

St. Oliver Plunkett Parish

Harris park



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22 February 2026 | First Sunday of Lent

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

When he calls on me, I will answer him;
I will deliver him and give him glory,
I will grant him length of days.

Cf. Psalm 90:15-16

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes forth
from the mouth of God.

Matthew 4:4

Weekday Mass times

Tuesday to Friday: 7:00 am

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday: Vigil 5:30pm

Sunday: 8:00 am & 10:00 am

Administrator: Fr Paul Marshall

School Principal: Pascale Rone

School Tel: (02) 8633 8300

Parish Secretary: Lilia Tolentino

Tel: (02) 8863 8801

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday & Friday: 10:00 am. - 3:00 pm

Wednesday: 8:00 am - 12:30pm

Sacraments @ St Oliver's

**For Baptism, Reconciliation,
First Holy Communion,
Confirmation, Marriage and
Funerals,** please ring or email the
parish office for assistance.

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

Thinking about becoming a Catholic
or know someone who may be
interested in exploring the Catholic
faith? Contact the Parish Office for
more details on joining the RCIA
program.

Gospel Reflection –

You must worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone

The message and ministry of Christ never allow us to sink into complacency about the way we live our lives. In our Gospel this weekend Jesus wrestles with the full power of evil tempting him to the core of his being as God and man. The first two readings are about spiritual warfare. Adam and Eve were tricked by the devil into believing they could do without God in their lives. This Lent let us not leave the dark, cold embers of those parts of ourselves and our loved ones outside the fire of God's love. Let's bring those parts of ourselves and others back into the fire of love and faith of God. Lent is less about the ashes and more about finding the fire and love of God again. So, make yourself available to God, and let him fill you up. Here are 4 spiritual resolutions you can make that will help you do just that:

- Spend time each day in personal prayer-talk to God about your struggles, your hopes, your dreams.
- Examine your conscience daily and repent of any sins that blocks God's light coming into your heart
- Devote some time each day to reading the Scriptures-find your bible and put it on a stand in your room – open to Matthew, Mark, Luke or John-read a small passage and rejoice how you can encounter Jesus in a new way.
- Make a special effort to go to a weekday Mass or read, pray and reflect about the Gospel for next Sunday either from your missal or the Lenten program.

Together this Lent, let us grow into the likeness of Christ. Lent is God's call to us, his beloved, to face into temptation and to turn back into a fuller relationship with Him. We are called to intensify our rejection of sin and to see the hand of the Evil One. God shows us the way to call-out the false promises of temptation. Jesus is the way to faithfulness and love.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. The law of fasting binds those who have completed their eighteenth year, until the beginning of their sixtieth year; the law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. Over all these laws put on love.

We thank all those who put on love in so many ways through service in our parish. Let's pray and reflect, read the bible, and reflect on the readings for the coming Sunday.

Fr. Paul



Other News and Events

Pope's Lenten message: Abstain from harsh words and rash judgement

(Extracts from Catholic Outlook By Devin Watkins, 17 February 2026)

Ahead of the start of Lent, Pope Leo XIV invites Catholics to open ourselves to listening, fasting, and community, urging us to abstain from words of hatred in order to make space for words of hope and peace.



"I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor."

As Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18, the Pope said this liturgical season offers Christians an opportunity to place the mystery of God back at the center of our lives.

Every journey of conversion, he said, begins by letting God's word touch our hearts, so that we may renew our commitment to follow Christ in the mystery of His saving passion, death, and resurrection.

Pope Leo focused on the importance of listening to God and to those around us, allowing ourselves to enter into authentic relationships.

"In the midst of the many voices present in our personal lives and in society," he said, "Sacred Scripture helps us to recognize and respond to the cry of those who are anguished and suffering."

Christians, said the Pope, can cultivate inner openness to listening, as God does, by growing in awareness that the poor challenge our lives and economic systems, as well as the Church.

Pope Leo XIV then turned to how fasting helps open us to the deep desire for justice, which he said frees us from complacency.

"Precisely because it involves the body, fasting makes it easier to recognize what we 'hunger' for and what we deem necessary for our sustenance," he said. "Moreover, it helps us to identify and order our 'appetites,' keeping our hunger and thirst for justice alive".

However, we must fast in faith, humility, and communion with the Lord, and not in a way that leads to pride, said the Pope, adding that other forms of self-denial also lead to a more sober lifestyle.

Pope Leo then pointed to an under-appreciated form of abstinence, which is refraining from hurtful words.

"Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves," he said.

"Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities."

If we do so, we will let words of hatred "give way to words of hope and peace."

Special Year of St Francis: Western Sydney Catholics invited to renew a call to peace

(Extracts from Catholic Outlook By Belinda Gadd, 11 February 2026)

Franciscan voices share call to peace

The Diocese of Parramatta is enriched by Capuchin Franciscans, the Poor Clares, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, and the Secular Franciscan Order, who minister across Western Sydney, the Blue Mountains, and beyond.

Pope declares 2026 a 'Year of Grace'

... Pope Leo XIV has proclaimed a Special Year of St Francis, to be celebrated **from 10 January 2026 to 10 January 2027**, marking 800 years since the death of the "Poverello of Assisi".

The Special Year commemorates the Transit of St Francis, who died in 1226 after a life shaped by the Gospel. Known as the "poor man of Assisi", St Francis lived with simplicity, humility and trust in God, becoming a lasting sign of peace and reconciliation.

Recalling St Francis' greeting – "May the Lord give you peace" – Pope Leo stressed that Franciscan peace embraces all of creation, writing that "peace with God, peace between men and with Creation are inseparable dimensions of a single call to universal reconciliation."

Plenary indulgences available

During this Year of Grace, Catholics may receive a plenary indulgence by devoutly taking part in Jubilee celebrations or making a pilgrimage to a Franciscan church or a place dedicated to St Francis, under the usual conditions of confession, Communion and prayer for the Holy Father's intentions.

Those who are elderly, sick or unable to travel may share in the indulgence by spiritually joining the celebrations through prayer and offering their sufferings.

Franciscan churches and sites in the Diocese of Parramatta include:

- The Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Plumpton – under the pastoral care of Capuchin Franciscans
- St Bernadette's Catholic Church, Dundas Valley – under the pastoral care of the Friars of St Francis
- Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, Kellyville and Franciscan Shrine of the Holy Innocents, Kellyville – under the pastoral care of the Conventual Franciscans
- Poor Clares Monastery, North Richmond
- Our Lady of Consolation Chapel, Rooty Hill – under the pastoral care of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary

Parish Updates

Stations of the Cross:

Stations of the Cross begin in the parish on **Friday 27th February**. They will continue through Lent each Friday at **7.00pm**.



Lenten Parish Mission:

Our seminarian **Francisco Do Carmo (Pancho)** comes from the village of Atsabe in the mountains of East Timor. **His village is building a Catholic school** and is **seeking donations to help**. Can we take this on as part of our Mission outreach from St. Oliver's? There is a 3-minute video showing the laying of the foundation of the school which we will show after communion on the next two Sundays.

Eucharistic Congress 2028:

In the lead-up to the Eucharistic Congress in 2028, 2026 is a year for a call to prayer. Next Sunday **1st March at 11.15am** after the 10.00am Mass we will have a **Holy Hour** on the theme- The Eucharist: a mystery to be encountered.



DAYS OF FASTING

ASH WEDNESDAY
GOOD FRIDAY

WHAT IS FASTING?

One full meal and two smaller meals.

DAYS OF ABSTINENCE

ASH WEDNESDAY
GOOD FRIDAY
EVERY FRIDAY DURING LENT

WHAT IS ABSTINENCE?

No meat.

START-UP FOR CHILDREN'S LITURGY – BEGINNING SUNDAY 1ST MARCH

We are looking for interested Mums or Dads or Young Adults to lead our 5–12-year-old children in Children's Liturgy once a fortnight at the 10.00am Mass.



We would look at providing training and resources for the leaders.

The plan is to call up the children at the beginning of Mass, and the leaders would lead them through a reflection on the Gospel message of that Sunday in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding. They would then come back at the Offertory time and share with the community their learnings from the day's readings.



Further inquiries:

Contact Seminarian Luke 0467 549 493

PARISH READING ROSTER: 28 FEBRUARY / 1 MARCH

Saturday 5:30 pm Gerard Pinto / Robert Aquino

Sunday 8:00 am Anthony Melham / Katherine Katrib

10:00 am

Patricia Armao / Natasha Joseph

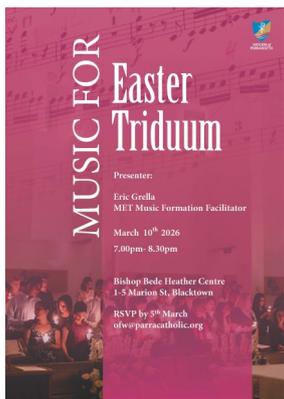
Diocesan Notices

Catholic Youth Parramatta 2026 Kick-Off: 26 February

Young people from across the Diocese are invited to an evening of celebration as we begin 2026 together. Hear testimonies from local leaders, take part in prayer, connect with others, and discover the vision for Catholic Youth Parramatta in the year ahead. Join us on Thursday 26 February from 7pm to 9.30pm at Holy Family Primary School, 11 Emert Parade, Emerton. Register today: <https://parracatholic.org/events/liftedlaunch/>



Music Workshop – Music for Easter Triduum



To be facilitated by Mr Eric Grella, our Music Formation Facilitator. This session will cover information around all the masses during the Triduum, starting with Palm Sunday and ending with Easter Sunday. Bring along any questions you might have, including but not limited to hymn selection during the Triduum.

For choir members, parishioners and any others who would be interested in this great opportunity.

Tuesday, 10th March
7pm – 9pm at the **Bishop Bede**

Heather Centre (1-5 Marion Street Blacktown).

RSVP 5th March to OFW@parracatholic.org

At Our Parish

St Patrick's Primary Parramatta Centenary Celebration: 14 March

The St Patrick's Parramatta School Community warmly invites all former staff, students, and families to join us in celebrating 100 years of faith, learning and community on Saturday 14 March at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta. Mass begins at 1:30pm, with an afternoon tea to follow. Let us come together in Eucharist to share memories and celebrate companionship across generations. RSVP via <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZCpRA1DLrNElCkwClltsabrOw4315RYq3LiRTzvAlkOFmaA/viewform>

Rosary Making Workshops

Come along for a fun evening of community and crafting rosary beads that will then be donated to the sick and dying in hospitals across our Diocese. The craft evening will be held on the following days:

- Thursday 26 February at St Nicholas of Myra Parish, Penrith, from 7pm.
- Saturday 7 March at Holy Spirit Parish, St Clair- Erskine Park, from 2pm.
- Tuesday 10 March at Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown, from 7pm.

Costs are \$5 per person – payable on arrival (includes all materials). To register and for more information, please visit parracatholic.org/rosary-workshops

Be a stronger you – Free empowerment course for women

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains has partnered with Survivor Voice Australia to run a free six-week empowerment program for women who have experienced domestic violence and abuse. The program will start in February 2026 in the Blue Mountains. Contact Catholic Care to express your interest: (02) 8843 2500.

Our Community

The law of fasting binds those who have completed their eighteenth year, until the beginning of their sixtieth year; the law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year.



Mass
Intentions
Of The Week

Please pray for those who are sick, recently deceased, have an anniversary at this time and all those for whom you have a special intention.



Recently Deceased: Cesar Francia | Liza Cuevas Reyes | Jeanette Abraham | Sue O'Brien

Deceased: Reggie & May Perumal, John & Tripony Pasangha, Rita Fernando, Cyril Fernando, Kule & Irene Nagalingam | Joe & Clare Boulous, Isaac Moses, Ruby Moses | Namtallah & Patrick Malkoun, Frank & Ray Malkoun, Romanos Malkoun, Mary Malkoun & Samiha Frome | Queenie & Nicholas Nicholas, Namtullah & Christine Coorey, Rizcullah & Patricia Coorey, Jeanette & Veronica Coorey, Jabour & Doura Nicholas & family, Saidie & Joseph Coorey & family, Najia & Toufic Samyia, Vincent Budwee, John Doumit, All deceased members of the Nicholas, Coorey, Budwee & Norman families | Artemio, Abraham, Augustus, Rebecca & Tranquilina Patacsil; Yolanda & Donald Muir; Rachael Sumagui, Melissa, Petronillo & Rebecca Llanillo, Luzviminda Nolasco | David (Dib) & Theresia Romanos | Romanos Family | Pamela Romanos | Evelyn Betros | Tony & Samira Abood & their Family | Fred Betros Family | Constanton Family | All Holy Souls in Purgatory especially for those who have no one praying for them

Anniversary: Felicia Mary Subramaniam | Peter Duong | Samantha Diaz

Sick: John Joaquin Patacsil, Virginia, Agnes, Napoleon, Manuel & Jorge Patacsil & his families, Elizabeth, Michael & Maryrose Perez, Naty & Maria Aurora Degamo, Erwin Ayuste, Ellen Patacsil, Emma Llanillo | All the Sick especially those who are sick in our parish community

Special Intentions: John Joaquin, Agnes, Napoleon, Manuel, Virginia & Jorge Patacsil & his families; Elizabeth, Michael & Maryrose Perez; Erwin Ayuste | Wap-Hill, Sidney, Kimberley, Richard | For all our special intentions and for those who have asked us for prayers

Thanksgiving: For all our blessings and prayers for thanksgiving

*To our parishioners who would like to request for a **home or hospital visit for the sick**, please call the parish office on (02) 8863 8801 or email harrispar@parracatholic.org. For mass offerings or special intentions, you may use the envelopes provided at the church foyer.*

Mass Readings

First Reading

Genesis 2:7-9,3:1-7

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

Now the serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death."' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 50:3-6,12-14,17

℟ Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin. ℟

My offences truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done. ℟

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. ℟

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise. ℟

Second Reading

Romans 5:12-19

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The

results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 4:4

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

Matthew 4:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God' he said 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,
and they will support you on their hands
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these' he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,
and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

