



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@lol7hills.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: 10th December 2023
Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Parish Website: www.lol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10 December 2023 • Year B



Let us Pray for the Sick

Leonila Ahillon, Mary Attard, Cynthia Avery, Barrie Chamberlain, Rosella Booth, Anthony Janicska, Carlos Moreno, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan, Sue Tipaldo, 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@lol7hills.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 Busuttill, Noel DCruz, Maximilian Epondulan, 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, Mercedes Yu, Anna Vingerhoed, Epifania Cruz Samaniego, Maria Fely Sebastian, Joseph & Theresa Vella

Anniversaries: Fredy Alphonse, Merlene & Ralph Blackford, Carolina Borg, Josephine & Family Calleja, Fe Licup Carmen, Mary Carmenzuli, Mervyn Costello, Conchita Deloso, Antonia, John Falzon, Josephine Francis, Charles Francis, Russell, Sheela Franklin, Paul Gauci, Charlie Gravina, Ivan Elisha, Martha Joseph, Ngoc Khuong Mai, Thelma Morrissey, Lourda Motha, Xavier Jm Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Paul Mula, Jason Muscat, Francis Muscat, Alberto Nahoy, Joseph Thang Nguyen, Aurora Nonato, Makalita Kilisitina Pongi, Sam Silvia, Cordula Paiva, Roseline Ratnam, Lorraine Rigney, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Caroline Susainathan, Jim & Alison Vella, Melchor Usman.

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

**Names are to be submitted to the Parish Office on or before a Thursday and will be*

Funeral Notices

May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen



THE PILGRIM STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The Statue of Virgin Mary is available for home visitation and will reside with you for a week, being Sunday to Saturday. If you are wishing to participate, please leave your name and address at the Parish Office or contact Maryse Augseeing on 0467 701 010.

Our Lady of Lourdes



Ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my needs, my troubles, my sufferings; cast on me a look of pity.

By appearing in the grotto of Lourdes, you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary,

from which you dispense your favours, and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their infirmities, both spiritual and physical. I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence to implore your maternal intercession. Obtain most loving mother, my requests, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
Amen.

REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second

FIRST COLLECTION and Matt's Point is for the support of Priests throughout the Diocese.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account name: Parramatta Diocesan Clergy

BSB: 067 950

ACC: 00 00 4265

Reference: Seven Hills - 6035

SECOND COLLECTION or Planned Giving Program

On behalf of the Parish Community, I would like to thank you very much for your ongoing support, which has been absolutely vital in keeping our Parish going strong. Projects completed include the Hall Kitchen renovation, Parish Meeting Room painting, Parish Office and Meeting Room Roof painted, Church roof cleaned and ceiling repaired and painted.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church.

BSB: 067 950

ACC: 000552

Reference: (Your *Planned Giving envelope number* or for a one off donation, 'DONATION')

IN-PERSON BANK DEPOSIT (at a Bank Inst / Branch)

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church

BSB: 062 315

ACC ID # 00901486

AGENT # 660



KEEP UP TO DATE

By visiting our parish website with news, the bulletin, prayers and much more - a great way to stay up to date with what's on in our parish Visit www.lol7hills.org.au

FIRST READING A reading from the prophet Isaiah 40:1-5; 9-11

Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The Word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. **(R.)**

3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**

SECOND READING A reading from the first letter of St Peter 2 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen



FROM FR. HENRY

Dear Friends,

In the Mekong Delta where I lived, fish was plenty in the monsoon season when the river rose up for about 5 meters high, but they became rare during the dry season and meat was always a luxury item served only for special occasions, such as our New Year, weddings, funerals and death anniversaries.

As a result we had to look for extra food to put on our table and one of them was the crickets which could be found plenty in the corn fields, but we had to dig them up out of their holes, clean and stir fry them.

They were our staple and super food keeping us survived throughout the hard times.

Just like crickets were our table food, locusts together with wild honey were John the Baptist's in the wilderness where he chose to live and exercise his ministry to help his contemporary preparing their lives worthy to welcome the Savior of the world through baptism and confession. This is a rather interesting detail from the Gospel for it reveals to us a bit of the history of our sacraments of Baptism and Confession whose origin can be traced back to pre-Jesus time.

In his ministry, John shows us an inspiring example of how he lived as Jesus' herald by means of his simplicity and humility. He chose to wear the camel-skin garment and consumed whatever nature would provide to him, and despite his popularity in the community as a holy man who had enjoyed strong support from his followers, John had no hesitation to make it clear to his followers that he is not the one they had been waiting for, but it was Jesus who was more powerful than he was to the point that he was unfit even to undo the strap of his sandals, and who will sanctify them and make them his people with the grace of the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of Baptism, something John could not do.

Importantly all this took place to fulfill God's promise proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah long before, that he is going to send his messenger, a voice in the wilderness to prepare people ready for the Lord (cf. Isa 40.3). The fulfillment of such a promise by God helps verify the true identity of Jesus as the Son sent by God to bring salvation to the world. Let us ask the Lord to strengthen our faith in Him as our Savior and help us follow John's humble way to carry out our call as heralds of Jesus in the world today through our humble efforts to help prepare others around us ready to welcome Jesus into their lives.

Have a Christocentric week.

Fr Henry

PARISH NEWS...

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

At the meeting last Wednesday night, members of the Council spent some time to reflect upon the Chat GPT-based results of our recent survey relating to question 4 about how we can help each other to grow in faith.

After the monthly reports from various Parish groups, the Council had a discussion about our Parish Feast Day on Sunday 11 February, 2024.

ZUMBA CLASS TUESDAY 12th DECEMBER

This Tuesday night's Zumba, 12th December is cancelled. Apologies for the inconvenience. See you back Thursday!

MINISTERS FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

There is a sign up sheet at the back of the church from this weekend for Ministers of the Eucharist, Acolytes and Altar Servers who would like to serve at one of our Christmas Masses.

CHURCH WELCOMERS

As part of the feedback from Synod in our parish, we need some new welcomers to greet and offer bulletins at all services to help continue to create a better community, welcoming parishioners and visitors before each mass. If you are able to assist please contact the parish office.

CHURCH CLEANING

We urgently need extra people to do the church cleaning once a month for about an hour. If you can help please phone the Parish Office or put your name and number on the A3 roster located at the back of the church under the weeks of your availability.

PARISH WINDOWS

We all know that our church has been more 60 years old, and so its windows. Unfortunately some of them have been broken and waiting to be fixed at the moment, so please be gentle to our aging windows when you need to open them. Thank you for not pushing them all the way out, as you might damage them.

ADVENT WREATH

This circular base is traditionally taken to symbolise the ever-renewing cycle of the seasons. The four candles, represent the four Sundays of Advent. The second candle known as the Bethlehem's candle symbolises peace. The light of peace shone forth from Bethlehem for all the world.



WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

We would like to welcome Rev Deacon Thong Nguyen who was appointed recently to serve in our Parish community. Deacon Thong is my compatriot and we have known each other for a long time, five years before the end of the Vietnam War. We wish him all the best and look forward to his companionship with us.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY—CHRISTMAS STORY

Thank you to the children who have volunteered to act out the Christmas Story this year. This will take place on the Sunday 24th December at 6pm mass. I please ask that children be present at every Sunday 9.30am Mass (10th & 17th) so we are able to practice. We may also do a quick run through on Saturday 23rd December. Many thanks for your support, Jemelyn Demeterio

PARISH DINNER THANK YOU

We would like to thank our Parish staff for helping to prepare our Parish Thank You dinner and all our volunteers who joined the Dinner Thank You night. Many thanks to those who were unable to attend the event for the generosity to serve in various ministries within our parish.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE CATECHIST GROUP

Due to circumstances, lot of our current catechists have to take a break and we therefore urgently need others to replace. If you can spare an hour per week plus a few hours of preparation for the class, please consider to join this ministry by contacting our Parish Office. You'll receive lot of support, such as training and materials for the ministry to nurture the faith of children at public schools.

DIOCESAN NEWS

Join our CYP team!

The Diocese of Parramatta's Mission Enhancement Team (MET) is looking to expand and deepen the work of Catholic Youth Parramatta in 2024. You have the opportunity to impact the lives of thousands of youth and young adults in our ever-growing ministry, especially in schools. Forward your current CV, refer to the position description, and record a 2-3 minute video addressing your passion, skills and experience for the role to parracatholicjobs@parracatholic.org

Be Part of Our Synod Journey: Diocesan Synod Report Now Available

The Diocesan Synod Report is now available for download. The newly released Diocesan Synod Report offers a summary of our first Diocesan Synod assembly, held from 13-15 October 2023, its preparatory stages, in-depth details of the proceedings, and insights from delegates. Download your copy from the Parramatta Synod website now:

<https://parracatholic.org/synod2023/>

Liturgical Ministry Course returns in 2024

The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence in February 2024. This is formation for anyone interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries either as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to the Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact the Office for Worship on 0460 037 795 or mary.gale@parracatholic.org or visit our website to download an enrolment form at

<https://officeforworship.org.au/>

Diocesan World Day of the Sick Mass: 10 February 2024

A Mass for the World Day of the Sick, including the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, will be held at 11am on Saturday 10 February 2024 at St Patrick's Church, Mary, Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown. All are welcome, including those who may be sick, and those who care for the sick and dying and health care professionals. RSVPs are required by 6 February 2024 to mary.gale@parracatholic.org

Music for Lent Workshop: 12 February 2024

Musicians and Liturgy Planners are invited to attend an evening exploring Music for Lent on Monday 12 February 2024 from 7pm to 8.30pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. The session will be presented by Eric Grella, Music Formation Facilitator, Mission Enhancement Team. To RSVP, please contact mary.gale@parracatholic.org by 5 February 2024.

Are you interested in becoming a pastoral and professional supervisor?

Transforming Practices offers a rich formation in Pastoral Supervision. Supervision Formation comprises of 5 two day Modules, held over 7 months. The next Portfolio of Learning Day will be held on Friday 3 February 2024 (with sufficient applicants). For those proceeding – an Introductory Day will be held on Friday 5 April 2024. All training days may be held on Zoom, face to face or in dual mode depending on successful applicant's location. For program prerequisites, please visit www.transformingpractices.org. For further information, please contact the Registrar, Mary Pearson via email marypearson@gmail.com

Positions Vacant:

- Facilitator: Catholic Youth Parramatta – Mission Enhancement Team, Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 12pm Monday 11 December 2023 (see description below).**
- Governance, Risk and Compliance Administrative Support – Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 10pm Tuesday 12 December 2023.**

More details at: parracatholic.org/employment



To All Parishioners of OLOL Seven Hills

Our final collection for the year is our Annual Vinnies Christmas Appeal.

By helping the St. Vincent De Paul Christmas appeal and Christmas hamper donations, you will be assisting in two ways. At a local level, our members and volunteers will be able to offer assistance directly to families and individuals. At a broader level, you will be contributing to the large and varied network of short- and long-term support services for people in NSW who require specialised care.

How to Donate:

We are requesting donations of gift cards, from Woolworths, Coles or Aldi. Gift cards often start at \$5 and upwards, and are then distributed to families in need in Seven Hills. These families and individuals then have the dignity of selecting food and/or gifts for their families at Christmas. Gift cards can be brought and placed by the Christmas trees in the church and we thank you in advance for your compassionate generosity.

Take a tag from one of the Christmas trees and make up an appropriate hamper. Please return your hamper by the 15th of December to enable us to distribute them in time for Christmas. Alternatively, an envelope is on your seat- Fill out and return to a Vinnies member or send by post. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

St. Vincent De Paul told his followers there are no people so rich that they have nothing to receive and none so poor that they have nothing to give. Support for this appeal will benefit recipients, and addresses poverty and disadvantage in our communities. At the same time, it is an endorsement of the concern and generosity of donors.

Reno Abela

ON Behalf of OLOL Seven Hills Conference of St. Vincent DePaul Society

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a good new year.



POPE FRANCIS' ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

Today too I will not be able to read everything: I am getting better, but my voice is still not good. Monsignor Braida will read the catechesis. Today, first Sunday of Advent, in the brief Gospel the liturgy offers us (cf. *Mk* 13: 33-37), Jesus addresses a simple and direct exhortation to us, three times: "Watch" (vv. 33, 35, 37). Thus, the theme is *vigilance*. How should we understand it? Sometimes we think of this virtue as an attitude motivated by fear of impending doom, as if a meteorite were about to plunge from the sky and threaten, if we do not avoid it in time, to overwhelm us. But this is certainly not what Christian vigilance is all about! Jesus illustrates it with a parable, speaking about a master who will return, and about his servants who await him (cf. v. 34). The servant in the Bible is the "trusted person" of the master, which whom there is often a relationship of collaboration and affection. Think, for example, that Moses is defined as the servant of God (cf. *Nm* 12: 7), and that even Mary says of herself, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord" (*Lk* 1: 38). So, the servants' vigilance is not one of fear, but of longing, of waiting to go forth to meet their Lord who is coming. They remain in readiness for his return because they care for him, because they have in mind that when he returns, they will make him find a welcoming and orderly home; they are happy to see him, to the point that they look forward to his return as a feast for the whole great family of which they are a part. It is with this expectation filled with affection that we also want to prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus: at Christmas, which we will celebrate in a few weeks; at the end of time, when He will return in glory; every day, as He comes to meet us in the Eucharist, in His Word, in our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. So, in a special way during these weeks, let us prepare the house of the heart with care, so that it is orderly and hospitable. In fact, keeping watch means keeping the heart ready. It is the attitude of the sentinel, who in the night is not tempted by weariness, does not fall asleep, but remains awake awaiting the coming light. The Lord is our light and it is good to dispose the heart to welcome him with prayer and to host him with charity, the two preparations that, so to speak, make him comfortable. In this regard, the story goes that Saint Martin of Tours, a man of prayer, after giving half of his cloak to a poor man, dreamed of Jesus clad in that very part of the cloak he had given. Here is a good program for Advent: to encounter Jesus coming in every brother and sister who needs us and to share with them what we can: listening, time, concrete assistance. Dear friends, it will be good for us today to ask ourselves how we can prepare a welcoming heart for the Lord. We can do so by approaching His forgiveness, His Word, His Table, finding space for prayer, welcoming those in need. Let us cultivate His expectation without letting ourselves be distracted by so many pointless things, and without complaining all the time, but keeping our hearts alert, that is, eager for Him, awake and ready. May the Virgin Mary, woman of expectation, help us to receive her coming Son.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

In Israel and Palestine the situation is serious. It pains us that the truce has been broken: this means death, destruction, misery. Many hostages have been freed, but many are still in Gaza. Let us think about them, their families who had seen a light, a hope to embrace their loved ones again. In Gaza there is much suffering; there is a lack of basic necessities. I hope that all those who are involved may reach a new ceasefire agreement as soon as possible and find solutions other than weapons, trying to take courageous paths to peace. I wish to assure my prayer for the victims of the attack that occurred this morning in the Philippines, where a bomb exploded during Mass. I am close to the families and the people of Mindanao, who have already suffered so much. Albeit at a distance, I follow the work of COP 28 in Dubai with great attention. I am close. I reiterate my appeal for a response to climate change with *concrete* political changes; let us come out of the straits of particularism and nationalism, mindsets of the past, and embrace a common vision, all making every effort now, without delay, for a necessary global conversion. Today is International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Welcoming and including those who experience this condition helps society as a whole to become more humane. In families, in parishes, in schools, at work, in sport: let us learn to value every person with his or her qualities and abilities, excluding no-one. I greet you all affectionately, Romans and pilgrims from Italy and other parts of the world, in particular the Polish people taking part in the events organized in Rome in honour of the Ulma martyr family, recently beatified. I greet all the pilgrims and parish groups from Florence, Siena, Brindisi, Cosenza and Adrano. I wish you all a good Sunday and a good Advent journey. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci!*

POPE FRANCIS MET COUNCIL OF CARDINALS TO DISCUSS CHURCH'S FEMININ DIMENSION *By Vatican News*

As the Pope announced on 30 November, during an audience with the International Theological Commission, the Council of Cardinals is focusing its reflections on the "feminine dimension of the Church."

"The Church is woman," said Pope Francis on that occasion. "If we do not understand what woman is or what the theology of womanhood is, we will never understand what the Church is." He also described the "masculinizing" of the Church as a "great sin," which has yet to be resolved. The Pope appealed to a distinction proposed by Jesuit theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar, who described a "Petrine" or ministerial principle, and a "Marian" or mystical principle. "The Marian is more important than the Petrine," Pope Francis said, "because there is the bride Church, the woman Church, without being masculine." **Last C9 meeting in June** - The last meeting of the C9 took place on 26-27 June, and saw the Cardinals reflect with the Pope on various themes. These included the ongoing war in Ukraine, the implementation of the apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* in local Churches, and the work of the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. Central to the discussions was also a reflection on the Synodal Assembly on the theme of synodality which was later held in the Vatican in October. **The new C9** - After the renewal of the Council of Cardinals by the Pope on 7 March, the C9 is currently composed of the following Cardinals: Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See; Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, President of the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State and the Governorate of the Vatican City State; Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, Archbishop of Kinshasa; Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay; Seán Patrick O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston; Juan José Omella Omella, Archbishop of Barcelona; Gérald Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec; Jean-Claude Hollerich, Archbishop of Luxembourg; Sérgio da Rocha, Archbishop of San Salvador de Bahia. Bishop Marco Mellino, titular bishop of Cresima, serves as the C9's secretary. The first meeting of the new C9 took place on 24 April. **The establishment of the Council of Cardinals** - The Council of Cardinals was established by Pope Francis with a papal chirograph on 28 September 2013. He entrusted the Council with the task of assisting him in the governance of the universal Church and studying a project for the reform of the Roman Curia. The reform was realized with the new apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* published on 19 March 2022. The first meeting of the C9 took place on 1 October 2013.

POPE FRANCIS' AUDIENCE ADDRESS

Dear brothers and sisters,

In the last catecheses we saw that the proclamation of the Gospel is *joy*, it is *for everyone*, and it is addressed to *today*.

Now let us discover a final essential characteristic: it is necessary that the proclamation takes place *in the Holy Spirit*.

Indeed, to “communicate God”, the joyful credibility of the testimony, the universality of the proclamation and the timeliness of the message are not enough. Without the Holy Spirit, all zeal is vain and falsely apostolic: it would only be our own and would not bear fruit.

In *Evangelii gaudium* I recalled that “Jesus is the first and greatest evangelizer”; that “in every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God”, who “called us to cooperate with him and who leads us on by the power of his Spirit” (no. 12). Here is the primacy of the Holy Spirit! Thus, the Lord compares the dynamism of the Kingdom of God to “a man [who scatters] seed upon the ground and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how” (Mk 4:26-27). The Spirit is the protagonist; he always precedes the missionaries and makes the fruit grow. This knowledge comforts us a great deal! And it helps us to specify another, equally decisive: namely, that in her apostolic zeal the Church does not announce herself, but a grace, a gift, and the Holy Spirit is precisely the Gift of God, as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman (cf. Jn 4:10).

The primacy of the Spirit should not, however, induce us to indolence. Confidence does not justify disengagement.

The vitality of the seed that grows by itself does not authorize farmers to neglect the field. Jesus, in giving his last recommendations before ascending to heaven, said: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses ... to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Lord has not left us theological lecture notes or a pastoral manual to apply, but the Holy Spirit who inspires the mission. And the courageous initiative that the Spirit instils in us leads us to imitate his style, which always has two characteristics: *creativity* and *simplicity*.

Creativity, to proclaim Jesus with joy, to everyone and today. In this age of ours, which does not help us have a religious outlook on life, and in which the proclamation has become in various places more difficult, arduous, apparently fruitless, the temptation to desist from pastoral service may arise. Perhaps one takes refuge in safety zones, like the habitual repetition of things one always does, or in the alluring calls of an intimist spirituality, or even in a misunderstood sense of the centrality of the liturgy. They are temptations that disguise themselves as fidelity to tradition, but often, rather than responses to the Spirit, they are reactions to personal dissatisfactions. Instead, pastoral creativity, being bold in the Spirit, ardent in his missionary fire, is the proof of fidelity to him. Therefore, I wrote that “Jesus can also break through the dull categories with which we would enclose him, and he constantly amazes us by his divine creativity. Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today’s world” (*Evangelii gaudium*, 11). Creativity, therefore; and then *simplicity*, precisely because the Spirit takes us to the source, to the “first proclamation”.

Indeed, it is “the fire of the Spirit ... [that] leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father’s infinite mercy” (*ivi*, no. 164). This is the *first proclamation*, which must “be the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal”; to say over and over, “Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you” (*ibid*).

Brothers and sisters, let us allow ourselves to be drawn by the Spirit and invoke him every day; may he be the source of our being and our work; may he be at the origin of every activity, encounter, meeting and proclamation. He enlivens and rejuvenates the Church: with him we must not fear, because he, who is *harmony*, always keeps creativity and simplicity together, inspires communion and sends out in mission, opens to diversity and leads back to unity. He is our strength, the breath of our proclamation, the source of apostolic zeal. Come, Holy Spirit!

Special Greetings

I welcome all the English-speaking pilgrims, particularly the groups from Malta, Australia, Japan, Indonesia and the United States of America. Upon all of you and upon your families, I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Summary of the Holy Father's words

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In our continuing catechesis on apostolic zeal, we now reflect on how the preaching of the Gospel always takes place *in the power of the Holy Spirit*. As the Gift of God (cf. Jn 4:10), the Spirit prepares, sustains and fosters growth and new life in the Church. Yet, in every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God the Father, who sent his Son among us and bestowed the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the Church. In our witness to the Risen Christ, we are called to imitate the creativity and simplicity that are the hallmark of the Spirit’s work. May the fire of the Holy Spirit continue to burn within us, strengthen us in unity and missionary zeal, as we strive to be joyful witnesses of our salvation in Christ, even to the ends of the earth.

GENERAL NOTICES...

NEW TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES? HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

Welcome. Wherever you are in your faith journey, it is great to have you. Please visit our website or call the parish office. We're here to serve you. www.olol7hills.org.au

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

SICK AND/OR HOMEBOUND?

Would you like to receive Communion? Or seriously ill or in danger of death? We have dedicated ministers who can visit and bring you communion. Feel free to approach or call Fr Henry for the Holy Anointing of the Sick. Please call the parish office 96222920

FUNERALS

When a Funeral is to be celebrated, please contact the parish office to organise a meeting with Fr Henry. Funerals are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

BAPTISM

Parents desiring Baptism for their children are encouraged to contact the parish office to arrange for the required preparation class for parents.

MASS INTENTIONS

All Mass intentions must be submitted to the Parish Office on or before Thursday. Names will be published for 4 weeks at a time.



LOURDES OVER 50s GROUP

Over 50s meeting Thursday 8th February 2024, 10.30am– 1pm. Please bring a plate to share. Look forward to seeing you there.

Lourdes: Luminate Young Adults Group

Wishes you a Merry and Blessed Christmas. The next group night will be in early 2024. If you would like more information please kindly contact Ian Epondulan: youtholol7h@gmail.com

LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish playgroup is a fun playtime for children aged 0 to 5 years old and their carers. It is held every Friday morning during school terms 9.30am-11.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. For further information please contact Maria Hosni 0432 174 056 or the Parish Office.

FREE ZUMBA CLASSES

Every Tuesday and Thursday 6.00pm-7.00pm in the Hall. Everyone Welcome!

LEGION OF MARY

Thursdays at 1.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group

Thursdays at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome

VINNIES SUPPORT CENTRES ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN NEED

St Vincent de Paul Support Centres across Greater Sydney are still available and taking calls to arrange for food vouchers or other items to be provided to those in need. If you need assistance, call the Support Centres in Blacktown on (02)8861 9777, Harris Park on (02)8861 9757 and Penrith on (02)8861 9770. To find out more about what support is available, visit <http://vinnies.org.au/covidsupportnsw>

OFFERTORY PROCESSION FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES

With the intention to help our community to get more involved at Mass and better appreciate our share in the priesthood of the faithful, meaning our call to be priests, prophets and kings or queens of Jesus through baptism that Fr David Orr reminded us in our recent Parish retreat, I would like to invite all our parishioners to take part in the offertory procession, especially families that have some special celebrations in the families, such as wedding anniversaries, baptisms, birthdays, or death anniversaries. Please see Fr Henry or Ernie before Mass to arrange it.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2023

| | |
|---|---------------|
| 19 Parish Second Rite of Reconciliation | 7.30pm |
| 21 Individual Confession | 9.30-10.30am |
| 22 Individual Confession | 9.30-10.30am |
| 24 Children/Family Christmas Mass | 6.00pm |
| 24 Christmas Mass | 9.00pm |
| 24 Midnight Mass | 12.00am |
| 25 Christmas Day Mass | 8.00 & 9.30am |



LOL MINISTRY ROSTER

Acolytes, Ministers, Readers and Altar Servers, please remember to arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass.

9/10 December 2023

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Acolytes | Vigil: James Dinning 8am: Ernie Gartner 9.30am Kilifi Huihui | |
| Ministers | Vigil: C. Gonzales, C. Jansz 8am: F. Balatbat, Edith Gartner 9.30am: P. Gow, K. Huihui | |
| Readers | Vigil: C. Rodrigues, M. Simic 8am: N. Arambulo, J. Cabasa 9.30am: A. H. R. Han, E. V. Pieris | |
| Altar Servers | Vigil: A. Spadaro, B. Spadaro 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: J. Martinez, M. Pieris, J. Pieris | |
| Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass) | Young Adults Group | |
| Musicians | Vigil: OFS 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Tongan Choir | |
| Flowers | Claudette & Judith | |
| Church Cleaning | 9 December | Tongan Community |
| Welcomers | Vigil: Helen Gonzales 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: Sastina Pieris | |

16/17 December 2023

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Acolytes | Vigil: Daniel La Guidara 8am: Jerome Irudayaraj 9.30am Eugene Mui | |
| Ministers | Vigil: L.La Guidara, M.Mifsud 8am: C.Gonzales, H.Gonzales 9.30am: G.Basili, S.Lenthall | |
| Readers | Vigil: B.Motha, A.Punch 8am: A.McNally, K.Walker 9.30am: M.Aquino, A.Walker | |
| Altar Servers | Vigil: A.La Guidara, C.La Guidara, S.Thoms 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: J. Kingston, A.Melki | |
| Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass) | Parish Pastoral Council | |
| Musicians | Vigil: K.Thoms & C.Woodward 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Maximilian's Chorale | |
| Flowers | Fennie & Angela | |
| Church Cleaning | 21 December | Cathy Hutchings & Annette Peatman |
| Welcomers | Vigil: Volunteer 8am: Volunteer 9.30am: Kathy Chamberlain | |

The Kids' Bulletin

Second Sunday of Advent
December 10th, 2023

A Messenger Sent from God

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way."
Mark 1:2 (NIV)

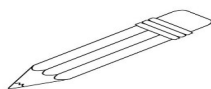
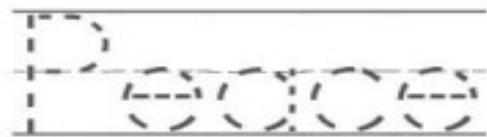
Choose the word that best matches the definition.
Answers can be found in Mark 1:1-8 (NIV)



*I am the voice of
one crying out in
the desert,
"Prepare the
way of the Lord,
make straight
his paths!"*



*What did God send before Jesus to prepare the
people for His coming?
Connect the dots to find out!*

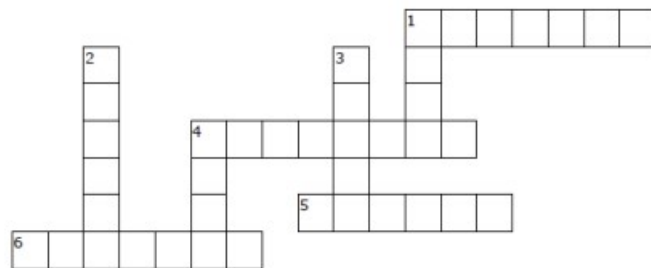


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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| W | Q | D | F | R | T | Z | U | X | B | A | N | M | J | P | O | Y | G | C | L | S | I | K | H | E | V |

- 3-25-21-25-5-6 _____
- 14-16-5-3-11-12 _____
- 21-11-12-3-11-20-21 _____
- 14-16-24-12 _____
- 10-11-15-6-22-7-25-3 _____
- 5-22-26-25-5 _____
- 1-11-17 _____
- 18-16-21-15-25-20 _____
- 20-16-19-8-21-6-21 _____
- 26-16-22-19-25 _____
- 24-16-12-25-17 _____
- 15-5-25-15-11-5-25 _____
- 14-25-21-8-21 _____
- 15-11-6-24 _____
- 21-6-5-11-22-18-24-6 _____

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|----------|----------|--------|---------|---------|
| JESUS | JOHN | DESERT | GOSPEL | VOICE |
| STRAIGHT | WAY | HONEY | LOCUSTS | PREPARE |
| SANDALS | BAPTIZED | PATH | RIVER | JORDAN |

- The river where John the Baptist baptized people
A. Nile B. Jordan C. Danube D. Amazon
- Having many bends and curves
A. smooth B. long C. crooked D. straight
- Having no bends or curves
A. long B. straight C. crooked D. smooth
- A dry region with very few plants
A. oasis B. forest C. river D. desert
- A sweet, sticky substance made by bees
A. locust B. milk C. honey D. candy
- To confess and turn away from sin
A. repent B. crooked C. sin D. prepare
- To make things ready
A. repent B. prepare C. forgive D. sin
- To do something that is against God's law
A. repent B. prepare C. sin D. forgive
- To pardon someone who has done something wrong
A. sin B. forgive C. repent D. prophet
- A person who speaks for God, or one who tells what will happen in the future
A. straight B. forgive C. prophet D. desert



ACROSS

- To make ready ahead of time
- Not having any curves or bends
- A dry, barren region with only a few plants
- To admit your sins to God

DOWN

- A trail made for traveling on foot
- The river where John baptized people
- What people use for speaking
- Actions that break God's law

| | | | |
|--------|---------|------|----------|
| VOICE | PREPARE | SINS | STRAIGHT |
| JORDAN | DESERT | PATH | CONFESS |

