



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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A

19 March 2023

First Reading 1 Sm 16:1. 6-7. 10-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22 R. v.1

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a banquet for me
In the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. (R.)

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. (R.)

Second Reading Eph 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel Jn 9:1-41

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered, 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts
I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;
the night will soon be here when no one can work.
As long as I am in the world
I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we don't know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?'

'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement
that I have come into this world,
so that those without sight may see
and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty,
but since you say, "We see",
your guilt remains.'

REFLECTION by Fr Michael Tate

Spittle and Mud

Our Lord, by the power of his word alone, could have healed the dis-ease of this man, blind since birth. Yet, he made a paste with spittle and put it over the eyes of the blind man. Just as God would have moistened the dust of the earth to shape the first human being, for the blind man, it was as though he had been created anew.

God rarely works by telepathy but has a preferred way of working through the elements of creation, especially in the Sacraments. So, with the Anointing of the Sick, pressing olive oil onto the forehead and hands of the sick or dying symbolises the Holy Spirit entering the very pores of the sick person, relieving that person of undue anxiety and giving strength for the next stage of life.

This sacrament is a formal ritual of healing by the Church. But there are a million informal ways, such as putting one's arm around someone who is lonely or unwell, which are sacramental to the world.

We could pause for a moment that we might go into the world like the man healed by Jesus, eyes wide open to see where we might exercise the healing power of the Lord of the Gospel.

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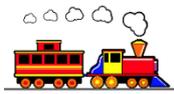
LIVING GOSPEL

Lenten Light

The story of the man born blind is a perfect choice for the Lenten season. During this season we are invited once again to open our eyes to Jesus; to step out of darkness and into the light; to look towards the future with hope and not despair. When we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at the Easter vigil, we celebrate the coming of the Light of the World into our lives. This annual call to turn away from darkness and walk in the light is a powerful and poetic call to focus our lives on the way of Jesus.

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 this **Sunday 19 March**.

Time: 2pm

Venue: The Old Convent

All welcome, join us for prayer and fellowship.



ST JOSEPH'S HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MASS

On Saturday 25th March at 5.30pm in St James Church, students will participate in the Mass and provide beautiful music to complement the Liturgy. Let's make our Parish a welcoming place for these young people and join with them in celebrating the Mass with as many parishioners as possible! St Joseph's students will enjoy an evening supper and fellowship with each other in the Convent and grounds after Mass. **Supper open to High School students and supervisors only.**



LIVE STREAM: INSTALLATION OF MOST

REV MICHAEL KENNEDY

Join us online for the Liturgical Reception and Installation of Most Rev Michael Kennedy as the Ninth Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Friday 17 March. The stream will start at 5.30pm:

www.mn.catholic.org.au/people/live-stream-installation-of-most-rev-michael-kennedy

CHRISM MASS

This year's Chrism Mass will take place in Holy Week on Tuesday 4 April at 7.00pm in the Sacred Heart Cathedral Newcastle West. This is a first opportunity for all who wish to gather, to celebrate with our new Bishop, Michael Kennedy at Mass and a light supper. All are welcome. Those with a specific role in the Mass please arrive early as communicated. Read more at

<https://tinyurl.com/chrism2023>

BECOME A VOLUNTEER AT CATHOLICARE'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

www.catholiccare.org.au/community-programs/community-refugee-hub/volunteer



**FOURTH SUNDAY OF
LENT
18TH - 19TH MARCH**



Thu lost his leg after stepping on a land mine in Vietnam. With the support of the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development, Thu can now earn extra income and care for his wife as she recovers from a stroke.

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



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR 2023/2024

CHRISTIAN FORMATION COURSE ARE NOW OPEN

Are you wanting to know more about Christianity and develop a deeper understanding of the Catholic Church? The Christian Formation Course (CFC) is a learning experience that allows participants to explore the foundational elements of the Catholic Faith Tradition. This one-year course introduces participants to scripture, theology, church history, sacramental life and liturgy.

- The Course runs across twelve (12) months and comprises eight (8) units
- All who complete the Course are awarded a diocesan Certificate in Christian Formation
- By engaging in the course, it is hoped participants will:
- become more confident in understanding the Catholic faith
- grow in their capacity to reflect on their life's journey
- realise that Christian faith is nurtured in community
- be affirmed in their gifts for participating in the life of the faith community
- grow in awareness of what it means to be a responsive member of the faith community

Commencing on Tuesday 2 May 2023, no prerequisite formation or qualification is required to enrol.

To find out more about the Christian Formation Course, visit: www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/christian-formation-course/

PRAYING THE GOSPELS

You are invited to connect and pray with each other across the Diocese from your own home.

God speaks to us through the words of the Gospel and then through artist's images of the Gospel message. Join us each Wednesday 5.00 - 5.45pm.

Zoom link: <https://mncatholic.zoom.us/j/68191395109>

Password: 316071 For more information contact: rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au

Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 20 March	Tuesday 21 March	Wednesday 22 March	Thursday 23 March	Friday 24 March	Saturday 25 March	Sunday 26 March
<i>St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>					<i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
9.00am Mass 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 Stations of the Cross St James Muswellbrook	9.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook 5.30pm St Joseph's High School Youth Mass St James Muswellbrook	10.00am Mass St James Muswellbrook
	4.30pm Stations of the Cross 5.00pm Mass St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00am Mass St Thomas Aberdeen

Minister Roster Sunday 26th March 2023

4th Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Extraordinary Ministers	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	M. Flanagan T. Furlong	C. Hayes	Sr. Dorothy	Can you fill this position?		R. Panis	C. Hayes
8am Sunday Aberdeen	S. Milton	C. Wykes	C. Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am Sunday Muswellbrook	Can you fill this position? Can you fill this position?	M. Kelly	C. Kelly	Can you fill this position?			K. Goodwin
Counters	Jane Thatcher		Can you fill this position?				

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.

Baptism: Quinn Turner, Luna Nebauer, and William Roberts

Anniversary: Reg Shanahan, Rhonda Minch, Hilda Minch, Joyce Johns, and Frank Bowen

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."