

Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies
he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me
will never die.

Do you believe this?

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.
I knew indeed that you always hear me.
But I speak
for the sake of all these who stand round me,
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Longer form, 11:1-45

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT / A

22 MARCH 2026

OUR SOURCE OF LIFE

As we come to the last Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the central meaning of Jesus' life—his gift of life. The story involves Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. These are Jesus' friends who are from the village of Bethany. When Jesus gets the message about Lazarus' dire illness, strangely, he does not go immediately to be with them but only after two days have passed.

The evangelist's words at this point link to the story from last Sunday: One 'can walk in the daytime without stumbling because he has the light of this world to see by.' It is this Light, Jesus, that then goes to Bethany, to bring the dead Lazarus to life. The interchange that Jesus has with Martha before he comes to Lazarus' tomb summarises a theology which John wants readers to transcend. Rather than wait for the general resurrection at the end time, Jesus is 'the resurrection and the life' now. Faith in him will bring people to life.

Space prevents a detailed examination of the narrative dynamic at play and the depths of the Gospel's symbolism behind the dialogues, Jesus' weeping, the various reactions to Jesus, Jesus' command to Lazarus to come from the tomb and the order to unbind Lazarus. On this final Sunday in Lent our gaze is squarely on Jesus. He is our source of life, now and into eternity. Today's Gospel invites us into a deeper communion with Jesus, who is 'the resurrection and the life'.

Fr Michael Trainor

FIRST READING

Ezek 37:12-14

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 129. R. v. 7

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, / Lord, hear my voice! / O let your ears be attentive / to the voice of my pleading. **R.**
2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, / Lord, who would survive? / But with you is found forgiveness: / for this we revere you. **R.**
3. My soul is waiting for the Lord, / I count on his word. / My soul is longing for the Lord / more than watchman for daybreak. / (Let the watchman count on daybreak / and Israel on the Lord.) **R.**
4. Because with the Lord there is mercy / and fullness of redemption, / Israel indeed he will redeem / from all its iniquity. **R.**

SECOND READING

Rom 8:8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he will give life to your own mortal bodies.

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been



justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 11:25, 26

**Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;
whoever believes in me will not die for ever.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

GOSPEL

Jn 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33-45.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

I am the resurrection and the life.

The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.'

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

22nd March 2026

Fr Christopher Onuekwusi – Parish Priest

Fr Clarence Canafe – Assistant Priest

stnicholasparish@armidale.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	Principal: Mr Michael Whitton
☎ (02) 6761 0800	Students currently enrolled: 1,006
St Nicholas Primary School	Principal: Mr Peter Flynn
☎ (02) 6766 1500	Students currently enrolled: 576

ENTRANCE: Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

COMMUNION: Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.

‘THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.’ The raising of Lazarus from the dead was a wonderful event. His sisters were overjoyed and many people came to believe in Jesus. But something more wonderful happened in Jesus’ own death and resurrection. While Lazarus was restored to his former life, the death of Jesus produces a life that will last forever, a life that we receive in baptism. Let us pray for all who are to be baptised this Easter.

Psalter Week 1

Monday 23/03 St Nicholas’ Mass 7am
Dan 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62: Ps 22: Jn 8:1-11:

Tuesday 24/03 St Mary’s Mass 9am
Num 21:4-9: Ps 101:2-3, 16-21 Jn 8:21-30:

Wednesday 25/03 St Nicholas’ Mass 7am
THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD
Is 7:10-14, 8:10: Ps 39:7-11: Heb 10:4-10: Lk 1:26-38:

Thursday 26/03 St Mary’s Mass 9am
Gen 17:3-9: Ps 104:4-9: Jn 8:51-59:

Friday 27/03 St Nicholas’ Mass 7am
Jer 20:10-13: Ps 17:2-7: Jn 10:31-42:

Saturday 28/03 St Nicholas’ Mass 9am
Ezek 37:21-28: Jer 31:10-13: Jn 11:45-56:

Vigil Mass 6pm

Sunday 29/03 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.

Please note: Any inclusions for the Parish newsletter must be received by the parish office no later than 3pm Wednesdays.

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.

Diary Dates

24 Mar Tue	St Nicholas Seniors – lunch 11.30am	West Diggers
25 Mar Wed	Silent Adoration 10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas’
25 Mar Wed	The Catholic Ladies – lunch at the Services Club – meet at 12.30pm for 1pm lunch	
25 Mar Wed	Info Session, First Eucharist 5.30pm	St Nicholas’
27 Mar Fri	STATIONS OF THE CROSS – Parish Pastoral Council 5.30pm	St Nicholas’
27 Mar Fri	Eucharistic Adoration 6-7pm	St Nicholas’
28 Mar Sat	Men’s Breakfast 7am	St Nicholas’
	Outdoor Function Area	
28 Mar Sat	Parish Working Bee for Easter 9.30am	St Nicholas’
28 Mar Wed	Info Session, First Eucharist 2pm	St Nicholas’
29 Mar Sun	PALM SUNDAY	
31 Mar Tue	Chrism Mass & lunch with parishioners, Armidale	
01 Apr Wed	Silent Adoration 10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas’
01 Apr Wed	Lenten Reconciliation 6pm	St Nicholas’
02 Apr Thu	Holy Thursday – No 9am Mass at St Mary’s	
02 Apr Thu	School Term 1 ends	
02 Apr Thu	Mass of the Lord’s Supper 6pm	St Nicholas’
	Offering of Project Compassion boxes and envelopes	
03 Apr Fri	Good Friday–Stations of the Cross 10am St Nicholas’	
03 Apr Fri	The Passion of the Lord 3pm	St Nicholas’
03 Apr Fri	SPECIAL COLLECTION – Holy Places – 3pm	
04 Apr Sat	Holy Saturday – No 9am Mass at St Nicholas’	
04 Apr Sat	EASTER VIGIL 6pm	St Nicholas’
05 Apr Sun	Daylight Saving ends – clocks back one hour	
05 Apr Sun	EASTER SUNDAY – 9.30am + 5.30pm Masses – SN Mass at St Mary’s at 7.30am	
06 Apr Mon	Public Holiday – morning Mass 9am St Nicholas’	
07 Apr Tue	Petitions Rosary 12.15pm	St Nicholas’
08 Apr Wed	Silent Adoration 10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas’
10 Apr Fri	Eucharistic Adoration 6-7pm	St Nicholas’
12 Apr Sun	DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY	
14 Apr Tue	St Nicholas Seniors, morning tea 10.30am	West Diggers
15 Apr Wed	Silent Adoration 10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas’
17 Apr Fri	Eucharistic Adoration 6-7pm	St Nicholas’
19 Apr Sun	Birthday Blessing All Masses	
	Morning tea after the 9.30am Mass hosted by The St Nicholas Women Connecting	
21 Apr Tue	St Nicholas Women Connecting – dinner at Tamworth City Bowling Club – meet at 5.30pm.	
22 Apr Wed	Start of School Term 2	
22 Apr Wed	Silent Adoration 10.30-11.30am	St Nicholas’
22 Apr Wed	The Catholic Ladies – lunch at the Services Club – meet at 12.30pm for 1pm lunch	

STATIONS OF THE CROSS SCHEDULE 2026

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

27 Mar St Nicholas Parish Pastoral Council

FIRST EUCHARIST SCHEDULE 2026

Parent/Carer Information Session in St Nicholas’ Church:

Wed 25 March 5.30pm or Sat 28 March 2pm

1st Reconciliation: Wed 10 June 5.30pm

1st Eucharist Masses: Sat 13 June 6pm or Sun 14 June at 9.30am

CONFIRMATION MASSES: Sat 19 Sep 6pm or Sun 20 Sep 9.30am

SAVE THE DATES:

Working Bee for Easter – Saturday 28th March 9.30am – church & presbytery grounds.

Parish Mission & St Carlo Acutis Exhibition – after Eucharistic Adoration on Friday evening 19th June 7pm – Midnight – Outdoor Function Area.



WEEKLY ROSTER – 21/22 March 2026

St Nicholas’ Saturday 6pm

C: Belinda Tyrrell W/R1: Cate Allen W/R2: Pauline Skewes
Ex Min: Leonie Hansen Music: Noel Greacen
Collection: David Raffaele/Bill Campbell/Morgan Hawthorne

St Mary’s Sunday 7.30am

C: Joan Newley W/R1: Bernadette Virgen W/R2: John Wallace
Ex Min: Lorraine Bryant Music: Grant Quinn
Altar Servers: Will Nguyen
Collection: Carl Cavallaro/Bill Higgins

St Nicholas’ Sunday 9.30am

C: Gemma Moy W/R1: Lucy Roberts W/R2: Maria Lincoln
Children’s Liturgy: Steph/Danae
Ex Min: Laura Hughes/Jennifer Hatfield
Music: St Nicholas Choir
Collection: Maria Gruer/Josie Cox/Phil Elliott

St Nicholas’ Sunday 5.30pm

C: Claire Doherty W/R1: Terry Dries W/R2: Cecilia Dries
Ex Min: Judy Campbell Music: Veronica Frost
Altar Servers:
Collection: Volunteers

Counting Team: Paul & Giovanna McDougall

Altar Linen: Rosemary Kinsela

Sacristy Cleaning: St Nicholas Women Connecting

Candelabrum: Anne Jones 22/03/26 - 28/03/26

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 March 2026

1st Collection \$ 1,707.60

Planned Giving \$ 1,563.00

Loose \$ 327.55

\$ 1,890.55



Lenten Reconciliation

St Nicholas’ Church

Wednesday 01 April

6pm

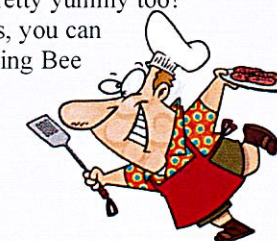
Gentlemen, just a reminder that the monthly **Men’s Breakfast** is coming up again next Saturday 28th March, in the **Outdoor Function Area**.

From **7am** until around 8.15am, there will be time for *prayer, reflection*, some time to *chat*, all with a *dash of humour* thrown in!

And by all accounts, the breakfast is pretty yummy too!

If you’re worried about your waistlines, you can always ‘*work it off*’ at the parish Working Bee

shortly afterwards! 😊



WEEKLY ROSTER – 28/29 March 2026 PALM SUNDAY

St Nicholas’ Saturday 6pm

C: Leonie Hansen W/R1: Pauline Skewes W/R2: Belinda Tyrrell
Passion N: Cate Allen **J:** Priest **O:** Kerry Ackhurst **C:** Congregation
Ex Min: Eil Smyth Music: Noel Greacen
Collection: David Raffaele/Bill Campbell/Morgan Hawthorne

St Mary’s Sunday 7.30am

C: Grant Quinn W/R1: Alex Knight W/R2: Grace Knight
Passion N: Bernadette Virgen **J:** Priest **O:** Katrina Krogh
C: Congregation
Ex Min: Jessica Galvin Music: Grant Quinn
Altar Servers: Will Nguyen
Collection: Carl Cavallaro/Bill Higgins

St Nicholas’ Sunday 9.30am

C: Gina Mahony W/R1: Ben Lamey W/R2: Lynne Prisk
Passion N: Brian Lincoln **J:** Priest **O:** Gemma Moy
C: Congregation
Ex Min: Fiona Downey/Michael Moy
Music: St Nicholas Choir
Collection: Maria Gruer/Josie Cox/Phil Elliott

St Nicholas’ Sunday 5.30pm YOUTH MASS

C: Youth W/R1: Youth W/R2: Youth
Passion N: Youth **J:** Priest **O:** Youth **C:** Congregation
Ex Min: Volunteers Music: Henry Buckman
Altar Servers:
Collection: Volunteers

Counting Team: Bill Higgins/Pauline Skewes

Altar Linen: Kerrie Bryant

Sacristy Cleaning: Beth & John Ryan/Bruce Stewart

Candelabrum: every 2nd week

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, Pat & Tony Favell, Sonia Fawdry (Alstonville), Joan Goodridge, Darren Graham, Paul Hayes, Sherree Haylock, Nadia Hum (Newcastle), Sullivan Hum (Singleton), Kay Mason, Julie Michell, Ken Michell, Jan & Richard Noad, Penny Pavlakis (Sydney), Kim Riley (Orange), Russell Smith, Adam Urquhart, Maureen White (Orange), Elizabeth Williams.

BAPTISMS: We pray for the school-age children who are being baptised this weekend, for **Tyler, Myles & Mila Kilby** and **Jaiden Allen**. May God’s blessing of peace and joy be with them and protect them all of their days.

SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Wendy Hetherington** (Anniversary) and **Heather Aldridge, Ken Mundy & Gary Godfrey** (Ipswich), all recently deceased. May God grant them eternal rest.

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.

I am
the
RESURRECTION
and
the
LIFE