



ST JAMES' PARISH

St James Muswellbrook
St Thomas Aberdeen



We acknowledge the traditional owners who cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who have maintained these spiritual connections and traditions

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THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD – YEAR A

25 December 2022

Christmas Day

Priest: Today we celebrate the gift of the Incarnation, Emmanuel, God with us. We celebrate the birth of Christ who is the Light of the World—a Light no darkness can extinguish. Christ's Light can enter any darkness and as members of the Body of Christ, we live in the Light of Christ.

Priest: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) Jesus, the Son of God, chose to be born of Mary, to become human, one of us. He lived among us, experiencing our joys and hopes, our struggles and challenges. He came to bring us out of the darkness to which we had fallen and into God's wonderful, eternal Light.

(Someone lights all the candles on the Advent Wreath and the white candle in the center—the Christ candle.)

All: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for your mystery of the Incarnation – Emmanuel, God with us. Help us receive the Light of Christ in our hearts and share it generously and joyfully in our families and communities. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.



First Reading *Is 52:7-10*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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

How beautiful on the mountains,
are the feet of one who brings good news,
who heralds peace, brings happiness,
proclaims salvation,
and tells Zion,
'Your God is king!'
Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,
they shout for joy together,
for they see the Lord face to face,
as he returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord is consoling his people,
redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 97:1-6. R. v.3*

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. **(R.)**

2. The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel. **(R.)**
3. All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy. **(R.)**
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. **(R.)**

Second Reading *Heb 1:1-6*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

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

At various times in the past and in various different ways,
God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in
our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through
his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit
everything and through whom he made everything there
is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect
copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful
command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement
of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right
hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the

angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

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!

Gospel **Jn 1:1-18**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

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

In the beginning was the Word:

the Word was with God

and the Word was God.

He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things came to be,
not one thing had its being but through him.

All that came to be had life in him

and that life was the light of men,

a light that shines in the dark,

a light that darkness could not overpower.

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness,

as a witness to speak for the light,

so that everyone might believe through him.

He was not the light,

only a witness to speak for the light.

The Word was the true light

that enlightens all men;

and he was coming into the world.

He was in the world

that had its being through him,

and the world did not know him.

He came to his own domain

and his own people did not accept him.

But to all who did accept him

he gave power to become children of God,

to all who believe in the name of him

who was born not out of human stock

or urge of the flesh

or will of man

but of God himself.

The Word was made flesh,

he lived among us,

and we saw his glory,

the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,

full of grace and truth.

John appears as his witness, He proclaims:

‘This is the one of whom I said:

He who comes after me

ranks before me

because he existed before me.’

Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received –

yes, grace in return for grace,

since, though the Law was given through Moses,

grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God;

it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father’s heart,
who has made him known.

REFLECTION by Fr Victor

The shopping is done, all the presents are bought and wrapped, the house is clean and the tree with all its decorations is shining brightly. So, what has all this hectic busyness been about?

When we have a birthday in our own family, what do we do? We gather around the person whose birthday it is and as a family, then we do two things. We remember and we celebrate. We remember the time and date the person was born. We look back and remember the day they came into our family. We tell stories about them when they were young; we remember their first words, the first days at a school, and other significant events in their early life. Then we celebrate with them. We give thanks and celebrate the difference they have made and continue to make to our family.

This is exactly what we do on Christmas Day; we remember, and we celebrate. We recall and tell the story of how and when Jesus was born. We tell the story of Mary and Joseph being turned away from the inn, we remember that the angels appeared with good news, and we remember how shepherds and the kings visited the stable. Then we celebrate the difference Jesus has made not only to the world, but to our personal lives. Through the birth of Christ, God enters our time and history, and more importantly each of our own personal lives. Christ is Emmanuel, God-is-with-us, and God is with each of us today in a very personal and intimate way. The celebration becomes meaningful only when we become Emmanuel to others. In other words, we become the presence of Christ to others through our words and deeds. This Christmas, while all the celebrations and festivities are taking place, let’s stop, take some time, and ask ourselves, what am I remembering? What am I celebrating?

I wish everyone of you a very Joyful Christmas. May the Light of Christ and Christ the Light bless our world and fill all our hearts, homes and families, this Christmas Day and always.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe and Stay Blessed!

Prayer for the Appointment of our new Bishop

Shepherding God you reveal your way of unending love in the image of the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost, shows compassion, knows and is known by the sheep and lays down his life for them. We your people of Maitland-Newcastle are without a bishop to shepherd us. We ask that your Holy Spirit who moves through this great south land, inspire the choice of our new Bishop, empower his ‘yes’ and open our hearts in hospitality and love. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help pray for us.
Mary MacKillop of the Cross pray for us.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE

The Parish Office will be closed on Tuesday 27 December for the Public Holiday. It will reopen on Wednesday 28 December.

THANK YOU 🌟🌟🌟

Thank you to all those who organised and helped with the Parish Christmas party and the preparations for the Spiritual Reflection Day (even though it did not go ahead). And thank you to Nicholas, Roni, and Dr Joe and their families for preparing our beautiful nativity scene.

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

Christmas offering envelopes are available in the Church foyers. This contribution supplements the First collection which supports the Priests in our Diocese. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES AROUND THE DIOCESE

Are you thinking about attending mass this Christmas? If you're not sure where to go, we've put together a list of services happening across the Diocese! You'll find it here: www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/parishes/

SHARING HOPE WITH CHRISTIANS IN SYRIA AND LEBANON THIS CHRISTMAS

Aid to the Church in Need is asking for support to aid our brothers and sisters who are suffering so deeply in Syria and Lebanon through our Christmas appeal Sharing Hope with Christians in Syria and Lebanon this Christmas. The support we are pledging to them is very much emergency relief to sustain the Christian population in hope. The projects we are supporting are projects such as medical aid, community help and gifts for children in Lebanon, as well as support for lay faithful and accommodation for families in Syria.

It is only with your help that ACN can support Christians in Lebanon and Syria this Christmas!

To watch videos and read stories of the projects we are supporting visit www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022

2023 LENTEN REFLECTION: FINDING LIGHT WITHIN THE DARKNESS

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, Finding Light within the Darkness. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community.

This resource will be available at the end of January.

SAVE THE DATE: TORONTO MEN'S WEEKEND

A MenALIVE Men's Weekend will be held at the St Joseph's Toronto Parish on the weekend of 25 and 26 March 2023. The weekend is suitable for all men from 18 years of age and provides an opportunity for attendees to explore what makes them feel fully alive.

More information including how to register will be provided closer to the date. For more information on MenALIVE, visit: www.menalive.org.au

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY SNAPS



Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 26 December	Tuesday 27 December	Wednesday 28 December	Thursday 29 December	Friday 30 December	Saturday 31 December	Sunday 1 January
<i>St Stephen, the first martyr</i>	<i>St John, apostle, evangelist</i>	<i>The Holy Innocents, martyrs</i>		<i>The HOLY FAMILY of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph</i>		MARY, the Holy MOTHER OF GOD
9.00am Private, Personal Prayer and Adoration St James Muswellbrook		9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook	11.30am Adoration and Benediction 12.05pm Mass St James Muswellbrook	9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook	5.30pm Mass St James Muswellbrook	10.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook
	No Mass St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook

Minister Roster Sunday 1st January 2023

1st Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Extraordinary Ministers	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	Can you fill this position?	C. Hayes	Sr. Dorothy	J. Toohey R. Wood			C. Hayes
	Can you fill this position?						
8am Saturday Aberdeen	T. Hobbs	J. Lonergan	C. Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am Sunday Muswellbrook	Can you fill this position?	Can you fill this position?	K. Mason	Can you fill this position?			K. Goodwin
	Can you fill this position?						
Counters	Mary-Ellen and David Leedham						

MASS AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: Iris Spittles, Pauline Coleman, David Curran, Pat Hogan, Abbie Sweeper, Kym Mason, Mollie Hofman, Melanie Hoch, Kim Goodwin, Anne Hugo, John Presland, Margaret Blake, Rodrigo Canete, Fay Biddle, Helen Tumbers, Hilda Carey, Lucrecia Casia, Anne Rawson, Enrique Tuazon, and Victoria Diputado.

Baptism: Dylan Hall

Recently Deceased: Sam Robinson, Peter New, and Greg Maloney

Anniversary: Melecio Abiol and Kathleen Storer

Privacy Laws. All parishioners are encouraged to pray for the sick. Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

St James and St Thomas - Pray for Us

BULLETIN

Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email:

muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au

The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au

or on our Facebook page: **Catholic Parish of St James Muswellbrook**

Please email muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au if you would like the bulletin emailed to you each week.

SAFEGUARDING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Please visit our 'Safeguarding' page to access a range of safeguarding resources: muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au

Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/

"Our mission is to spread the Kingdom by being an alive and informed Community, united as one family in care and consideration for each other in the love of God."