



St. John the Baptist Catholic

Mount Street, Bonnyrigg Heights

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



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MASSES THIS WEEK

PSALTER 4

Monday - Christmas Eve

5:30pm Children's Mass,

8:00pm and Midnight

Tuesday - The Nativity of the Lord

Christmas Day

8:00am and 10:00am

Wednesday - 7:00pm

St Stephen, the first martyr

Thursday - 9:10am

St John, Apostle, Evangelist

Friday - 9:10am

The Holy Innocents

Saturday - 9:10am

NEXT SUNDAY

SUNDAY 29/30

DECEMBER

(The Holy Family of Jesus,

Mary and Joseph

Year C)

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

1st Saturday of the Month

Fatima Devotions 7.45am

Adoration/Benediction

8.30am

Reconciliations:

Saturdays — 4:15 — 5:00pm

Anointing of the Sick

Contact the Parish Office

or Fr Dominic 0423 420 639

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)

22nd & 23rd December, 2018

LOVE

Mother Teresa visited an elderly man in a dark and dirty old shed. She found an oil lamp sitting in the corner of the shed. After cleansing it, she lit it and said to the elderly man, "Why don't you use this lamp to brighten this place?" "I never have any visits from anyone; therefore there is no point to use it!" Answered the man, "We'll continue to visit you if you promise to light this lamp every day." Ten years later, mother Teresa received a note saying "I have kept my promise that I'll lit the lamp every day 'till the day I die." Visitations are signs of love. We all want to visit the people whom we love. Very often something happens in our visits. A new relationship is set up. A new plan is hatched, a problem is solved. A grief is consoled, a joy is enhanced, or an understanding is deepened. From the four Gospels we read about many places, families, and people whom Jesus visited and he brought healing, reconciling and even restored life back from the dead. His visitations gave hope, peace and joy to many who believed.

Today's Gospel records a very special visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. The story is often used to point out Mary's charity, her reaching out to the need of another. I believe that pregnant women often experience mixed feelings such as joy, anxiety, worry, excitement etc. and they need to talk to someone especially someone who has had the same kind of experience (not her husband). This story is about Mary's humanness. After knowing Elizabeth was pregnant, Mary wanted to be with her to help her, to share her mixed feelings and also to share the wonder and joy of the new life within her, while Elizabeth was carrying John, the precursor. Mary was also carrying the savior of the world. As the mothers met, the child in Elizabeth's womb leapt for joy. She declared "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb...Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled." Then as it mentioned 'Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then went back home.

During this Advent season, we are called to carry the Lord and be the precursor for Christ. When we meet others in either planned or chance visits, we can support one another in pain and grief, strengthen one another in weakness and in despair, and guide one another in lost and confusion. Let us pray that we'll always be conscious of Christ's presence in us especially through the Sacrament of the Eucharist which we received in Holy Mass so that we can bring His healing presence to our families, work place and to the world.

Fr Dominic

A PRAYER FOR THE Fourth Sunday of Advent

Jesus, you are constantly coming to your people,
even when we fail to see you.
In each and every moment that we are blessed
to recognize you here and now,
give us the courage to leap with joy at your coming.
Amen.



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



Sick: Fr Paul STENHOUSE, Bishop Bill WRIGHT, Janelle CLIFTON, Isabelle CROUCHE, Giuseppina LETTIERI, Peter ANDERSON, Col PURCELL, Inez BUGEJA, Claudio Da SILVA, Charlie SALIBA, Bozana VUKOV, Diana VUKOV, Judy VELLA, Giuse, Giuseppe PIGNATARO, Giuseppe LETTIERI, Nancy VARTULI, Jessie ZAMMIT

Recently Deceased: Emmanuel ZAHRA, Margaret TAYLOR, Mariella SOTO, Gioakim Van Chuyen NGUYEN

Death Anniversary: Bishop George PHIMPISAN, Joseph (Joe) BORG

Other: Charles HIGGANS, Arthur and Julia HIGGANS, Anthony and Maria VELLA, William and Rita CRUZ, Marion FENECH, Jimmy and Maryann FENECH, Thanksgiving, Special Intention



We congratulate the family of Axel DAWSON who will be baptised here this weekend.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT BECOMING A CATECHIST/HELPER?

Faith is pure gift; a gift received and a gift given. A catechist is right there at the centre of this exchange of gifts. Our children are the future. We as parents, catechists, teachers, clergy and Religious need to be instruments of God giving the gift of faith to them, to help them understand that God is always there for them. I encourage you to become these instruments of God's love.

What is involved? You are invited by the Church to share our faith with over **1100** children in our **6 public schools** who receive **30 minutes of Scripture** each week during the school term. Classes are on Tuesday mornings, Wednesday mornings and afternoon and Friday mornings.

What do I need? A willingness to share your faith life and a Working with Children Check (WWCC)

What help will I get? Support and encouragement from our vibrant group of 65 catechists who share their faith interests and goals. CCD provides practical training courses including compulsory safeguarding training to help you to develop teaching skills and to make the best use of your own gifts. Training will start weeks 2 and 3 of Term 1, 2019.

Each Catechist has a Teacher's Manual containing easy to follow lesson plans and each child receives a Student Activity Book. We use the "Christ Our Light and Life" Curriculum.

We do not expect you to teach as soon as you begin. You will be invited to start as a helper. A helper assists a Catechist in class and is not required to give a lesson; then, when you feel ready and have begun training you may like to start to prepare lessons and teach.

Due to work and family commitments and some catechists teaching 2 or 3 classes we need **6 catechists to cover all classes in 2019.**

I personally thank the wonderful JB Catechist Team and pray that God will continue to bless them in bringing the hope and joy of Jesus to the children entrusted in our care.

If you would like more information about the mission of a Catechist or Helper, please speak to Fr Dominic or Fr Richard or contact the Parish Office on 98232572 or JB Coordinator Nina Laureti 0408465149.

Saints of the Week



St Stephen was one of the first ordained deacons of the Church. He was also the first Christian martyr. As the Apostles worked to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ as his elders, some of the Greek-speaking widows were being neglected in their practical needs. The Twelve decided to ordain seven deacons to oversee their care. In doing so, the deacons extended the pastoral care of the Apostles, the first Bishops of the early Church, enabling them to attend more to teaching. Of the seven ordained, Stephen was the oldest and given the title of "archdeacon," the chief among them. Great preaching and miracles were attributed to Stephen. Stephen's popularity created enemies, they accused him of blasphemy, of speaking against God and Moses. Stephen was put on trial, he was charged with predicting that Jesus would destroy the Temple and for preaching against Mosaic law. Stephen was filled with wisdom from heaven. He responded by detailing the history of Israel and outlining the blessings God had bestowed upon his chosen people. As Stephen concluded his defence, he looked up and saw a vision of Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He said, "Look, I can see heaven thrown open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." That vision was taken as the final proof of blasphemy to the Jews who did not believe Jesus was the Messiah or Son of God. For them, Jesus could not possibly be beside the Father in Heaven. The crowd rushed upon Stephen and carried him outside of the city to stone him to death. As Stephen was being brutally stoned, he spoke his last words, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, do not hold this sin against them." Words which echoed the very words of Jesus on the Cross. Following those words, Stephen died, in the Lord.

Feast day: December 26

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. John was the only one of the Twelve Apostles who did not forsake the Saviour in the hour of His Passion. He stood faithfully at the cross when the Savior made him the guardian of His Mother. After the Assumption of Mary, John went to Ephesus, according to Church tradition. He later became banished by the Roman authorities to the Greek Island of Patmos; this is where he allegedly wrote the Book of Revelation. It is said John was banished in the late 1st century, during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, after being plunged into boiling oil in Rome and suffering no injuries. It is also said that all those who witnessed the miracle in the Colosseum were converted to Christianity. Emperor Domitian was known for his persecution of Christians. John is known as the author of the Gospel of John and four other books in the New Testament - the three Epistles of John and the Book of Revelation. St. John is called the Apostle of Charity, a virtue he had learned from his Divine Master, and which he constantly inculcated by word and example. The "beloved disciple" died in Ephesus after AD 98, where a stately church was erected over his tomb. It was afterwards converted into a Mohammedan mosque.

Feast day: December 27

Patron of love, loyalty, friendship and authors



The Holy Innocents

In the New Testament, the Massacre of the Innocents is the incident in the nativity narrative of the Gospel of Matthew in which Herod the Great, king of Judea, orders the execution of all male children two years old and under in the vicinity of Bethlehem.

Feast day: December 26

CHRISTMAS NOVENA PRAYERS

Please take home of copy of the Christmas Novena Prayers.



PARISH SACRAMENT INFORMATION

Baptisms - If you wish to Baptise your child here in the Parish you will need to attend **10:00am Mass on Sunday 6th January**. Following Mass Fr Dominic, Fr Richard and Deacon Mervyn will meet with you in the Parish Meeting Room.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

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

Christmas Day: 8:00am and 10:00am



MEMORIAL BOOK: Parishioners are invited place their loved ones names in the permanent Memorial Book which will be left in the Church for the whole year.

Please call or email the Parish Office with their names and date of their death so that we can add them to the Book. Thank you

To all our Children's Liturgy Leaders and Helpers of 2018.

The community of John the Baptist would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank you for the commitment and care you have given the children of our Parish. Thank you for sharing your faith with our children and helping them in their journey of faith, to know and love God more.

May the peace and joy of Christmas be with you and your family. God bless you.



Please let Angela or your co-ordinator know (ASAP) whether you would like to continue being a Children's Liturgy Leader in 2019. We are especially **in need of Leaders and helpers for the 10am Mass in 2019**. If anyone is interested in joining the team please contact Angela Galdas on 9606 8403 or 0410 964 196.

After your final Children's Liturgy for the year, please leave your folder and photocopies for 2018 in the Children's Liturgy cupboard. Thank you

ATTENTION READERS: The new roster is now available for collection after all Masses this weekend.

ATTENTION EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS: The new Roster is now available for collection after all Masses this weekend.

Ministries Next Week 29/30 DEC	Sat 5.30 pm	Sun 8.00 am	Sun 10 am	Sun 5:30 pm
READERS:	J Oliveri A Pace	J Finucane S Davies	C Porreca J Habib	
EXTRA-ORDINARY MINISTER	A Vlahadamis D Vella L Tononcelli E Vella M Camilleri A Pace	M Jebrail Delicia Vella A Liberatore F Foti B O'Connor	T Nguyen M Aulsebrook R Hibbs J Habib A Bautista N Laureti	R Imbert M Abdal S Cook M Mai
CHURCH COUNTER	M Privitera			
CLEANERS: CHURCH				
ALTAR SOCIETY ROSTER	30/12/2018 M De Luca	6/01/2019 A Portolesi	13/01/2019 R Marciano	20/01/2019 S Leonello
10AM MORNING TEAS	30/12/2018 Group 5	6/01/2019 Group 1	13/01/2019 Group 1	20/01/2019 Group 3

Upcoming Parish Activities Save the date!

Now for Christmas!

This year we will not be collecting foodstuffs for Parish Hampers. However, if you wish to donate to a Christmas appeal, please consider a donation to THE COMMUNITY CARE FUND through the PARISH POOR BOXES in the Church and Piety Store.

Be assured that all money donated to this fund will be utilised solely for community needs that and transparency will be a priority.

In conclusion, if you know of any person in need this Christmas, or at any other time, please contact Fr Dominic, the parish office, or any member of the committee.

Thank you for your continued support of others.

John the Baptist Community Care Committee



JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH CALENDAR is available for purchase for \$5.00 from the Piety Store outside the Church.

St Elizabeth Convent in Minsk, Belarus

Nuns from this convent, a Christian community that supports a large psychiatric hospital; takes care of an orphanage for children with mental and physical disabilities and runs a rehabilitation centre and a shelter for the homeless; will be visiting us on Wednesday 2nd January before 7pm evening Mass to sell religious articles and souvenirs some of which were made by these vulnerable people. Proceeds will be used to support the people who are in their care. Please support them in their endeavours. Thank you.

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, asylum seekers, 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.

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. I wish you all many blessings during this Holy Season and a happy New Year 2019.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Dominic



PARISH MORNING TEA EVERY SUNDAY AFTER 10AM MASS

The Parish will now be holding a morning tea after the 10am Mass every Sunday. Please bring along a plate to share and stay to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee with your community.

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.*

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 - (Yr C)

First Reading: 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52

Reflection Questions.....

- ♦ Like Elizabeth, I have been astounded to find the Lord's presence when..... in..... through.....
- ♦ My response to the Lord's presence tends to be.....
- ♦ Like Mary, I bring the Lord's presence to others when I.....
- ♦ The Good News for me is.....

First reading

A reading from the prophet Micah

The Lord says this:

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
the least of the clans of Judah,
out of you will be born for me
the one who is to rule over Israel;
his origin goes back to the distant past,
to the days of old.

The Lord is therefore going to abandon them
till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth.
Then the remnant of his brothers will come back
to the sons of Israel.

He will stand and feed his flock
with the power of the Lord,
with the majesty of the name of his God.
They will live secure, for from then on he will extend his
power
to the ends of the land.
He himself will be peace.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

79:2-3,15-16,18-19

Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help.

Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name.

Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Micah 5:1-4

Second reading

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world:

*You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation,
prepared a body for me.
You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin;
then I said,
just as I was commanded in the scroll of the book,
'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.'*

Notice that he says first: *You did not want* what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and *you took no pleasure* in them; and then he says: *Here I am! I am coming to obey your will.* He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 31:39-44

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord

