



St Peter's Church, 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 – Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C

Mon 17 Jan	Saint Anthony
Thu 20 Jan	Saint Fabian
	Saint Sebastian
Fri 21 Jan	Saint Agnes

Mass times effective 2 Jan 2022

Daily Mass: **Mon to Sat:** 10:00am

Sunday Mass: 10:00am

Confessions: **Sat:** 9:30am - 10:00am (during the holiday season) or by approaching Fr. John

We Pray For

Our sick and injured – Angelines, Nerisa Williams, Josephine Finneran, Ana Teresa Rodrigues, Mafalda Triolo, Aimi McEwen, Louise McCann, Nathan Essey, Marija Barclay, John Yo-un, Dan Southee.

Our deceased – Joanna and Tadeusz Wolski (17/1), Rolando (Sr Asunta Marie's brother) (9/1), Bro. Kevin Francis Guthrie (28/12), Robert Armstrong, Alan Davidson, Noel Allport (2/12), Peter Hanrahan, Marisa Mandelli (23/11), Sylvia Abela (28/10), Coralie Hinkley, Katie Brincat (27/7), David Patrick Watson (18/7), 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 – Shirley Kennedy, Anna Maria, Myra Krcma

Our recently baptised: Paul Baart (and his parents, Eric and Rebecca) of Bennett Street, Surry Hills on Sat 15 Jan 2022

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*

COVID Safe Rules and Recommendations in NSW

QR Code check-in is still mandatory for entry to places of worship.

According to the NSW Government regulation, everyone attending Mass at Saint Peter's is **once again required to wear a face mask** and to maintain at least 1.5m **social distance**. By continuing to practise mask wearing and social distancing in church, we are also obeying core moral teachings of the Church concerning our care for ourselves and our care for the common good.

The Catholic moral principle of regard for the common good requires us to always weigh our individual rights against our care and concern for others. As the State and Church authorities continue to emphasise, the most important instrument in the protection of our own health and the health of the community is for all of us to be fully vaccinated.

Full vaccination also preserves the viability of our medical and hospital systems and reduces unnecessary pressure on our already fatigued medical and nursing professionals.

To this end, the Premier has asked everyone in NSW to take the booster jab as one of our New Year's resolutions.

On COVID vaccinations, Pope says health care is a 'moral obligation' – NPR, January 10, 2022

ROME — Pope Francis suggested Monday that getting vaccinated against the coronavirus was a "moral obligation" and denounced how people had been swayed by "baseless information" to refuse one of the most effective measures to save lives.

Francis used some of his strongest words yet calling for people to get vaccinated in a speech to ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, an annual event in which he takes stock of the world and sets out the Vatican's foreign policy goals for the year.

Francis, 85, has generally shied away from speaking about vaccination as a "**moral obligation**," though his COVID-19 advisory body has referred to it as a "moral responsibility." Rather, Francis has termed vaccination as "**an act of love**" and that refusing to get inoculated was "suicidal."

On Monday he went a step further, saying that individuals had a responsibility to care for themselves "and this translates into respect for the health of those around us. Health care is a moral obligation," he asserted.

He lamented that, increasingly, ideological divides were discouraging people from getting vaccinated.

"Frequently people let themselves be influenced by the ideology of the moment, often bolstered by baseless information or poorly documented facts," he said, calling for the adoption of a "reality therapy" to correct this distortion of human reason.

"Vaccines are not a magical means of healing, yet surely they represent, in addition to other treatments that need to be developed, the most reasonable solution for the prevention of the disease," he added.

Some Catholics, including some conservative U.S. bishops and cardinals, have claimed vaccines based on research that used cells derived from aborted fetuses were immoral, and have refused to get the jabs. **(Please see the article in this Sunday's Catholic Weekly entitled, "Faith, Science and Vaccines: Vaccines aren't a threat, not contrary to our faith" on pages 1, 4 and 5.)**

The Vatican's doctrine office, however, has said it is "morally acceptable" for Catholics to receive COVID-19 vaccines based on research that used cells derived from aborted fetuses. Francis and Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI have been fully vaccinated with Pfizer-BioNTech shots.

Francis repeated his call for universal access to the shots, particularly in the parts of the world with low vaccination rates, and called for revisions to patent rules so that poorer countries can develop their own vaccines.

"It is appropriate that institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization adapt their legal instruments lest monopolistic rules constitute further obstacles to production and to an organized and consistent access to health care on a global level," he said.

Saint Antony of Egypt, abbot (Feast day 17 Jan) – Catholic Online

Two Greek philosophers ventured out into the Egyptian [desert](#) to the mountain where Antony lived. When they got there, Antony asked them why they had come to talk to such a foolish man? He had [reason](#) to say that -- they saw before them a [man](#) who wore a skin, who refused to bathe, who lived on bread and water. They were Greek, the world's most admired civilization, and Antony was Egyptian, a member of a conquered nation. They were philosophers, educated in languages and rhetoric. Antony had not even attended school as a boy and he needed an interpreter to speak to them. In their eyes, he would have seemed very foolish.

But the Greek philosophers had heard the stories of Antony. They had heard how disciples came from all over to learn from him, how his [intercession](#) had brought about [miraculous](#) healings, how his words comforted the suffering. They assured him that they had come to him because he was a wise man.

Antony guessed what they wanted. They lived by words and arguments. They wanted to hear his words and his arguments on the [truth](#) of [Christianity](#) and the value of asceticism. But he refused to play their game. He told them that if they truly thought him wise, "If you think me wise, become what I am, for we ought to imitate the good. Had I gone to you, I should have imitated you, but, since you have come to me, become what I am, for I am a Christian."

Antony's whole [life](#) was not one of observing, but of becoming. When his [parents](#) died when he was eighteen or twenty he inherited their three hundred acres of land and the responsibility for a young sister. One day in church, he heard read [Matthew](#) 19:21: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you [will](#) have treasure in heaven;

then come, follow me." Not content to sit still and meditate and reflect on Jesus' words he walked out the door of the church **right** away and gave away all his **property** except what he and his sister needed to live on. On hearing **Matthew** 6:34, "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow **will** bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today," he gave away everything else, entrusted his sister to a convent, and went outside the village to live a **life** of praying, fasting, and manual labor. It wasn't enough to listen to words, he had to become what **Jesus** said.

Every **time** he heard of a holy **person** he would travel to see that person. But he wasn't looking for words of wisdom, he was looking to become. So if he admired a person's constancy in **prayer** or courtesy or patience, he would imitate it. Then he would return home.

Antony went on to tell the Greek philosophers that their arguments would never be as strong as faith. He pointed out that all rhetoric, all arguments, no **matter** how complex, how well-founded, were created by human beings. But **faith** was created by God. If they wanted to follow the greatest ideal, they should follow their faith.

Antony knew how difficult this was. Throughout his **life** he argued and literally wrestled with the devil. His first temptations to leave his ascetic **life** were arguments we would find hard to resist -- anxiety about his sister, longings for his relatives, thoughts of how he could have used his **property** for **good** purposes, desire for power and money. When Antony was able to resist him, the **devil** then tried flattery, telling Antony how powerful Antony was to beat him. Antony relied on Jesus' name to rid himself of the devil. It wasn't the last time, though. One time, his bout with the **devil** left him so beaten, his friends thought he was dead and carried him to church. Antony had a hard **time** accepting this. After one particular difficult struggle, he saw a light appearing in the **tomb** he lived in. Knowing it was God, Antony called out, "Where were you when I needed you?" **God** answered, "I was here. I was watching your struggle. Because you didn't give in, I **will** stay with you and protect you forever."

With that kind of assurance and approval from God, many people would have settled in, content with where they were. But Antony's reaction was to get up and look for the next challenge -- moving out into the desert.

Antony always told those who came to visit him that the key to the ascetic **life** was perseverance, not to think proudly, "We've lived an ascetic **life** for a long time" but treat each day as if it were the beginning. To many, perseverance is simply not giving up, hanging in there. But to Antony perseverance meant waking up each day with the same **zeal** as the first day. It wasn't enough that he had given up all his **property** one day. What was he going to do the next day? Once he had survived close to town, he moved into the tombs a little farther away. After that he moved out into the desert. No one had braved the **desert** before. He lived sealed in a room for twenty years, while his friends provided bread. People came to talk to him, to be healed by him, but he refused to come out. Finally they broke the door down. Antony emerged, not angry, but calm. Some who spoke to him were healed physically, many were comforted by his words, and others stayed to learn from him. Those who stayed formed what we think of as the first monastic community, though it is not what we would think of religious **life** today. All the monks lived separately, coming together only for worship and to hear Antony speak.

But after a while, too many people were coming to seek Antony out. He became afraid that he would get too proud or that people would worship him instead of God. So he took off in the middle of the night, thinking to go to a different part of **Egypt** where he was unknown. Then he heard a voice telling him that the only way to be alone was to go into the desert. He found some Saracens who took him deep into the **desert** to a mountain oasis. They fed him until his friends found him again.

Antony died when he was one hundred and five years old. A **life** of solitude, fasting, and manual labor in the service of **God** had left him a healthy, vigorous **man** until very late in life. And he never stopped challenging himself to go one step beyond in his faith.



Saint Athanasius, who knew Antony and wrote his biography, said, "Antony was not known for his writings nor for his worldly wisdom, nor for any art, but simply for **his reverence toward God**." We may wonder nowadays at what we can learn from someone who lived in the desert, wore skins, ate bread, and slept on the ground. We may wonder how we can become him. We can become Antony by living his **life** of radical **faith** and complete commitment to God. In His Footsteps: **Fast** for one day, if possible, as Antony did, eating only bread and only after the sunsets. Pray as you do that **God will** show you how dependent you are on **God** for your strength.

Prayer: Saint Antony, you spoke of the importance of persevering in our **faith** and our practice. Help us to wake up each day with new **zeal** for the **Christian life** and a desire to take the next challenge instead of just sitting still. **Amen**

Pisanello: *Vision of Our Lady with St. Antony and St. George*

Who Was Saint Agnes? – The Church of St Agnes: (Feast day 21 Jan)

Saint Agnes is also known as Agnes of Rome, Ines, Ines del Campo, and Ynez. The name "Agnes" is similar to the Latin word *agnus*, which means "lamb". For this reason depictions of Saint Agnes often include a lamb. The name actually comes from a Greek word which means "chaste, pure, sacred".

Agnes is one of the "virgin martyrs" of the church of Rome. She is one of seven women, in addition to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who are mentioned in the Roman Canon of the Mass (Eucharistic Prayer I). Saints Felicity, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Cecilia, and Anastasia are the

other six. Agnes is a patron saint of chastity, gardeners, girls, Girl Scouts, engaged couples and victims of rape.

Here are a diversity of accounts of her martyrdom (by fire, or sword) from very early on, and so it is hard to know much with certainty. The historical record of the specific circumstance/reasons for her martyrdom is also unclear. Most date her martyrdom to the year 304 under the Emperor Diocletian, but the evidence again is not unanimous. All sources seem to agree that she was very young, 12-13 years old, when she was martyred, in the late 3rd or early 4th century. It is the tradition that she was martyred on January 21, and so her feast day is January 21. It was the custom in the early church to commemorate martyrs on the day of their birth into eternal life. However, her regular birthday, January 28 has also been commemorated in our church's history.

The bones of Saint Agnes are preserved in the Church of Sant'Agnese Fuore le Mura (Saint Agnes Outside the Walls) in Rome. This church was built over the catacombs that were constructed around the tomb of Saint Agnes. Her skull is preserved in a side chapel of the Church Sant'Agnese in Agone (Saint Agnes in Agony) which is in Rome's Piazza Navona. The Fountain of the Four Rivers is immediately in front of the church.

One of the traditions associated with Saint Agnes is that on the Feast of Saint Agnes, two lambs who have been raised at the local Trappist Monastery of Tre Fontane, are brought to the Basilica of Saint Agnes Outside the Walls and are blessed. The lambs are raised into sheep by the Benedictine Sisters of Cecilia in Trastevere (a section of Rome near the Vatican).

The sheep are sheered each year on Holy Thursday. The wool from these lambs is then woven into material that is used to make around 12 pallia. (Latin singular=pallium, plural=pallia). The pallia are placed near the tomb of Saint Peter on June 28, the vigil of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul where they remain overnight. The pallia are then kept for future use in the "niche of the pallia" in a confessional near the tomb of Saint Peter.

A palium is a collar-like vestment that is the symbol of the office of an archbishop. It is ornamented with six crosses and is worn over a chasuble. A palium is presented to an archbishop by the Pope, and is symbolic of his unity with the Pope. Since the Diocese of Rome is an archdiocese, the Pope, who is the Bishop of Rome is also an archbishop. He also wears a pallium.

Saint Agnes is the patroness of our parish. August Knochelman, who donated much of the land (4.9 acres) of our current parish property wanted the parish to be under the patronage of Saint Philomena. Bishop Howard however, decided that it would be under the patronage of Saint Agnes. The reasons for his decision are apparently lost to history. Our parish actually began as a mission attached to the Cathedral Parish in 1930. It was established as an independent parish in 1954.



A medallion with a primary relic of Saint Agnes, along with a certificate of authentication, is framed underneath the statue of Saint Agnes in our church. A second primary relic is displayed in an ostensorium, kept in a display case in our chapel. Also in the same display case are relics of Saint Agatha (like Agnes, a virgin martyr) and Saint Anthony of Padua.

Sources: Catholic Encyclopedia on line, Wikipedia, For a contemporary and very thought-provoking reflection on the tradition of the virgin martyrs, please see, "The Virgin Martyrs: Between 'Point Verge' and the 'Usual Spring'", in *The Cloister Walk*, by Kathleen Norris, pages 186-205.

Feast of the Infant Jesus of Prague – 14 Jan

The Significance of the Infant Jesus of Prague

By depicting Jesus as a child, the tradition of the Infant of Prague also emphasizes His humanity, and how we are children of God because of the salvation that He brings us. As [Pope Benedict XVI said](#):

The figure of the Child Jesus, the tender infant, brings home to us God's closeness and his love. We come to understand how precious we are in his eyes, because it is through him that we in our turn have become children of God. Every human being is a child of God and therefore our brother or sister, to be welcomed and respected. May our society grasp this truth! Every human person would then be appreciated not for what he has, but for who he is, since in the face of every human being, without distinction of race or culture, God's image shines forth.

Source: Basilica Guide and Tour Book, Dr. Geraldine Rohling



Prayer to the Holy Family



Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,
I give you my heart and my soul;
Jesus Mary, and Joseph,
assist me in my last agony;
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,
may I breathe forth my soul
in peace with you.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Archbishop Fisher's mother,
Maria Gloria Fisher (née Maguregui)
15 June 1938 – 11 January 2022

We seem to be giving her back to you, O God,
who gave her to us.

Yet, as You did not lose her in giving her to us,
so we do not lose her by her return.

For You do not give as the world gives, O Lover of
souls:

what You give You never take away,
for what is Yours is ours also, if we are Yours.

For life is eternal, and love is immortal,
and death is only an horizon,
and the horizon is no more than the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further;
cleanse our tearful eyes, that we may see more clearly;
draw us closer to Yourself, that we may know
ourselves
to be nearer to our loved one who is with You.

And while You prepare a place for us,
prepare us also for that happy place,
that where You and she are, we may be also, for
evermore.

- Prayer of Fr Bede Jarrett OP

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord,
and let Your perpetual light shine upon her.
May her soul rest in peace. AMEN.