



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills. NSW. 2147

Ph. 9622 2920

Email: secretary@olol7hills.com.au

Parish Priest:	Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran	Parish School:	OLOL 8869 6800
Parish Deacon:	Deacon Thong Nguyen	Principal:	Ms Keiran Byrnes
Parish Office Team:	Rosie Sadipoor, Kim Dang Jane Nguyen, Laura Ilioski	Reconciliation:	Saturday 4:30-5:30pm
Office Hours: Monday-Friday:	9am - 3.00pm	Baptismal Preparation:	19th February 2025
WEEKDAY MASS:	Tues, Wed, Fri. 8.00am Thursday 9.00am	Baptism:	23rd February 2025
WEEKEND MASS:	Saturday Vigil 6pm Sunday 8am & 9.30am	Sacrament Co-Ordinator:	Mrs Artelle Lenthall
		Parish Website:	www.olol7hills.com.au
		Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/



Christmas Year C 24th & 25th December, 2024

Christmas Eve 6.00pm and 9.00pm

READINGS 1st Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5
2nd Reading: Apostles 13:16-17, 22-25
Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

*The Lord takes delight in you.
Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.
A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David.*

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed: the Saviour of the world will be our king. **Alleluia!**

Christmas Midnight Mass

READINGS 1st Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7
2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14
Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

*A son is given to us.
God's grace has been revealed to all people.
Today a saviour has been born for you.*

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! Good News and great joy to all the world: today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord. **Alleluia!**

Christmas Day 8am and 9:30am

READINGS 1st Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10
2nd Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6
Gospel: John 1:1-18

*All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.
In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.
The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we saw his glory.*

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. **Alleluia!**



WE WISH OUR PARISH COMMUNITY AND THEIR FAMILIES A VERY HOLY
CHRISTMAS AND OUR PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS REMAIN WITH YOU OVER
THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS





Let us Pray for the Sick

S.R Anesley, Florence Arinanan, Rodney Bell, Lawrence Charles, Ben Dixon, Alma Caguimbal, Para Dias, Mary Camilleri, Lucia Fernando, Renuka Fernando, Chmouneh Hayek, Lynnda Lim-Huynh, Mary Jordan, Paul Leong, Blago Milicevic, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Jennifer Morrissey, Carlos Mureno, Maricar Poblete, Camy Ratnam, Eustace Ratnam, Sue Tipaldo, Christina Tsui, Natalie Woodward.

If you would like to add to our Sick List or know of any Parishioner who is unwell please contact Father Henry or email the Parish Office: secretary@olol7hills.com.au

We can also arrange for Holy Communion or a visit if required.

Let us Pray for the Deceased

Recently Deceased: Emma Barriom, Ann Byrne, Vivienne Cameron, Murial Chary, Barrie Chamberlain, Romeo Condes, Blaise Costa, Padmini De Seram, Randy De Silva, Dulcie Duraisamy, Sandra Eichhorn, Bonosa Enfesta, Henrieta Fernando, Rienzie Fernando, Jasmin Fernando, Ethan Garcia, Ricardo Garcia, Zac Jordan, Ingga Leysa, Cynthia Lopez, Richard Monreal, Eloise Nagallo, Teresita Ngalongalay, Gerard Noval, Etelka Petkovics, Suranjith Reberra, Sria Shami, Michael Scott, Linda Villavicencio.

Anniversaries: Mary Alagiah, Horace Baptist, Ronald Barley, Elaine Bosen, Peter & Helen Bonnici, Denis Brophy, Catherine Chandra, Aloysean Corera, Mary Camenzuli, Philomena Corera, Ivan Elisher, Rita de Silva, John Fernando, Nevis Fernando, M.A Fernando, Anthony Garcia, Francisca Garcia, Teodoro Garcia, Zenaida Garcia, Christine Gomez, Josephine Gomez, Mary Grech, Harold Thomas Hancock, Bill & Helen Hili, Prudencio Moner, Thelma Morrissey, Anton Motha, Xavier Motha Jnr, Sr Christina Morrissey, Paul Mula, Lissy, Jose & Mary Kutty, Jason Muscat, Tony Muscat, Aurora Nonato, Cordula Paiva, Adrian Pereira, John Portelli, Bernabe Quinto, Roseline Ratnam, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Michael Sant, Mary Silva, Rosary Silva, Loreta Laberinto Udan, Melchor Usman, Dionisio Udan, Alison Vella, Jim Vella.

Remembrance: Fe & Jose Abadiano, Neil Amaratunga, France Angseeing, Carmen Attard, Annie Azucenas, Sam Borg, Ceferino, Rosario, Renato & Marlyn Cabasa, Toufic, Dede & Bede Diab, Fe Licup Carmen, Dennis Clarke, Myrna Cruz, Saviour Caruana, John Soo Choon, Tania McGove, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Marcel, Monsen & Peter Diab, Carmen, Jimmy, Antonia, Tania, Tony, Vicki, Louie, Joe & Launcer De Guire, Joseph & Carmena Formosa, Melvyn Fernandes, Nevis Fernando, Zaren & William Formosa, Sam Formosa, Mario & Joe Gat, Maximilian & Julian Epondulan, Sam Gabo, Mary & Sam Galea, Evangeline Garcia, Leandro Snr Garcia, Jose Garcia, Teodoro Garcia, Rita Hili, Selvam Irudayaraj, Sheena Landagan, A. Mansoor, Apolinario Maylaya, Pauline Meilak, Mangion & Cini Family, Felina Mayuyo, Michael (Mike) McNamee, Maureen & John Mead, William & Emilia Mifsud, Joe & Doris Mifsud, Mary Mifsud, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Lourda Motha, Louis, Stephen & Joseph Mula, Mary & Francis Muscat, Peter John & Carmelita, Jesus Opuencia, Natalia Prahinog, John Ratnam, Jose, Maria, Laureano, Yolanda & Karen Reyes, Sem Sema, Jonathan Tek Kie, Tony Vassollo, Shane Vaz, Colin Zahra, Vinnie Zahra.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR GREETINGS

In this joyful time of the year, I would like to thank each of you for your support throughout the year and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the Lord fill your hearts with joy and hope and help you share them with people around you both in this Parish community and beyond.

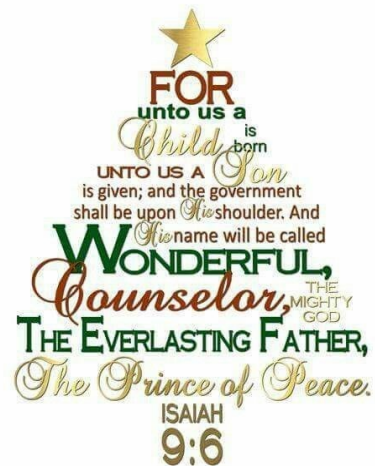
Fr Henry.

CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

On behalf of the Parish community I would like to thank our ministers for their generosity to serve at our Christmas liturgies and our volunteers for their skills to make the church look great for the feast of the Lord's Nativity.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

The Parish Office will be closed between Christmas and New Year. We wish you a wonderful Christmas and many blessings and a warm welcome for 2025. During January, the office hours will be reduced due to the holiday period. If you require assistance, please call 9622 2920 and leave a voicemail message. These messages are checked and we will endeavour to assist you as soon as possible. Thank You.



CHRISTMAS OFFERTORY

Christmas is a joyous time when we come together as a parish family to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Our Lady of Lourdes relies on the generosity of our faith community to sustain our liturgical, sacramental, pastoral and charitable ministries and we are ever grateful for your support. Please consider giving a Christmas Offertory in the envelopes provided.



BISHOP VINCENT'S 2024 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

We are pleased to be able to share Bishop Vincent's Christmas message for 2024.

It can be viewed online at

[Bishop Vincent Long's Christmas Message 2024 - YouTube](#)

FROM FR. HENRY DUC



Dear Friends,

Once again we gather to celebrate Christmas, the birth of Jesus, the Son of God who was born to save us from sin, to let us know that we are loved by God, and to lead us to our heavenly home.

Historically speaking, Christmas was the initiative of the Early Christians meant to replace a pagan feast celebrated on December 25 with a Christian one.

As we know, some pagan people in pre-Christian time viewed the world as the battle ground for the fight between the evil gods and the good ones. They began to feel alarmed in early December as they noticed the days getting shorter in the Northern hemisphere, a phenomenon they saw as the indication that the evil gods were on top of the good ones. Consequently they held a feast to drum up support for the good gods who were in trouble with lot of parties and noise to wake up the good gods from their slumber and encourage them to fight back. This feast was held on December 25 every year.

Later on, some of the early Christians who once were pagans began to celebrate this feast with their neighbours. As Christians they believed in one God instead of multi gods who were combatting, but they felt rather reluctant to let go the fun part associated with the feast. As a result they gave the pagan feast a Christian meaning which was Christmas or the nativity of the Lord as known in the Church. This epistemological transformation was smoothly done, since they placed Jesus at the centre of the celebration as the light sent by God into the world to overcome the darkness of sin.

For the four Gospels of the Vigil Mass, the Mass during the Night, the Mass at Dawn and the Mass during the Day of Christmas, we have the opportunities to listen to various accounts of the Christmas story according to Matthew, Luke and John. Matthew begins the story with Jesus' genealogy starting from Abraham to Jacob, the father of St Joseph and ending with the birth of Jesus, the Emmanuel meaning 'God-is-with-us.'

In the first account of Luke, the reason why Jesus came to be born in a manger at Bethlehem far away from Nazareth his home town was revealed; though he was born wrapped in swaddling clothes by Mary as a poor baby, he was no ordinary, because God's angel happily sang of his praise and proclaimed him as the Saviour of the world, and in the second account we hear how the shepherds respond to the angels' call to come to see Jesus and went away as his witnesses.

John himself recounts the birth of Jesus in a philosophical way as he opts for the Greek term Logos meaning the Word to cover the story of Christmas. According to John, Jesus was God and with God from the beginning; he was made human and lived with us to help us see God's glory; he was also the true light to enlighten the world, and to overcome darkness.

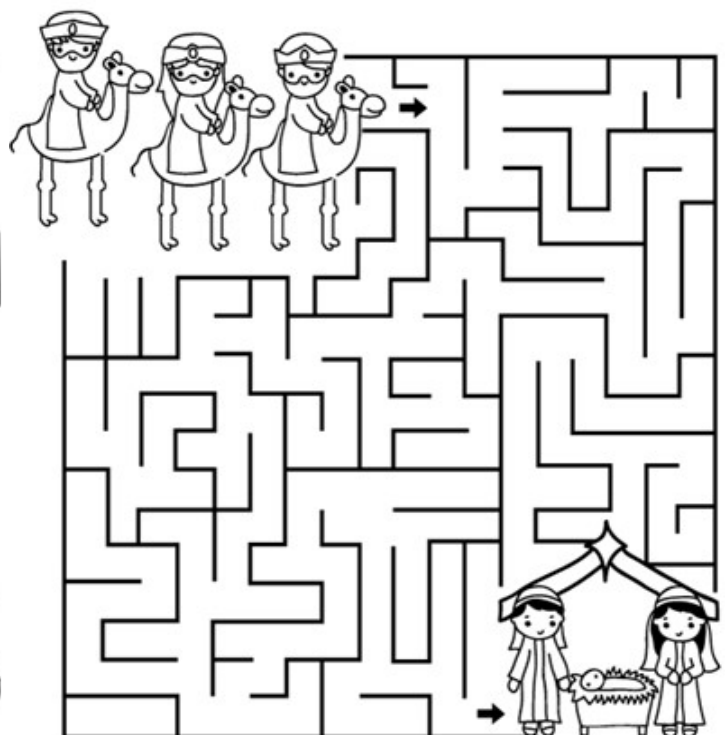
As we celebrate once again the Nativity of Jesus, let us give praise and thanks to God for giving us his saving Son as the light to enlighten us, and as the saviour to deliver us from sin and to show us the way to enter life in eternity.

Pray that we all may be inspired by the example of the shepherds to become authentic witnesses to Christ by means of all what we do and say always reflecting the spirit of love, the virtue closest to Jesus' heart.

Have a love-filled Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Fr Henry

Help the Three Wise Men find the manger.



POPE FRANCIS' HOMILY FOR CHRISTMAS MASS IN 2023

"A census of the whole earth" (cf. Lk 2:1). This was the context in which Jesus was born, and the Gospel makes a point of it. The census might have been mentioned in passing, but instead is carefully noted. And in this way, a great contrast emerges. While the emperor numbers the world's inhabitants, God enters it almost surreptitiously. While those who exercise power seek to take their place with the great ones of history, the King of history chooses the way of littleness. None of the powerful take notice of him: only a few shepherds, relegated to the margins of social life. The census speaks of something else. In the Scriptures, the taking of a census has negative associations. King David, tempted by large numbers and an unhealthy sense of self-sufficiency, sinned gravely by ordering a census of the people. He wanted to know how powerful he was. After some nine months, he knew how many men could wield a sword (cf. 2 Sam 24:1-9). The Lord was angered and the people suffered. On this night, however, Jesus, the "Son of David," after nine months in Mary's womb, is born in Bethlehem, the city of David. He does not impose punishment for the census but humbly allows himself to be registered as one among many. Here we see not a god of wrath and chastisement but the God of mercy, who takes flesh and enters the world in weakness, heralded by the announcement: "on earth peace among those whom he favors" (Lk 2:14). Tonight, our hearts are in Bethlehem, where the Prince of Peace is once more rejected by the futile logic of war, by the clash of arms that even today prevents him from finding room in the world (cf. Lk 2:7).

The census of the whole earth, in a word, manifests the all-too-human thread that runs through history: the quest for worldly power and might, fame and glory, which measures everything in terms of success, results, numbers, and figures, a world obsessed with achievement. Yet the census also manifests the way of Jesus, who comes to seek us through enfleshment. He is not the god of accomplishment, but the God of incarnation. He does not eliminate injustice from above by a show of power but from below, by a show of love. He does not burst on the scene with limitless power, but descends to the narrow confines of our lives. He does not shun our frailties, but makes them his own.

Brothers and sisters, tonight we might ask ourselves: Which God do we believe in? In the God of incarnation or the god of achievement? Because there is always a risk that we can celebrate Christmas while thinking of God in pagan terms, as a powerful potentate in the sky; a god linked to power, worldly success, and the idolatry of consumerism. With the false image of a distant and petulant deity who treats the good well and the bad poorly; a deity made in our own image and likeness, handy for resolving our problems and removing our ills. God, on the other hand, waves no magic wand; he is no god of commerce who promises "everything all at once." He does not save us by pushing a button, but draws near us, in order to change our world from within. Yet how deeply ingrained is the worldly notion of a distant, domineering, unbending, and powerful deity who helps his own to prevail against others! So many times this image is ingrained in us. But that is not the case: our God was born for all, during a census of the whole earth.

Let us look, then, to the "living and true God" (1 Thes 1:9). The God who is beyond all human reckoning and yet allows himself to be numbered by our accounting. The God who revolutionizes history by becoming a part of history. The God who so respects us as to allow us to reject him; who takes away sin by taking it upon himself; who does not eliminate pain but transforms it; who does not remove problems from our lives but grants us a hope that is greater than all our problems. God so greatly desires to embrace our lives that, infinite though he is, he becomes finite for our sake. In his greatness, he chooses to become small; in his righteousness, he submits to our injustice. Brothers and sisters, this is the wonder of Christmas: not a mixture of sappy emotions and worldly contentment, but the unprecedented tenderness of a God who saves the world by becoming incarnate. Let us contemplate the Child, let us contemplate the manger, his crib, which the angels call "a sign" for us (cf. Lk 2:12). For it truly is the sign that reveals God's face, a face of compassion and mercy, whose might is shown always and only in love. He makes himself close, tender, and compassionate. This is God's way: closeness, compassion, tenderness. Sisters and brothers, let us marvel at the fact that he "became flesh"

(Jn 1:14). Flesh: the very word evokes our human frailty. The Gospel uses this word to show us that God completely assumed our human condition. Why did he go to such lengths? Because he cares for us, because he loves us to the point that he considers us more precious than all else. Dear brother, dear sister, to God, who changed history in the course of a census, you are not a number but a face. Your name is written on his heart. But if you look to your own heart and think of your own inadequacies and this world that is so judgmental and unforgiving, you may feel it difficult to celebrate this Christmas. You may think things are going badly, or feel dissatisfied with your limitations, your failings, your problems, and your sins. Today, though, please, let Jesus take the initiative. He says to you, "For your sake, I became flesh; for your sake, I became just like you." So why remain caught up in your troubles? Like the shepherds, who left their flocks, leave behind the prison of your sorrows and embrace the tender love of the God who became a child. Put aside your masks and your armor; cast your cares on him and he will care for you (cf. Ps 55:22). He became flesh; he is looking not for your achievements but for your open and trusting heart. In him, you will rediscover who you truly are: a beloved son or daughter of God. Now you can believe it, for tonight the Lord was born to light up your life; his eyes are alight with love for you. We have difficulty believing in this, that God's eyes shine with love for us.

Christ does not look at numbers but at faces. However, who looks at him amid the many distractions and mad rush of a bustling and indifferent world? Who is watching? In Bethlehem, as crowds of people were caught up in the excitement of the census, coming and going, filling the inns, and engaged in petty conversation, a few were close to Jesus: Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and then the Magi.

Let us learn from them. They stood gazing upon Jesus, with their hearts set on him. They did not speak, they worshipped. Tonight, brothers and sisters, is a time of adoration, of worship.

Worship is the way to embrace the Incarnation. For it is in silence that Jesus, the Word of the Father, becomes flesh in our lives. Let us do as they did, in Bethlehem, a town whose name means "House of Bread." Let us stand before him who is the Bread of Life. Let us rediscover worship, for to worship is not to waste time, but to make our time a dwelling place for God. It is to let the seed of the Incarnation bloom within us; it is to cooperate in the work of the Lord, who, like leaven, changes the world. To worship is to intercede, to make reparation, to allow God to realign history. As a great teller of epic tales once wrote to his son, "I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament. There you will find romance, glory, honor, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth" (J.R.R. Tolkien, Letter 43, March 1941). Brothers and sisters, tonight love changes history. Make us believe, Lord, in the power of your love, so different from the power of the world. Lord, make us, like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the Magi, gather around you and worship you. As you conform us ever more to yourself, we shall bear witness before the world to the beauty of your countenance.