

NORTHERN MISSION

incorporating Queanbeyan, Michalego, Bungendore and Braidwood Parishes.

<http://www.stgregorysparishqueanbeyan.com>

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Father Troy Bobbin

Associate Priest: Father Peter Day (Braidwood & Bungendore)

Deacons: John Lim (Bungendore)

Chris Van Gessel (Queanbeyan)

Pastoral Associate, Braidwood: Br Brian Berg

Parish Website: <http://cg.org.au/braidwood/Home.aspx>

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Br. Brian email: bcberg@edmundrice.org

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Trish Ferlitsch Ph. 4842 2413

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Thurs 9.00am - 5.00pm.



Mission Sunday Masses:

St Raphael's Q'bn 5.30pm Sat

9am & 5.30pm Sun

St Mary's Bung. 8.30am Sun

St Bede's B'wood 6.00pm Sat

Ministries for our Sunday Liturgy:

	31 Dec @ 8.30am	6 Jan @ 6pm	13 Jan @ 6pm
Commentator:	P Coady	H Hart	P Coady
Reader:	R Coady	C Ffrench	W Hart
Reader:	W M-Bell	G Hannaford	volunteer
Acolyte:	F Schlager	L Hart	J Gunderson
Sp. Ministers	B Schlager	A Monkhouse	W Hart
	H Pieper	volunteer	H Bopping
Welcomer:	G Sutton	C Ffrench	H Pieper
PowerPoint:	D Flores	H Hart	A Monkhouse
Gifts:	Marj & Norah	Geraldine & Natasha	Laffan Family

Ministries of Service:

	5 January	12 January	19 January
Altar Decorating:	Cathy	Margaret	Fran
Cleaners:	Bobbie	Victor	Joan

Sp. Min hospital: 1st Sun: Eileen Dempsey. 2nd Sun: Helen Pieper.

3rd Sun: Brian Berg 4th Sun: Ann Monkhouse. 5th Sun: Jane Gardner.

Counters: 1st Sun: K & M Toirkens. 2nd Sunday: G Kain. 3rd Sunday: Wendy Hart.
4th Sunday: E Hannaford. 5th Sunday: H Bopping.

World Community for Christian Meditation is held Thursdays at 10.30am

at St Bede's Presbytery. For information please contact Br. Brian on 4842

2444. Newcomers are always welcome. Check out the websites:

www.wccm.org or www.christianmeditationaustralia.org

St Vincent de Paul Society Braidwood Conference:

"Giving a helping hand up"

Office Hours: office closed until 19 January 2018



Readings this week: 1st: Sir. 3:2-6,12-14. 2nd: Colo. 3:12-21. Gospel: Luke 2:22-40.

Next week Epiphany: 1st: Is. 60:1-6. 2nd: Eph. 3:2-3,5-6. Gospel: Mt. 2:1-12.

Northern Mission



THE HOLY FAMILY
Yr. B

31st December 2017

Join Us in Prayer

Entrance Antiphon:

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

Responsorial Psalm:

Response: Happy are those who walk God's ways in awe.

All: Happy are those who walk God's ways in awe.
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper.

All; Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

All: Indeed thus shall be blessed
the one who holds God in awe.
May God bless you from Zion
all the days of your life!

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon:

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Next weekend Mass time: Vigil Saturday at 6pm in St Bede's Church.
Weekday Mass: in recess until February.
Meditation: in recess until February.
Braidwood AA meets each Tuesday at 7.30pm in the Centre.
Social Justice Group in recess until February.

NB: MASS TIME WILL BE VIGIL AT 6.00PM UNTIL THE END OF JUNE

Please pray for the sick: Derek Kelly, Mollie Grady, Diana Wiley, Tony Ryan, Luke Ward, Len Kanowski, Ted Younger, Paul Conaghan, Tony Riley, Dave Kelly, Robin Marsden, Patricia Golotta, Barbara Monaghan, John Sheldon, Sarah Lewis, Richie Simpson, Mark Sissian, Sarah Cree, Teresa Neilsen, the residents of Narbethong & the aged care unit and all who need prayers.

Please pray for those who have died in recent days:
Jimmy Roberts, Ruth Robbie and our own deceased relatives and friends.

Offerings acknowledged with thanks:
Christmas offerings will be acknowledged next week.

Reflection on the Holy Family in today's world.

Look at any newspaper, magazine, television current affairs program or social commentary and you will be bombarded with the notion that the institution of family is under attack. Rather, what appears to be under attack is a particular view of what it means to be 'family'. Society in general and governments in particular are recognising the reality that 'family' is a much more fluid term than it used to be. Rather than an attack on family, it might be argued that there is in fact an embracing of the concept of family by making its definition much broader.

In this feast we celebrate the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The model of family that we have in this Holy Family is a model that would not be entirely out of place in the 21st Century. Mary was a very young woman; possibly no more than 13 or 14 years old. There was a degree of scandal about the conception of their child and Joseph seriously contemplated whether or not he would go ahead with the marriage. They were forced to flee their homeland and seek protection as refugees in Egypt. We see from today's passage that the parents are doing their best to be faithful to their religious and cultural traditions whilst worrying about what the future holds for their son. It is a picture that is not too different from the situation in which many families today find themselves. So while we celebrate today the feast of the Holy Family, it is very much a celebration of every family.

Greg Sunter

PATTY FAULKNER SGS. Of Mary and Maya.

21 December 2017

When we see the images of Mary and her child this Christmas, may we pause and think of Maya and the countless victims of sexual exploitation, writes Sister Patty Fawkner.

It was the large brown eyes looking out from beneath the black burka that captured my attention. A few weeks ago the evening ABC news reported the plight of Rohingya women who had been gang-raped by the Myanmar military. ABC journalist Liam Cochrane had interviewed this traumatised woman, whom I will call by the Rohingya name, Maya. Eighteen-year-old Maya had witnessed the slaughter of her family. She takes up the story:

"[The military] entered and aimed the gun at my forehead. They held my hands strongly and did what they wanted to me. Then I was told to go back. But I didn't. I was sitting there. Then they started beating me and they took off my clothes. They beat me too much and did what they wanted. The military did this".

Maya is one of countless Rohingya women who have endured systematic sexual assault by Myanmar soldiers. These women are victims of orchestrated rape used as an instrument of war. These women will be further traumatised if they tell their story to any surviving family members. Maya is the one who is shamed; Maya is the one who has brought dishonour on her family; Maya is the one who is ostracised. Yet again, rape becomes a woman's problem, rather than a societal problem.

Maya is a person worthy of human dignity. Yet she is made an object of violence, domination and exploitation. She is a commodity used for male pleasure and specious military ends.

What has Maya's story got to do with Christmas? How do we reconcile the brutality of her reality with the romantic notions of Christmas? It occurred to me that Mary, real Mary – not the idealised or saccharine Mary – has something to offer.

From the Gospel infancy stories of Matthew and Luke we can conjecture many moments in Mary's journey that are far removed from that of popular religious imagery where we encounter a very docile and subservient Mary.

There are intersections between Mary and Maya's experience. Each share humiliation, pain and forced fleeing. Mary is held suspect and shamed from carrying an illegitimate child. She then endures a 150 kilometre journey while heavily pregnant. For a time she faces the prospect of homelessness. She gives birth in an animal feeding trough, is greeted first by shepherds who were the social and religious outcasts of the day, and then flees with her newborn child as a desperate refugee.

Mary is declared and honoured as a virgin. Theologian Elizabeth Johnson claims that, more than meaning that she never had sexual intercourse with a man, an ancient and more archetypal meaning of being a virgin "is to be one in yourself, free, independent, insubordinated, unexploited, a woman never subdued" – everything that Maya is not, and everything to which she and other victims of sexual exploitation aspire.

Christmas, the feast of the Incarnation, celebrates neither a fairy tale nor a magical event. The *WORD* is made flesh. Jesus born of Mary, takes on flesh – vulnerable, weak, needy and suffering human flesh. Jesus takes on our humanity and gives his life so that all humanity will be "free, independent, insubordinated [and] unexploited". When we see the images of Mary and her child this Christmas, may we pause and think of Maya and the countless victims of sexual exploitation. And then as individuals and as a society, may we do all that is in our power to speak out, to shout out about sexual exploitation, and take whatever action we can to change society so that all women are free, independent, insubordinated, unexploited, and never subdued.