



St Peter's Church, Surry Hills

235-241 Devonshire St (between Crown and Marlborough Streets),

Parish phone: (02) 9698 1948

Email: admin@stpeterssh.org.au

Website: www.stpeterssurryhills.org.au



Most Reverend Danny J Meagher: Bishop in Residence, Episcopal Vicar for the Northern Region

Fr. John A Macdonald: Administrator

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

Sunday Masses: 9:00am and 10:30am

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

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: **Tues – Thurs:** 5:00pm – 6:00pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction: **Fri:** 5:00pm – 6:00pm

Confessions: **Fri:** 5:00pm – 5:45pm; **Sat:** 9:30am - 10:00am

Holy Rosary: Daily before Mass

Feast Days for the Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Mon 14 Aug Saint Maximilian Kolbe, priest, martyr

Tue 15 Aug The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Solemnity

Sat 19 Aug Saint John Eudes, priest

We Pray For:

Our sick and injured: Fred Hailwood, John O'Brien, Greg Mason, Maximiliano Carias Suriano, (Jacqui's father), Roy Child, Roslyn Furber, Nerisa Williams, Sophie Marden, Grace Moon, Anna Seow, Ricardo Francisco, Gerry Cassar, Makram Nammour, Ana Teresa Rodrigues, Mafalda Triolo.

Our deceased: Dr EK Cheriachan (32nd anniversary 9/8 (Elsy's husband)), Pat McGannon, Helen McGannon, Geoff Stevens, Philomena Smith, John Rogers, Martin Bonke, Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood & Margaret D Hailwood.

Our Recently Deceased: Edward Michael Oliver ((20/6) Terry's friend), Alan Dixon ((25/7) Brendan's father), Luxy Godfrey (11/7), Christopher Heffernan (14/7), Rose Ly-Schmitz (28/6), Doris White

Our house bound elderly: Bernadette Hailwood, Robert Pearce, Joyce Regoski, June Holt, Shirley Kennedy, Anna Maria, Patricia Wells.

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.

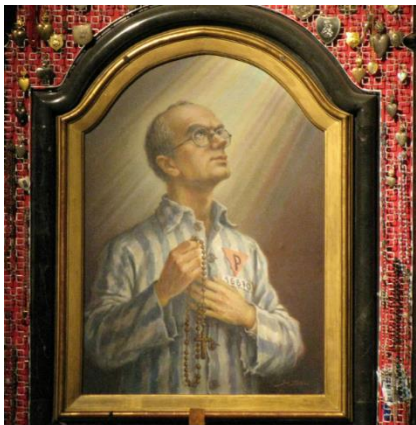
Pope Francis

Catechesis on the Mass 2018

Tues 15 Aug -The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary there will be a 6:00pm mass in addition to the 10:00am Mass

The Gaze of the Saint: Only Love is Creative

The Nazi invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, sent an already fragile Poland into chaos. Yet, under Fr. Kolbe's direction, the friary opened its doors to upwards of 3,500 displaced persons – men, women, and children fleeing or forced off of their land by the Third Reich. Fr. Kolbe was offered and declined German citizenship, a way out of persecution. Meanwhile, he continued to petition the German censors at Board of People's Education and Propaganda for permission to print the *Knight*, and succeeded in securing a 120,000 copy run on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1940. In his final published article, "Truth," he writes: "No one can change any truth. One can only seek the truth, find it, acknowledge it, conform one's life to it, walk on the path of truth in each matter. . . . Only truth can be and is the unshakable foundation of happiness, both for individuals and for the whole of humanity."^[22] Two and a half months later, after Mass and breakfast, the Gestapo arrived at the City of Mary to arrest Fr. Kolbe. Br. Rufin Majdan later recalled that Maximilian, dressed in his good habit that was normally reserved for holy days, greeted the Gestapo, saying, "Praised be Jesus Christ." He calmly set about giving the Third Reich officers a tour, which concluded with his arrest. He was transported to Pawiak Prison until his transfer to Auschwitz at the end of May 1941 along with 320 other prisoners. Like millions of others herded under the cynical sign:



"Work Leads to Freedom," Fr. Maximilian's head was shaved, and he was stripped of his name and given the number #16670. Indifference begins with the erasure of all signs of humanity. Even in the early days of the camps, the Third Reich was efficient at eroding all humanizing features of the men, women, and children brought there to work and to die. Unknown to the SS-guards and Capos, mercy had snuck into Auschwitz.

Into a place where ruthless indifference stifled communion, Fr. Maximilian made his body a space for mercy. He heard confessions made in whispers at night. He held secret conferences throughout June and July of 1941, instructing others in the lives of the saints and martyrs. Though sick

himself, he often gave his rations away. He reminded fellow inmate Joseph Stemler "Hate is not creative; only love is creative."^[23] Where evil had eroded human dignity, he dared to affirm it. Where evil had divided men, he brought them together. Where evil declared that there is no mercy, he dispensed it.

Maximilian's ascent to Golgotha made room for a burning expansiveness of love. Like Christ, whose pierced side makes a space in his body for us to enter his Sacred Heart, Maximilian's body became a space of quiet joy in the dense fog of evil. He endured, but did not pass on the hatred and indifference that spread and circulated like cancer.

In the poisoned soil of hate, God transplanted a rose—in a man who lived in the palm of the Blessed Mother. Because he was formed in the memory of Love, Maximilian was able to walk in Christ, to fulfill his commandment: “Love the Lord your God and love your neighbour as yourself” (Mt 22:37–8). And thus, his death is a paradox. It is a sign. In dying he affirmed the value of every human life because, in dying, he affirmed the value of one man’s life. Inflamed with charity, St. Maximilian consumed the evil of indifference and indifference of evil. He exposed the lie of hell, the lie that there is no love, as a cynical show. He was a burning flame of love so bright, so piercing that the SS guards could not endure his gaze. Auschwitz survivor Bruno Borgowiec recalled that Fr. Kolbe “looked directly and intently into the eyes of those who were entering the cell” to collect the bodies of the dead. “Those eyes of his were always strangely penetrating. The SS men couldn’t stand his glance, and used to yell at him, ‘*Schau auf die Erde, nicht auf uns!*’ (Look at the ground, not at us.)”^[24] These seven words, perhaps, sum up the logic of indifference as the refusal of another’s gaze. Like Dante’s depiction of the lowest circles of hell, where even light becomes an offensive intrusion into one’s space, the guards suffered under love’s gaze.

In his book *Prolegomena to Charity*, French philosopher Jean-Luc Marion writes, “Christ vanquishes evil only by refusing to transmit it, enduring it to the point of running the risk, in ‘blocking’ it, of dying.”^[25] And so, too, his saints. Maximilian’s daily response to grace made him more profoundly human until he could not even see his persecutors as enemies. Plunged into Christ’s charity, he could only see in love. Conformed to the God who is Love, he emptied himself on behalf of another, lying down his life for a friend. For Maximilian even strangers and enemies were friends. Not in a sentimental sense but in all its radical, piercing, resplendence. His love of neighbour is in the end a love that makes space within itself for others, even at the risk of being hated, even at the risk of being executed.^[26] Herein lies the creative power of love: it is animated through sacrifice, the giving of oneself up without reserve.

On July 29, 2016, Pope Francis became the third successive pontiff to visit the prison camp. Whether by plan or by providence, his visit fell nearly seventy-five years to the day since prisoner #16670 had stepped forward out of the ranks of his fellow prisoners and volunteered to take the place of a man condemned to death. Witnesses recall the camp’s deputy commander SS- Karl Fritsch leisurely walking up and down rows of men, selecting those who would die with chilling indifference. Upon hearing his fellow inmate, Francis Gajowniczek, cry out, “My wife! My children!” Maximilian approached Fritsch and requested that his life be accepted as a substitute. His simple explanation, reported by witnesses: “I am a Catholic priest.” With this matter-of-fact testament of identity, Kolbe would die as he had lived—an icon of the royal priesthood of Christ. Entering the ranks of the nameless condemned, he became one of more than 1.1 million men, women, and children to die within these walls of hatred. He did not know the man he had volunteered to replace, but he was so practiced in love that it made little difference. They were stripped naked and cast into the starvation cell. As one biographer puts it, “God had snuck into hell.”^[27] Kolbe’s will had so completely merged with God’s that it was truly no longer he who lived, but Christ in him.

In Cell 18 of Block 11—the hunger block—Fr. Kolbe led the other prisoners in prayers, hymns, and the rosary as one by one they died. He and another prisoner lingered on, until after about two weeks the Nazis decided they were taking too long to die. Animated by the desire to sow the fruit of hate, the Nazis exercised ruthless indifference. Valuing the space of Cell 18 more

than the bodies within it, on August 14, 1941, the SS ordered that Maximilian be killed by a lethal injection of carbolic acid. His body, which had become a Eucharistic sacrifice, was incinerated in the crematorium the following day, the Feast of the Assumption.

An Epidemic of Indifference

In a letter to his younger brother and fellow Franciscan dated April 28, 1919, Kolbe writes that there is “a very serious epidemic of indifference.”^[28] It remains so in our own age. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis writes:

The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades.^[29]

Indifference breaks the bonds of communion. It rules out sacrifice. Indifference hardens our hearts; it makes us less merciful, less human. We live in a world that daily, even hourly, convulses in violence. Euphemism upon euphemism programmatically obscures both human dignity and the brutality that erodes it.

Auschwitz mimicked human community, all the while collapsing the possibility of love. And yet, despite his efforts, the Strong Man is exposed as the idiot whose tale, so full of sound and fury, is unmasked as an illusion. Through the Immaculata, God became man. Christ invaded humanity not to destroy us, but to remain with us. So completely conformed to Christ, for St. Maximilian the words of the Psalmist became a reality:

If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;

if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.

*Darkness is not dark for you,
and night shines as the day.*

Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being;

you knit me in my mother's womb (Ps 139: 8; 12–13).

In the face of the poison of indifference we are called to love without limit. Maximilian Kolbe's childhood *fiat* was confirmed through a life of joyful sacrifice that was sealed in his death, a death like Christ's, a death conformed to Love itself. So immersed in the God who is Love, he saw love everywhere, even piercing the depths of Sheol, as his final letter to his mother attests. Dated July 15, 1941, he writes:

My Beloved Mother,

Toward the end of May, I came by a train to the Auschwitz camp. All is well with me.

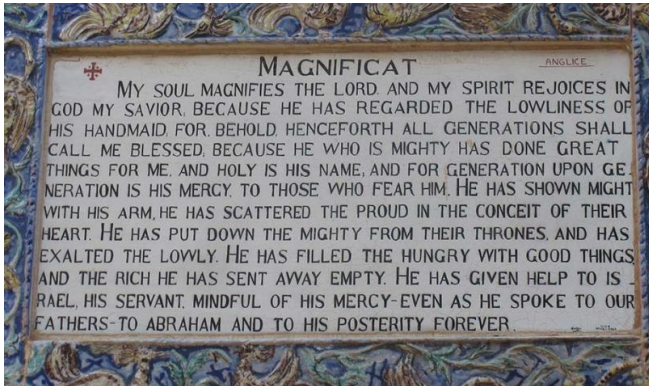
Beloved Mama, do not worry for me and for my health, because the good God is in every place and with great love He thinks about everyone and everything.

It would be best not to write to me before I send you another letter, because I do not know how long I will remain here.

With warm greetings and kisses, Raymond Kolbe^[30]

The Catechism of the Catholic Church [tells](#) us that the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin celebrates the belief that at the end of her earthly life, Mary was "taken up body and soul into heavenly glory" in a "singular participation in her Son's resurrection."

Although the Book of Revelation does not identify Mary as the woman portrayed in today's selection, tradition has seen her in this mother whose son was in danger and as the woman clothed with the sun and crowned with stars. These images morphed to portray Mary as a queen. (Thirteen of the 55 titles of Mary in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin call her a queen.)



From a different perspective, Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung is reputed to have appreciated the proclamation of the Assumption as the church's best expression of full acceptance of the feminine.

Critics have added that even if the hierarchy wasn't ready to accept

everything it implied, the teaching affirms that ordinary people of flesh and blood are created with the capacity to share divine life.

In truth, neither church nor society has probably ever been quite ready for Mary of Nazareth and all that she implies for the rest of our race. Rather than celebrate her simplicity as one of us, we typically depict her with crowns and halos, imagining her as the pinnacle of beauty. And we rarely depict her with a skin tone that is anything but white. But what about the Mary of the Gospels? Who was that Jewish woman?

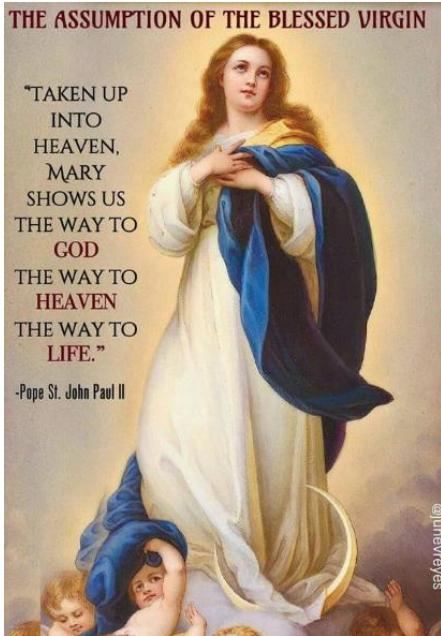
Luke tells us more than anyone else about Mary, primarily in the infancy narratives. At the Annunciation, Mary spoke in the name of humanity and gave her yes to God's desire to dwell among us.

After that, as we read in today's Gospel, she began the down-to-earth activity of preparing for what would happen; she sought out Elizabeth, the elder whose experience came closest to her own.

In telling of that visit, Luke portrays Mary singing a song of praise based in the Hebrew Scriptures and prefiguring the essence of what her Son would preach. When sung out of liturgical context, the song could be labelled subversive or even communist.

Mary of the Magnificat has no pretensions. Decidedly non-regal, she refers to herself as a slave, using the same word that describes Jesus in [Philippians 2:7](#). But except for proclaiming God's goodness to her, the focus of Mary's song is not on herself. Her song is a proclamation of faith, a practical creed praising God's ways without any philosophical concepts.

The first article of Mary's creed proclaims that those who stand in awe of God's majesty (fear of the Lord) will learn how God's mercy outshines even the splendour of all creation. Then, perhaps as an explanation of God's mercy, she goes on to sing of how God upends all worldly values and expectations. The proud lose their way (and just maybe, embarrassment at their confusion may save them from themselves). The mighty discover to their terror that their power offers no ultimate safety net, while the lowly who trust in God fear nothing. The hungry who know how to share enjoy fulfillment while there will never be enough to satisfy those who



count on their own wealth.

At the end of her psalm, where Catholics might pray the "Glory Be," Mary sings the praises of the God of Israel, the God who has remained faithful throughout their history and promises to be their future.

The song of the mother of God is Luke's gift to us. As we ponder her assumption into the realm of God, Luke invites us to contemplate the God of real life and history whom she proclaims.

Mary's song urges us to recognize God's activity in the everydayness of our world. She points to where we can find God working among us and warns us about the possibilities of losing our way.

As we celebrate her Assumption in body and soul, Mary's canticle tells us where we will find our own salvation.

Mary's creed leads us to seek God in the times and places where the lowly are cherished and the hungry filled. Everything about this feast urges us to appreciate flesh and blood — to

appreciate it so much that we do everything possible to save the powerful from their pretensions, to help nourish every kind of hunger and to receive and share God's own mercy. The more we are able to do that, the more we will sing with her, "My soul proclaims the greatness of God who loves and blesses the lowly — including me."

Pope Francis: 'Spiritual worldliness' one of greatest dangers facing priests, the Church, CNA 7 Aug

Spiritual worldliness is one of the most dangerous temptations facing priests and the Church because it "reduces spirituality to appearance" while disconnecting it from the Gospel, Pope Francis warned in a recently released letter to the priests of Rome.

"[Spiritual worldliness] leads us to be 'workers of the spirit,' men clad of sacred forms that actually continue to think and act according to the fashions of the world," the pope wrote.

The pope's message was communicated in a lengthy letter released by the Vatican on Monday but which was dated Aug. 5, the memorial of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome. The pope is the bishop of Rome and wrote the letter to provide what he described as the comfort of a "fraternal encounter."

In his comments on spiritual worldliness, the pope drew heavily from the reflections of 20th-century theologian and cardinal Henri de Lubac, who wrote that the invasion of spiritual worldliness into the life of the Church would be “infinitely more disastrous than any simple moral worldliness” because spiritual worldliness “corrupts [the Church] by undermining her very principle.”

Pope Francis wrote that spiritual worldliness begins to take hold in the lives of priests not only through temptations to mediocrity, power and influence, and vainglory but also “from doctrinal intransigence and liturgical aestheticism,” which have the appearance of religiosity and even loving the Church but instead seek human glory and personal well-being.

“How can we fail to recognize in all of this the updated version of that hypocritical formalism which Jesus saw in certain religious authorities of the time and which in the course of public life made him suffer perhaps more than anything else?” the pope wrote.

The pope also took the occasion to address more deeply one of his perennial concerns, clericalism, which he described as a “specific form” of spiritual worldliness. Pope Francis wrote that clericalism falsely gives the impression that priests are “superior, privileged, placed ‘high’ and therefore separated from the rest of God’s holy people,” which the pope said denotes “an illness that makes us lose the memory of baptism we have received.”

Drawing from the prophet Ezekiel and St. Augustine, the pope also told the Roman clergy that they must not seek primarily the “milk” of material gain nor the “wool” of praise and worldly recognition, which undermines “the priestly spirit, the zeal for service, [and] the yearning for the care of the people.”

The pope also critiqued a “clerical spirit” among the laity, manifested by elitism, possessiveness of one’s ministry, and an inward focus, which he said leads to the loss of joy and gratuitousness and the rise of criticism and anger.

The antidote to spiritual worldliness and clericalism, the pope wrote, is “to look at Jesus crucified, to fix our eyes every day on him who emptied himself and humbled himself for us unto death.” Looking at the wounds of Jesus, Pope Francis said, helps the clergy learn “that we are called to offer ourselves, to make ourselves bread broken for the hungry, to share the journey of the weary and oppressed.”

“It is not a question of leading back to a good observance or reforming external ceremonies but of returning to the evangelical sources, of discovering fresh energies to overcome habits, of introducing a new spirit into the old ecclesial institutions,” Pope Francis wrote.

Finally, the pope encouraged the Roman priests to work together with the laity to initiate “synodal forms and paths” that would help to strip the clergy of worldly securities so that “the Lord’s consolation truly reaches everyone.”

“May the Church of Rome be an example of compassion and hope for all, with her pastors always, always ready and available to bestow God’s forgiveness as channels of mercy that quench the thirst of today’s man.”

Meditation Day at St Benedict’s Monastery, 20th August 2023

Invitation to St Benedict’s Monastery, 121 Arcadia Rd, Arcadia, on Sunday - 20th August, for our Christian Meditation Introduction and Renewal Day.

Timetable: Arrival from 10 am to register for a 10:30 am start, presentations, introduction to meditation, periods of meditation, Mass, information exchange, and conclusion around 3 pm.

Book display and morning tea provided, BYO picnic lunch.

Masks are optional, recommend social distancing and vaccination for one’s own personal protection.

Enquiries: Ann Lomas, atlomas@bigpond.com / 9653 2637

For possible accommodation in the Monastery Guest House please get in touch with Fr Michael Kelly:

mkelly@silvestrini.org / 0455 329 607

This year, 2023, marks the **70th anniversary of the commencement of Dr John Billings’ research** in finding a natural, reliable method of Fertility Awareness for couples. During Natural Fertility Awareness Week, in August, a special, free webinar in recognition of Dr John Billings’ work, entitled “*Understanding Couple Fertility: the Male Perspective*” will be held on Monday 21st August 2023 at 7.30pm AEST.

As well as highlighting the male perspective in using the Billings Ovulation Method®, couples will reflect on how it has helped them in understanding their joint fertility, as well as benefiting their relationships and family life. Please follow the link to register for the Webinar on Eventbrite.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/understanding-couple-fertility-the-male-perspective-webinar-tickets-678382479257?aff=oddtcreator>

Raising Fathers Events 2023

Join us for the RAISING FATHERS Evening as we unpack practical advice and share powerful, impactful, informative and instructional stories for fathering in today's world.

This is a partnership with Robert Falzon and MenAlive on the following dates:

Tuesday, 29 August - Marist College Eastwood - 44 Hillview Rd, Eastwood

Wednesday, 30 August - Patrician Brothers' College: 268 The Horsley Drive, Fairfield

Thursday, 31 August - St Patrick's College: Francis St, Strathfield

[Visit the event website](#) to attend one of the evenings.

Sunday 10:30am Mass Readers' Roster

Sun 13 Aug	Isabella and Annaloussie
Sun 20 Aug	Fiorella Vayda and Grant Jones

(If there is a fifth Sunday of the month, readers will be arranged ad hoc for that day.)

NB: if you are unable to read on your rostered Sunday, and you have been unable to find a replacement, please contact the parish office. Other parishioners are welcome to contact the office if they wish to read at either of the Sunday Masses.

August is the month dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I Trust

Look to the Star
Call upon Mary!
In danger, in difficulty
or in doubt,
think of Mary,
call upon Mary,

Keep her name on your lips,
Never let it pass out of your heart.
Following in her footsteps,
you will not go astray:
praying to her,
you will not
fall into despair:
thinking of her you will not err.

While she keeps hold of your hand,
you will not fall ...
you will not grow weary ...
you will have no fear ...
Enjoying her protection,
you will reach the goal.

(Saint Bernard of Clairvaux)

