

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 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
Youth Co-Ordinator: Diana Park
Parish Website: www.olol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

7th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

23 February 2025 • Year C



Let us Pray for the Sick

Florence Arinanan, Lawrence Charles, Ben Dixon, Alma Caguimbal, Para Dias, Mary Camilleri, Lucia Fernando, Renuka Fernando, Philippe Honore, Lynnda Lim-Huynh, Anthony Janicska, Odette James, Mary Jordan, Klare Kinsley, Paul Leong, Melissa Mead, Blago Milicevic, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Maricar Poblete, Veronica Portelli, Camy Ratnam, Sue Tiplado, 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: Tricia Batongbacal, Vivienne Cameron, Carmen Cassar, Murial Chary, Blaise Costa, Padmini De Seram, Randy De Silva, Dulcie Duraisamy, Sandra Eichhom, Henrieta Fernando, Rienzie Fernando, Jasmin Fernando, Ethan Garcia, Ricardo Garcia, Assad Karam, Cynthia Lopez, Antoun Martinez, Richard Monreal, Jennifer Morrissey, Silvia Morales, Jacintha Noronha, Carol Orduña, Etelka Petkovics, Eustace Ratnam, Suranjith Rebera.

Anniversaries: Mary Alagiah, Horace Baptist, Ronald Barley, Lila Bate, Romeo Binahan, Elaine Bosen, Peter & Helen Bonnici, Denis Brophy, Catherine Chandra, Aloysean Corera, Mary Camenzuli, Paul Commarmond, Alejandra Yabut Dayrit, Alita Do Rosario, Joe Falzon, John Fernando, Nevis Fernando, M.A. Fernando, Sheela E. Franklin, Constance Gaycroft, Anthony Garcia, Francisca Garcia, Teodoro Garcia, Zenaída Garcia, Christine Gomez, Josephine Gomez, Bill & Helen Hill, Cecilia Dayvit Mendoza, Marie Marchand, Thelma Morrissey, Anton Motha, Xavier Motha Jnr, Paul Mula, Lissy, Jose & Mary Kutty, Tony Muscat, Cordula Paiva, Adrian Pereira, John Portelli, Roseline Ratnam, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Nicholas Saliba, Michael Sant, Mary Silva, Rosary Silva, Helen Tanti, Marie Tanti, Loreta Laberinto Udan, Melchor Usman, Dionisio Udan, Jim Vella,

Remembrance: Neil Amaratunga, France Angseeing, Carmen Attard, Sydney Azie, Lydia, Marlene Busac, Barrie Chamberlain, Ceferino, Rosario, Renato & Marilyn Cabasa, Fe Licup Carmen, Dennis Clarke, Myrna Cruz, Saviour Caruana, Tania McGove, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Carmen, Jimmy, Antonia, Tania, Tony, Vicki, Louie, Joe & Launcer De Guire, Gilbert D'Souza, Conception & Dominic D'Souza, Christiansen Dias, Joseph & Carmena Formosa, Melvyn Fernandes, Nevis Fernando, Sammy Formosa, Mario & Joe Gat, Maximilian & Julian Epondulan, Sam Gabo, Mary & Sam Galea, Evangeline Garcia, Leandro Snr Garcia, Jose Garcia, Teodoro Garcia, Charlie Gauci, Elizabeth Hancock, Selvam Irudayaraj, Harold, Marc, Rosine Lafluer, Sheena Landagan, A. Mansoor, Apolinario & Felina Maglaya, Maureen & John Mead, Pauline Meilak, Rose Merz, Maria Regina Menezes, Mangion & Cini Family, William & Emilia Mifsud, Joseph & Doris Mifsud, Mary Mifsud, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Lourda Motha, Ngan Pin, Louis, Stephen & Joseph Mula, Mary & Francis Muscat, Peter John & Carmelita, Jesus Opulencia, John Ratnam, Jose, Maria, Laureano, Yolanda & Karen Reyes, Felcy & Henry Rodrigues, Paulina & Santan Soares, Jonathan Tek Kie, Tony Vassollo, Shane Vaz, Vinnie Zahra & all the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

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 or contact Maryse Augseeing on 0467 701 010.



KEEP UP TO DATE

By visiting our parish website with news, the bulletin, prayers and much more - a great way to stay up to date with what's on in our parish. Visit www.olol7hills.com.au

FIRST READING *A reading from the first book of Samuel 26:2. 7-9. 12-13. 22-23*

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice. David answered Abishai, Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM**(R) The Lord is kind and merciful.**

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. **(R.)**

2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **(R.)**

3. The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. **(R.)**

4. As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins.
As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him. **(R.)**

SECOND READING *A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 15:45-49*

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven.

As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment;
love one another as I have loved you.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL *A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 6:27-38*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect?

Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

The Gospel of the Lord



Dear friends,

We all know that love is the heart of Jesus' teaching and he makes love as his commandment. Love, according to Jesus, must be unconditional and have no attachment, and he deliberately uses the Greek word AGAPE to describe it.

With regards to love, a lot of us perhaps may have heard of Pope Francis' letter to the American bishops raising his concern over the deportation program carried out by the present government, to remind them of their duty to affirm the dignity of all, and surprisingly to rectify a recent comment by JD Vance the Vice President of the USA about the need to love one's family, community, country prior to others around based on St Thomas' order of love (Ordo Amoris) as the way to defend the cruelty of his government in mistreating migrants and refugees on a theological basis. In his letter the Holy Father makes it very clear that 'Christian love is not a concentric expansion of interests that little by little extend to other persons and groups' and 'the true *ordo amoris* that must be promoted is that which we discover by meditating constantly on the parable of the "Good Samaritan" (cf. Lk10:25-37), that is, by meditating on the love that builds a fraternity open to all, without exception'.

In the Gospel of Luke this Sunday, Jesus presents his signature teaching of love and goes into detail of various concrete ways he expects the disciples to follow in living out the commandment of love. It, according to Jesus, means to do good for people who hate them, to bless those who curse them, to pray for those who mistreat them, to offer the other cheek to those who slap them on one cheek, or not to refuse the tunic to those who take the cloak from them. Why do they or we have to do that? Jesus singles out God's compassion and kindness to the ungrateful and the wicked as the telling example to inspire us to do the same to our fellow human beings.

Let us pray today for the grace to overcome our self-centric human nature calling us to pay back and revenge to those who wrong us, and follow the way of love Jesus presents to us in the Gospel today by showing our love for those who have hurt us, curse us or mistreat us, so that we might reflect better the image of God who is compassionate and kind to all to all people around us.

Have a love-filled week,

Fr Henry

PARISH NEWS...

SACRAMENTAL PROCESS 2025

Reconciliation and First Communion

Last weekend during the 9:30am Mass, we welcomed the children and their families from our parish enrolling in the sacramental program for 2025. Please keep these children in your prayers during their faith journey. A gentle reminder that the next Sacramental Meeting is Wednesday the 26th February at 6.30pm in the Parish Hall, if you miss this, a repeat will be on Saturday 1 March at 4.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room.

PROGAM PASSPORT SIGNING

All children doing the Sacramental Program this year have received a passport to be signed as they attend Sunday Mass. May I ask the children to approach Fr Viet for his signature after Mass this weekend, and for those who happen to go to Mass somewhere else, please ask the celebrant there to sign the passport.

FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT (FGM) AT OLOL

The FGM has gone from strength-to-strength with further families having registered. The "Joyful Journey" group will meet on Sunday 2-March at Bungaribee Park. We warmly invite more families to join. Contact the Parish office for further information. Coordinated by Frank Paiva and Edward Pieris.

ST JOSEPH NOVENA MASS WED 12 MARCH 7PM

All are welcome to join in the Novena Masses for the Feast of St Joseph. Our parish at Seven Hills will host the 7th Day Novena Mass on Wednesday, 12th March 2025 7pm Mass. Main celebrant will be Fr Domingo (Meng) Barawid MI. The Feast Day Mass will be Saturday, 15th March 2025, 10:30am St Patrick's Church, 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown celebrated by Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFMConv.

LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Playgroup is on every Friday during the school term, 9.00am—11.00am in the Parish Meeting Room. To attend please register by 3pm the Thursday prior via Facebook 'Lourdes Play Group' or contact Maria Hosni on 0432174056.

WELCOME AND THANK YOU TO FR VIET NGUYEN, SVD

We would like to welcome Fr Viet Nguyen, SVD to our Parish and kindly thank him for his generosity to help cover all our Masses over this weekend.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS TIMES

The 5th of March 2025 is Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. Mass times for the day will be:

8am

9.15am (school mass)

7.30pm

'Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return'

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during LENT.

Starts Friday 7th March

at 7.30pm.



LENTEN RETREAT FOR ALL

We put our Cars in for Service; Lent is the time for us to put ourselves in for Service! Let's do it! Check your Diary and Come along! Saturday March 15, 2025. Time: 9.30AM– 3PM in the Parish Hall. B.Y.O Lunch The Theme is: 'Speak Lord, your servants are listening' This day will be very interesting, and too good to miss. We can only accommodate 100 people. So, get in first! Your companion for the day is Fr Kevin Walsh an Experienced Retreat Giver and Missioner. Do book in to the Parish Office.

WELCOME OUR YOUTH COORDINATOR

We welcome our new Youth Co-ordinator Diana Park to our parish team. If you are a teenager or young adult and are interested in volunteering to be apart of the youth leader team, please contact Diana via dianap@lol7hills.com.au

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.

DIOCESAN NEWS

LIFTED Launch: 27 February

Join us for LIFTED Launch on Thursday, February 27th, from 6:45 PM to 9:30 PM at West HQ, Rooty Hill!

Get a sneak peek at exciting events we have planned for young Catholics, including the Jubilee Year Pilgrimage and Australian Catholic Youth Festival. Enjoy a night of prayer, formation, and fun with fellow young Catholics. Register now: parracatholic.org/events/liftedlaunch/

FaithLIFE Lenten Scripture night by Dr Michele Connolly RSJ: 3 March

Are you looking to read the Bible during Lent but don't know where to start? Consider the FREE Diocesan Lenten Scripture Night guided by Scripture scholar, Dr Michele Connolly RSJ. Monday, 3 March. 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM. 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown NSW 2148 – Mary Queen of the Family parish. RSVP via parracatholic.org/events/lenten-scripture-night/ OR email met@parracatholic.org

Pilgrimage 2025

Fr. Clifford D'souza is inviting you to join him on a pilgrimage to the saints of Portugal, Spain, France and Italy- Fatima, Avila, Loyola, Lourdes, Nevers, Lisieux, Paris, Padova, Assisi and Rome. 31 August-19 September 2025. For more details pls contact Fr. Clifford on cliff_dsouza03@yahoo.com.au or atitours.com.au

Sydney Alliance Federal Pre-Election Assembly: 13 March

Join the Diocese of Parramatta's delegation at the Sydney Alliance Federal Pre-Election Assembly 2025. A great opportunity to experience and showcase our faith in action as this non-partisan assembly invites decision-makers to commit to concrete post-election action on housing and renting, affordable and renewable energy, and climate resilience: 13 March 2025, 5:40pm-7:40pm, Morley Centre, 2 Darcy Rd, Westmead. Register at events.humanitix.com/sydney-alliance-federal-assembly-2025 and please include "Catholic Diocese of Parramatta" and the name of your parish or organisation.

Diocese of Parramatta's Jubilee Youth Pilgrimage

Young people (18-35) across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains are invited to embark on an 18-day pilgrimage to the Jubilee of Youth in Rome from 19 July – 5 August 2025. The journey includes a visit to Greece, tracing the footsteps of Saint Paul, before heading to Rome for the celebration. Express your interest today via the below link parracatholic.org/jubileeyouth2025

Children's Liturgy Workshop: 28 February

Are you a part of children's liturgy or looking to get started? Come along to this informative workshop to learn more about the Diocesan Guidelines, meet children's liturgy teams from other parishes, and ask any questions you may have about this rewarding ministry. This workshop will be held at Holy Family Church, Luddenham on Friday 28 February, 7-8:30pm. Registrations are essential, so please RSVP by 24 February via parracatholic.org/events/childrens-liturgy-workshop/

Campion College introduces The Compass Program

Campion College is proud to introduce *The Compass Program*. Through workshops, mentoring, and industry connections, students will integrate their liberal arts education with practical skills and career discernment, ensuring a confident transition from tertiary study to career. Learn more at <https://www.campion.edu.au/why-campion/career-prospects/>

MET Natural Fertility Instruction Sessions:

MET Natural Fertility are organising a series of instruction sessions on the Natural Family Planning methods offered by the Diocese of Parramatta via Zoom. Learn how to chart your cycle, space out pregnancies and identify the best time to reach your family goals. Sympto-Thermal Method: 25 February at 7:15pm Billings Ovulation Method@: 18 March at 7:30pm To book your place or for further information, please contact Catherine on catherine.bourne@parracatholic.org or call 0400 427 605.

OLOL SAFEGUARDING NEWS

What is Safeguarding?

Measures to protect the safety, human rights and well-being of individuals, which allow people – in this context children and most vulnerable – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Visiting Clergy to OLOL

Visiting clergy to our church all uphold the standards and processes we here at OLOL and the Diocese have put in place to ensure the safety of our community.

Privacy and Confidentiality

In your role here at OLOL, you may have access to private and confidential information about our Parish, the Diocese, clergy, employees and parishioners. You are expected to keep this information entirely confidential. This is a legal requirement and also applies to the use of social media and email. Discussing information, you have received during your volunteer role with staff, family, friends or any other volunteers – inside or outside the Parish or Diocese – is not acceptable. From time to time, photos may be taken of you whilst volunteering. If you do not wish your photo to be used, please inform the person taking the photo or through the Parish Office. Permission from a child's parent/guardian must be sought before taking any photographs of children.

Safeguarding Face-to-face Training Opportunities: 3 May

The next session of face-to-face Mandatory Safeguarding Renewal Training will be held on Saturday 3 May at Holy Family Emerton for Cycle 2 (Module 4-5). More training opportunities will be available soon. 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

Responsibility

The protection of all vulnerable people is not something to be added to the to-do list. All volunteers of the Church have a responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of all peoples. It is everyone's responsibility and it must be embedded into everything that happens in our Church.

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.



POPE FRANCIS' CONDITION

Vatican News

The Holy See Press Office provided the following update on Wednesday evening, 19 February: *The Holy Father's clinical condition is stationary. The blood tests, evaluated by the medical staff, show a slight improvement, particularly in the inflammatory indices.*

After breakfast, the Pope read some newspapers and then went about his work with his closest collaborators. Before lunch he received the Eucharist. In the afternoon, he received a visit from Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, with whom he spent 20 minutes in private.

Let us continue to pray for our Holy Father, so that he will get well very soon.

POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FROM THE HOSPITAL

Prepared text by the Holy Father

Brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today in the Vatican the Eucharist was celebrated, dedicated in particular to the artists who have come from various parts of the world to experience the Jubilee days. I thank the Dicastery for Culture and Education for the preparation of this appointment, which reminds us of the importance of art as a universal language that spreads beauty and unites peoples, contributing to bringing harmony into the world and silencing every cry of war.

I wish to greet all the artists who have participated: I would have liked to be among you but, as you know, I am here at the Gemelli Hospital because I still need some treatment for my bronchitis.

I greet all the pilgrims present in Rome today, especially the faithful of the diocese of Parma, who have come on a diocesan pilgrimage, led by their bishop.

I invite everyone to continue to pray for peace in tormented Ukraine, Palestine, Israel and all the Middle East, Myanmar, Kivu and Sudan.

Thank you for the affection, prayer and closeness with which you are accompanying me in these days, and I would like to thank the doctors and healthcare workers in this hospital for their care: they do such a valuable and tiring job, let us support them with prayer!

And now let us entrust ourselves to Mary, "Full of grace", that she may help us be, like her, chorists and creators of the beauty that saves the world.

POPE FRANCIS EMPHASISES THE ONGOING RELEVANCE OF 'GAUDIUM ET SPES'

By Christopher Wells

Pope Francis used the occasion of an audience with members of the Gaudium Et Spes Foundation to reflect on the enduring relevance of the Vatican II document from which the group takes its name.

The work of the Foundation "honours" the Council's sole "**Pastoral Constitution**" and "makes present the relevance of this document," the Pope said in printed remarks that were later published by the Holy See Press Office.

Tying *Gaudium et spes* to the Church's ongoing commitment to synodality, Pope Francis said the Council's message "coincides with the synodal spirit of the Church, where all are united in Christ, forming a universal brotherhood, as members of His Body."

This unity is formed by the Holy Spirit, the Pope continued, and is manifested in solidarity, especially solidarity "with those who suffer the most."

Pope Francis explained that the "family" of all those united as brothers and sisters in Christ's Body, are nourished by the Eucharist, "the spiritual meal served to all equally," which in turns brings us into communion with God and with one another.

Finally, the Pope said, the "power of the Holy Spirit leads us to be instruments of God's love," which seeks to reach "all people, without distinction."

The Holy Father concluded his remarks by thanking members of the Gaudium Et Spes Foundation "for being a source of hope for many people who suffer and are discouraged," and "who feel that God caresses and consoles them in the midst of their pain" through the works undertaken by the Foundation.

POPE FRANCIS' AUDIENCE

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. *Jesus Christ our Hope. I. The Infancy of Jesus. 6. “They saw the child ... They prostrated themselves and did him homage” (Mt 2:11). The Visit of the Magi to the newborn King*

Dear brothers and sisters,

In the Gospels of the childhood of Jesus there is an episode which is exclusive to Matthew's narrative: the *visit of the Magi*. Attracted by the appearance of a star, which in many cultures is the harbinger of the birth of an exceptional person, some wise men set out on a journey from the east, without knowing exactly where they will go. They are the Magi, people who do not belong to the people of the covenant. The last time we spoke about the shepherds of Bethlehem, marginalized by Hebrew society because they were considered “impure”; today we encounter another category, the foreigners, who immediately arrive to pay homage to the Son of God who entered into history with an entirely unprecedented kingship. Hence, the Gospels tell us clearly that the poor and foreigners are invited among the first to meet God made child, the Savior of the world.

The Magi were considered to be representatives both of the primordial races, generated by the three sons of Noah, and of the three continents known in antiquity, Asia, Africa and Europe, as well as the three phases of human life: youth, maturity and old age. Aside from all possible interpretations, they are men who do not stay still but, like the great chosen ones of biblical history, feel the need to move, to go forth. They are men who are able to look beyond themselves, who know how to look upwards.

The attraction for the star that appeared in the sky sets them on the move to the land of Judaea, to Jerusalem, where they meet King Herod. Their naivety and trust in asking for information about the newborn king of the Jews clashes with the shrewdness of Herod, who, troubled by the fear of losing his throne, immediately tries to obtain a better view, contacting the scribes and asking them to investigate.

The power of the earthly ruler thus shows all his weakness. The experts know the Scriptures and refer to the king the place where, according to Micah's prophecy, the leader and shepherd of the people of Israel should be born (*Mi 5:1*): little Bethlehem, and not great Jerusalem! Indeed, as Paul reminds the Corinthians, “God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong” (*1 Cor 1:27*).

However, the scribes, who are able to identify the Messiah's birthplace exactly, show the way to others, but they themselves do not move! Indeed, it is not enough to know the prophetic texts to tune in to the divine frequencies; one must let them to enter within and allow the Word of God to revive the yearning to seek, the kindle to desire to see God.

At this point Herod, acting in secret, as do the deceitful and violent, asks the Magi the precise moment of the appearance of the star and incites them to continue their journey and then to return to bring him news, so that he too can go and adore the newborn. For those attached to power, Jesus is not the hope to be welcomed, but a threat to be eliminated!

When the Magi set off again, the star reappears and leads them to Jesus, the sign that creation and the prophetic word represent the alphabet with which God speaks and lets Himself be found. The sight of the star inspires an irrepressible joy in those men, because the Holy Spirit, who stirs the heart of whoever sincerely seeks God, also fills it with joy. Having entered the house, the Magi prostrate themselves, adore Jesus and offer Him precious gifts, worthy of a king, worthy of God. Why? What do they see? An ancient author writes: they see “a humble little body that the Word has assumed; but the glory of divinity is not hidden from them. They see an infant child; but they worship God” (CROMAZIO DI AQUILEIA, *Comment on the Gospel of Matthew*, 5:1).

The Magi thus become the first believers among the pagans, the image of the Church drawn together from every language and nation.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us, too, follow in the footsteps of the Magi, these “pilgrims of hope” who, with great courage, turned their steps, hearts and goods towards the One who is the hope not only of Israel but of all peoples. Let us learn to adore God in His smallness, in His kingship that does not crush but rather sets us free and enables us to serve with dignity. And let us offer Him the most beautiful gifts, to express our faith and our love.

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.com.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 March 2025, 10.30am– 1pm in the Parish Hall. Please bring a plate to share. Look forward to seeing you there.

Lourdes: Luminare Young Adults Group

The next group night will be in February. 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 rabel24@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.

MARCH 2025

| MARCH 2025 | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2nd Meeting—Sacramental Program (RPT) | 4.30pm |
| 5 | Ash Wednesday Masses | 8am, 9.15am, 7.30pm |
| 5 | 3rd Meeting—Sacramental Program | 6.30pm |
| 7 | Stations of the Cross | 7.30pm |

LOL MINISTRY ROSTER

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

22/23 February

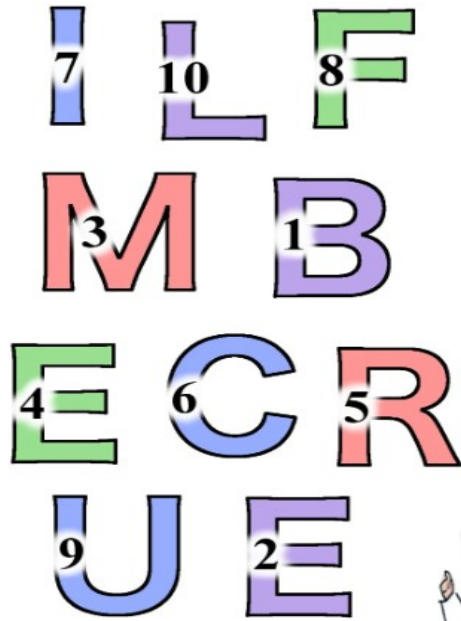
| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Acolytes | Vigil: Daniel La Guidara 8am: Ernie Gartner 9.30am: Ryan Epondulan | |
| Ministers | Vigil: J. Franco, L. La Guidara 8am: E. Gartner, J. Irudayaraj 9.30am: P. Gow, C. Brooks | |
| Readers | Vigil: A. Franco, N. Sumcad 8am: F. Paiva, A. Pushparajan 9.30am: J. Nonato, A. Han | |
| Altar Servers | Vigil: Alex & Christina La Guidara, A. Bagatella 8am: Harrison Winter & Volunteer 9.30am: A. Melki, C. Attard | |
| Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass) | Couples for Christ | |
| Musicians | Vigil: Nina's Group 8am: Christine Clarke 9.30am: Nina's Group | |
| Flowers | Annette & Mary | |
| Church Cleaning | 26 Feb | Jessie Borg Anne McNally Edgardo Barcelon |
| Welcomers | Vigil: Ram Ugre 8am: Anne McNally 9.30am: Kathy Chamberlain | |

1/2 March

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Acolytes | Vigil: Derick Soares 8am: Eugene Miu 9.30am: Fayelene Kennedy | |
| Ministers | Vigil: M. Mifsud, R. Soares 8am: A. McNally, F. Paiva 9.30am: P. Gow, C. Brooks | |
| Readers | Vigil: C. Rodrigues, M. Simic 8am: J. Mai, T. Perak 9.30am: K. Huihui, L. Rigney | |
| Altar Servers | Vigil: E. Reardon, M. Gluovic, J Hoang 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: L. Sadipoor & Volunteer | |
| Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass) | Tongan Choir | |
| Musicians | Vigil: Christine Clarke 8am: Fr Henry 9.30am: Couples for Christ | |
| Flowers | Fenty & Liz | |
| Church Cleaning | 6 March | Lourdes Spiteri Edgardo Barcelon |
| Welcomers | Vigil: Judith Deloso 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Raul Nigli | |

The Kids' Bulletin

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 23rd, 2025



What was Jesus telling us to do in today's Gospel reading?
Use the numbers to help unscramble the letters!



Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



TRUE OR FALSE?

- T F Jesus taught the people to love their enemies.
- T F We should curse those who curse us.
- T F We should only give to our friends.
- T F We should love only those who love us.
- T F We should do good for all people.
- T F You should pray for those who mistreat you.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Discover the hidden words.



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

Word Bank

- PERSECUTE
- ENEMY
- DISCIPLES
- DIED
- CURSE
- CHRIST
- SON
- EVIL
- GOD
- SERVE
- JESUS
- LOVE



We should love others even if they do not love us