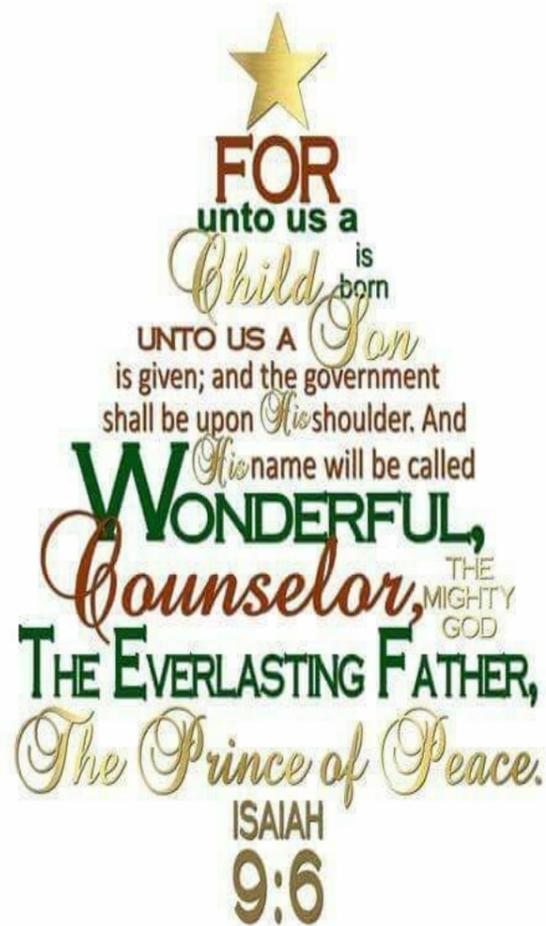


		December 29/30 The Holy Family of Jesus Mary and Joseph
Acolytes	Vigil 8am 9.30am	David Christian Terry Jordan Ramzee Michael
Ministers	Vigil 8.00am	Abel Do Rosario, Marinela Simic Anne McNally, Adrian Walker
	9.30am	Carole Brooks, Barbara Chandler
Readers	Vigil 8.00am	Denis Symon, Mariane Descombes Bob McNally, Andrew Millar
	9.30am	Mercy Aquino, Laura Bellissimo
Altar Servers	Vigil 8.00am	Alexander Bateman-Paul Caron Cyril Makayla Dalmati Jesseline Franco Chrisha Gonzales VOLUNTEERS
	9.30am	Erika Naing Jaylen Niang Riley Niang Florenca Wanandy Gabrielle Wanandy
Musicians	Vigil 8am 9.30am	Perrys Angels Fr Henry Maria Balatbat
Children's Rosary	Liturgy	2nd & 3rd Sunday of the month Only Milicevic 10 Grantham Rd, Seven Hills
Flowers		Lucinda
Bookshop	Vigil 8am 9.30am	Mariane Christian Shelia Volunteer
Morning Church Cleaning	Tea 2 Jan	Imelda Carole Brooks, Lourdes Spitieri., Vinnie Zahra, Suzy Nemorin
Welcomers	6pm 8am 9.30am	Ram Ugre, Mary Bonnici, VOLUNTEER Joyce Hillbrick, VOLUNTEERS Helen Gonzales, VOLUNTEERS



PARISH DIARY

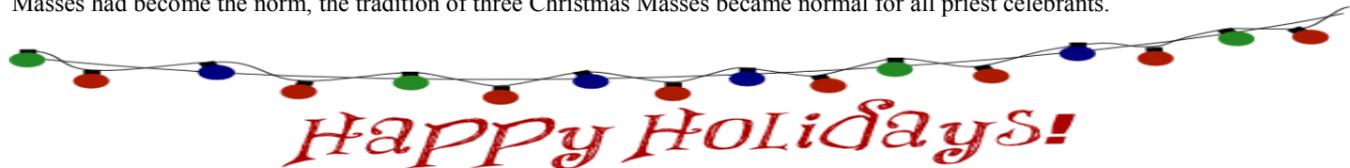
JANUARY		
3	Healing Mass	8am
4	Exposition and Divine Mercy	7:30pm
16	Baptism Preparation Meeting	7:30pm

Three Christmas masses

Apart from the spread of feasts of the Christmas cycle the major novelty of this cycle is the custom of three masses on Christmas Day. The origin of this custom has a quaintness all its own. Originally in the fourth century there was only one Mass on Christmas Day which was celebrated in St Peter's by the pope with his retinue in the pattern of stational liturgies of the era. After the declaration of the Divine Maternity of Mary at the Council of Ephesus in 421 C.E., the Basilica dedicated to Mary built on the Esquiline Hill, was eventually given the title of St Mary Major, and became the venue for another Christmas Mass.

The origin of Mass at midnight "ad praesepem" (at the crib) is also associated with the exporting of Jerusalem based customs to other areas. In the Holy Land, the Christians would gather in the basilica that the Emperor Constantine had built to enclose the cave of Christ's birth. They celebrated Eucharist at night over the cave of Christ's birth in Bethlehem then processed to Jerusalem and celebrated another Eucharist in the morning. The Roman midnight custom developed into having a papal Mass at the replica of the Bethlehem crib built under the church and then retired for a brief night

The origin of the Dawn Mass actually has little to do with Christmas. In Rome it is celebrated at the Church of St Anastasia, down near the Tiber, on her feast day, December 25th. When the Byzantine Greeks conquered Rome they made this church their imperial church so, when the pope celebrated with the Greek community, out of deference for the Emperor the custom arose of this early morning Mass so he could be at St Peter's for the Day Mass. There were concerted attempts to unify the liturgical practices of the Holy Roman Empire in the ninth century. Under Alcuin's orchestration the transportation and export of the Roman liturgical books meant that the papal practice of three masses at Christmas became standard in the Latin liturgical books. Subsequently once private Masses had become the norm, the tradition of three Christmas Masses became normal for all priest celebrants.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."

Parish Priest:	Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran	Parish Secretary:	
Pastoral Care C-Ordinator of Sick and Elderly	Mrs Bathista Emmanuel	Sacrament & Youth Co-Ordinator:	Mrs Judy Barden
Parish Church	7 Grantham Rd, Seven Hills 2147	Office Hours Monday-Friday:	9.00 - 3.00pm
Postal Address:	PO Box 944, Seven Hills 1730	Telephone:	9622 2920
Parish Website:	www.olol7hills.org.au	Parish Office Email:	secretary@olol7hills.org.au
Parish School:	Our Lady of Lourdes	Youth Group Email:	youtholol7h@gmail.com
Principal:	Ms Keiran Byrnes	Public School Catechist Co-Ordinator:	Mr Bob McNally

Christmas Year C 24th & 25th December, 2018

WEEKEND MASS	Saturday Vigil 6pm Sunday 8am & 9.30am	HEALING MASS & ANOINTING OF SICK	1st Thursday of month at 8am. 3 January
WEEKDAY MASS	Tues - Fri, 8.00am	RECONCILIATION	Saturday 4.30-5.30pm
PRAYER AND WORSHIP SERVICE	Monday & Saturday 8am	MARRIAGES	Please contact Parish Office 6 months prior to the wedding
Church Open Monday-Friday	Mon-Fri 8.30am-3pm (for prayer and reflection)	BAPTISMAL PREPARATION	16 January 7.30pm Baptisms 2nd & 4th Sunday 11am
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Novena to Our Lady of Lourdes	Friday after 8am Mass until 9am	FAMILY MASS YOUTH MASS	28th January 1st Sunday of the month 9.30am 6 January
Divine Mercy, Exposition And Mass	First Friday of the month 7.30pm 4 January	A BLESSING FOR CHILDREN AVAILABLE ALL AT MASSES	

Christmas Eve 6.00pm, 9.00pm

READINGS	1st Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5 2nd Reading: Apostles 13:16-17, 22-25 Gospel: Matt 1:1-25	<i>The Lord takes delight in you Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David</i>
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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Today you will know that the Lord will come, and he will save us, and in the morning you will see his glory.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who gladden us year by year as we wait in hope for our redemption, grant that, just as we joyfully welcome your Only Begotten Son as our Redeemer, we may also merit to face him confidently when he comes again as our Judge. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

RESPONSE TO PSALM: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed: the Saviour of the world will be our king. Alleluia!

COMMUNION VERSE: The glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh will see the salvation of our God.



WE WISH OUR PARISH COMMUNITY AND THEIR FAMILIES A VERY HOLY CHRISTMAS AND OUR PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS REMAIN WITH YOU OVER THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS



Christmas Midnight Mass

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7

A son is given to us

2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14

God's grace has been revealed to all people

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

Today a saviour has been born for you

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: *The Lord said to me: You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day.*

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who have made this most sacred night radiant with the splendour of the true light, grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of his light on earth, may also delight in his gladness in heaven. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! Good News and great joy to all the world: today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

COMMUNION VERSE: *The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.*

Christmas Day 8am

1st Reading: Isaiah 62:11-12

Your Saviour Is Born

2nd Reading: Titus 3:4-7

His own compassion saved us.

Gospel: Luke 2:15-20

The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: *Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.*

OPENING PRAYER: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word, the light of faith, which illumines our minds, may also shine through in our deeds. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Alleluia!

COMMUNION VERSE: *Rejoice, O Daughter Sion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem: Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Saviour of the world.*



Christmas Day 9.30am

1st Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.

2nd Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.

Gospel: John 1:1-18

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: *A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.*

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

RESPONSE TO PSALM: *All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

COMMUNION VERSE: *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

The Parish Office will be closed between Christmas and New Year. We wish you a wonderful Christmas and many blessings and a warm welcome for 2019. During January, the office hours will be reduced due to the holiday period. If you require assistance, please call 9622 2920 and leave a voicemail message. These messages are checked daily and we will endeavour to assist you as soon as possible. Thank You.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR GREETINGS

I would like to wish all our parishioners and visitors to the Parish a wonderful Christmas and a favourable New Year filled with the Lord's endless blessings and goodness.

For our ministers and our volunteers I would like to thank you all most sincerely for your generosity in helping the parish in every way. May the Lord bless you.

Fr Henry

HOLIDAY MASS SERVICES

26 Dec	Mass St Stephen	8.00am
27 Dec	Mass St John	8.00am
28 Dec	Mass The HOLY Innocents	8.00am
29 Dec	Mass 5th day Octave	6.00pm
30 Dec	Holy Family	8.00, 9.30am
31 Dec	Communion Service	8.00am

1-4th January Normal Mass 8.00am

The History of Christmas

It is not totally clear how the delineation of the Christmas cycle came about, with the consequence that in historic eras and in our own day, we have a range of different, if not conflicting, themes being celebrated.

There are two schools of thought explaining the vagueness about the origins of Christmas and on which day it was celebrated.

One theory, often associated with the school of comparative religions and with historical research of Dom Bernard Botte, OSB, predicated the connection of December 25th in the Christian substitution of the Mithraic feast of the Birth of the Unconquered Sun (*Natalis Solis Invicti*).

The pagan feast was associated with the winter solstice and the transportation from the shortest day of the year to the growing length of days. As a Roman custom, following the Julian calendar, this meant several days of festivity culminating on December 25th. As an Egyptian custom, following a different calendar, the culmination of the festivity came to be January 6th. The Christian interpretation of the return of the sun transformed the title *Sol Iustitiae* to now mean Christ as the new Sun of Justice, being proclaimed as the light of the world. Thus the adaptation of pagan solstice feasts concerned a native Roman feast of early times, or an important Mithraic feast after the first century of the Christian era.

The second theory is based on various computation theories about the date of birth and death of the patriarchs, and is associated with the research of Anton Baumstark, Thomas Talley, Louis Duchesne and Andrew Wilmart. The heart of this theory is the Semitic belief that key figures such as the patriarchs, were born and died on the same date. This theory interweaves biblical data with computations about the birth of John the Baptist, and of Jesus.

This theory involves John's being conceived in the autumn equinox (September 24th) and born at the summer solstice (June 24th). Since the Lukan account of the visitation journey occurs when Elizabeth is six months pregnant it presumes the conception of Jesus is at the time of the spring equinox. In the presumption of the same date of conception and death it affirms March 25th at the spring equinox as the time of his conception and death at Passover. In the lunar-based calendar this puts the equinox on March 25th and therefore the birth on December 25th.

If the death of Jesus is calculated by a solar-based calendar, giving a fixed date for Pascha, this would result in April 6th being the date of death and, logically, the date of birth is brought back to January 6th. This became the major feast of the manifestation in eastern areas of the church, which wrapped the nativity and other facets of Jesus' public manifestations into the one feast. This also illustrates why even today Orthodox Easter is celebrated at a different date from the rest of the Christian world, differing by as little as a few days to almost a whole month according to the calculations of the lunar and solar calendars.

Commentators point out that the likelihood of a winter date for the Roman census is remote, because of issues of transport, food, accommodation, and especially the weather. These factors would seem to indicate that the data of the gospel accounts are not strictly historical in the modern sense of factual, but are more in the way of theological interpretation of the divine and human elements in these significant events.

Actually the earliest specific reference to December 25th is found in the civil calendar of 354 C.E.. This is built on an earlier list, from 336, concerning the anniversary of the deaths of the bishops of Rome and Roman martyrs, when the date December 25th is assigned as the birth of the Christ in Bethlehem, and that is observed as the beginning of the liturgical year.

Regardless of the merits of the respective arguments for these two hypotheses, the trend for centralisation, which is associated with the era of Christianity becoming the religion of the empire in the fourth century, facilitated a rapid acceptance of this new feast. The result was that by the end of the fourth century, both throughout the West and in many Eastern Churches, there was now a feast that focused attention on the person of Christ and not simply the work of the God-Man. The spread of the feast of the Incarnation was intensified by the Christological debates of the fourth and fifth centuries especially the great ecumenical councils of Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). The feast became the occasion for affirming the full and authentic understanding of incarnation as central to Christian faith.

This original account of the new feast was directed at the manifestation of the God-Man as the Word made Flesh. This manifestation included:

both his conception and birth

His manifestation to the Gentiles (portrayed in the gospel story of the three Magi)

His manifestation to the disciples (portrayed in the portents and wonders in the scene of the baptism of Jesus) and

His manifestation in the first "sign" of his power (portrayed in the miracle at Cana of Galilee).

Significantly all these manifestations are celebrated in the feasts of this Christmas season in the 1969 Roman Calenda

Let us Pray for the Sick

Sue Tipaldo, Andrew Fedrigo

If you would like to add to our Sick List or know of any Parishioner that is unwell please contact Father Henry or the Parish Office on 9622 2920

Let us Pray for the Deceased

Recently Deceased: Alexander Balatbat, Roseline Ratnam, Lourdes Fernandez de Venecia, Lazaro Fernandez, Victoria Almeida, Bridgette Fernandes, Alejandro Alvarado, Mary Harnett

Anniversaries: Thelma Morrissey, Fr Bill O'Connor, Sylvia (Abbott) Walker, Louis Mula, Stephen Mula, Paul Mula, M.A. Fernando, Anton Motha, John Azzopardi, Alison Vella, Jose Reyes, Laureano Reyes, Gina and Albert Ammorao, Dennis Clarke, John Bonello, Alison Vella, Manuel Vella, Carmen Camillerie

Remembrance: Papa Maman Cyril, Harold Lafleur, Rosine Lafleur, Marc Lafleur, Teodoro Garcia, Lakshman Perera, Lourda Motha, Mary Muscat, Pauline Meilak, Albert Randall, Arlene Capistani, Albert Randall

May their souls, and the souls of all the Faithful Departed, rest in peace. Amen

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES: In using the Christmas offering envelopes we are offering financial support to the priests of our diocese. The money collected in the first collection goes to the Diocese of Parramatta for the support of the clergy, those active in fulltime Ministry, those