



# St Peter's Parish, Surry Hills

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**Fr. John Macdonald**, Administrator

**Fr. Nicola Falzun OP**, Priest in Residence for the *Missio ad gentes* of the Neocatechumenal Way

## **Feast Days – Twentieth week in Ordinary Time, Yr. B:**

Mon 16 Aug	Saint Stephen of Hungary
Thu 19 Aug	Saint John Eudes
Fri 20 Aug	Saint Bernard, abbot, doctor
Sat 21 Aug	Saint Pius X, pope

### **Saint Peter's Church - temporary COVID closure**

In line with the directive of the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Saint Peter's Church at Surry Hills will be closed until further notice.

### **We Pray For**

***Our sick*** – baby Dio Onero, Noel Allport, Louise McCann, Nerisa Williams, Nathan Essey, Mira Krcma, Josephine Finneran, Marija Barclay, John Yo-un and Dan Southee.

***Our deceased*** – Katie Brincat (27/7), Johnny Heard (20/7), David Patrick Watson (18/7), Charles Xavier ((13/7), William Winterton (8/6), Peco Mitrevski (30/6/21), Muriel Rosemary Goddard [Tyrrrell] (2/7) (Paula's mother), Helen McGuirk, George Vorlicek, Lourdes Eulalia Martinez (10/6), Anne Kelly (Deborah White's mum (14/5), Betty Harkins (12/5), Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood, Margaret D Hailwood, Joyce Hailwood & Marge Heaney, Joan McEvoy and June Veronica Hailwood.

***Our house bound elderly*** – Anne Maria, Myra and Robert Pearce

**Partaking in the Eucharist commits us to others, especially the poor, teaching us to pass from the flesh of Christ to the flesh of our brothers and sisters, in whom he waits to be recognised, served, honoured and loved by us.**

*Pope Francis*

*Catechesis on the Mass 2018*

## The history and the heart of the Solemnity of the Assumption



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### ***Why we should offer a two-fold prayer of thanks***

*by Brother Silas Henderson, SDS - published on 15/08/19*

In my work as a retreat leader and catechist, I encounter a wide diversity of faith perspectives and even traditions. As we know, understandings of Mary and the Communion of Saints are some of those beliefs that divide Christians, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is certainly one of those teachings that has been divisive. While it is true that the Dogma of the Assumption was officially promulgated by Pope Pius XII in 1950, the mystery that inspires this celebration is firmly rooted in the ancient Tradition of the Church and has its foundations in the words of Scripture. What may surprise many is that this celebration is shared with Orthodox Christians throughout the world, while many members of the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran Church also honour Mary on this day.

This feast, which celebrates the truth that, at the end of her earthly life, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heaven, evolved from a liturgical celebration of the “Day of Mary, Mother of God,” in Jerusalem in the 5th century. Although it was originally a more general celebration of Mary, it soon became a commemoration of Mary’s *Natale*, her “birthday” into heaven. Within 200 years, it was being celebrated in Rome. Under Pope Sergius I (d. 701), this day in honour of Mary came to be celebrated as a memorial of Mary’s passing from this life and included a midnight procession (during the night of August 14) from Rome’s church of St. Adrian to the Basilica

of St. Mary Major. By the end of the century, it had come to be known as the “Assumption of Holy Mary.”

The fact that there was a celebration of Mary’s entrance into Heaven tells us that early Christians believed that there was something special about the end of Mary’s time on earth (called her *Dormition* (“falling asleep” in Latin) and that they saw particular meaning in this mystery.

Among the earliest set of prayers we have for this Feast (from the 8th-century *Gregorian Sacramentary*), is a prayer that reads: “God, turning your gaze to the humility of the Virgin, you raised her to the sublime dignity of the Mother of your Son and crowned her with incomparable glory.” This theologically ripe sentence tells us what is at the heart of the celebration of Mary’s Assumption: Because of Mary’s humble and unique cooperation in the mysteries of salvation, she enjoys a privileged place in Heaven.

In his *Genesee Diary*, Henri Nouwen expresses this truth in this way:

Mary is the most pure contemplative. Luke describes her as contemplating the mysteries of the redemption. After telling about the visit of the shepherds to the Child, he writes, “As for Mary, she treasured all these things in her heart” (2:19), and after describing how she found Jesus in the temple among the doctors of the Law, he adds: “His mother stored up all these things in her heart ...”

The doctrine of the Assumption affirms the fulfilment of this contemplative life in heaven. There the most redeemed human being, the woman in whom God touched us in the most intimate way, the mother of Jesus and all who believe in him—there she stands in the presence of God, enjoying forever the beatific vision that is the hope of all Christians.

The glory and grace that Mary enjoys now in Heaven is also promised to each of us. We are reminded of this in the Second Reading for the Mass for the Assumption: Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ.” (Colossians 15:20-23)

The special grace that preserved Mary from the decay of death (cf. Genesis 3:19; Romans 6:23) contains a promise of restored life for each of us. But, in order to really appreciate the gift and promise of the Assumption, we have to recognize that the grace and call God extended to Mary were received, by her, with an open heart. She did not allow those gifts to remain idle within her heart and soul. This is Mary as the woman of faith and this is Mary as a model for all of us who follow her Son.

Mary's active and living faith inspired her to place her trust in God's promises and to give herself completely to the will of the Father: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Even Jesus himself praised his mother's faith. When a woman called out to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you," he replied, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it" (Luke 11:27-28). Mary was called blessed not simply because she happened to be the mother of Jesus. Mary is blessed because of faith and obedience.

So, on this Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, let us take a moment to offer **a two-fold prayer of thanks**. First, for the gift we have received because of **Mary's obedience and faith** which are at the heart of this celebration and, second, for the **promise of new and eternal life** that God has made to each of us, in Christ, when we faithfully and lovingly respond to the movements of the Holy Spirit, as did Mary.

**TWO GREAT LESSONS** from *Virgin Mary*  
BY POPE FRANCIS

**The faith of Mary**  
"Mary believes and proclaims that God does not leave his children alone, humble and poor, but sustains them with merciful care"

**Life is not about wandering**  
"Life is not a senseless wandering, but a pilgrimage which, with all of the sufferings...has a sure destination"

INFORMATION FROM CATHOLICNEWSAGENCY.COM

**Social Justice Sunday (29<sup>th</sup> August)** – The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) have issued a Media Release on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021 urging the Catholic Church to act



## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

### **Catholic Church urges action to care for the earth, the poor**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**August 5, 2021**

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has made an historic commitment to work towards a more sustainable Church in its annual statement promoting social justice.

In the Social Justice Statement 2021-22 launched today, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, the bishops commit to a seven-year journey towards seven Laudato Si' Goals.

"We are facing an ecological crisis and Pope Francis wants the whole Church globally to act with a greater sense of urgency," said Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service.

"In Australia, passionate individuals, religious institutes, schools and organisations have been working on ecological issues for a long time. I want to affirm and thank them all, and to urge the whole Catholic community to join them."

Bishop Long pointed out that "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been caring for country from time immemorial. The rest of us need to listen, and to learn how we can walk together to care for the whole of creation – including one another."

The statement explains that the Laudato Si' Goals "aim to put Pope Francis' [2015] encyclical into practice, making communities around the world sustainable in the spirit of the integral ecology of *Laudato Si'*".

The bishops invite Catholics to "uncover the sacramentality of creation" in recognising the divine presence in the world, and to respond with wonder and awe. They call for a "profound conversion expressed in a new way of living, both personally and collectively".

"We are being called to a new way of thinking, feeling, understanding and living," the statement says.

Speaking during the online launch of the statement, Bishop Long said: "My hope is that *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* will encourage ever deeper and more effective Christian responses to the urgent cries of the earth and of the poor."

The statement urges families, schools, parishes, dioceses and organisations to join the bishops in signing up to the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

The platform, an initiative of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, will gather ideas for action from around the globe to help participants in their journeys. The Bishops Conference's Office for Social Justice has been involved in developing the platform.

At the statement's launch, Bishop Long also announced a new name for that agency – now known as the Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace – affirming "social justice, ecology and peace are inseparable".

*Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* and associated resources can be downloaded at [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

on caring for the earth and the poor. Here is the link to the media release: <https://www.catholic.org.au/acbc-media/media-centre/media-releases-new/2328-media-release-catholic-church-urges-action-to-care-for-the-earth-the-poor/file>

In the Australian Bishops' Social Justice Statement, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, the Church is called to have " ... a new way of thinking, feeling, understanding and feeling.". Furthermore, at the Laudato Si Action Platform launch, Bishop Long affirmed that " ... social justice, ecology and peace are inseparable." For more information: ACBC Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace, [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au) or tel. (02) 6201 9845.

The following link also provides a video of the Bishops launching the Statement, as well as other materials associated with it:

<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2021/06/24/social-justice-statement-2021-22/>



“The Rosary is the most beautiful and the most rich in graces of all prayers; it is the prayer that touches most the Heart of the Mother of God ... and if you wish peace to reign in your homes, recite the family Rosary.” Saint Pope Pius X

### **Act of Perfect Contrition:**

O my God, I am sorry  
and beg pardon for all my sins  
because they have crucified my loving Saviour Jesus Christ  
and most of all because they have offended your infinite goodness to me.  
I firmly resolve by the help of your grace  
never to offend you again  
and to avoid the occasions of sin. Amen.

*(This is the standard of Contrition which, together with our intention to go to the sacrament of reconciliation when we are next able to do so, ensures forgiveness for our sins. During the pandemic Pope Francis has encouraged those Catholics unable to go to the sacrament of confession to make a perfect act of contrition for the forgiveness of their sins.)*

### **Spiritual Holy Communion:**

As Fr. John mentioned in his Sunday's homily, Jesus Christ comes to us in Word and Sacrament: We always have access to Jesus as the Word of God via Sacred Scripture (see the attachment to this email or the parish website for this Sunday's readings). Moreover, when we do not have access to the Sacraments, we can make an act of perfect contrition (see homily) and a "spiritual communion".



### **Communion Prayers**

The following prayers before and after Holy Communion may be helpful in normal times, and currently in the form of a "**spiritual communion**".

#### **Prayers before Communion**

Heavenly Father, you offer me the living and life-giving food that is Christ your Son. Humbly, I accept and I pray that this divine food may deepen, strengthen and make flourish the superantural life in me and in all who receive Him at this Mass.

Jesus, you became the Lamb of God, the victim for our sins. May I receive you with gratitude and love. May I absorb something of your love for the Father and of your love for all; and may all of us who receive you be filled with your Spirit and become more like you.

Holy Spirit of God, abiding in me, help me to receive with great reverence and love of this gift of the Father. Help me to surrender myself to Jesus and through him to the Father, and make stronger and more conscious the bond that unites us to one another in Christ Jesus.

#### **Prayers after Communion: Thanksgiving**

Heavenly Father, You have given me this divine gift under the form of bread because you intend Him to be food for me. May, then, this living Bread give me life, his divine strength replace my weakness, his nourishment promote my spiritual health, his perfection transform me into the likeness of Jesus, Himself..

In You, Jesus, we are all united. Sharing your life, we are made one with you and with one another. How wonderful the bond that invites, how wonderful the charity that should animate us. Make my love for others a reflection of your love for us all.

May the Holy Spirit, the soul of the Mystical Body, dwell in my soul and enkindle it with the flame of true love.

Mary, Mother of Jesus and my mother, at this moment when I am so closely united with him help me to give him the love and worship that are his due. You knew him so intimately in his earthly life; you know him so wonderfully in glory: teach me to know him better:

Help me to become more like him in my thinking, in my imagining, in my desiring and in my living.

**Sunday Mass collections** – The parish kindly asks that we keep in mind the ongoing costs and expenses of the parish in the absence of the Sunday Mass collections. Please consider donating via i) a direct transfer to the parish church account **BSB**

**No: 062 784 Acc. No: 10000281** or ii) by clicking on the yellow **“Support us”** button on the top right hand corner of the Homepage of the parish website.

**Evangelium** – This Sunday’s topic on **“Assumption”** will be presented by **Michael Donohue**. Here are the Zoom details:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85429524136?pwd=WUhJVlFvZ2pCZzhjMTFwQVJNZC9udz09>

Meeting ID: 854 2952 4136

Passcode: 175175

**Christian Life Community (CLC)** – The CLC parish group would like to invite parishioners who may like to join at 7:30 pm – 9:00pm on Tuesday 17 Aug. At this meeting the group will be led through an exercise in imaginative prayer based on a Gospel scene. Here are the Zoom details:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81252954631?pwd=TW1YdnBOVDZHWHN6UjIS-MkFsZFlyQT09>

Or to join by phone: Dial: +61 2 8015 6011

Enter meeting ID: **812 5295 4631**

Passcode: **634101**

**Parishes for Mission Day – This has been postponed.** St Peter's Parish will host the neighbouring parish of Redfern, Rosebery and Waterloo for a "parishes for mission" day between 9:00am to 4:00pm. Fr. John is calling for expressions of interest any parishioners who would like to attend. This event which will be held in our parish Hall (1880). Program for the day will be aimed at helping to form us for the Archbishop's missionary project "**Go Make Disciples**". There is no cost associated with this event and lunch will be supplied.

**University of Notre Dame (UND) Catholic Interfaith Group** – Parishioner and UND Law Student Rebecca Rogan is seeking to establish a Catholic Interfaith group at UND. In order to satisfy one of the university's requirements for the establishment of the group, Rebecca needs four current UND students to simply declare their signed support for the group.

Interfaith dialogue is a core requirement for every Catholic diocese. We commend Rebecca for her initiative at UND and ask any students who would like to declare their support for her project to contact the Parish by phone or email.

### **PARISH GROUPS should meet online until further notice**

**RCIA** – The Duffy Hall – Thursday: 6:30pm – 7:30pm (fortnightly)

**Neocatechumenal Way** – B16 - Thursday: 7:30pm – 8:30pm

**Mother's Group** – Courtyard – Friday: 2:30pm

**AA Surry Hills Group** – Duffy Hall – Tuesday: 6:00pm – 7:00pm

**Christian Life Community (CLC)** – B16 Room - Tuesday: 7:30pm (fortnightly)

**Young Adults** – Sun 11:30 – 2:00pm (morning tea, Angelus, Evangelium & pub lunch)

**Marian Group** – before mass daily

**Divine Mercy Group** – before mass daily

**Cenacle** – Church – Tuesday: 10:30 am

**Liturgy Group** – B16 – after Sunday lunch

Legion of Mary – To be announced

**Home visits during COVID** - Fr John is available to visit parishioners in their homes in Surry Hills. This is allowable according to the lockdown regulations. If anybody would like to be visited by Fr John, or would like to recommend that he visits somebody else, please contact the Parish. Fr John also invites anybody to request a phone conversation with him.

Again, simply contact the Parish and Fr John will be in touch with you.



### **Safeguarding our Parish**

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding Office at 93905810 or [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org). The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.