



# St. John the Baptist Catholic

## Mount Street, Bonnyrigg Heights



(incorporating Bonnyrigg Heights, Green Valley, Edensor Park, Abbotsbury, Cecil Hills & Elizabeth Hills)

**Parish Priest: Rev Fr Dominic Dinh**

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**Parish Pastoral Centre:**

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**Office Hours: Tue- Fri 10.30am to 4pm**

**Parish Secretary: Leanne Lang**

**Bookkeeper: Yvonne Smolinski**

### MASSES THIS WEEK

#### PSALTER 4

#### 'Prayer of the Church'

Morning Prayer is prayed  
at St John the Baptist  
10 minutes prior to  
weekday morning Masses

**Monday - 8:00am &  
10:00am**

*The Nativity of the Lord*

**Tuesday - 9:10am**

*St Stephen, the first martyr*

**Wednesday - 7:00pm**

*St John, apostle, evangelist*

**Thursday - 9:10am**

*The Holy Innocents, martyrs*

**Friday - 9:10am**

**Saturday - 9:10am**

#### **NEXT SUNDAY**

#### **SUNDAY 30/31**

**DECEMBER (The Holy  
Family of Jesus, Mary and  
Joseph Year B)**

**Saturday Vigil Mass:  
5:30pm**

**Sunday Masses:  
8:00am, 10:00am and  
5:30pm**

**4th Sunday of the Month:  
5:30pm Mass in Tagalog**

**1st Friday of the Month:  
7:00pm Mass in  
Vietnamese**

**Reconciliations:  
Saturdays - 4:15-5:00pm**



### Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year B) 23rd and 24th December, 2017

***"I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Cf. Luke 1:38)***

This is the last Sunday of the Advent season. We all know that Christmas is so close. We all may recognize the change round our neighbourhood. We can see that people are getting things ready for Christmas. They adorn their houses with beautiful flashing lights. The decoration is not just the light but also variety of images. In churches, the nativity scenes have been setting up. People not just within Australia but all around the world are preparing a place to welcome the Baby Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of God.

The preparation for Christmas, indeed, becomes an inevitable activity before the Christmas Day not only within the Catholic communities but also the other denominational communities. There are, however, different perspectives between Christians and non-Christians in their preparation for Christmas. As Christians, we not only prepare our houses with the adornment of various flashing lights, the nativity scenes, the mangers, but also prepare a dwelling place for the Baby Jesus in our hearts. This is what the voice of Saint John the Baptist called out in the wilderness which we have heard in the Gospel reading according to Mark on the second Sunday of Advent "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his path" (Mark 1:3).

My dear friends, this is the attitude which we all should have while we are waiting for the coming of Christ either in the first or second Christmas. This becomes one of the fundamental elements of the Church teachings that we are the eschatological people in whom God had established his covenant. As eschatological people, we are all called to orientate ourselves towards God, the origin of all existences.

The act of answering to this call is of course necessary for one to obtain benefit from the Incarnation that is the fullness of redemption. Within action, it requires a total cooperation to whatever conditions which might enable one to gain his or her own redemption. The first and foremost action is the acceptance towards God's invitation. Throughout the long and interesting history of the salvific activities, we have witnessed so many glorious examples of prophets and saints in how they accepted the invitation of God.

In those magnificent examples, there was one that changed the existential meaning of the entire humanity and all that related. It was the acceptance of Mary towards the inviting message of the angel Gabriel - "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word", said Mary. It was indeed a non-better "Fiat" which gave us what we have right now. If you and I acclaim ourselves as children of God, we should seriously take this 'fiat' of Mary up and make it for our own.

My dear friends, just only few hours to go, in the event of Christmas, the Son of God became man due to the acceptance of Mary to the invitation of God. Mary indeed has done her part. How about us? Will you and me courageously say yes to the invitation of Christ and welcome him into our lives? If it is so who is Christ for me?

**Fr. Phan Nguyen**

## RAISE YOUR VOICES!

**Entrance Antiphon:** *Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.*

**Responsorial Psalm:** *For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.*

**Gospel Acclamation:** *Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done. Alleluia!*

**Communion Antiphon:** *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.*

### Next Sunday:

#### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Year B)

First Reading: Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

### Reflection Questions.....

- ♦ God announced divine Presence in the lives of David and Mary. I experience God's Presence in my life when..... by.....God relates to me in these ways..... I relate to God in these ways.....
- ♦ I announce the Word made flesh within me for others when.....

*Your Prayers are requested for the following, for whom Mass will be offered:*

**Sick:** Nancy VARTULI, Jiang Ya YIEN

**Recently Deceased:** Josephine VELLA, Fr Brian ROONEY, Guido BADINO, Teotonio MAGNO,

**Death Anniversary:** Marianna FOTI

**Other:** Thanksgiving, Kuriakose KATTAPPHRAM, Special Intention



### A Prayer while lighting the fourth candle on the Advent Wreath

Almighty and loving God, soon the whole world will celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus. Even as we rejoice in our remembrance of his birth at Bethlehem, we find greater comfort in his promise to come again.

May our preparations for this wondrous season remain with us, increase in us, and become as much a part of us as our breathing and our heartbeat. Then may we say, "Come, Lord Jesus, we are ready."

Amen.

*Congratulations*

We congratulate Freeman Catholic College and the 2017 HSC Graduates who performed extremely well this year. Congratulations to the class of 2017

and their teachers on the best results the Archdiocese of Sydney has ever seen!

- 94% of subjects above state average
- 14 students made the "All Rounders" list in the SMH. A Freeman record.
- 236 Band 6's. Freeman record. No other Sydney Archdiocese has ever achieved this number.
- Ranked 65th School on HSC performance in NSW.
- 3 students in one class of Studies of Religion 1 Unit came in the top ten in the state. This has never been done by any Catholic school before.
- 44 students achieved ATARS over 90.
- 44% of students achieved a least one Band 6 listing
- 75% of students achieved at least one Band 5 listing.

We have been truly blessed and we give thanks to God for all of our success during 2017.

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

488 'God sent forth his Son', but to prepare a body for him, he wanted the free cooperation of a creature. For this, from all eternity God chose for the mother of his Son a daughter of Israel, a young Jewish woman of Nazareth in Galilee, a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary'. The Father of mercies willed that the Incarnation should be preceded by assent on the part of the predestined mother, so that just as a woman had a share in the coming of death, so also should a woman contribute to the coming of life.



### THE LIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL

6th - 25th December 2017  
8:30pm until Midnight

Join us at the annual *Lights of Christmas* at St Mary's Cathedral Square, in the heart of Sydney's CBD, for a spectacular free sound and light show every night from Wednesday 6 December until Christmas night 2017.

Choirs will sing carols from 7:30pm, and the new sound and light show celebrating the season of peace, joy and goodwill will illuminate the huge 75m façade of St Mary's Cathedral at 8:30pm and continue through until midnight.

This event continues to capture the imagination of adults and children alike and is now firmly Sydney's most popular Christmas lights show.

For more details: <http://lightsofchristmas.com.au/>

### CATHOLIC CARE

Our CCareline service helps Sydney families find the resources they need in a crisis. We are open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday excluding Public Holidays and can be reached on 13 18 19.

Our Parent Line service for parents of children aged 0-18 is open 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday and 4pm to 9pm on weekends excluding Public Holidays.

Call 1300 1300 52 to speak directly to a counsellor.

# Saints of the Week



**St Stephen** was one of the first ordained deacons of the Church. He was also the first Christian martyr.  
**Feast day:** 26 December  
**Patron** of Deacons, altar servers, bricklayers, casket makers and stonemasons.



**St. John the Apostle**, the son of Zebedee and Salome, was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. John was called to be an Apostle by our Lord in the first year of His public ministry. He is considered the same person as John the Evangelist, John of Patmos and the Beloved Disciple. John's older brother was St. James the Great, another one of Jesus' Twelve Apostles.

Jesus referred to the brothers as "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder." John is believed to be the longest living apostle and the only not to die a martyr's death.

**Feast day:** 27 December

**Patron** of love, loyalty, friendships and authors



## CHRISTMAS MASSES

**Christmas Eve:**  
 5:30pm Children's Mass  
 8:00pm and  
 Midnight

**Christmas Day:**  
 8 :00am  
 10:00am

## "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord..." (Jeremiah 29:11)

I am a bit of a Star Wars fan (fear not; there are no spoilers here). Episode VII features the very recognisable stormtroopers (the guys in the white armour who are the soldiers for the bad guys) and we meet one in particular called FN-2187.

All of these soldiers are just referred to as a number. They have no identity, personality or individual freedom. These stormtroopers live in a way that is so unhuman, one can be forgiven in thinking they are robots.

The deep truth about our lives as Catholics is so opposed to the way of the stormtrooper. We are not just a number, another anonymous person traveling through history. Each of our lives is willed by God. Each of us was created by God. Each of us has a mind and will in order to know and do the good. Each of us has unique personalities, talents and gifts with which to love.

God did not do all this by accident but on purpose and for a purpose. This purpose is our VOCATION. He has a specific plan for our lives. We have been anointed with a particular mission, a particular vocation.

In order to live out this truth we need to reject the 'stormtrooper' mentality and not allow it to effect our big and small decisions in life. We can't live God's plan if we just cruise through life and let society and its expectations, or even chance, dictate what we do. Then we just become another number. God is calling us to pray and reflect in order to get in touch with his personal, individual plan for our daily lives. This plan is our vocation.

Ronnie Maree  
 Seminarian

## St Vincent De Paul Annual Report 2017

Over the past twelve months the Parish St Vincent De Paul Conference assisted a number of people/families of the area. This also includes the Smithfield and Sadleir and Bossley Park areas.

Currently, there are new procedures coming into operation regarding home visitations by volunteers, there is an ongoing refocus on how best to support the needy of the region.

All money from the Poor Boxes, Piety Store and donations support the Society. Thank you **Millie and Pauline** for coordinating this important ministry. As of last weekend the following totals have been collected:

Poor Boxes	\$2,605.00
Piety Store	\$10,759.00
Donations	\$200(anonymous) \$15 from a young girl in 1E at JB. Weekly donation of flowers from Frances Demasi which are sold at the Piety Store

The volunteer members of the Piety Store deserve congratulations for their time, energy and continuing efforts in providing quality religious items at reasonable prices to help support the needy.

A special thank you Millie and Pauline for co-ordinating and managing the Piety Store over this past year. .... Likewise to Maryanne C, Anna P, Carina L, Mary S, Toni J, Dora, Giovanna, Kathy F, Lani V, Lucy M, Marilyn N, May, Olimpia P, Rose W, Silvana S, Theresa L, Yvonne S, Jenny S, Jelica, Josie B, Sarina P, Valerie B. ... Thank you for your generosity of time and spirit over the past year. We congratulate you for your efforts to raise funds for the poor and marginalised.

Over the past week, many people have helped pack toys and Christmas hampers and helped deliver some 70 hampers to needy people in our community. Thank you all. Special thanks to Ms. Rosalie Capolupo and Marion school and staff at Horsley Park and Mr. Steve Gissane and John the Baptist Primary School and staff for coordinating the food and toys that made up the hampers. Very much appreciated.

To Errol and Margaret O'Dwyer for their tireless work in hamper preparation over the past 2 weeks. Your work is acknowledged and appreciated. To our Parish volunteer packers and delivery drivers .... Gary Xuereb, Guy Santangelo, Pauline McAndrew, Millie Breden, Brendon and Isaac O'Connor, Kathy Finucane, Cole Purcell, Erol, Maryann and Rachel Camilleri, Tina and Gabrielle Dunn, Rosalie, Joshua and Ella Capolupo, Anthony Liberatore. And long serving 'Hamper Helpers' Silvana and Emma Amalfi..... sincere thanks to you all.

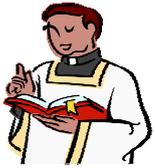
As we consider the dire events in our world, let our hearts and minds be uplifted as we rejoice at how blessed we are to be surrounded by family and friends and caring people. With Christmas upon us, we are challenged to reflect the face of Jesus to all with whom we come in daily contact.

We pray that we may live, not by our fears, but by our hopes; not by our words, but by our deeds..... And that we may continue to think globally but act locally.

Thank you for your continuing support of St Vincent De Paul through donations, Poor Boxes and the Piety Store. We wish you and your families the peace and joy of Christmas and a safe New Year.

Jim, on behalf of the St Vincent de Paul Members and parish helpers.

# Christmas Eve, Midnight, Christmas Day Year B 2017



## Christmas Message

My dear parishioners in Christ, we celebrate as a community the mystery of the birth of the One who brings us hope, joy, love and peace.

Christmas is a time to give thanks to God for the great gift of his Son to the world.

We share in our parish of faith a belief and trust in Jesus Christ. He is "God is with us" - Our God wants to share our life that through Jesus Christ we might share the life of God.

There was no room in the Inn for Christ to be born, we are aware of the great needs in our world - those who are affected by war and violence, the victims of natural disaster those lack clothing, food, shelter and freedom. As a parish community we strive to live by the teachings and example of Christ. Many parishioners are very generous with their time and effort in their service of the parish community.

On behalf of Fr Phan and Deacon Mervyn, Parish Council and Parish Staff thank you for all you do, your kindness, supports and good wishes. May the peace and love of Christ be with you and your family. we wish everyone a Holy Christmas and many blessings throughout New Year 2018.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Dominic

### Something to think about:

**Funny** how .....we set our clocks to arise at 5:00am or 6:00am to be at the job by 8:00am, yet when Sunday comes, we can't get to the church by 10:00am to praise the One who gave us the jobs!

**Funny** how we call God our Father and Jesus our brother, but find it hard to introduce them to our family.

**Funny** how much difficulty some have learning the gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is to understand and explain the latest gossip about someone else.

**Funny** how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have any difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.

**Funny** how we are so quick to take directions from a total stranger when we are lost, but are hesitant to take God's direction for our lives.

**Funny** how people want God to answer their prayers, but refuse to listen to His counsel.

**Funny** how we sing about heaven, but live only for material things.

**Funny** how it is okay to blame God for evil and suffering in the world, but it is not necessary to thank Him for what is good and pleasant.

**Funny** how when something goes wrong, we cry, "Lord, why me?" but when something goes right, we yell, "Hey, it must be me!" Oh wait.....may be all this isn't "funny" after all.



### Some Comments on what Christmas is:

- \* The season when you buy this year's gifts with next year's money.
- \* The visible material world is bound to the invisible spiritual world.
- \* The best of all gifts around any Christmas tree: the presence of a happy family all wrapped up in each other.
- \* The season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love!
- \* The season when people give each other presents and family members being present to each other.

### PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM REQUEST FORM

**Would you like to become a regular contributor to the Parish?**

If so, please fill in this slip and return it to the Parish Office. Otherwise send an e-mail with your details to Leanne at [info@johnthebaptist.org.au](mailto:info@johnthebaptist.org.au)

Name..... Telephone No.: .....

Address:.....

Email : .....

WOULD LIKE  
ENVELOPES

CONTRIBUTE WITH  
CREDIT CARD

MAKE CHANGES TO  
MY DONATIONS

*Wishing everyone a Happy and Holy Christmas*