

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 6
29th December 2019
Year A

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



VERITAS



Holy Family

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

Parish Priest
Fr Kieran Adams OP

Assistant Priests
Fr Rafael Cabezon OP
Fr Bernie Maxwell OP

Holy Rosary Church
Cnr Phillip Avenue &
Antill Street, Watson ACT

Postal Address
PO Box 900, Dickson

Ph. 6248 5925

Email: watson@cg.org.au
www.cg.org.au/watson

Office Staff
Jacquie Cortese
Jim Smith

Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday
9.00am—12.30pm

Parish Council
Andrew Blakey

Mass times
Wed 5.30pm
Tues & Thurs 6.45am
Fri 5.30pm

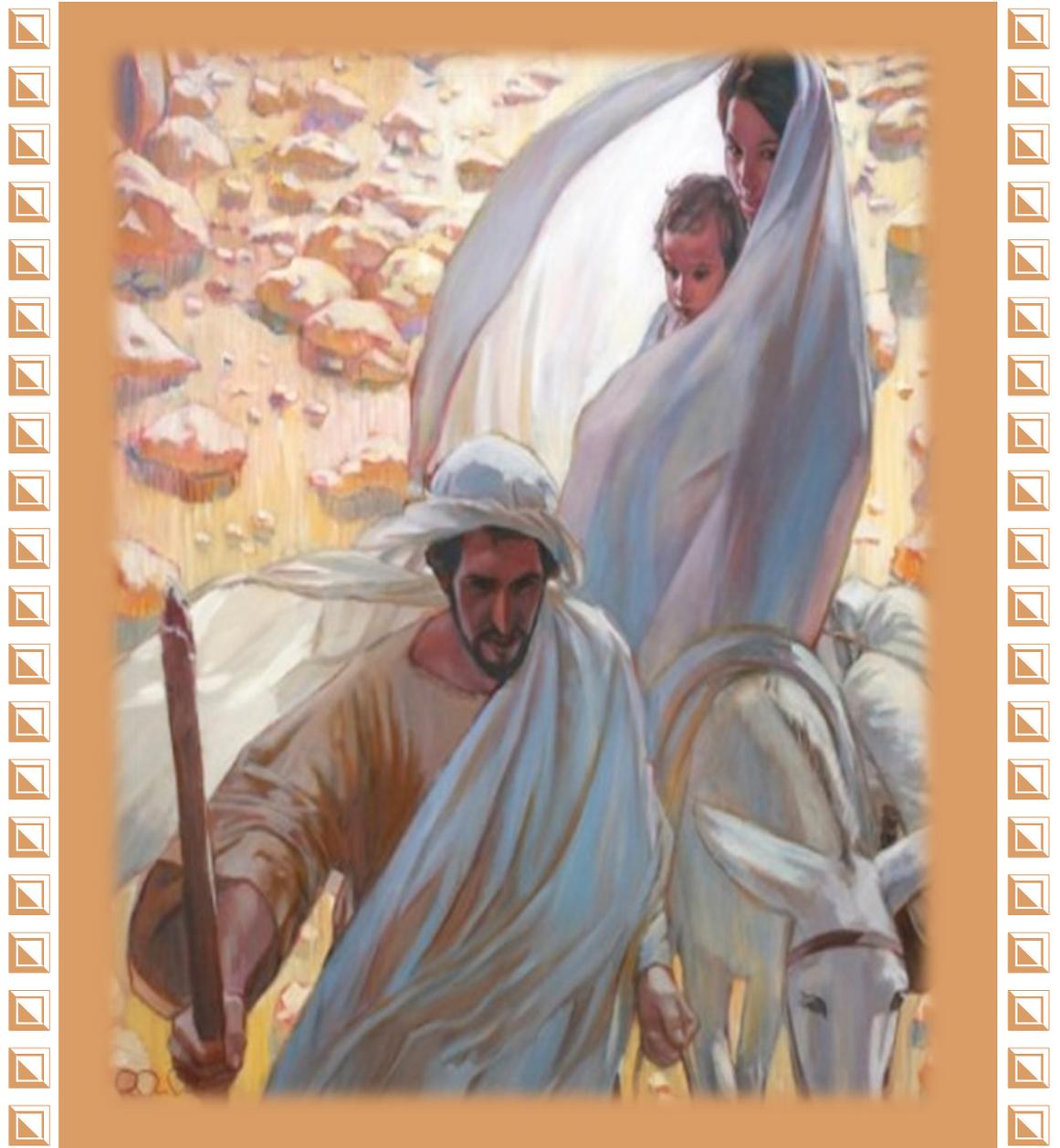
Saturday 5pm (Vigil)
Sunday 8am, 10am & 5pm

9am Mass Saturday & Public
Holidays
excluding Mondays

Pray the Rosary
Wed & Fri before 5.30pm Mass
Saturday after 9am Mass
and First Saturday each month
3.30pm

Reconciliation
Saturday 12pm—12.30pm
and 4pm—4.30pm

ACU Chapel Signadou
Thursday—12.30 pm



**If you are in Urgent need of
a Priest Call - 6248 8253**

A warm welcome is extended to guests & parishioners celebrating our Eucharist today.

ENTRANCE	The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger.
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION	Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.
COMMUNION	Alleluia, alleluia! May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts; and the fullness of his message live within you. Alleluia!
READINGS	Ecclesiastics 3:2-6. 12-14 Colossians 3:12-21 Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

FAMILY LIFE

Family life is always a challenge, and our religious ancestors had advice about how to make it work. Though many cultural values were different, we realize how family life was interwoven with faith. We don't know much about Jesus' family, but we hear today that they followed traditional Jewish laws. We tend to think of them as so different from our own families; but, like us, they would have struggled to understand what they were being called to. We are more alike than we think.



RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 23:1-6

Happy are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labor of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper.

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

Indeed thus shall be blessed
The man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
All the days of your life!

Happy are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways.

OFFICE HOURS

The office will be closed from Friday 20th
December and reopen Monday 6th January.
If you are in urgent need of a priest please call
6248 8253. Church enquires call Jim 0448 737 700

THE JOURNEY

When Joseph was still tasting the joy of the first Christmas, he was given unexpected instructions. He was told to take Mary and the Child to a foreign country - a thirty-day, three-hundred mile journey through dangerous territory. From time to time, we too are called to move from comfortable quarters to journey into unknown territory. When this happens, we have the example of Joseph to help us say 'Yes!' to what at first sight may seem daunting.

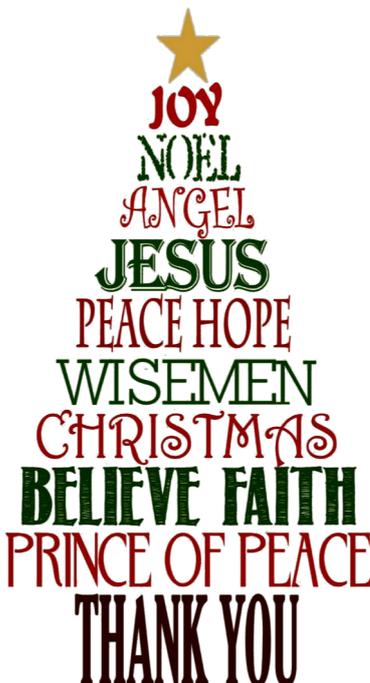
THE HIDDEN LIFE

As far as we know, Jesus lived unobtrusively in Nazareth for thirty years before his public ministry. There were no miracles, no public teachings - but despite appearances, it was a time of unspeakable value: Jesus, Mary and Joseph in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. There are many 'hidden' parishes in Australia, some with a resident priest, some without. People there live apparently unremarkable lives - yet these lives, lived in union with God, are lives of enormous value.

PARISH RENEWAL

Over the past year, a group of parishioners, inspired by Plenary Council conversations, have been praying and reflecting on Parish Renewal in Blackfriars Parish. As part of this process Fr. James Mallon's book "Divine Renovation" was the focus of two parish reading groups over the last couple of months. Now, following on from this, there is a desire to explore running an Alpha course in the parish next year. Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith based on a series of short films. Each film looks at a different question and is designed to create conversation. It is run in cafés, churches, universities and homes around the globe. The three key elements are: food, a talk and good conversation. It is currently being run in several dioceses in Australia, including ours. If you are interested in participating in Alpha in the parish next year, you are warmly invited to get in touch with: Roger Paul (0421612572; rpaul2572@gmail.com) or Siobhan Tanzer (0432 292 498) for more information.

THANK YOU



Fr Kieran, Fr Rafael, Fr Bernie well as members of the Parish Team would like to thank all parishioners for your generosity and help during the year. We have a huge list of people to acknowledge.

'Thank You' to members of the Parish Pastoral Council & Parish Finance Council. 'Thank You' to the Acolytes, Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Musicians & Choir, School of Religion Catechists, Counters & Collectors, Social Function, Pastoral Care, Flower Ladies, Maintenance, St Vincent de Paul, Altar Linen / Sacred Vessel Carers, Prayer & Reflection Groups, Sausage Sizzlers, and all the other quiet achievers who contribute to the life of our wonderful Parish!

We share with you the glory, the wonder,
the miracle of this Beautiful Holy Season.

FOCUS ON MORE THAN JUST CHRISTMAS DAY



We now celebrate the birth of Christ and the light of the world that has come into our lives. We have heard of the salvation that Jesus is bringing us and revel in the stories of hope and joy that the prophets share with us. During this time of year, it is important to remember the focus of this season, the birth of Christ. The emphasis that Christmas isn't just one day is a very important.

In Your Prayers please remember those in our community who are ill:	Elizabeth Cronin, Mary Bui, Greg O'Neill, Una Bell, Fr Ellis Clifford, Mary Martin, Edith Jensen, Philip Bailey, Maureen Blood, Anne Corver, Barbara Wilson, Awny El-Ghitany, Joe Schimizzi, Elsie Laughton, Alexia Harris, June Pollard, Paul Neddrie, Beth Delos Santos, Rosa Maria Santos, Maria Martiniello, Elizabeth Webster, Frank Zobec, Mimma Giampietro, Zelma McManus, Catherine Feehan, Pamela Sandy, Margaret Sullivan, Fr Joe McGeehan, Charlotte Woolner, Angela Fleming, Alphonsa Bankovsky, Ann & Bernard Slammon, Ivy-Pearl Simpson
Our deceased	Patricia Smith, Mary Boyle, Joan Lever, John Coggan, Maria Cuc Dong
In Memory	Bill McManus

A FAMILY IN CRISIS

Feast of the Holy Family.

Fr Robert Gay OP argues that the Holy Family in its moments of crisis is most powerfully a model for our own families.

The true meaning of Christmas is largely ignored by many people these days. But nevertheless, it still seems to be a time when people like to get together in a spirit of festivity. It's a chance for families to gather from far and wide to spend some time together. It's a great blessing for people to see each other again; for those children who've flown the nest to come back to the family home, and for grandparents, aunts and uncles to gather and catch up on the news of the past months. But whether people come together to celebrate the birth of our Lord, or simply get together to see each other and exchange gifts, Christmas can be a mixed time for many. When families get together, in can be as much an occasion of difficulty as joy. Old rivalries and tensions may resurface, and arguments flare up as the Christmas wine loosens the shackles of politeness and self-control. And for others, there is the pain of loneliness arising from family breakup, the isolation brought about by mental or physical sickness, or distance from loved ones which makes Christmas something to be endured. Rosy cheeked smiling faces of people in Christmas jumpers can seem a world away from reality.

It's important then for us to remember that very soon after the birth of our saviour in the manger in Bethlehem, the Holy Family's life is in crisis. The peace and stillness of the stable is brought to an abrupt end with the news that Herod is in search of Jesus, and plans to kill him. Joseph takes Mary and Jesus by night on a journey to safety in Egypt. They become refugees, dwelling in a strange land.

Perhaps one of the most striking messages of the story of Christmas then, is that family life doesn't always run smoothly even for this most special of families. Right from the very beginning, there is struggle, hardship, and the need for extraordinary courage and endurance in the face of these difficulties. How true does this seem of your own experience of family life? Most of our families will not face the same kind of difficulties as the Holy Family, but many and varied trials and struggles will come. If we are to think of the Holy Family as any kind of model for family life – and I think we should – I would like to suggest that this example is not best shown in the manger scene, but rather in the flight to Egypt. Mary and Joseph are model parents because of their immediate response to the needs of the baby Jesus. Responding to the angel's message, they will do anything to ensure his safety. Good parents always do everything they can to ensure the wellbeing of their children. This is the sacrifice at the heart of parenthood. Mary and Joseph did everything that they could, and yet as they set out for Egypt, unsure of the burdens and difficulties that they face. But they set out anyway. The journey of family life is always a journey into the unknown. Parents always have hopes and dreams for the future of their children. Children in turn have their own hopes and dreams. Yet as day to day life passes; as months become years and years become decades, reality may well take a very different trajectory. Life is a great mystery, and it sometimes throws all kinds of difficult things our way. And then of course there's the problem of sin, which disrupts and breaks down relationships, and threatens the bonds of love which keep us together.

But if we listen to the message of the good news of salvation, which comes to us in Jesus Christ, we hear that at the heart of loving is mercy and forgiveness. If we have God-like expectations of our families, then we're surely going to be hurt and disappointed at some point. But if we are merciful and forgive, those very moments of difficulty and sin can be transformed by the grace of God to renew and strengthen the bonds of love. Perhaps that sounds rather too simplistic or idealistic – until, perhaps, we realise that striving to live in family life in the light of the Gospel message takes faith, courage and trust in what God has done for us through that child in the manger.

CHRISTMAS STORY

"Christmas is not just one day of the year! It is a whole season. There are twelve wonderful days of Christmas!"

For good or bad, you may have already sent the shepherds back to the attic, back to their Styrofoam fields to keep watch over their china crèche flock by night. You may be ready to move on because it feels like Christmas should be over.

You know the story's preface. There's an awkward pregnancy along with a "pre-due date" relocation because of taxation. Then a birth to this blended family, followed by a hosting of a holiday party, including Luke's shepherds and Matthew's Wise Men. The holy family had probably seen enough of Christmas. They must have been ready for things to return to normal—whatever that is. But, alas, they would never see normal again. This baby had brought with him a new normal.

Fascinating, that right off the bat, God's own Son becomes a transient, homeless, migrant, alien. Within a few pages the baby will be all grown-up and we'll hear him say, "Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." I guess once a refugee, still a refugee. Wherever we go, whatever we feel, faithful people have found that God faithfully has been there, done that, and will meet us there, as well, again.

The old prophet Isaiah knew it to be true. He sang of God: "It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old." (Isaiah 63:9)

Even the testing times of life can be handled faithfully because of Christ. The writer of Hebrews says, "Because he [Jesus] himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested." (Hebrews 20:18)

So, here we sit, with a new year just ahead, an old year with bittersweet memories almost behind; and in our hearts we hold a Christmas story. A bizarre Christmas story—with foreign tyrants and heavy taxes and bloody swords and innocent suffering and homeless holy refugees.

And, remarkably, prayerfully, God somehow uses this collage of odd images to fulfil a commitment to us. It can be stated so simply, but here it is: With our grief in one hand, and our gratitude in the other, we bask in God's big promise to never leave us or forsake us.

Whatever next year's "new normal" brings our way—the good news is it is not new to God. And that is a Christmas gift worth keeping.

Amen.



IMPORTANT PARISH INFORMATION

It is important that you contact the office by email, phone or in writing if you would like to a Mass Intention, Memorial Mass, Baptism, or use of the Parish Centre a **minimum two weeks** notice for Wedding bookings **six months** notice is required.

If you DO NOT book through the Office we cannot guarantee your request.

If you would like a loved one in the prayers for the sick, anniversary or death in the *Bulletin*, details must be with the Parish Office **NO** later than **Tuesday 9am** of that week.

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL OF RELIGION / CATECHISTS - This year-long faith education program is intended for children who do not attend Catholic schools. Please contact the Parish Office if you'd like more information. In recess until next year.

BLACKFRIARS MEDITATION GROUP meets on **Thursday** evenings in the 7.30pm Parish Centre. Enquiries John Jarvis 6296 2001 or Michael Flynn 6257 1038 - www.wccm.org

CARDS Play social style 'Cards for fun', **Monday** 10am-1pm in the Parish Centre. All welcome!!!

COFFEE GROUP Our monthly coffee group will meet the **third Thursday** of each month at Siam Twist Hackett at 10.30 am. We look forward to seeing our friends & welcome newcomers.

CRAFT GROUP meets noon - 4.00pm in the Parish Centre on the **first, second and fourth Wednesdays** of the month .

DOMINICAN LIBRARY will open **Saturday** mornings, 9.30am - 12.00 noon in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

HOLY MARY MOTHER OF GOD PRAYER GROUP meets 2.00pm **Thursdays** in the church. Contact the Office.

WEEKLY READER FORMATION Reflections on the readings for the following Sunday are held **Wednesday** evenings at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre. All Parishioners welcome.

PRAY THE ROSARY will be held the First Saturday of every month at 3.30pm in the Church. Confessions available afterwards followed by refreshments in the parish centre. Please bring a plate to share. For information - Letty 0418 518 033

COELIACS Parishioners who are coeliac (intolerant to Gluten) If you wish to receive a gluten free host at Mass you should advise the Celebrant or Acolyte prior to Mass.

PARISH BULLETIN - DEADLINE for notices is **NOON TUESDAY** Ph. 6248 5925 or Email: watson@cg.org.au

PROCLAIMING FAITH

Today it is common for families to move many times. In Jesus time families did not move so often. So we can imagine how Joseph felt when an angel suddenly warned him to pack up his family and move to Egypt. But Joseph did not argue or complain. He listened, and out of love he obeyed God's will. Then, when danger was past, God called the Holy Family out of exile. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph finally had a permanent home in Nazareth. The word *obedience* comes from a Latin word meaning, "to listen." Some of us have developed what is called "selective hearing." We select, or choose, what we want to hear. When God (who is working through our parents and others in authority) says, "Go on vacation," or "Take a ride together and stop for ice cream," we listen! At other times, it might be harder to listen to God and to our parents. Why do you think Joseph listened to God? Have you ever been like Joseph and obeyed and then were very glad you did?

TRANSPORT - Due to bus timetable changes a couple who live in the Ainslie area are unable to attend the 10am Mass. If you can help with transport please contact the office.

ROSTER

4 / 5 January

Saturday 5pm		
Acolyte / Server	M. Tran	
Readers	P. English	T. Dennis
Presentation of Gifts	U. Ford	
EMOE	C. Lewis	
Sunday 8am		
Acolyte / Server	F. Bertrand	
Readers	B. Bandle	C. Bandle
Presentation of Gifts	Bandle Family	
EMOE	E. Smith	
Sunday 10am		
Acolyte / Server	R. Tanzer	
Readers	P. McDonald	Volunteer
Presentation of Gifts	Musolino Family	
EMOE	A. Moore	K. Murphy
Sunday 5pm		
Acolyte / Server	P. Tran	
Readers	Volunteer	K. Watson
Presentation of Gifts	Malone Family	
EMOE	C. de Luca	T. de Luca
COUNTERS	F. Higgins	I. Buckley

31 DECEMBER - NEW YEARS EVE CELEBRATION

AMICUS New Year's Eve Celebration on Tuesday 31.12.19 meet at the Austrian Club Mawson for dinner & dance to DJ Joe Pelle for those who are available on this night. (more details closer Tba) contact: Patricia 0412 351 548

31 DECEMBER - THE MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIESTS

Everyone is invited to the 13th annual Canberra New Year's Eve Prayer Vigil at St Brigid's Church, Dickson commencing at 8.00pm. First Cenacle is prayed at 8.00pm (Joyful Mysteries) Second Cenacle at 9.00pm (Luminous Mysteries) Third Cenacle at 10.00pm (Sorrowful Mysteries) Fourth Cenacle at 11.00pm (Glorious Mysteries) Exposition from 8.00pm until 11.45pm concluding with Benediction. For further inquiries phone Judy & Joe Mewburn 6254 6202

TRIBUNAL OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Marriage breakdown is usually a traumatic experience for all those concerned with many divorcees unsure of the validity of this marriage within the Catholic Church. The Church reaches out in support of those whose marriage has broken down, while upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage.

If you are divorced or in the process of finalising your divorce and would like information about the annulment process, please contact the Tribunal on 6239 9813 or by email tribunal@cg.org.au. All enquiries remain confidential to the Tribunal.

FOOTPRINTS Last night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to me, the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before us I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that at many times along the path of life, there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of my life. This really bothered me, so I questioned the Lord about it. 'Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why in times when I needed you most, you would leave me.' The Lord replied, 'My precious child, I love you and I would never, never leave you during times of trial and suffering. When you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you'.

The fragrance always stays in the hand that gives the rose.