



Parishes of Mater Dei Blakehurst & St Raphael's South Hurstville

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Year B

Bulletin 28th April 2024

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Ps 97:1-2

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts 9:26-31

Saul joins the apostles.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 21:26-28.

I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

1. My vows I will pay before those who fear him. The poor shall eat and shall have their fill. They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him. May their hearts live for ever and ever! (R.)

2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him. They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. (R.)

3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him. They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn: 'These things the Lord has done' (R.)

Second Reading: 1 Jn 3:18-24

We are in God and God in us.

Gospel Acclamation: Jn 15:4-5

Alleluia, alleluia! Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; my branches bear much fruit. Alleluia!

Gospel: Jn 15:1-8

Jesus the vine, the Father, the vine-grower.

Communion Antiphon: Cf. Jn 15:1,5

I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

At first glance, it appears that there is a certain ruthlessness about the image of the vinedresser pruning the vine: perform or perish! However, the process of cutting away and pruning branches is an incredibly nurturing action; it is removing the unproductive portions of the plant so that the vine has an even better opportunity to produce fruit in the next season. It is an act of love; not an act of economic rationalism. Within our own lives we are called to make decisions about which of our thoughts and actions are life-giving (fruit-bearing) and which are unproductive; negative; crippling; life-diminishing. If we are able to 'prune' our life-diminishing thoughts and actions we allow ourselves the freedom and the ability to really flourish. Feelings of jealousy, greed, resentment, self-doubt and lack of confidence can limit our ability to be fully alive just as addictive and harmful behaviours can physically take away our ability to perform at our best.

I am reminded of the old *Karate Kid* movie when the boy, Daniel, is introduced to the art of bonsai. He is told to close his eyes, imagine the perfect tree and then start clipping and shaping the plant to make real the perfection that lies within it. It is only through a process of cutting away and pruning that we can nurture ourselves to realise the beauty of our potential.

Living the Gospel – Bearing fruit

The vinedresser of this passage cuts away the dead branches and prunes back those that are not bearing fruit. In what way do we bear fruit? When we strive to reach our fullest potential in whatever we do, we bear fruit. When we act out of motivation for the other person rather than ourselves, we bear fruit. When we strive to bring about the reign of God in our small part of the world, we bear fruit. Sometimes we too need to have some of our thoughts and actions pruned so that we might better bear the fruit that we are truly capable of producing.

Scriptural context – In context

The imagery that Jesus used in his parables and in extended metaphors such as the one used in this week's gospel sometimes seems a little foreign to a 21st century audience. However, the world in which Jesus lived and taught was dominated by small scale farmers and producers in an agrarian economy. His use of images such as 'shepherd', 'vine', 'tenants', 'farmers' and 'wineskins' would all have been immediately recognisable to his audience. They would also have appreciated much more than we do the subtlety of Jesus' use of such images when he twists them in an unexpected way.

Historical Context – The 'True' vine

The image of the vine has its origins in Psalm 80 where the nation of Israel is likened to a vine: 'You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land.' (Ps 80:8-9) However, the people of Israel have forgotten who they are and who it was that planted them in their country – it is like the rootstock of a grafted plant has taken over and gone wild. Jesus' presence as the 'true vine' reminds them of what they are called to be.

UNITED IN FAITH, GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT NOURISHED BY THE EUCHARIST, COMMITTED TO
PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL WE STRIVE TO LIVE AS GOD ASKS
"to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8)

MASS TIMES		
	St Raphael Church	Mater Dei Church
Tues	9:15am Mass	
Wed		9:00am Novena 9:15am Mass
Thurs		9:15am Mass
Friday	7:30pm Adoration	8:45am Adoration, Rosary & Mass
Sat	4:30pm Reconciliation 5:00pm Vigil Mass	Vigil mass 1st and 3rd Sat.
Sunday	8:00am Mass	10:00am Mass

27th /28th Apr (4th Sun)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	4:30pm	8.00am		10.00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Norman	No Vigil Mass	Volunteer
EMOHC	Gail	Rosie G		Lucy Mitry Allan M
Readers	Karen Volunteer	Maria C Rose T		

4th /5th May (1st Sun)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	4:30pm	8.00am		10.00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Gary, Max	No Vigil Mass	Paul Watson
EMOHC	Susi	Annie		Anne P Luisa Galea
Readers	Volunteers	Rosy G JP Moral		

Death Anniversary: Rudolf Sossinka

Pray for good health of: Rupeni Fabiano, Vanessa Yenson, Benjamin Ross, Matthew Smith, Nicolas Zapata, Yvonne Amy, Gisselle Clark (Oscuro), Joan Rounds, Anne Lo, Sunga Family, Adele Shehata, Anna Liza Torres Zapata.

Pray for the deceased: Peter Smith, Rafael Monserrat, Souls of all the departed Legionaries and their Families. Antonius Widjaja, Jeffrey Bishop, Fr Isidore Anantharaj, Fr Kennedy, Fr Kerr, all priests, Holy Souls in purgatory.



You are invited to an exclusive screening of

CABRINI

Based on a true story

7:00pm on Tuesday 30th April
All tickets \$13.00

Screening at Beverly Hills
Cinema

Mater Dei Home Rosary

30-4-2024 Nives Care
33 Church St Blakehurst 11:00 AM
07-5-2024 Marguerite and Denis
32 Waratah Street Kyle Bay 11:00 AM
All are welcome

ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

Every Thursday night MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH

6:30 pm Rosary, **7:00 pm** Praise and Worship and Reconciliation, **7:30 pm** Talk or Mass or Adoration

Dates to Remember

May 2	“Receiving God’s Gifts”	Fr George Sigamony
May 9	“Baptism in the Holy Spirit”	Fr Hugh Thomas
May 16	“Growth and Transformation”	Fr Tony Alex

Please Note: Confession will be available from 6:30pm—7pm



DINNER DANCE

WITH A TOUCH OF SPARKLE

Date: Friday 14th June 2024 6:30PM
Venue: Doltone House—223 Belgrave Esplanade Sylvania Waters
Dine / Dance / Drink
Tickets \$90.00pp
Contacts: MD Marguerite Derrig 0420 523 592.
SR Yvette 0413 319 948



Mater Dei Church
 Morning tea after mass
on 28th April 2024

Confirmation 2024

Mater Dei	- Tues 14 May @ 6 PM
	Wed 15 May @ 6 PM
St Raphael's	- Thurs 13 Jun @ 7 PM

CWF Parish Appeal
We need you.

4th and 5th May is the Charitable Works Fund appeal and we need your help. CWF funds services that help thousands of people every year. They offer comfort to people in crisis, provide advocacy, training and better access for the disadvantaged, support people in their faith development and train our future priests. This work can only be done with our parishes' support. Give generously. **Your tax-deductible donation changes lives.** All donations contribute to your Parish target. Thank you.

3 Ways to donate:
1) Scan the QR code or visit www.ourfaithourworks/give-to-cwf

2) Complete the parish envelope
3) Phone 1800 753 959

Mater Dei & St Raphael's Parish Calendar 2024		
7-05-2024	Mater Dei First Eucharist Information night 5:30pm	MD
8-05-2024	St Raphael Confirmation info night 5:30pm	SR
13-05-2024	Mater Dei Council meeting	MD

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND		
TYPE	St Raphael's	Mater Dei
First	304.35	203.85
Second: loose	571.30	262.00
Envelopes	340.00	360.00

PARISH DIRECTORY

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Thomas Alukka
M: 0469 236 118 E: tomyalukka@gmail.com

MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH
1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst 2221, NSW

ST. RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
84 George Street, South Hurstville

Website: <https://www.materdei-straphael.org.au/>

Parish Secretary: Juliana Widjaja
Office hours: Tues & Wed 9:30am - 2:30pm
Phone: 02 9546 2605
Email: admin@materdei-straphael.org.au

Parish Ministry Coordinator & Safeguarding Officer Michael Fernandes
Office hours: Tues, Wed & Fri 10am - 2:30pm
M: 0437 517 758 E: mc@materdei-straphael.org.au

Day after day the atheist college professor would taunt his students with the same question. “Have you ever seen God??” Three times he asked. When no one dared answer, he always concluded, “Well, it is quite obvious there is no God.”

One day a Christian student had had enough. The girl said to the class, “Have you ever seen our professor’s brain?” Three times she asked it. When no one answered, she concluded, “Well, it is quite obvious that our professor has no brain.”

so FUNNY