

ST BERNADETTE'S PARISH LALOR PARK

Web Page: www.stbernadetteslalorpark.org.au

Parish Centre: 14 Wheeler Street, Lalor Park, 2147

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Parish Church: 10 Gardenia Grove, Lalor Park 2147

PARISH BULLETIN

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Parish Administrator: Fr John Paul Escarlan

Parish Secretary: Mrs Bev Baxter

Sacramental Coordinator: Mrs Madge Miranda (Thursday/Friday)

Assistant Secretary: Mr Joel Agius

Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9am to 4pm

Parish School: St Bernadette's, 18 Wheeler Street, Lalor Park

Principal: Mrs Lisa Samojlowicz Tel: 8869 6400



(Established 1961)

ST BERNADETTE'S PARISH VISION STATEMENT

The Parish of St Bernadette's strives to be a vibrant, active, Catholic community, that is welcoming and nurturing to all and celebrates being a people of God, with Christ as the model.

We acknowledge the Darug people, the traditional custodians on whose land we worship

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - YEAR A 8 JANUARY 2023

A Saviour for the world

There are many key images in today's Gospel that have their background in the Scriptures. Bethlehem is the small village in which David, the great king of Israel was born, and later anointed by the Prophet Samuel (1 Sam 16). For this reason Matthew quotes the prophet Micah who speaks of a new leader, a shepherd like David to be born in Bethlehem.

The images of the star and Magi look back to the time of Moses. When the people of Israel escaped from Egypt they wandered in the Sinai wilderness before moving up into the region now known as Jordan. This is on the east bank of the Jordan River. In order to travel into the land of Canaan, they had to pass through the region of Moab and the king of Moab did not want this large group to travel through his land. The king called on his seer (*magus*) to place a curse on the Israelites, but the seer instead pronounced a blessing. This *magus* from the eastern land of Moab proclaimed, 'I see him but not now; I behold him but not near; a star shall come out of Jacob and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel' (Numbers 24:17). In this episode we have the symbols used by Matthew – a magus in the East, seeing a star, the symbol of kingship. By use of these images Matthew continues to show the links between his new Christian community and the more ancient religion of Israel. Like much of the Gospel narrative, we are challenged to move from reading literally to reading these narratives seeking their theology rather than history.

Once again I suggest you make the distinction between the joy-filled narrative of Luke, and the threatening atmosphere of Matthew so that the community recognise two different, symbolic narratives. Children in school could even bring Christmas cards and separate the cards that depict Matthew's gospel, from those depicting Luke's story, and those that have mixed them up. This sort of exercise can help even young children learn to look beyond a literal reading.

In the eastern churches this Feast is celebrated as Christmas, for in today's feast Christ is revealed to the Gentiles, the non-Jews. By having foreigners come to the nativity and honour the child, Matthew looks ahead to the later Christian church which by the 80s, when Matthew is writing, has expanded beyond Judaism into the gentile lands. This is *our* festival, for as non-Jews, we have been brought into the blessing promised to Abraham and extended through the people of Israel to us. This is the message we find in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. God's gracious love has come to the gentiles (the pagans). Paul calls this a mystery – something that reveals the power of God at work – God has come to all people.

The Gospel contrasts wisdom and power. The Magi from the east are called wise and they come searching for Jesus in order to offer homage. It takes wisdom to acknowledge the truth of who we are before the mystery of God's ways. In humility they kneel before a child, seeing here a sign of God's presence. Herod acts with power. He commands and expects obedience. He is the King in Judea and will not tolerate another called 'king of the Jews'. Even the words of the Magi and the prophecies from the Scriptures fail to change his grasp on power. Herod's hands cling to his rule while the hands of the Magi open with gifts for the child.

Grant me this wisdom God, to live with open hands and a heart that seeks your presence.

© Sr Mary Coloe PVBM

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, Alleluia! We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord. Alleluia!



Below is the Spiritual Testament of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, written on Aug. 29, 2006, one year and four months into his pontificate. Each pope writes a spiritual testament to be made public only after his death.

When, at this late hour of my life, I look back on the decades I have wandered through, I see first of all how much reason I have to give thanks. Above all, I thank God Himself, the giver of all good gifts, who has given me life and guided me through all kinds of confusion; who has always picked me up when I began to slip, who has always given me anew the light of his countenance. In retrospect, I see and understand that even the dark and arduous stretches of this path were for my salvation and that He guided me well in those very stretches.

I thank my parents, who gave me life in difficult times and prepared a wonderful home for me with their love, which shines through all my days as a bright light until today. My father's clear-sighted faith taught us brothers and sisters to believe and stood firm as a guide in the midst of all my scientific knowledge; my mother's heartfelt piety and great kindness remain a legacy for which I cannot thank her enough. My sister has served me selflessly and full of kind concern for decades; my brother has always paved the way for me with the clear-sightedness of his judgements, with his powerful determination, and with the cheerfulness of his heart; without this ever-new going ahead and going along, I would not have been able to find the right path.

I thank God from the bottom of my heart for the many friends, men and women, whom He has always placed at my side; for the co-workers at all stages of my path; for the teachers and students He has given me. I gratefully entrust them all to His goodness. And I would like to thank the Lord for my beautiful home in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps, in which I was able to see the splendour of the Creator Himself shining through time and again. I thank the people of my homeland for allowing me to experience the beauty of faith time and again. I pray that our country will remain a country of faith and I ask you, dear compatriots, not to let your faith be distracted. Finally, I thank God for all the beauty I was able to experience during the various stages of my journey, but especially in Rome and in Italy, which has become my second home.

I ask for forgiveness from the bottom of my heart from all those whom I have wronged in some way.

What I said earlier of my compatriots, I now say to all who were entrusted to my service in the Church: Stand firm in the faith! Do not be confused! Often it seems as if science - on the one hand, the natural sciences; on the other, historical research (especially the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures) - has irrefutable insights to offer that are contrary to the Catholic faith. I have witnessed from times long past the changes in natural science and have seen how apparent certainties against the faith vanished, proving themselves not to be science but philosophical interpretations only apparently belonging to science - just as, moreover, it is in dialogue with the natural sciences that faith has learned to understand the limits of the scope of its affirmations and thus its own specificity. For 60 years now, I have accompanied the path of theology, especially biblical studies, and have seen seemingly unshakeable theses collapse with the changing generations, which turned out to be mere hypotheses: the liberal generation (Harnack, Jülicher, etc.), the existentialist generation (Bultmann, etc.), the Marxist generation. I have seen, and see, how, out of the tangle of hypotheses, the reasonableness of faith has emerged and is emerging anew. Jesus Christ is truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life - and the Church, in all her shortcomings, is truly His Body.

Finally, I humbly ask: pray for me, so that the Lord may admit me to the eternal dwellings, despite all my sins and shortcomings. For all those entrusted to me, my heartfelt prayer goes out day after day.

Pope Benedict XVI

GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders
of Judah,

for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.



VINNIES PANTRY

The St Vincent De Paul members would like to thank all parishioners for their continued generous support for Vinnies Pantry and the Poor Box throughout the year of 2022.

BREAK OPEN THE WORD 2023

The 2023 Edition of Break Open The Word is now available for Ministers of the Word. Please take one from the box in the Sacristy.

"Soul Sisters"

A new women's fellowship group for our parish. Monthly catch-ups for any women in the parish who wish to catch up for a coffee and a chat! First meetup will be on Monday 6th of February at 8pm at the Mordini's place, 2 Lawson Street Lalor Park. Please contact Leanne Mordini on 0413047373 for further details.

"Pathfinders"

A new parish Youth Group for Years 5 and 6 students. Initial meeting will be for **parents only** so that we can chat about how often the group will meet, who will volunteer etc – this meeting will be held in the Parish Centre on Monday the 23rd of January at 7.30pm. Please contact Leanne Mordini on 0413047373 for further information.

Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses 2023

The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence next year in February. 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/>. Enrolment forms are also available from the Parish Office.

Summer 2022 Catholic Outlook Magazine out now!

The Summer 2022 version of the Catholic Outlook Magazine is out now! This edition, discover how our multicultural families across the Diocese are celebrating Christmas, learn about using Christmas to deepen your marriage and read Bishop Vincent's Christmas message. Pick up your free copy from our church or read it online via catholicoutlook.org/magazine

PARISH PRIVACY POLICY

Following proclamation of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) at the end of 2001, the parish has reviewed its records and methods for holding and collecting information about parishioners. A Privacy Policy has been developed and approved by the Parish Priest and Parish Pastoral Council, in accordance with Diocesan norms, and a copy can be obtained from the Parish Centre during office hours.

Diocesan World Day of the Sick Mass: 11 February 2023

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, 11 February 2023 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 2023 to hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org

Diocese of Parramatta WYD23 Pilgrimage Registrations Open!

Registration for WYD23 in Lisbon has now opened. Young people aged 16-35 can now view our itinerary, inclusions, indicative pricing, register and pay their \$800 deposit to secure their place. Limited spaces still available to join our team of 170 pilgrims with Bishop Vincent. Visit www.parrawyd.org

MASS TIMES AND PARISH LITURGIES

Saturday Vigil 6.00pm,
Sunday 8.30am & 10.00am

YOUTH MASS

6.00pm Vigil Mass on the 4th Saturday of the month

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday @ 9.15am
(Rosary and Exposition before Mass @ 8.30am)
Wednesday evening @ 7.30pm

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 9.45 - 10.15am & 4.30pm - 5.30pm

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Mon, Thurs, Fri, Sat 8.30am—9.15am
Wednesday 6.30pm
(Devotions to Our Lady of Lourdes & St Bernadette)
Sat: 4.30pm—5.30pm

BAPTISMS

At 11.30am by appointment only.
A Preparation Evening will be held before the Baptism for parents and godparents at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

MARRIAGES & FUNERALS

By Appointment—Please contact Parish Office for details.

For the following sick parishioners, relatives and friends:

Victoria Herzig, Sandra McShane, Gwen Gunderson, Phoebe Mae Lasmarias, Ann Thompson, Sr M. Teresa, Glenn Mowbray, Julie Daly, Annette McKenzie, Brendan Doran, Paul Mowbray, Ivy Deguzman, Karan Moloney, Joe Calabria, Carmen Sammit, Margaret Duff, John Roch, Trish Mowbray, Ginette Sharrock, Professor Keith Kennet, Jossie Thompson, Neven Vuleta, Joseph Leslie, Angie Delara, Gerard Leslie, David Smythe, Beryl Foster, Jom & Andrew Cadman, Sue James, Myra Sessions, David Ward, Brian Sloane, David Williams, Nathan Weaver.

For our deceased brothers and sisters:

Recently deceased: Pope Benedict XVI, Ailsia McDonald, Elaine Melinz, Primitiva Sumampong

Anniversary: Fay Roch, Remedios Acre, Olipio and Margarita Matildo

Deceased: Michelle Makin, Linda Mackinnon

Deceased members & benefactors of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

May all the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace and rise in glory.

ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND:

14th & 15th JANUARY 2023

Ministry	6.00pm	8.30am	10.00am
Altar Servers	Joshua Vaz Rachel Vaz Zoe Kenyon	Andrew Spiteri Justin Spiteri Noah Bonello	Cate Astillo Zara Astillo Jess Barbin
Minister at the Altar	Rey Baterna Leonides Martinez	Mario Spiteri Francis Sultana	Michael Webster
Minister of the Word	Bernadette Nolan @ 1 David Smyth @ 2 Albert Agius @	Ana Vlatko @ 1 Carmen Bonello @ 2 Lynne Tolhurst @	Josephine Baracz @ 1 Perla Billedo @ 2 Kate Fardouly @
Eucharistic Minister	Joanne Digwood	Helen Gonzales	Sarah Key
Welcomer	Agius Family	Louise Bruni	Volunteer Required
Music		St Francis Choir	CDs - Sue Gilmore
Flowers	Amabel Keelty		
Counters	Kevin Sloane and Kevin Isbester		
Church Cleaners	Rosa Watson / Jenny Agius / Sue Gilmore		