

21 May 2023

The Ascension of the Lord
Year A

ASCENSION



Entrance Antiphon

Men of Galilee, why gaze in
wonder at the heavens?
This Jesus whom you saw
ascending into heaven
will return as you saw him
go, alleluia.

First Reading from the Acts
of the Apostles 1: 1-11

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 46:2-3. 6-9. R. v.6

Response: God mounts his
throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets
for the Lord.

Second Reading from the
letter of St Paul to the
Ephesians 1: 17-23

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my
gospel. I am with you always,
until the end of the world.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to
Matthew 28: 16-20

Communion Antiphon

Behold, I am with you
always, even to the end of
the age, alleluia.

Next Week

**PENTECOST SUNDAY
YEAR A**

First Reading: Acts 2:1-11

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 103:1. 24. 29-31. 34. R. v.30

Second Reading:

1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13

Gospel: Jn 20:19-23

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand,
the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.*

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME OF THE YEAR 2023

Do good; seek justice. (Isaiah 1:17)

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Australia will be observed in
the week between Ascension and Pentecost.

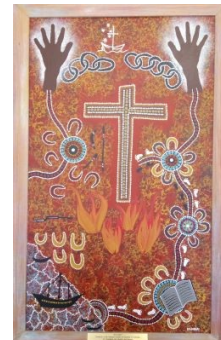
The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2023 was
chosen by the Minnesota Council of Churches **"Do good; seek
justice."** (cf Isaiah 1:17)

In the Scripture passage chosen for the Week of Prayer for Christian
Unity 2023, the prophet Isaiah teaches us how we are to cure these ills. Learning to do right
requires the decision to engage in self-reflection. The Week of Prayer is the perfect time for
Christians to recognize that the divisions between our churches and confessions cannot be
separated from the divisions within the wider human family. Praying together for Christian
unity allows us to reflect on what unites us and to commit ourselves to confront oppression
and division amongst humanity. The prophet Micah points out that God has told us what is
good and what God requires of us: "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly
with your God" (Mic 6:8). To act justly means that we have respect for all persons. Justice
requires truly equitable treatment in order to address historic disadvantage based on
"race", gender, religion and socio-economic status. To walk humbly with God requires
repentance, reparations, and finally reconciliation. God expects us to unite in a shared
responsibility for equity for all God's children. The unity of Christians should be a sign and
foretaste of the reconciled unity of the entire creation. However, Christian division weakens
the force of that sign, serving to reinforce division rather than bring healing to the world's
brokenness which is the Church's mission.

The Bible tells us that we cannot separate our relationship with Christ from our attitude
towards all God's people, particularly those considered "the least of these" (Mt 25:40). Our
commitment to each other requires us to engage in mishpat, the Hebrew word for
restorative justice, advocating for those whose voices have not been heard, dismantling
structures that create and sustain injustice, and building others that promote and ensure
everyone receives fair treatment and the rights that are due to them. This work must
extend beyond our friends, family and congregations to the whole of humanity. Christians
are called to go out and listen to the cries of all who are suffering, in order to better
understand and respond to their stories of suffering and their trauma. Rev Dr Martin Luther
King Jr. often stated that "a riot is the language of the unheard." When protest and civil
unrest arise, it is often because the protesters' voices are not being heard. If churches join
their voices to those of the oppressed, their cry for justice and liberation will be amplified.
We serve and love God and our neighbour by serving and loving one another in unity.

The working group appointed by the Minnesota Council of Churches chose this verse from
the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah as the central text for the Week of Prayer: *"learn to
do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow"* (1:17).

The resources have been adapted for use in Australia by the NCCA Faith and Unity
Commission in collaboration with the Faith and Order Commission of the Victorian Council
of Churches. Additional reading and resources are available on our parish website including
an 8 day prayer reflection.



Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri & Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: Friday 14 April from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon		
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12

Contact us

Office Hours: **Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm**
 Phone: **9603 7373 / 0434 705 176**
 Email: varroville@dow.org.au
 Website: varroville.dow.org.au

Parish Priest: **Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD**

Assistant Priest: **Fr “Sam” Ransom Rapirap OCD**

Parish Associate: **Sr “Jill” Girлие Sudario, CM**

Prayer intentions

For the sick & homebound: Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys

May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.

For our recently dearly departed: Antonio Azevedo, Luke Stephenson, Phyllis Cooper,

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Jennifer Bishop

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.



Our Community: Rosters

28 May	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Myra, Paul & Lori	Allan & Anita	Patricia & Matthew
Altar Servers	Cody, Christian & Ralph	Orly, Luisa & Carlos	Stuart
Readers	Candice & Michael	Tess V & Aida	Sheenalyn & Timothy
Refreshments	Estela & Margaret	Tina & Volunteer	XX
CLOTW		Rebecca & Emma	
Flowers	Lorraine & Effie	Church Vacuuming	Feiloakitohi family
Counters	Vilma & Jeanette	Foyer Cleaning	Feiloakitohi family

Our Community

Parish Feast Day Preparation Meeting is on Monday 15 May at 7.30pm. With just 2 months till our Feast Day on 16 July, we need to form our committee and coordinate the stalls. It will be great if each ministry has a representative at the meeting; Different people will have the skills to manage and help with the food stalls, concert, children’s activities, logistics, publicity, liturgy, first aid. Please come along to the meeting and offer your support for this important annual event in our parish. For more information please call Patricia on 0434 705 176.

Fundraising Cash Raffle: We will be selling raffle tickets in our annual major raffle to be drawn at the parish feast day on 16 July. Tickets will be sold after Mass and books of tickets are available to take home and sell.

Sacramental Preparation dates are now available on the parish website. Preparation for First Holy Communion commences this weekend. Please keep the children who are preparing and their families in your prayers at this time.



Bulletin Notices

State of Origin (Rugby League) is on 31 May at 7.30pm.

The game will be on in the meeting room and you are challenged to come along and cheer for NSW (or QLD). BYO drinks and snacks.

Music is a joyful service. Come serve with the Music Ministry.

•musicians• singers • slides •

Do you Value Music at Mass? The challenge we face in our liturgy today is one that affects the whole parish. Our music ministry needs guitar and keyboard players specifically to meet the needs of the near future.

All Sunday Masses would benefit from another musician to provide another option to those that currently are committed, sometimes without any break, from week to week. Those who come forward will be well supported with initial formation, resources and tuition as needed, for as long as needed, before becoming "active" or "live". There are many current musicians who are willing to share their experience of leading the worship of God through song. The commitment to playing at Mass is based on availability. So if you know anyone who is a competent guitar or keyboard player, and who wants to belong to a friendly and supportive faith community, please encourage them to value this opportunity. For details contact the Parish office or approach the choir after mass.

Let us all pray for the growth of this ministry as an expression of our thanksgiving to God.

The Rosters will finish at the end of May. All current serving ministers will be invited to join the rosters for the next 6 months from June – November. All ministries will welcome new members. To sign up please contact the parish office or speak to one of the welcomers in the foyer after Mass today. Discernment and training will be provided if you are unsure where you can serve our parish community.

Have you registered your family with our parish office. If you have been attending Mass here and consider this to be your parish, please register your details with the parish office. Also, if your contact details have changed, please let us know. Knowing how many active families are in our parish helps us plan for the future.

The Illawarra Choral Society is sending out a call to peace with a new and truly moving concert at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Saturday 27 May 2023, 2pm. The Armed Man: a mass for peace by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins, draws on texts from various sources and includes the Christian Mass and the Islamic call to prayer. It was originally written in 1999 and dedicated to the victims of the Kosovo conflict. Its message is as relevant today as when it was first commissioned, and it continues to inspire and move audiences around the world. The event will be held at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Harbour st, Wollongong. The performance will commence at 2pm on Saturday 27th May. All are welcome to attend. For further details and tickets please visit the Illawarra Choral Society's website illawarrachoralsociety.com

The Journey, 21 May 2023 –Weekly Podcast On The Journey This Week: Fr Mark De Battista and the Great Commission: go and make disciples. This is not an optional extra for us as Christians. Mother Hilda on doing a little exercise called: I wish God knew. Plus, Fr Mike Delaney, Trish McCarthy, and Fr Dave Callaghan. The Journey podcast is available at www.jcr.org.au.

Sorry Day Webinar Caritas Australia is pleased to invite your parish community to our Sorry Day Webinar with survivors from Kinchela Boys Home, one of the most notorious institutions associated with the Stolen Generations. In this special event, you will hear from Uncle Widdy (#36) and Uncle Bobby (#24), two survivors of Kinchela Boys Home, one of the most notorious institutions associated with the Stolen Generations. Caritas Australia's First Australians Programs team will also speak about what truth-telling and intergenerational healing means to our partners. Date: 25 May 2023; Time: 11-12 pm AEST; Location: Zoom Webinar; Please register at www.caritas.org.au/sorry-day-webinar.

An invitation to join electronic parish planned giving from your Parish Finance Council; An electronic regular gift provides many benefits. You will find it a secure, convenient, and efficient way to regularly support your parish, while also reducing our administration costs. It will also help us to confidently forecast and plan, as we know that we can rely on your support. You can increase, decrease, discontinue, or restart your monthly gift at any time. Please visit <https://dow.sh/parishgiving> to learn of the four simple ways you can support our parish electronically.

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL PENTECOST CELEBRATIONS:

Please join the Catholic Charismatic Renewal NSW & Parramatta in celebrating Pentecost 2023 with an uplifting, inspiring encouraging Holy Spirit afternoon of Praise & Worship, Testimonies, Hearing the Word of God, and Prayer Ministry. Date Saturday 27th May 2023, venue Servants of Jesus Centre 15 Park Road Seven Hills. Time 2pm-5.30pm. Enquiries 9810 2499 or email@ccrns.org.au

Prayer Breakfast Book Launch | Fr Tony Percy 27 May 7:30am

-9am Cost \$10; Micah House Evangelisation Centre, 35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown Join us for a Prayer Breakfast, commencing with morning prayer of the Church, followed by breakfast and a Q & A with Fr Tony Percy about his new book which espouses that nations need strong foundations if they are to endure. Resting on the work of David Kemp's five-volume political history, Fr Percy investigates the liberal intellectual roots of Australia's democracy and asks what went right and what went wrong. He shows that, by any reasonable measure, the last 120-odd years prove the roots of this nation are strong. Spots are limited for what will be an engaging morning including a hot breakfast. I would strongly encourage you to register now to secure your spot by clicking here; RSVP by Wed 24 May. Any enquiries: cindy.oliver@dow.org.au

The Chosen – A TV Series about Jesus is a new 'free to view', series, now in its third season, that beautifully and creatively presents the life of Christ and his followers. The shows are of the highest quality and are receiving acclaim around the world across denominations. Go to watch.angelstudios.com/thechosen to watch or get the free app for use on your phone / laptop via The Chosen app (download) or for your Smart TV. Watch it on your own, or better still with family and friends.

Go Deeper in your Faith with popular & FREE Catholic Podcasts

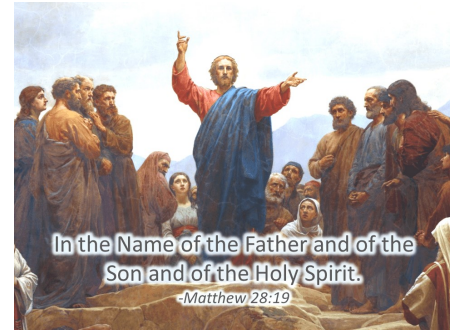
- ◆ Bible in a Year
- ◆ Catechism in a Year www.ascensionpress.com/ciy

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 28:16-20

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



Homily by Pope Francis

Today we celebrate Jesus' Ascension into heaven, which took place 40 days after Easter. The Gospel passage, which concludes the Gospel of Matthew, presents the moment of the Risen One's final farewell to his disciples. The scene is set in Galilee, the place where Jesus had called them to follow him and to form the first nucleus of his new community. Now those disciples have traversed the "fire" of the Passion and of the Resurrection; at the visit of the Risen Lord they prostrate themselves before him, although some remain doubtful. Jesus gives this frightened community the immense task of evangelizing the world; and he reinforces this responsibility with the command to teach and baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' Ascension into heaven thus constitutes the end of the mission that the Son received from the Father and the beginning of the continuation of this mission on the part of the Church. From this moment, from the moment of the Ascension, in fact, Christ's presence in the world is mediated by his disciples, by those who believe in him and proclaim him. This mission will last until the end of history and every day will have the assistance of the Risen Lord, who assures: "I am with you always, to the close of the age".

His presence brings strength during persecution, comfort in tribulations, support in the difficult situations that the mission and the proclamation of the Gospel will encounter. The Ascension reminds us of Jesus' assistance and of his Spirit that gives confidence, gives certainty to our Christian witness in the world. He reveals to us the reason for the Church's existence: the Church exists to proclaim the Gospel, for this alone! So too, the joy of the Church is proclaiming the Gospel. The Church is all of us baptized people. Today we are called to better understand that God has given us the great dignity and responsibility of proclaiming him to the world, of making him accessible to all mankind. This is our dignity; this is the greatest honour of each one of us, of all the baptized!

On this Feast of the Ascension, as we turn our gaze toward heaven, where Christ has ascended and sits at the right hand of the Father, we strengthen our steps on earth so as to continue our journey — our mission of witnessing to and living the Gospel in every environment — with enthusiasm and courage. However, we are well aware that this does not depend first and foremost on our strengths, on our organizational abilities or human resources. Only with the light and strength of the Holy Spirit can we effectively fulfil our mission of leading others to know and increasingly experience Jesus' tenderness.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary to help us contemplate the heavenly benefits that the Lord promises us, and to become ever more credible witnesses to his Resurrection, to the true Life.

High Tea thank you to the fundraising team for hosting a very lovely event 2 weeks ago. The tables looked so pretty and the morning tea was delicious. Here are a few photos. \$1646.50 was raised to support the parish renovation project.

