



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 – Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – (Year C)

Mon 7 Feb	Saint Paul Miki and companions
Tue 8 Feb	Saint Jerome Emiliani
	Saint Josephine Bakhita
Thu 10 Feb	Saint Scholastica
Fri 11 Feb	Our Lady of Lourdes

Sunday Masses: 9:00am and 10:30am (Sung Mass)

Daily Mass: **Mon:** 7:30am **Tue to Sat:** 10:00am

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction: **Fri:** 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Confessions: **Fri:** 6:00pm – 6:45pm; **Sat:** 9:30am - 10:00am

Holy Rosary: Daily before Mass

We Pray For:

Our sick and injured: Maria de Los Angeles ('Angelines') Agudo, Nerisa Williams, Josephine Finneran, Ana Teresa Rodrigues, Mafalda Triolo, Aimi McEwen, Louise McCann, Nathan Essey, Marija Barclay, John Yo-un, Dan Southee.

Our deceased: Damien Carroll ((31/1) Marita Ellison), Julian Ciappara (28/1), Joanna and Tadeusz Wolski (17/1), Rolando (Sr Asunta Marie's brother) (9/1), Robert Armstrong, Alan Davidson, 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

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.

For the above reasons, Pope Francis is now referring to the need for vaccination against the COVID virus as a 'moral obligation'.

COVID vaccine misinformation violates human rights, says Pope Francis

Pope Francis has said misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccines is a human rights violation.

He condemned the "distortion of reality based on fear" on Friday during a meeting with Catholic journalists who have formed a fact-checking network. It is the second time in less than a month that Francis has spoken out against misinformation during the pandemic. The 85-year-old has frequently called for responsible journalism that searches for the truth and respects individuals.

"To be properly informed, to be helped to understand situations based on scientific data and not fake news is a human right," he said. "We can hardly fail to see that these days, in addition to the pandemic, an 'infodemic' is spreading. "In our global society [this] leads to an explosion of commentary on falsified if not invented news."

The Pope also stressed that those who believe conspiracy theories about COVID-19 should be mercifully helped to understand true scientific facts. "Fake news has to be refuted, but individual persons must always be respected, for they believe it often without full awareness or responsibility," he said. "Reality is always more complex than we think and we must respect the doubts, the concerns and the questions that people raise, seeking to accompany them without ever dismissing them."

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

Francis has been one of the most vocal religious leaders speaking out in favour of vaccines and respect for measures to fight the pandemic. He has implied that people have a "moral obligation"

to ensure the health care of themselves and others, and the Vatican recently required all staff to either be vaccinated or show proof of having had COVID-19 to access their workplaces.

Pope: Let us keep our gaze fixed on Jesus: Vatican News: Christopher Wells, 23 Jan 2022

“Everything started with the word that God spoke to us,” said **Pope Francis in his homily** during the Mass for the Sunday of the Word of God. So “let us keep our gaze fixed on Jesus... and let us embrace His word.”

The word reveals God - The Holy Father highlighted two aspects of the day’s readings: The word of God reveals God; and His word leads us to man. The Pope noted that in the Gospel, Jesus reveals that He came “to liberate the poor and the oppressed,” showing that God is not detached or indifferent to humanity, but is close to human beings and wants to care for them. He does so, the Pope said, precisely through His word, “rekindling hope amid the ashes of your fears, helping you rediscover joy in the labyrinths of your sorrows, filling your feelings of solitude with hope.”

Pope Francis said, ““The word of God nurtures and renews faith: let us put it back at the centre of our prayer and our spiritual life!”

The word leads to man - This revelation of God leads us to the human race: When we discover God, “we overcome the temptation to shut ourselves up in a religiosity reduced to external worship, one that fails to touch and transform our lives.” Instead, “God’s word impels us to go forth from ourselves and to encounter our brothers and sisters solely with the quiet power of God’s liberating love.” In particular, Jesus, when preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth, said that He had been sent to the poor to set them free. “In this way,” the Pope said, “He shows us the worship most pleasing to God: caring for our neighbour.”

Pope Francis denounced the temptation to rigidity in the Church, which he described as a “perversion” and an “idol,” a kind of modern “pelagianism” that does not change us. The word of God, he explained, does change us; it challenges and disturbs us, so that we will not remain indifferent to the sufferings of this world, which fall disproportionately on the poor. It “urges us to act, to combine worship of God and care for men and women.” He also spoke out against a kind of “angelic spirituality” as another temptation the Church faces today -- a temptation to a certain “gnosticism” that proposes a word of God that is out of touch with reality. Instead, the word of God is meant to become flesh in Christians, in the concrete circumstances of everyday life, so that Christians might no longer be indifferent, but creative and prophetic in their outreach to their brothers and sisters.

Our mission - Pope Francis insisted, “The Word wishes to take flesh today.” Noting the conferral of the ministries during the liturgy, the Pope explained, “They are called to the important work of serving the Gospel of Jesus, of proclaiming Him, so that His consolation, His joy, and His liberation can reach everyone.” This is also the mission of all Christians, he said: “To be credible messengers, prophets of God’s word in the world.” He called on the faithful to “grow passionate about sacred scripture,” exhorting them “to put the word of God at the centre of the Church’s life and pastoral activity,” and “to listen to that word, pray with it, and put it into practice.”

In this way, he said, "we will be freed from every rigid pelagianism, for any rigidity, and will be freed from the illusion of spirituality that leaves us "in orbit," without caring for our brothers and sisters." So, he concluded, "Let us listen, let us pray, let us put [the word of God] into practice."

FEBRUARY Month of the Holy Family: Imitation of the Holy Family (Catholic Culture)

The Holy Family models for us what family life should exemplify. It is a school of virtue for both parents and children. There we find God, and learn how to connect with God and with others. The family is where love is freely given without self-interest. It is where we learn to love, to pray and to practice the gift of charity. Pope John Paul II has said, "The family, more than any other human reality, is the place in which the person is loved for himself and in which he learns to live the sincere gift of self" (Nov. 27, 2002).

We should ask ourselves if our own families model that of the Holy Family. We need to be open to God's grace to value the positive and to accept our mistakes — and to be willing to rectify them.

Parenting is a very challenging responsibility and at times errors are made despite the best intentions. Recognizing this, children should trust their parents and never forget that parents want only what is best for them. Which leads us to what may be **the most important family virtue — forgiveness**.

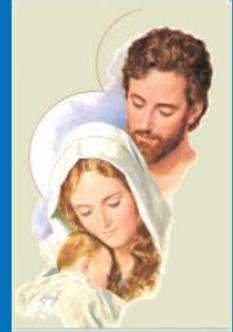
Living so intimately within the family nucleus naturally gives rise to unpleasant situations where someone is apt to be offended. Saint Paul knew this when he told us to "**bear with and forgive one another**." The health of our family may depend on how quickly we learn to forgive without harbouring feelings of resentment.

No family can thrive and grow without constant work. Even the material details that take time and effort are essential to keeping the family strong. Everyone has to pull together for the good of the family — even to the point of putting ahead of our own needs and ambitions the happiness of other family members, setting aside our own selfish desires. It is also important to pray as a family, especially **the holy rosary**. **Prayer will help us to intensify our closeness with each other and to learn to forgive.**

During this Year of the Eucharist it is essential to discover the relationship between the Eucharist and family life. Pope John Paul II wrote, "In the Eucharistic gift of charity the Christian family finds the foundation and soul of its communion and its mission" (*Letter on the Family*, No. 57). — Excerpted from *The Holy Family models what family life should be*, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

Saint Paul Miki and companions (Feast day 7 Feb) Catholic News Agency

On Feb. 6, the Catholic Church honours the 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki, a group of native Japanese Catholics and foreign missionaries who suffered death for their faith in the year 1597.



"May the Holy Family, icon and model of every human family, help each individual to walk in the spirit of Nazareth."

During the 16th century, the Catholic faith reached Japan by the efforts of the Jesuit missionary Saint Francis Xavier (1506-1552). Jesuit outreach to the Japanese continued after his death, and around 200,000 Japanese had entered the Church by 1587.

Religious tensions led to a period of persecution during that year, during which many churches were destroyed and missionaries forced to work in secret. But few episodes of martyrdom took place during this time, and within a decade 100,000 more Japanese became Catholic despite the restrictions.

During 1593, Franciscan missionaries came to Japan from the Philippines by order of Spain's King Philip II. These new arrivals gave themselves zealously to the work of charity and evangelism, but their presence disturbed a delicate situation between the Church and Japanese authorities.

Suspicion against Catholic missionaries grew when a Spanish ship was seized off the Japanese coast and found to be carrying artillery. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a powerful imperial minister, responded by sentencing 26 Catholics to death.

The group was comprised of three native Jesuits, six foreign Franciscans, and several lay Catholics including some children. Sentenced to die by crucifixion and lancing, they were first marched 600 miles to the city of Nagasaki.

During the journey they underwent public torture meant to terrorize other Japanese believers in Christ. But all of the 26 held out courageously, even singing the hymn of praise "Te Deum" when they arrived at the hill where they would be crucified.

Three of the best-known martyrs of Nagasaki are Saints Paul Miki, John of Goto, and James Kisai. Though none were priests, all were associated with the Jesuits: Miki was training for the priesthood, while Kisai was a lay brother and John of Goto was a catechist preparing to enter the order.

Paul Miki offered an especially strong witness to his faith during the group's month-long march to Nagasaki, as he joined one of the captive



Franciscan priests in preaching to the crowds who came to mock the prisoners.

The son of a wealthy military leader, Miki was born in 1562 and entered the Church along with the rest of his family. He joined the Jesuits as a young man and helped many Buddhists to embrace Christianity. His last act of evangelism took place as he hung on his cross, preaching to the crowds.

"The only reason for my being killed is that I have taught the doctrine of Christ," he announced. "I thank God it is for this reason that I die. I believe that I am telling the truth before I die."

"After Christ's example, I forgive my persecutors. I do not hate them. I ask God to have pity on all, and I hope my blood will fall on my fellow men as a fruitful rain."

St. Paul Miki and his 25 companions were stabbed to death with lances on Feb. 5, 1597, at the site that became known as "Martyrs' Hill." Pope Pius IX canonized the Martyrs of Nagasaki in 1862.

Feast Day 8 Feb of St. Josephine Bakhita – International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking – Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, February 2, 2022



St. Josephine
Bakhita
1868-1947
The Lord has loved
me so much: we must
love everyone ... we
must be
compassionate!

The Catholic Church celebrates the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita on the 8th of February each year, her life was a journey from slavery to freedom and faith. The patron saint of Sudan, her life story inspires hope in the face of modern day indifference and exploitation.

As Pope Francis states: “She is charged with showing to all the path to conversion, which enables us to change the way we see our neighbors, to recognize

in every other person a brother or sister in our human family and to acknowledge his or her intrinsic dignity in truth and freedom. This saint, who lived at the turn of the twentieth century, is even today an exemplary witness of hope for the many victims of slavery; she can support the efforts of all those committed to fighting against this ‘open wound on the body of contemporary society.’” Pope Francis on the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2015.

Saint Josephine Margaret Bakhita was born around 1869 in the Darfur region of Sudan. She was a member of the Daju people and her uncle was a tribal chief. Due to her family lineage, she grew up happy and relatively prosperous, saying that as a child, she did not know suffering. Historians believe that sometime in February 1877, Josephine was kidnapped by Arab slave traders. Although she was just a child she was forced to walk barefoot over 600 miles to a slave market. She was bought and sold at least twice during the grueling journey. For the next 12 years she would be bought and sold and given away over a dozen times. She spent so much time in captivity that she forgot her original name.

As a slave, her treatment was cruel with several owners. She was sold to the Italian Vice Consul, Callisto Legani. He was kind to her. When it was time for him to return to Italy, she begged to be taken with him and he agreed.

After a long journey back to Italy, Legani gave her away to another family as a gift and she served them as a nanny. This new family had dealings in Sudan and when her mistress decided to travel to Sudan without Josephine, she placed her in the custody of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. While with the Sisters she came to know about God.

When the mistress returned from Sudan, Josephine refused to leave the Sisters. This caused the Superior of the Institute for baptismal candidates among the sisters to complain to Italian authorities on Josephine’s behalf.

The case went to court, and the court found that slavery had been outlawed in Sudan before Josephine was born, so she could not be lawfully made a slave. She was declared free.

For the first time in her life, Josephine was free and could choose her own path. She chose to remain with the Canossian Sisters.

She was baptized in 1890 and three years later became a novice with the Canossian Daughters of Charity and took her final vows in 1896. For the next 42 years, she worked as a cook and doorkeeper at the convent. She was known for her gentle voice and smile.

She died on February 8, 1947. She was canonized by Saint Pope John Paul II on October 1, 2000. She is the patron saint of Sudan. To read the full account, please click [here](#)



The International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

This Day of Prayer is held on February 8th each year. In addition to prayer, the day is a call to action:

“Our awareness must expand and extend to the very depths of this evil and its farthest reaches...from awareness to prayer...from prayer to solidarity...and from solidarity to concerted action, until slavery and trafficking are no more,” says Cardinal Peter Turkson.

In this sense another goal of the day is to encourage people to act and to take concrete steps to help eradicate slavery and trafficking. Indeed, an essential part of freedom is our ongoing

effort to ensure it is woven into the fabric of our society. To access resources for the International Day of Prayer, please click [here](#)

World Day of the Sick – February 11 (Feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes)

While traditionally February in the Catholic Church is dedicated to the Holy Family, in reality it is a month that could easily take on the theme of serving the **sick and suffering**.

Saint John Paul II instituted this day in the Catholic Church in 1992 and appointed its celebration **for February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes**. The reason why he picked this day is because many sick people flock to Lourdes in hopes of physical or spiritual healing. Many have been cured by being immersed in the waters at Lourdes. [John Paul II explained in a homily](#) the general theme of this day.

This day, which, beginning in February 1993, will be celebrated every year on the commemoration of Our Lady of Lourdes, for all believers seeks to be “a special time of prayer and sharing, of offering one’s suffering for the good of the Church and of reminding everyone to see in his sick brother or sister the face of Christ who, by suffering, dying and rising, achieved the salvation of mankind” (Letter Instituting the World Day of the Sick, 13 May 1992, n. 3). The day seeks, moreover, to involve all people of good will. Indeed, the basic questions posed by the reality of suffering and the appeal to bring both physical and spiritual relief to the sick do not concern believers alone, but challenge all mankind, marked by the limitations of the mortal condition.



Is Mary praying the Rosary to herself? – Aleteia: Philip Kosloski 18/10/17

In Western art Mary is frequently depicted in statues and paintings carrying a rosary. It is a popular image, one that has been confirmed with the apparitions of Lourdes and Fatima; on both those occasions the Virgin Mary appeared holding a rosary. To some it is a strange composition, as it might suggest Our Lady was praying the “Hail Mary” to herself, an action that wouldn’t match up with Mary’s selfless humility, or really make much sense.



In order to understand the reason for the artistic choice it is important to look at what happened at Lourdes and Fatima. By doing so we realize that she isn’t praying to herself, but teaching us how to pray.

About Lourdes, St. Bernadette gives us the [following testimony](#).

Without thinking of what I was doing, I took my rosary in my hands and fell on my knees. The Lady made a sign of approval with her head and took into her hands a rosary which hung on Her right arm. When I attempted to begin the rosary and tried to lift my hand to my forehead, my arm remained paralyzed, and it was only after the Lady had signed herself that I could do the same. The Lady left me to pray all alone; she passed the beads of her rosary between her fingers but she said nothing; only at the end of each decade did She say the ‘Gloria’ with me. When the recitation of the rosary was finished, the Lady returned to the interior of the rock and the golden cloud disappeared with her.

Bernadette explains how she prayed the rosary alone, while the Virgin Mary only joined in for the “Glory Be” prayer at the end of each decade. She also notes how she wasn’t able to start the rosary until Our Lady made the Sign of the Cross.

One of the primary requests of Mary at Lourdes was simply, “Pray for sinners.”

The apparitions at Fatima were much different, including longer conversations with the Virgin Mary. She first appeared when the three children were praying a truncated version of the Rosary and she held a rosary in her hands. In subsequent apparitions Our Lady appeared only after the children finished praying the Rosary.

Our Lady of Fatima repeatedly asked the children, “Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and an end to the war,” and also, “Make sacrifices for sinners.”

In the end, then, it is clear that the Virgin Mary is holding a rosary so as to encourage us to pray the Rosary. She does not pray the “Hail Mary” of each decade, but still accompanies us as a loving mother, guiding our hands when they fall limp.

Our Lady is a great teacher and as Pope Francis [said in 2013](#), “**The Rosary is a school of prayer, the Rosary is a school of faith!**”

‘Living in the Light’ - A Spiritual Conversation led by Margaret Hill from Christian Life Community (CLC); 7.30pm-8.30pm Wednesday 16 February in the Duffy Hall
All are welcome. More about CLC visit: clcaustralia.org.au