

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 4:4

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! / No one lives on bread alone, / but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. / Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

GOSPEL

Mt 4:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus fasted for forty days and nights.

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone
but on every word that comes from the
mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God' he said 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,
and they will support you on their hands
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the
test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these,' he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,
and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT / A

22 FEBRUARY 2026

SELF-CENTRED SEDUCTIONS

As is traditional on the First Sunday of Lent, the Gospel passage is about Jesus' temptation, an appropriate theme as we begin our own journey in Lent and begin to explore our own seductive temptations. We are all prone to these, and Matthew presents us with a Jesus similarly tested: an egoism exclusive of others especially God, the attraction to power and the seduction of wealth. These temptations are crafted in Old Testament terminology and imagery, particularly present in the Book of Deuteronomy, and ones that Israel experienced in the wilderness.

In today's story, Satan enters the scene, originally a member of the heavenly court (see Job) but, by the time of Matthew, God's adversary who tests the intention and fidelity of those who belong to God. Jesus is his target in three temptations. The first is about food and the temptation to break covenantal fidelity to God due to hunger. The second seeks to question Jesus' conviction of God's care of him. From the parapet of the temple, Jesus is told to throw himself from it, and test God's protection of him. In the third, with a vision of all the earth's kingdoms and seduction of wealth, Jesus is tempted to change his allegiance from God to Satan.

Matthew's point is quite clear writing to a Jewish audience most familiar with Israel's desert failures: Jesus is an authentic Jew who belongs to the Israelite people, knows and experiences their temptations, but resists the seduction of egoism, power and wealth in fidelity to God and his covenantal relationship. In this first week of Lent, today's Gospel invites us to reflect on those self-centred seductions that may compromise our true relationship to God.

Fr Michael Trainor

FIRST READING

Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7

A reading from the book of Genesis

Creation of our first parents, and sin.

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death."' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

■ The word of the Lord.

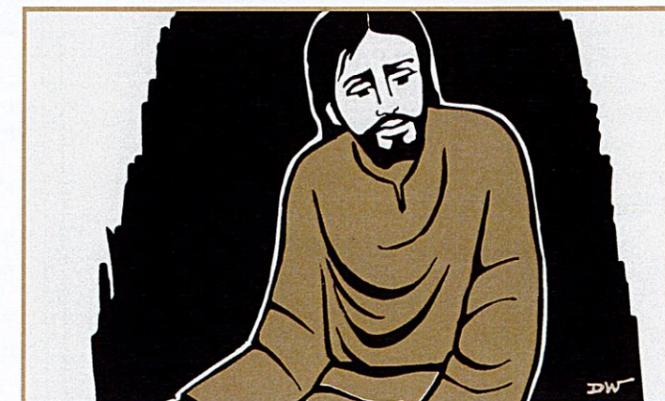
RESP PSALM

Ps 50:3-6, 12-14, 17. R. v. 3

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. / In your compassion blot out my offence. / O wash me more and more from my guilt / and cleanse me from my sin. **R.**

2. My offences truly I know them; / my sin is always before me. / Against you, you alone



have I sinned; / what is evil in your sight I have done. **R.**

3. A pure heart create for me, O God, / put a steadfast spirit within me. / Do not cast me away from your presence, / nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **R.**

4. Give me again the joy of your help; / with a spirit of fervour sustain me. / O Lord, open my lips / and my mouth shall declare your praise. **R.**

SECOND READING

Rom 5:12, 17-19.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Where sin increased, there grace abounded all the more.

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned.

If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

■ The word of the Lord.

Longer form 5:12-19

*Welcome to
St Nicholas' Catholic Parish,
Tamworth
for the
First Sunday of Lent
Year A*

22nd February 2026

Fr Christopher Onuekwusi – Parish Priest
Fr Clarence Canafe – Assistant Priest

stnicholasparish@arnidale.catholic.org.au ☎ (02) 6766 2228

Parish Website: <https://www.stnicholasparish.org.au/>

Parish Secretaries: **Finance:** Stephanie Hetherington - Mon/Tue 9-5pm

Administration: Anne Jones Wed/Fri 9-5pm Pauline Skewes Thurs 9-1pm

Parish Office hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

Catholic schools in our parish

McCarthy Catholic College ☎ (02) 6761 0800	Principal: Mr Michael Whitton Students currently enrolled: 1,006
St Nicholas Primary School ☎ (02) 6766 1500	Principal: Mr Peter Flynn Students currently enrolled: 576

ENTRANCE: When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

COMMUNION: One does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

'A TIME OF PREPARATION.' The forty days spent by Jesus in the wilderness can be likened to the season of Lent. Jesus' time in the wilderness was a time of preparation for his ministry, a time in which he confronted the temptation to choose self and not the Father. For us Lent is a time of preparation for the feast of Easter. It is a time in which we are invited to examine whether the will of God is central to our lives.

Psalter Week 1

Monday 23/02 St Nicholas' Mass 7am
Lev 19:1-2, 11-18: Ps 18: 8-10, 15: Mt 25:31-46:

Tuesday 24/02 St Mary's Mass 9am
Is 55:10-11: Ps 33:4-7, 16-19: Mt 6:7-15:

Wednesday 25/02 St Nicholas' Mass 7am
Jonah 3:1-10: Ps 50:3-4, 12-13, 18-19: Lk 11:29-32:

Thursday 26/02 St Mary's Mass 9am
Esther 4:17: Ps 137:1-3, 7-8: Mt 7:7-12:

Friday 27/02 St Nicholas' Mass 7am
Ezek 18:21-28: Ps 129: Mt 5:20-26:

Saturday 28/02 St Nicholas' Mass 9am
Deut 26:16-19: Ps 118:1-2, 4-5, 7-8: Mt 5:43-48:
Vigil Mass 6pm

Sunday 01/03 St Mary's 7.30am Mass
St Nicholas' 9.30am & 5.30pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 4pm – 5.30pm

A warm welcome to all new parishioners! To help you feel at home in our parish, we encourage you to introduce yourself to Father after Mass, or you might also consider exploring opportunities to get involved in parish life through various ministries and activities. If so, please see our Parish Notice Board or contact the Parish Office.

BULLETIN DEADLINE: If you wish to have a notice or prayer intention included in the Bulletin, please contact the parish office by no later than **3pm Wednesday** or it will not be included until the following weekend. Thank you!

BAPTISMS are held **Saturdays at 11am & Sundays at 12 noon.** If you wish to book a Baptism, please email or telephone the Parish Office on 67662228 for more information. Candidate for Baptism forms can also be completed and submitted on our parish website.

Parish toilet is located in the Outdoor Function Area. Please ensure children are accompanied by an adult when leaving the church during Mass to go to the toilet or for any other reason.

PRAYERFUL REFLECTION on the readings is always included in this Bulletin, after the Communion Antiphon. You are encouraged to reflect on this every week.

PARISH EVENTS coming up

22 Feb Sun	McCarthy Catholic College Family Mass followed by morning tea	9.30am	St Nicholas'
24 Feb Tue	St Nicholas Seniors – lunch	11.30am	West Diggers
25 Feb Wed	Silent Adoration	10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas'
25 Feb Wed	The Catholic Ladies – lunch in the Russell Room at the Tamworth Services Club – 12.30pm for 1pm lunch		
27 Feb Fri	STATIONS OF THE CROSS – St Nicholas School - staff	5.30pm	St Nicholas'
27 Feb Fri	Eucharistic Adoration	6-7pm	St Nicholas'
28 Feb Sat	MEN'S BREAKFAST Outdoor Function Area	7am	St Nicholas'
01 Mar Sun	Commissioning of Catechists – 7.30am + 9.30am Masses		
01 Mar Sun	FAMILY MASS Morning tea hosted by St Nicholas Primary School Kinder and Year 6	9.30am	St Nicholas'
03+04 Mar	Tuesday + Wednesday CLERGY ASSEMBLY		
03+04 Mar	Tues + Wed 9am Liturgy of The Word		St Mary's
03 Mar Tue	'Petitions' Rosary	12.15pm	St Nicholas'
04 Mar Wed	NO ADORATION		
06 Mar Fri	WORLD DAY OF PRAYER followed by morning tea in the Outdoor Function Area	10am	St Nicholas'
06 Mar Fri	STATIONS OF THE CROSS – St Nicholas Parish Catechists	5.30pm	St Nicholas'
06 Mar Fri	Eucharistic Adoration	6-7pm	St Nicholas'
06 Mar Fri	Youth Group – for yrs 6 to 9	7-8.45pm	St Nicholas'
07 Mar Sat	Anointing of the sick during the 9am Mass		St Nicholas'
07 Mar Sat	Silent Adoration	4-5.30pm	St Nicholas'
10 Mar Tue	St Nicholas Seniors – morning tea	10.30am	West Diggers
11 Mar Wed	Silent Adoration	10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas'
13 Mar Fri	STATIONS OF THE CROSS – St Vincent de Paul Society	5.30pm	St Nicholas'
13 Mar Fri	Eucharistic Adoration	6-7pm	St Nicholas'
15 Mar Sun	Birthday Blessing Morning tea after the 9.30am Mass hosted by the Frassati prayer group		All Masses
18 Mar Wed	Silent Adoration	10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas'
20 Mar Fri	STATIONS OF THE CROSS – McCarthy Catholic College - staff	5.30pm	St Nicholas'
20 Mar Fri	Eucharistic Adoration	6-7pm	St Nicholas'
20 Mar Fri	Youth Group – for yrs 6 to 9	7-8.45pm	St Nicholas'

PLANNED GIVING: SUPPORTING OUR PRIESTS & PARISH

1ST Collection (supports the clergy)
BSB: 082 105 A/C No: 001 023 584
A/C Name: St Nicholas Presbytery

2nd Collection (Planned Giving for Parish maintenance)
BSB: 082 105 A/C No: 001 003 255
A/C Name: St Nicholas Parish

Ref: Planned Giving Number/or your name. Thank you for your support.

COLLECTIONS: 15th February 2026

1 st Collection	\$ 1709.70
Planned Giving	\$ 1578.00
Loose	\$ 411.10
	\$ 1989.10

School-Age Baptism is being offered for children in **Kinder to Year 6** who have not yet been baptised.
Parent Information Session: Wednesday 18 March 2026 at 5.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room.
School-Age Baptisms: Saturday 21st March 2026 at 10am at St Nicholas' Church.

WEEKLY ROSTER – 21/22 February 2026

St Nicholas' Saturday 6pm
C: Paul McDougall W/R1: Leonie Hansen
W/R2: Giovanna McDougall
Ex Min: Eil Smyth Music: Noel Greacen
Collection: David Raffaele/Bill Campbell/Morgan Hawthorne

St Mary's Sunday 7.30am
C: Sue O'Halloran Welcomer /R1: Joan Newley
W/R2: Bernadette Virgen
Ex Min: Kevin McMahon Music: Grant Quinn
Altar Servers: Will Nguyen
Collection: Carl Cavallaro/Bill Higgins

St Nicholas' Sunday 9.30am
McCarthy Catholic College Family Mass
Commentator/Welcomers/Readers: McCarthy Catholic College
Children's Liturgy: Linda/Marielle
Ex Min: Fiona Downey/Brian Lincoln Music: St Nicholas Choir
Collection: Maria Gruer/Josie Cox/Phil Elliott

St Nicholas' Sunday 5.30pm **YOUTH MASS**
Commentator/Welcomers/Readers: Young people
Ex Min: volunteer Music: Henry Buckman
Altar Servers:
Collection: Volunteers

Counting Team: Gary Bryant/Andrew McGuirk
Altar Linen: Rosemary Kinsela
Sacristy Cleaning: St Nicholas Women Connecting
Candelabrum: Bruce Stewart 22/02/26-28/02/26

Introducing Our New Parish Pastoral Council

The following parishioners have accepted the invitation to serve our community for the next 2 years.

The PPC works in collaboration with Fr. Chris to foster the spiritual and pastoral life of our parish, helping to create a vibrant, welcoming, and missionary community. Please pray for them as they begin their service.

Henry Buckman – Chairman
Gemma Moy - Secretary
Sr Trang (Sister of Nazareth)
Michael Whitton (Principal, McCarthy Catholic College)
Peter Flynn (Principal, St Nicholas Primary School)
Campion Bourke
Paul Crayn (Representative, St Vincent de Paul)
Fiona Downey
Paul Hagley
Alison Hamilton
Anne Jones
Brian Lincoln
Paula Tighe

Fr Chris, Parish Priest
Fr Clarence, Assistant Priest

STATIONS OF THE CROSS SCHEDULE 2026

Fridays of Lent: St Nicholas Church: 5:30pm

27 Feb	St Nicholas School - Staff
06 Mar	St Nicholas Parish Catechists
13 Mar	St Vincent de Paul Society
20 Mar	McCarthy Catholic College - Staff
27 Mar	St Nicholas Parish Pastoral Council

WEEKLY ROSTER – 28 February/01 March 2026

St Nicholas' Saturday 6pm
C: Leonie Hansen W/R1: Kerry Ackhurst W/R2: Eil Smyth
Ex Min: Cate Allen Music: Noel Greacen
Collection: David Raffaele/Bill Campbell/Morgan Hawthorne

St Mary's Sunday 7.30am
C: John Murphy W/R1: Bruce Stewart W/R2: Grant Quinn
Ex Min: Lorraine Bryant Music: Grant Quinn
Altar Servers: Will Nguyen
Collection: Carl Cavallaro/Bill Higgins

St Nicholas' Sunday 9.30am
St Nicholas Primary School Family Mass
Commentator/Welcomers/Readers: St Nicholas Primary School
Ex Min: Maria Lincoln/Robert Panchasarp
Music: St Nicholas Choir
Collection: Maria Gruer/Josie Cox/Phil Elliott

St Nicholas' Sunday 5.30pm
C: Cecilia Dries W/R1: Renee Dunst W/R2: Judy Campbell
Ex Min: Alison Hagley Music: Veronica Frost
Altar Servers:
Collection: Volunteers

Counting Team: Cecilia Dries/Anne Jones
Altar Linen: Vivienne Mundy
Sacristy Cleaning: Beth & John Ryan/Bruce Stewart
Candelabrum: Cecilia & Terry Dries 01/03/26-07/03/26

BAPTISM: We pray for **Quinn Swain** who is receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this weekend. May God's love be with her throughout her life.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Archibald Sheppard, John McCarthy and Louise O'Halloran (Sydney).

SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Mounir Mouawad, and Bakhos, Rosa and Joe Sleiman and Ray Thompson** (6th Anniversary, 26th February). May they rest in eternal peace.

ANNIVERSARY: Kevin (Kim) Slattery, 2nd Anniversary 24 Feb.

PERPETUAL INTENTIONS: Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Alec & Betty Fyffe and Cyril & Grace Cahill**, who will be long remembered in our parish.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK

Maddy Anderson (Sydney), Carmel Bennett (Gladstone), Colin Bryant, Michael Bryant, Rev Fr Tony Castelli, Brindley Cavallaro (Sydney), Elizabeth Coroneos (Toowoomba), Dan Daly, Bill Dennis, Kath Donoghue, Cormac Downes (Uralla), Nicholas Doyle (Sydney), Richard Doyle (Sydney), Doreen Eunson, Joan Goodridge, Darren Graham, Sherree Haylock, Nadia Hurn (Newcastle), Sullivan Hurn (Singleton), Kay Mason, Julie Michell, Ken Michell, Kim Riley (Orange), Russell Smith, Adam Urquhart, Maureen White (Orange), Jan & Richard Noad, Pat & Tony Favell, Sonia Fawdry (Alstonville).

"In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could lead to a hardness of heart, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of the boundless love of God, in order to experience his tenderness."

~ Pope Francis



NAZARETH CARE IS IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS to assist with reading to groups of residents, crafts, visiting residents, and being a friendly face. If interested, you will need to undertake a police and NDIS check. Please contact Nazareth Care for more information – phone: 67 618 755. Thank you!