



# 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

## PARISH CONTACTS

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THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD – YEAR A

24 December 2022

### Christmas Eve

**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 62:1-5**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*The Lord takes delight in you.*

About Zion I will not be silent,  
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,  
until her integrity shines out like the dawn  
and her salvation flames like a torch.

The nations then will see your integrity,  
all the kings your glory,  
and you will be called by a new name,  
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.

You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the  
Lord,

a princely diadem in the hand of your God;  
no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken',  
nor your land 'Abandoned',  
but you shall be called 'My Delight'  
and your land 'The Wedded';  
for the Lord takes delight in you  
and your land will have its wedding.

Like a young man marrying a virgin,  
so will the one who built you wed you,  
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,  
so will your God rejoice in you.

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 88:4-5. 16-17. 27. 29 R. see v.2**

**(R.)** For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages.' **(R.)**
2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king,  
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,  
who find their joy every day in your name,  
who make your justice the source of their bliss. **(R.)**
3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me."  
I will keep my love for him always;  
for him my covenant shall endure.' **(R.)**

### Second Reading **Acts 13:16-17. 22-25**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

*Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.*

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak: 'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out.

'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his promise, God has raised up for

Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel.

Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".'

### **Gospel Acclamation** Mt 1:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed:  
the Saviour of the world will be our king.

Alleluia!

### **Gospel** Mt 1:1-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David.*

A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham:

Abraham was the father of Isaac,

Isaac the father of Jacob,

Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers,

Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, Tamar being  
their mother,

Perez was the father of Hezron,

Hezron the father of Ram,

Ram was the father of Amminadab,

Amminadab the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon the father of Salmon,

Salmon was the father of Boaz, Rahab being his mother,

Boaz was the father of Obed, Ruth being his mother,

Obed was the father of Jesse;

and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been  
Uriah's wife,

Solomon was the father of Rehoboam,

Rehoboam the father of Abijah,

Abijah the father of Asa,

Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat,

Jehoshaphat the father of Joram,

Joram the father of Azariah,

Azariah was the father of Jotham,

Jotham the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh,

Manasseh the father of Amon,

Amon the father of Josiah;

and Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers.

Then the deportation to Babylon took place.

After the deportation to Babylon:

Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel,

Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud,

Abiud the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim the father of Azor,

Azor was the father of Zadok,

Zadok the father of Achim,

Achim the father of Eliud,

Eliud was the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob;

and Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary;  
of her was born Jesus who is called Christ.

The sum of generations is therefore: fourteen from Abraham to David; fourteen from David to the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen from the Babylonian deportation to Christ.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

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### **REFLECTION by Fr Victor**

Christmas is finally here! It is a time to relax, reflect, and savour the moment of the season. It is a time to enjoy family and friends. It is a time to share gifts of love. It is the one day of the year when "peace on earth, good will to all people" can seem to be a reality. But what is Christmas?

Christmas is about the incarnation of Jesus. The decorations, the trees, food, the season's hustle, and bustle should not distract us from the central message. When all these are removed, what remains? A very humble birth story of poor Jesus into a poor family of Joseph and Mary: two poor people who could not find any hospital or any hotel to pass the night. The great mystery of God's coming physically into our history, the incarnation of the eternal Son of God was to take place in a poor stable. They benefited from the generosity of the animals who gave up their manger for the baby Jesus. Their first visitors were the poor and neglected shepherds. Despite this poor scenario, they had the best choirs, the angelic one singing: Gloria in excelsis Deo!!!

From its very beginning, the Christmas message is clear. The love of God is available to all. In effect "God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race" (Tit 2:11). God revealed himself first and foremost to the poor, weak and the disadvantaged. The poor manger in which Jesus was born is an indication of our need to see grace and goodness in the most deprived of people. It is a clarion call for us to be kind and learn to be sensitive to the many needs of the poor who are crying out for our generosity and caring. The first Christmas was indeed a poor one, not like the shinning decorations and heavy expenditures we have today!

**Stay Healthy, Stay Safe and Stay Blessed!**

## **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/](http://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](http://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](http://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>		<b>MARY, the Holy MOTHER OF GOD</b>
9.00am <b>Private, Personal Prayer and Adoration</b> St James Muswellbrook		9.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	11.30am <b>Adoration and Benediction</b>  12.05pm <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	9.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	5.30pm <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	10.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook
	<b>No Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00am <b>Mass</b> 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?						
<b>Counters</b>	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](mailto:muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au)

The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: [muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au)

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

Please email [muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto: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](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au)

Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: [officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/](http://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."**