

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills. NSW. 2147

Ph. 9622 2920

Email: secretary@lol7hills.com.au

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: 17th April 2024
Baptism: 28th April 2024
Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Parish Website: www.lol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT 3rd March 2024 • Year B



Let us Pray for the Sick

Rico Valentine Abadam, Leonila Ahillon, Mary Attard, Marija & Family Barclay, Rosella Booth, Penny Briscoe, Para Dias, Florence & Roslyn, Alberto Fernandez, Anthony Janicska, Paul Leong, Blago Milicevic, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Carlos Moreno, Gloria Momblan, Joemar Noquera, Antonio Solis Palmos, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Eustace Ratnam, Sue Tipaldo, Guza Schembri, Alaoma Okoro Ogbulachi, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan, Wally Villanueva, Bob & Therese Marini,

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

We can also arrange for Holy Communion or a visit if required.

Let us Pray for the Deceased

Recently Deceased: Emma Barriom, Lila Bate, Barrie Chamberlain, Michael Ellis, Jasmin Fernando, Charlie Gauci, Cathy Howard, Marie Marchand, Jossie Marie Manalac, Angela Michael, Mario Mirador, Perl Perera, Lorna Wettasinha, Vinnie Zahra.

Anniversaries: Beena Abraham, Fredy Alphonse, Carsal & Tamasin Castana, Audrey & Herman Chilla, Fe Licup Carmen, Conception, Dominic & Monica D'Souza, Joe Falzon, John Fernando, M.A Fernando, Emily Galea, E & Sheela Franklin, Josephine Gomez, Harold Laffleur, Apolinario Maglaya, Jason Muscat, Joseph Nguyen, Cordula Paiva, Maria Reyes, Jose Reyes, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Maria Trinh, Alison Vella, Melchor Usman, Pastora Villarta.

Remembrance: Neil Amaratunga, Carmen Attard, Sydney Azie, Roy, Mary & Des Barney, Sam Borg, France Angseeing, Rolily Burac, Miriam Busutill, Fe Licup Carmen. John Cini & Cini Family, Tania McGove, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Carmen, Jimmy, Tony, Tania, Vivian, Joe & Launcer De Guire, Maximilian & Julian Epondulan, Pru Farncomb, Melvyn Fernandes, Mary & Sam Galea, Sam Gabo, Jean, Elsie, Karl & Gervais Garrick, Tino & Mana Kama, Flordeliza Limguangco—Labancz, Mangion Family, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Pauline Meilak, Mary Mifsud, Emilia & William Mifsud, Anton & Lourda Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Mary Muscat, Mary & Francis Muscat, Ngan Pin, Elizabeth Pinter, John & Roseline Ratnam, Jonathan Tek Kie, Jim & Alison Vella, Shane Vaz.

Funeral Notices

Marie Marchand

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

Wednesday 6th of March, 11.00am

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

FIRST READING A reading from the book of Exodus 20:1-17

God spoke all these words. He said, 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 'You shall have no gods except me.

'You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God and I punish the father's fault in the sons, the grandsons, and the great-grandsons of those who hate me; but I show kindness to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

'You shall not utter the name of the Lord your God to misuse it, for the Lord will not leave unpunished the man who utters his name to misuse it.

'Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath for the Lord your God. You shall do no work on that day, neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your servants, men or women, not your animals nor the stranger who lives with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that these hold, but on the seventh day he rested; that is why the Lord has blessed the sabbath day and made it sacred.

'Honour your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the Lord your God has given to you. 'You shall not kill. 'You shall not commit adultery. 'You shall not steal. 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. 'You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his servant, man or woman, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is his.'

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R) Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

1. The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.
The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple. **(R.)**

3. The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.
The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just. **(R.)**

2. The precepts of the Lord are right,
they gladden the heart.
The command of the Lord is clear,
it gives light to the eyes. **(R.)**

4. They are more to be desired than gold,
than the purest of gold
and sweeter are they than honey,
than honey from the comb. **(R.)**

SECOND READING A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 1:22-25

While the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
that all who believe in him might have eternal life.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

GOSPEL A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 2:13-25

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.



Dear friends,

As Christian Catholics, we believe and confess that Jesus is both divine and human, for he is the Son of God and the Son of Man as he often said throughout his preaching ministry. He was human like us in all aspects, except sins. All the four evangelists recount a lot of stories in which he expressed his joy, compassion, worry tears and even anger as recounted in the Gospel this Sunday.

Why did he get angry? Because, according to John, he could bear no longer while witnessing Jewish merchants turn the temple of Jerusalem, his Father's house into a market where they traded animals used for sacrificial offerings and set up their money exchange counters.

So, upset by such sacrilegious activities he saw unfolding before his eyes then, Jesus decided to take action. He used the cord and weaved it as a whip to chase all those wheelers and dealers and their animals out of temple, and even scattered the coins of the money changers and knocked their tables over. From John's account, we can see how emotional and angry Jesus was, and this was the only time throughout his life, he had to act as such.

While chasing the trader-people out of the Temple, he charged them for turning the House of God into a market place, and the Jews in return challenged Jesus for the legitimacy of his action. 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' they angrily asked.

In response, Jesus asked them to destroy the temple and promised to rebuild it in three days. Here he quickly switched from a worldly matter to something theological and transcendent, namely his coming Death and Resurrection.

Of course no one, even the disciples had any idea of what he was talking about. The Jews mocked him for his crazy and unrealistic request and the disciples just came to understand what he truly wanted to say in the post-resurrection time, that he meant to foretell his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Interestingly, John said at the end of the Gospel that many came to believe in Jesus, but their faiths were rather shallow. He came to such a conclusion because he knew everyone inside and out and no one could hide anything from him. 'He could tell what a man had in him,' declared John.

Inspired by this Gospel account, let us humbly put ourselves before Jesus who knows each of us by name and ask him to help us to show due respects to this church of ours, the House of God, and partake in whatever way we can to maintain it and keep it presentable. Let us also pray that we may be able to care better for our bodies compared by St Paul as God's temple.

Have a church-oriented and better self-care week.

Fr Henry

PARISH NEWS...

DRIVING CONCERNS

One of our neighbours has sent to our Parish Office an email reminding our parishioners of two important matters as following:

- 1/ Please put the indicators on to indicate which way to go when we exit the carpark,
- 2/ Elizabeth Lane is a NO STOPPING area, so we should never stop there.

Thank you all for your co-operation.

Fr Henry

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

All members of our Parish Pastoral Council are invited to attend our monthly meeting on Wednesday March 6 at 7.30pm in the Parish Meeting room.

LENT PRAYER GROUP

Lent is a time to focus on prayer, to open our hearts and minds to God who loves us. You are invited to experience God's peace and love by slowing down and reflecting in a small group each week on a Thursday morning at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. For further enquiries, please call Olivia on 0423 890 978.

SERVING AS PARISH MINISTERS

In response to popular requests from the community to serve as lectors, Extraordinary ministers of Communion, Acolytes and so on, I would like to invite you to pick up the form available in our Parish Directory, tick your preferred ministry, write down your name and contact number, and place it in the collection plate or return it to Fr Henry, and the Parish office will contact you.

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.

ALTAR SERVERS RECRUITMENT

If your child has completed their First Holy Communion and is in year 4 or higher, they are invited to serve Mass. Please see Fr Henry before or after Mass to get a form and come along to a training session on Saturday 9th March and attend the Installation Mass at 9.30am on Sunday 17th March, 2024.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday during lent at 7.30pm.

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

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.

LOURDES PLAYGROUP IS BACK 1st MARCH

Every Friday during school term, 9.00am—11.00am in the Parish Meeting Room, children aged 0 to 5 years old and their carers are welcome to come along during any part of that time for a play, chat and cuppa. ALL ARE WELCOME.

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.*

Synod 2023 Update:

Decree issued and Development of Diocesan Plan Begins

In January, the Synodal Decree from our inaugural Diocesan Synod was issued, enabling us to move forward in the development of a Diocesan Plan. Join us in the next phase of our journey, as we discern a new path forward for our local Church in Western Sydney and Blue Mountains. The Diocesan Plan for a Synodal Church will launch at the Diocesan Gathering Saturday 10 August. Learn more at parracatholic.org/synod

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 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 or call (02) 8838 3456 by 5 March 2024.

Filipino Chaplaincy Feast of St Joseph Celebrations: 16 March

The Filipino Chaplaincy of the Diocese of Parramatta invites you to join Holy Mass to celebrate the Feast of St Joseph, the Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Saturday 16 March at 10:30AM at St Patrick's Church, Blacktown. There will be Novena Masses in preparation for the Feast from March 6 to 14 at 7:30PM (except on March 6 and 13 at 8:00PM) at St Michael's Church, Blacktown South.

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.lttn.org.au for more information and register today. Contact rego@ltnn.org.au or Therese MGL on 0432 228 250.

Safeguarding Face-to-face Training Opportunity for Cycle 1

Have you had a chance to complete your first three Mandatory Safeguarding Modules as yet?

Face-to-face Mandatory Safeguarding Training will be held at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre Blacktown on Tuesday mornings in March.

Module 1: Tuesday 5 March (10.00am – 11.00am)

Module 2: Tuesday 12 March (10.00am – 11.30am)

Module 3: Tuesday 19 March (10.00am – 11.30am)

To register, please visit <https://parracatholic.org/connect/events/?topic=safeguarding>

Glenbrook Parish Lenten Biblical Studies: 12 and 19 March

St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook, is hosting two Biblical Studies sessions on the Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark on Tuesday 12 and 19 March at the parish hall from 7.30pm. Parish Priest Fr Joseph Lam OSA will lead the sessions. To RSVP and for more information, please contact secretary@stfinbars.org.au

Positions Vacant:

- Parish Cook (part-time) - St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Parramatta – **Applications close 4 March**

More details at: parracatholic.org/about/jobs/

- Administration Assistant (part-time) - Sacred Heart Parish, Mt Druitt South and Permanent Diaconate community – **Applications close 10pm Monday 11 March**

Music for Easter Triduum Workshop: 12 March

Join us for another Music Workshop led by Eric Grella to learn more about Music for the Easter Triduum. This event will be held at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown on 12 March from 7-9pm. This workshop is for all who are involved in the music ministry of their parish and anyone interested in diving deeper into the world of liturgical music! RSVP to lucy.woodbury@parracatholic.org or 0460 037 795

Enrolling Now for Kindergarten 2025



Third Sunday of Lent 2nd & 3rd March Please donate to Project Compassion

Not having access to a reliable source of clean water was very difficult for **Leaia** and her family. But with the support of Caritas Australia, a water tank was installed at their home, improving their health and living conditions.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **for all future generations.**

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



OUR LADY OF LOURDES PRIMARY

OPEN DAYS 28 February 6pm - 7:30pm
4 March 6pm - 7:30pm

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills
T: 8869 6800 ololshills.catholic.edu.au





POPE FRANCIS' ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!* The Gospel of this second Sunday of Lent presents us with the episode of the Transfiguration of Jesus (cf. Mk 9:2-10). After having announced his Passion to the disciples, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John with him and goes up a high mountain, and physically manifests himself there in all his light. In this way, he reveals to them the meaning of what they had experienced together up to that moment. The preaching of the Kingdom, the forgiveness of sins, the healings, and the performed signs were, indeed, sparks of a greater light, namely, of the light of Jesus, of the light that Jesus *is*. And from this light, the

disciples are never to direct their eyes away, especially in moments of trial, like those of the Passion which was near at this point. This is today's message: *never direct your eyes away from the light of Jesus*. It is a little like what farmers used to do in the past while plowing their fields: they focused their gaze on a specific point ahead of them and, while keeping their eyes fixed on that point, they traced straight furrows. This is what we are called to do as Christians while we journey through life: to always keep the luminous face of Jesus before our eyes. Brothers and sisters, let us be open to welcome the light of Jesus! He is love, He is life without end. Along the roads of existence, which can be tortuous from time to time, let us seek His face, that is full of mercy, fidelity, and hope. It is Prayer, listening to the Word and the Sacraments, especially Confession and the Eucharist, that help us to do this: Prayer, listening to the Word and the holy Sacraments help us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. And this is a good Lenten resolution: cultivating a welcoming outlook, becoming "seekers of light," seekers of the light of Jesus, both in prayer and in people. So let us ask ourselves: do I keep my eyes fixed on Christ who accompanies me? And in order to do so, do I make space for silence, prayer, adoration? Finally, do I seek out every little ray of Jesus' light, which is reflected in me and in every brother and sister I encounter? And do I remember to thank him for this? May Mary, who shines with the light of God, help us to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus and to look at each other with trust and love.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters, It is with sorrow that we remembered the second anniversary of the beginning of the large-scale war in Ukraine yesterday, February the 24th. How many victims and injured people, how much destruction, anguish and tears in a period that is becoming terribly long and the end of which cannot be seen yet! It is a war that is not only devastating that region of Europe but which is unleashing a global wave of fear and hatred. While renewing my heartfelt affection for the tormented Ukrainian people, I keep praying for everyone, especially for the countless innocent victims. I earnestly plead that the little humanity needed to create the conditions for a diplomatic solution in seeking for a just and lasting peace be sought. And, brothers and sisters, let us not forget to pray for Palestine, for Israel, and for the many peoples torn apart by war, and to concretely help those who suffer! Let us think of the huge amount of suffering, let us think of the wounded, innocent children. It is with concern that I am following the increase in violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I join the bishops' call to pray for peace, hoping that the clashes may cease and that a sincere and constructive dialogue may be sought. The increasingly frequent kidnappings in Nigeria are extremely concerning. I express my closeness in prayer to the Nigerian people, hoping that efforts will be made to contain the spread of these incidents as much as possible. I am also close to the population of Mongolia, affected by a wave of intense cold, which is causing serious humanitarian consequences. This extreme phenomenon is also a sign of climate change and its effects. The climate crisis is a global social problem that deeply affects the lives of many brothers and sisters, especially the life of the most vulnerable: let us pray to be able to make wise and courageous choices to contribute to the care of creation. I greet you, faithful of Rome and from various parts of the world, especially the pilgrims from Jaén (Spain), the young Greek-Catholic Romanians from Paris, the Neocatechumenal Communities from Poland, Romania, and Italy. I also greet the Interregional Pontifical Seminary of Posillipo, the Secretariat of the International Forum of Catholic Action, the Scouts of Paliano, and the confraternities of Lastra Signa, Torre Maina, and Gorzano. I also greet the Italian Federation of Rare Diseases, the Cultural Circle "Reggio Ricama," the members of the Nonviolent Movement, and the volunteers of the N.O.E.T.A.A. Association. And I greet the young people of the *Immacolata*. I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci*.

POPE FRANCIS: EDUCATION IS AN ACT OF HOPE FOR A BETTER SOCIETY By Lisa Zengarini

In a message addressed to participants in a conference in Madrid on the Church's commitment in education in Spain, Pope Francis highlights the importance for Catholic institutions to ensure that education is accessible to all. Pope Francis has reminded Spanish Catholic educators that the Church is called to promote an inclusive education, where all students can unleash their potential regardless of their background, recalling that this has always been an essential part of its educational mission. "Education is, above all, an act of hope in those before us, in their possibilities to change and contribute to the renewal of society", he said in a message he addressed on Saturday to participants in a conference organized in Madrid by the Spanish Bishops' Conference (CEE) on the Church's commitment in education. The session concludes a four months' process started in October 2023 in which bishops, experts and Catholic educators from across Spain have reflected and taken stock of the work done by the Church in Spain in the field of education.

Everyone has the right to education

In his message Pope Francis welcomed the initiative, and highlighted the importance for Catholic institutions to ensure that education is accessible to all: "Everyone has the right to education, no one should be excluded," he said. "*I cannot help but remember the many children and young people who do not have access to education in different parts of the world, who suffer oppression, and even war and violence.*" The Pope thus invited participants not to overlook "the new exclusions" produced by the modern "throwaway culture." "he added, "that the creation of relationships of justice among peoples, the capacity for solidarity towards the needy, and the care of the common home will pass through the hearts, minds, and hands of those who are being educated today."

The distinctive feature of Catholic education is true humanization

The distinctive feature of Catholic education in all areas "is true humanization" that "arises from faith and generates culture," Pope Francis went on to remark the Church's commitment in education in Spain has contributed significantly to build the specific cultural identity of the country, also enriching the universal Church.

Catholic education must open the way to a culture of encounter

Concluding his message, Pope Francis encouraged participants "to continue reflecting and walking together," to value their identity and faith, while avoiding self-referentiality, and also to be "artisans of peace." "Education is not possible without betting on freedom, opening the way to social friendship and the culture of encounter," he said.

POPE FRANCIS AT AUDIENCE Cycle of Catechesis. Vices and Virtues. 2. *The spiritual striving*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Last week we introduced the theme of vices and virtues. It refers to the spiritual struggle of the Christian. Indeed, the spiritual life of the Christian is not peaceful, linear and without challenges; on the contrary, Christian life demands constant struggle: the Christian struggle to preserve the faith, to enrich the gifts of faith in us. It is no coincidence that the first anointing that every Christian receives in the sacrament of Baptism the catechumenal anointing is without any aroma and symbolically announces that life is a struggle. In fact, in ancient times, wrestlers were fully anointed before a competition, both to tone their muscles and to make their bodies elusive to their opponent's grasp. The anointing of catechumens immediately makes it clear that Christians are not spared the struggle, that Christians must struggle: their existence, like everyone else's, will have to descend into the arena, because life is a succession of trials and temptations.

A famous saying attributed to Abba Anthony the Great, the first great father of monasticism, goes like this: "Remove temptations and no one would be saved". Saints are not men and women who have been spared temptation, but rather people who are well aware of the fact that in life, the seductions of evil appear repeatedly, to be unmasked and rejected. We have all experienced this, all of us: that a bad thought comes to you, that you feel a desire to do this, or to speak badly of others... All of us, all of us are tempted, and we must strive not to give in to these temptations. If any of you have no temptations, say so, because that would be an extraordinary thing! We all have temptations, and we all have to learn how to behave in these situations.

There are many people who absolve themselves, who consider themselves to be "just fine" — "No, I am good, I don't have these problems". But none of us is "alright"; if someone feels they are alright, they are dreaming; every one of us has many things to adjust, and must also be vigilant. And at times it happens that we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation and we say, sincerely, "Father, I don't remember, I don't know if I have any sins...". But this is a lack of awareness of what is happening in the heart. We are all sinners, all of us. And a little examination of conscience, a little insight, will be good for us. Otherwise, we run the risk of living in the dark, because we have become accustomed to darkness and no longer know how to distinguish good from evil. Isaac of Nineveh said that, in the Church, those who know their sins and mourn them are greater than those who raise a dead man. We must all ask God for the grace to recognize ourselves as poor sinners, in need of conversion, keeping in our hearts the confidence that no sin is too great for the infinite mercy of God the Father. This is the opening lesson Jesus gives us.

We see it in the first pages of the Gospels, primarily in the account of the baptism of the Messiah in the waters of the River Jordan. There is something disconcerting about the event: why does Jesus submit to such a rite of purification? He is God, He is perfect! Of what sin must Jesus ever repent? None! Even the Baptist is shocked, to the point that the text says: "John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?'" (Mt 3:14). But Jesus is a very different Messiah from the way John had presented him and the way the people had imagined him: He does not embody the wrathful God and does not summon for judgement, but, on the contrary, queues up with sinners. How come? Yes, Jesus accompanies us, all us sinners. He is not a sinner, but he is among us. And this is a beautiful thing. "Father, I have many sins!" — "But Jesus is with you: talk about them, he will help you come out of it". Jesus never leaves us alone, never! Think about this. "Oh Father, I have committed serious ones!" — "But Jesus understands you and accompanies you: He understands your sin and forgives it". Never forget this! In the worst moments, in the moments when we slip into sin, Jesus is by our side to help lift us up. This brings consolation. We must not lose this certainty: Jesus is by our side to help us, to protect us, even to lift us up again after sin. "But Father, is it true that Jesus forgives everything?" — "Everything. He came to forgive, to save. Jesus just wants your heart to be open. He never forgets to forgive: it is we who often lose the capacity to ask for forgiveness. Let us regain this capacity to ask for forgiveness. Every one of us has many things for which to ask forgiveness: let each one of us think about it, inwardly, and speak about it with Jesus today. Speak with Jesus about this: "Lord, I do not know if this is true or not, but I am sure that you will not turn away from me. I am sure that you forgive me. Lord, I am a sinner, but please do not turn away from me". This would be a beautiful prayer to Jesus today: "Lord, do not turn away from me".

And immediately after the episode of the baptism, the Gospels tell us that Jesus retreated into the desert, where he is tempted by Satan. In this case too, we ask ourselves: why does the Son of God have to know temptation? Here too, Jesus reveals himself to be in solidarity with our frail human nature, and becomes our great *exemplum*: the temptations he faces and overcomes among the arid stones of the desert are the first instruction he gives to our life as disciples. He experienced what we too must prepare ourselves to confront: life is made up of challenges, tests, crossroads, opposing views, hidden seductions, contradictory voices. Some voices are even persuasive, so much so that Satan tempts Jesus by resorting to the words of the Scripture. We must preserve our inner clarity in order to choose the path that truly leads to happiness, and then strive not to stop along the way.

Let us remember that we are always torn between opposite extremes: arrogance challenges humility; hatred opposes charity; sadness hinders the true joy of the Spirit; the hardening of the heart rejects mercy. Christians continually walk along these edges. Therefore, it is important to reflect on vices and virtues: it helps us to defeat the nihilistic culture in which the boundaries between good and evil become blurred and, at the same time, it reminds us that the human being, unlike any other creature, can always transcend itself, opening up to God and journeying towards holiness.

The spiritual struggle, then, leads us to look closely at those vices that shackle us and to walk, with the grace of God, towards those virtues that can flourish in us, bringing the springtime of the Spirit into our lives.

Summary of the Holy Father's words

Dear brothers and sisters: In our catechesis on the virtues and the vices opposed to them, we have seen that the Christian life involves a constant struggle to resist sin and to grow in holiness. Jesus, himself sinless, submitted to baptism by John and was tempted in the desert, in order to teach us the need for spiritual rebirth, conversion of mind and heart, and unfailing trust in God's mercy and sustaining grace. May our weekly reflections on the virtues and vices help us to imitate the Lord's example, to grow in wisdom and self-understanding, and to discern between good and evil. As we advance in the knowledge and practice of the virtues, may we come to experience the joy of closeness to God, the source of all good, authentic happiness and the fullness of eternal life.

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

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

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

The next group night will be in March. If you would like more information please kindly contact Ian Epondulan: youtholol7h@gmail.com or search 'Lourdes 7Hills Young Adults' on Facebook.

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-11.00am 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.

OLOL PARISH CALENDAR

March

	March	
6	5th Reconciliation Meeting	6.30pm
6	Parish Pastoral Council Meeting	7.30pm
9	5th Reconciliation Meeting RPT	4.30pm
13	First Reconciliation	7.00pm

OLOL MINISTRY ROSTER

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

2/3 March 2024

Acolytes	Vigil: Abel De Rosario 8am: Eugene Miu 9.30am Fayelene Kennedy	
Ministers	Vigil: H. Gonzale, F. Pavia 8am: S. Nemorin, C. Gonzales 9.30am: M. Aquino, A. Walker	
Readers	Vigil: C. Rodrigues, N. Do Rosario 8am: J. Irudayaraj, Pepito Ferriols 9.30am: N. Arambulo, S. Manamperi	
Altar Servers	Vigil: Saoirse Costello, S. Costello, E. Reardon 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: S. Culili, J. Kingston, A. Melki	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Tongan Choir	
Musicians	Vigil: Youth for Christ 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Couples for Christ	
Flowers	Fenty & Liz	
Church Cleaning	9 March	Tongan Community
Welcomers	Vigil: Chrisha Gonzales 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Kathy Chamberlain	

9/10 March 2024

Acolytes	Vigil: James Dinning 8am: Louis Fernandes 9.30am Ryan Epondulan	
Ministers	Vigil: L. Bellissimo, A. Bellissimo 8am: F. Balatbat, L. Fernandes 9.30am: G. Basili, C. Brooks	
Readers	Vigil: M. Simic, A. Punch 8am: J. Cabassa, K. Walker 9.30am: C. Diaz, E. V. Pieris	
Altar Servers	Vigil: L. Sadipoor, D. Sant, J. Sant 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: M. Pieris, J. Pieris, F. Wanandy	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Young Adults Group	
Musicians	Vigil: Shaun's Group 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Tongan Choir	
Flowers	Claudette & Judith	
Church Cleaning	21 March	Cathy Hutchings Annette Peatman
Welcomers	Vigil: Judith Deloso 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Sastina Pieris	

The Kids' Bulletin

Third Sunday of Lent
March 3rd, 2024



Here are the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses for His people. The only problem is that they are in the wrong order! Can you put the right numbers in the spaces?

Choose the word that best matches the definition.

1. The Son of God
A. Jerusalem B. Passover C. Dove D. Jesus
2. A place where people gather to buy and sell things
A. temple B. house C. market D. court
3. A small, wild pigeon
A. cattle B. sheep C. dove D. chicken
4. A piece of furniture with a smooth, flat surface and four legs
A. table B. chair C. whip D. bed
5. Coins or bills used to pay for something
A. money B. cattle C. sheep D. dove
6. A building dedicated to the worship of God
A. temple B. market C. table D. courts
7. An animal raised for its wool
A. dove B. cattle C. whip D. sheep
8. A strip of leather or cord fastened to a handle
A. table B. whip C. money D. dove
9. A Jewish holiday celebrating being freed from slavery in Egypt
A. Christmas B. Easter C. Passover D. Thanksgiving
10. A building where a family lives
A. market B. house C. temple D. tent

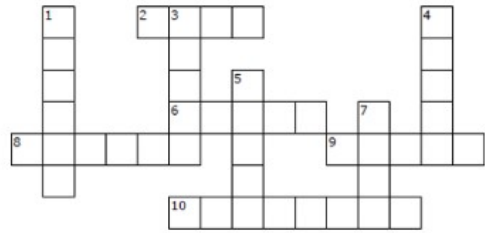
C W C M C P A S S O V E R U N
H F O B A Y D M O N E Y J A V
A F U F T R K Y G E Q H K M S
N O R G T P K I F F F G E G C
G T T T L U I E C G K L S G A
E E S E E Q N D T T A E N X T
R C O M J D O V E S L I S B T
S R B P S B B G U B L E P R E
H D G L G Z N R A L E E I X R
J L R E Y I E T E Z E I W E E
P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

DROVE	SCATTERED	JERUSALEM	PASSOVER	SITTING
TEMPLE	COURTS	DOVES	SHEEP	CATTLE
TIME	MARKET	CHANGERS	JEWISH	MONEY
SELLING	HOUSE	TABLES	WHIP	CORDS

Cleaning House

So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. John 2:15 (NIV)

Based on John 2:13-16 (NIV)



ACROSS

2. A strip of leather or cord fastened to a handle
6. An animal raised for its wool
8. A building dedicated to the worship of God
9. Coins or bills used to pay for something
10. A Jewish holiday celebrating being freed from slavery in Egypt

DOWN

1. A place where people gather to buy and sell things
3. A building where a family lives
4. A piece of furniture with a smooth, flat surface and four legs
5. The Son of God
7. A small, wild pigeon

WHIP	MARKET	PASSOVER	SHEEP	TEMPLE
HOUSE	TABLE	MONEY	JESUS	DOVE

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.

