



# 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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Office Hours: Tue, Wed & Fri 9.00am – 3.00pm

**SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B**

**25th February 2024**

### **Entrance Antiphon** Cf Psalm 26:8-9

Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face.  
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek.  
hide not your face from me.

The Gloria in excelsis is not said.

### **First Reading** Genesis 22:1-2. 9-13. 15-18

A reading from the book of Genesis

*The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith.*

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham,' he called.' Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self – it is the Lord who speaks – because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of your enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless

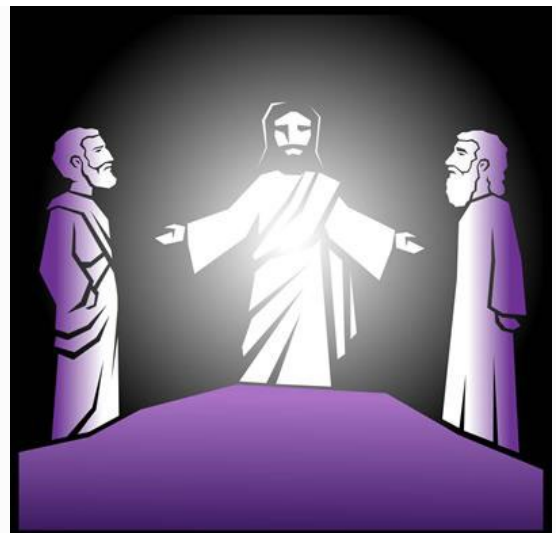
themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

### **The word of the Lord**

### **Responsorial Psalm** Ps 115:10. 15-19. R. 114:9

(R.) I will walk in the presence of the Lord  
in the land of the living.

1. I trusted, even when I said:  
'I am sorely afflicted.'  
O precious in the eyes of the Lord  
is the death of his faithful. (R.)
2. Your servant, Lord, your servant am I.  
you have loosened my bonds.  
A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:  
I will call on the Lord's name. (R.)
3. My vows to the Lord I will fulfil  
before all his people,  
in the courts of the house of the Lord,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem. (R.)



## **Second Reading** *Romans 8:31-34*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*God did not spare his own Son.*

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us – he rose from the dead, and there at God’s right hand he stands and pleads for us.

### **The word of the Lord**

#### **Gospel Acclamation** *See Matthew 17:5*

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!  
From the shining cloud, the Father’s voice is heard:  
this is my beloved Son, hear him.  
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

#### **Gospel** *Mark 9:2-10*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

*This is my Son, the beloved; listen to him.*

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. ‘Rabbi,’ he said, ‘it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.’ Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them anymore but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain, he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what ‘rising from the dead’ could mean.

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

*The Creed is said.*

#### **Communion Antiphon** *Matthew 17:5*

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.  
listen to him.

### **REFLECTION by Fr Victor**

This Sunday marks the beginning of the second week of our Journey with Christ. Last week he took us to the desert. This Sunday he is taking us to a mountain. The mountain in scripture is the place of revelation. Throughout the bible, it is often on the mountain that God’s power and presence are revealed and experienced. Our readings today include two mountains on which people had an extraordinary experience of God: the mountain Abraham climbed with

his son Isaac and saw the glory of God manifested in his blessing, and the mountain that Peter, James, and John climbed with the Son of God where they saw Jesus was transformed or transfigured in their presence.

In the gospel this Sunday Jesus takes three of his apostles away from the activity, noise, and business of the marketplace. As he had done on his own before, he takes them to the mountain so that they can experience something wonderful and powerful. While they are there something out of the ordinary happened; before their very eyes, Jesus is transfigured, then they hear these words from God; ‘This is my Son, the Beloved, listen to him.’

What are we to make of this event? What does it mean for us today? The call, invitation and challenge of Lent is that we are to be transformed and changed. God calls to each of us and says, ‘Come back to me with all your heart.’ During this sacred season we are called to look honestly and humbly at our daily lives; at how we treat others, how we speak to them and how we behave. We are invited to ask ourselves, is there anything in my own daily life that needs to change and improve? How are we meant to be transformed during Lent before we celebrate the new life of Easter?

While on the mountain, Peter exclaims, ‘It is wonderful for us to be here.’ When we have the opportunity to gather with others to celebrate the Eucharist, could we make that our prayer and say, indeed, it is wonderful for us to be here. During the mass, we offer and present the ordinary bread and wine to God. God accepts, blesses, transforms, and then offers them back to us as the Body and Blood of his Son. However, not only during Lent, but also whenever we are at mass, we are meant to be changed and transformed into the people God wants us to be. With faith and courage can we also offer our own ordinary daily lives to God with the bread and wine? God will accept, bless, and transform us too, if we are open to allowing God to act powerfully in our lives. Just as those with Jesus left the mountain changed by what they heard and saw, we too in our own way are meant to leave mass changed and renewed by what we have experienced with each other. This week let’s pray that we too will be transfigured by God’s love, compassion, and forgiveness as we continue our journey through Lent with Jesus and each other.

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

#### **LECTIONARY BASED YOUTH ACTIVITIES – by Lisa-Marie Calderone-Stewart**

##### **God's Word** (Lenten Sculpture)

A major theme of the Scripture readings is ‘Tests of faith’.

God really put Abraham to a tough test. What can be more precious to a parent than her or his own child? Asking Abraham to sacrifice his son is seen by Christians as a foreshadowing of what God will do in sacrificing Jesus to rescue us from eternal death. Abraham set about doing what God required, getting everything ready for the sacrifice. But what a relief it must have been when the Lord’s messenger stopped the sacrifice.

The psalm reads as though it could have been written by Abraham. The psalmist still believes in God despite all that he was asked to give up. Even in the midst of great trial, the author’s faith is not diminished.

The reading from Romans allows us to see that God didn't ask Abraham to do anything God wasn't willing to do. What other proof should we need of God's love than the sacrifice of God's Son?

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus takes a few of his disciples up a mountain. Elijah and Moses appear and talk with Jesus. They represent the Law and the prophets, which previously conveyed the promises of God. Jesus is the fulfilment of both. The voice of God makes it clear who Jesus is, 'This is my Son, my beloved. Listen to him.' Jesus asks the disciples to keep secret what they just saw and heard – what they know will not be revealed to all until after Jesus' Resurrection.

Coming down from the mountain, Jesus talks about his death. The disciples do not understand that to share in God's glory is to share in Jesus' suffering and death.

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL LENTEN OASIS !**

### **RECOLLECTION AND MINI RETREAT**

**Combined Catholics** 😊 Scone & Murrurundi and Muswellbrook & Aberdeen Parishes.

**Hosted at St. Joseph's Church, Segenhoe St., Aberdeen.**

**9am to 12 Noon Saturday 16 March AD2024. Bring a picnic lunch/plate for after.**

9am. Concelebrated Holy Mass. Fr. Victor Babu-Doss and Fr. Graham Fullick.

9.30am continuous. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

9.30am continuous. 2-3 Priests available for Reconciliation.

10.00am. Scriptural Rosary.

11am. Oasis Reflection Reflection Talk. Visiting Priest.

11.45am. Benediction with Blessed Sacrament.

Noon. Angelus and Close.

Picnic lunch/plate sharing.

**This is a new, unique Spiritual Encounter. Not to be missed!**

### **St. Thomas' Cuppa Roster** ☕

Please join us for a cuppa after Mass at St Thomas' this **Sunday 25th February**. February rostered volunteers are Marianne and Cathy.

### **Parish Office Update**

The Parish office will be **CLOSED** on Wednesday 28th February 2024 due to a meeting in Maitland. Sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

### **2024 Sacramental Program**

If anyone would like to participate in the sacramental program this year, please contact the parish office. The confirmation day is expected to be mid-August 2024.

### **Congratulations**

Members of the Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle community recently filled Sacred Heart Cathedral for the annual Called to Serve Mass. Prior to the Mass there was a presentation of awards for 25 years of service to staff in recognition of their commitment to Catholic education. We would like to congratulate John and Francis O'Brien who are active members of our parish on receiving awards at this presentation.



### **Lenten Program 2024**

Interested Parishioners are invited register for the Pieta Lenten Program this year.

There will be at least three group sessions this year (more if needed) If you have a group who would like to do the Program on another day please call Colleen 0402 242 273 to arrange for Lenten Books for your members. There are six weekly sessions in the Lenten Program. Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday.

**St Thomas Group** held Monday evening at the Church at 6pm new members very welcome. Call Carol Bowen 0438 812 898 or Marg Hamilton 0408 668 251.

**St James groups** to be held in the Convent this year as it affords ease of access and ease of Parking.

**Tuesday Morning Group 10am**

– call Kay Goodwin 0404 212 686 to register

or

**Tuesday Evening Group at 7pm**

– call Colleen Kelly 0402 242 273 to register

**First session 13<sup>th</sup> February**

In order to assist us on our Lenten journey the Wollongong diocese publishes a Lenten Program book each year that includes private daily reflections from

Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday for personal reflection in addition to longer-form Sunday Scripture reflections, readings, responsorial psalms, prayers and reflection questions that are traditionally part of group Lenten programs. The book also includes beautiful artwork from the Masters with accompanying artwork reflections.



### **Second Sunday of Lent 24 & 25 February**



After the birth of her children, 22-year-old **Ronita** was at risk of having to leave school permanently. But, with the support of Caritas Australia's partners in the Philippines, she resumed her studies and secured a job at a call centre to support her family.

**Please donate to Project Compassion.**

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 and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.

**PLACES TO CALL IF YOU NEED HELP**

<b>LIFELINE</b> 13 11 14	<b>BEYOND BLUE</b> 1300 22 4636
<b>1800 RESPECT</b> 1800 737 732	<b>HEADSPACE</b> 1800 650 890
<b>MINDSPOT</b> 1800 61 44 34	<b>KIDS HELPLINE</b> 1800 55 1800
<b>NATIONAL DEBT HELPLINE</b> 1800 007 007	<b>NATIONAL CORONAVIRUS HELPLINE</b> 1800 020 080

## Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 26 February	Tuesday 27 February	Wednesday 28 February	Thursday 29 February	Friday 1 March	Saturday 2 March	Sunday 3 March
						<b>3rd Sunday Lent</b>
9.00am <b>Private, Personal Prayer, and Adoration</b> St James Muswellbrook		<b>No Mass</b>	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>Stations of the Cross</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
	4.30pm <b>Stations of the Cross</b>  5.00pm <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen		2.00pm <b>Funeral Mass</b> of Allen Bishop			8.00am <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen

### Minister Roster Sunday 3rd March 2024

1st Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Counters	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook		C. Hayes	Sr. Dorothy			R. Panis	C. Hayes
8am Sunday Aberdeen	T. Hobbs	J. Lonergan	C. Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am Sunday Muswellbrook	M. Kempis	M. Kelly	K. Mason		Kay and Brian Mason		K. Goodwin

#### 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:** 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, Danielle Camilleri and Sebastiammal

**Recently Deceased:** Tim Pike, Zlatka Pikulich, Noel Symington and Allen Bishop.

**Anniversary:** Molly Hofman, Jackie Partridge, and Wendell Borres.

**Baptisms:** Alby Les Baber.

**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."**