

Looking at the Readings

The book of Ecclesiasticus (better entitled Sirach in the new Lectionary) is a collection of wise sayings inspired by the Law of God. The Law originally was given as a gift and observed to set people free from slavery and establish a new relationship with God. The first reading from this book concerns the right relationships between parents and children. The family values expressed are very human and very divine: honour, respect, obedience, kindness and forgiveness.

Matthew writes his gospel for a Christian community with very Judaic roots: Christ is seen as the new Moses. Jesus' life is threatened by King Herod and Moses' life was threatened by Pharaoh. Moses led his people out of Egypt, Matthew quotes the Prophet Hosea "I called my son out of Egypt." (11:1). There are many other parallels, but this passage is chosen for the Feast of the Holy Family to show that Joseph's dreams, responses, insights, decisions and protection he provides to and for Mary and Jesus are the dreams, responses, insights, decisions and protection we ought to develop in our families today.

The new Lectionary only gives the shorter form of the second reading from Saint Paul's letter to the Colossians. He expounds family values of compassion, generosity, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, love, peace and giving thanks to God. Peace in our hearts is re-emphasised in the Gospel Acclamation.



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Parish Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9am - 1pm

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PARISH MASS TIMES

Weekend Masses: 27th & 28th December

Saturday: 6.00pm Mass

Sunday : 9:30am Mass

Weekday Masses: 29th December - 2nd January 2026

Thursday: 9.30am New Years Day Mass

Friday: 11.30am Adoration 12.00pm 1st Friday Mass

Reconciliation: Approach Fr Novie before Mass

Baptism: Every Second weekend of the Month

Weddings: By Appointment with the Parish Priest

Sophia Sisters: Every Monday 1:30pm (Parish Centre)

Men's Group: Every Saturday 9am (Parish Centre)

Playgroup: Every Friday 9am (Parish Centre)

Children's Liturgy: G'day Sunday

Sunday School: G'day Sunday

Ladies Drinks: 4th Wednesday 5:30pm (Parish Centre)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Yorta Yorta Nation. This land is sacred, this land is gift, this land is thousands of years old. We acknowledge the immense beauty of this land and the dreams of the Yorta-Yorta People. We pay our respects to elders past and present and acknowledge the lessons the Yorta-Yorta people teach us about care, respect and justice for mother earth.

If you wish to assist in "further supporting the Parish" we offer different ways of giving... direct debit, credit card or planned giving envelopes. Please ring the office for more details.

PARISH BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS:

St Mary's Echuca: BSB Number: 083-543

Account Number: 45-782-9206

Child Safety: Through our policies and practices, we protect the right of children to feel safe and to be safe. We promote the well-being and inclusion of all children. For more information, contact the parish office and look for the Child Safety Officer Mel Slattery.

PARISH CALENDAR

1st January: 9.30am Mass
2nd January: 11.30am Adoration 12.00pm 1st Friday Mass

1st January the Office will be closed.

Christmas and New Year Message 2025 Hope and Peace

Dear Parish Family,

As we celebrate the joy of Christmas and New Year, we give thanks for the gift of Jesus, born among us as a sign of God's enduring love, hope, and peace. This holy season invites us to pause, reflect, and look ahead with renewed trust in God's presence among our parish community. This past year has truly been a blessing for our parish. We have seen our community grow—not just in numbers, but in spirit. New faces, new families, and new cultures have enriched our parish life, reminding us that the Church is at its best when it is welcoming, open, and grounded in love. I am deeply grateful for each of you who have shared your time, faith, and generosity to make our parish a home for all, regardless of culture, background, or story.

As we look to the future, may we continue to be a parish that carries Christ's hope into the world and becomes a place of peace for those who seek it. Let us walk forward together with faith, kindness, and courage, trusting that God will continue to guide and bless our journey. May the peace of Christ fill your hearts and homes this Christmas and throughout 2026.

**With blessings and gratitude,
Fr. Novie Lim**

Thank you. . .

The St. Mary's Parish community extends its sincere thanks to everyone who worked tirelessly to prepare our Christmas Masses.

Gratitude is also extended to the liturgy team, music ministry, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and all volunteers whose time and commitment helped make our Christmas celebrations prayerful, joyful, and meaningful for the parish community.

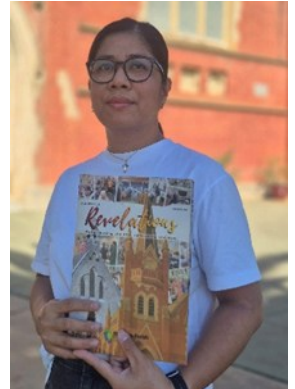
The community would also like to thank St. Mary's Primary School for generously allowing the use of the school facilities for the Christmas Family Mass, making it possible for families and children to gather and celebrate together.

Thank you to everyone for your faith, service, and generosity. Your contributions have helped make this Christmas truly special for St. Mary's Parish.

A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Parish Family,

I hope this message finds you well and filled with the peace of Christ. As I reflect on the past year in our parish, I am reminded of the countless moments of kindness, generosity, and faith that bring our community to life - from a warm welcome at Mass to volunteers quietly serving behind the scenes. It is such a joy to share this year's issue of *Revelations*, where we celebrate the stories of parish groups, events, and individuals who make our parish so vibrant and full of life. This magazine is not meant to report on every ministry, but to highlight the moments and people that inspire us all.



With so many wonderful ministries, we cannot feature every group each year. Please know that the absence of a ministry in this edition in no way diminishes its value. Every volunteer, every act of service—seen and unseen—is deeply appreciated and cherished.

If any disappointment arises, we sincerely apologise. To ensure everyone has a chance to be featured in the future, ministry leaders will be invited earlier to express their interest.

As volunteers for the magazine, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve in this way. We continue learning and improving so that *Revelations* may better reflect and celebrate the life of our parish community.

Printed copies of *Revelations* are available at the church entrance and parish office, and a digital version can also be viewed on our website.

May this magazine inspire us and remind us of our shared journey in faith, hope, and love, guiding us as a parish family growing in faith together.

With gratitude and prayers,
Cindy Narvasa

Christmas Mass envelopes are available at the back of the church. Thank you.



CARITAS AUSTRALIA

CHRISTMAS APPEAL: Be a

light in the darkness for

families facing adversity this Christmas



Caritas is inviting Australians to “be a light in the darkness” for families living through the trauma of war, displacement, poverty and natural disaster. The intensity of the conflict in Ukraine has increased and more people are experiencing displacement and poverty. The people of the Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are devastated by typhoons and floods. With your support, we can bring hope to these families. Caritas is on the ground working hard to support people on the ground.

As a practical way for us to be Lights of Hope, the theme for St Mary’s Christmas Eve Family Mass 2025 is the Light of Hope in the Darkness.

Our Christmas Mass collections will support these Caritas appeals but to bring hope immediately, you can donate today via QR code or at www.caritas.org.au/christmas-appeal/be-the-light-in-darkness/ or www.caritas.org.au/asia-storms or call 1800 024 413

ROSTERS THIS WEEK

27th & 28th December 2025

Commentators/Lectors:

6.00pm: Rose Quinn, Carol Purdon, Allan Chettiar

9.30am: Rachel McAsey, Win Lavery, Max Marchetti

Ministers of the Eucharist:

6.00pm: Christine Sebire, Carmel Mackenzie

9.30am: Bebher Mitchell, Adrian Costello

Prayers of the Faithful: Rose Quinn

St Anne’s Church Cleaners: 27th

Loretta Holman, Mary Byrne

Setting up the Church: 27th Carol Purdon

Setting up the Church: 28th Kenn Liwanag

Baptism Preparation: Sarah Byrne

Counters: 30th Pat Whyte, Adrian Costello

Hospital Visiting: 29th John and Julie Moyle

Gardening: Jim & Prue Galea, Rose Quinn

ROSTERS NEXT WEEK

3rd & 4th January 2026

Commentators/Lectors:

6.00pm: Christine Sebire, Dominic Karunanayake, Rose Quinn

9.30am: Barb Green, Julie Moyle, Noela Boyer

Ministers of the Eucharist:

6.00pm: Leah Williams, Tania Dixon

9.30am: John Moyle, Margaret Hart

Prayers of the Faithful: Mary Atkins

St Anne’s Church Cleaners: 3rd

Lee Pethybridge, Cindy & Jonas Narvasa

Setting up the Church: 3rd Rose Quinn

Setting up the Church: 4th Kate Bruty

Baptism Preparation: Holly Morris

Counters: 6th Eileen Pineo & Lois Williams

Hospital Visiting: 4th Carmel Mackenzie

Gardening: Rob Morris & Bob Cooper

YOUR PRAYERS PLEASE

Sick: David Baker, Bruno Barbera, Monica Beckwith, Dan Carey, Howard Clark Jnr, Pat Davey, Chloris Dignan, Caroline Farley, Fred Molluso, Murray Perrett, Meredith Ryan (Maddick), Bruce Haines, Maureen McKenner, Lenny Reid, Alistair Corman, Frank Slattery, Elizabeth Kyne (Weekly), Patricia Vogeale, Meaghan Broom (Byrne), Maurice O’Connor, Antonia Molluso, Carmel Murphy, Judy Clark, Judy Cooling (Dwyer), Dominga Cabantac, John & Elaine Farley, Pat & Margaret McMahon

Anniversaries: Howard Clark, Bishop Joe Grech, Carmel Cannard, Barry McIntyre, Teresa Pavone, Mele Clifford and Monica Murname.

Recently Deceased:

***If you have an addition to our overall prayer list or require someone to be removed from our sick list please email admin.*

First Reading*Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14***A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus**

The Lord honours the father in his children,
and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.
Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins,
he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a
fortune.

Whoever respects his father will be happy; with children
of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays.
Long life comes to him who honours his father,
he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to
the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age,
do not grieve him during his life.
Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,
do not despise him in your health and strength;
for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten
but will serve as reparation for your sins.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm*Psalm 128.1-2, 3, 4-5***R. Happy are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways.**

Happy is the one who fears the Lord,
who walks in his ways.
You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands;
you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you. **R.**

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table. **R.**

Thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.
The Lord bless you from Zion.
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life. **R.**

Gospel Acclamation*Colossians 3:15, 16***Alleluia, alleluia!**

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.
Alleluia!

Next Week: Epiphany of the Lord, Year A**3rd & 4th January 2026**

1st Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6
Responsorial Psalm: 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-13
2nd Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Second Reading*Colossians 3:12-21***A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians**

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and
you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness
and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one
another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins.
The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.
Over all these clothes, to keep them together and
complete them, put on love. And may the peace of
Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you
were called together as parts of one body. Always be
thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home
with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all
wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and
hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do
anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving
thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the
Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with
gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents
always, because that is what will please the Lord.
Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you
will make them feel frustrated.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel*Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23***A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord
appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take
the child and his mother with you, and escape into
Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod
intends to search for the child and do away with him.'
So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother
with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until
Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had
spoken through the prophet: I called my son out of
Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a
dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the
child and his mother with you and go back to the land of
Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead'.
So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother
with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he
learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as
ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being
warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee.
There he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way
the words spoken through the prophets were to be
fulfilled:
He will be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.