



THE MASSABIELLE

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF ST BERNADETTE'S PARISH COMMUNITY CASTLE HILL

ST. BERNADETTE'S PARISH

367 Old Northern Road
Castle Hill NSW 2154

Ph: (02) 9634 2622

e: admin@stbernadette.org.au

w: www.stbernadette.org.au

Facebook: /Castlehillparish

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

PARISH PRIEST

Fr Fernando Montano

Assistant Priest
Fr Menard Gaspi

Pastoral Associate

Mrs Nancy Eberhaut
pa@stbernadette.org.au

Admin and Office Support

Ms Laura Burton
admin@stbernadette.org.au

Youth Ministry
ym@stbernadette.org.au

Groundskeeper
Mr Darren Edwards

SCHOOL

St Bernadette's Primary
(02)9407 6600
Principal: Bianca Cooke

WEEKLY MASS TIMES

Monday, Tuesday

6:45am

Wednesday, Thursday

6:45am, 9:15am

Friday 6th February

6:45am, 9:15am, 12noon

Saturday and Public Holidays
8:00am

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil

5:00pm

Sunday

7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am,
6:00pm

RECONCILIATION TIMES

Saturday

8:30am-9:00am,

4:00pm-4:30pm

Or by appointment

31 JAN-1ST FEB 2026 **THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A**

Hello Everyone!

With the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord we close what in other times used to be known as the Christmas Season, 40 days after the Nativity of the Lord. I remember growing up, this was the day when all Christmas decorations were taken down as we wait patiently for the next year. The day after the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, the Church celebrates the memory of a very interesting Saint.



St. Blaise, also known as Blasius, was a fourth-century bishop and martyr venerated in the Catholic Church, particularly as the patron of those afflicted with throat ailments, woolcombers, animals, veterinarians, and town criers. His feast day is celebrated on February 3, marked by the traditional blessing of throats using two crossed candles, invoking his intercession. While historical evidence for his life is limited to traditions from the eighth century onward, his legendary acts portray him as a compassionate healer and steadfast confessor of the faith during the persecution of Licinius who reigned from 308 to 324 AD.

According to the accounts in his Acts, Blaise was born to wealthy and noble parents in Sebastea (modern Sivas, in Armenia Minor). He received a Christian education and, while still young, was ordained a bishop of that city. Some traditions describe him first as a physician, reflecting his later miraculous healings. When the persecution under Emperor Licinius intensified around 316, Blaise, guided by divine inspiration, withdrew to a cave in the surrounding mountains. There, he lived as a hermit, surrounded by wild animals whom he healed of wounds and illnesses. These beasts would approach him peacefully, receiving his blessing, demonstrating his harmony with creation and foreshadowing his patronage of animals.

His seclusion ended when hunters, sent by the governor Agricolaus to capture animals for the amphitheater, discovered him amid the beasts. Amazed by the scene, they arrested him and brought him before the governor. En route, a striking miracle occurred: a poor woman lamented the loss of her pig, stolen by a wolf. At Blaise's command, the wolf returned the pig unharmed, an event that gave rise to devotional practices and underscored his authority over animals. This story, echoed in variations like freeing a wolf from a thorn, highlights his role as protector of livestock and patron of veterinarians.

In Sebastea, Blaise's fame grew through further wonders. A woman brought her dying son, choking on a fishbone lodged in his throat. Blaise healed the boy instantly, establishing his enduring association with throat afflictions. Imprisoned and ordered scourged and starved by Agricolaus, Blaise received secret aid from the woman whose pig was restored; she brought food and tapers to light his dark cell. These candles later inspired the throat-blessing practice.

Refusing to sacrifice to pagan gods, Blaise endured horrific tortures. Licinius commanded his flesh be raked with iron wool-combs—a tool of his future patrons, the woolcombers—before he was beheaded. His steadfastness sealed his martyrdom, probably around 316. A faint historical link appears in the acts of St. Eustratius, suggesting Blaise reverently handled that martyr's relics during Diocletian's time, affirming his early veneration.

Blaise's veneration spread widely, especially from the eighth century. Relics, some allegedly brought West, fueled miracles, propagating his cult in Europe. In Germany, he ranks among the Fourteen Holy Helpers (Nothelfer). French and German devotion remains strong, with blessings of "St. Blaise's water" for sick cattle. Pope Benedict XVI highlighted him in 2010 alongside other martyrs like St. Agatha. In Rome, the February 3 blessing with candles is still practiced as in some other countries.

Today, Blaise inspires trust in God's providence amid suffering. His life teaches compassion for the vulnerable—human and animal alike—and bold witness to Christ. As one tradition notes, town criers invoke him for clear proclamation, linking throat protection to communicative vocations. Through his intercession, the faithful seek healing and strength, honoring a saint whose legendary gentleness triumphed over persecution.

Saint Blaise, Pray for us!



Peace in Jesus

Fr. Fernando Montano

DONATIONS TO SUPPORT THE PARISH

Donations can be made using the bank details below, the QR code, or via the Tap-and-go machines and cash collection boxes in the church. Your donations are greatly appreciated.



SUPPORT DONATIONS

For EFT to the First Collection - supporting the priests

BSB 067 950
Account No 00004265
Account Name Diocesan Clergy
Reference 6006 Your name

EFT to the Second Collection – for support of the Parish

BSB 067 950
Account No 00000032
Account Name Castle Hill Catholic Church
Reference Second Collection (Your Name)

SACRAMENTS

For Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation programs for school children please contact the Parish Office on 9634 2622 or at sacraments@stbernadette.org.au.

For Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), please contact the Parish Office on 9634 2622 or at admin@stbernadette.org.au for bookings and further details. Baptisms are held on the 1st, 2nd and 5th (when occurring) Sunday of each month at 12noon.

Note the church law: parents are obliged to take care that infants are baptised within the first few weeks. As soon as possible after the birth indeed even before it, they are to approach the pastor to request the sacrament for their child and to be prepared properly for it. [Can. 867§1]

NEW TO THE PARISH

We would like to welcome all new parishioners. If you are new to the parish, please collect a registration form from the foyer or the Parish Office and please come and say hello to one of the Clergy or Nancy at mass.

Welcome

Youth



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



On Instagram



On Facebook

@st_bernadettes_youth

@st_bernadettes_young_adults

@St Bernadette's youth Castle Hill

@St Bernadette's Young Adults

JUNIOR YOUTH (years 5-8) and SENIOR YOUTH (years 9-12)

Welcome Back BBQ Social Friday 6th February 2026.

We will be kicking off the year with a combined welcome back BBQ social on Friday 6th February at 7pm on the basketball courts. Families welcome. To assist us with catering, we kindly ask you to RSVP via the QR code or by emailing ym@stbernadette.org.au



YOUNG ADULTS BIBLE STUDY (16-35yrs)

Our Young Adults Bible Study is held every Wednesday evening 7:30-9:30pm in the St Joseph's Room. We will be reading through the coming Sunday's readings through Lectio Divina.



YOUNG ADULTS NIGHT 15TH FEBRUARY

Our Young Adults Nights (18-35 Yrs) is on Sunday 15th February 7:00pm-9:00pm in the hall.



Guest Speaker Anne Younis will be presenting her talk: "I am not holy enough"

Dinner included. Please let us know any dietary requirements by contacting ym@stbernadette.org.au.

ROSTERS 7-8 FEBRUARY 2026

Mass Ministry	Vigil	7:30am	9:00am	10:30am	6:00pm
Lectors	Caroline Dumapit Malisa Barsic John Abernethy	Sue Pinkerton Campion Fernando Lisa Kemmis	Steve Vassallo Catherine Whitelock Ann O'Brien	Sylvia Rego Vince del Gallego John Eberhaut	Michelle Barreto Laura Burton Radheen Wettasinghe
Communion Ministers	Lisa Hurst Rick Jenkins Brian Fitzalan Natalia Chui Conni Tierney	Julian Bong Monica Rodrigues David Rodrigues Andrea Tomic	Mary Tondini Ranmalee De Silva Lynda Sillick Yvette Braganza +1	Mila Mina Coney Lau Helen Carr-Boyd Elizabeth Joseph Jiji Joseph	Anabel Formosa Brennie Hassan Jane Lapidario
Bookshop	Elaine Small	Eugenia Fidel	Jenny and Brian Blacklock	Dorothy Finucane	Remy de Leon
Flowers	1st Collection	2nd Collection	Children's Liturgy	Housekeeping	Church Linen
Darshi Wettasinghe	Mon 9th Feb Pauline and Bernard Home	John Geoghegan Kevin Johnson Douglas Carvalho	Joanne Boland Joanna Camarda	Andrea Tomic Krystyna Graczyk Myra Tan Gabriella Tan Pauline Home	Lois and John Donnelly



RECONCILIATION SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2026

Registrations are now open for the 2026 Reconciliation Sacramental program. This preparation process is suitable for children who are currently in Year 3 and above who have received the sacrament of Baptism. For more information, please contact the Parish Office at sacraments@stbernadette.org.au. Registrations close Monday 2nd February 2026.

FIRST FRIDAY MASS: ANOINTING OF THE SICK/ADORATION



will take place this Friday, 6th February at 12noon followed by a light lunch in the Marian Centre. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed from after 6:45am mass until 12noon. All welcome. If you require transport please contact Maureen Fearnside on 9634 3329.



ST BERNADETTE'S SPIRITUAL READING BOOK CLUB

We are starting a Spiritual Reading Book Club, to share and discuss religious themed books. The Book Club will be held on the second Saturday of each month at 9am in the Marian Centre. Our first meeting will be held on Saturday 14th February, where we will choose our first book & discuss the structure & purpose of the Spiritual Reading Book Club. All Welcome. For more information please contact Danielle Vassallo on 0421 649 641 or sdvassallo@bigpond.com



ASH WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY

Ash Wednesday masses on Wednesday 18th February will be at 6:45am, 9:15am (school attending) 12 noon (school attending) and 7:30pm.

COMPASSIO LENTEN PROGRAM

Fr Menard will be running the Wollongong Diocese COMPASSIO Lenten program on Thursday nights during lent at 7pm in the Marian Centre, starting Thursday 19th February. Books are available for purchase for \$10 each through the parish office or on the night. Cash only.



ST BERNADETTE'S FOOTBALL CLUB

Registrations are now open for the 2026 season with St Bernadette's Football Club. Players from Kindy (under 6) to Year 6 (under 12) are most welcome and all talent levels are catered for. Games are played on Saturday morning for Boys and Mixed, with Girls on Sunday. Season commences just prior to Easter. For more specific requests around other adult teams, please reach out to Registrar@sbfc.org.au. More information, and key links are available on www.sbfc.org.au

ST BERNADETTE'S NETBALL CLUB

Registrations for St Bernadette's Netball Club 2026 netball season are open. The club is welcoming boys and girls aged 7-12, girls and women aged 13+ and all abilities players. All new and returning players welcome! Register via www.playhq.com. Any queries please contact Michael Lincoln at sbncsecretary@gmail.com



We are also looking for local businesses or individuals to partner with us as sponsors for the upcoming 2026 Netball season. If you, your family, or business would like to be involved please contact Michael Lincoln at sbncsecretary@gmail.com for more information and sponsorship options.

CATECHISTS WANTED



We are incredibly fortunate to still have the opportunity to go into the local public schools and spread the Word of God with primary school students at a number of public schools in our area. As the number of families in the Hills continues to grow, so does the number of students attending Public Schools.

St Bernadette's currently provide Catechist teachers to 5 local public schools, and we are looking for more teachers to assist in this growing need. All our teachers are provided with the training and support required, as well as the lesson plans and resources used in the classroom.

Our volunteer teachers currently consist of a fantastic team of parents, grandparents and young adults from various backgrounds, careers and experiences. We are looking for volunteers who are available to take a half-hour lesson on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday at one of our local public school. For more information please contact the Parish Office on 9634 2622 or admin@stbernadette.org.au

DIOCESAN WORLD DAY OF THE SICK: 11 FEBRUARY



A Mass for the World Day of the Sick, including the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, will be held at 11am on Wednesday 11 February 2026 at St Patrick's Church, Mary, Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown. All are welcome, those who may be sick, and those who care for the sick and dying and health care professionals. To register, please visit parracatholic.org/events/diocesan-world-day-of-the-sick-mass/

Upcoming Events

Please see notices for further details.

February

This Week

Mon 2nd	Reconciliation Registrations close
Tues 3rd	Tuesday Morning Prayer Group 10am Reparation Prayer Group 7:00pm
Wed 4th	Young Adults Bible Study 7:30pm
Thurs 5th	Holy Hour 8pm-9pm
Fri 6th	First Friday Mass and Adoration Combined Youth Welcome back BBQ

February

This Month

Sat 14th Feb	Spiritual Reading Book Club 9am
Sun 15th Feb	Young Adults: Anne Younis
Wed 18th Feb	Ash Wednesday
Thurs 19th Feb	Lenten Program with Fr Menard 7pm
Sun 22nd Feb	Fundraiser BBQ: Parish Council
Thurs 26th Feb	Coffee and Chat

Today's Readings

Entrance Antiphon

Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

First Reading Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

Seek the Lord all you, the humble of the earth, who obey his commands. Seek integrity, seek humility: you may perhaps find shelter on the day of the anger of the Lord. In your midst I will leave a humble and lowly people, and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in the name of the Lord. They will do no wrong, will tell no lies; and the perjured tongue will no longer be found in their mouths. But they will be able to graze and rest with no one to disturb them.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 145:7-10. R. Mt 5:3

Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad; Your reward will be great in heaven.

Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: 'How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

Communion Antiphon:

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

Readings Next Weekend

7-8 February 2026

The 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

First Reading	Second reading	Gospel
Is 58:7-10	1 Cor 2:1-5	Mt 5:13-16

Feast Days This Week

2 Feb	The Presentation of the Lord
5 Feb	Saint Agatha
6 Feb	Saint Paul Miki and Companions

*Seeing the crowds, Jesus
went up the hill...
Then he began to speak.*

Matthew 5:1



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SOUL OF

Recently deceased: Catherine Hennessy

Anniversaries: Hermine Eberhaut, Estelita Cruz

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Lukas Ivanic, Victoria Rix, Eleanor Ross, Tony Kearney, Minda Robles, Marge Kleinsmith