

# THE BULLETIN

ST THERESA'S PARISH

24-25 DECEMBER 2022

CHRISTMAS TIME

YEAR A

## MISSION STATEMENT

*St Theresa's Catholic Parish is a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming community committed to living and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Under our baptismal mission and inspired by the Spirit, we are bread for one another and nourished we reach out to make a difference in the world.*

## Christmas Music

I remember celebrating Christmas Mass at a nursing home – I did a quick calculation and concluded that, between them, the congregation had lived for 1,580 years! Which meant that between them they had celebrated 1,580 Christmases as tiny infants and now as elderly men and women, 1,580 years of joining the angels singing 'Glory to God in the Highest and Peace to His people on earth.'

This was very humbling for me, thinking of them in relation to that first Christmas, in relation to that first Christian music. We sing those words at almost every Mass during the year and perhaps don't sense the awesome message of those words. The glory of God is to be found in peaceful relations among people. The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are to be found in the person of a little baby in a manger of straw, a little baby with an exhausted Mary and a protective Joseph, stranded in Bethlehem with no proper shelter, the scene reproduced in front of our altar today. Why is this scene so attracting? Why has it been attracting those elderly men and women at the nursing home for 1,580 years? Why is it attracting us today? I think because it fills us with hope. *Every* baby is a promise of a new future. With *every* baby there is a new cause of joy in our world. But, there is a radical truth about *this* baby which makes the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes absolutely unique. *This* Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. *This* baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. *This* baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant. God is embodied in that gurgling, squinting, smiling baby with arms outstretched wanting to embrace us into Divine Love, reaching out in all innocence for *our* love. This baby, like all babies, needs our love. The One through whom all things were made needs our love! Only divine revelation would allow us to dare to think of God in this way.

And don't we find that this fulfils all the yearning of the human heart? We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. *This* baby enables that because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints: He in-finitely loves us. But not only us. Pope Francis emphasises the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by *all* peoples.' All peoples are meant to share in this joy. Tragically, many people find this near impossible because of a lack of peaceful relations, sometimes at the micropersonal level, sometimes because of the barbarity of armed conflict. A good Christian resolution is to do what we can to bring peace into the lives of people.

In the meantime, we are amongst the ones graced to share in this joy this Christmas, here in this little church thousands of kilometres from Bethlehem and over 2,000 years since that momentous event. We are following the shepherds. Perhaps they sensed that *this* baby would, like them, be a good shepherd who would do anything to guard his flock. They certainly felt a special bond with this infant. Like the shepherds, we feel that bond today. But perhaps we are more like the ass and the donkey and the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, just following an intuition, some deep instinct which said to them and says to me and says to you;

'I must go to that baby. I must make my way to that manger. I must kneel in adoration of that little bundle of flesh of our flesh. Simply, it is good to be here.'

Of course, like the shepherds, we will return to the routine of our lives. But, at the moment we are here. We are welcomed by that tender infant reaching to embrace us with infinite love.

That is why we join the angels in singing 'Glory to God in the Highest and Peace to His people on earth.' O come, let us adore Him. © Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

## RECENTLY DECEASED

**Anna Sinclair** (Mary Conaghan's mother)

## HEALING FOR THE SICK

### Parishioners:

<b>Brian Powell</b>	<b>Leo Flynn</b>
<b>Christine Scott</b>	<b>Anne Thomas</b>
<b>Brian Carter</b>	<b>Moya Schaefer</b>
<b>Glenda Walsh</b>	<b>Bert Pervan</b>
<b>Murray Doyle</b>	

### Friends and Family

#### **Lisle Stephenson**

(Kathy Sternes' Friend)

#### **Jennifer Fogarty**

(Beverley Patterson's Friend)

#### **Di Winterton**

**Erica Armagnacq** (Bill Armagnacq's Daughter in Law)

#### **Margaret Chiesa**

**Janette Ansell** (Patricia Stevens sister)

**Will Wildig** (Meg Hicks' Brother in Law)

**Geoff Doyle** (Mary Otto's brother)

**Anna O'Toole** (Maryanne Long's friend)

#### **Madeline (Sally) Gray**

(Kathy Sternes' Mother)

**Phil Connolly** (Glen & Bernadette Whisson's friend)

**Kate Sturgeon** (Rita Sturgeon's Granddaughter)

**Kathleen le Gras** (Sister of Sr Una)

#### **Shona Kraayvanger**

(Gabrielle Adam's daughter)

#### **Indiana Harman**

(Ray & Madeline Taylor's (Granddaughter)

**Louis Gandini** (Lina Pervan's brother)

**Connie Bamgart** (Lina Pervan's friend)

**Simon Riethmuller** (Shirley's son)

**Max Shearer** (Grandson - Judy Shearer)

**John Mullen** (Helen McNaught's nephew)

#### **Rev. Brian Sparksman**

**Fr Peter McGrath** .CP

**Molly Schmidt** (Aileen Collins' friend)

**Peter Brown** (Denis' brother)

#### **The Dowling Family**

**Reg Parsons** (Powell family group)

## ANNIVERSARIES

**Maureen Long** **Bob Mackie**

**Judith Ryan** **Denise Long**

**Russell Cartwright**

**Monica Bierhoff**

**Alan O'Connell**

**Dot Gleeson**

**Matthew O'Dea**

MASSSES

MON	NO MASS
TUE	NO MASS
WED	NO MASS
THU	NO MASS
FRI	NO MASS
SAT	6PM VIGIL
SUN	9.30AM MASS
<p>If you are Gluten intolerant and require a special host, please advise the coordinator.</p>	

READINGS

**Christmas Time Year A**  
**First Reading:** *Isaiah 62: 11-12*  
 Your Saviour is born.  
**Responsorial Psalm:** *96: 1, 6, 11-12*  
 A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.  
**Second Reading:** *Titus 3: 4-7*  
 His own compassion saved us.  
**Gospel Acclamation:**  
 Alleluia, Alleluia!  
 Glory to God in the highest, peace to people on earth.  
 Alleluia!  
**Gospel:** *Luke 2: 15-20*  
 The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.  
**Next week's readings,**  
**Mary, The Holy Mother of God Year A**  
*Numbers 6: 22-27*  
*Galatians 4: 4-7*  
*Luke 2: 16-21*

NOTICES



The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the second and fourth Sunday of the month either during Mass at 9.30 or after Mass at 11.00am



Best wishes for a Christmas full of love and laughter.  
 Thank you for your support through 2022  
 from Fr Brian, Monica and Janet



## Gospel Reflection - Christmas

A pentecostal friend of mine tells the story of leaving church one Christmas morning as the preacher was standing at the door, greeting everyone and shaking hands. He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. The pastor said to him, 'You need to join the Army of the Lord!' To which my friend replied, 'I'm already in the Army of the Lord, pastor.' The pastor looked amazed and said, 'How come I don't see you here at church then, except at Christmas and Easter?' My friend whispered back, 'Because I'm in the secret service.'

If you are like my friend and find yourself in the 'secret service', you're in good company at Christmas time. The first hearers of the Christmas story were not much into church-going either. Shepherds in first century Palestine had to watch their flocks around the clock for fear of thieves and wolves. This didn't leave much time for temple attendance. They prayed where they were, as they were. These shepherds, however, were in the right place at the right time to hear the first Christmas message. Maybe they had the right disposition too.

Sometimes, publicly religious people can sound as though they know the mind of God better than God does! It's a trap we need to avoid and Christmas helps us do it. No one predicted the way God would send us a saviour. No one knew the day or the hour of God's coming. No one foresaw that God would be born a homeless person. No one envisaged that the first witnesses to the birth would be illiterate shepherds from nearby fields. While some waited for a mercenary to overthrow the Romans, others held their breath for the procession of a heavenly king. The love of God, however, took flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone and came to us as a poor, defenceless baby.

That's our God, not bound by our precepts or expectations, but honouring the promises made to our ancestors, in the most surprising of ways. And Christmas provides us with the most tender images of our God, One who needs to be nurtured, suckled and held tight.

It's not a bad metaphor for our Christian faith either. If Christmas means anything to us then it's not an annual religious outing or something to fill in time on a public holiday. It's a moveable feast which we celebrate every time we do something just, loving or peaceful. That's why we gather here for the Eucharist each week: to be nurtured, fed, suckled and held in God's embrace, if only for a while, so that we find the courage and strength to go out from here, confront the wolves and thieves of our own day and be in the right place at the right time for God to find us. As a result of that first Christmas, Christ wants to nurture a people who by their lives will change the world for the better, for all people everywhere. So this Christmas cash in your secret service card and, 'Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere. Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.' © Richard Leonard SJ

### SYCHAR HOUSE OF PRAYER & SPIRITUALITY

69 Margaret Street Toowoomba

Please view the website for current happenings at Sychar. You are most welcome to visit Sychar if you are in Toowoomba – however, to ensure that someone can be there to greet you, please contact Sr. Elaine ahead of time if possible at 0458 020 906.

**SYCHAR**

Email: [sychar@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sychar@twb.catholic.org.au)



## You've got a lot to give beyond Christmas gifts.

**In January you can prepare for mission at home or abroad.**

Palms Australia has trained Australians to live and work within cultures and communities overseas since 1961. Now four days of that training will be available for parishioners interested to assist harness the diverse gifts of our community and make it stronger.



### **At Home**

Palms' **Neighbours Without Borders** program (January 7 – 11) will “**focus on building communities that are welcoming to all, with particular attention to those on the margins of society and the church**” as urged by the recent Plenary Council.

### **Overseas**

Completing a further four days (January 12 – 15) will prepare you to meet one of the **many requests Palms has from communities** in Africa, Asia and the Pacific who need educators; health professionals; administrators and others to assist build on the strengths of their people who otherwise have little opportunity for training.

Enquire about Palms Orientation for mission via [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au) or call 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.

**CONTACTS**

**Parish Priest:**

Fr Brian Noonan ph:4696 7094  
 e-mail: [brian.noonan@sttheresas.org.au](mailto:brian.noonan@sttheresas.org.au)  
[brianjnoonan@bigpond.com](mailto:brianjnoonan@bigpond.com)

**Pastoral Associate**

Monica Brennan  
 Ph.: 4639 4688  
 e-mail: [monica@sttheresas.org.au](mailto:monica@sttheresas.org.au)

**Parish Secretary:**

Janet Weier  
 Ph.: 4639 4688  
 e-mail: [office@sttheresas.org.au](mailto:office@sttheresas.org.au)

**Church:** Cnr Campbell & Curzon Sts, Toowoomba

**Office:** 55 Curzon Street, Toowoomba

**Parish Website** [www.sttheresas.org.au](http://www.sttheresas.org.au)

**Parish Pastoral Council**

Fr Brian Noonan, Tim Burgess, Gailene Jurgs, Matt Boyd,  
 David Wilson, Kath Doherty, Trish Kennedy-Lee, Glen/  
 Bernadette Whisson, Greg Hallam, Elizabeth Curtis.  
 Monica Brennan.

**Finance Committee**

Fr. Brian Noonan, Warren Dredge, Ray Taylor, Shane  
 Blakeley, Pat Richardson, Tim Burgess.

**Liturgy Team**

Fr. Brian Noonan, Jan Mayo, Peter Kenny, Peter Nolan,  
 Monica Brennan, Gay Jorgensen, Elizabeth Stewart.

**Musicians**

Norma Kenny, Kathy Sternes, Elizabeth Stewart,  
 Libby Rosentreter.

**Baptism Team:**

Cath Kelly, Jenny Ryan, Tracy George, Bernadette Hede,  
 Anne Anderson, Jan Watkins, Jane Burgess,  
 Catherine Cooper Tracy Stinson, Elizabeth Curtis, Monica  
 Brennan

**Sacramental Team:**

Monica Brennan, Kathy Doherty, David Wilson,  
 Gay Jorgensen.

**Consolation Team:**

Fr Brian Noonan, Peter Kenny, Josephine Nolan,  
 Monica Brennan

**Welcome & Hospitality Team:**

Paul & Kathryn Marangelli,  
 Maureen Burke.

**Family Groups:**

Contact Parish Office 4639 4688

**Care & Concern Team**

Coordinator: Mary Otto

**RCIA**

Coordinator: David Wilson  
 0451 131 849



**NOTICE**

**Roll up your sleeves; make a difference overseas.**

Do you require professional renewal, or are you seeking a retirement challenge? Communities abroad are asking for qualified and experienced Australians able to mentor their people in education, health, administration, trades, agriculture and more.

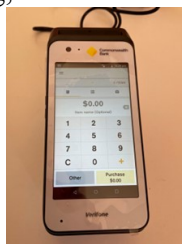
Imagine yourself re-engaging your vocational passion in Africa, Asia or the Pacific. Since 1961 Palms Australia has been recruiting Australians able to offer mentoring that will allow overseas counterparts opportunities otherwise unattainable. Sharing your skills will strengthen the capacity of workers overseas to serve their communities for generations to come, long after you return home.

Communities in American Samoa, Cambodia, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Zambia are seeking to fill a variety of roles.

Enquire about those roles via [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au) or by calling 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.

**ELECTRONIC COLLECTIONS DEVICE**

St Theresa's now has the ability to accept donations/money for the collection through cards electronically. It does not replace Planned Giving envelopes or Direct Credits. This device enables you to donate any amount you choose using your cards, either by tapping, inserting or swiping the card. Once your transaction has occurred, a paper receipt will be printed for you to take. An instruction procedure is near the electronic device pictured.



**Care & Concern Meeting**

Care & Concern Meeting 13 February 2023 @ 3pm

**Second & Fourth Tuesday of the Month**

St Vincent de Paul St Theresa's  
 Conference, 4pm, Contact 0408 808 437



**First Wednesday /month**

Parish morning tea at 9.45am, Cobb & Co Museum

**Second Sunday**

Mad Toowoomba Group from 7.00pm at St Anthony's  
 Parish Centre.  
 (Grade 7-12 people) PH: 4636 0461