

# Weekly Sulletin Mary, Queen of the Family Parish

St. Michael's Church - 58 Orwell Street, South Blacktown. & St. Patrick's Church - 51 - 59 Allawah Street, Blacktown. We acknowledge the Darug people, the traditional custodians on whose land we worship.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

15TH DECEMBER 2024

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Mary Queen of the Family (MQOF) parish strives to grow as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, continuing to deepen in understanding the Sacred Scriptures and Sacred Tradition of the Catholic Church and to live as a faithful and committed Catholic community, evangelising and responding to the needs of the family in the Blacktown community and beyond.

### **LITURGY TIMES**

### **Sunday Masses**

5.30pm Sat Vigil (St Patrick's) 7.00am Sun (St Patrick's) 8.00am Sun (St Michael's)

9.30am Sun (St Michael's)

10.00am Sun (St Patrick's)

11.00am 4th Sun - Filo Mass (St Michael's)

2:00pm - Sudanese Mass (St Patrick's) 1.00pm - Syro-Malabar Mass (St Michael's)

5.30pm Sun (St Patrick's) 6.00pm Sun (St Michael's)

### Weekday Masses

St Michael's: 8am Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 7.30pm Wed only

St Patrick's: 9am Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Sat and 7.30pm Fri only.

### RECONCILIATION

St Michael's: Wed 6:30pm-7:20pm St Patrick's: Fri 6:30pm-7:20pm & Sat 9:30am-10:30am

**HOLY HOUR** St Michael's: Wed 6:30pm-7:30pm St Patrick's: Fri 6:30pm-7:30pm

Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals & Anointing of the Sick by appointment.

### **Third Sunday of Advent**

Using words that gave them strength, words that put heart into them, John preached the good news to the people. Luke 3, 10-18

Advent is essentially a period for readying ourselves to reflect on the significance of how God's promise for us and our world was fulfilled in the person of Jesus, born into the world in the same way as you and I were born. The birth of Jesus was confirmation of God's fidelity to the divine promises articulated by prophets over centuries. Over more than 2000 years since then, there have been countless Christians who have testified to God's ongoing trustworthiness, presence and self-revelation in the very ordinary circumstances of our lives. As the Jesuit poet, Gerard Manly Hopkins expressed it: "Christ plays in ten thousand places, lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his to the Father through the features of men's faces" (G. M. Hopkins, As Kingfishers Catch Fire).

The prophet Isaiah had said as much more than seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus: "Seek God while God is still near, call to God while God is close at hand" (Isaiah 55, 5-6). And in today's reading from Philippians, we hear part of what Paul had written from prison: "The Lord is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer...(Philippians 4, 5-6). Paul was so conscious of God's presence in the circumstances of his life, that he wanted to share it with the people of Philippi among whom he had lived and worked. So, he urged them to rejoice, as if they had the same consciousness of God's close presence in their lives. However, while we can admire Paul's enthusiasm in sharing his experience, we just don't know the impact his message had on his audience. We do know, however, that directions to us like "Rejoice!", "Be positive!, "Snap out of it!" and "Don't be anxious!" generally have little impact. The emotional experiences of others are generally not contagious. Simply telling me that God is near, doesn't necessarily mean that I will feel God's nearness. But it might start me on the way of trusting enough to take my anxieties, troubles and concerns to God. And we all know that there are times in our lives when our faith in God struggles, when it waxes and wanes. And, as a result, we don't approach God with boundless faith.

The message in today's first reading is out of character with the prophet who wrote it. His prophecy is full of gloom and doom, with his predictions of the "day of the Lord" promising a disastrous experience for the people of Israel and Judah. His audience was people who had been carried into exile where they were forced to live with foreigners whose language. customs and religion had not the slightest similarity to theirs. And yet, quite uncharacteristically he talks of God singing to them an infectious song of promise: "So sing, Daughter of Zion! Raise the rafters, Israel! Daughter Jerusalem, be happy! Celebrate! God has reversed his judgements against you and sent your enemies off, chasing their tails... There's nothing to fear from evil ever again!...Don't be afraid, dear Zion, don't despair.

### **Parish Directory**

St. Michael's Church - 58 Orwell Street, South Blacktown & St. Patrick's Church - 51-59 Allawah Street Blacktown.

Parish Office: At St. Patrick's Church. Office Hours: Mon-Fri: 9am-4pm Telephone: 02 9622 1125 A/H: 02 8705 0830.

Website: www.mqofblacktown.org.au Email: admin@mqofblacktown.org.au

Parish Team:

Parish Priest: Fr. Wim Hoekstra.

Assistant Priests: Fr. Ever Bernaldez, MSP & Fr. Andrew Rooney Deacon: Rev. John Cinya.

Finance Officer: Sarah Canete-Damole Email: accounts@mgofblacktown.org.au

Parish Assistant: Ann Hart (Wed-Fri) Email: admin@mqofblacktown.org.au

Sacramental Coordinator: Gerald "Ged" Oblea. (Mon to Wed) Mobile: 0422 724 008

Email: sacraments@mqofblacktown.org.au Catechist Coordinator: Sandra Baker

Parish Pastoral Council: Chair: Cecil Fernandes: Asst Chair: Joshua Carr Secretary: Savita Surendra

Members: Beato Pudadera, Ekhlas Ambili, Erica Luiz, Harlane Petersen, Helena Vea, Sidney Lazum, Fr. Wim Hoekstra, Fr. Andrew Rooney, Fr. Ever Bernaldez, Rev. John

Parish Schools:

St Michael's Primary:

P: 8869 6200 https://www.stmichaelsblacktown.catholic.edu.au

St Patrick's Primary:

: 8869 6000 https://www.stpatsblacktown.catholic.edu.au

Nagle College:

P:8887 4500 https://www.nagleblacktown.catholic.edu.au

Patrician Brothers College:

P: 8811 0300 https://www.patsblacktown.nsw.edu.au

Catholic Early Learning Centre (St Michael's):
P: 8814 8406 https://www.celcblacktownsth.catholic.edu.au

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Opal Nursing Home ( 37 Kildare Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148 ) P : 9852 9600

Mullauna Retirement Village (61 Bungarribee Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148) P: 8822 2100

Your God is present among you...The accumulated sorrows of your exile will dissipate. I, your God, will get rid of them for you" (Zephaniah, 3, 14-18). While these words of Zephaniah were not a magic wand, they were words of hope and encouragement to a people down on their uppers.

The hope in all this for us is that, despite our personal wavering, we known deep down that we can trust in a God to whom we can bring our brokenness, our doubts and our questions, confident that we will find some consolation even if we don't immediately get the answers we want. For God's people, the promise that Zephaniah offered was long in coming. It was delivered when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. We refer to that as the Incarnation, God coming among us in human flesh, in the person of Jesus. But the Incarnation is an ongoing event, and God is here to stay, abiding in creation and in the depths of the human heart, and to be encountered in everyone we meet.

And that brings us to today's gospel-reading. We have all behaved in ways that leave us feeling guilty. We have been less than we want to be. To participate in today's gospel-reading, rather than just hear it from the side-lines, means joining with those whom John called to a change of heart and asking: "What must we do then?"

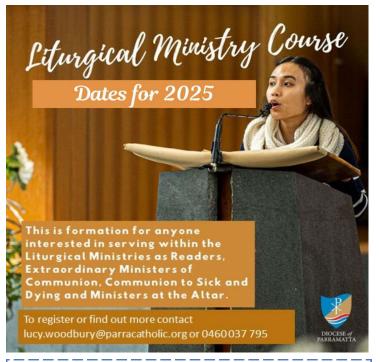
While we know deep in our hearts that the answer is to live with integrity, it is essential that we stop, from time to time, to spell out for ourselves what that looks like in practice. Way back in the middle of last century, a German theologian and psychologist, Josef Goldbrunner, wrote a book called Holiness is Wholeness. It was based on Carl Jung's psychology that posited that we all have a deep desire to be truly at home with ourselves. In the long run, that comes down to growing into our true selves, to being the persons that God is inviting us to be. That's wholesomeness or holiness means.

Perhaps that's best illustrated in a story. A medical doctor, Victoria Sweet, volunteered to spend two months of her time at Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco. It's a medical centre that caters specifically for the homeless and the destitute. Dr Sweet came for two months and stayed twenty years. She recorded her reflections on that long experience in a delightful book entitled God's Hotel: A Doctor, A Hospital and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine. In one of her anecdotes, she tells of a colleague who worked with stroke patients. One day, while he was doing his rounds, he came across a man who had been ready for discharge months earlier. However, the man was still in a wheelchair, even though he was able to walk. "Why are you still here, Bill?", the doctor asked. "No shoes!" came the reply, "They've been ordered, Doc, but still waiting for insurance to approve them." "How long have you been waiting", the doctor asked. "Three months" said Bill. "What size do you wear?" asked the doctor. "Nines", said Bill. The doctor turned on his heels and was back within 30 minutes with a pair of size nine running shoes. On the way back into the ward, he ran into Dr Sweet who asked him what he was doing with a pair of runners. He gave her a quick explanation, went and put the new shoes on Bill's feet, and filled in the discharge form.

On reflecting on the incident, Dr Sweet commented that it would never have occurred to her to do what her colleague had done for Bill. It gave her an understanding of an aphorism that had puzzled her for decades: The secret in the care of the patient is in caring for the patient. The doctor who bought the shoes for Bill, understood that Bill was his brother, that patients are people deserving respect.

John the Baptist's repentance (conversion of heart) goes hand-inhand with just, compassionate and merciful action. The first step in that direction lies in telling the truth about ourselves. That prepares the way for the kind of action the Baptist called for. Saying "We have Abraham as our father" is a bit like producing our Baptism Certificate as proof of our Christianity. Practicing daily conversion means doing whatever is reasonable to makes things right in our work, relationships and lives.

© Br. Julian McDonald cfc



### MQOF SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

We encourage you to continue to support and donate non perishable items for Mary's Pantry. These are some suggestions: Cereal, Pasta, Instant Noodles, Rice, Biscuits, Milk, Tinned Soup, Tinned Fruit, Tinned, Fish,

Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Spaghetti, Tinned Meat, Tinned Chickpeas, Tinned Lentils, Pasta Sauce, Baked Beans, Your donations will go to help those who are doing it tough in our community and beyond. Thank you for your generosity.

Thank you also for continuing to support the MQOF Social Justice Group 10 cents bottle collection.

Please come and join us for a cuppa and a chat at Mary's Café. We are open every Wednesday after the 9am Mass in the Cardinal Clancy Room.





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### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** Philippians 4:4-5

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-18

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** IS 12:2-6 R. V.6.

R ~ Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and

Holy One of Israel.

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Isaiah 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me:

he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL:** Luke 3:10-18

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Cf Isaiah 35:4

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

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### PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

### **DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

Michael Debono, Margaret Apap

### **IN MEMORIAM**

Joseph Azzopardi, Stella Buttigieg

### SICK

Cristeta, Ingrid Piu, Fr. Noel Bianco, Alejandra Montero, Katrina Jukic, Angela Mikhaiel, Michael Flanjak.

Names submitted to Parish for the sick list will be published for 4 weeks at a time.

\*Mass intentions can be requested online by following the link below:

https://www.mqofblacktown.org/mass-intention-or-offering-request

### **CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES**

Wednesday **Tuesday** Wednesday 24 December 25 December 1 January 12:00am at 5:30pm St Patrick's Church (Children's Mass) **7:00am** at **8:00am** at St Patrick's Church St Patrick's Church St Michael's Church **8:00am** at 6:00pm St Michael's Church **9:00am** at (Children's Mass) St Patrick's Church 9:30am at St Michael's Church St Michael's Church 10:00am at 8:30pm St Patrick's Church (Youth Mass) **12:00pm** at St Patrick's Church St Patrick's Church (Sudanese)

The Parish Office will be closed from Wednesday 25th December 2024 and will reopen on Monday 6th January 2025

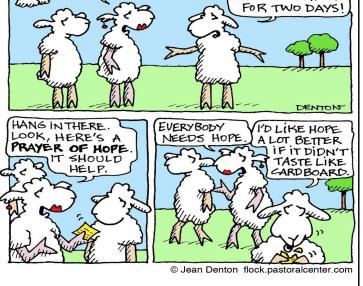
> LUCK, AND I HAVEN'T EATEN

There will be no

evening Mass on

Christmas Day at

either Church



"Those who sow in tears shall reap rejoicing."

### Sheepish Question:

STILL LOOKING

JOB, HARRY?

How can I bring real hope to someone suffering in a difficult time?



### Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv DD STL

Bishop of Parramatta

Bethany Centre, 470 Church St, Parramatta NSW 2150, Australia PO Box 3066, North Parramatta, NSW 1750

C2 8838 3400 

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S bishop@parracatholic.org 

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12 November 2024 Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Pope Francis has declared <u>2025 a Jubilee Year for our Church</u>, themed "Pilgrims of Hope", a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis.

As Pope Francis states "The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire; that is why I have chosen as the motto of the Jubilee, Pilgrims of Hope."

A Jubilee is a special and profound year of grace, mercy and conversion, involving prayer, pilgrimage, and sacramental repentance, held every 25 years.

The Jubilee of 2025 will commence on 24 December 2024 with the Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica and runs to 6 January 2026, the Feast of the Epiphany, with the closing of the Door.

In our Diocese of Parramatta, I invite all to participate in the many events that will be taking place. In particular, I invite everybody to take a personal or small group pilgrimage to one or all three of our pilgrimage sites for the Jubilee Year:

- St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta
- Mount Schoenstatt Shrine, Mulgoa
- The Franciscan Shrine of the Holy Innocents, Kellyville

A Jubilee Indulgence is granted to those who make a Jubilee pilgrimage during the year. For those who cannot make a jubilee pilgrimage due to illness or other circumstances, you are invited to take part in the spiritual movement that accompanies the Jubilee year, offering up the sufferings of their daily lives, and participating in reconciliation, prayer, and the Eucharistic celebration.

The Diocese is also organising two adult pilgrimages to Rome and other countries in the footsteps of St Paul, with one specifically for young adults to coincide with the Jubilee of Youth in Rome at the end of July/early August. All are invited. ......

As events are finalised, they will be listed on our website. Please check <u>parracatholic.org</u> and please follow catholicoutlook.org for further news updates.

For the Jubilee Year of Hope, I pray that it will bring about a renewed trust and confidence as we witness to the Gospel of Christ.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Tyraulong

Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv. Bishop of Parramatta



The Filipino Chaplaincy Diocese of Parramatta Invites you to celebrate Advent 2024 Through Misa de Aguinaldo (Dawn Masses Novena) 16 to 24 December 2024

St Patrick's Church, at 4:30am



Join us every Wednesday from 10:00am until 12:00pm at Sid Moseley St. Michael's Church and every Friday from 10:00am till 12:00pm at Cardinal Clancy room at St. Patrick's Church, for our Arts and Crafts activities will include: Embroidery and Embellishment, Crocheting, Knitting, Arts and Crafts (Painting) & Sewing.

Please, note all sessions are free. Materials for the lessons is provided or bring your own materials. Refreshments are provided.

Our last session will be on Friday 20 December 2024 and will recommence on Wednesday 8 January 2025.

> For any inquiries please contact: Noemi Romero on 0475 798 770.

# 2025 MEDJUGORJE

### PILGRIMAGES

Join David and Angeline Wilkes from St Aiden's Parish on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje from April 1st to 9th, 2025. This is their third pilgrimage, and the group will be staying with visionary I Mirjana Soldo, guided by her long-time English interpreter, Miki Musa. Fr Neil Bulathsinhala will also be accompanying the group as

Places are limited, so if you feel called to experience the peace of Medjugorje, please contact Angeline Wilkes at 0410 665 306 or visit saintlytravel.com.au for more details.



With joyful hearts, we welcome our newly Baptised to our parish community:

### Liliana Garth & Hughvan Maximo

Parents wishing to have their children baptised are to contact the parish office prior to attending a Baptism workshop. The next workshop will on Saturday 18th January 2025 - St. Patrick's Church.

> For more information please logon to our website: https://mgofblacktown.org.au/sacraments/#baptism

Our clergy and pastoral care ministers bring the sacraments of Eucharist, reconciliation, and anointing of the sick to members who are unable to participate because of illness or aging. For more information and to arrange receiving of the sacraments, please contact the Parish Office on 9622 1125 or after office hours number 02 8705 0830.



### CHURCH MAINTENANCE UPDATE

St Patrick's Church – Roof Project Update

As you are aware we have made application to spend \$600K and borrow \$500K for the Roof Project. As this needs to be considered by the Diocesan Property Council, the Diocesan Finance Committee and the College of Consultors, and owing to the Christmas holidays and the timing of their various meetings it will be early February before we receive approval for the Roof Project. I'm afraid we can't do anything until the approval is given.

All donations to the parish, using the various TAP'N'GO machines around the Churches will now go to meet the development and maintenance needs of the parish which will of course, include repayments to the Diocese for our loan.

To assist our parish needs, can you consider donating regularly online, either via EFT, credit/debit cards or even envelopes. This will help us plan for the future of Mary Queen of the Family Parish.

Thank you for your continued generosity

Fr Wim

### PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

You can also support the parish by using our Tap & Go Machine. The machine amount is variable, please use the screen to donate the amount you wish to give. It also accepts Apple Pay, Google Pay and Pay Wave. All contributions go to the maintenance and development of the Parish as does the second collection at weekend Masses.

Planned Giving (Direct Debit or Credit Card) is also an option if you wish to do cashless

donation to the parish, forms are available in the foyer and on our parish website or contact the parish office on 9622 1125.



Account Name: Diocesan Clergy

BSB: 067 950 Bank: CBA

Account Number: 0000 4265

Reference: 6004 - Donor's Name SECOND COLLECTION: For the Parish

Account Name: Blacktown Catholic Church

BSB: 067 950 Account Number: 0000 0677 Bank: CBA

Reference: 6004 ~ Donor's name

If you encounter any issues signing up, please email Sarah at accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au. Thank you so much for your continued support to our parish. We are grateful!

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For further information contact: Mark @ 0417 181 228.





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# St Michael's Primary School Blacktown South

155 Reservoir Road Blacktown South https://www.stmichaelsblacktown.catholic.edu.au/





### **Enrolling now for 2025**

Contact the school office on 8869 6200 or download an enrolment pack from our website.

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR C

Lk 3:10-16, 18 My name is

# Prepare for the Lord Jesus

John, the son of Zecheriah baptised people in the River Jordan to prepare them for the arrival of God's chosen one, Jesus. Draw John baptising one of the people in the river.



### Gaudete Sunday



The third Sunday in Advent is called Gaudete Sunday; the Sunday of Joy! Draw a picture of something you can do to bring joy into the lives of others during this week of Advent.