

OUR VISION:

"WE ARE CONTINUALLY ATTRACTING PEOPLE TO ST LUKE'S AND EVERYONE WHO ENGAGES AS A MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY IS TRANSFORMED IN EVERY AREA OF THEIR LIFE BY HAVING A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS."



First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to

her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best

to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

Gospel Reflection

The gospel of Mark is sometimes portrayed as a 'no fuss' gospel. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in this week's passage. We have the first eight verses of the gospel and the author wastes no time in announcing the purpose, 'The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.' The gospel of Mark does not give any infancy narrative or genealogy like Matthew or Luke, nor a theological foreword like John. It jumps straight in with a declaration that Jesus is the Son of God and almost immediately begins to explore his ministry. John appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism for forgiveness of sins. It may seem odd to think of going to the wilderness to try to influence people. Today we might think that the city centre or street corner might be the better venue to preach something. What is it about the wilderness? Reference is made to the wilderness several times in scripture. It is used as a place of preparation and encounter with God. The wilderness referred to was a vast expanse of emptiness on the eastern side of the Jordan River. It

was not uncommon for wandering preachers like John and Jesus to go out into the wilderness as a way of making a break from their previous life and getting themselves ready in body and spirit to begin their ministry. The wilderness to the east of the Jordan was also the place in which many of the rebels based themselves. There was a sense that challenge and unrest came out of the wilderness. In many ways that is what Jesus – heralded by John – brought out of the wilderness as well.

- Greg Sunter



St Luke's Church Building fund

BSB: 067 950

Account: 00004307

Account Name: St Luke's Marsden Park.

Reference: (Your name)

OFFERING FOR ST LUKE'S

To help support the living costs of the clergy and the operating costs of St Luke's: BSB: 067 950

Account No: 0004026

Account name: St Luke's

Reference: Your name



Novena to the Mother of Perpetual Help:

Wednesdays at 7.30pm via

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/624180454>



If you have prayer needs, please visit our website:

<https://stlukesmarsdenpark.org.au/>

We have a team of prayer

warriors ready to pray for your requests.

We welcome this week as our celebrants:

Fr Andrew Hennes (Vigil)

Fr Joseph Nguyen (10am)

**What's happening at St Luke's
'Calendar of Events'**

15 DEC – Saints in Training Youth Group Christmas Party

23 DEC – Reconciliation 4.30-5.15pm

Christmas Mass times

24 DEC – 7pm & 11pm

25 DEC – 10am

OUR COMMUNITY PRAYER

O God, you show us in St Luke, our patron, a person of faith who desired all people to come to know and love you in the community of your Church.

Teach us to embrace what St Luke pioneered: discipleship of Jesus Christ.

Trusting in your love and grace and nourished by Word and Sacrament may we grow in our relationship with you and together make our Catholic Faith Community a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

St Luke, pray for us.

Positions Vacant:

Facilitator: Catholic Youth Parramatta – Mission Enhancement Team, Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 12pm Monday 11 December 2023 (see description below).**

Governance, Risk and Compliance Administrative Support – Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 10pm Tuesday 12 December 2023.**

More details

at: parracatholic.org/employment

Liturgical Ministry Course returns in 2024

The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence in February 2024. This is formation for anyone interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries either as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to the Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact the Office for Worship on 0460 037 795

or mary.gale@parracatholic.org or visit our website to download an enrolment form at <https://officeforworship.org.au/>



Caritas Australia's Global Gifts Cards

Caritas Australia's Global Gifts Christmas cards are a great way to spread joy and

hope this Christmas season and to make a life-changing impact. Each gift represents a donation that will support vulnerable communities to create a brighter future. Order now to receive in time for Christmas at www.globalgifts.org.au or scan the QR code.

Our Synod Journey: Diocesan Synod Report Now Available

The Diocesan Synod Report is now available for download. The newly released Diocesan Synod Report offers a summary of our first

Diocesan Synod assembly, held from 13-15 October 2023, its preparatory stages, in-depth details of the proceedings, and insights from delegates. Download your copy from the Parramatta Synod website now: <https://parracatholic.org/synod2023/>

Donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal

Following a series of surprise attacks against Israel by Hamas in early October, Caritas Australia is supporting partner agencies on the ground to provide emergency cash, shelter, and psychosocial support to those affected by the violence. The efforts of these partner agencies are expected to support 17,000 displaced families. To support Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/gaza-crisis/ or call 1800 024 413 toll free.



WITNESS & PRAY WITH US
PARRAMATTA MENS ROSARY
MEN OF SERVICE, MEN OF WORSHIP, MEN OF EVANGELIZATION
EVERY 1ST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

DEC 2ND 2023
JAN 6TH 2024
FEB 3RD 2024

10:30 AM
PRINCE ALFRED SOAURE, PARRAMATTA
(FRONT OF ST PATRICKS CATHEDRAL)



Glenbrook Parish Christmas concert: 10 December

St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook, invite you to their annual Christmas concert event on Sunday 10 December at 7.30pm in the parish church. The evening will include choir and musical performances alongside themed readings for Christmas. Suggested donations for entry are \$15 for individuals and \$35 for families. For enquiries, please contact 0421 105 017.

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra St Patrick's Cathedral Concert: 12 December

Reel in the festive season with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir on Tuesday 12 December, 7:30PM at St Patrick's Cathedral for their annual Christmas concert, *Noël! Noël!*. Gather your loved ones and join us for this beloved festive tradition, as the Brandenburg perform stunning choral works and Christmas classics, conducted by Artistic Director Paul Dyer.

SPECIAL OFFER: Get four tickets for just \$149! There are less than 200 tickets remaining, so head to brandenburg.com.au or call 1300 782 856 to book your tickets now.

Epiphany Pilgrimage and Fiesta 2024

Commit the first fruits of your new year to Christ with the 2024 Epiphany Pilgrimage (2 - 9 Jan 2024). Enjoy 7 days of bushwalking, fellowship and prayer as we journey from Emu Plains to the top of the Blue Mountains, experiencing the wonderful hospitality of parish communities along the way. For more information and to register for all or part of the journey, visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org.

Sydney Summer School of Evangelisation: 7 – 14 January 2024

Summer School is a week-long, live-in, life-changing retreat at the Mt Carmel Retreat Centre in Varroville NSW, featuring praise and worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill & learn and more in the midst of a community of 150+ young people aged 16-35. Registrations open 31 October. Register by 30 November to receive early bird rates (concession \$525/adult \$625). More info: contact@summerschool.org.au. Bookings: summerschool.org.au

Marriage Preparation Courses in 2024

Getting married in 2024? Let the Diocese of Parramatta help you prepare. Visit www.parracatholic.org/pmp 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 met@parracatholic.org or phone Karin on 0419 242 435 or Marisa on 0412 280 017.

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 5.30pm
Sunday 10.00am

Baptisms available every second Sunday after Mass. Apply via email.

Reconciliation on the fourth Saturday of the month 4.30-5.15pm

Communion to the sick: call the office to arrange a time.

CONTACT US

Pastoral Director:

Deacon Tony Hoban

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marsdenpark@parracatholic.org

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stlukesmarsdenpark.org.au

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