

The Living Word

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Year B

31 December 2023



he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master,
you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

In today's Gospel, Mary, having given birth, is regarded as ritually unclean. She could not take part in public worship until she was 'purified'. This involved offering up a couple of pigeons which she and Joseph had to buy.

No wonder that, at the Cleansing of the Temple, Jesus shatters the cages in which the pigeons were kept! He was angry with a Temple system which saw Mary that way, which thought of all women giving birth that way. Indeed, his whole ministry is full of instances when women breach religious and cultural taboos in his presence, because of his presence.

This Feast of the Holy Family gives us the opportunity to thank God for our mothers who, like Mary, helped fulfil God's plan for humankind by birthing us into the world.

We could pause for a moment to pray that the Church changes rules and structures which confine women in cages built from ideologies foreign to the Gospel, lest those rules become swords which pierce Mary's soul.

mtate@bigpond.com

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First Reading Gen 15:1-6. 21:1-3

Your own son shall be your heir.

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great'.

'My Lord', Abram replied, 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless...' Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.' And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be one of your own flesh and blood.' Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants,' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 104:1-6. 8-9. R.vv.7.8

(R.) The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. O sing to him, sing his praise; tell all his wonderful works! (R.)
2. Be proud of his holy name, let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice. Consider the Lord and his strength; constantly seek his face. (R.)
3. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, the judgements he spoke. O children of Abraham, his servant, O sons of the Jacob he chose. (R.)
4. He remembers his covenant for ever, his promise for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. (R.)

Second Reading Heb 11:8. 11-12. 17-19

The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

Gospel Acclamation Heb 1:1-2

Alleluia, alleluia!

In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets; now he speaks to us through his Son. Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 2:22-40

(or Shorter form Lk 2:22. 39-40)

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until



Catholic Parish of St Mary Queen of Heaven Georges Hall

Parish Priest: Rev. Peter Krigovsky
Secretary: Mrs. Zenna Azar (Tues 9.30am—5.30pm)
Address: 15 Georges Cres, Georges Hall NSW 2198 **Telephone:** 9727 3759
Website: <http://www.smgh.org.au> **Email:** parishoffice.smgh@bigpond.com
Facebook: fb.me/smgh2 **Streaming:** <https://cutt.ly/StMarys>

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Georges Hall
God and Us Together

Principal: Mrs Monica Palmer **Website:** www.stmgeorghall.syd.catholic.edu.au
School Tel: 02 9727 0000 **School email:** info@stmgeorghall.catholic.edu.au

MASS TIMES (English):
 Vigil Mass 5 pm (Saturday)
 Sunday 8.00 am & 10.00 am
 Weekdays: Wednesday 6 pm
 Mon. Tue. Thu. Fri. Sat. 9.00am

VIETNAMESE MASS
 Vigil Mass 6.30 pm (Saturday)
 Sunday 5.30pm

RECONCILIATION
 Saturday 4.30pm-4.55pm
 or anytime on request

ADORATION OF THE
 BLESSED SACRAMENT
 Wednesday 5.00pm—6.00pm
 Friday after Mass 9am-10.30am

SACRAMENT OF THE
 ANOINTING OF THE SICK
 Offered to those in need on
 1st Tuesday at 9.00am Mass

Baptisms: Sunday 11.00am
 Bookings are necessary

Children first Sacraments:
 Please contact Elaine Nehme:
nehme.elaine@yahoo.com.au

Parish site maintenance:
 John Impala Phone TBA
 Ivan Leskur Phone TBA

Parish Pastoral Council:
 Bernie Freeburn, Veronica Denning,
 Elaine Nehme, Zenna Azar,
 Paul Abdul Ahad, Natalie Goetz,
 Monica Palmer, Linh Bui,
 Jannette Samawi, Grace Mokdassi

Finance Committee:
 Bernie Freeburn, Michael Anderson,
 Ted Goetz, Veronica Denning, Eileen
 Stevenson

Golden oldies:
 Lorraine Impala

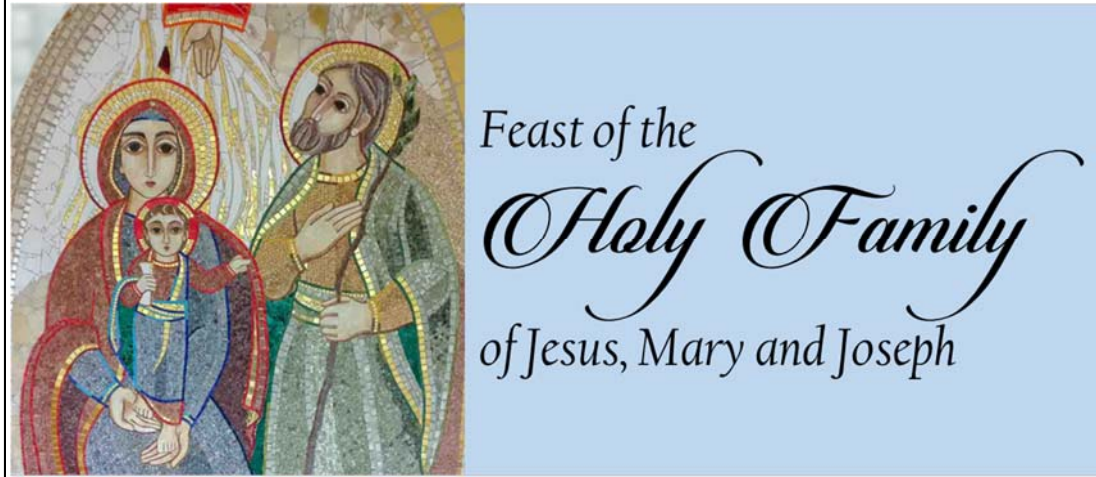
St Vincent de Paul: Mary Scott

Special Religious Education:
 Lorraine Corkeron

Music Ministry: Vivienne Mosely

Youth Ministry: Grace Mokdassi

Children's Liturgy: Nancy Khalil



COVID-19 is still around, please use sanitiser when you enter the church.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES If you are interested in any diocesan events, please collect a copy of the additional bulletin at the back of the church.

NEW YEARS ADORATION & BENEDICTION Monday 1st January 8am. Let our first thought in the new year be with the Lord. Let us give thanks for the year just concluded and seek the blessings and protection in the new year. Hymns Te Deum and Veni Creator will be recited, which attract plenary indulgence on the last day and the first day of the year. Also the Holy Rosary will be recited which also attracts plenary indulgence when recited in a group. (under usual conditions of confession, eucharist and prayer for the Holy Father).

MARY THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD Monday 1st January 9am. This solemnity concludes the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord. It is also a fitting way to start a new year with the protection of the Mother of God and our own Heavenly Mother.

THANK YOU to all who volunteered for various ministries with Christmas Masses. Much work and much time was given in the background and anonymously in order to celebrate

Charismas with dignity and solemnity it deserves. May God reward you hundredfold. We have received much positive feedback about the Children's Christmas Mass and the Nativity reenactment. We look forward to bringing it to our parish for years to come.

DAILY MASS BOOK 2024 - Copies of the Daily Mass books are at the back of the church. Please return them at the end of mass.

BREAK OPEN THE WORD - This beautiful resource is available to assist Proclaimers prepare for Sunday liturgy. Proclaimers are all invited to collect a copy of the 2024 Break Open the Word book from the sacristy - one copy per family.

PARISH CENTRE A second round of feedback with our Architect was completed and drawings submitted. Our Building Committee is expected to meet after Christmas break to decide on further action.

LATEST UPDATE ON PARISH ROLES THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WWCN (Working with children number)

• Cleaners, Gardener, Choir members, Musicians, Finance Committee, Parish Pastoral Council, Counters, Audio Visual Coordinators, Piety Stall,

Flower Arranger, Offertory, Hospitality Workers, Ministers of the Homebound, Welcoming/greeting Ministry, Ministers of the Word/Readers/Lectors, Parish Collectors (AKA Wardens)

BIBLE STUDY will resume Wednesday 10 January 2024. If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Grace on 0450 757 377.



PARISH WEBSITE - is updated on a weekly basis, if you have any feedback on content please email: gracemokdassi@gmail.com

ADORATION AND BENEDICTION is available on Wednesdays from 5-5.55pm prior to the 6pm evening Mass and on Fridays from 9.30-10.30am after the 9am Mass.

MINISTRIES ROSTER is now also printed in the bulletin for the current and the following weekend. We can have up to 4 Altar Servers for each Mass. To get on the roster children need to have received their First Holy Communion and undertaken initial training. Please see Fr. Peter or Bernie Freeburn to organise training.

SILENCE IN THE CHURCH We all need silence especially in the modern world filled with noise. Many seek and hope to find it in the church as they immerse themselves in prayer. Let us remember that our church is also a House of God and a House of Prayer and let us

observe silence before and after Mass out of reverence for God and respect for others. If there is an urgent necessity to speak, please use low voice. Thank you.

LOW GLUTEN HOSTS are available for gluten sensitive persons. If you or your child would like to receive such host, please inform the celebrating priest prior to the commencement of the Mass.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK to those in need is offered during the Mass on 1st Tuesday of each month. Please consider to bring your shut-in loved ones to this Mass.

BURNING CANDLES are the most common cause of church fires. If you light a candle or visit the church and see an unattended burning candle, please blow it off before you leave. Of course electric candles are safe to be left turned on even after you leave. Thank you.

BEWARE OF SCAMS Number of our parishioners have received a scam email or SMS soliciting money/ gift cards in the name of Fr. Peter. Please note Fr. Peter will never ask you for money. If in doubt always check with Fr. Peter personally. Simply ignore any such requests without responding to them.

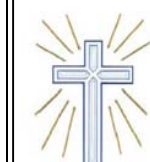
SAFEGUARDING OUR PARISH - Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding Office at 02 9390 5810 or Email: safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police. **Our parish** has a folder with Safeguarding information in the church for parishioners to view. Check out the latest safeguarding newsletter. A link to the Archdiocese's Child Safeguarding Policy is available from the homepage of our parish website and on display in the folder. Enquiries: Veronica via email: parishoffice.smgh@bigpond.com
Check out the latest Safeguarding newsletter-in the folder

Date/Mass	Greeters	Commentator	Proclaimers	Extraordinary Ministers	Acolytes	Altar Servers	Altar Servers
December 30/31 - The HOLY FAMILY of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Year B							
5.00 pm Sat	Chris Lockart	Yvette Nehme	Elaine Nehme	Zenna Azar Pauline Tonkli	Chaben Azar	Gabriel Azar	Anthony Torbay
8.00 am Sun		Goetz Family	Jenny Freeburn	Veronica Denning Carmen Heredia	Bernie Freeburn	Lucas Ross Harry Ross	Nicholas Coorey Gabriel Serratore
10.00 am Sun		Alex Driessen	Cramp Family	Alex Driessen	Andrew Driessen	James Ghanem	William Amicucci
January 6/7 - The EPIPHANY of the Lord, Year B							
5.00 pm Sat	Lorraine Impala	Brian Kurrle	Abraham Family	Barbara Kains Annette Simpson	Laurie Simpson	Gabriel Azar	Anthony Torbay
8.00 am Sun		Danuta Maka	Carmen Heredia	Goetz Family	Mike Anderson	Lucas Ross Harry Ross	Nicholas Coorey Gabriel Serratore
10.00 am Sun		Ghanem Family	Maurice Gili	Gill Cramp Alex Driessen		James Ghanem	William Amicucci



Please Remember In Your Prayers Our Sick

Jayden Turk, Joseph Akkary, Paul Tonkli, Daniel Clarke, Warren Clarke, Azelia Donati, Eileen Ellery, Paul Evans, Kerry Gibbons, Kathleen Gibson, Christine Hughes, Sue James, Barbara Kains, Daniel Matesic, Phillip Nehme, David Sanders, John Smallwood, Tony Strambio, Cornelius Van Baardwyk



Rest In Peace

Let us Pray For All Those Who Have Died

Sr. Rita Yammine, Bernard Hurworth, Attilio Colussi, Eddy & Tom Counihan, Sr. Rita Yammine, Barry Sligar, Carmelina Calcagni, Trevor + Colin + Eileen Newton, James Barrett, Wilson + Ursula Barrett, Sara + Michael Dolahenty, Elizabeth + Philomena Dolahenty, George + Jenny + Mary Goure, Ian Urquhart, Louis & Mary Grech, Wood Fml, Janet & John & Debbie Wood, Mary Strambio, John & David Huskinson, Jan & Jozefa & Bernard

*Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them.
 May they rest in peace. Amen.*