

carpenter's square



June
issue

sjt youth magazine



autumn life nights

easter celebrations

rise up camp

Welcome to our trimonthly youth magazine, covering content from recent gatherings, amongst other things.

See inside this issue of *Carpenter's Square* for all youth & young adults events at St Joseph's Parish Takapuna.

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AUTUMN LIFE NIGHTS

"We set our focus on deepening our understanding of Lent."

By Nicole Lay

This autumn, our Life Nights ventured through the Lenten series from Ash Wednesday to the Easter Triduum. 'But Wait... There's More!' was a 4-part series following Jesus' 40-day journey towards His death and holy resurrection. We started off with our Ash Wednesday Life Night with Father Nathaniel as our Proclaim speaker. Repentance and reconciliation with God, as well as the story of salvation from the cross, were the key themes on the opening night of this series.

Father Mark was our second Proclaim speaker and discussed the importance of our relationship with prayer, the significance of fasting, and almsgiving as a gift of the self. This session shone a light on the magnitude of our Lenten commitments as a focused practice and the ways in which they may lead us to a deeper relationship with God.

Our third Life Night was all about intrapersonal conversion and the conscious decision we make to turn to God in our lives with a proclamation beautifully delivered by Yeji. Spiritual transformation through the rejection of sin and mistrust of God towards an acceptance of His love and mercy guided our discussions that night.

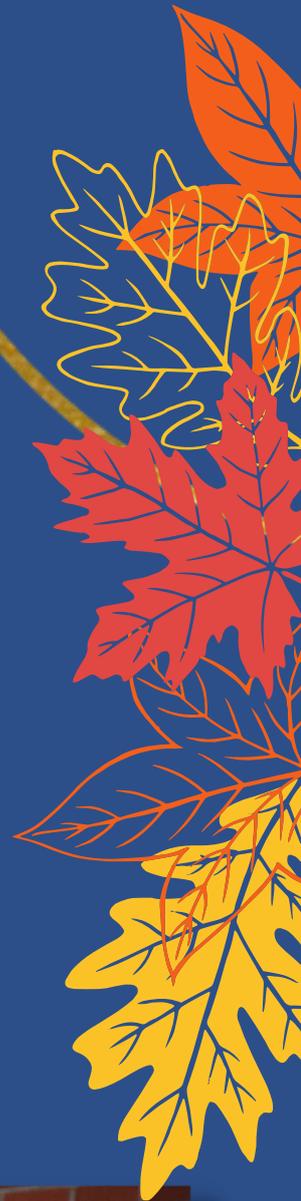


The final Life Night was held on Good Friday and was centred on the solemn focus of Mary at the cross. Michael led the proclaim, and our discussions emphasised the significance of Mary's role as the mother of the Church and an intercessor between God and the people, guiding us through our Lenten journey.

Our hospitality team, meticulously led by Patrikk, provided hearty suppers to all those in attendance and set the scenes for each Life Night. Inspiring praise and worship sessions were led by our reliable music team, who elevated each night's experience with their incredible voices and instrumentals.

We reflected on how our sacrifices can lead us towards something greater this Lent. We set our focus on deepening our understanding of Lent while strengthening our relationship with Jesus through its ups and downs.

While this Lent may have been a challenging time for some, our autumn Life Nights were designed to guide teens through the fundamental themes of Lent to cultivate a more profound love and appreciation for God's sacrifice and our salvation, just in time for Easter.



THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Mary kept all these things in her heart

A sermon of St Laurence Justinian

As Mary pondered all she had learned from reading and from what she had heard and seen, how greatly did she increase in faith, advance in merit and become enlightened with wisdom! More and more she was consumed with burning love. Drawing life and inspiration from heavenly mysteries which were being unlocked for her, she was filled with joy; she became alive with the Spirit, she was guided towards God and was kept humble in herself.

The effects of divine grace are such indeed that they raise one from the depths to the heights, and transform one in an ever greater degree of glory. Entirely blessed was the mind of the Virgin which, through direction of the Spirit dwelling in her, ever obeyed the command of the Word of God in all things. She was governed not by her own judgement or opinions, but she outwardly performed through her body whatever wisdom had indicated inwardly to her faith. It was surely fitting that divine Wisdom, which had built the house of the Church for its abode, should use most holy Mary as its instrument, where the observance of the law, purification of the heart, the doctrine of humility and spiritual offering were concerned.

Imitate her, O faithful soul. Enter into the temple of your heart that you may be purified in spirit and cleansed of the pollution of your sins. In everything we do God considers our disposition rather than our actions. And so, whether we retire mentally to God in earnest contemplation and remain at rest or whether we are intent on being of service to those around us with good works and worthy undertakings, let our object be that we are motivated only by love of Christ. So the really acceptable offering of purification of the spirit is that which is rendered not in a man-made temple but in the temple of the heart, where Christ the Lord is pleased to enter.





EASTER CELEBRATIONS

"And there's always H O P E."

By Rochelle Dias

In the blink of an eye, we moved from Ash Wednesday to celebrating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. For me, Palm Sunday always brings a little bit of excitement, maybe it is because the church is decorated with palms, and we hear the beautiful (yet sometimes long) narrative of the Passion of Jesus. While there is excitement, there is a grim reminder of the loneliness that is about to befall us on Good Friday.



This year was the first time we had a Life Night on Good Friday, and I don't know if it was "divine timing" or a "God-incidence", but we focussed on Mary standing at the foot of the Cross. There is much to learn about Mary's consistent YES from the annunciation - to the death of her beloved son.

It serves as a reminder that I am not only called to say YES to Jesus during times when everything is going right in my life, but even during times when life is just a mess and when all hope is lost.

Through the various liturgies happening during Holy Week, I am drawn into this holy encounter with Christ. Palm Sunday is a reminder that there are always joyous moments in life, and it is worth celebrating.

Holy Thursday helps me contemplate the mystery of spending time alongside loved ones and how I take these moments for granted. The eerie loneliness kicks in after Holy Thursday as we are moving the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose and especially when I see the tabernacle empty. The only difference is that now I know that Easter is just around the corner, there is something I can look forward to, that my struggles, fears, and loneliness will soon be overcome by the light of Christ.

EASTER reminds us that no matter how challenging your struggles are, even though you feel like you have hit “rock bottom”, there is always the light of Christ that shines in the darkness, that God is and has always been the rock at the bottom and that no matter what there is always HOPE.



*He is
Risen*

RISE UP CAMP

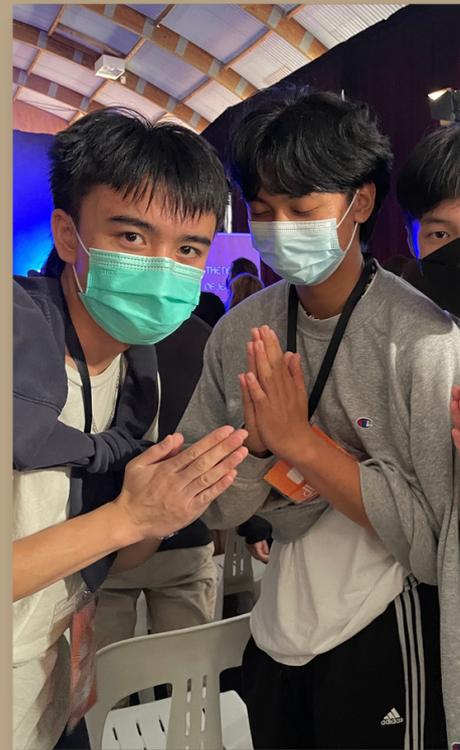
Acts 3:6 "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Rise up."

by Ayrton Ermita

In the middle of Autumn, while it may be the norm to see the leaves fall, it was a sight to see our young people rise! Following the end of an eventful celebration of Easter week and heading right into the core of the school holidays, a bright group of teens sought the development in their spiritual journeys by going to Rise Up Youth Camp.

From April 20-22, the event took place at YMCA Camp Adair. With youth from other parishes in attendance, meeting new faces was something our teens were excited for and went off immediately to do so once we arrived. With our new friends alongside us, we set path on the holy journey we all shared as we entered this three-day camp.

Each moment of our time there were footsteps taken on an encounter with God. Each session attended was jam packed with the Holy Spirit - kicking off each time with Praise & Worship, acting as the best spark plug preparing us for the experience, we were about to partake in.



Hearing the amazing talks shared by speakers, Emma, and Sam - we learnt about having a relationship with God, experiencing the love of God, standing up for what is right, and how we can use the word of God in being an influencer in our schools as well as to those around us.



Additionally, listening to those who spoke in the vocations panel, we learnt how God calls us to do his work: whether it's through our school or work lives, or just the small things we can do on a day-to-day basis. To bring it full circle, experiencing adoration as well as the holy sacrament of reconciliation was a reminder everyone needed to remember to forgive and love those around us, just as Jesus did.

By experiencing this journey along with our new-found friends, indulging in other activities like messy games, and sharing a meal with each other each day, what we learnt at Rise Up Youth Camp is something we will remember to bring with us as we progress in our everyday lives. To be ourselves, in Jesus' name.



CORE REFLECTION

Inside look into the team

by **Chris Macdonald**

Now it's obvious that the Life nights every fortnight don't happen by accident. I find myself thinking lately of how fortunate we are to have such a great team of supportive leaders, who all pitch in to keep the nights running smoothly.

For anyone who's worked in Youth Ministry before, or running any sort of group for that matter, you'll know how often the responsibility ends up falling onto just one-, or two-people's shoulders. And when that happens, stresses add up and people find themselves overburdened.

But many hands make light work, and I'm so grateful to the team that we can all work together, and the enthusiasm and love they bring to the nights. That's not to say people don't get tired though or have endless confidence.

I know I for one always worry about how the night is going to go. Will the youth enjoy it? Is our topic going to be good? Have we prepared enough? And this is natural of course, worries are. But despite the worrying, things always work out, and we manage to pull off a great Youth Night.





But what I've come to realise recently, which really speaks to the love Jesus, is that when we hear feedback from the youth and stories about people's experiences at our youth nights.

All those things we might worry about, the topics and the activities. That's not what the youth talk about. They talk about how nice everyone is, and how people do their best to make others feel included. We've had new youth come and say "Yeah, I definitely want to come back, everyone is so nice here", and "... just a genuinely nice group of people".

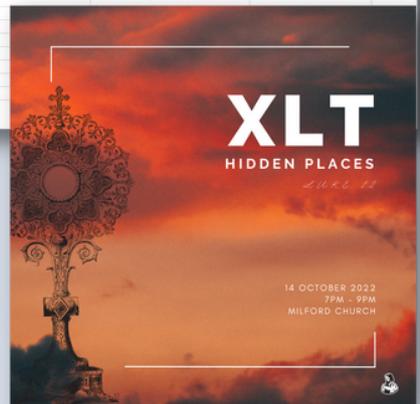
And this has everything to do with the youth, as well as the leaders. Taking a step back to see the community, which is continuing grow, and has such a great environment, makes me very proud of our youth and excited to continue serving this amazing bunch of kids.

ON THE HORIZON

Upcoming Events

2022 YOUTH CALENDAR								
	WINTER SEMESTER				SPRING - SUMMER SEMESTER			
	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Mon								1 All Saints Day
Tues								2
Wed		1						3
Thurs		2						4
Fri		3	1		5 Life Night Series: Part I	2 Life Night Series: Part III		1
Sat		4	2				1 Term 3 Holidays	3 Fundraiser: D&D
Sun	1 Fundraiser: Night-Market	5	3					4
Mon	2	6	4					5
Tues	3	7	5					6
Wed	4	8	6					7
Thurs	5	9	7					8
Fri	6	10 Vaping & Substance Abuse	8 Bonfire Party					11 Life Night Series: Part II
Sat	7	11	9 Term 2 Holidays					9 Life Night Series: Part IV
Sun	8	12	10					10
Mon	9	13	11					11
Tues	10	14	12	15 Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary				12
Wed	11	15	13					13 Outreach: Angel Trees
Thurs	12	16	14					14
Fri	13 Dealing with Stress	17	15 Fundraiser: Movie Night	19 Life Night Series: Part II	16 Life Night Series: Part IV			15
Sat	14	18	16	20	17 Youth Mass			16
Sun	15 Youth Mass	19 Youth Mass	17 Youth Mass	21 Youth Mass	Youth Mass	Youth Mass		17
Mon	16	20	18					18 Youth Mass
Tues	17	21	19					19
Wed	18	22	20					20
Thurs	19	23	21					21
Fri	20	24 Academic honesty	22					22
Sat	21	25	23					23 Christmas Party
Sun	22	26	24					24 Christmas Eve
Mon	23	27	25					25 Christmas Day
Tues	24	28	26		25 Fundraiser: Morning Market			26
Wed	25	29	27					27
Thurs	26	30	28					28
Fri	27 Drama & Toxic Relationship	31	29					29
Sat	28		30		30 Heaven's Kitchen			30
Sun	29		31					31 New Year's Eve

CLICK HERE





Glory Story

From one of our Teens

During a recent evening mass a short while ago, I sang the psalm in front of the whole congregation. It was like any other psalm, praising God and all that. But during this one - maybe because I was singing it - I really felt an incredibly strong connection with God, and with the rest of the choir that was singing with me.

Even though my legs were shaking (either out of fear or because I had just run for a while to make it to Mass on time!) it made me feel incredibly whole, and I felt close to God in a way that I had not felt in a while. With all the things going on in the world, it felt peaceful and reassuring to be close to the Lord in such a way.

- Ephraim Abenes



"I felt close to God in a way that I had not felt in a while."





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Always Forward.