



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

Parish Priest: Fr Victor Babu Doss

Email: frvickybabu@gmail.com

Phone: 0484 903 427 or 6543 1167

St James Primary School

Principal: Mr Aaron Moon

Office: 6543 3094

Email: admin@muswellbrook.catholic.edu.au

Parish Administration: Mrs Adele Skardon

Email: muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au

Website: muswellbrookparish.org.au

PO Box 35, Muswellbrook NSW 2333

Phone: 6543 1167

Office Hours: Tue - Fri 9.30am – 2.30pm

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A

12 March 2023

First Reading **Ex 17:3-7**

A reading from the book of Exodus

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

Responsorial Psalm **Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8**

(R.) If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)
3. O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.' (R.)

Second Reading **Rom 5:1-2. 5-8**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith and

through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

Gospel Acclamation **See Jn 4:42. 15**

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world;

give me living water, that I may never thirst again.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel **Jn 4:5-42**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' – Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied:

'If you only knew what God is offering
and who it is that is saying to you:

Give me a drink,

you would have been the one to ask,

and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?'



Jesus replied:

'Whoever drinks this water
will get thirsty again;
but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give
will never be thirsty again:
the water that I shall give
will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal
life.'

'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that
I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again
to draw water.' 'Go and call your husband' said Jesus to
her 'and come back here.' The woman answered, 'I have
no husband.' He said to her, 'You are right to say, "I have
no husband"; for although you have had five, the one you
have now is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.'
'I see you are a prophet, sir' said the woman. 'Our fathers
worshipped on this mountain, while you say that
Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus
said:

'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming
when you will worship the Father
neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.
You worship what you do not know;
we worship what we do know;
for salvation comes from the Jews.
But the hour will come – in fact it is here already –
when true worshippers will worship the Father in
spirit and truth:
that is the kind of worshipper
the Father wants.
God is spirit,
and those who worship
must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah – that is,
Christ – is coming; and when he comes he will tell us
everything.' 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am
he.'

At this point his disciples returned, and were surprised to
find him speaking to a woman, though none of them
asked, 'What do you want from her?' or, 'Why are you
talking to her?' The woman put down her water jar and
hurried back to the town to tell the people, 'Come and see
a man who has told me everything I ever did; I wonder if
he is the Christ?' This brought people out of the town and
they started walking towards him.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have
something to eat'; but he said, 'I have food to eat that you
do not know about.' So the disciples asked one another,
'Has someone been bringing him food?' But Jesus said:

'My food
is to do the will of the one who sent me,
and to complete his work.
Have you not got a saying:
Four months and then the harvest?
Well, I tell you:
Look around you, look at the fields;
already they are white, ready for harvest!
Already the reaper is being paid his wages,
already he is bringing in the grain for eternal life,
and thus sower and reaper rejoice together.

For here the proverb holds good:

one sows, another reaps;

I sent you to reap

a harvest you had not worked for.

Others worked for it;

and you have come into the rewards of their trouble.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the
strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He
told me all I have ever done', so, when the Samaritans
came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He
stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many
more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now
we no longer believe because of what you told us; we
have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is
the saviour of the world.'

REFLECTION by Fr Victor

This Sunday, the holy Mother Church encourages us to
come to Christ the Eternal Living Water. She calls us to
break all cultural barriers and prejudices to let the eternal
living water flow into all hearts. The gospel also helps us
think about our true desires through the episode of the
Samaritan woman at the well.

The woman in the Gospel Reading (John 4:5-42) left her
water jar when she discovered this fact; when she
recognised the very fount that quenches all the needs and
the true desires of all men and women. Her water jar
became useless and unnecessary once she realised that
Jesus is the living water, because the water jar was only an
instrument that nurtures human thirst rather than
quenching it; it only brought momentary relief and
afterwards a greater feeling of thirst rather than
extinguishing the very thirst itself.

This is our story! This is the experience of each one of us!
Sometimes we carry our water jars, made of clay, as if
they are our true source and means of salvation.
Sometimes we hang onto the ever-changing things of this
world as if there is nothing beyond the physical.
Sometimes we trust human progress and successes and
achievements and inventions that we forget God and
displace Him from the rightful position that He should take
in our lives and in our history as human beings.
Even in all these moments of forgetfulness of God, He
never stops loving us. He loves us more than we know it
and "what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for
us while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:1-2, 5-8). Even
when we refuse to acknowledge and appreciate His love
for us, God is telling us anew through His Son Jesus Christ
"anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never
be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a
spring inside him, welling up to eternal life."

This is the water we need to survive. This is the water the
world needs to overcome and outlive the crises that
torment her. We may not want to recognise it; but the
turn of things is an invitation to go back to God our
Creator and our Guide; back to Christ our Saviour and back
to the Holy Spirit that leads us to the truth. God knows
what we need, and He alone can satisfy and quench this
thirst within human beings which no created thing can
quench and which no human invention can satisfy.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe and Stay Blessed!

FAREWELL

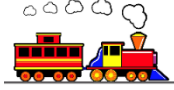
We give thanks for David and Mary-ellen Leedham who have faithfully served the Parish of St James for the past 16 years.

We wish them all the very best for their new journey. Please keep them both in your prayers.



KEEGAN/WOOD FAMILY GROUP

Train trip to Wickham leaving Muswellbrook at 10.09am, arriving Wickham at 11.46am.



Please ensure you have your OPAL card organised, activated, and cashed up. Pensioners' Excursion Fare \$2.50 covers all public transport. The train departs Wickham at 4.29 pm, arriving in Muswellbrook at 6.05pm. Perhaps you have a 'rellie' or friend in Newcastle who'd like to meet up with you. We'll travel by Light Rail to Great Northern Hotel for lunch. Lunch menu \$20. (If there are to be extras from N/Castle for lunch let Robyn (6542 54326)/Margaret (6543 1238) know for booking purposes.) Confirm details of times of trains nearer the date of the excursion.

NB: Names to Robyn or Margaret by **Friday 17 March** for Restaurant booking.

DIVINE MERCY GROUP

Will be meeting **Sunday 19 March**.

Time: 2pm

Venue: The Old Convent

All welcome, join us for prayer and fellowship.



MASS CANCELLATIONS THIS WEEK

Please refer to the Mass diary overleaf. Masses are cancelled Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday this week, as well as Stations of the cross on Friday, due to Fr Victor having meetings mid-week in Newcastle, and the new Bishop's installation on Friday evening.

INSTALLATION OF MOST REV MICHAEL KENNEDY AS THE NINTH BISHOP OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

The Liturgical Reception and Installation of Most Rev Michael Kennedy as the ninth Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle will be held on Friday 17 March 2023 at 6pm at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton.

This important event in the life of our Diocese is an invitation only event. Invitations have been issued and each parish has been allocated places and asked to nominate their parish representatives and RSVP for those people.

The installation will be live streamed on the evening of Friday 17 March and can be watched via our website:

www.mn.catholic.org.au.

There will be opportunities to gather with Bishop Michael Kennedy following the Installation. Bishop Michael is committed to visiting with, and meeting the people of our Diocese, and has dedicated significant time as he commences with our Diocese to visit each region and connect with the people of our Diocese. Further information will be shared about the visit of Bishop Michael Kennedy to our region soon.



THIRD SUNDAY OF
LENT

11TH AND 12TH MARCH



Zimbabwe is experiencing an intense drought, exacerbated by climate change. With the support of Caritas Hwange, Priscilla learnt conservation farming skills to grow drought-resistant crops and started poultry farming to support her family during the current food crisis.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2023.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow

For All Future Generations.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes available from your Parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion, or by calling 1800 024 413.



Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

BECOME A VOLUNTEER AT CATHOLICCARE'S REFUGEE HUB

CatholicCare's Refugee Hub is looking for more volunteers to support their tutoring program, community garden, men's and women's groups, art program, casework support and OzHarvest food support program. If you have a couple of hours to spare here and there, please reach out. You could help CatholicCare make a difference. To register your interest, please fill out the volunteer enquiry form: www.catholiccare.org.au/community-programs/community-refugee-hub/volunteer

WAY OF THE CROSS – SUNDAY 26 MARCH

This year, following over 55 years of local tradition, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will once again celebrate the Ecumenical Way of the Cross on the grounds of Toronto Parish, Kilaben Bay on the Fifth Sunday of Lent. Picking up the theme from this year's World Youth Day (WYD) – "Mary arose and went with haste" – we will join with Bishop Michael Kennedy as we experience the Way of the Cross through the eyes of Mary. We will journey with creative retellings of Mary's story as shared by women from across our Diocese and fellow Christian Churches. This prayerful experience will be supported by our school communities and local WYD pilgrims. People will start gathering at St Joseph's Toronto from 2pm at the Community Centre. The event will start at 3pm, afternoon tea will be provided.

DIVINE RETREAT CENTRE – MARCH 2023 PROGRAM

The Divine Retreat Centre will host several retreats in March, they include:

- Lenten Growth Retreat – 17 to 19 March
- Spiritual Retreat at St Patrick's Wallsend – 20 March
- Spiritual Retreat at St Luke's Revesby – 21 March
- One Day Pilgrimage – 26 March

For more information, visit www.divineretreatcentre.org

Weekly Mass Diary

| Monday 13 March | Tuesday 14 March | Wednesday 15 March | Thursday 16 March | Friday 17 March | Saturday 18 March | Sunday 19 March |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | <i>St Patrick, bishop</i> | | FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT |
| 9.00am Private, Personal Prayer, and Adoration St James Muswellbrook | MASSES CANCELLED | | | 9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook | 9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook 5.30pm Mass St James Muswellbrook | 10.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook |
| | | | | | | 8.00am Mass St Thomas Aberdeen |

Minister Roster Sunday 19th March 2023

| 3rd Sunday of the Month | Readers | Cantors | Musicians | Gifts | Extraordinary Ministers | Altar Servers | Sacristan |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook | S. Bernard J. Jacobs | C. Hayes | Sr. Dorothy | Can you fill this position? | | R. Panis | C. Hayes |
| 8am Sunday Aberdeen | K. Mason | M. Edwards | C. Bowen | | | | M. Hamilton |
| 10am Sunday Muswellbrook | C. O'Brien Can you fill this position? | M. Kelly | C. Kelly | Can you fill this position? | | | K. Goodwin |
| Counters | Therese Bristow and Esther Molloy | | | | | | |

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, Melanie Hoch, Kim Goodwin, Anne Hugo, Margaret Blake, Rodrigo Canete, Helen Tumbers, Hilda Carey, Lucrecia Casia, Anne Rawson, Enrique Tuazon, Vinitia Fernando, Maree Bible, Kirsty Munn, Kellie Shaw, and Vidhya Vijay.

Recently Deceased:

Anniversary:

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/

Muswellbrook Parish Promoter of Safeguarding: Jane Jacobs.

Mobile: 0428 164 730 Email: jane.jacobs@mn.catholic.edu.au

"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."