOMILY AT A RECENT MASS *By Linda Bordon*

Pope Francis celebrates Mass at the Casa Santa Marta on Thursday inviting the faithful not to content themselves with a fake inner peace that bears no fruit. Reflecting on the reading from the Book of Haggai, Pope Francis spoke of how the Lord urges His people to reflect on their behavior and to change it by working to rebuild the House of God.

#### Procrastinating conversion

The prophet Haggai, the Pope explained, was trying to move the heart of the lazy people who had resigned themselves to a life of defeat. The Temple had been destroyed by enemies, all was in ruin, but those people let the years go by without taking any action. Then, he said, the Lord sent the prophet to "rebuild the Temple," but the hearts of the people were bitter and they had no wish to take risks and to work. Those people, the Pope continued, "did not want to pick themselves up, to start again. They would not let the Lord help them to do so", and their excuse was that the time had not yet come. This, he continued, is the same drama of so many lukewarm Christians who say "Yes, yes, Lord, it's fine ... but slowly, slowly, Lord, let's leave it like this ... I'll do it tomorrow!"

#### Lukewarm spirituality leads to "a graveyard-like peace"

Lukewarm faith, the Pope said, leads so many to find excuses in uncertainty and fuels the tendency to procrastinate. It causes so many people to waste their lives and end up "in tatters because they have done nothing except nurture sentiments of peace and calm within themselves". But that, he said, "is the peace of graveyards". Pope Francis warned the faithful that when we become "spiritually lukewarm", we become half-Christians, without substance. Instead, he said, the Lord wants conversion, today. He described that tepid spirituality as something that transforms our lives into a graveyard: a place where there is no life. Let us ask the Lord for the grace not to fall into that "half-Christian" spirit which makes us Christians without substance – "Rose water Christians" as some would say - the Pope said, Christians who perhaps "sowed a lot but reaped very little, lives that promised so much, and in the end did nothing".

May the Lord help us, he concluded, to "wake-up from a tepid spirit" and fight "this gentle anesthesia of spiritual life".

### Cycle of Catechesis. Vices and Virtues. 8. *Acedia*

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

Among all the capital sins there is one that is often overlooked, perhaps because of its name, which is very much often incomprehensible to many: I am talking about *acedia*. Therefore, in the list of vices, the term *acedia* is often substituted by another, much more commonly used: sloth, or laziness. In reality, laziness is an effect more than a cause. When a person is idle, indolent, apathetic, we say he is lazy. But as the wisdom of the ancient desert fathers teaches us, often the root of this laziness is *acedia*, which from its Greek origin literally means a “lack of care”.

It is a very dangerous temptation, which one must not joke about. It is as though those who fall victim to it are crushed by a desire for death: they feel disgust at everything; the relationship with God becomes boring to them; and even the holiest acts, those that in the past warmed their hearts, now appear entirely useless to them. A person begins to regret the passing of time, and the youth that is irretrievably behind them.

*Acedia* is defined as the “noonday demon”: it grips us in the middle of the day, when fatigue is at its peak and the hours ahead of us seem monotonous, impossible to live. In a famous description, the monk Evagrius represents this temptation thus: “The eye of the slothful person is continually fixed on the windows, and in his mind he fantasizes about visitors [...] When he reads, the slothful person often yawns and is easily overcome by sleep, wrinkles his eyes, rubs his hands and, withdrawing his eyes from the book, stares at the wall; then turning them back to the book, he reads a little more [...]; finally, bowing his head, he places the book underneath it, and falls into a light sleep, until hunger awakens him and urges him to attend to his needs”; in conclusion, “the slothful man does not do God’s work with solicitude” [1].

Contemporary readers perceive in these descriptions something that closely recalls the evil of depression, both from a psychological and a philosophical point of view. Indeed, for those who are gripped by *acedia*, life loses its significance, prayer becomes boring, and every battle seems meaningless. If in youth we nurtured passions, now they seem illogical, dreams that did not make us happy. So, we let ourselves go, and distraction, thoughtlessness, seem to be the only ways out: one would like to be numb, to have a completely empty mind... It is a little like dying in advance, and it is ugly.

Faced with this vice, which we recognize to be very dangerous, the masters of spirituality envisage various remedies.

I would like to note one that to me seems most important, and which I would call *the patience of faith*.

Although in the clutches of *acedia*, man’s desire is to be “elsewhere”, to escape from reality, one must instead have the courage to remain and to welcome God’s presence in the “here and now”, in the situation as it is. The monks say that for them the cell is the best teacher of life, because it is the place that concretely and daily speaks to you of your love story with the Lord. The demon of *acedia* wants precisely to destroy this simple joy of the here and now, this grateful wonder of reality; it wants to make you believe that it is all in vain, that nothing has meaning, that it is not worth taking care of anything or anyone. In life we meet slothful people, people about whom we say, “He is boring!”, and we do not like to be with them; people who even have an attitude of boredom that is infectious. This is *acedia*.

How many people, in the grip of *acedia*, stirred by a faceless restlessness, have stupidly abandoned the good life they had embarked upon! The battle of *acedia* is a decisive one, that must be won at all costs. And it is a battle that did not spare even the saints, because in many of their diaries there are some pages that confide terrible moments, of genuine nights of the faith, when everything appears dark. These saints teach us to get through the night in patience, accepting *the poverty of faith*. They recommended, under the oppression of sloth, to maintain a smaller measure of commitment, to set goals more within reach, but at the same time to endure and persevere by leaning on Jesus, who never abandons us in temptation.

Faith, tormented by the test of *acedia*, does not lose its value. On the contrary, it is the true faith, the very human faith, which despite everything, despite the darkness that blinds it, still humbly believes. It is that faith that remains in the heart, like embers beneath the ashes. It always remains. And if one of us falls prey to this vice, or to the temptation of *acedia*, try to look within and fan the embers of faith; that is how we keep going.

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[1] Evagrius Ponticus, *The Eight Spirits of Evil*, 14.

### Special Greetings

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially the groups from England, Wales, Nigeria, Korea and the United States of America. As we begin this season of Lent, I invoke upon all of you the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

### Summary of the Holy Father’s words

In our reflections on the vices and virtues, we now consider *acedia* or *sloth*, which, although associated in English with laziness, is above all a deep spiritual apathy, manifested by discontent and aversion to attentive prayer and growth in our relationship with God. According to the monastic tradition, this “noonday devil” is best overcome by the patience of faith.

This includes accepting the poverty or dark night of faith, which then enables us, by God’s grace, to sense the divine presence and to continue to reach out to God. The saints themselves show us that perseverance in time of temptation leads us to set practical goals, however small, for our daily life and moves us to lean on Jesus, who always remains with us.



## GENERAL NOTICES...

### NEW TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES? HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

Welcome. Wherever you are in your faith journey, it is great to have you. Please visit our website or call the parish office. We're here to serve you. [www.olol7hills.org.au](http://www.olol7hills.org.au)

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK** <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

### SICK AND/OR HOMEBOUND?

Would you like to receive Communion? Or seriously ill or in danger of death? We have dedicated ministers who can visit and bring you communion. Feel free to approach or call Fr Henry for the Holy Anointing of the Sick. Please call the parish office 96222920

### FUNERALS

When a Funeral is to be celebrated, please contact the parish office to organise a meeting with Fr Henry. Funerals are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

### BAPTISM

Parents desiring Baptism for their children are encouraged to contact the parish office to arrange for the required preparation class for parents.

### MASS INTENTIONS

All Mass intentions must be submitted to the Parish Office on or before Thursday. Names will be published for 4 weeks at a time.



### LOURDES OVER 50s GROUP

Over 50s meeting Thursday 14th March 2024, 10.30am– 1pm. Please bring a plate to share. Look forward to seeing you there.

### Lourdes: Luminate Young Adults Group

Wishes you a Merry and Blessed Christmas. The next group night will be in early 2024. If you would like more information please kindly contact Ian Epondulan: [youtholol7h@gmail.com](mailto:youtholol7h@gmail.com)

### LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish playgroup is a fun playtime for children aged 0 to 5 years old and their carers. It is held every Friday morning during school terms 9.30am-11.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. For further information please contact Maria Hosni 0432 174 056 or the Parish Office.

### FREE ZUMBA CLASSES

Every Tuesday and Thursday 6.00pm-7.00pm in the Hall. Everyone Welcome!

### LEGION OF MARY

Thursdays at 1.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

### Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group

Thursdays at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome

### VINNIES SUPPORT CENTRES ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN NEED

St Vincent de Paul Support Centres across Greater Sydney are still available and taking calls to arrange for food vouchers or other items to be provided to those in need. If you need assistance, call the Support Centres in Blacktown on (02)8861 9777, Harris Park on (02)8861 9757 and Penrith on (02)8861 9770. To find out more about what support is available, visit <http://vinnies.org.au/covidsupportnsw>

### OFFERTORY PROCESSION FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES

With the intention to help our community to get more involved at Mass and better appreciate our share in the priesthood of the faithful, meaning our call to be priests, prophets and kings or queens of Jesus through baptism that Fr David Orr reminded us in our recent Parish retreat, I would like to invite all our parishioners to take part in the offertory procession, especially families that have some special celebrations in the families, such as wedding anniversaries, baptisms, birthdays, or death anniversaries. Please see Fr Henry or Ernie before Mass to arrange it.

## LOL PARISH CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

21	Sacramental Meeting	6.30pm
21	Baptism Meeting	7.30pm
24	Sacramental Meeting RPT	4.30pm
24	Holy Spirit Mission	9am-4pm

## LOL MINISTRY ROSTER

**Acolytes, Ministers, Readers and Altar Servers, please remember to arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass.**

### 17/18 February 2024

Acolytes	Vigil: Daniel La Guidara 8am: Terry Jordan 9.30am Ryan Epondulan	
Ministers	Vigil: L.La Guidara, M.Mifsud 8am: F.Balatbat, F.Paiva 9.30am: C.Brooks, B.Chandler	
Readers	Vigil: A.Punch, M.Simic 8am: K.Walker, J.Cabasa 9.30am: P.Ferriols, E.Vinoth Pieris	
Altar Servers	Vigil: A.La Guidara, C. La Guidara, J.Martinez 8am: K.Maruthanayagam 9.30am: M.Pieris, J.Pieris, L.Sadipoor	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Young Adults Group	
Flowers	Team	
Church Cleaning	24 Feb	Judith Deloso
Welcomers	Vigil: Judith Deloso 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Sastina Pieris	

### 24/25 February 2024

Acolytes	Vigil: Frank Paiva 8am: Louis Fernandes 9.30am Eugene Miu	
Ministers	Vigil: R.Soures, N.Shami 8am: L.Fernandes, E.Gartner 9.30am: P.Gow, M.Michael	
Readers	Vigil: J.Sarmiento, B.Motha 8am: M.Santos, A.McNally 9.30am: A.Han, I.Epondulan	
Altar Servers	Vigil: M.Gluvic, E.Reardon, B.Spadaro 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: C.Attard, L.Culli	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Couples for Christ	
Flowers	Team	
Church Cleaning	28 Feb	Jessie Borg Anne McNally
Welcomers	Vigil: Ram Urge 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Volunteer	

# The Kids' Bulletin

First Sunday of Lent  
February 18th, 2024



What was the story mentioned in today's first reading that talks about God washing away the sins of the world and making a covenant with His people?

Connect the dots to find out what the story was about!

## Into the Wilderness with Jesus

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. Mark 1:12-13 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Mark 1:12-15 (NIV)



The words below have been written in code. Use the hints in the decoder at the top of the page to help break the code (the letters on top are the correct answers, the letters on the bottom are the code). Write the correct word on the line provided beside each code word.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 18-5-16-5-14-20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2-5-12-9-5-22-5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 20-5-13-16-20-5-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 14-5-23-19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1-14-9-13-1-12-19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 19-1-20-1-14 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4-1-25-19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 23-9-12-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6-15-18-20-25 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7-15-15-4 \_\_\_\_\_

Find all ten words:

Jesus  
Lent  
Ash  
Wednesday  
Dust  
Prayer  
Alms  
Fasting  
Sacrifice  
Purple

W	J	E	P	S	A	C	T	A	P
E	Q	L	L	U	F	A	W	L	R
D	J	G	E	O	R	V	R	M	A
N	E	A	F	N	V	P	C	Q	Y
E	P	R	R	I	T	E	L	W	E
S	A	C	R	I	F	I	C	E	R
D	U	S	T	F	W	Y	R	Z	N
A	R	Y	H	V	A	L	M	S	D
Y	Z	B	J	E	S	U	S	H	U
Z	J	F	A	S	T	I	N	G	F

One thing I can do during Lent to bring me closer to God...

Lent

