



# Weekly Bulletin

## Mary, Queen of the Family Parish

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

*We acknowledge the Darug people, the traditional custodians on whose land we worship.*

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD YEAR A

11 JANUARY 2026

### 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;  
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.

### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

*After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him.*  
Matthew 3, 13-17

*Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: "The truth I have now come to realise" he said "is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God."*  
Acts 10: 34-38

It seems that Baptism rituals have been part of religious sects and communities for a long time. There is archaeological evidence that the Essenes, a Hebrew sect, had ritual baths for members who wanted to be cleansed of their sins. The Essenes lived in caves in the desert between the Dead Sea and the ancient city of Jericho during the period of approximately 200 years BC or BCE. And we all know of the Baptism to which John the Baptist invited people to participate when he called them to repent of their sins in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Mark, Matthew and Luke all made reference to the fact that Jesus presented himself to his cousin John for baptism in the Jordan. But this presented those three Gospel writers with a theological conundrum.

Why would Jesus, who was sinless, qualify for a baptism for repentance of sins? Matthew took the story of Jesus' baptism by John from Mark and proceeded to embellish it. Matthew included what was something of a debate between John and Jesus. John initially protested to Jesus that he was the one who should be baptized by Jesus not vice-versa. Jesus effectively said to John: "Leave it like this for the time being for the sake of "righteousness" - because that's what our prophets had foretold." Matthew then simply stated that John gave in to Jesus and went ahead and baptized him. A close look at today's gospel-reading from Matthew reveals that it gives more attention to Jesus' identity, the role of the Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven than to the fact that Jesus was baptized. In Mark's version the voice from heaven was God's affirmation of Jesus: "You are my Son, the Beloved" (words from God directed to Jesus). Matthew made it clear that the voice from heaven was for the benefit of all those who were looking on: "This is my Son, the Beloved." In his Gospel, John the Evangelist made no mention of Jesus' baptism or the debate between Jesus and the Baptist or the voice from heaven. John the Evangelist did no more than state the Baptist's words when he saw Jesus passing by: "Look, there is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29).

### 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 Emergencies only: 02 8705 0830.  
Website: [www.mqofblacktown.org.au](http://www.mqofblacktown.org.au) Email: [admin@mqofblacktown.org.au](mailto:admin@mqofblacktown.org.au)

#### Parish Team:

Parish Priest: Fr. Wim Hoekstra  
Assistant Priests: Fr Stephen Onyekwere, Fr Tom Green  
Deacon: Rev. John Cinya  
Finance Officer: Sarah Canete-Damole Email: [accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au](mailto:accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au)  
Parish Secretary: Jill Franco Email: [jfranco@mqofblacktown.org.au](mailto:jfranco@mqofblacktown.org.au)  
Sacramental Coordinator: Parish Team  
Email: [sacraments@mqofblacktown.org.au](mailto:sacraments@mqofblacktown.org.au)  
Catechist Coordinator: Sandra Baker

#### Parish Pastoral Council Members:

Daniel Mangabat, Don DeMello, Erica Luiz, Eva Cheetley, Helena Vea, Josh Carr, Marian Asiegbu, Mary Mondeddu, Savita Surendra, Trevor Brewty, Vince Tabone, Fr Wim Hoekstra, Fr Tom Green, Fr Stephen Onyekwere & Deacon John Cinya.

#### Parish Schools:

St Michael's Primary: Phone 8869 6200  
St Patrick's Primary: : Phone: 8869 6000  
Nagle College: Phone: 8887 4500  
Patrician Brothers College: Phone: 8811 0300  
Ambrose Early Learning Centre (St Michael's) : Phone 0458 508 444

#### Aged Care Facilities:

Opal Nursing Home ( 37 Kildare Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148 ) P : 9852 9600  
Mullauna Retirement Village (61 Bungarribee Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148)  
P : 8822 2100  
St Hedwig Village Blacktown (140 Reservoir Rd, Blacktown 2148)  
P: 8822 9920

In the earliest years of the Christian community, the years immediately after the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension, admission to Christian baptism was something that required proof of qualification. ... (A)dmision to the Christian community was granted only after a candidate demonstrated that she/he appreciated that becoming a Christian put one at risk of persecution, ridicule and even martyrdom. Preparation for baptism took months or even years. It was not until the year 312 CE, when the Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, that seeking Baptism ceased to be a risky business.

That aside, whatever our or anyone else's theological view of Jesus' request for a baptism of repentance, it is clear that Jesus' insistence that John baptize him was an indication of his wanting to be identified with the crowds who had heeded the Baptist's call to prepare for the arrival of the one who would come after him and who would usher in the kingdom of God.

That Jesus, in due course, chose to follow a different ministry did not diminish his admiration for the Baptist and what he had done to convince the general populace to ready themselves to welcome the long-awaited Messiah.

What led Jesus to pursue another path was his life of prayer and his openness to the promptings of God's Spirit. Therein was the double inspiration that motivated Jesus throughout the remainder of his life and in the ministry he undertook.

Our Baptism into Jesus calls us to commit ourselves to keeping his mission and ministry alive in our world. It leaves no room for excuses that we are inadequate or not good enough. Created in the image of God, we are made for love and service in imitation of Jesus our brother; we are made out of love for love and blessed with creativity, imagination and a unique combination of personal talents and gifts, all of which make no allowance for excuses.

In that context, I put to myself and to all who read this reflection the story of a man who claimed to have no religious affiliation but who was searching for purpose in his life. He approached a Jewish rabbi with the following question: "Why, of all things, did God choose the lowly thornbush as the place from which to speak to Moses?" The rabbi responded: "If God had chosen a cedar, a carob tree or a mulberry bush, you would have asked me the very same question. Still, I can't let you leave emptyhanded. That's why I'm now telling you that God chose the humble thornbush to tell us all that there is nothing or no place on earth in which God is not present, not even a thornbush." God's Spirit has already settled in our thornbush, aspidistra or rosebush lives.

Who else could have selected Peter to lead that slow-witted group who were the first apostles? Who else could have called a man like Paul, who opposed, ridiculed and persecuted the earliest Christians, to champion the Gospel of Jesus? Who else might have invited a charming young playboy and lover of French poetry like Francis of Assisi to rebuild the Church and care for the poor?

Today's reading from Acts, with its story of the conversion of the Roman centurion and his family underlines the reality that God has no favourites. We hear of how, in a dream, Peter heard a message from God that all food was suitable for eating because nothing created by God was profane. When, at God's insistence, Peter accepted this truth, he was able to transfer what he had learned from God to people. There was really nothing unworthy about gentile people that excluded them from access to God's love. Accordingly, Peter accepted Cornelius and his household (all foreigners, all previously regarded as ritually unclean because of their gentile origins) into the community of the baptised.

If we care to ponder this, we will realise that we are all Cornelius - imperfect, broken sinful and of gentile origin, all in need of conversion and all beloved of God.

© Br Julian McDonald cfc



## Be The Witness Musical – Parish Update

An exciting year ahead as The Witness musical, an inspiring parish initiative continues to gather momentum across our Parish and Parramatta Diocese with Vocal Auditions and Chorus rehearsals scheduled to commence in the weeks ahead.

This production is more than just a performance—it is a vibrant expression of faith, community, and creativity, bringing together people of all ages to proclaim the Gospel through music and drama.

### A Heartfelt Thank You

Thank you to all who have registered and joined us for the Commissioning Mass and Welcome event. It was a resounding success, filled with an uplifting and infectious energy. View pictures on our website [bethewitness.com.au](http://bethewitness.com.au) or [Diocese of Parramatta's albums | Flickr](#)

At the mass over 60 parishioners were commissioned and at the event that followed they were aligned to the seven core teams – **Chorus, Production, Event Management, Fund Raising, Finance, Communication and Prayer team.**

The enthusiasm and commitment are a true testament to the spirit of collaboration and mission that defines our parish.



**Register:** If you haven't yet signed up, there's still time! Let us know which team you'd like to align with and we can add you to the groups

**Pray and Support:** Even if you're not performing, your prayers and encouragement are invaluable. Spread the word and invite others to join this

exciting journey. Together, let us make Be The Witness a beacon of hope and joy for our community.

### Vocal Auditions

**Whether you are a seasoned performer or simply passionate about sharing your gifts or know friends and family who are—we encourage you to register or get in touch with us. Everyone is welcome to take part in this inspiring musical journey. These are the scheduled dates, times, and venue:**



Scan the QR code to book a time slot for

Sunday, 18/01/2026 – 11:00am to 4:00pm

Monday, 19/01/2026 – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Auditions will be held at the Parish Office, St Patrick's Church, Allawah St, Blacktown.

For further information, please email [music@bethewitness.com.au](mailto:music@bethewitness.com.au) or call Marianne Fernandes on 0411 540 917.

### Additional Audition Dates

To accommodate those who may be away on holidays, we have added extra dates for open auditions. This ensures that everyone who feels called to participate has the chance to do so:

Sunday, 01/02/2026 – 11:00am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Monday, 02/02/2026 – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

### Choral Rehearsals Begin Soon

Music lies at the heart of Be The Witness, and we are delighted to confirm that choral rehearsals will commence on 23/02/2026.

This marks a significant milestone as we begin shaping the powerful harmonies and uplifting songs that will bring the story to life. Our dedicated music team is eager to work with singers of all levels, so don't hesitate to join us—your voice matters!



Thank you for your continued support, and stay tuned for more updates.

## THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD —YEAR A

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** Cf Matthew 3:16-17

After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened,  
and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove,  
and the voice of the Father thundered:

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 42:1-4. 6-7

*Here is my servant, my chosen one in whom I am well pleased.*

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 28:1-4. 9-10. R. v. 11

**R ~ The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

**SECOND READING:** Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

*God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** See Mark 9:8

Alleluia, alleluia!

The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard:  
this is my beloved Son, hear him.

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL:** Matthew 3:13-17

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. 'It is I who need baptism from you,' he said 'and yet you come to me!' But Jesus replied, 'Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.' At this, John gave in to him.

As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. A voice spoke from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him.'

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** John 1:32,34

Behold the One of whom John said:

I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

© The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.

## PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

You can also support the parish by using the:

**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.



**FORMED**  
Watch, listen and read.  
Anywhere, anytime.



## PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

**RECENTLY DECEASED**

James Muscat, Reno Vella, Elias Astorea, Remedios Gines, George Cheriyan, Josep Aguillera

**DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

Stephen Byrne, Maria Aquilina, Romar C Abad, Generoso Bucad, Rick Morse, Roland Bouquet, Luzsvisminda Quimson, Lucia Gonzales

**DECEASED**

Monica Davan, Neville Davan, Frank Cefai, Moises Halili, Emmanuel Manti, Carmen Sultana, Zuela Majarucon, Lynus Rodrigues, Josephine and William D'Lima, Grace & Edward Xavier

**SICK**

Gus & Tina Caruana, Charbel, Eddy Bru, Veronica Astroza,

**THANKSGIVING**

Mass intentions can be requested online at:

<https://mqofblacktown.org.au/mass-intentions/>

## PARISH PLANNING DAY 2026

Sat January 31—9.30am to 2.30pm

The Parish Pastoral Council is hosting a Parish Planning Day for 2026, on Saturday 31 January after the 9.00am Mass. Its main purpose will be to plan for the pastoral issues for Mary Queen of the Family. While issues relating to the Blacktown Quarter project will no doubt arise, it focus will be on 2026 and what we can do to promote the concept of "missionary disciples" in the Blacktown area.

If you would like to attend, please use the QR code to register for the day.



Little Lambs is our holiday program for children ages 5-12 that our Youth will be running each day from Wednesday 21st to Friday 23rd January. There will be activities, craft, movies, and more with snacks and lunch provided each day. Please use the QR code on the flyers to register.

*Age is merely the number of years  
the world has been enjoying you.*

*Unknown*

## THE SACRAMENTS / MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

### PASTORAL CARE FOR THE HOMEBOUND

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.

### PARISH GROUPS

#### CHRIST'S CATHOLIC COMMUNITY GROUP



**Contact:** Jane Cauchi, 0433 173 177  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Fridays, 9.30am  
Sid Moseley Centre, St. Michael's Church  
All are welcome!



Love arts and crafts? Join us on every Tuesday, 10am-1pm in the Sid Mosely Room, St. Michael's and Fridays from 10am-12pm at the Cardinal Clancy Room, St. Patrick's Church. Activities include embroidery, crocheting, knitting, painting and sewing.  
**Contact** Noemi Romero on 0475 798 770.

#### JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS



**Contact:** Antoinette Mangion, 0414 735 943  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every 3rd Monday of the month, 10:00 am at Cardinal Clancy room, St Patrick's Church

#### LEGION OF MARY ST MICHAEL'S



**Contact:** Max Rosario, 0490 137 533 (for statue bookings) President: Steve Attard.  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every Thursday, 9am-10.30am at Sid Mosley Centre, St Michael's Church.

#### LEGION OF MARY ST PATRICK'S



**Contact:** Doris Zammit, 0419 274 002 (for statue bookings)  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every Monday, 6:30pm at Cardinal Clancy room, St Patrick's Church.

#### MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIESTS



**Contact:** Max Rosario, 0490 137 533  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Monday 9:30am-10:30am at Sid Mosley Centre, St Michael's Church.  
All are welcome!

#### MQOF SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP—MARY'S PANTRY

#### ROSARY GROUP

**Contact:** Frank Mangion, 0410 830 877

**Contact:** Diane Zerafa, 0403 554 566  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday after the 8am Mass, at St Michael's church.

#### CATECHIST MINISTRY

**Contact:** Sandra Baker  
admin@mqofblacktown.org.au  
For more information, please contact the parish office.

#### TEHILLAH COMMUNITY



**Contact:** Ash & Rozario Fernando, 0416 861 976 or 0412 195 916  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every 2nd & 4th Saturday (during school term only), 2pm - 4pm at the Cardinal Clancy Room, St Patrick's Church.

#### TRUE LIFE IN GOD PRAYER GROUP



**Contact:** Diane Zerafa, 0403 554 566  
**Meeting Time and Venue:** Every 2nd Saturday of the month, 3.00pm at Sid Mosley Centre St Michael's Church

#### YOUTH MINISTRY

**Contact:** Parish Office  
admin@mqofblacktown.org.au  
For more Information please contact our Youth Minister through the parish office.

### SACRAMENTS

## Baptism

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, 5th February, 2026 at 7:00pm in the Cardinal Clancy Room.**

For more information please log on to our website:  
<https://mqofblacktown.org.au/sacraments/#baptism>

### And from the MQOF Flower Ministry

We sincerely appreciate your generosity and faithful support over the past year. Your contributions, whether through our donation boxes in the church foyers, or by participating in our fundraising events, have played an important role in the success of the MQOF

Flower Ministry.

Your ongoing commitment allows us to continue adorning our

churches with beautiful, fresh flowers throughout the coming year. Thank you for making it possible for our places of worship to remain vibrant and welcoming for all.



### AUDITIONS

FOR THE BIGGEST MUSICAL IN WESTERN SYDNEY

### Be The Witness



- Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> Jan – 11:00am to 4:00pm
- Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Venue : Parish Office, St Patrick's Church  
Allawah St, Blacktown.  
Scan and Book your audition



#### Additional Open Auditions

- Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb – 11am to 1pm and 2pm - 4pm
- Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb – 6pm to 8pm

Chorus Rehearsals commence 23 Feb 2026

### The wisdom of Charles Schultz



No matter  
how stressed  
you are,  
remember  
how blessed  
you are