

SACRED HEART PARISH MORUYA



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Priest: Fr George Azhakath msfs

Secretary: Mrs Pat Anderson

Parish Office hours: Wed. and Fri. 10am—3pm

Mass Times:

Moruya: Sat: Vigil 6.00 pm Sun: 10.00 am

Tue: 5.30 pm. Wed, Thu & Fri: 9.15 am

Sat: Reconciliation: 10—10.30 am

Tuross Mass: Sun. 8am Bodalla: Mass: 2nd Thursday of the month 9.15am. Fifth Sunday of the month 3 pm .

Schools: St Mary's Moruya: 4474 2817

Carroll College Broulee 4471 5600

Caring Group: Tuross Head: 0497 315 534 Moruya: 0431 354 993

Devotions: Daily Rosary after mass. First Friday Adoration & Benediction. 9.45—10.45 am



Baptism of the Lord.

YEAR B

January 9 & 10 2021

The Baptism of our Lord.

“You are my son, the beloved: my favour rests on you”

The Baptism of the Lord is the great event celebrated by the Eastern churches on the feast of Epiphany because it is the occasion of the first public revelation of all the Three Persons in the Holy Trinity, and the official revelation of Jesus as the Son of God to the world by God the Father. Hence, it is described by all the four gospels. It marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

Jesus' baptism: Many Fathers of the Church explain that, though sinless, Jesus received the baptism of repentance to identify himself with this people. Jesus might have been waiting for this most opportune moment to begin his public ministry. The Fathers point out that the voice from the heavenly Father speaks words which are similar to Psalm 2:17, “This is my beloved Son,” and of Isaiah 42:1 referring to the “*suffering servant*”: “*with whom I am well pleased.*” The words meant that Jesus' baptism by John was the acceptance and beginning of his mission as God's suffering servant to atone for the sins of mankind.

The turning point: The baptism from John was an important event in the life of Jesus. First, it was a moment of decision to begin public ministry. Second, it was a moment of identification with us sinners. Third, it was a moment of approval when his heavenly Father approved Jesus as His “*beloved Son*”. Fourth, it was a moment of conviction that his mission was to preach the good news of God's love and salvation and to atone for our sins by becoming the “*suffering servant*.”: Fifth, it was a moment of equipment. The Holy Spirit equipped Jesus by descending on him in the form of a dove, giving him the power of preaching and healing.



Entrance Antiphon: 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.

Communion Antiphon: Behold the One of whom John said: I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

Prayer for Australia: Lord you place deep in our hearts the love of Mary Help of Christians. Through her prayers grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens. Under her protection may Australia be granted harmony, justice and peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer after Communion: Lord, we thank you for coming into our hearts in Communion. We believe you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. You are our life and our hope. Draw us more deeply to yourself and transform our hearts through your abiding love. May we come to know Sunday as a special day of faith, the day of our Risen Lord. May our celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday consecrate this day to you.

O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, All Praise and All Thanksgiving be every moment thine.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Is 55:1-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;
though you have no money, come!
Buy corn without money, and eat,
and, at no cost, wine and milk.
Why spend money on what is not bread,
your wages on what fails to satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and you will have good
things to eat
and rich food to enjoy.
Pay attention, come to me;
listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant
out of the favours promised to David.
See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples,
a leader and a master of the nations.
See, you will summon a nation you never knew,
those unknown will come hurrying to you,
for the sake of the Lord your God,
of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will
take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways - it is
the Lord who speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from
the heavens and do not return without watering
the earth, making it yield and giving growth to
provide seed for the sower and bread for the eat-
ing, so the word that goes from my mouth does
not return to me empty, without carrying out my
will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Is 12:2-6. R. v.6

*(R.) You will draw water joyfully from the
springs of salvation.*

1. Truly, God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my saviour.
With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation. **(R.)**

2. Give thanks to the Lord, give praise
to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name. **(R.)**
3. Sing a psalm to the Lord
for he has done glorious deeds,
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy
for great in your midst is the
Holy One of Israel. **(R.)**

Second Reading: 1 Jn 5:1-9

A reading from the first letter of St John

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ
has been begotten by God;
and whoever loves the Father that begot him
loves the child that he begets.

We can be sure that we love God's children
if we love God himself and do what
he has commanded us;

this is what loving God is -
keeping his commandments;
and his commandments are not difficult,
because anyone who has been begotten
by God has already overcome the world;
this is the victory over the world -
our faith.

Who can overcome the world?

Only the man who believes that
Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus Christ who came by water and blood,
not with water only,

but with water and blood;
with the Spirit as another witness -
since the Spirit is the truth -

so that there are three witnesses,
the Spirit, the water and the blood,
and all three of them agree.

We accept the testimony of human witnesses,
but God's testimony is much greater,
and this is God's testimony,
given as evidence for his Son.

This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia!

Gospel: Mk 1:7-11

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark

In the course of his preaching John the Baptist said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

ALL: Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

WORD AND LIFE this week.....

1. The Baptism of Jesus reminds us of our identity and mission. First, it reminds us of who we are and Whose we are: By baptism we become sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus, members of his Church, heirs of heaven and temples of the Holy Spirit. Hence, 'baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other Sacraments' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1213). Before COVID-19 most of us dipped the fingers of our right hands into the holy water font and blessed ourselves when we came into church. *Why?* This blessing is supposed to remind us of our baptism. And so when I bless myself with holy water I should be thinking of the fact that I am a child of God; that I have been redeemed by the Cross of Christ; that I have been made a member of God's family and that I have been washed, forgiven, cleansed and purified by the blood of the Lamb.

Second, Jesus' baptism reminds us of our mission: **a)** to experience the presence of God within us, to acknowledge our own dignity as God's children, and to appreciate the divine presence in others by honouring them, loving them and serving them in all humility; **b)** to live as the children of God in thought, word and action so that our Heavenly Father may say to each one of us as He said to Jesus: "You are my beloved son/daughter in whom I am well pleased" **c)** to lead a holy and transparent Christian life and not to desecrate our bodies (the temples of the Holy Spirit and members of Jesus' Mystical Body) by impurity, injustice, intolerance, jealousy or hatred; **d)** to accept both the good and the bad experiences of life as the gifts of a loving Heavenly Father for our growth in holiness; **e)** to grow daily in intimacy with God by personal and family prayers, by reading the Word of God, by participating in the Holy Mass, and by frequenting the sacrament of reconciliation; **f)** to be co-creators with God in building up the "kingdom of God" on earth, a kingdom of compassion, justice and love, and to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

2. This is the day for us to remember the graces we received in Baptism and to renew our baptismal promises: On the day of our Baptism, as Pope John Paul II explains, "We were anointed with the oil of catechumens, the sign of Christ's gentle strength, to fight against evil. Blessed water was poured over us an effective sign of interior purification through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We were then anointed with chrism to show that we were thus consecrated in the image of Jesus, the Father's Anointed One. The candle lighted from the paschal candle was a symbol of the light of faith which our parents and godparents must have continually safeguarded and nourished with the life-giving grace of the Spirit." This is also a day for us to renew our baptismal promises by consecrating ourselves to the Holy Trinity and "by rejecting Satan and all his empty promises," which our profane world is constantly offering us through its mass media of communication. Let us ask Our Lord today to make us faithful to our Baptismal promises. Let us thank Him for the privilege of being joined to His mission of preaching the 'Good News' by our transparent Christian lives of love, mercy, service and forgiveness.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK AND HOUSE

BOUND: We continue to pray and extend our support to those who are in near lock down at Banksia Village, IRT Moruya; and the sick members of our Parish: Gail Fenton, John Gerber, Ben Pollock, Catherine Hulse, Kathleen Ebbelaar, Carmel Trenholme, Dale Moore, Gerry Ebbelaar, Kylie Leplaw, Jean Marrion, Monique Driver, Ester and Peter Morgan, Andy McCosker, Paul Croese, Pauline & Peter Morgan, Trish Tarlington and Ron Parnell. Love and prayers to all of them for a speedy recovery.

Please advise the Office if you would like to be added to or taken off the list for prayers.

ORDER OF MALTA—Email.

It saddens me to say that we cannot visit you in this month due to current travel & isolation advice related to the latest COVID outbreak and due to an unavailability of accommodation.

I am conscious that this month marks the first anniversary of last summer's devastating bushfires, and we wanted to be there with your parishioners and community at this challenging time.

Please let everyone know that we are thinking of you all and praying for you.

Assuming that all settles down with the latest COVID outbreak we should be able to return on the weekend of 13th & 14th February.

God bless! *Frank Testa KMG (Ob) Order of Malta*

BODALLA MASS NEXT THURSDAY 9.15AM.

PARISH SECRETARY POSITION: People are invited to apply for the position of Parish Secretary for Sacred Heart Parish, Moruya. This is a part-time permanent position 12 hours per week, Wednesdays and Fridays 9am—3pm. **ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:** Experience with Microsoft suite & database packages; strong communication and liaison skills; strong organizational skills; ability to work in a team environment and show personal initiative; Desire to share in the mission of Christ in the Catholic tradition. **SALARY** will be subject to Clerk Award Level 4 rates. Please email your application (including resume) to George.azhakath@cg.org.au Applications addressed to Fr George Azhakath, must be received by Friday 22nd January, 2021. Copy of duties available on request. The position to commence 3rd March, 2021.



Exegesis: Origin of baptism: Neither John nor Jesus invented baptism. It had been practiced for centuries among the Jews as a ritual equivalent to our Confession. Until the fall of the Temple in 72 A.D., it was common for Jewish people to use a special pool called a MIKVEH—literally a “collection of water”—as a means of spiritual cleansing, to remove spiritual impurity and sin. Men took this bath weekly on the eve of the Sabbath; women, monthly. Converts were also expected to take this bath before entering Judaism. The Orthodox Jews still retain the rite. John preached that such a bath was a necessary preparation for the cataclysm that would be wrought by the coming Messiah. Jesus transformed this continuing ritual into the one single, definitive act by which we begin our life of faith. In effect he fused his divine essence with the water and the ceremony.



A couple of questions: 1) Why did Jesus, the sinless Son of God, receive the ‘baptism of repentance’ meant for sinners? 2) Why did Jesus wait for thirty years to begin his public ministry? The strange answer for the first question given by the apocryphal book, “The Gospel According to the Hebrews,” is that Jesus received the baptism of John to please his mother and relatives. In this humble submission we see a foreshadowing of the “baptism” of his bloody death upon the cross.



Jesus’ baptism by John was the acceptance and the beginning of his mission as God’s suffering Servant. He allowed himself to be numbered among sinners. Jesus submitted himself entirely to his Father’s will. Out of love he consented to His baptism of death for the remission of our sins. Many Fathers of the Church explain that Jesus received baptism to identify himself with his people, who for the first time in Jewish history became aware of their sins and of the need of repentance, as a result of John’s preaching. The Jews had the traditional benefit that only the Gentiles who embraced Jewish religion needed the baptism of repentance, for, as God’s chosen people the Jewish race was holy. Jesus might have been waiting for this most opportune moment to begin his public ministry. The Fathers point out that the voice from the heavenly Father is an adaptation of Psalm 2:17, ‘*This is my beloved Son.*’ and of Isaiah 42:1 referring to the “*suffering servant*”. “*with whom I am well pleased*”.

EIGHT STEPS TOWARD A MORE SATISFYING LIFE. In a recent TIME magazine sidebar, there were “Eight Steps Toward a More Satisfying Life.” Here are the Eight Steps (Time, 17 January 2005, A8-A9) 1. Count your blessings; 2. Practice acts of kindness; 3. Savour life’s joys; 4. Thank a mentor; 5. Learn to forgive; 6. Invest time and energy in friends and family; 7. Take care of your body; 8. Develop strategies for coping with stress and hardship. This morning when we reflect on the parable of the ten virgins, we add one more step, a 9th Step to the strategy. Be prepared. Be prepared to step off life’s planned paths, and trust the Spirit. After all, the Spirit can appear in many guises, disguises, and surprises. (Rev. Leonard Sweet).

Signs seen at churches: “How will you spend eternity? Smoking or Non-smoking?” “Dusty Bibles lead to Dirty Lives.”
“Come work for Christ the King. The work is hard, the hours are long and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are very grand and out of this world.”