



# 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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4th Sunday in Ordinary Time – YEAR A

1 February 2026

### First Reading

**Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13**

Zion's God, from age to age. **(R.)**

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah

*In your midst I will leave a humble and a lowly people.*

Seek the Lord  
all you, the humble of the earth,  
who obey his commands.  
Seek integrity,  
seek humility:  
you may perhaps find shelter  
on the day of the anger of the Lord.  
In your midst I will leave  
a humble and lowly people,  
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in the  
name of the Lord.  
They will do no wrong,  
will tell no lies;  
and the perjured tongue will no longer  
be found in their mouths.  
But they will be able to graze and rest  
with no one to disturb them.

### The Word of the Lord

**Responsorial Psalm** **Ps 145:7-10. R. Mt 5:3**

**(R.)** Happy the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith forever,  
who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **(R.)**
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan. **(R.)**
3. It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,

### Second Reading

**1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17**

**1 Corinthians 1:26-31**

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

*God has chosen what is weak by human reckoning.*

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

### The Word of the Lord

**Gospel Acclamation** **Matthew 5:12**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Rejoice and be glad;  
Your reward will be great in heaven.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel** **Matthew 5:1-12**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Happy are the poor in spirit.*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Happy the gentle:  
they shall have the earth for their heritage.  
Happy those who mourn:  
they shall be comforted.  
Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is  
right:  
they shall be satisfied.  
Happy the merciful:  
they shall have mercy shown them.  
Happy the pure in heart:  
they shall see God.  
Happy the peacemakers:  
they shall be called sons of God.  
Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of  
right:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and  
persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against  
you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your  
reward will be great in heaven.'

## **The Gospel of the Lord**

### **Reflection by Fr Victor**

The Gospel on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary time, places us on the hillside with Jesus as He proclaims the Beatitudes. These are not rules for the strong and successful, but promises for the humble, the gentle, the merciful, and those who trust in God. Jesus calls blessed those the world often overlooks. In God's kingdom, greatness is measured not by power or status, but by love, faith, and a heart open to Him.

The first reading invites us to seek the Lord in humility, while St Paul reminds us that God chooses what is simple and weak to reveal His strength. This is good news for every family, every child, every parish community: holiness is possible for all, right where we are.

As I write this final bulletin message for you, I do so with deep gratitude. It has been a blessing to walk with you, to pray with you, and to witness your faith lived out in ordinary and beautiful ways. Like the Beatitudes, parish life is built not on perfection, but on shared faith, patience, kindness, and trust in God.

Thank you for your love, your prayers, and your support. Please remember me in your prayers, as you will remain in mine. May the Lord bless you and keep you always.

As I take leave of this parish community, I do so with a grateful heart. Thank you for welcoming me into your lives, your homes, and your celebrations of faith. I have been enriched by your kindness, your patience, and your quiet witness to the Gospel. Though I take up a new position as a Spiritual Director at the Seminary in Wagga Wagga, I carry you with me in prayer and thanksgiving. May God continue the good work He has begun among you.

May the Lord bless this parish with hearts that are poor in spirit, gentle in love, and rich in mercy. May your families be strengthened in faith, your children grow in wisdom and grace, and may this community always reflect the Beatitudes in daily life.

**May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

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

### **FAREWELL AND THANK YOU!**

### **AND WELCOME!**

**This Sunday  
1<sup>st</sup> February is our  
Farewell to Fr. Victor  
and Welcome Fr Sabu**

**Donations towards the purchase of a new  
laptop for Father can still be put in an  
envelope and placed on the Second  
Collection this week.**

**Father's last Mass in the Parish  
Will be at 10am at St James Church 1 Feb.**

**The light luncheon will be shared at St James  
School Hall , Skellatar Street Muswellbrook.  
Tea and coffee will be served from 12pm until  
Fr. Victor arrives around 12.30 for the  
Celebration.**

**Everyone is reminded to please bring a  
plate to share.**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February,  
St James School Hall  
Skellatar Stock Route Muswellbrook**

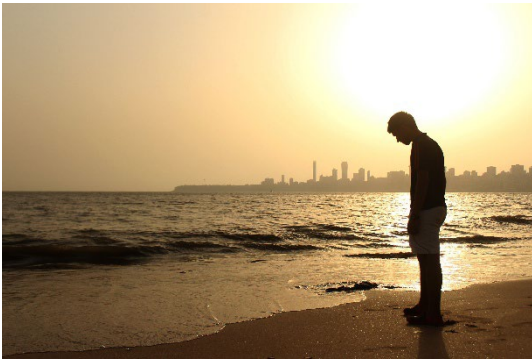
### **Lent 2026 with the Catholic Guy, Bruce Downes**

Lent is a time when we can grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the true meaning of Easter. Be inspired. Be refreshed. Be renewed!

For 40 days you will receive a short, practical and inspiring video in your inbox every morning to help you make this Lenten journey more powerful and prayerful. This program is FREE and you can sign up here:

<https://brucedownes.org/lent-2026-sign-up/>

Go to BruceDownes.org for more information.



### **Bishop's Prayer for the Jewish Community**

Let us pray together for peace: O God, creator of the world, Who first revealed Your love and salvation for humankind in and through the Jewish community, and Who has revealed that peacemakers are to be called Your children, grant we pray, that we may work without ceasing to establish that justice which alone ensures true and lasting peace. Amen.

### **Rite of Election 2026**

The Rite of Election on Sunday 22 February 2026 is an opportunity to welcome all catechumens who will be baptised in their parishes at the Easter Vigil. A catechumen is an unbaptised person whose search for meaning has brought them to the Catholic Church. Please join in witness and prayerful support of those who choose to be Catholic. 1.30pm Sacred Heart Cathedral Newcastle West, followed by afternoon tea. RSVP for catering to [mission@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:mission@mn.catholic.org.au).

Flyer is available as you come into the church for those who are interested



Volunteers are invited to form a Parish Team to assist in realising Parish Council plans and events. If you have any questions, please contact Fr Victor.

### **Prayer for Peace in the Middle East (and other wars)**

Lord, Jesus Christ, the Holy Land is once again struck by violence, hatred and death. Lord, look with mercy upon the land that was your earthly home. Receive the deceased into your presence; and comfort those who mourn, are wounded, or forced to flee. Be close to all who are full of fear and despair. You are our peace and light of the nations; put an end to the spiral of terror and suffering in the Holy Land and in the whole Middle East. Let peace and justice flourish at the holy sites. You are our refuge. Let the people be safe in your love. Have mercy on us and on our time. Amen.



### **LENT**

Ash Wednesday is on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Mass times will be announced soon.

Lenten Programme "Compassio." The booklets have been ordered but have not been received yet. Cost of booklets will be \$10 each.



## Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> February	Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> February	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> February
<i>The Presentation of the Lord</i>			<i>St Agatha, virgin, martyr</i>	<i>St Paul Miki and companions, martyrs</i>		<i>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
	9.00 am <b>Mass</b> St James Church	9.00 am <b>Mass</b> St James Church	11.30 am <b>Adoration &amp; Benediction</b> 12.00 pm <b>Mass</b> St James Church	9.00 am <b>Mass</b> St James Church	9.00 am <b>Mass</b> St James Church  5.30 pm <b>Vigil Mass</b> St James Church	10.00 am <b>Mass</b> St James Church
						8.00 am <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen

## Minister Roster Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026

2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Month	Readers	Cantors	Musician	Gifts	Counters	Altar Server	Sacristan
5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook	S.E. Bernard	C Hayes	Sr. Dorothy			Ryan	C. Hayes
8.00 am Sunday Aberdeen	J Dallah	T Hobbs	C Bowen				M Hamilton
10.00am Sunday Muswellbrook	G Griffin M Shanahan	M Kelly	C Kelly		J & S Thatcher	Stella Liam	J. Grenfell

### 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, Pat Hogan, Helen Tumbers, Anne Rawson, Kym Mason, Anne Hugo James McGrath, David Curran, Beate Shanahan, Rochelle Ashman, Sr. Anne Daley, Glenda Fe Jimenez, Chris Cantrall, K.P.Paul, Yolly Catoy, Jim Curran, Charles Sadgrove, Rollen Borres, Linda Bates, Josefina Flores, Jenelyn Regala, Florentino Mateo, Rodelio Borress, Paul Carey, Eunice Benn and Vhiel Bobadillah.

**Anniversary:** Fay Biddle.

**Recently Deceased:** Verlee Bea Bobadillah.

**Baptisms:**

**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/)

Muswellbrook Parish Promotor of Safeguarding: Jane Jacobs (Contact via Parish Office).

**"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."**