

THE BULLETIN

ST THERESA'S PARISH

31 DEC 2022—1 JAN 2023

MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

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.

The Calendar-Shattering Mary

It is fitting that on this day when we note the start of a New Year, we celebrate an entirely new calendar-shattering, calendar-shaping, event in human history. We celebrate the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

Mary of Galilee was a teenager in a small village of perhaps a few hundred families. Yet today that teenager is especially venerated by the Church.

The Greek word for this day describes Mary as 'Theo-tokos' – God-Bearer.

It is a way for the Church to say that the One whom Mary bore in her womb was no mere prophet or guru or wonder-worker, but EMMANU-EL – God with us, God embodied, God enfleshed. Hence: Theotokos, Godbearer.

But, in the Western Church, the title 'Mother of God' was used to convey the same truth, and I prefer it. It is less clinical, more relational, less instrumental, more personal – in short, it is maternal. As soon as one proclaims Mary to be 'Mother of God', one immediately signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship which goes well beyond carrying in the womb to a safe birth.

We can quite easily imagine that relationship which was not altogether placid and straightforward. One thinks of her anguish and fright at his disappearance at the age of twelve. Humanly speaking, he was undergoing his growing awareness of his true identity. She was experiencing the pangs of a certain distancing by this adolescent son.

Yes, she was pre-eminently a Mother, with all that that entails, including the horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but Mother of God.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? How did Divine Revelation picture the event which set all calendars going? We need to go to the very beginning, the Book of Genesis which commences the Hebrew scriptures.

Billions of years ago, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void. Light, and then the whole of the beautiful order of the cosmos came into existence at the word of the Creator.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word,' the Light of the World was united to our human nature. The human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began.

On this calendar-changing day of 1 January, it is indeed fitting that we celebrate the maternity of Mary, the calendar-shattering event which is the fulcrum of history and from which we count the passing of the years.

At the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, may we share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.

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HEALING FOR THE SICK

Parishioners:

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

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)

Glynis Grosskopf (Powell family group)

ANNIVERSARIES

Marg Mackie
Dilworth Zimbwa
Rev. Fr. Thomas Concannon
Marie Wood
Noel Bourke
Brendan McDowell
Jim McKinley
Fr. Tom O'Brien MSC
Nora Black

MASSSES

MON	NO MASS
TUE	NO MASS
WED	9AM MASS
THU	NO MASS
FRI	9AM MASS
SAT	6PM VIGIL
SUN	9.30AM MASS
If you are Gluten intolerant and require a special host, please advise the coordinator.	

READINGS

Mary, The Holy Mother of God Year A
First Reading: *Numbers 6: 22-27*
 They will call down my name on the children of Israel and I will bless them.
Responsorial Psalm: *66:2-3,5,6,8.*
 May God bless us in his mercy.
Second Reading: *Galatians 4: 4-7*
 When the appointed time came, God sent his son, born of a woman.
Gospel Acclamation:
 Alleluia, Alleluia!
 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; now he speaks to us through his Son.
 Alleluia!
Gospel: *Luke 2: 16-21*
 The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the crib... When the eighth day came they gave him the name of Jesus
Next week's readings,
The EPIPHANY of the LORD Year A
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6.
Matthew 2: 1-12

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



NEW YEAR PRAYER:

Thank You Lord for giving me
 The brand new year ahead.
 Help me live the way I should
 As each new day I tread.
 Give me gentle wisdom
 That I might help a friend,
 Give me strength and courage
 So a shoulder I might lend.
 The year ahead is empty,
 Help me fill it with good things
 Each new day filled with joy
 And happiness it brings.
 Amen.

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 or call 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.



REFLECTION

Liturgically, the Octave of Christmas commemorates: the Solemnity of the Mother of God; the day designated for prayers for global peace; and the beginning of the New Year. Though the shepherds gain insight into the presence of God by seeing this holy family, it is Mary who holds all these things in her heart. She is the one who ponders the significance of these mysterious events. Mary becomes for Christians an inspiration of contemplation and reflection. She inspires us to consider deeply the significance of events, lest we go blandly through life without meaning or direction. She inspires us to fidelity to the practices of our faith, practices which are the disciplines of soul that lead the community to a clearer focus on God's presence in human affairs.

The theme of peace appears today on many levels. Its meaning, 'fullness of life', bursts forth in every one of the readings. The ancient prayer or blessing of peace is an appropriate start for the New Year. It resonates well with the angels' wish for people of good will. Peace is also our inheritance in Christ. As adopted children of God, we have been given the freedom to live in a godly manner, calling God our *Abba*. Right relationships in the covenant activity of God are the pathways of peace. The beginning of a New Year is a good time to reach out to others and to pray for God's blessing of peace for each dimension of human encounter.

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POPE FRANCIS'S MESSAGE FOR THE 56TH WORLD DAY OF PEACE

1 JANUARY 2023

Pope Francis' message for the 56th World day of Peace is available in the church foyer.
Please take a copy.

POPE FRANCIS'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY 2023

For educators

We pray that educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than



Reflection

After Christmas Day we no longer hear Christmas carols on radio or elsewhere. However, the church reminds us that Christmas is not a one-day-event but an ongoing part of our lives. Today, with Mary, the Mother of God-become-human, we ponder what Christ's birth means for humanity every day of the year. Rather than gathering around the manger like the shepherds, we gather with the one who transforms us into brothers and sisters – each bearing God's image. We are reminded that each day is Christmas where we can encounter God in the people we know and love and those we find it hard to love.

In today's gospel, God reaches down into the social fray to the victims of empire and society which stretches all the way to embracing a group of shepherds who were kept at arm's length by those of higher status and tolerated as an economic necessity. As we begin this new year, we see the shepherds who were silenced by society finding their voices. They are the early prototypes of the disciples and evangelists that followed. They were emboldened by being included in God's plan for peace. They found one whose circumstances was as humble as theirs. Though once invisible, they were the first to witness God's work and speak of what they witnessed as they returned to their homes.

On this solemnity, Mary the Mother of God, we witness to the God who comes in dependence and loving vulnerability. Today, Mary models peacemaking and one who could not be silenced. Many people pray that she intercede for us that we might walk in the way of peace, we fail to see that it is up to us to the hard work of peacemaking. The 14th century mystic, Meister Eckhart, challenges us to reflect on Mary as peacemaker. He writes: 'What good is it to me if Mary gave birth to the Son of God fourteen hundred years ago and I do not also give birth to the Son of God in my time and in my culture? We are all meant to be Mothers of God.' If that is true, we must ask ourselves what Mary can teach us about mothering the God of Peace in our materialistic and technological society. In Mary, we see the intervention of the feminine into a worldview and world politics. The intervention of gentle strength, patient endurance, contemplation, cooperation, and nonviolence is absolutely crucial if we are to avoid suicide by war, or nuclear and environmental catastrophe.

To do this we need to set aside the rational analysis, logic, and fear of the unknown as Mary did by embracing intuition, feeling and faith. We know what rational arguments and commonsense can lead us, e.g., that weapons keep the world at peace, that first strike arsenals are logical responses to conflict, that our national security is primary to that of others. Can we choose alternatives that make for peace by seeing every person as a sister or brother whether in Moscow, Yemen, or Redfern? Is the rational the only reasonable response to God-become-human in our culture. With Mary, we are asked to give birth or en flesh this God every day of our lives. Will we answer, 'be it done unto me?'

At the Cross, Jesus entrusted all sons and daughters to her and she embraced them as her own when he said, 'Woman, behold your son; son, behold your mother.' This quote has real significance for us. It was not just about Mary or John, but about us – the love and care in God's heart extending to all people and the earth. But how do we respond to the question, who is my mother? My brother? My sister? Can we respond from the heart that the people of South Africa, Palestine, Russia, Libya, China, Israel are all our mother, brothers, and sisters and members of the same family? We cannot give birth to the God of Peace until all the faces of the earth become precious in our sight. We must make choices. To choose the intuitive over the rational, refuse selfish pursuits and serve the poor, choose humility over domination, accept the cross over personal comfort, share God's gifts with the whole human family, leap with abandon into what others see as impossible, forgive without limit and love unconditionally, look in the face of each human being and see our brother, our sister. Like Mary, let us mother the new creation.

Compiled by Claude Mostowik msc, Director of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Justice and Peace Centre, Enmore, NSW

CONTACTS

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Office: 55 Curzon Street, Toowoomba

Parish Website www.sttheresas.org.au

Parish Pastoral Council

Fr Brian Noonan, Tim Burgess, 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: Damian Carroll

RCIA

Coordinator: David Wilson
 0451 131 849



NOTICE

DATES TO REMEMBER FOR JANUARY

- Wednesday 4 January** 9am Mass
 Parish morning tea after mass
 Parish office opened from 11am
- Friday 6 January** 9am Mass
- Sun 8 Jan—Sat 14 Jan** Priests' Retreat—Lismore
- Wednesday 11 January** 9am Lay led service
- Friday 13 January** 9am Lay led service

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.

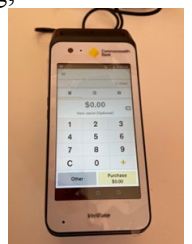
SYCHAR

Email: sychar@twb.catholic.org.au



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