



## St Mary's On Swanson

(Our Lady of Perpetual Succour)  
An inner-city Catholic community  
Welcoming all to celebrate with us  
*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Gadigal  
people of the Eora Nation.*

### Parish House

21 Swanson Street, Erskineville, 2043  
Phone: 9516-3542 Fax: 9516-3536  
Email: [stmaryserko@bigpond.com](mailto:stmaryserko@bigpond.com)  
Web Site: [www.misacor.org.au/mscparishes](http://www.misacor.org.au/mscparishes)  
Secretary Mon, Wed & Fri 8:30am-1:30pm

### The Ascension of the Lord — Year B

20 May, 2012

### THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

The Ascension is not the celebration of a physical journey into the skies or the clouds. That is no more than an image to express that Jesus has entered into glory and that the time of the Church has begun. He has entrusted his mission and ministry to us!

The Ascension is a celebration to mark the fact that there was a period when Jesus of Nazareth was physically present and a subsequent time when he was no longer present in the same way. We are aware that, even though Jesus is no longer physically present among us, the Lord is working with us. In some sense he has 'gone away' from us, yet we believe and experience that he is still very close to us.

The risen Lord instructs us that we have a task to do: we are to bring the Good News to all the world, to the whole of creation. He is present in the many marvels that accompany the Church down the ages. Some of the things Mark mentions do not make much sense to us, especially picking up serpents and drinking poisons unharmed. Yet we all recognise the small and great miracles of love and forgiveness which have come to us through the grace of God and the presence of Jesus in our midst. We do know of demons cast out in the healing of broken spirits and broken bodies. The ascended Jesus is not an absent Jesus. The celebration of Word and Sacrament in the Church is the continuation of Jesus' presence in our world, as is our going out to live what we celebrate. He may no longer be present to us as he was before his passing over through the events of Easter, but the Lord continues to be with us and work with us.

At this time in particular we are on the journey of healing, seeking reconciliation with the original inhabitants of this land, and we are praying for greater unity among Christians. We pray that the risen Lord will perform his marvels amongst us – that the Spirit he promises will lead us to complete reconciliation and full Christian unity with all Christians.

#### MASS TIMES

**Saturday:** 6:00pm **Sunday:** 9:00am & 6:00pm  
**1st Tuesday:** 10:30am Healing Mass (includes Sacrament of the Sick) **3rd Tuesday:** 10:30am Healing Mass  
**Wednesday, Thursday & Friday:** 9:15am  
Individual Reconciliation Sat 5:15pm—5:45pm Sun 8:15am—8:45am & 5:15pm—5:45pm

**Baptisms & Weddings By Appointment**

<b>Easter</b> Gospel 1st Reading 2nd Reading	<b>Pentecost Sunday (27/5/12)</b> John 15:26-27, 16:12-15 Acts 2:1-11 Galatians 5:16-25	<b>Holy Trinity (3/6/12)</b> Matthew 28:16-20 Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40 Romans 8:14-17	<b>Corpus Christi (10/6/12)</b> Mark 14:12-16, 22-26 Exodus 24:3-8 Hebrews 9:11-15
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**Dates to Remember**

- May 20** ACM Mass 11am
- May 24** Our Lady Help of Christians Mass 9:15am
- May 27** Pentecost Sunday

**WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER presents:**

Sunday 1 July:  
A DAY OF GROWTH – for married, engaged, dating couples, priest and religious 11:30am-4:00pm at John the Baptist Parish, 45 Mount Street, Bonnyrigg Heights, NSW 2177. Full details: 02 98238059

20-22 July:  
Weekend for married couples, at Douglas Park, NSW bookings: 02 4283 3435 or [wsharpe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wsharpe@bigpond.net.au)  
Information: [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au)

**2012 WALK WITH CHRIST  
FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI**

Sunday, 10 June 2.30-4.30pm starting from St Patrick's Church Hill, Wynyard and ending at St Mary's Cathedral Forecourt. Bishop Julian Porteous will lead the procession and celebrate solemn Benediction. For more information please visit [sydneycatholic.org/walkwithchrist](http://sydneycatholic.org/walkwithchrist).

**PRAYER MORNING AT MARY MACKILLOP PLACE**

Last Wednesday of the month  
7 Mount Street North Sydney  
(Entry via Museum Reception)

You are invited to a Prayer Morning with Mary MacKillop on Wed, 30 May from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. cost \$15 (Concession \$10).  
This month's topic: *The Dream Darkens – Excommunication Reinstatement & beginning again.*  
If you would like to stay on for the 1pm Mass in the Chapel, you are most welcome.

Bookings and further enquiries: 8912 4818 or [mmp.ministries@sosj.org.au](mailto:mmp.ministries@sosj.org.au)

**WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF GRACE.**

The Bishops of Australia have invited the whole Church to a Year of Grace which will commence at Pentecost, 2012. The year is meant to be a gift to the Church to celebrate and renew our faith and life as Catholics. It is an exhortation from the bishops of Australia to "Start afresh from Christ" and to receive, recognise and respond to God in a new way. For more information about the Year of Grace in the Archdiocese of Sydney see [www.sydneycatholic.org](http://www.sydneycatholic.org) and for special Year of Grace updates [text your name to 0407 621 609](http://text.your.name.to.0407.621.609).

**St. Mary's Towers Retreat Centre  
Douglas Park  
Couple's Weekend Retreat**

June 1 to 3 –Friday evening to Sunday afternoon  
Cost: \$180 each

A weekend of quiet and peace. A chance to relax, re-focus and strengthen your unique relationship.  
Ph: 02 4630 0233 [towersretreat@bigpond.com](mailto:towersretreat@bigpond.com)

<http://towersretreat.abundance.org.au>

**THE CATHOLIC ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE**

**PRESENTS PATRICK MADRID** live in Sydney from 21-23 May. This International Theologian, Speaker, Author, Radio Host, TV Personality and expert on the Catholic response to the "New Atheism" is giving public talks Our Lady of Lebanon Parish (Harris Park), Parliament House, Theology on Tap, the Mustard Seed Bookshop and Sydney University. For more information call 02 9646 9010, email [info@caec.com.au](mailto:info@caec.com.au) or visit [www.patrickmadridlive.com](http://www.patrickmadridlive.com).

**BOOK LAUNCH**

The Mustard Seed Bookshop invites you to the launch of "Answering the Anti-Catholic Challenge" edited by Robert M Haddad. Patrick Madrid, acclaimed author, will be launching this book on Tuesday, 22 May - 7.30pm at The Catholic Centre, 3 Keating St Lidcombe. Supper is included. For more information and RSVP: 02 9646 9010, [info@caec.com.au](mailto:info@caec.com.au) or [www.mustardseed.org.au](http://www.mustardseed.org.au)

**Good Shepherd Seminary Enquiry Morning:  
Sunday, 3 June 2012.**

The Seminary of the Good Shepherd is hosting an open day for those who want to satisfy their curiosity about how men are formed for the priesthood. It begins with Morning Prayer at 9.15am and Mass at 10.00am. It includes time for prayer, talks, information about the studies required, a guided tour of the Seminary, time to chat with priests and seminarians. The day concludes at 1.15pm. RSVP is essential for brunch at 11.30am. All details of every enquirer is kept confidential. Enquiries/RSVP: 9390 5970 or [vocations@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:vocations@sydneycatholic.org)



**Reconciliation in the homes of war criminals**

*Frank Brennan SJ,  
Eureka Street, Vol. 22 No.9 May 15, 2012*

On Saturday, I was travelling around the Catholic parish of Khompong Thom in Cambodia in company with the director of UCAN News, Australian Jesuit Fr Michael Kelly and the parish priest, Thai Jesuit Fr Jub Phoktavi. As we drove through the village of Prek Sbeuv, Jub matter-of-factly pointed to Pol Pot's old house.

It is an unremarkable house, and if tourists happened to be this far off the beaten track they would have little idea that this was the residence of one of the world's greatest war criminals.

I thought back to 1987 when I met a Khmer leader in the Site Two refugee camp on the Thai Cambodian border. I asked him if he could ever imagine a return to government in Cambodia. He looked very sad as he told me how the Khmer Rouge had killed most of his immediate family. He could not trust the Khmer Rouge again.

I had the sense that he would find it hard to trust any of his fellow Cambodians ever again in rebuilding his nation from such ruins. Reconciliation was a fashionable textbook concept.

Twenty five years later, there is a certain routine to life in Cambodia, though poverty in the villages is widespread and government corruption legendary.

The previous evening I had been asked to address a

multi-faith group of NGO and Church workers on faith, justice and public policy. What could I, a Catholic priest from Australia, say about such matters in a largely Buddhist country devastated by genocide?

Whether Christian, Buddhist, or Muslim, faith is about my having, owning and reflecting on a belief system which allows me to live fully with the paradoxes and conflicts of life and death, good and evil, beauty and suffering. It is only fundamentalists who are able to live as if these paradoxes are not real, as if they do not impinge on our sense of self and on our considered actions every day.

By embracing these paradoxes and confronting these conflicts, the person of faith, whether inspired by Jesus, Mohammed, or Buddha, is able to live an engaged life of faith. I am able to commit myself to others, in love and in justice. I am able to be open to reconciling, or at least being reconciled to, the previously irreconcilable.

I am able to accord dignity to all others in the human family, no matter what their distinguishing marks, and regardless of their competencies, achievements or potentialities. I am able to surrender myself to that which is beyond what I know through my senses. I am able to commit myself to the stewardship of all creation.

The atheist, the person with no faith except in man himself, may do all these things to varying degrees. Suffice it to say, I cannot imagine being committed to these tasks so comprehensively and so universally except with faith. Some atheists are among the finest, most generous humanitarians I know. But equally I know that my faith enhances my humanitarian instincts and achievements. I would be a lesser person without my religious faith.

For example I would find it difficult to accord full human dignity to persons at either end of the life cycle but for the abiding conviction that every person is uniquely created in the image and likeness of God. I would find reconciliation in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia incomprehensible and impossible without some religious faith.

When we live in diverse, pluralist societies, it makes good sense for us to be able to translate our comprehensive world view in terms accessible to others if they do not subscribe to our way of thinking.

The challenge to a Christian living in a largely Buddhist society has some similarities to the challenge confronting a Christian living in a society where the public square is largely the preserve of those who argue and agitate with a secularist mindset. We have ideas not just about what is good for us as individuals but what is good for the society of which we are a part.

While it might be patronising and inappropriate for the religious person to tell others how to live their lives, there is nothing wrong with participating in the discussion about how society might be shaped for the good of everyone.

As state officials or as citizens, religious faith can help us and our neighbours. The religious person who espouses universal truths and the universal dignity of humanity might be more likely to stand up for the people on the margins —

the land evictees, the stateless, and the trafficked of Cambodia.

The religious person is free, and perhaps duty bound, to speak up in the public square and vote accordingly. When appointed as a state official, that person is vested with a public trust and must discharge it faithfully. It would be wrong for a religious person to abuse that trust by imposing their religious views on others.

It is important to distinguish the citizen or public official with religious faith from the religious official or representative of the faith community. There are other prudential issues to consider when we come to define the role of religious leaders in the public square.

Buddhists in countries like Cambodia and Myanmar know that the monks can be very effective in making public protests. But the monks must not do it too often; otherwise they lose their exalted role. And if they never do it, they risk becoming irrelevant and withdrawn from their people. Think just of the time when the monks marched in the streets of Rangoon and gathered outside the house of Aung Sang Su Ki when she was under house arrest.

People of faith come into the public square as committed citizens. True to their religious tradition, they discharge the public trust vested in them and work to recognise the dignity and human rights of all persons, at all life stages, no matter what their competencies, potentialities, achievements or distinguishing marks. People of faith work to establish the conditions for the common good, and to respect and enhance the culture and space for freedom of religion and conscience for all their fellow citizens. They find hope in the midst of despair and love in the midst of hatred, and persevere to educate and form citizens and to design structures appropriate to our history and culture, promoting the rule of law and due process for all.

I remain in awe of those Cambodians who have been able to be reconciled, committing themselves to the common good of their nation. Fr Jub drops in occasionally for a chat with Pol Pot's niece who still lives in the family home. May God continue to bless them both.

*Note: Let us as Christians reflect on the fact that this week is the [World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 20-27 May 2012](#) and that we should be mindful of all peoples and pray for a just and peaceful world.*

**Theme: "We will all be changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. 1 Cor 15:51-58)**

Australian Churches will observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 20-27 May 2012. The theme chosen for 2012 is "We Will All Be Changed by the Victory of Our Lord Jesus Christ." (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:51-58). The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2012 comes to us from the churches in Poland, who have reflected upon their own experience as a nation, and in particular how, as a nation, they have been changed and transformed by the many upheavals of their history, and sustained by their faith.

Fr. Barry Brundell msc.....	Parish Priest
Debra Whaley (stmaryserko@bigpond.com).....	Parish Secretary
Jim O'Donnell (jim@od.net.au).....	Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson
Andrew Chatelier.....	Parish Finance & Maintenance Committee
Michael McIntyre (melvilleest@hotmail.com).....	St Vincent de Paul Society (Erskineville Conference) President
Marian Watson (maranto@optusnet.com.au).....	Liturgy Committee Chairperson
Pauline Nowlan (pauline_nowlan@yahoo.com.au).....	Liturgies Co-Ordinator
John Powter (johnpowter@hotmail.com).....	Youth Representative
Mary Pollinger (marypoll@optusnet.com.au).....	Children's Liturgy Co-Ordinator
Marianna Keogh.....	Sacramental Co-Ordinator
Marita McInerney (maritaclare@unwired.com.au).....	Social Justice Committee Chairperson
Bev Coffey (info@stmarys.erskineville.syd.catholic.edu.au).....	St Mary's School Principal
KOSMAC House (smoosh2@aapt.net.au).....	St Mary's After School & Vacation Care
Fr. Claude Mostowik msc (mscjust@smarthat.net.au).....	MSC Social Justice Office
Marika Gubacsi (marita.gubacsi@bigpond.com).....	Yarra Bay Eucharistic Prayer Community

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

- 1st Reading:** Acts 1:1-11
- Responsorial Psalm:** **God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:  
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.**
- 2nd Reading:** 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!**
- Gospel:** Mark 16:15-20
- Prayers of the Faithful:** **Lord Hear our prayer.**



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Why are you looking up  
to heaven?

Acts 1:11

### **We ask your prayers for**

Michael Hurst, Owen Jackson, Danusia Michalak, John Ryan, Kathleen Edwards, Maria & Norman Casamento, John Nichols, Peter Tanner, Wendy Bridges, Bev Sellick, Keryn Wallace, Peter Gasdner, Molly Whaley, Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Danielle Corso, Jacqueline Daley, Finlay Jean Dibley, Peter Oakes, Stephen John Travers, Donna Nurcombe, Kusha Dwyer, Miklos & Marika Gubacci, Donald Stephens, Willis Eloise & Kerry Scheikowski, Sr. Hildegard Ryan osb, Marie Searson, Margaret Morgan, Graham Sims, Fr. Keith Comer msc, Therese Keogh, Caroline Watson-Ley, Carmel Nolan.

### **Anniversaries of our deceased loved ones**

Rita Violet Pfeiffer, Jeff Mark Roberts, James Edward Williams, Simon Andrew Thomas, John Joseph Carroll, Roslyn Silva, John O'Sullivan, Bruce Alexander Mexon

### **Recently Deceased**



**I am a new St Mary's Parishioner or I have changed address:**

**Name: Mr./Mrs./Ms:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill in and put in the collection bag. Thanks!**