

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHN'S CHURCH



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ST JAMES CHURCH

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ASCENSION OF THE LORD, YEAR A: 17 MAY 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: we celebrate this Sunday the Ascension of the Lord Jesus. Forty days after he rose from the dead during which he appeared to his apostles and other disciples, the risen Jesus ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father. In his risen, glorified humanity, Jesus now reigns in the everlasting glory of the Son of God and constantly intercedes for us before the Father.

In the first reading, Acts 1:1-11, St Luke reports that before he ascended into heaven, Jesus had shown himself alive to the apostles after his suffering and death by many demonstrations: for forty days the risen Christ had continued to appear to them to tell them about the Reign of God. He describes the Ascension of Jesus this way: he was lifted up while the apostles looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight.

Commenting on this passage, Fr Brendan Byrne says: "In biblical language and imagery this signals that the One who had been crucified on the trumped-up charge of being a political Messiah, a rebel against Rome, and who God raised from the dead in vindication of his true messianic status, has now entered messianic glory at God's right hand."

In other words, the Ascension of Jesus is "the irreversible entry of his humanity into divine glory, symbolised by the cloud and by heaven, where he is seated from that time forward at God's right hand." It is the definitive entry of his humanity into God's heavenly realm. His humanity is completely permeated by divine life, power and glory. As the eternal Son of God, he is co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. When he became man, he descended from heaven assuming our humanity. From conception to his death, he was like us in every but sin. With his resurrection, his humanity was glorified, filled with

divine life and glory. His ascension is the definitive entry of his body and soul into the realm of God.

In the second reading, Ephesians 1:17-23, St Paul says that the Father made Jesus to sit at his right hand in heaven and "has put all things under his feet, and made him as the ruler of everything..." St John Damascene says: "By 'the Father's right hand' we understand the glory and honour of divinity, where he

who exists as the Son of God before all ages, indeed as God, of one being with the Father, is seated bodily after he became incarnate and his flesh was glorified." It is about his humanity fully participating in the divine life, glory and power.

In the gospel, Matthew 28:16-20, the risen Jesus tells his apostles: "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." For biblical scholars Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri, "This means that Jesus, as a man, is now invested with God's authority over heaven and earth. He never ceased to be omnipotent in his divinity, of course, but now he exercises his lordship over the universe through his risen humanity."

As such, he can and is present always and everywhere, though hidden from our naked eyes: "I am with you always, yes to the end of time." Indeed, He is always with us to offer his friendship, guidance and help. In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says: "Look, I am standing at the door knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share his meal side by side with him."

In this Mass, let us ask the exalted Jesus to come into our heart, mind and body, to constantly intercede for us before the Father, to fill us anew his Spirit and to renew our hope of one day reaching the place he has prepared for us.

Fr Roland



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens?
This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will
return as you saw him go, alleluia.

COLLECT

Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God, and make
us rejoice with devout thanksgiving, for the Ascension
of Christ your Son is our exaltation, and, where the
Head has gone before in glory, the Body is called to
follow in hope. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING *Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with
everything Jesus had done and taught from the
beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the
apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and
was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive
to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for
forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell
them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at
table with them, he had told them not to leave
Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had
promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me
speak about: John baptised with water but you, not
many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy
Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord,
has the time come? Are you going to restore the
kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to
know times or dates that the Father has decided by his
own authority, but you will receive power when the
Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my
witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea
and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked
on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were
still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in
white were standing near them and they said, 'Why
are you men from Galilee standing here looking into
the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into
heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same
way as you have seen him go there.'

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Ps 46:2-3. 6-9. R. v.6*

**(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.**

1. All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,
great king over all the earth. (R.)
2. God goes up with shouts of joy;

the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our king, sing praise. (R.)

3. God is king of all the earth.
Sing praise with all your skill.
God is king over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne. (R.)

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of
glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of
what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of
him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that
you can see what hope his call holds for you, what
rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and
how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised
for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of
his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise
him from the dead and to make him sit at his right
hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty,
Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name
that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the
age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and
made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the
Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who
fills the whole creation.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 28:19. 20

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you
always, until the end of the world.**

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 28:16-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the
mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them.
When they saw him they fell down before him, though
some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He
said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been
given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the
nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to
observe all the commandments I gave to you. And
know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of
time.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer sacrifice now in supplication, O Lord, to honour the wondrous Ascension of your Son: grant, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we, too, may rise up to the heavenly realms. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For the Lord Jesus, the King of glory, conqueror of sin and death, ascended today to the highest heavens, as the Angels gazed in wonder.

Mediator between God and man, judge of the world and Lord of hosts, he ascended not to distance himself from our lowly state but that we, his members, might be confident of following where he, our Head and Founder, has gone before.

Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim: Holy

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER I

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Iluka*)

Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty ever-living God, who allow those on earth to celebrate divine mysteries, grant, we pray, that Christian hope may draw us onward to where our nature is united with you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

It seems that the risen Jesus remained on earth for forty days, appearing to his apostles and speaking about the reign of God. When the disciples' responsibilities were sufficiently explained, he was taken from their sight. The cloud is a traditional symbol of the presence of God. The two men in white garments who interpreted the ascension recall the two men in similar garb who announced the resurrection. In most eschatological passages, the Spirit is identified with the endtime. Here the activity of the Spirit is a characteristic of the new age, the period between the resurrection and the time of complete

fulfilment.

The author of Ephesians prays for a threefold spiritual enlightenment: the hope of the calling from God; the riches of the glory of the inheritance of the holy ones; and the surpassing greatness of God's power for those who believe. These marvels have already taken place; it is for the believers to acknowledge them. The power referred to belongs to God. It was God's power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Christ in the place of honour in heaven; it was God's power that made all things subject to Christ and exalted Christ as head of the church. It is this same power that enables the members of Christ's exalted body to share in Christ's fullness and exaltation.

In the account of the commissioning by Jesus, the disciples returned to Galilee and see Jesus on the mountain. They worship him, but with incomplete understanding. The commission that Jesus confers is straightforward and all encompassing. The disciples are told to go out and make disciples of all nations. This will be accomplished by baptising and teaching. The disciples are told to baptise in the threefold name of the Trinity. Those baptised are plunged into the mystery of that name and recreated as new beings. Social or cultural boundaries are dissolved; ethnic and gender restrictions are lifted. The specific teaching alluded to is moral rather than doctrinal. Those who hear this teaching are to observe what Jesus commanded. *Dianne Bergant CSA*

Bishop Gregory Homeming, OCD

On Tuesday, Bishop Greg Homeming delivered a homily during an ecumenical worship service at the Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel in Sydney, as part of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference May plenary program. In it, Bishop Greg called for "love and God" in a world of madness:

"We are at a time in the world where we could all say with him 'madness, madness'. You don't have to look very far. It is everywhere. Anyone who can think 'I can make peace by bombing people until they're totally obliterated' – that is absolute madness. We are called to experience the darkness and in that darkness be light. And what does that mean for us? We gather together this evening because we all have one thing in common – we have Jesus Christ and he's the light that has come into the darkness. I think at this time more than ever this is something which we must take to heart because in the midst of a world full of madness there are only two possibilities given to us. The first is we must look to God, and for us that means look to Jesus Christ to walk with him and stand with him. And the other thing which madness calls forth through us is love. Two things: God and love."

ONLINE GIVING

Internet donations to assist our parish are always welcome. Details for donating online via Electronic Funds Transfer BSB: 032582 Account Number: 810033 [Surname, parish envelope no]

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers for the Sick: Audrey Hancock, Ben & Nadine Shaw, Patrick Wheeler, Denise & Bob, Tim Scherger, Jan Taylor, Miriam Scherger, Kathy Leseberg, Ava Blay, Mark Thurbon, Alma Bailey, Mary Wiseman, Sue Gravalin, Ron Weekes, Pam Lewis, Matthew & Paul Gallagher, Chris Naismith, Trevor Nicolia, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Recently Deceased:** Margaret Donges, Maree Hammond, Mary Thorne, Dennis Neville. **Anniversary:** Bernadette Castle, Jack Turk, Stan Fornal, Mark Leseberg, William Ellem. **Pray for:** Dulc Sinderberry, Valerie Woodroffe, Eva Gallagher, Clarice Loughman, Margaret Eggins, Jurgen Zoller, John Fox, Towell, Baker, Gough & Robertson families, Fran Eckersley, Robyn Smith, Pam Sutherland All the suffering souls in Purgatory especially the dec'd members of F.O.S.S.

MASS TIMES:

Sunday Masses: Yamba: 5:30pm (SAT); Maclean: 8:30am (SUN); Iluka: 10:30am (SUN).

Weekday Masses: Tuesday, 9:00am: Iluka; Wednesday, 9:30am: Yamba; Friday, 12:00am, Maclean; First Saturday: 11:30am, Maclean.

RECONCILIATION TIMES

Saturday, 11:00am, Maclean; 5:00pm, Yamba
Sunday, 8:00am, Maclean
Tuesday, 9:30am, Iluka
Wednesday, 10:00am, Yamba

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

First Wednesday: 10:00am, Yamba
First Saturday: 12:00pm, Maclean

MINISTRY ROSTER: 23/24 MAY 2026

Readers: Yamba: F Robertson/R Tory; Maclean: L Senz/C Newton; Iluka: H Naug. **Commentators:** Yamba: A Schofield; Maclean: S Winter, Iluka: I Durham. **E Communion:** Maclean: J de Roos. **Count team:** Neander/Stephenson.

READINGS: 23/24 MAY 2026

First: Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11; **Second:** 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13; **Gospel:** John 20:19-23.

NEWS & EVENTS

Emergency contact: In case of emergency outside of parish office hours, contact Fr Roland 0401 508 812.

New office days/times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:00am-2:30pm.

Parish bulletin online: Our bulletin is now uploaded weekly to our website <http://stmarysparish.org.au>

The 6th National Count of Attendance at Mass and

Other (Sunday) Assemblies will take place in May 2026. This year marks a significant milestone—25 years of national attendance data, beginning with the first count in 2001. The 2026 results will provide valuable insights into long-term trends, particularly in understanding the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which influenced attendance patterns in 2021.

Vocations view: Vocations view: Do you know a Catholic man, aged between 18-35, whom God may be calling to the priesthood? Perhaps God is asking you to be the voice to prompt that man to consider the quiet whisper he already hears in his heart. Ask someone if they have considered the call. vocations@lismore.catholic.org.au

Passionist Family Group Movement: Please see the latest copy of the newsletter on the noticeboard.

Thinking of Becoming a Catholic? Contact Fr Roland 0401508 812

Preschool in St James School DA Application: We are excited to announce that we are supporting St James Catholic Primary School to submit a Development Application (DA) for a proposed new on-site preschool. If approved, the preschool building would be funded by the NSW Government's New and Upgraded Pre-School Funding Program. The proposed preschool would provide a high-quality early years education program for local children and in time support potentially a smooth and connected transition into Kindergarten at St James in line with diocesan policy.

Clergy retreat is being held 18-22 May. There will be no weekday Masses in the parish this week except Friday 22 May.

Latest update from Halle M: please find the latest copy of Halle's newsletter on the noticeboard.

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in Nigeria: Christians in Nigeria continue to suffer greatly for their faith, yet many persevere with deep trust in Christ and devotion to Our Lady. *Aid to the Church in Need* invites you to join with John, a Catholic farmer in Nigeria, in praying a decade of the Rosary this week for persecuted Christians and all who suffer for their faith.

Safeguarding: If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Diocese of Lismore, we ask you to contact us. We will listen to you respectfully: offer support and discuss options you have available to you. Contact the Safeguarding Office – Phone: (02) 66219444 or Email: safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au