



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 Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Sun 6 Aug Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord

Mon 7 Aug Saint Sixtus II, pope, martyr, and companions, martyrs

Thu 10 Aug Saint Lawrence, deacon, martyr

Fri 11 Aug Saint Clare, virgin

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: Pat McGannon, Helen McGannon, Geoff Stevens, Philomena Smith, John Rogers, Martin Bonke, Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood & Margaret D Hailwood.

Our Recently Deceased: 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*

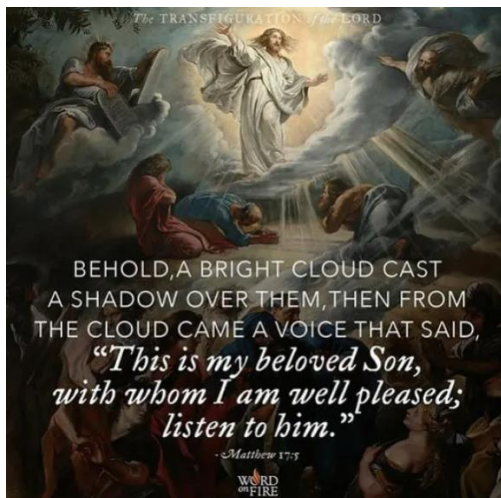
Tues 15 Aug -The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary there will be a 6:00pm Mass in addition to the 10:00am Mass

On August 6, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the Transfiguration, a momentous event in the life of Jesus Christ, recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This profound occurrence took place on Mount Tabor, where Jesus' appearance was transformed before the eyes of His chosen disciples, Peter, James, and John. The Transfiguration is a significant event that holds deep theological symbolism, offering us a glimpse of the glory of heaven and the ultimate encounter with God Himself.

The Transfiguration stands as a remarkable revelation of Jesus' divine nature and serves as a bridge between His earthly ministry and His heavenly glory. As Jesus prayed on the mountain, His countenance changed, and His face shone like the sun, while His garments became dazzlingly white (Matthew 17:2). This radiant transformation unveiled His true identity as the Son of God, emphasizing His dual nature as both fully human and fully divine.

During the Transfiguration, two significant figures from the Old Testament, Moses and Elijah, appeared and conversed with Jesus (Matthew 17:3). Their presence symbolizes the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets in Christ. Moses represents the Law, given to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai, while Elijah stands for the prophetic tradition. Their appearance signifies that Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, connecting the past to the present and pointing to the future.

Peter, James, and John were the privileged witnesses of the Transfiguration. Their presence illustrates the importance of authentic and close relationships with Christ. It was to these three apostles that Jesus chose to reveal this extraordinary event, inviting them into the depth of His divine mystery. This intimate experience transformed the apostles, solidifying their faith and preparing them for the challenges that lay ahead.



A Glimpse of Heavenly Glory

The Transfiguration also offers us a foretaste of heaven, where we will behold God face-to-face in all of His glory. In our earthly journey, we often struggle to grasp the fullness of God's presence and the reality of the afterlife. However, the Transfiguration reminds us that one day, in heaven, we will experience the radiant splendour of God's divine presence. Like the apostles on Mount Tabor, we too will witness the glory of the Risen Christ, which will surpass anything we can currently comprehend.

The Feast of the Transfiguration calls us to embrace the call to holiness. As we contemplate the glorified Christ, we are

invited to renew our commitment to living lives of virtue and grace. Just as the apostles were transformed by their encounter with the transfigured Christ, we are called to be transfigured by

our encounter with Him in the Eucharist and through prayer. This transformation is an ongoing process, as we seek to become more like Christ and reflect His light to the world.

The Feast of the Transfiguration is a profound celebration of Jesus' divine nature and His ultimate triumph over sin and death. As we meditate on this event, we are reminded of the heavenly glory that awaits us and the transformative power of encountering Christ in our lives. Let us strive to follow the example of Peter, James, and John, embracing the call to holiness and allowing Christ's light to shine through us, so that others may also catch a glimpse of the glory that awaits those who faithfully follow Him. May the Feast of the Transfiguration inspire us to draw closer to Christ and become bearers of His love and light in the world.

The Significance of St. Sixtus II, Catholic 365, Michael Cunningham | 08/14/2021

Many may not believe this, but a man who lived almost 1800 years ago would have such a stronghold over believers today. Note, I purposely said 1800 years ago so no one would get this man confused with Jesus who lived more than 2000 years ago. Today we are going to look at the life of St. Sixtus II.

St. Sixtus II was the Pope (Bishop of Rome) from August 257-August 6, 258. In a little over a year, his papacy was without some very tense problems, concerns and worries. Much like some of the problems we face today. Of the first 48 popes who died before the year 500, 47 are saints; half of them were martyrs. St. Sixtus was one of the 47. Yet, his death and his life have touched so many people. The Italian artist Raphael caught some of this man's greatest in his famous painting, Sistine Madonna. This painting was commissioned by Pope Julius II for the Church at San Sisto, Placenza in 1512. Perhaps no other Pope was executed so quickly or abruptly or for such a small reason.

A Roman of Greek descent, Sixtus was elected to the papacy in 257. Much of Italy was under the influence of the Greeks. The Greeks had settled in this area and maintained a strong presence in Italy until well after the fall of Rome in the 5th century. Sixtus II succeeded to the chair of Saint Peter at a very difficult time in Church History. The on-again, off-again persecutions of the early Church were on-again in the 250s. Blaming Christians and squeezing Christians for additional taxes or even taking their land became fair game during this period of time.

The Roman Emperors were changing quickly during this time. Emperor Valerian sought the blood of Christians not only to try to decapitate the surging Church but also to confiscate the wealth and property of Christians. The Church was perceived to be wealthy. Whether this prescription of reality was real or not, it didn't really make a difference. The truth wouldn't satisfy someone who believed or was told differently.

The tensions in Church-State relations were no less serious than internal Church tensions tearing at its unity. The persecution of Decius from 250–251 was wicked, cruel, and relentless. Decius' edict required everyone in the empire to sacrifice to a Roman god in the presence of a state official, with a signed *libellus*, or certificate, being issued afterward as proof that the sacrifice had been offered. If you could not provide or produce these papers you could be arrested or killed on the spot. Decius took a play out of the Seclud's playbook with the Jews and tried to stop this religion from growing by changing their beliefs.

Many Christians were weak and afraid and so sacrificed to gods they knew didn't exist. There were just a few people who went along with this so Decius decided to exert additional pressure. Some Christians purchased a *libellus*, some fled to the safety of the countryside, and some refused to sacrifice and were cruelly martyred. Rome was winning because it created more Gold for the treasury and it created confusion for the Church. Now, if this was not bad enough to have that much pressure from the government to change your religion, inside the Church, there were great differences over the practices of baptism. One group supported infant baptism- a practice the Early Church adopted and another supported rebaptism. This was ritual baptism- a renewal baptism. John The Baptist was a good example of ritual baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

Many people inside of the Church were very upset with the people who had fallen away from the Church. They wanted them to be baptized because they felt like their first baptism was not valid. This is why many people in the Church wanted them to be baptized again.

Before his death, however, Sixtus II had successfully healed the breach between Rome and the churches of North Africa, Syria, and Asia Minor that had been opened by the dispute over the rebaptism of heretics and schismatics who wished to enter or be reconciled with the church. His positive spirit and ability to listen to all sides and then strike on a path that would allow both sides to feel good about this decision worked out and avoided a tremendous split in the Church at that time over this issue.

Representing the tradition of Rome, Alexandria, and Palestine, Sixtus' predecessor, Stephen I, had opposed the widespread practice in North Africa, Asia Minor, and elsewhere of requiring the rebaptism of those who had been baptized by heretics or schismatics. Stephen thought it was not right. However, many Church leaders in the areas involved did not hold that same position in this matter.

The situation reached crisis proportions following a third North African synod which supported Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, against the pope. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria intervened, urging Pope Stephen to adopt a less confrontational approach, but he was rebuffed. Had not Stephen died in the midst of the controversy and had not his successor, Sixtus II, reached out to Cyprian and the estranged churches of Asia Minor, probably by agreeing to tolerate the coexistence of the two practices, one can only imagine how the situation might have deteriorated even further. Cyprian's biographer would later describe Pope Sixtus II as "a good and peace-loving priest."

Overall there have been five Popes who took the name Sixtus. The first of the line did so because he was regarded as the "sixth" successor of St. Peter. He reigned from about the year 116 until about 125.

On Aug. 7, the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of another Pope Sixtus II (257-58), outstanding for his holiness and his courage in the face of certain martyrdom. Indeed, he is generally regarded as one of the church's most highly venerated martyrs.

Sixtus was elected Bishop of Rome just as the emperor Valerian abandoned his policy of toleration toward Christians. Valerian changed from being tolerant to being actively aggressive to the Church. Valerian had for many years been tolerant of the Church and its practices. He now ordered Christians to participate in state-sponsored religious ceremonies and forbade them from gathering in cemeteries where they often celebrated the Eucharist together.

Sixtus II, however, was politically savvy enough to avoid unnecessary confrontations with the emperor, that is until the emperor issued a second edict ordering the execution of bishops, priests and deacons and imposing assorted penalties on laypersons. Pope Sixtus II thought that this had gone too far. Who was the Emperor to tell him where and when they could celebrate Mass?

On Aug. 6, 258, the Pope wanted to celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration with a Mass. This Holy Day of Obligation would not be denied in the mind of St. Sixtus. While the pope was seated in his episcopal chair addressing the congregation at a liturgical service in the private, and presumably safe, the cemetery of Praetextatus, imperial forces rushed in and seized and beheaded the pope and four of his deacons.

It was said that the Pope refused to flee to save his own life because he feared that the soldiers would retaliate by massacring the entire assembly. Two other deacons were executed later the same day, and the seventh -- the famous St. Lawrence -- was put to death four days after that.

After Sixtus's martyrdom, his body was transferred to the papal crypt in the cemetery of Callistus on the Appian Way. The bloodstained chair on which he had been presiding when killed was placed behind the altar in the crypt's chapel.

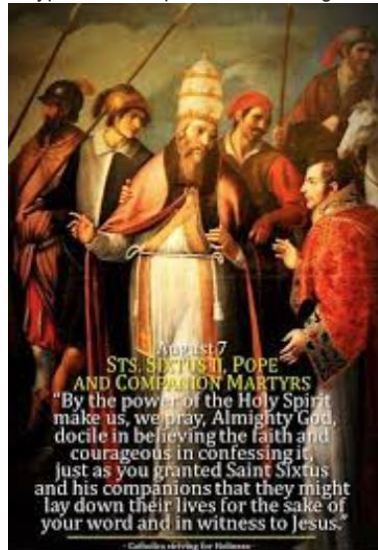
A century later, Pope Damasus I (366-84) composed an epitaph describing the execution and had it placed over the tomb. The name of Sixtus II was subsequently included in the first part of the Canon of the Mass (today known as Eucharistic Prayer I).

Why is he important? He died so we might all be able to practice our beliefs. He took a stand on Holy Feast Day- Day of the Transfiguration has come to be celebrated on **August 6** by Pope Calixtus III in 1457 as a thanksgiving offering for the victory over the Turks at Belgrade on that day in 1456. However, we now know that on that same day some almost 1200 years earlier, **St. Sixtus gave up his life for the Church, his followers, and showed us an example of what we need to do to make a stand against political leaders who stand in the way of God.** Clearly, brothers and sisters, we need more people like St. Sixtus today.

Saint Lawrence, Franciscan Media (Feast day 10 Aug)

The esteem in which the Church holds Lawrence is seen in the fact that today's celebration ranks as a feast. We know very little about his life. He is one of those whose martyrdom made a deep and lasting impression on the early Church. Celebration of his feast day spread rapidly. He was a Roman deacon under Pope Saint Sixtus II. Four days after this pope was put to death, Lawrence and four clerics suffered martyrdom, probably during the persecution of the Emperor Valerian.

Legendary details of Lawrence's death were known to Damasus, Prudentius, Ambrose, and Augustine. The church built over his tomb became one of the seven principal churches in Rome and a favourite place for Roman pilgrimages.



A well-known legend has persisted from earliest times. As deacon in Rome, Lawrence was charged with the responsibility for the material goods of the Church, and the distribution of alms to the poor. When Lawrence knew he would be arrested like the pope, he sought out the poor, widows, and orphans of Rome and gave them all the money he had on hand, selling even the sacred vessels of the altar to increase the sum. When the prefect of Rome heard of this, he imagined that the Christians must have considerable treasure. He sent for Lawrence and said, "You Christians say we are cruel to you, but that is not what I have in mind. I am told that your priests offer in gold, that the sacred blood is received in silver cups, that you have golden candlesticks at your evening services. Now, your doctrine says you must render to Caesar what is his. Bring these treasures—the emperor needs them to maintain his forces. God does not cause money to be counted: He brought none of it into the world with him—only words. Give me the money, therefore, and be rich in words."

Lawrence replied that the Church was indeed rich. "I will show you a valuable part. But give me time to set everything in order and make an inventory." After three days he gathered a great number of blind, lame, maimed, leprous, orphaned, and widowed persons and put them in rows. When the prefect arrived, Lawrence simply said, "These are the treasure of the Church." The prefect was so angry he told Lawrence that he would indeed have his wish to die—but it would be by inches. He had a great gridiron prepared with coals beneath it, and had Lawrence's body placed on it. After the martyr had suffered the pain for a long time, the legend concludes, he made his famous cheerful remark, "It is well done. Turn me over!"

Reflection: Once again we have a saint about whom almost nothing is known, yet one who has received extraordinary honour in the Church since the fourth century. Almost nothing—yet the greatest fact of his life is certain: He died for Christ. We who are hungry for details about the lives of the saints are again reminded that their holiness was after all, a total response to Christ, expressed perfectly by a death like this.

Saint Clare (Feast day 11 Aug)

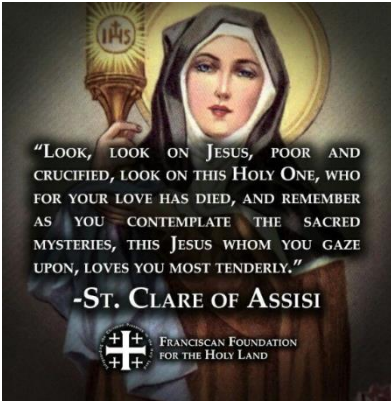
Chiara Offreduccio was born on July 16, 1194, to a wealthy noble family. Her mother was already known for her deep piety. She named her eldest daughter Clare (Chiara) which means "light" in Italian.

Even as a young girl, Clare was unusually devout. Not only was she outwardly beautiful, with a head of golden hair—she was also inwardly lovely. Clare was deeply prayerful, and practiced a life of very real, but hidden, mortification. Soon she was free of any attachment to a spirit of worldliness.

Saint Clare and the Saracens

You may have noticed that most images of Saint Clare depict her with a monstrance in her hands. This comes from an event that took place in 1244. The following account tells us what happened:

"In 1244, Emperor Frederick II, then at war with the Pope, was ravaging the valley of Spoleto, which was part of the patrimony of the Holy See. He employed many Saracens in his army, and a troop of these infidels came in a body to plunder Assisi. St. Damien's church, standing outside the city walls, was one of the first objectives. While the marauders were scaling the convent walls, Clare, ill as she was, had herself carried out to the gate and there the Sacrament was set



up in sight of the enemy. Prostrating herself before it, she prayed aloud: 'Does it please Thee, O God, to deliver into the hands of these beasts the defenseless children whom I have nourished with Thy love? I beseech Thee, good Lord, protect these whom now I am not able to protect.' Whereupon she heard a voice like the voice of a little child saying, 'I will have them always in My care.' She prayed again, for the city, and again the voice came, reassuring her. She then turned to the trembling nuns and said, 'Have no fear, little daughters; trust in Jesus.' At this, a sudden terror seized their assailants, and they fled in haste."

The Humble Yet Miraculous Life of Clare

Clare suffered greatly and was very ill for most of her last years. It seems that, although she was gentle and moderate regarding her sisters' austerities, she lived a very rigorous penance out of her deep love for Christ which took a toll on her body.

Once, when she so ill that she was too weak even to leave her bed and attend Mass, she was able to participate in the very Mass she could not attend when it was made miraculously visible on the wall of her cell. This is why she is the patron saint of T.V.

When she died, surrounded by the community who loved her, she radiated such holiness that the Pope (who knew her holiness well) wanted to canonize her immediately. This was unheard of at such a time, and he was advised to wait. Still, the Lady Clare would be canonized just two years later. There are numerous Poor Clare saints who have walked in her footsteps, giving us further examples of holiness. Saint Colette, who helped reform the order when this was needed in 1410, is one of them.

Second CWF August 2023 Appeal for the year, this weekend 5th and 6th Aug. Your kind donation will go towards keeping the many ministries alive in helping those in need.



Donate to the Charitable Works Fund August 2023 Appeal 5th & 6th August 2023 is our parish appeal.

Help keep alive vital ministries of the Church in service to those who need it most. In hospitals, churches, schools, communities and families, your donation is making our world a loving, caring and compassionate place.

Give generously. Your tax-deductible gift changes lives. Thank you!

Donate at www.ourfaithourworks/give-to-cwf
Or complete the parish envelope.



Overshadowed: Filled with the Power of the Holy Spirit, 18-20 August 2023

Join the MGL Sisters in a weekend retreat exploring what happens we say yes to the Holy Spirit. Experience the life-changing power of deepening in God's love, surrendering to Jesus and living under the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Venue: Carmel House, 345 St Andrews Rd, Varroville NSW
Booking: <http://www.trybooking.com/CFBQX> (by 11 August)
Contact: Katherine - mgl sisters.sydney@gmail.com

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, alomas@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>

Oremus: Online Prayer Series

Strengthen your faith in Christ, your prayer life, and your confidence to pray with others. Join us online for this 3-week series on the Foundations of Prayer:

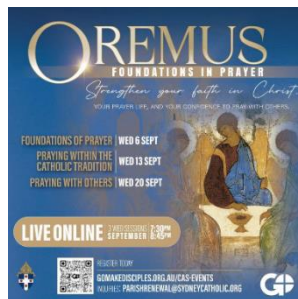
When: Wednesdays 6, 13 and 20 September 2023

Time: 7:30 – 8:45 pm. **Cost:** Free

Optional in-person retreat to follow on Saturday, 28 October, at St Martha's Leichhardt, 10 am – 4 pm, \$28.50 (+booking fees).

Register for either or both opportunities at

www.gomakedisciples.org.au/cas-events. All welcome.



Sunday 10:30am Mass Readers' Roster

Sun 6 Aug	James and Geneviève McCaughan
Sun 13 Aug	Isabella and Annaloussie
Sun 20 Aug	Grant Jones and Alex Leach

(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.

Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney: Parish Safeguarding volunteer Online Induction Training, working With Children Check & Code of Conduct



The Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney advises that any person performing any role in the life of the Parish (e.g., readers, servers, collectors, welcomers is required to comply with Safeguarding Volunteer Online training as per the details below: Registration to complete the Online Safeguarding Induction Training via this

link <https://forms.gle/9ebT3voEAffP7P8R9> or you can register to attend a Zoom Safeguarding Induction Training session by emailing safeguardingtraining@sydneycatholic.org for further information and dates.