



The Catholic Parish of Bundaberg

Under the Patronage of Mary Mother of the Church

Office Hours: 9:00 - 1:00 PM Monday to Friday
Rossolini Place Level 1, 66 Woongarra Street
PO Box 79 Bundaberg QLD 4670
Phone 07 4151 6666 sbundaberg@rok.catholic.net.au

The NATIVITY of the LORD

Welcome to the Parish

24th/25th December 2022

Christmas

By: Fr Peter Tonti
Parish Priest

Christmas defines Christianity. God becoming one of us through the Incarnation of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. How earthy and fleshy. God the Creator of all things becoming a human creature through Mary. Unbelievable! And why does God go to all this bother?

So the Creator of all things can get right into our flesh and bones, every nook and cranny in our human body; right into the essence of our heart, soul and mind and yes, even those dark places we do not want to talk about or to see the light of day. It is there our Creator calls us by name, draws us up and raises us into the heavenly realm. Christmas is the Great Universal Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Christmas is more than Jesus teaching us good ethics, moral practices and following the laws of righteous behaviour. But so we can once again, with all of creation, walk and talk with our God, singing and dancing the Gift of Life in God's Garden.

Too much to believe? Well line up all the world leaders from the beginning of time, gather with them all the best scientists, philosophers, theologians, teachers, artists ... all our greatest figures and see if they can create Life and Love, the unfolding creation of stars and planets, sea and land, creatures of all shapes, sizes and forms through to the smallest microcosms ... To put it simply look at just one creature and stay in its presence, looking and listening deeply into its extraordinary and unique beauty and dance of life. Allow your awareness to experience creation calling you longingly, into praising God. Christmas is not about God sending his only Son to die on the cross to save our sins. How macabre! How unjust! How unloving could a parent be! Let alone this being the God we worship as Divine Mercy, Unconditional Love!

God enters humanity, taking human nature to himself to raising us up to be participants in the divine dance, into holiness. God speaks (Spirit) and acts through Mary to give birth to Jesus of Nazareth. As humans we need a higher power to break into our dysfunction, our sinfulness and transfigure us from the inside. A broken vehicle needs a higher power than itself to get right into the very mechanism, fix it and give it a good oil. And so do we need our loving God to enter into our body, heart, soul and mind to raise us up, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to holiness.

A truly loving parent will come to the aid of their child who is suffering or has greatly failed and take on their child's deepest hurt. They will gently seek the source of the hurt and then lovingly raise the little one up by healing them and teaching them Christ's Way of Truth and Life. The great story of hope and reconciliation. The child then can confidently and gratefully continue their journey. (Salvation from Salve: to heal)

God doesn't save from some distant heavenly realm but comes right into our mess, our hell, to rework it from the inside: "*did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are; and in every way like a human being, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.*" (Philippians 2:6-11)

We threw, and still do, our very worst, our most evil at Christ, each other and God's creation. But the divine victory is already won in Christ's Resurrection and so not even death, death on a cross, or any other principality or power can prevent God's creation from unfolding, where there is love.

Mary's initial "Yes!" allowed God's Spirit of creation to come upon her allowing Jesus to be born in a stable and placed in a manger (an eating trough for animals). And Mary pondered in her heart all these things with all the hopes and dreams of her son.

Are we able to say "Yes!" to God's Spirit? Can we ponder in our hearts all these things with all the hopes and dreams of the risen Jesus Christ? Then we too can join with all creation, the shepherds in the fields, the Magi, all the angels and saints throughout the ages and the whole multitude of the heavenly host "*Glory to God in the highest, and peace to people of good will*" (Luke 2: 9-14).

May the Child of God grow in you and his love bring you home.

The Catholic Parish of Bundaberg respectfully acknowledges the Taribelang Bunda, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, and Bailai Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the country in which we live. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Parish News and Announcements

PASTORAL TEAM

Rev Peter Tonti PP
Parish Priest

Rev Sijo George
Associate Pastor

Br Ted Magee
Executive Officer/Stewardship

Mrs Anne Sheehan
Liturgy & Sacramental Co-Ordinator

Mr Jeffrey Caluag
Finance & Marketing Officer

Mrs Marcia Sharp
Visitation Co-ordinator

Miss Elizabeth Kelly
Youth Ministry Co-ordinator

Mrs Jan Aplin
Safeguarding Representative &
Bereavement Co-ordinator

Mr Norm Whyte
Property Officer

Mrs Sandra Fox
Receptionist

PARISH STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Dr Presly Varghese
Chair

Mrs Kaye Beston
Deputy-Chair

Ms Nadene Pettett
Secretary

Members:

Mr David Batt

Mr John Begea

Ms Madonna Davitt

Mrs Maryanne Taylor

Mr Michael Walker

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

St Joseph's Principal
Mrs Monica White
sjbgrok.catholic.edu.au
Ph: 4151 4771

St Mary's Principal
Mr Bill Goodwin
smbg@rok.catholic.edu.au
Ph: 4152 2167

St Patrick's Principal
Mr Mark Fox
spboffice@rok.catholic.edu.au
Ph: 4152 1380

Shalom College Principal
Mr Dan McMahon
shalomcollege.com
Ph: 4155 8111

CHURCHES

Holy Rosary Church
Corner Barolin & Woongarra Streets

St Patrick's Church
14 Powers Street

St James' Church
38 See Street Bargara

ADULT FAITH - "The Mass": – Christ said to the eager crowds listening to his Sermon on the Mount: *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them (Mt.5:17).* During the Liturgy of the Word the **First Reading** and the **Revelation** it contains regarding the holy Incarnation (the coming of Christ), compel us to pray and reflect on the Sunday Scriptures with the Old Testament reading receiving as much attention as the others. During the two thousand years of Jewish history, the Holy Spirit laid the groundwork to our combined *Salvation History*. It was a time of preparation when the Chosen People were taught about a faithful God who never lets you down. He taught them to trust Him no matter what. He taught them to pray, giving them the Psalms, the most beautiful prayer-book ever written. When Christ came, he brought revelation to its completion. He taught us all we need to know about God as only He could. At Mass Christ comes to us, the same Christ whom God spent two thousand years preparing his People to receive. (Notes from *The Mass in Close-Up*, Fr Antony Jones STL, PhL, Wales, March 2022)

PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS TIMES: The Office will be closed from 1.00pm, Friday December 23rd until 9.00am, Monday January 3rd, 2023. The emergency phone will be in use during that period, and you can contact by following the prompts when you call 4151 6666. We take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Holy Christmas. May you be blessed with good health and joy during 2023.

GOOD NEWS MAGAZINE: The Christmas edition is available at the doors of all Churches and on our website. A gold coin donation would be greatly appreciated. This edition looks at all the Parish has achieved over 2022.

BISHOP MICHAEL'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE:

The full text of Bishop Michael's Christmas message is on our website.

In part, the Bishop writes:

"Christ did not come into the world alone. He was greeted by his family, the angels, the shepherds working in the fields and soon after the Magi. He then grew up among his people and went on to fulfil his ministry – gathering a group around him, teaching, healing, guiding and eventually dying among the people. He did all of this for us and among the brokenness of us. Christmas is a time to be together.

I pray that you may all enjoy the peace and joy of Christmas."

ST JAMES' CAROLS: was an afternoon of Music and Laughter. 15 Christmas Hampers were raffled with a total of \$911.00 being raised. We would like to thank all those involved in the organisation and participation which contributed to a great success.



BLANKET BUDDIES RAFFLE WINNERS:

Thank you to everyone who bought tickets in the Christmas Raffle. The prizes were won by.

1st Prize Merle McDermid,

2nd Prize Anne Underwood,

3rd Prize Marg,

4th Prize Judy Moore.

Congratulations to all the winners.



DIRECT DEBIT GIVING: If you wish to make a donation to the Parish by direct debit, please scan the QR code and follow the prompts. **Thank You.**



Parish News and Announcements

BETHLEHEM LIVE: A repeated thanks to all who assisted with Bethlehem Live. The construction and deconstruction squad; the Blanket Buddies who gave away 2160 Christmas crocheted gifts to attendees; the storytellers, the cleaners; the actors; and, finally to Lizzie Kelly who represented the Parish on the steering committee and was present day and night at this great Bundaberg Ecumenical event.

CHANGES TO STREAMING FROM ST JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL: To give our streaming volunteers a short break there will be no Sunday Mass stream for the two Sundays after Christmas, 1st and 8th January. Sunday streaming will resume from Sunday 15th January.

With the restoring of the Sunday obligation from Christmas Day and the faithful being encouraged to gather with their communities, it has been decided the daily Mass stream from St Joseph's Cathedral will cease after Christmas. The long-running 9.30am Sunday Mass stream will continue for those who are sick, infirm or may not have access to a regular Sunday Mass. **Daily live streaming started during the lockdowns and while it can't replace attending Mass, it was a valuable tool to help keep people connected during that time. Many thanks to the Diocesan staff who provided this service for our communities.**

FR PETER FAREWELL: A simple yet heartfelt farewell was attended by more than a hundred parishioners and representatives of other churches and the local community on Tuesday evening. Dr Presly Varghese spoke on behalf of the Parish community and made a presentation to Fr Peter. In his reply, Fr Peter spoke of his gratitude to all in the Parish and of his pride in the outreach and service of our community. The catering from all parishioners was varied and excellent and enabled many to have "take home" parcels for supper. The sung blessing and best wishes were a resounding tribute to a humble and compassionate pastor.

SUMMER CAMP 2023

Ignite Summer Camp Diocesan Group

When: 11-15 January, 2023

Where: QCCC Mapleton (Sunshine Coast)

Who: Any 2023 high school students

Cost: \$310, Family discounts are available for siblings.

The Parish may assist with sponsoring on written application to the Executive Officer.

Application Forms will be available from the Parish Office.

Ignite Summer Camp is back in 2023, with four days of huge outdoor games, amazing rallies, 200 new mates and connecting with Jesus. Our diocese will be taking a group to Summer Camp, providing transport to and from the event and even providing an extra night's accommodation so we will be ready to go when the camp begins on the morning of the 12th of January. To register with our diocesan group, use the coupon code **RockyBoy** for male students and **RockyGirl** for female students. For more details scan the QR code or contact Mick at youth@rok.catholic.net.au or 0433 897 973.



Recently Deceased: Mary "Philippa" Pike, Brenden Rieck, Mario Coco, Antonio Falco (Brisbane), Mary Jozefowski, Robyn Bayliss, Lethorieo Angelo Nielsen.

Funeral Details: Brenden Rieck, January 5th at St Patricks 10.00am, Funeral Prayers.

LITURGIES

Monday 26 December 2022

St Stephen

9.00am Holy Rosary-Mass

Tuesday 27 December 2022

St John

9.00am Holy Rosary Mass

Wednesday 28 December 2022

5.30pm St Patrick's - Mass

Thursday 29 December 2022

St Thomas Becket

6.30am St Patrick's—Mass

Friday 30 December 2022

The Holy Family

12.15pm Holy Rosary-Mass

Saturday 31 December 2022

7.30am St Patrick's- Mass

9.00am Holy Rosary- Penance

6.00pm St Patrick's -Mass

NEXT SUNDAY

1 January 2023
Year A(1)

7.00am St James'

8.00am Holy Rosary

9.00am St Patrick's

12pm Baffle Creek

5.30pm Holy Rosary

SCRIPTURES

For next Sunday

First Readings

Numbers 6:22-27

Second Reading

Galations: 4:4-7

Gospel

Luke2:16-21

What's On!

Mark the date in your
Calendar

January

3 Parish Office reopens

16-19 Priest Gathering in
Rockhampton

26 Australia Day Mass

9.00am Holy Rosary

PRAYER GROUPS

ROSARY GROUP: The Rosary Group will take a break over the Christmas period and will resume Tuesday 10th January 5.30pm. In Holy Rosary Church

ADORATION IN ST PATRICK'S CHURCH: Every 1st Sunday, 2.00pm - 5.00pm and 3rd Sunday, 3.00pm - 5.00pm. All are welcome!

CCR UNITED HEARTS PRAYER GROUP: Will resume in 2023. Dates will be advised.

The Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton

abides by the principles of the **National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (2013)**, and is committed to safeguarding, with a specific focus on protecting children and vulnerable adults. For further information or support please contact the **Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office:**

Response Line: 1800 830 113
(free call)

Email:

pssoadmin@rok.catholic.net

Diocesan website for more information:

<https://rok.catholic.net.au/our-diocese/safeguarding/>

To view the **Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults commitment statement and policy:**

www.rock.catholic.net.au/safeguarding-policies.html

OTHER CONTACTS

Mrs Judy Pidcock: 4887 3080
Diocesan Safeguarding

Catholic Care: 1300 523 985

St Vincent de Paul: 4151 5455

Ozcare: 1800 692 273

Mater Hospital: 4153 9539

Towards Healing: 1800 337 928

AFTER HOURS

**Anointing of the Sick
for Medical Emergencies**

Phone 4151 6666

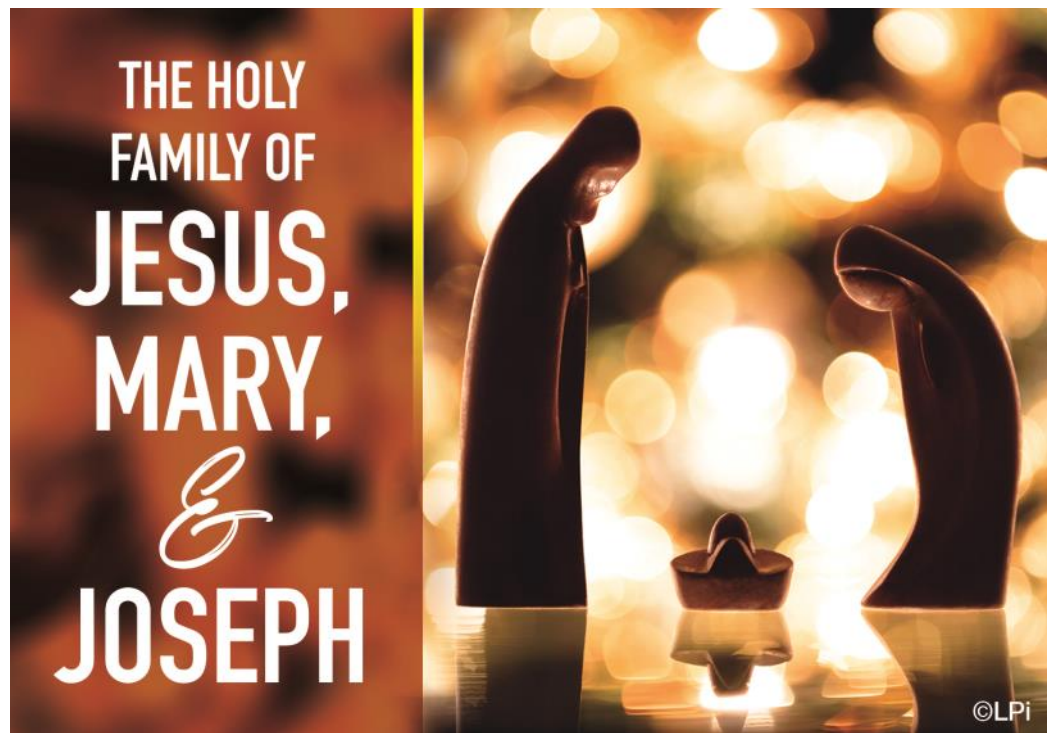
& follow the prompts

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

OPEN HOURS

Sunday to Friday from 7.00am until 5.00pm approx. Saturday, open for Reconciliation from 9.00am -10.00am.

Live the Liturgy



As we age, time seems to pass more quickly. Years seemingly fly by as one holiday flows into the next, January quickly becomes December and life maintains its hectic pace. What do we accomplish in all of that busyness? Perhaps technology is responsible for some of the frenzy, keeping us isolated in our social media worlds, communicating through texts rather than in person, and always connected to world events. We're over stimulated in many ways by information, noise, opinions, and ideologies. Yet, we still find the time to decorate our homes, purchase gifts, and plan Christmas gatherings. We know, however, that the true meaning of Christmas is not found in twinkling lights, beautifully adorned trees, perfectly set tables or exchanged gifts. We are being called to something deeper and more authentic.

Christmas reminds us to look for God along the way of our lives and not get distracted by the illusions around us. Our world's complexity can leave us feeling displaced, desperate, alone, neglected, and unimportant. Joseph and Mary felt that way too. In the midst of all that captures and intrigues us in our self-created virtual worlds, is this longing for the anchor of faith to keep us grounded and make sense of it all. Only faith can give us the perspective to see what truly matters in life. We discover our divinely blessed humanity. The uncertain and challenging journey to Bethlehem gives way to the tender moments of birth and its embrace. Christmas softens us and slows us down a bit. It shows us Jesus as the light who enlightens everyone. It shows us the truth.

The faith that comes from Christmas calms our fears and allows us to go into the nighttime of our lives courageously. We are never lost or alone. We need to stop and savor more of life's moments before they slip away in time. God is with us, loving us, and leading us where we need to be. God is born again and again in every soul willing to give birth to His presence. God connects us and provides us with a place where we feel safe and welcome: home. Merry Christmas! ©LPi



Bundaberg Parish Website: www.bundabergcatholic.net.au