



ST. JAMES' PARISH

Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle

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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Office Hours: Tue, Wed & Fri 9.30am – 2.30pm

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

17th December 2023

First Reading

[Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11](#)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God



2. The Almighty works marvels for me.

Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. (R.)

3. He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. (R.)

Second Reading

[1 Thessalonians 5:16-24](#)

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the
Thessalonians

*May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming
of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things
give thanks to God, because this is what God expects
you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of
prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything –
hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and
may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and
body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has
called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

[Lk 1:46-50, 53-54, R. Is 61:10](#)

(R.) My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. (R.)

Gospel Acclamation

[Isaiah 61:1 \(Lk 4:18\)](#)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

Gospel

[John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

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.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to the Lord Jesus Christ

A MESSAGE FROM FR. VICTOR

Can we be joyful amid the challenges and difficulties of our time? In a world of uncertainty caused by the war, the daunting climatic change, secularism, and its materialistic competitive attitude, joy seems elusive. But, as we draw near to Christmas, the readings for this third Sunday of Advent, also known in Latin as "Gaudete Sunday" (Sunday of Joy), are full of rejoicing. To signify the joy of the Lord's closeness, we light a pink Advent candle to focus our attention on the spirit of joy.

Although many challenges in our lives are seemingly threatening away our joy, the true reason for our joy is not in material things and situations, nor in the creation itself, but the Lord our Saviour. The Lord clothes us with his salvation and justice as Isaiah says in the first reading. The Psalm is the words of rejoicing said by Mary when visiting her cousin Elizabeth. With

her joyful prayer, she celebrated God's saving promise to us all.

Paul in the second reading encourages us to rejoice and be grateful to our faithful God whose will is for us to rejoice in all circumstances. Even as the situations we continue to live in are getting more challenging and threatening, the will of God for us is to rejoice and be grateful for his salvation. That's why Paul advises us to "rejoice always" by leading a blameless, holy, and thankful life guided by the Holy Spirit because Christ is faithful in his promise that he will come again to reward us. To rejoice always, Paul tells us to pray constantly and to give thanks in all circumstances.

The Gospel introduces John as the messenger for the light. Himself wasn't the light, but someone to testify the presence of that light. John reveals a deep truth that Christ stands in our midst and is truly Emmanuel; God with us, even when we are ignorant of his presence.

Every Christian disciple must take delight in becoming a witness and giving testimony of faith in Jesus Christ in our troubled world of today. By reflecting the love of God to others we shall make them rejoice and share in the Lord's salvation. And by inviting them and welcoming them in our faith communities without judging them, they will truly experience Jesus as their real cause of joy.

I wish you a beautiful and joyful Third Week of Advent and a glorious week.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe, and Stay Blessed!

PARISH OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

You can contact Parish Office from Tuesday to Friday from 9 am to 2 pm on Parish number or Parish Priest number.



BULLETIN

Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 by 12.00pm Friday if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email:

muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au

The Parish bulletin can be accessed online:

www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/parishes/muswellbrook

Or alternatively please email:

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

Christmas Eve

5pm St James Cghurch
Brook Street, Muswellbrook

8pm St Thomas Church
Segenhoe Street, Aberdeen

Christmas Day

9am St James Church
Brook Street, Muswellbrook



Family Mass on Christmas Eve we invite all **Primary School Children** to join the **Celebration of the Nativity** by coming in **suitable costumes for the Manger in Bethlehem**. Be at the **Church at 4.45** to join the **entrance procession**

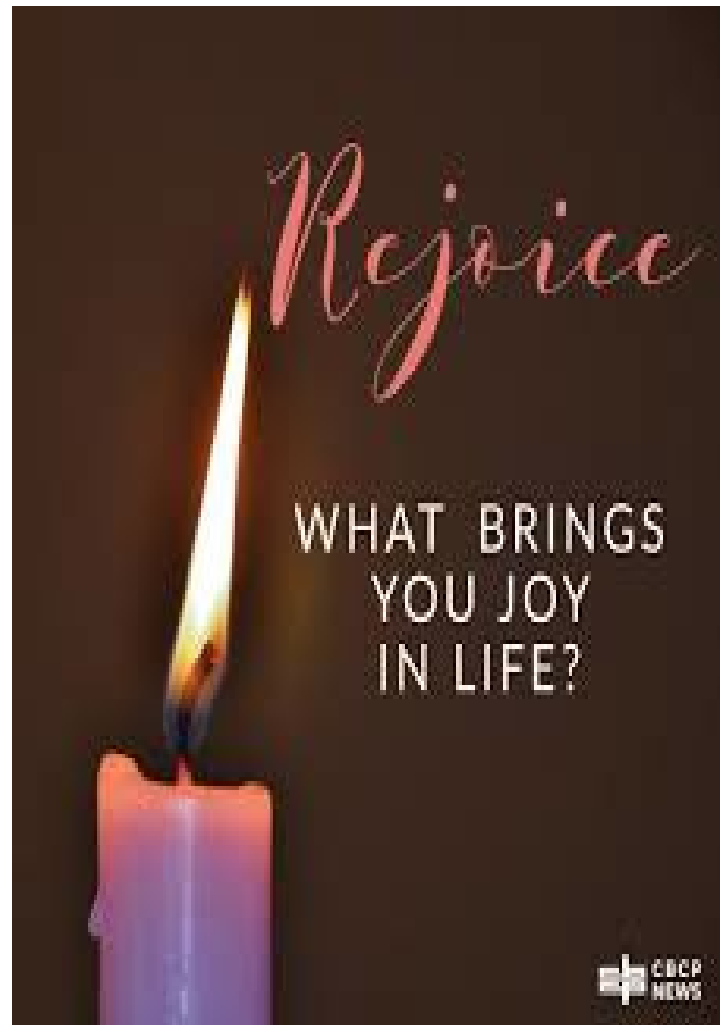


SIMBANG GABI- Christmas Novena commenced on **Friday 15th December**. The Novena will continue with 6pm Mass every day until Saturday, 23rd December.

I invite everyone to participate so we can enrich our preparation for a meaningful Christmas.

Please stay for a light meal in the Convent following the Mass – We ask you to bring a plate to contribute to the meal
Fr. Victor

CAROL REHEARSAL – This Tuesday at 7pm we will be rehearsing the Carols for Christmas Eve Family Mass. We invite you to come along, Young people attending St James and St Josephs schools also encouraged to join with us. Approximately 1 hour only



JOY – A fruit of the Spirit. Comforting, Content and full of Peace. An enduring attitude of the heart and spirit and a natural part of the Christian Faith.

Weekly Mass & Liturgy Diary

Monday 18th December	Tuesday 19th December	Wednesday 20th December	Thursday 21st December	Friday 22nd December	Saturday 23rd December	Sunday 24th December
		<i>St. Lucy Virgin & Martyr</i>	<i>St. John of the Cross</i>			THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
No Personal Prayer Novena Mass 6. 00pm	Novena Mass 6. 00pm	Novena Mass 6. 00pm	<u>11.30am</u> Adoration and Benediction Novena Mass 6. 00pm	Novena Mass 6. 00pm	<u>9.00am</u> Mass St. James Muswellbrook <u>5.30pm</u> Mass St. James Muswellbrook	<u>10.00am</u> Mass St James Muswellbrook Christmas Eve <u>5.00pm</u> St James Church Muswellbrook
	No Mass at Aberdeen					Christmas Vigil 8.00pm <u>St Thomas Aberdeen</u>

RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation is available **30 mins before** weekend Masses and at **any time upon request**. Please call ahead to let Father Victor know when and where you would like to meet with him.

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: We pray especially for Judy Chlebowicz, Mick Chisolm, David Curran, Pat Hogan, Abbie Sweeper, Kym Mason, Melanie Hoch, Kim Goodwin, Anne Hugo, Helen Tumbers, Anne Rawson, Vinitia Fernando, Kirsty Munn, Kellie Shaw, Michael Dolahenty, Jenny Paul, George Henriques, Danielle Camilleri and Sebastiammal.

Anniversary: Peter New and Rita Lorraine Oakes Dulcie McTaggart

Recently Deceased: Aruldoss, Fr. Pushpanather and Kevin Thompson, who died recently. May they rest in peace.

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.

Ministers Roster Sunday 24th December 2023

4th Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Extraordinary Ministers	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	M.Flanagan	C.Hayes	Sr. Dorothy	Can you Fill this Position		R. Panis	C. Hayes
8am Sunday Aberdeen	S.Milton	K.Mason	C.Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am Sunday Muswellbrook	B. Powell T.Furlong	M. Kelly	C. Kelly	Can you Fill this Position			K. Goodwin
Counters	Therese Bristow and Joel Bristow			<i>The collections can be counted any time after 10am Mass on Sunday till the Wednesday of that week.</i>			

"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."