



St George Maronite Catholic Church,  
Thornleigh

# Our Parish

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023

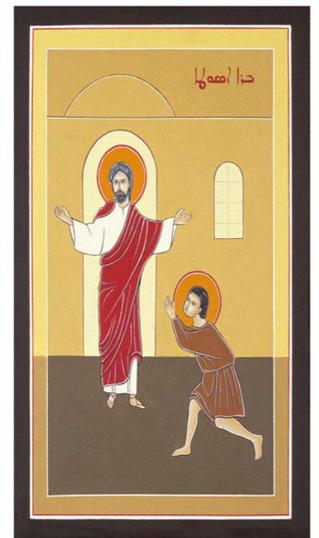
Year 2023, Issue #11

## The Gospel

Luke 15: 11-32

The Lord Jesus says: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe the best one and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate. "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

Season of  
Lent



Next Sunday

Sunday of the  
Paralytic

Old Testament  
Reading

Isa 35: 1-6, 8, 9b-10

Epistle

1 Tim 5: 24-6:5

Gospel

Mark 2: 1-12

### Divine Liturgy and Services

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

Mondays and Tuesdays: 9:00am

Wednesdays – Saturdays: 6:00pm

Confessions: By Appointment

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

### Parish and Ministry Team and Contact Details

Parish Priest: Mons Marcelino Youssef 0404 272 272

Assistant Parish Priest: Fr Bechara Trad 0403 725 134

Deacon: Nagi Dimian 0403 750 613

Parish Secretary: TBA

Admin Assistant: Rose Zeaiter

Phone: (02) 9481 7388 or 0422 275 199

Office Hours: Tuesdays - Fridays 9:00am - 5:00pm; Saturdays 9:00am - 3:00pm

Parish Safeguarding Officers: Margaret Simpson 0408 895 798, George Takchi 0419 651 229

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

Website: [www.stgeorgemcc.org.au](http://www.stgeorgemcc.org.au)

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

## Bishop's Message Golden Jubilee Year Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This Sunday, the Maronite Church reads and reflects on the parable of the Prodigal Son. After hearing this parable told by Jesus, we can be confident of the infinite patience and love of God.

The infinite love of God for humanity manifests itself in His patience, His forgiveness and His joy at the return of every sinner. God, the Father, desires and waits patiently to save and forgive each one of us. No sinner is irretrievably lost and doomed. Patience, forgiveness and joy are three fundamental characteristics of divine love. These are also the characteristics of true love.

The parable tells the story of two sons and, through them, allows us to learn to live contrition and understanding. The youngest son, called prodigal because he squandered the paternal fortune, embodies the human error of taking for happiness the satisfaction of his desires, without constraints. After spending all his money, he regrets turning away from the love that his father poured on him for years. This regret pushes him towards a humble conversion: "he returned to himself".

In this time of Lent, we find ourselves in this son who needs conversion and forgiveness. We constantly need to return to the house of our Father. Our conversion of heart and desire to change and improve our lives manifests itself in works of sacrifice and self-giving.

Jesus also invites us to have the understanding and mercy of the father in the parable. By often being the prodigal sons and daughters ourselves, we are the recipient of God's divine mercy. We then must be able to be merciful to others, like the father in this parable. We will also avoid becoming like the eldest son, full of zeal for his father's business, but a bitter zeal. We would rejoice for the return of every sinner as the father rejoices.

Let us not forget that while the younger son was still far away, his father saw him and rushed towards him. Such is the infinite love of God! No sooner does the sinner repent and set out for God than God comes quickly to meet them and welcome them.

### Encountering Jesus in Adoration changes the world—starting with ourselves.

I have requested that all Eucharistic Adoration next week beginning with Monday 13 March, be dedicated specifically for the conversion of those offending the loving heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether knowingly or unknowingly. I will be joining in adoration at Our Lady of Lebanon, Harris Park, on Thursday evening.

When most of us are calling for action to stand up to what we see as a downward spiral in our society, prayer and adoration form key elements of our action and response. A better home, a better organisation, a better society starts with a better and holier "us". Adoration has a big role to play and one of the most beautiful elements of spending time before the Eucharist is that what we see before us is the truest version of ourselves.

Let us deliberately and resolutely return to the house of the Father, bringing our hearts closer to His Son, believing that He awaits us all with patience and will throw a feast at the return of every sinner and every prodigal child.

+ Antoine-Charbel Tarabay

## Reflection of the Week: "Prodigal Son"

As we journey through the Season of Lent, our Sunday Gospel is that marvellous parable of the Prodigal and his brother. For today's purpose we are going to focus on something less prominent in the parable.

So, we know the younger son has gone and squandered his inheritance and has found himself destitute. In desperation he 'hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs' (v15). What a state of hopelessness. The younger son is starving, penniless and alone. He has nowhere to go. What is striking is that a 'citizen' sends him to feed the pigs without a concern for the young man. This sentence speaks volumes. Our understanding of citizen is one who behaves as a law-abiding member of society. In this case this citizen had no care or responsibility for those in society. This so called 'citizen' sends the hired man to feed the pigs, giving no notice to the desperate state of the young man. And too many of us have become like this citizen. We are more interested in feeding the pigs than in compassionate concern for humanity. Where do our values lie?

The behaviour of the citizen is in stark contrast to the father who immediately notices the dire need of the young man and generously attends to him.

During this Lent we are called to examine our relationship to others. Are we stingy with our love, ignoring humanity and prioritising the insignificant to avoid a sense of responsibility towards others? We pray to notice the needs of others and generously alleviate their misery. Amen

Sr Margaret Ghosn mshf

### كلمة الحياة غذاءً للنفوس

بين الحياة والموت قد عاش الإبن الصغير. "كان ميئاً وعاش": هكذا عبر الأب عن عودة ابنه الضال. هذه هي الحقيقة: إن للخطيئة نتيجة حتمية وهي الموت. فالقدوس بولس أوضح مرات عديدة عن خطر الموت بسبب الخطيئة. في رسالته إلى المؤمنين في روما، كتب: "من أجل ذلك، كأنما بإنسان واحد دخلت الخطيئة إلى العالم، وبالخطيئة الموت، وهكذا إجتاز الموت إلى الجميع، إذ أخطأ الجميع" (رو ٥: ١٢).



إذا هذا الإبن قد خطى إلى أبيه لأنه إقتسم ميراثه وأبوه حيٌّ يرزق، ورحل عنه إلى بلد بعيد فأراد الحرية المطلقة خارج نطاق أبيه، وهناك تحت راية الحرية المطلقة الوهمية بدد ماله في حياة الطيش. وما الذي حصل؟ أوصلته خطيئته إلى الموت على مستويات عديدة:

- الموت الإنساني: عاش كالخادم وهو كان السيد في بيت أبيه.
  - الموت الروحي: كيهودي وهو يرمى الخنازير يعني أنه يعيش حالة التدنيس الدائم.
  - الموت الإجتماعي: بالطبع سينبذ الجميع بسبب حالته المذرية.
  - "فرجع إلى نفسه": أي قام بفحص ضميره وقيم حالته المأساوية وقرّر العودة إلى أبيه أي التوبة.
  - "خطت إلى السماء وأمامك": إن أبعاد الخطيئة ثلاث. كلما نخطأ ولو كانت الخطيئة شخصية فهي تتصف باتجاهات ثلاث:
  - تجاه الله: في كل مرة نخطأ، نحزن قلب الله لأننا نقرّر الإبتعاد عنه وإختيار الخطيئة مكانه.
  - تجاه أنفسنا: لأننا ندخل ذاتنا في ظلمة الخطيئة ونتأجها السلبية على الذات.
  - تجاه الآخر أي الجماعة: إن خطيئتي الشخصية لها تأثير سلبي غير مباشر على الجماعة التي أعيش فيها.
- لذلك التوبة ضرورية، والأب ينتظر في الخارج عودة ابنه، ليحتفل به حيناً من خلال توبته.

[www.kobavat.org](http://www.kobavat.org)

# Parish News and Upcoming Events




**FRIDAYS DURING LENT SCHEDULE**

9:00am: Mass  
6:00pm: Stations of the Cross

**Fersan Bus Trip**  
**Mary Mackillop Place**  
Wednesday 12th April 2023



**\$30**  
per person

Departing 9:15am from St George Church  
Returning 2:00pm for Sausage Sizzle at the Church  
All children will need to be accompanied by an adult  
Souvenir Shop will be open  
To book, contact Evette 0406 997 100

**ROSARY NIGHT**



**Every Monday throughout Lent at 8pm**

Join us as we journey with Christ throughout our lives



**ARABIC CLASSES**



**FOR ALL AGES 5YRS - 30YRS PLUS**

MONDAYS 4.45PM - 5.45PM  
FOR ALL CHILDREN  
WEDNESDAYS 5.45PM - 6.45PM  
FOR ALL OUR YOUTH AND ANYONE WANTING TO LEARN ARABIC

TO JOIN CONTACT EVETTE ZEATER 0406997100



**WORKING BEE**



We are seeking help from volunteers for a working bee to clean up the Parish grounds

Saturday 25th March 2023  
Starting @ 7:00am

For more information, please contact the Parish Office



**PALM SUNDAY CANDLES**



ON SALE NOW

**\$40 EACH**



**MAAMOUL FOR SALE**



**\$35 per 1 kg tray**

Pre-order by 20th March 2023

To order or for more information, please contact the Parish Office

St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

**Annual Parish Gala**

**SAVE THE DATE**

Saturday 10th June 2023  
\$120 per person

FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE RELEASED SOON



SJB YOUTH & ST GEORGE YOUTH INVITES YOU ON A SPIRITUAL...

**BERRIMA DAY RETREAT**

Join SJB's Youth & St George's Youth on a Spiritual Lenten Retreat to The Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy.

Trip includes: Transport, breakfast and lunch.  
When: 19th of March 2023  
Leaving: 8.00am sharp  
Cost: \$40 per person

TO SAVE YOUR SEAT CONTACT: DAVID 0433799254 OR DOMINIQUE 0438884495



**7 Churches Pilgrimage**

Thursday, 6th April

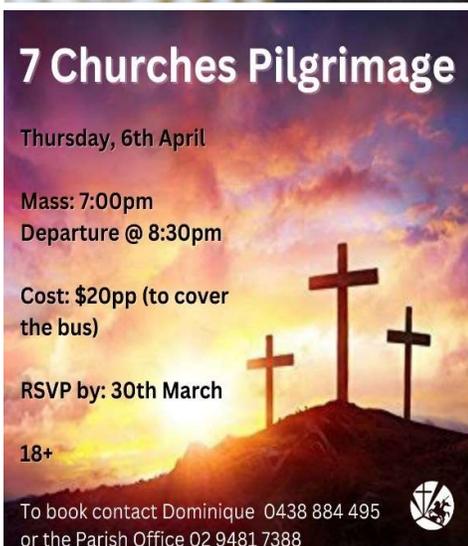
Mass: 7:00pm  
Departure @ 8:30pm

Cost: \$20pp (to cover the bus)

RSVP by: 30th March

18+

To book contact Dominique 0438 884 495 or the Parish Office 02 9481 7388




**ST GEORGE STATUES NOW AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER**



**\$120**

30CM X 30CM SOLID STATUES

LIMITED STOCK

TO ORDER, PLEASE CALL 0406 997 100



**\$150**



**TEENS ADORATION**



**THIS THURSDAY 7.30PM-8.30PM CONFESSION AVAILABLE**





**CONFESSION  
AVAILABLE  
EVERY THURSDAY  
7.30PM-8.30PM**



**Sports Day  
2023**  
EASTER MONDAY | APRIL 10 | 7 AM  
Georgina 0433 550 425 | David 0433 799 254  
**BANKSTOWN BASKETBALL STADIUM,  
KINCH RESERVE, CONDELL PARK**  
\$35 PLAYERS | \$15 SPECTATORS  
REGISTER WITH PARISH REPRESENTATIVE



**Aged Care  
Program**  
If anyone is interested in joining  
the Aged Care Program or  
volunteering, please contact:  
Zaride 0417 427 661  
Josephine 0426 239 129



Memorial Masses			نوايا القديسات		
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	6pm	Mass for Late Hani Shikri, widow of Late Hanna Antoun	قديسة المرحومة حنة أرملة المرحوم حنا أنطون	٦ : ٠٠	السبت ١١ آذار ٢٠٢٣
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	9am	Mass for Late Sadie Khamis	قديسة المرحومة سعيدة خميس	٩ : ٠٠	الاحد ١٢ آذار ٢٠٢٣
	11am	1 Year Mass for Late Nazih Beaini and for his wife, the Late Helen Beaini	قديسة السنة المرحوم نزيه البعيني وزوجته المرحومة هلان البعيني	١١ : ٠٠	
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	6pm	Mass for Late Audette Boyaji	قديسة المرحومة أودات بوياجي	٦ : ٠٠	الخميس ١٦ آذار ٢٠٢٣
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	6pm	Mass for Late Fouad Kazzi	قديسة المرحوم فؤاد القزي	٦ : ٠٠	السبت ١٨ آذار ٢٠٢٣
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	9am	40 Day Mass for Late Jamili El Hindi with her husband Edmond El Hindi and family	قديسة ٤٠ المرحومة جميلة الهندي وزوجها ادومون وعائلتها	٩ : ٠٠	الاحد ١٩ آذار ٢٠٢٣
	11am	Mass for Late Betty Merhi	قديسة المرحومة بتي مرعي	١١ : ٠٠	

**Congratulations to the newly Baptised: Eddy Jreige**

Parish Financial Updates		To receive our eNewsletter please email	
Parish Income (fortnight 06/03/2023 – 19/03/2023) TBA		<a href="mailto:info@stgeorgemcc.org.au">info@stgeorgemcc.org.au</a>	
Parish Operations Account \$62,138.96	Parish Loan Balance \$534,891.70		Subscribe to our Channel <a href="#">St George Maronite Catholic Church</a>
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)		 'like' us on Facebook Follow us on Instagram	

**Business Community Corner**

**Laing + Simmons**  
Chris Khoudair  
Principal  
0405 122 331 | 02 9875 1777  
chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au  
Pennant Hills  
100 Yarrara Road,  
Pennant Hills NSW 2120  
lsre.com.au/pennant\_hills

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Email: info@magnoliahelpinghands.com.au  
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www.magnoliahelpinghands.com.au

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