

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."

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Parish Priest: Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran
Parish Deacon: Deacon Thong Nguyen
Parish Office Team: Rosie Sadipoor, Kim Dang, Jane Nguyen, Laura Ilioski
Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 9am - 3.00pm
WEEKDAY MASS: Tues, Wed, Fri. 8.00am
 Thursday 9.00am
WEEKEND MASS: Saturday Vigil 6pm
 Sunday 8am & 9.30am

Parish School: OLOL 8869 6800
Principal: Ms Keiran Byrnes
Reconciliation: Saturday 4:30-5:30pm
Baptismal Preparation: 19th February 2025
Baptism: 23rd February 2025
Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Parish Website: www.olol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph 29 December 2024 • Year C



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: Joyce Ashton, 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, MA Fernando, Anthony Garcia, Francisca Garcia, Teodoro Garcia, Zenaida Garcia, Christine Gomez, Josephine Gomez, Mary Grech, Harold Thomas Hancock, Bill & Helen Hill, 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, Elizabeth Pinter, 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, Iris Warne

Remembrance: Fe & Jose Abadiano, Neil Amaratunga, France Angseeing, Carmen Attard, Annie Azucenas, Sam Borg, Ceferino, Rosario, Renato & Marilyn 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 Hill, 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 Serna, Jonathan Tek Kie, Tony Vassollo, Shane Vaz, Colin Zahra, Vinnie Zahra.

Our Lady of Lourdes

Ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my needs, my troubles, my sufferings; cast on me a look of pity. By appearing in the grotto of Lourdes, you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary, from which you dispense your favours, and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their infirmities, both spiritual and physical. I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence to implore your maternal intercession.

Obtain most loving mother, my requests, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Amen.



REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second

FIRST COLLECTION is for the support of Priests throughout the Diocese.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account name: Parramatta Diocesan Clergy
BSB: 067 950
ACC: 00 00 4265
Reference: Seven Hills - 6035

SECOND COLLECTION or Planned Giving Program

On behalf of the Parish Community, I would like to thank you very much for your ongoing support, which has been absolutely vital in keeping our Parish going strong. Projects completed include the Hall Kitchen renovation, Parish Meeting Room painting, Parish Office and Meeting Room Roof painted, Church roof cleaned and ceiling repaired and painted.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church.
BSB: 067 950
ACC: 000552
Reference: (Your Planned Giving envelope number or for a one off donation, 'DONATION')

IN-PERSON BANK DEPOSIT (at a Bank Inst / Branch)

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church
BSB: 062 315
ACC ID # 00901486
AGENT # 660

SMART DEVICE TERMINALS

All donations made via these new machines are shared 50/50 with our Diocese.

THE PILGRIM STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The Statue of Virgin Mary is available for home visitation and will reside with you for a week, being Sunday to Saturday. If you are wishing to participate, please leave your name and address with the Parish Office.

FIRST READING *A reading from the Book of Samuel 1:20-22. 24-28*

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son, and called him Samuel 'since' she said 'I asked the Lord for him.' When a year had gone by, the husband Elkanah went up again with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go up, having said to her husband, 'Not before the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and present him before the Lord and he shall stay there for ever.'

When she had weaned him, she took him up with her together with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the temple of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was with them. They slaughtered the bull, and the child's mother came to Eli. She said, 'If you please, my lord. As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord. This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord granted me what I asked him. Now I make him over to the Lord for the whole of his life. He is made over to the Lord.'

There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R) How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

1. How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord, God of hosts.
My soul is longing and yearning,
is yearning for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God. **(R.)**

2. They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.
They are happy, whose strength is in you;
they walk with ever growing strength. **(R.)**

3. O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,
gave ear, O God of Jacob.
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,
look on the face of your anointed. **(R.)**

SECOND READING *A reading from the letter of St John 3:1-2,21-24*

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed, all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is. My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Open our heart, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL *A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 2:41-52*

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant. He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord



Dear friends,

This Sunday following Christmas we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family meant to highlight the importance of the Holy Family for the world as a model for key virtues necessary for human development. This feast was instituted by Pope Leo XIII in 1893 as an optional celebration for any diocese requesting it, and Pope Benedict XV added it to the universal Church calendar three years after the end of World War I in 1921 to be exact.

In the Gospel for the feast this year, Luke recounts the story about how Mary and Joseph took the twelve-year-old Jesus from Nazareth up to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, an annual celebration of Jewish people to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt. As we know, the distance between Nazareth and Jerusalem is about 146 kms, and if the Holy Family then travelled approximately 20 kms per day, it would take them about a week to make the journey.

From a religious education perspective, this trip highlights the great effort of Mary and Joseph to give the best religious education to Jesus as responsible parents. They themselves observed their religious tradition and helped Jesus to know and follow it as well.

The interesting part of the story is that at the return trip when the young Jesus deliberately made the decision to stay behind to mix and mingle with the smartest men in the religious world then, while Mary and Joseph thought he was with their relatives and friends. Seeing him nowhere amongst those travelling with them in other caravans, they decided to come back to Jerusalem and found him sitting among the doctors in the temple like nothing ever happened. When asked to explain his adventure, Jesus replied with the questions 'why were you looking for me?' and 'did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' Mary and Joseph's response was very admirable, they remained calm and patient though they had no idea of what Jesus meant to say, and Mary herself, according to Luke, quietly treasured the experience in her heart. To me, Jesus was so fortunate to have such understanding parents like that, I'm afraid it wouldn't be quiet like that if he happened to meet some of the parents I know!

Let us pray especially today for all families in the Church, may parents be responsible faith educators to their children by teaching them our faith tradition and observing it, and may children always show respect to parents and grow in wisdom and in favour of God.

Have a Holy Family-focused week,

Fr Henry

PARISH NEWS...

NEW YEAR MASS: SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

All are invited to attend the New Year Mass marking the feast of Mary, the Mother of God at 8am.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS

We wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas and a joyful and grace-filled New Year. May the love of Christ be with you and his light enlightens your way today and always.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please show your deepest respect for our House of God at Seven Hills by not bringing any food into the church, that includes the crying room. Parents are always encouraged to bring soft toys and crayons for children to work with our weekly bulletin.

CANDLE WAX ON THE CHURCH CARPET

Please do not try to remove candle wax on the church carpet by yourselves, for you might make it worse. Instead let our staff know and we ask our carpet cleaners to treat it.

LITURGICAL MINISTRY COURSE RETURNS IN 2025

Those interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries either as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to the Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar, the Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence in February 2025. Enrolment forms can be found at the back sacristy.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS AND BULLETIN

Our Parish Office will close during the month of January as usual to allow our Parish staff to take a break, consequently there will be no bulletins throughout the month. Fr Henry however will be around in the Parish Office for help if needed.

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 FEAST DAY: FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

We will celebrate of feast day on the weekend 8th and 9th of February, 2025 with a festive celebration in the Parish hall following the 9.30am Sunday Mass. Please get yourselves ready for this joyful occasion.

MINISTRY ROSTER UPDATE 2025

Ministry rosters for February - July 2025 are now available. You can find a copy at the back Sacristy or on our website under 'Parish Forms'. If you require more copies or notice any discrepancies, please kindly contact the parish office.

LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Please note that Lourdes Playgroup has ended for the year. Thank you to the families that have supported it during 2024 Playgroup will resume in 2025, school term 1.

DIOCESAN NEWS

St Paul Feast Day Celebration: 18 January

Come Join the Celebrations at St Paul's Feast. Saturday, 18 January 2025, 5.30pm at St Monica's, Richmond. Followed by procession. Other details Lady Queen of Peace band, BBQ, food, drinks, rides and chocolate wheel.

MET Natural Fertility Creighton Model Introduction

Session: 19 February

Are you looking for help to track your fertility cycle? Come and explore the Creighton Model FertilityCare System – a Natural, Effective, Healthy and Scientific approach to achieve, space/avoid pregnancy or monitor women's health. Engaged and married couples, single women and those wanting to know more about their menstrual cycles are welcome to attend. This free session will be held on Wednesday 19th February from 7:15-8:15pm via Zoom and is valued at \$125. To register or for more information, please contact catherine.bourne@parracatholic.org or 0400 427 605.

Free English and Citizenship Classes

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains are offering English and Citizenship classes at Mamre House, 181 Mamre Rd, Orchard Hills, on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am to 2pm during school terms. Free childcare is available. If you are interested in enrolling, please contact Mamre Crèche on (02) 8843 2506 or Nepean Community College (02) 4724 9000.



2025 Enrolments are open

Study scripture, theology, pastoral ministry and spirituality

- Introductory or further studies
- Face-to-face or online modes
- Audit, undergraduate or postgraduate level

For more information: view our [2025 Prospectusctc.edu.au/contact/contact-the-registrar/](https://2025.prospectusctc.edu.au/contact/contact-the-registrar/)

CATHOLIC
THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY
OF DIVINITY

Calix Society: 12 Step Recovery and Catholic Spirituality

Are you or a loved one troubled by addiction or alcoholism? The Calix Society is a way to recovery that incorporates 12 Step recovery and Catholic Spirituality. Sydney Unit meets Monthly at St Joseph, Enfield. Mass (5:30pm) and "About Calix" talk (6:30 - 7:30pm). We also meet weekly via zoom and have an annual retreat. Contact: Tim 0401 600 422 or Kevin 0435 668 382 or calixsydney@outlook.com. See: <https://www.calixsociety.org/>

Epiphany Pilgrimage and Fiesta: 2-9 January 2025

Commit the first fruits of your new year to Christ with the 2025 Epiphany Pilgrimage. Enjoy 7 days of bushwalking, fellowship and prayer as we journey from Emu Plains to the top of the Blue Mountains, experiencing the wonderful hospitality of parish communities along the way. Day 1 is a family-friendly day, with the option for a children's pilgrimage finishing with the Fannies Fiesta at St Finbars, Glenbrook. For more information and to register for all or part of the journey, visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org

Thank You for Supporting our Catholic Care's Houses to Homes

Fr Fernando Montano, Parramatta Catholic Foundation, and Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains thank you for your generous support of homeless mothers and children. Our Bishop's Christmas Appeal ensures that Catholic Care can continue to provide homeless mothers and children safety, support, and a place to call home. If you haven't had a chance to donate, please visit the website parracatholic.org/appeal Thank you.

Diocese of Parramatta Tribunal Office

The Tribunal of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Parramatta is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, to offer advice and assistance regarding marriage annulments and dissolution of marriages. Interviews are preferably conducted in person with Zoom and telephone interviews in special circumstances. Please contact the Tribunal Office on (02) 8838 3480 or email tribunal@parracatholic.org.

Medjugorje Pilgrimage 2025

Join David and Angeline Wilkes from St Aiden's Parish on a spiritual journey to Medjugorje from April 1st to 9th, 2025. This is their third pilgrimage, and the group will be staying with visionary Mirjana Soldo, guided by her long-time English interpreter, Miki Musa. Fr Neil Bulathsinhala will also be accompanying the group as the Chaplain. Places are limited, so if you feel called to experience the peace and grace of Medjugorje, please contact Angeline Wilkes at 0410 665 306 or visit saintlytravel.com.au for more details.

LOL SAFEGUARDING NEWS

Safeguarding Face-to-face Training Opportunities

The next session of face-to-face Mandatory Safeguarding Training will be held on Saturday 29 January at St Andrew the Apostle Parish Marayong for Cycle 1 (Module 1). More training opportunities will be available throughout January and February. Please register directly for this training or for other convenient dates and locations by clicking on the training event at: <https://parracatholic.org/connect/events/?series=safeguarding-training>. For more information, please email: safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org

Supporting the Safety of Our Community

We all have a role to play in safeguarding those who are vulnerable. Concerns about safeguarding may be referred to Fr Henry, our Parish Priest, or directly to the: Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards Ph (02) 8838 3419 or via Email: safeguarding@parracatholic.org.

LOL Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers here at LOL have a responsibility to support the Diocese's goals and objectives. Ways we do this are by abiding by the Diocese's Code of Conduct; treating others with respect; behaving appropriately and courteously to all clergy, employees, volunteers, parishioners, contractors and the public in the course of your role; undertaking training as requested or necessary; treating confidential any personal information learned about in the course of duties; maintain professional relationships within acceptable boundaries; contributing to and maintaining workplace health and safety and being aware of the duty of care to yourselves, clergy, employees and other volunteers.



POPE FRANCIS' ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

I am sorry not to be with you in the Square, but I am getting better and precautions must be taken.

Today the Gospel presents us with Mary who, after the annunciation of the Angel, visits Elizabeth, her elderly relative (cf. *Lk 1:39-45*), who is also expecting a child. Theirs is thus the meeting of two women rejoicing at the extraordinary gift of motherhood: Mary has just conceived Jesus, the Saviour of the world (cf. *Lk 1:31-35*), and Elizabeth, despite her advanced age, is carrying John, who will prepare the way before the Messiah (cf. *Lk 1:13-17*), John the Baptist.

They both have much to rejoice about, and perhaps we might feel they are far away, the protagonists of such great miracles that do not normally figure in our experience. The message the Evangelist wants to give us, a few days before Christmas, is this, it is different. Indeed, contemplating the miraculous signs of God's salvific action must never make us feel far from Him, but rather help us to recognize His presence and His love close to you, for example in the gift of every life, of every child, of his or her mother. The gift of life. I read, on the programme "A tua immagine", a beautiful thing that was written: *no child is a mistake!* The gift of life.

In the Square, even today, there will be mothers with their children, and perhaps they are some who are expecting. Please, let us not remain indifferent to their presence: let us learn to marvel at their beauty, as Elizabeth and Mary did, that beauty of expectant mothers. Let us bless mothers and give praise to God for the miracle of life! I like – I used to like, because now I cannot do it – when I used to take the bus, in the other diocese, when an expectant mother got on the bus, I would immediately offer her my seat: it is a gesture of hope and respect!

Brothers and sisters, in these days we like to create a festive atmosphere with lights, decorations and Christmas music. Let us remember, though, to express feelings of joy every time we encounter a mother who is carrying a child in her arms or in her womb. And when it happens to us, let us pray in our heart and let us say too, like Elizabeth, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" (*Lk 1:42*); let us sing, like Mary, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord" (*Lk 1:46*), so that every motherhood may be blessed, and in every mother in the world may the name of God be thanked and exalted, who entrusts men and women with the power to give life to children!

We will soon bless the "Bambinelli" you have brought. I have brought mine: this one was given to me by the Archbishop of Santa Fé; it was made by native Ecuadorian people... the *Bambinelli* you have brought. We can ask ourselves, then, do I thank the Lord because He made Himself a man like us, to share in all of our existence, apart from sin? Do I praise the Lord and bless Him for every child who is born? When I encounter an expectant mother, am I kind to her? Do I support and defend the sacred value of the life of the little ones ever since their conception in the maternal womb?

May Mary, Blessed among women, make us capable of experiencing wonder and gratitude before the mystery of nascent life.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

I follow with attention and concern the news from Mozambique, and I wish to reiterate my message of hope, peace and reconciliation to that beloved people. I pray that dialogue and the quest for the common good, supported by faith and good will, may prevail over mistrust and discord.

Tormented Ukraine continues to be struck by attacks against the city, which at times damage schools, hospitals, and churches. May the weapons be silenced and Christmas carols resound! Let us pray for a ceasefire on all war fronts, in Ukraine, the Holy Land, in all the Middle East and the entire world, at Christmas. And with sorrow I think of Gaza, of so much cruelty; of the children machine-gunned, the bombing of schools and hospitals... So much cruelty!

I greet all of you, Romans and pilgrims, with affection. I greet the delegation of Italian citizens who live in territories that have been waiting for a long time for reclamation in order to protect their health. I express my closeness to these populations, especially to those who suffered the recent tragedy in Calenzano.

This morning, I had the joy of being with the children, with their mothers, who attend the Santa Marta Dispensary in the Vatican, run by the Vincentian Sisters. They are good nuns! Among them there is one nun who is like a grandmother to everyone, the good Sister Antoinette, whom I remember with great love. And these children – there were many of them! – filled my heart with joy. I repeat: "No child is a mistake".

And now I will bless the "Bambinelli": I have brought mine. The statuettes of the Infant Jesus that you, dear children and young people, have brought here and which then, returning home, you will put in the Nativity scene. I thank you for this simple but important gesture. I heartily bless all of you, your parents, your grandparents, your families! And please, do not forget your grandparents! May no-one remain alone during these days.

And I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. May the Lord bless you.

Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci!*

POPE FRANCIS TO ROMAN CURIA: 'NEVER SPEAK ILL OF ONE ANOTHER'

By Lisa Zengarini

"An ecclesial community lives in joyful and fraternal harmony to the extent that its members walk in the way of humility, refusing to think and speak ill of one another." In his annual Christmas address to the Roman Curia in the Vatican on Saturday, Pope Francis again cautioned against the destructive effects of negative rumours and gossip that, he said "poisons hearts and leads nowhere".

Focusing on Saint Paul's exhortation to "bless and not to curse" (Rm 12,14), the theme of his address, the Pope encouraged the members of the Curia to refrain from malicious speaking and to instead foster an harmonious and joyful working community.

"Gossip damages social bonds, poisons hearts, and leads nowhere. As people often say: gossip amounts to nothing."

More children killed in Gaza: "It's cruelty"

Before starting his reflection Pope Francis again turned his thoughts to the ongoing deadly war in Gaza, where on Friday Israeli airstrikes killed at least 25 Palestinians including seven children from the same family in Jabalia al-Nazl, as Israel continues to bombard the already devastated territory. "This is not war. This is cruelty", the Pope lamented in unscripted remarks. "I want to say this because it touches my heart."

Pope Francis then went on to reflect on the virtue of humility and its profound relevance to Christian life and community, connecting it to the mystery of the Incarnation. "Speaking well and not speaking ill is an expression of humility, and humility is the hallmark of the Incarnation and particularly the mystery of the Lord's Birth which we are about to celebrate", he said, referring to Saint Paul's words in his Letter to the Romans.

The path to humility: self-accusation

As a way to cultivate humility, Pope Francis suggested the practice of self-accusation, drawing on the teachings of early Christian spiritual masters like Dorotheus of Gaza. Dorotheus' wisdom advocated for introspection and the transformation of negative thoughts about others into positive ones. S

Self-accusation, Pope Francis remarked "is the basis for our being able to say 'no' to individualism and 'yes' to the ecclesial spirit of community" in which "all are guardians of one another and walk together in humility and charity," and "are gradually liberated from suspicion and distrust".

"When one sees a defect in a person, one can only talk to three people: with God with the person concerned and if one cannot talk to the person, with the one in the community who can take care of the case. Nothing more."

The practice of self-accusation, the Pope explained, mirrors the "condescension" (*synkatabasis*) of God in the Incarnation, an act of divine humility where "the Most High chooses to become little, like a mustard seed, like a man's seed in a woman's womb" taking "upon Himself the unbearable burden of the world's sin."

This reality, Pope Francis continued, is exemplified by the Virgin Mary, who willingly participated in God's plan with humility, making her an archetype this theological virtue: "She had no cause for self-accusation, yet she freely chose to cooperate fully in God's condescension, in the abasement of the Son and in the descent of the Holy Spirit", he said.

Blessed ourselves, let us bless others in turn

Recalling that the Incarnation of the Word shows us that God has not condemned us but blessed us, the Pope underscored that "precisely because we ourselves have been blessed, we can bless others in turn." This blessing flows from immersion in God's grace, through "moments of encounter, friendships, in a spirit of openness and generosity" that can help us renew and give new life to office work which can otherwise become arid.

"If our hearts are embraced by that primordial blessing, then we will be able to bless everyone, even those for whom we do not care or those who have treated us badly."

Artisans of blessing

The Pope went on to highlight that as members of the Church "sign and instrument of God's blessing for humanity", all of us are called to become "artisans of blessing", envisioning the Church as a vast river branching into numerous streams to bring God's blessing to the world. He described the Roman Curia as a "workshop" where diverse roles contribute to this mission: "I like to think of the Roman Curia as a great workshop in which there are any number of different jobs, but where everyone works for the same purpose: to bless others, and to spread the blessing of God and Mother Church in the world."

Hidden and humble work

The Pope particularly praised the "hidden" work carried out by office staff who prepare letters and convey blessings to individuals in need. Their humble work, he said, is a "means of spreading blessings", it is "the way of God Himself, who in Jesus condescends to share in our human condition, and thus gives us his blessing."

Concluding Pope Francis encouraged the members of the Roman Curia to embrace humility and to live as true "artisans of blessing" in the world, by not speaking ill of others: "We cannot write blessings and then speak ill of our brother or sister", he said.

GENERAL NOTICES...

NEW TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES? HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

Welcome. Wherever you are in your faith journey, it is great to have you. Please visit our website or call the parish office. We're here to serve you. www.olol7hills.org.au

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

SICK AND/OR HOMEBOUND?

Would you like to receive Communion? Or seriously ill or in danger of death? We have dedicated ministers who can visit and bring you communion. Feel free to approach or call Fr Henry for the Holy Anointing of the Sick. Please call the parish office 9622 2920

FUNERALS

When a Funeral is to be celebrated, please contact the parish office to organise a meeting with Fr Henry. Funerals are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

BAPTISM

Parents desiring Baptism for their children are encouraged to contact the parish office to arrange for the required preparation class for parents.

MASS INTENTIONS

All Mass intentions must be submitted to the Parish Office on or before Thursday. Names will be published for 4 weeks at a time.



LOURDES OVER 50s GROUP

Over 50s meeting Thursday 13th February 2025, 10.30am–1pm in the Parish Hall. Please bring a plate to share. Look forward to seeing you there.

Lourdes: Luminate Young Adults Group

The next group night will be in December. If you would like more information please contact Ian Epondulan: youtholol7h@gmail.com or search 'Lourdes 7Hills Young Adults' on Facebook.

LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish playgroup is a fun playtime for children aged 0 to 5 years old and their carers. It is held every Friday morning during school terms 9.00am-11.00am in the Parish Meeting Room. For further information please contact Maria Hosni 0432 174 056 or the Parish Office.

PIETY SHOP

Located at the back of the church. Please come have a browse after mass.

LEGION OF MARY

Thursdays at 1.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group

Thursdays at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome

Vinnies Support Centres Are Available To Those In Need

The St Vincent de Paul Society has members and community-focused Vinnies Support Centres right across NSW. They provide people in immediate crisis with assistance. If you need assistance, call 131812 (option 3) to be redirected to your nearest Vinnies Support Centre. To find out more about the support that is available, visit <https://www.vinnies.org.au/nsw/find-help>. If you'd like to contribute to helping those in need in the local community through the St Vincent de Paul Society, please email Reno Abela at rael24@gmail.com.

OFFERTORY PROCESSION FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES

With the intention to help our community to get more involved at Mass and better appreciate our share in the priesthood of the faithful, meaning our call to be priests, prophets and kings or queens of Jesus through baptism that Fr David Orr reminded us in our Parish retreat, I would like to invite all our parishioners to take part in the offertory procession, especially families that have some special celebrations in the families, such as baptisms, birthdays, wedding anniversaries, or death anniversaries. Please see Fr Henry or Ernie before Mass to arrange it.

JANUARY 2025

1	New Years Day Mass	8.00am
26	Australia Day	
31	School Resumes Term 1	

LOL MINISTRY ROSTER

Acolytes, Ministers, Readers and Altar Servers, please remember to arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass.

28/29 December

Acolytes	Vigil: Abel Do Rosario 8am: Ernie Gartner 9.30am: Ramzee Michael	
Ministers	Vigil: T.Perak, M.Mifsud 8am: E.Gartner, F.Paiva 9.30am: M.Aquino, M.Michael	
Readers	Vigil: A.Punch, N. Do Rosario 8am: P.Ferriols, M.Santos 9.30am: N.Arambulo, F.Kennedy	
Altar Servers	Vigil: S. Costello, S.Costello, L.Costello 8am: K.Maruthanayagam, C.Bellamin 9.30am: A.Melki, C.Attard	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Parish Pastoral Council	
Musicians	Vigil: Shaun's Group 8am: Christine Clarke 9.30am: Maximilian Chorale	
Flowers	Team	
Church Cleaning	2 Jan	Lourdes Spiteri Edgardo Barcelon
Welcomers	Vigil: Ram Urge 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Kathy Chamberlain	

4/5 January

Acolytes	Vigil: Daniel La Guidara 8am: Jerome Irudayaraj 9.30am: Sandy Manamperi	
Ministers	Vigil: N.Shami, L. La Guidara 8am: C.Gonzales, H. Gonzales 9.30am: P.gow, C.Brooks	
Readers	Vigil: M.Simic, J.Sarmiento 8am: A.McNally, K.Walker 9.30am: E.V Pieris, R.Epondulan	
Altar Servers	Vigil: D.Sant, J.Sant, E.Reardon 8am: K.Cassaniti, H.Winter 9.30am: J.Pieris, M.Pieris	
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Volunteer	
Musicians	Vigil: Christine Clarke 8am: Fr Henry, Christine Woodward 9.30am: Couples for Christ	
Flowers	Fennie & Liz	
Church Cleaning	11 Jan	Tongan Choir Edgardo Barcelon Edgar Cabrera
Welcomers	Vigil: Volunteer 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Sastina Pieris	

The Kids' Bulletin

The Holy Family Puzzle

Unscramble the letters to fill in the blanks.
Use the letters in boxes to fill in the blanks with numbers part-way down.

Every year Jesus and His (NTSPRAE) went to Jerusalem for the (SVOPSARE) festival. When (SUJES) was twelve, they went to the (LFSETVIA) as usual, but Jesus stayed in the (MPELET) afterwards. (RMYA) and Joseph thought He was with their relatives in the caravan, but when they couldn't (DNIF) Him they went back and (CHDEASRE) for Him. On the (HDRIT) day they found him. When they asked Jesus why He had done this, He replied, "Did you not (WNKO) that I must be in my _____?"
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Then he went home with them to (ZRNATHEA) and was obedient to them, and grew up in (DSIWMO) and age and grace.



The Boy Jesus in the Temple

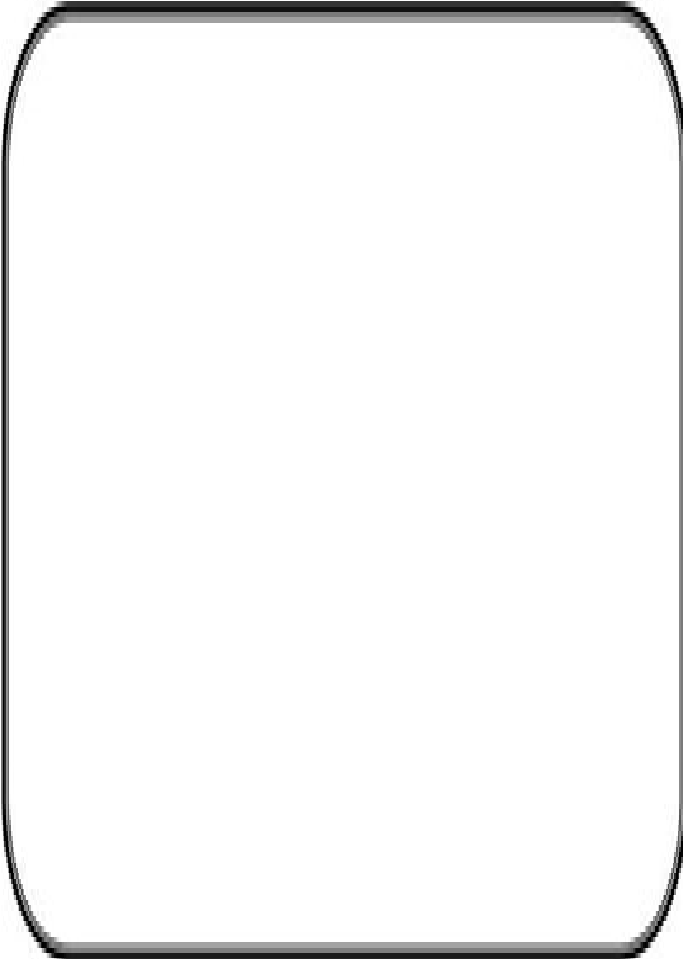
After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Luke 2:46 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 2:41-52

Q L U T E M P L E R E T U R N
A C T L S A R P R V Q I E D M
E T F R E U M E A N U P H I O
U T E Y A P P A L R P T B R T
D D I A R V T L Z A E S L H H
P H Q H C A E A N E T N J K E
E Y M O H H R L N L D I T C R
J K P M I B E Q E S H A V S V
L U W E N K X R M D W B C E W
L Y L D G B W S S U D E B I S
P Z A F R I E N D S T E R Z C
W F E V C L G N J S X C O S Z
G W B B F J Q M A R D I R P E
X W P V J O M E P F A T H E R
U E F V F C F O U N D Z X A W

FRIENDS	ANSWERS	FOUND	AMAZED	TEACHERS
MOTHER	FEAST	SEARCHING	FATHER	RELATIVES
PARENTS	RETURN	TEMPLE	HOME	TRAVELED

Draw a picture below of your family



THE HOLY FAMILY

Jesus + Mary + Joseph

