

## Reflection

While the Gospel for this feast tell us about the family life and events of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the accompanying readings follow themes not connected to the Holy Family but rather connected to the purpose of the Feast Day (see the column on the left). The Gospels relate three separate difficulties the Holy Family experienced together: their escape into Egypt and return (A: Matt 2:13, 19-23); the prophecies of Simeon and Anna concerning suffering and sorrow at the presentation of Jesus in the Temple (B: Luke 2:22-40 [today]) and account of losing and finding 12 year old Jesus in the Temple (C: Luke 2:41-52).

The first reading from the book of Genesis gives a very abbreviated account of the promise to Abraham that he will be a father and a beginning of a new line of descendants. Then we skip six chapters to hear the fulfilment of God's promise with Sarah giving birth to Isaac. Our response is: "The Lord remembers his covenant forever." A praise of God's faithfulness to his people for 1000's of generations. The second reading is a praise of the faith of Abraham and Sarah. The faith of parents: Mary and Joseph, Abraham and Sarah is the faith we find from God to be parents in a tough world, in difficult times and in uncertain futures our sons and daughters, and their children.



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**Admin Assistant: Marianne Kelly**

**Parish Office Hours**

**Thursday : 9am - 1pm (January)**

**St Mary's Parish Centre**

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**Website:** [www.stmarysechuca.org.au](http://www.stmarysechuca.org.au)

**Facebook:** St Mary's Parish Echuca

### PARISH MASS TIMES

**Weekend Mass Times: 30th & 31st December**

**Saturday: 6:00pm Mass**

**Sunday : 9:30am Mass**

**Weekday Masses: 1st January - 5th**

**Wednesday: 12.00pm Mass/Communion Service**

**Weekend Mass Times: 6th & 7th January 2024**

**Saturday: 6:00pm Mass**

**Sunday : 9:30am Mass**

**Reconciliation:** Approach Fr. Novie Before Mass

**Baptism:** Every Second Sunday of the Month

**Weddings:** By Appointment with the Parish Priest

**Ladies' Group:** Every Tuesday 2pm (Parish Centre)

**Men's Group:** Every Saturday 9am (Parish Centre)

**Playgroup:** Every Friday 9am (Parish Centre)

During school terms

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Yorta Yorta Nation. This land is sacred, this land is gift, this land is thousands of years old. We acknowledge the

immense beauty of this land and the dreams of the Yorta-Yorta People. We pay our respects to elders past and present and acknowledge the lessons the Yorta-Yorta people teach us about care, respect and justice for mother earth. We remember their story as we journey together in a spirit of hope, justice and peace.

**If you wish to assist in "further supporting the Parish" we offer different ways of giving... direct debit, credit card or planned giving envelopes. Please ring the office for more details.**

**PARISH BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS are as follows:**

**St Mary's Echuca**

**BSB Number: 083-543**

**Account Number: 45-782-9206**

**Child Safety: Through our policies and practices, we protect the right of children to feel safe and to be safe. We promote the well-being and inclusion of all children. For more information, contact the parish office and look for the Child Safety Officer Mel Slattery.**

# PARISH NEWS

## PARISH CALENDAR (January)

January.

The office will only be open on a Thursday from 9.00am to 1.00pm.

**24th January**—Ladies' Night 5:30pm

**26th January**—Australia Day (Public Holiday)

**29th January**—Combined Staff Mass (St. Mary's and St. Joe's)

Dear Parishioners,

### Temporary Parish Office Arrangements for January 2024

I'll be away on my annual holiday, returning to the Philippines from December 26th to January 26th. With no permanent Parish Secretary available, we've collaborated with the Senior Leadership Team to create a temporary plan for smooth operations.

In January, the Parish Office will be open exclusively on Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm, managed by Marianne Kelly, our administrative assistant. On days when Marianne is unavailable, Julie Moyle will be the point of contact for urgent matters like Anointing of the Sick (reaching out to Fr. Des or Fr. Damien), parish emergencies, pastoral concerns, and essential needs. Julie will coordinate with various ministry groups. Building issues will go to the Maintenance Team (Rob Morris, Bob Cooper, and Bunny Oliver), and financial matters will go to Margaret Hart. Mary Atkins and our team will continue managing funerals and liturgical matters.

We regret any inconvenience caused and appreciate your patience. We're maximising the support of our staff and volunteers during this time. Thank you for your understanding and continued support. We hope to resume normal parish office operations soon.

**Fr. Novie**

### Caritas Australia Christmas Appeal:

At our Christmas Masses you were invited to share your love to help communities vulnerable to natural disasters around the world to be ready, respond and recover.

When a disaster strikes, the most vulnerable and marginalised are often hit the hardest. Natural disasters and emergencies can devastate communities, and responding rapidly to a crisis is often a matter of life and death. **This lifesaving work can only happen with your support.**

Caritas is also on the ground in Gaza responding to the urgent need of humanitarian aid. Your support is needed now to help provide immediate basic needs like food, shelter and medical supplies.

If you haven't already you can still donate.

[caritas.org.au/christmas](https://caritas.org.au/christmas)



One of our parishioners has a medical appointment in Melbourne on the 19th January. They're looking for someone to drive them down and back. If you're able to assist could you please contact Julie Moyle on 0409 826336. Thank you.



## We prayerfully remember those who have died this past year.

Patricia Bannan, Marie Dullard, Simone Slaughter, Joan Edwards, Sam Nastasi, Anna Columbro, Roly Hall, Justin Perera, Mary Byrne, Margaret Spedding, Norm D'Angri, Wendy Rolfe, Ted Payne, Eileen Ryan, Shelley Grace, Francie Graham-Tubb, Jessie Davison, John Bennett, Cheryl Baker, Delene Hutchison, Ryan Archard, Peter Davison, Kevin Russell, Cameron Purdon, Gomer Oliver, Christina De Jesus, Marita Oliver, Helen Fusti, Max Dupuy, Estelle Errey, Aileen Ostwald, Peter Phyland, Bryan Jones, Pedro D'Costa Guterres, Mary Roberts and John Oliveri.



### **ROSTERS: This Week - 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> December**

#### **Commentators/Lectors:**

**6.00pm:** Mary Atkins  
Christine Sebire, Kajini Karunanayke  
**9.30am:** Cecilia Merrigan  
Jenny Morris, Michelle Shingles

#### **Ministers of the Eucharist**

**6.00pm:** Carmel Mackenzie  
**9.30am:** Rob Morris, Margaret Hart

#### **St Anne's Church Cleaners: 28<sup>th</sup>**

Pat Sanderson, Bev Kenna

**Setting up the Church: 30<sup>th</sup>** Carol Purdon

**Setting up the Church: 31<sup>st</sup>** Noela Boyer

**Baptism Preparation:** Sarah Byrne

**Counters: 2<sup>nd</sup>** Eileen Pineo, Lois Williams

**Hospital Visiting:** Karla Chisholm

**Gardening:** Jim & Prue Galea, Rose Quinn

### **ROSTERS: Next Week - 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

#### **Commentators/Lectors:**

**6.00pm:** Tania Dixon  
Kristy Serpell, Ruth Phillips  
**9.30am:** Theresa Jacobs  
Rod Chisholm, Noela Boyer

#### **Ministers of the Eucharist**

**6.00pm:** Carol Purdon  
**9.30am:** Phil Stiles, John Moyle

#### **St Anne's Church Cleaners: 6<sup>th</sup>**

Elaine Roberts, Tania Dixon

**Setting up the Church: 6<sup>th</sup>** Tania Dixon

**Setting up the Church: 7<sup>th</sup>** Bernie Oliver

**Baptism Preparation:** Holly Morris

**Counters: 9<sup>th</sup>** Brendan Shingles, Andrew Kennedy,  
Peter Davey

**Hospital Visiting:** Carmel Mackenzie

**Gardening:** Jim & Prue Galea, Rose Quinn

### **YOUR PRAYERS PLEASE**

**Sick:** Julio and Nati Acebron, Eileen Anderson, David Baker, Bruno Barbera, Monica Beckwith, Dan Carey, Howard Clark Jnr, Pat Davey, John & Chloris Dignan, Anne Dodd, Caroline Farley, Bernadette McClelland, Fred Molluso, John Monigatti, Margaret Oman, Murray Perrett, Beatrice Phillips, Peter Phillips, Meredith (Maddick) Ryan, Patricia Voegel, Jodie Walton, Jayden Williams, Judy Wallace.

**Anniversaries:** Howard Clark Snr., Bishop Joe Grech, Carmel Cannard, Barry McIntyre, Edward Jasper, Teresa Pavone, Dorothy Reilly, Michael Anderson, Monica Murnane, Ken Marwood, Ronald McCrickard, Antonio Lucic.

**Deaths:**

**First Reading**    Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3 (Year B)

**A reading from the book of Genesis**

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 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.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**    Ps 104:1-6, 8-9 (Year B)

**R. The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.**

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.**

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.**

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.**

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.**

**Next week: The Epiphany of the Lord**

**6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> January Year B**

**1st Reading:**

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-13**

**2nd Reading:**

**Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6**

**Gospel:**

**Matthew 2:1-12**

**Second Reading**    Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19 (Year B)

**A reading from the letter to the Hebrews**

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.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

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

**Alleluia!**

**Gospel**    Luke 2:22, 39-40 (Year B)

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

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.

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.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**