

25th December 2025

The NATIVITY of the LORD, YEAR A

Dear friends,

May each of you be gifted with peace at Christmas!

## The seats in the stadium

I remember some time ago being at Olympic Stadium when Premier League club Liverpool FC was here playing against Sydney FC. Not surprisingly most of the crowd was behind Sydney FC and most, including me, seemed to accept that 3-0 was a respectable enough loss. I was there with a close friend who I'll describe as unpredictable, in a good way! I say that because he's always keen to chat about some random thing of life, that ends up being a great conversation. Three qualities of how he engages in conversation that aren't always found are; i. he's never defensive ii. he's always interested to know the other person's thoughts and experiences and iii. he always seems to find something from the conversation that he says he's keen to now go and learn more about!

So, true to form, at half time in the game he said: 'Imagine how many different people and stories have sat on all these same seats we're on now!' Then looking at some people about three rows in front he added: 'Where do you reckon their bloodline is from?' And off we went chatting, into the second half of the game, about the people we'd met in our lives from different stories and how they'd influenced us. It was an unexpected great conversation that grew from my friend's spontaneous remark about the seats! And again true to form, he left that night with an enthusiastic smile, one of his parting comments being: 'And mate it's on my list – I want to find out more about Pacific Islander cultures!' I took his energy and interest as a challenge to ask what was on my next learning list.



## Stories in the walls

That half time chat at the stadium is an image I try often to think of in relation to all of us who sit on the seats in the church – or who are walking through a crowded Westfield – or others who I see in the street or in the traffic but don't know. Everyone has a story. Every story has many parts and a particular mix of influences, history, chance and connections. And just about every story has tender pieces or realities that most, even many closer people, don't know about. I want to use this image at Christmas here at OLQP to say that whether today and/or through the year, you are here from the local community – or from another place – or another spiritual background – or another story – then

thanks be to God for the blessing of your presence. May the gathering with many other people and stories – around God's story and presence in the Eucharist – bring you some kind of blessing, even an unexpected blessing. While writing this message, I've been pondering how true it is that so much of our growth in life comes from learning another's story – and through our different experiences. We've all heard expressions such as: 'Imagine the stories these walls hold'? It's like saying that the walls of a building soak in the stories of those who gather there – and give it its character. I think that's part of what can make some church buildings feel special. God has come into the building in the lives and loves of those who've gathered there.



## Bondi – evil deleting

The horrific events of the Bondi massacre of our Jewish brothers and sisters is one of the world's evil obscenities that says; 'your story doesn't belong – I destroy and delete you!' Christmas defies such evil. Christmas shows tangibly the entry of God not only into knowledge of our human stories – but AS our human story. Through the life of Jesus, nothing and no-one can delete your humanity or story that is now irreversibly connected into the divine life of the Creator. May each of us recommit in our own many ways, not to delete people in the many small ways that can happen – but to build belonging in the striving of Pope Leo's motto, to be '*one in the One*'.

So, to all the locals and to all those from other places and backgrounds, happy Christmas – and may our sharing in this space enable us to sense God's presence in our lives. May the very walls hold every person's story with dignity and further bless this space to be one in which we can always grow, at home with each other and in God.

As the message on the church's screens before each Christmas Mass says this year:

*May the Divine Light be born anew*

*- in your human journey of life & faith*

*- in the heart of your eternal purpose*

With friendship and gratitude together in God's mission,  
Fr Paul – parish priest

# Faith B4U...

## Sing a New Song Music Workshop for Children

Do you have a child in Year 4-12? Invite them to come along to our 'Sing A New Song Holiday Music Workshop', for a fun day of singing and exploration of sacred music. The workshop will be held on **Wednesday 21 January from 9:30am to 2pm** at St Patrick's Cathedral Hall, Parramatta. Morning tea and lunch provided. Student participants will form a choir that will sing at the Solemn Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta on Sunday 25 January at 11am.

To register, please visit <https://forms.office.com/r/OURuFAeThA>

## Diocese of Parramatta Tribunal

The Tribunal of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Parramatta offers advice and assistance regarding marriage annulments and dissolution of marriages. Interviews are preferably conducted in person with Zoom and telephone interviews in special circumstances.

**The Tribunal Office will be closed from COB Tuesday 23 December and will reopen on Monday 5 January.**

Please contact the Tribunal Office on (02) 8838 3480 or email [tribunal@parracatholic.org](mailto:tribunal@parracatholic.org).

## Lost Property

Missing an umbrella, water bottle, glove, rosary etc? Please look in the main entry area of the church (Narthex) near the Lost Property Sign.

For valuables, please call the parish office on 9631 8135.

## FEAST DAYS



This week we celebrate

28<sup>th</sup> Sunday The HOLY FAMILY of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

1<sup>st</sup> Jan Thursday MARY, the Holy MOTHER OF GOD

2<sup>nd</sup> Jan Friday Sts Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, bishops, doctors

## Liturgical Ministry Formation Course

The Liturgical Ministry Formation Course will be returning in February 2026. If you would like to become a Minister of the sick, Extraordinary Minister of Communion, Reader or Altar Server, please contact the Parish Office for the application form. Applications must be in before 23 January.

For more information on the course visit: [parracatholic.org/liturgical-ministry-course](http://parracatholic.org/liturgical-ministry-course)

Please note: all applications must go via the parish office



Wishing you a  
Blessed and Joyous  
Christmas and may  
the New Year be  
filled with happy  
memories.

## Be a stronger you – Free empowerment course for women

Catholic Care has partnered with Survivor Voice Australia to run a free six-week empowerment program for women who have experienced domestic violence and abuse. The program will start in February 2026 in the Blue Mountains. Contact Catholic Care to express your interest: 8843 2500.

## Children's Liturgy Volunteers needed

Children's Liturgy - Once a month with a small team to share the Gospel with our young children during either the 8:30am or 10:30am Mass. School Terms only.

For details contact the Parish Office on: P: 9631 8135 or email: [parishoffice@olqp.org.au](mailto:parishoffice@olqp.org.au)

## Let us pray...

FOR OUR SICK, that they will be nourished with hope & recognise the loving presence of God in their lives.

Elie Aboumelhem, Mary Anjoul, Rita Attard, Amara Bewert, Ellen Boissett, Frank Borg, Haryono Budiono, Ann Bugaya, Karl Croning, Mario Curmi, Kathleen Davies, Nerida Fabri, Gabrielle Farfus, Delina Galea, Dorothy Gatt, Kay Jaunais, Margaret Jones, Rachel Karbic, Tulla Kavich, Patrick Kelly, Tyler Kenedy, Peter Kennedy, Maxine Kroebel, Michelle Makin, Joyce Mifsud, Elsie Moran, Joseph Moses, Alex Noble, Bob Nowfel, Brendon Onorato, Benjie Santiago, Michael Scanlon, Connie Shembri, Carmel Thompson, Connie Tudman, Eddie Vella, Joe Vella, Sue Watters, Gerard Watts, Grace Widjaya, Maureen Zarb

FOR DEATH ANNIVERSARIES, that they now know the fullness of life & delight in God - may they pray for our active purpose in God's Mission.

Joyce Verri, Nardo Carmela, George Attard

FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED, may our Lord embrace them with unimaginable joy & bless those who grieve with the power of hope.

Gerardo Schettino - 29 Dec @ 10.30am



# What makes Christmas special to you?

We both love Christmas; it is our favourite holiday. We enjoy spending quality time with our family and taking part in many special traditions each year. One of our favourite activities is visiting the Greystanes and Pemulwuy areas to see the houses decorated with Christmas lights. We also love going into the city to see the large Christmas tree at Martin Place and visiting Myer and David Jones to look at the Christmas displays.

On Christmas Eve, we enjoy making Christmas cookies and gingerbread houses with our mum, dad, brothers, aunty, and cousins. We also like watching Carols in the Domain on television together as a family. On our dad's side of the family, attending Christmas Eve Mass at their local church is an important tradition.

We were born in Australia, and our ancestors are of English and Irish descent. On Christmas Day, we usually eat a roast dinner for lunch, continuing a tradition that has been passed down through our family. Most of all, we love opening presents on Christmas morning and celebrating this special day together. By Scarlett and Hayley Marden

Christmas reminds me of the peace and love our God brings into the world. In a world that often feels busy and fast-paced, moments like decorating the Christmas tree and attending Christmas Mass with my family encourage me to live in the present. Celebrating the birth of Jesus in these moments invites me to slow down and appreciate what truly matters in life. By Anne Augusthy

"Our family usually get together to share a meal, exchange gifts but most of all we love to share stories of our loved ones who are no longer with us, and who now live only our hearts." By Marisa



Maltese Seniors Group

Christmas is a really special time for our family. It's a chance to slow down, spend time together, and enjoy each other's company. We also take time to remember the family members who are no longer with us, sharing stories and keeping their memories close.

We usually celebrate with a Christmas lunch where everyone brings a favourite dish. There's lots of laughter as we eat, play games, and catch up, just enjoying being together. Most importantly, Christmas is a time for us to reflect on the true meaning of the day and to look back on the year that has been, the challenges, the blessings, and everything in between. We remember the birth of Jesus and what Christmas represents: love, kindness, hope, and generosity. It's a time to be thankful for what we have, to care for one another, and to carry that spirit with us into the year ahead. By Karen Micallef



Ellyse, David, Abbey & Karen



Scarlett & Hayley



Aisling



Delivering toys from OLQP

Christmas means a lot to me because it is a time to care for others and spend time with the people I love. At school, as part of the Greystanes Catholic Community Christmas Embrace, we donated food to be packed into hampers for families who are poor or struggling. We also raised a lot of money at school by selling small goods at the Year 6 Christmas Market. That money was used to buy toys for sick children at Westmead Hospital. These outreach initiatives made me feel happy knowing I played a small part in giving hope, love and joy to others at Christmas time.

Christmas is also one of the most special times of the year for me because I get to spend time with my immediate and extended family. We share Christmas lunch and dinner together, talk, laugh, and make special memories. Most importantly, Christmas reminds me that Jesus is the reason for the season, and it helps me remember to be kind, generous, and thankful for all in my life. As Father Paul says, we should "think to thank and thank to think", especially at Christmas. By Aisling Arrage Year 6 student at OLQP 2025

When I was a child the month of December was always filled with excitement over what I might be getting on the 25th of that month. The night before that I could barely sleep over the potential to catch the magical man who would somehow come down my non-existent chimney and deposit immaculately wrapped toys into my house. Fast forward to my later adult years, and I look forward to the break in work schedule so I can clean my house and organise decorative ornaments around the house. I'm especially enthused by objects depicting the biblical mystery of Jesus arrival into humanity and the privilege those who saw him experienced. Each decoration, each song is a slow unwrapping of the story I now get to share with the younger ones in my family. Walking around the streets in the evening with family and viewing the lights in neighbouring yards, observing people's faces in sheer amazement as they flitter from house-to-house reminds me how we will always be drawn to the light. We will always be drawn to the Christmas story and I find it is impossible not to feel it when I deliberately slow down, spend time with family and friends and ask them if they want to come with me and find the Light.

By Nathan

We as a family centre Christmas around the birth of Jesus. We attend mass and then get all together to share a beautiful meal whilst enjoying each other's company. By Daniel

# Our Mission: To grow as a community in the likeness of Christ.

## Safeguarding is a priority at OLOP

Volunteers, group leaders and assistant group leaders are asked to complete the Safeguarding modules either online or in person. Details below.

**ONLINE:** To sign up & log into your Safeguarding modules, visit: <https://learning.safeguarding.org.au>

**IN PERSON TRAINING:** To find a training session near you & to register, visit: <https://parracatholic.org/connect/events/?series=safeguarding-training>

For more information, please email:

[safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org)

If you volunteer at the parish and are unfamiliar with Safeguarding, please contact the parish office for more details.

## The Parish Prayer Chest

You are welcome to write a prayer and place it in the prayer chest located in the chapel; perhaps to give thanks or to pray for the world, to praise God or to ask blessing and care for God's creation, to mention a special intention or to remember a loved one.

All prayers will be read with love by volunteer parishioners at the Rosary prayer time or other parish prayer group times. The prayers will then be placed at the altar during a weekend Mass.

As you write your prayer, may you sense God's tender closeness in your journey!

## Catholic Faith Enquiry

Do you know someone who might be interested in finding out more about the Catholic faith, wanting to know about Jesus or explore questions to discover more about life and faith?

Please share the gift of faith with others by inviting someone who is interested or thinking about becoming part of the catholic community to contact the parish office ph: **9631 8135** or email: [parishoffice@olqp.org.au](mailto:parishoffice@olqp.org.au) where we can arrange to meet up with them and accompany them in their next steps of their faith journey.

## Helping Others ...

Please consider donating the following items to:

Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS): **Sugar / Salt / Condensed Milk / Dry Chickpeas / Instant Coffee / Tea Bags / Instant Noodles / Women's Deodorant / Long life Milk/ Nappies, sizes 3, 4 & 5. Other sizes are OK.**

St Vincent de Paul: **Non perishable foods**

Donated food can be placed into the baskets located in the front entry.

## Parish Office closed over Christmas

From **Thursday 25th December 2025 until Tuesday 13th January 2026**. The Office will **reopen on Wednesday 14th January 2026**.

In case of an emergency please call the Emergency Number:  
**0447 509 207**

### This Sunday's Readings

#### 1st Reading

Sirach

3:2-6, 12-14

#### 2nd Reading

Colossians

3:12-21

#### Gospel

Matthew

2:13-15, 19-23

### Next Sunday's Readings

#### 1st Reading

Sirach

3:2-6, 12-14

#### 2nd Reading

Colossians

3:12-21

#### Gospel

Matthew

2:13-15, 19-23

**BOXING DAY - 9:15am Mass**

**There will be NO 6.30am Mass**

## Mass Times

Monday - 9:15am

Tuesday - 9:15am

Wednesday - 6:30am | 9:15am

Thursday - 9:15am

Friday - 6:30am | 9:15am

Saturday - Vigil 5:00pm (live streamed)

Sunday - 7:00am | 8:30am | 10:30am | 6:00pm

**Memorial Mass** - Last Tuesday night of each month (except December) at 7:00pm

**Mass for Peace with anointing of the sick** - First Saturday of each month (except January) at 10:30am

### Reconciliation:

Saturday - 4:00pm - 4.45pm

Please join us via Facebook or Website, [olqp.org.au](http://olqp.org.au), every Saturday Vigil Mass at 5:00pm

**Rosary in the church:** Weekdays at 8:30am & Friday nights at 7:30pm

ZOOM option available Friday night for those who cannot travel to the church for rosary.

Meeting ID: 896 7944 2594 | Passcode: rosary

**PLEASE NOTE:** *The last Friday night rosary for the year will be 19th December, and it will resume on Friday 30th January 2026.*

P: 9631 8135 | E: [parishoffice@olqp.org.au](mailto:parishoffice@olqp.org.au)

**Emergency Contact Only 0447 509 207**

Join us on...

[www.facebook.com/OLQPGreystanes](https://www.facebook.com/OLQPGreystanes) | [OLQPGreystanesYouth](https://www.instagram.com/OLQPGreystanesYouth) | [www.olqp.org.au](http://www.olqp.org.au)

Parish Office hours: 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 4pm Monday to Friday

PO Box 5035 Greystanes 2145 | 198 Old Prospect Rd, Greystanes