



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
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: 21st February 2024
Baptism: 28th January 2024
Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Parish Website: www.olol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>



Christmas Year B 24th & 25th December, 2023

Christmas Eve 6.00pm and 9.00pm

READINGS

1st Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5
2nd Reading: Apostles 13:16-17, 22-25
Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

*The Lord takes delight in you.
Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.
A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David.*

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!

Christmas Midnight Mass

READINGS

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7
2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14
Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

*A son is given to us.
God's grace has been revealed to all people.
Today a saviour has been born for you.*

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!

Christmas Day 8am and 9:30am

READINGS

1st Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10
2nd Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6
Gospel: John 1:1-18

*All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.
In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.
The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we saw his glory.*

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!



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





Let us Pray for the Sick

Leonila Ahillon, Mary Attard, Cynthia Avery, Barrie Chamberlain, Rosella Booth, Penny Briscoe, Khien Doan, Anthony Janicska, Carlos Moreno, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan, 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: Mansour Ahmad, Ronald Bailey, Connie Busuttil, Charlie Calleja, Charlie Cheteuti, Noel DCruz, Maximilian Epondulan, Sonny Elluh, Bonosa Enfesta, Gladys Fernando, John Lionel, Joan Falzon, Mary Ann Farugia, Alfredo Fernandez, Ranjan Fernando, Epifanio Jalandoni, Mary Mifsud, Solomon Morias, Anthony & Evangelista Micallef, Josip Mrzljak, Marilyn Nalapo, Pacienza Piscopo, Connie Redman, Mercedes Yu, Anna Vingerhoed, Epifania Cruz Samaniego, Maria Fely Sebastian, Joseph & Theresa Vella

Anniversaries: Fredy Alphonse, John Azzopardi, Carolina Borg, Merlene & Ralph Blackford, Josephine & Family Calleja, Fe Licup Carmen, Mary Carmenzuli, Dennis Clarke, Philomena Corera, Mervyn Costello, Conchita Deloso, Rita de Silva, John Falzon, MA Fernando, Josephine Francis, Charles Francis, Russell, Sheela Franklin, Frank Galea, Paul Gauci, Charlie Gravina, Ivan Elisha, Martha Joseph, Ngoc Khuong Mai, Irene Moroney, Thelma Morrissey, Anton Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Paul Mula, Jason Muscat, Alberto Nahoy, Aurora Nonato, Makalita Kilisitina Pongi, Sam Silvia, Cordula Paiva, Jose Reyes, Lorraine Rigney, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Santan & Pauline Soares, Caroline Susainathan, Jim Vella, Alison Vella, Melchor Usman.

Remembrance: Neil Amaratunga, France Angseeing, Carmen Attard, Joseph Azzopardi, Roy, Mary & Des Barney, Sam Borg, Eveillino Bhundoo, Brian Carrebine, Lina Cabaero, Mary Chircop, Cini Family, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Carmen, Joe, Lonsan, Jimmy & Tony De Guarie, Julian Epondulan, Melvyn Fernandes, Joseph Formosa & Family, Sammy Formosa, Evangeline Garcia, Jose Garcia, Christine Gomez, Harold, Rosine, Marc LaFleur, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Mangion Family, Elenoa Matavesi, Pauline Meilak, Mary Mifsud, Emilia & William Mifsud, Marcel Mohsen, Lourda Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Felix & Adriana Muscat, Michelle Muscat, Mary & Francis Muscat, Josephine Muscat, Charles Muscat, Philippa & Jim Muscat, Piu Muscat, Adrian Pereira, Lakshman Pereira, John Portelli, John & Roseline Ratnam, Jose Sanchez, Sem Serna, Joyce & John Sutari, Tony Vassallo, Shane Vaz, Jonathan Tek Kie, Stevenson Upulasi and all the Holy Souls of Purgatory.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR GREETINGS

In this joyful time of the year, I would like to thank each of you for your support throughout the year and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the Lord fill your hearts with joy and hope and help you share them with people around you both in this Parish community and beyond.

Fr Henry.

CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

Many thanks to all our ministers, helpers, volunteers and Parish staff for the hard works they have done to make our Christmas liturgies truly special and our church fit for the occasion.

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 2024. 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 f and we will endeavour to assist you as soon as possible. Thank You.



Christmas Offertory

Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights

— James 1:17

Your gift supports our parish to share Christ's
message of love and salvation with all

GIVE TO YOUR PARISH



CHRISTMAS OFFERTORY Christmas is a joyous time when we come together as a parish family to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Our Lady of Lourdes relies on the generosity of our faith community to sustain our liturgical, sacramental, pastoral and charitable ministries and we are ever grateful for your support.

Please consider giving a Christmas Offertory gift via parracatholic.org/christmas-offertory, the QR code above or in the envelopes provided.

FROM FR. HENRY DUC



Dear Friends,

It's depending on which Mass you go to this weekend either Christmas Eve, Midnight or Christmas Day, you will have a chance to listen to one of the accounts focusing on the nativity of Jesus.

For those who attend the 6pm and 9.00pm Mass, the Gospel of Matthew gives us a glimpse into Jesus' genealogy starting from Abraham and ending with St Joseph, and more interestingly a highlight of the complexity of Mary's conception making Joseph feel uneasy, consequently he planned to divorce her informally.

Thanks to the angel's intervention, the mystery of Mary's pregnancy was revealed to Joseph, and he felt released and went ahead to carry out what the angel instructed him to do, which was to take Mary home as his wife and name her son Jesus.

As we know, the Gospel of Matthew was written mainly for the Jewish community in diaspora, a community quite familiar with the messianic teachings of the prophets, the writer managed to put an extra touch about Mary's conception that it fulfilled the prophecy in the Old Testament about the Virgin to conceive and give birth to a son called Emmanuel (cf Isa 7.14), therefore this son must be the Messiah.

For those who go to the Midnight Mass, the Gospel of Luke explains to us the reason why Mary heavily conceived and Joseph originally from Nazareth had to go to Bethlehem, found no room available in the inn and were forced to wrap her newly-born baby in swaddling clothes and place him in a manger. The angel then broke the most joyful news about the birth of the savior, Christ the Lord with the shepherds watching their flocks in the fields. Though this Lukan account of Christmas stops at this point, we know that the shepherds did respond to the angel's message and they rushed to come over to the spot where Jesus, Mary and Joseph were staying and paid homage to the Son of God.

For those who choose to go to Mass on Christmas Day, John gives us a highly abstract and philosophical reflection upon the entry of the Son of God called the Word into the human world as the light to enlighten all dwellers on earth. The Word had John as his witness verifying his pre-existence in eternity, and also met with certain resistance from those who preferred not to accept him. However, it is a great honor for those who embrace and accept him, they are given the grace to make them sons and daughters of God.

In the joyful spirit of Christmas, let us give praise and thanks to God for making the impossible possible through the nativity of Jesus born of the Virgin Mary, and for revealing Jesus to us through our faith. May the grace of Christmas open our hearts and minds to welcome Jesus into our lives and try our best to live our lives worthy of our call as God's sons and daughters.

Have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year,

Fr Henry



BISHOP VINCENT'S 2023 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

We are pleased to be able to share Bishop Vincent's Christmas message for 2023.

It can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/T7Rn2GyHVis>



Who did What?

Write the number of the person beside what they did in the Christmas Story.

1. Saint Joseph _____ *Announced the joyful news of the Saviour's birth*
2. Our Lady _____ *Commanded that everyone register in their hometown*
3. The Shepherds _____ *Did not have room for the man and his wife*
4. The Angels _____ *Took his wife to Bethlehem*
5. The Innkeeper _____ *Pondered all these things in her heart*
6. Baby Jesus _____ *Went to find the newborn Saviour*
7. The Emperor _____ *Came to save the people from their sins*



Nativity Word Scramble

1. STRA _____
2. MAGREN _____
3. MYAR _____
4. SEPHE _____
5. DOEYKN _____
6. AEGLN _____
7. JPHOES _____
8. JSSEU _____
9. KIGSN _____
10. STBALE _____

All these words come from the Christmas story. Can you unscramble them?



POPE FRANCIS' CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2022

Dear brothers and sisters in Rome and throughout the world, happy Christmas!

May the Lord Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, bring to all of you the love of God, wellspring of confidence and hope, together with the gift of the peace proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those whom he favours" (*Lk 2:14*).

On this festive day, we turn our gaze to Bethlehem. The Lord comes to the world in a stable and is laid in a manger for animals, since his parents could find no room in the inn, even though the time had come for Mary to give birth.

He comes among us in silence and in the dark of night, because the word of God needs no spotlights or loud human voices. He is himself the Word that gives life its meaning, he is the Light that brightens our path. "The true light, which enlightens everyone" – the Gospel tells us – "was coming into the world" (*Jn 1:9*).

Jesus is born in our midst; he is *God with us*. He comes to accompany our daily lives, to share with us in all things: our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears. He comes as a helpless child. He is born in the cold night, poor among the poor. In need of everything, he knocks at the door of our heart to find warmth and shelter.

Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, surrounded by light, may we set out to see the sign that God has given us. May we overcome our spiritual drowsiness and the shallow holiday glitter that makes us forget the One whose birth we are celebrating. Let us leave behind the hue and din that deadens our hearts and makes us spend more time in preparing decorations and gifts than in contemplating the great event: the Son of God born for us.

Brothers and sisters, let us turn our eyes to Bethlehem, and listen to the first faint cries of the Prince of Peace. For truly Jesus *is our peace*. The peace that the world cannot give, the peace that God the Father has bestowed on humanity by sending his Son into the world. Saint Leo the Great summed up the message of this day in a concise Latin phrase: *Natalis Domini, natalis est pacis*: "the Lord's birth is the birth of peace" (*Serm.* 26, 5).

Jesus Christ is also *the way of peace*. By his incarnation, passion, death and resurrection, he has opened the way that leads from a world closed in on itself and oppressed by the dark shadows of enmity and war, to a world that is open and free to live in fraternity and peace. Brothers and sisters, let us follow that road! Yet in order to do so, to be able to walk behind Jesus, we must divest ourselves of the burdens that weigh us down and block our way.

What are those burdens? What is that dead weight? The same negative forces that prevented King Herod and his court from acknowledging and welcoming the birth of Jesus: attachment to power and money, pride, hypocrisy, falsehood. These forces hold us back from going to Bethlehem; they exclude us from the grace of Christmas and they block the entrance to the path of peace. Indeed, we must acknowledge with sorrow that, even as the Prince of Peace is given to us, the icy winds of war continue to buffet humanity.

If we want it to be Christmas, the Birth of Jesus and of peace, let us look to Bethlehem and contemplate the face of the Child who is born for us! And in that small and innocent face, let us see the faces of all those children who, everywhere in the world, long for peace.

Let us also see the faces of our Ukrainian brothers and sisters who are experiencing this Christmas in the dark and cold, far from their homes due to the devastation caused by ten months of war. May the Lord inspire us to offer concrete gestures of solidarity to assist all those who are suffering, and may he enlighten the minds of those who have the power to silence the thunder of weapons and put an immediate end to this senseless war! Tragically, we prefer to heed other counsels, dictated by worldly ways of thinking. Yet who is listening to the voice of the Child?

Our time is experiencing a grave *famine of peace* also in other regions and other theatres of this third world war. Let us think of Syria, still scarred by a conflict that has receded into the background but has not ended. Let us think too of the Holy Land, where in recent months violence and confrontations have increased, bringing death and injury in their wake. Let us beseech the Lord that there, in the land that witnessed his birth, dialogue and efforts to build mutual trust between Palestinians and Israelis may resume. May the Child Jesus sustain the Christian communities living in the Middle East, so that each of those countries can experience the beauty of fraternal coexistence between individuals of different faiths. May the Christ Child help Lebanon in particular, so that it can finally rebound with the help of the international community and with the strength born of fraternity and solidarity. May the light of Christ illumine the region of the Sahel, where peaceful coexistence between peoples and traditions is disrupted by conflict and acts of violence. May that light lead to a lasting truce in Yemen and to reconciliation in Myanmar and Iran, and an end to all bloodshed. May it inspire the political authorities and all people of good will in the Americas to attempt to calm the political and social tensions experienced by various countries; I think in particular of the people of Haiti who have been suffering for a long time.

On this day, as we sit around a well-spread table, may we not avert our gaze from Bethlehem, a town whose name means "house of bread, but think of all those, especially children, who go hungry while huge amounts of food daily go to waste and resources are being spent on weapons. The war in Ukraine has further aggravated this situation, putting entire peoples at risk of famine, especially in Afghanistan and in the countries of the Horn of Africa. We know that every war causes hunger and exploits food as a weapon, hindering its distribution to people already suffering. On this day, let us learn from the Prince of Peace and, starting with those who hold political responsibilities, commit ourselves to making food solely an instrument of peace. And as we enjoy gathering with our loved ones, let us think of families that experience great hardship and those that, in this time of economic crisis, are struggling as a result of unemployment and lacking in the necessities of life.

Dear brothers and sisters, today as then, Jesus, the true light, comes into a world severely sick with indifference, a world that does not welcome him (cf. *Jn 1:11*) and indeed rejects him, as it does with many foreigners, or ignores him, as we all too often do with the poor. Today may we not forget the many displaced persons and refugees who knock at our door in search of some comfort, warmth and food. Let us not forget the marginalized, those living alone, the orphans, the elderly – who are wisdom for their people – who risk being set aside, and prisoners, whom we regard solely for the mistakes they have made and not as our fellow men and women.

Brothers and sisters, Bethlehem shows us the simplicity of God, who reveals himself not to the wise and the intelligent but to the little ones, to those with a pure and open heart (cf. *Mt 11:25*). Like the shepherds, let us too set out in haste and allow ourselves to be amazed by the unthinkable event of God who becomes man for our salvation. He, the source of all good, makes himself poor, asking as alms our own poor humanity. Let us allow ourselves to be deeply moved by the love of God. And let us follow Jesus, who stripped himself of his glory in order to give us a share in his fullness.