



St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

# Our Parish

Our Lives on Earth are Our Pathway to Heaven

*"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1: 15-16)*

**New Sunday and Divine Mercy Sunday**

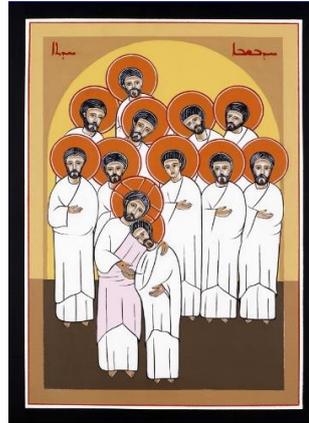
**Year 2022, Issue #17**

## The Gospel

**John 20: 26-31**

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God! Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

## Season of the Resurrection



**Next Sunday**

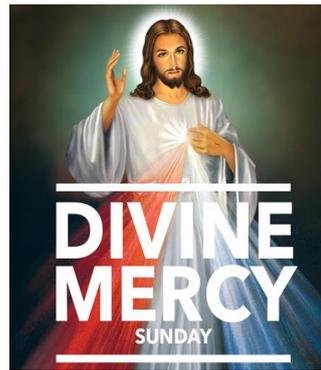
**New Sunday**

**Epistle**

**2 Cor 5: 11-21**

**Gospel**

**John 20: 26-31**



## الإنجيل

يو ٢٠ : ٢٦ - ٣١

بَعْدَ ثَمَانِيَةِ أَيَّامٍ، كَانَ تَلَامِيذُ يَسُوعَ ثَانِيَةً فِي الْبَيْتِ، وَتُومًا مَعَهُمْ. جَاءَ يَسُوعُ، وَالْأَبْوَابُ مُغْلَقَةً، فَوَقَفَ فِي الْوَسْطِ وَقَالَ: «السَّلَامُ لَكُمْ!». ثُمَّ قَالَ لِتُومًا: «هَاتِ إِصْبَعَكَ إِلَى هُنَا، وَأَنْظُرْ يَدَيَّ. وَهَاتِ يَدَكَ، وَضَعْهَا فِي جَنْبِي. وَلَا تَكُنْ غَيْرَ مُؤْمِنٍ بَلْ كُنْ مُؤْمِنًا!». أَجَابَ تُومًا وَقَالَ لَهُ: «رَبِّي وَإِلَهِي!». قَالَ لَهُ يَسُوعُ: «لَأَنَّكَ رَأَيْتَنِي آمَنْتَ؟ طُوبَى لِمَنْ لَمْ يَرَوْا وَآمَنُوا!». وَصَنَعَ يَسُوعُ أَمَامَ تَلَامِيذِهِ آيَاتٍ أُخْرَى كَثِيرَةً لَمْ تُدَوَّنْ فِي هَذَا الْكِتَابِ. وَإِنَّمَا دُوِّنَتْ هَذِهِ لِكَيْ تُؤْمِنُوا أَنَّ يَسُوعَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ، وَلِكَيْ تَكُونُوا لَكُمْ، إِذَا آمَنْتُمْ، الْحَيَاةَ بِأَسْمِهِ.

## Divine Liturgy and Services

Sundays: 9:00am (Arabic), 11:00am (Arabic/English), 6:00pm (English)

Mondays and Tuesdays: 9:00am

Wednesdays – Fridays: 6:00pm

Saturdays: 9:00am and 6:00pm

Confessions: By Appointment

Sick Visits: Contact Clergy or the Parish Office (contact details below)

## Parish and Ministry Team and Contact Details

Parish Administrator: Fr Claude Rizk 0422 819 277

Deacons: Nagi Dimian 0403 750 613, Robert-Pio Al Bayeh 0414 447 883, Joseph Maatouk 0413 245 501

Parish Secretary: Debrah Habkuk 0422 275 199

Office Hours: Tuesdays – Fridays 9:00am - 5.00pm

Parish Safeguarding Officers: Margaret Simpson 0408 895 798, Jessica Georges 0426 114 696, George Takchi 0419 651 229

Parish Address: 2 Yarrara Road (Corner Wells Street), Thornleigh, NSW, 2120



## Bishop's Corner: New Sunday



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Maronite Church, we call this Sunday “New Sunday,” because it is the first Sunday of the Season of the Resurrection, when sin and death have been overcome, and a new life begins: a life in God, for God, and journeying to God, like pilgrims on the road.

The Gospel for today is from St John. At the beginning of the passage, we are told that Christ appeared to His disciples, and standing in the middle of them, said: “Peace to you!” The final words of the passage are St John’s own statement that this was “written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

So the beginning of this reading is the Lord’s message of peace, and the conclusion of it is the evangelist’s declaration of salvation for those who have faith in Christ. In between these two comes the testing of St Thomas the Apostle, a story we all know.

Christ’s first words to Thomas were words of peace. If we could remember that when we are speaking to those who are doubting the faith, perhaps we could touch their hearts with something of the peace of God.

It was for us that all this took place, so that we would know that we would inherit the blessing which Our Lord promised to those who had not seen and yet believed. And really, are we not in a similar position to Thomas? We know a great deal about Our Lord. We have the accounts of the Gospels, and we know how the early Christians taught and spread the word, facing martyrdom without a second thought. And we see Him at work in our own lives.

This is why our witness is so important – because other people are looking at us, the Christians, to find the evidence of Christ in our lives. Any sign of holiness and faith can touch someone, we never know how.

So on this New Sunday, a question arises for us: where do we see Christ? He is all around us if we have the eyes to see, and the ears to hear. But have we opened them? And then, the next question is can other people see Christ in us? And if not, then why not? Finally, when our days are done and we come to the end of our lives, will we see Christ? Let us live our lives with this hope, looking and listening for Him, believing with the Apostles, that He has risen.

Al Maseeh qam!

+ Antoine-Charbel Tarabay



## The Word from Your Servant

The Feast of Divine Mercy is celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Saint John Paul II, who established this feast in 2000 when canonizing Faustina Kowalska, encouraged the Church to grow in this devotion. As part of the Universal Church, I encourage you all to live this devotion.

Sister Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938) received the mission to spread devotion to Divine Mercy, fostering trust in God and mercy towards our neighbour. In her *Diary* she records Jesus’ request for a special feast of Divine Mercy on the Sunday after Easter:

***I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet (Diary, 699).***

Throughout Lent, we lived each Sunday remembering, reflecting and praying about the different acts of God’s mercy and the different manners in which we can seek His mercy – by touching His hem, by having our friends bring us to Him, by asking our Lady to intercede, by returning to our Father and asking for forgiveness, He is always waiting for us....

We have finished Lent and are now in the happiest of Seasons, the Season of the Resurrection. The feast of Divine Mercy reminds us so much of God’s perfect Fatherhood – the Father who gives us complete freedom and then forgiveness when we exercise that freedom wrong. The Feast of Divine Mercy reminds us that despite Lent ending that nonetheless we are invited to continue to ask God for His mercy and He will grant it.

It reminds us that the temptations of the Devil continue, and unfortunately, often we will fall. The feast reminds us that the gift of the Sacrament of Confession is always available. God awaits us in the confessional always, not just in Lent, to grant us His mercy and to help us to start again.

We recall in Genesis that even when Adam and Eve committed the first sin and they felt their shame and their nakedness, God showed His mercy by making for them clothes to cover their shame and restore their dignity.

Through Divine Mercy, which of course is preceded by our humility, we can get up and start again, and again, and again. How great is God’s love for us, that His Son specifically asked for this feast even after the Season of Great Lent.

I think there are also messages from St Faustina’s life which we can take to our own lives. St Faustina lived a difficult life and yet so normal life. She was a Saint of the last century – large family, poverty, WW1. Firstly, we see her parents’ efforts to pass on the faith in all its truth to their children. Prayer first – work second. This is a reminder to us when we are caught up in the business of our life and all our human priorities. We can’t forget our spiritual obligations to our Father, which we need to give priority.

Secondly, we see St Faustina’s struggles to firstly comprehend the Will of God for her, and secondly to implement the Will of God. Her faith, her prayers, her hard work, and most importantly, her ardent desire to work out what God wanted (as opposed to what would make her life easier or greater) and her humility, were the tools through which God worked to reveal to her what He wanted.

Thirdly, we also see her struggle to even continue her ardent prayer. This is something we all encounter in our relationship with God. In terms of her struggles to keep her spiritual life, we can reflect on this when we find it difficult to maintain our own spiritual relationship with God. Her struggles remind us that our relationship with God is not just based on emotions – we can’t leave prayer to those moments when we “feel like it” or have “an outburst of emotion”. God is our Father, and we have to make every effort to speak with Him as we would to our own parents. As the Head Sister reminded Sr Faustina – if we can’t speak for long hours, then use small words of love and aspirations to keep alive the reminder that God is present in our life.

As we conclude a wonderful week of St George celebrations, I extend firstly my deepest gratitude to all the volunteers and donors without whom these celebrations would not have been possible. Each person’s contribution (physically small or big) is valuable and worthwhile, and truly our Parish family is enriched by this. God bless all our Parishioners. Our family and hence our Church and love for God grows daily and I give thanks to God for this every day.

Fr Claude Rizk

# Parish News and Upcoming Events



**Month of May  
Month of Mary**

**VISITATION  
OF MARY TO  
YOUR HOME**

For bookings, please register your details at the Church Door or contact the Parish Office




**Diocesan  
Fersan Day**

Saturday 14th May 2022  
9:30am - 3:00pm

@ St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

All children are invited to join the Fersan children of our Parish and Diocese to celebrate together.

For more information, or if available to volunteer, please contact the Parish Office on 02 9481 7388




**BIBLE STUDY  
IN YOUR HOME**

Weekdays from 7:30pm - 8:30pm

Invite us to host a bible study in your home with your family, relatives and friends.

For bookings, please contact the Parish Office.




**ST GEORGE MARONITE CHURCH**

**BOOK FAIR**

**26TH MARCH - 1ST MAY**

- Books
- Religious Items
- CDs and DVDs
- Statues
- Plus much more!



St George Mother's Day Dinner

FRIDAY

**SOLD OUT**

TICKETS \$120PP  
KIDS \$60PP\*  
\*up to 12yrs old

SECURE YOUR TICKETS CONTACT:  
NATASHA KHOUDAIR  
M: 0410 406 575




St George Youth

Help us grow our future youth by attending our...

**GENERAL MEETING**

TO FORM A NEW YOUTH COMMITTEE

April 28th  
7:30PM  
Church Hall




**ST GEORGE FERSEN**

EVERY SATURDAY DURING THE SCHOOL TERM  
4.00PM - 5.30PM

YEAR 1 - YEAR 6

Scan me to register your children




St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

**PLAYGROUP**

Ages 0-5 years old  
**FREE**

All welcome! Come join us as and build our community family.

Every Tuesdays from 9am - 12pm  
Commencing Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

For more information, please contact  
Mary 0422 871 197

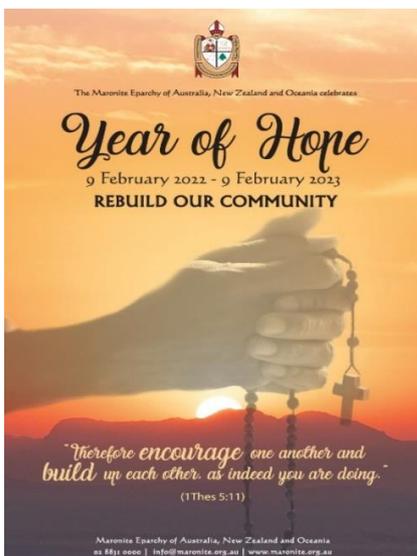



The Maronite Eparchy of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania celebrates

**Year of Hope**  
9 February 2022 - 9 February 2023  
REBUILD OUR COMMUNITY

"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing."  
(1Thes 5:11)

Maronite Eparchy of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania  
21 401 0000 | info@maronite.org.au | www.maronite.org.au




**ATTENTION PARISHIONERS**

IN PREPARATION OF THE  
**50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
OF THE MARONITE EPARCHY  
(1973 - 2023)

WE ARE CALLING UPON ALL OUR PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE ANY

**HISTORICAL INFORMATION & IMAGES**

KINDLY FORWARD TO YOUR PARISH OFFICE OR CONTACT THE MARONITE CHANCERY ON 02 8831 0000



**Memorial Masses**

Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	9am	Late Youssef Chafic Khamis and Wajiha Khamis
<b>نوايا القداسات</b>		
قداس المرحومين يوسف شفيق خميس ووجيها خميس	٩ : ٠٠	الاحد ٢٤ نيسان ٢٠٢٢
<b>MASS LIVE STREAMING: Sundays at 9:00am only</b>		
<b>Congratulations to the Easter Raffle Winner: Mark Takchi</b>		

# Children's Corner: Divine Mercy Hidden Message Puzzle

N O I T C E R R U S E R  
 P T E N I V I D O P E Y  
 A J R T O S A I N T C H  
 L A P U S N P A U R L I  
 L N I A S O S J E S U S  
 E I C T I T C M A O R D  
 L T R H T N P E C E N D  
 U S E D A O T T T A O I  
 I U T V P P A I L N V I  
 A A S E N V L O N E E M  
 E F A R E C P E Y G N P  
 S U E N D A Y R T R A Q

- Alleluia
- Chaplet
- Divine
- Easter
- Faustina
- Jesus
- Mercy
- Novena
- Octave
- Painting
- Pentecost
- Poland
- Pope
- Resurrection
- Saint
- Trust

Find the words in the grid.

When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message.

(Note: the last THREE unused letters will NOT be part of the hidden message!) Remember: the words you find can go horizontally, vertically, and diagonally in all eight directions.

**What is the HIDDEN message?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Parish Financial Updates

**Parish Income between 11<sup>th</sup> April – 17<sup>th</sup> April**

Holy Thursday Candles: \$1,100

**Parish Operations Account**

\$14,253.62

**Parish Loan Balance**

\$611,613.11

**Donations to support our ongoing Parish mission can be made at the Parish Office or by internet banking or direct debit - (Account Name: St George Maronite Church, BSB #062-784, Account # 16948504)**

**To receive our eNewsletter please email**

[info@stgeorgemcc.org.au](mailto:info@stgeorgemcc.org.au)



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[chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au](mailto:chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au)

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