



St Paul the Apostle Parish

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Parish Priest: Fr Raning Creta
Assistant Priest: Fr Tovia Lui

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Saturday Evening Vigil 6.00pm (*Exposition 4.30pm - 5.45pm*)
Sunday 8.00am, 9.30am and 6.00pm

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Monday 9.10am
Tuesday 7.00pm (*Exposition 6.00pm - 7.00pm*)
Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9.10am
Saturday 9.00am

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 4.30pm - 5.30pm

WHAT WONDERFUL THINGS GOD HAS PLANNED FOR OUR CHILDREN

On my wedding day, I noticed that my mother-in-law was crying. I said to her, 'Don't think of it as losing a daughter—think of it as gaining a son.' She said, 'That's why I'm crying.' We think it tragic when parents lose a child, but one way or another, all parents lose their children. We lose our children through marriage, or when they grow up and leave home and move away. Even before that, they've begun to assert their independence, to make the point that they don't belong to us. We enjoy them for a while, but they're not ours to keep.

That point is brought home to Mary and Joseph when Jesus is twelve years old. They take him to Jerusalem for the feast. Afterwards they set out for home without him. That my seem very careless, but no doubt they were part of a very large extended family. He would be with his grandparents, or his cousin or his aunts. Up to now that had been a perfectly safe assumption. But this time he wasn't with them. He had gone missing. Desperate with worry, they return to Jerusalem to look for him. They find him, eventually, in the Temple, and Mary says to him, 'Why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' And Jesus replies, 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know I would be at my Father's?' The Greek phrase could mean, 'At my Father's house' or 'At my Father's business.' Probably Luke meant it to be ambiguous: Jesus is both in his Father's house, and about his Father's business. But the Father in question is not Joseph. It dawns, certainly on Mary, and perhaps on Joseph too, that Jesus has an agenda which is not theirs, business which is not theirs, things to teach which he has not learnt from them, loyalty to someone other than themselves.

We celebrate the feast of the Holy Family, but in fact our Gospel tells us of the beginning of the break-up of the Holy Family. This is the last time

in the Bible that Joseph will be mentioned. We don't know what became of him. We assume that he died. Certainly from now on he is out of the picture. From now on, whenever there is mention of Jesus' father it is his heavenly Father who is meant. Jesus returns to Nazareth and spends another eighteen years there, but those years are hidden from us. The next time he is mentioned, he has left home. Only once afterwards does he return to Nazareth, and on this occasion the inhabitants try to throw him over a cliff. He is totally alienated from those friends and neighbours with whom he had used to travel to Jerusalem. The split which we see today developing between Jesus and his extended family has become a chasm.

I don't know whether any of this offers comfort to those whose children have moved away, not only physically, but mentally, emotionally, spiritually, from their parents, those whose children have adopted different ideas, different standards, perhaps even different religions, from those they learnt at home. It is hard to bear, but it has to be so. It was so for Jesus himself. Mary had to experience the pain that is common to so many parents.

The pain is necessary because Jesus needs the space to mature. He needs, as St Luke puts it, to increase in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men. Had he remained part of one happy family, if he could always be assumed to be with the caravan of friends and relations, there would have been no Gospel, no crucifixion, no resurrection, no salvation. All this was part of God's plan.

It may be that the loss of our own children is also part of God's plan. I think St Augustine's mother spending a whole night in prayer, praying that her son would not go away to Rome. He slipped away by night, even as she was praying; something of which he was afterwards ashamed, but if he had not gone, he would not have become a Christian, a bishop, a theologian, a saint. What wonderful things God has planned for our own children! Provided only that we have the wisdom to let them go, and the love to keep them in our prayers.

from Scripture in the Church Issue Vol. 30, No. 120

FEAST DAYS

- 27th St John, Apostle
- 28th Holy Innocents
- 31st Saint Sylvester I
- 1st Mary, the Holy Mother of God
- 2nd Sts Basil the Gt and Gregory Nazianzen

NOVENA MASS TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Every Tuesday at 7pm in the Church. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6-7pm.

ROSARY

For the intention of world peace. Every Wednesday at 2.30pm in the Church. All welcome.

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

Every Friday at 3.30pm in the Church.

NEXT MEETING

SVDP	30/12	7pm
Baptism	7/01	7.30pm
Youth	15/01	7pm
Leisure Group	27/01	10am
Liturgy	27/01	7pm
Finance	28/01	7pm
Parish Council	01/02	7.30pm

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASS AND OTHER ROSTERS					
02 / 03 JAN	ACOLYTES	MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST	ALTAR SERVERS	READERS COMMENTATORS	PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS
6.00pm Vigil	J	Emmy Cox Veronica Brown	D	Natalie Mifsud Pauline Knowler	Peter & Renata Beck
8.00am	P	Sylvia McGee Jan Francis	C	Christie Bawden Diane Samson	Wendy Wilson Marie Hiscock
9.30am	Q	Joyce Lord Nic Vidot	E	Frances Stephenson Phil Ogle	Leslie & Rineth Scott
6.00pm	R	June Wood Cathy Staff	G	Youth Group	Youth Group
CHILDREN'S LITURGY		No Children's Liturgy during the school holidays			
CHURCH CLEANING		Minda Chumroonridhi, Warren D'Costa, Valentine Mukuria, Charlotte Dos Remedios and Lourdes & Fidel Zaballa			
WINDOW CLEANING		Phyllis Trovato, Kerry Foeken and Lou Pulvirenti			

HOLY HOUR for VOCATIONS

Saturday 5.00 - 6.00pm

Can you honestly pray: Unless your family loves you, nothing else makes sense. In your family your vocation can grow in wisdom, age and grace.

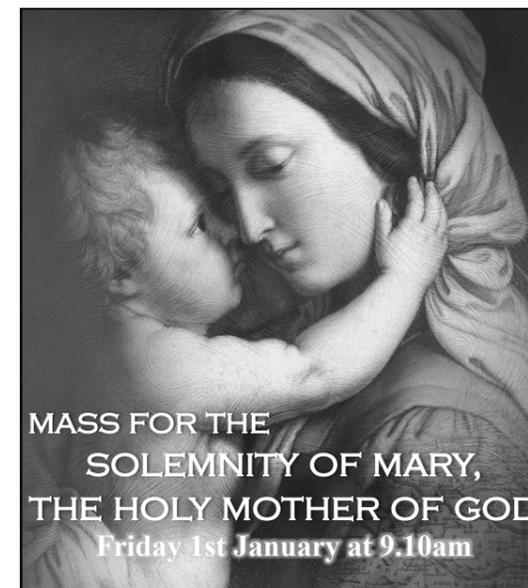
BAPTISM WELCOME

to Faith Mikaela Daniel, Alexa Pearl Mei Feng Low, James Peter Jun Long Low, Penelope Jean Sofiak and Lilly Swain who were baptised here last weekend. We pray that their faith will become an important and integral part of their lives.

PIETY STORE

Come in and have a browse -

- Columban Calendars \$8
- Fr Mac's Christmas Puddings are still available for \$15.00



MASS FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
Friday 1st January at 9.10am

Free Retirement Planning Seminar: 20 January

Australian Catholic Superannuation presents this FREE seminar on how to optimise your savings for retirement and potentially save tax with an account-based pension. Tax savings could be \$'000s each year from age 56.

From 10am-1.30pm
Parramatta Leagues Club
13-15 O'Connell St, Parramatta

Partners and friends welcome.
Book now
1300 658 776

www.catholicsuper.com.au/seminars

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Jack & Gladys Scott, Fr David Scott, Therese & Noel Scahill, Alice, Aurelio Lopez & Julia Sherman, Bern, Mary Betts, Elias & Afifi Younis, Frank Whiting, Ted Church, Elizabeth & Allan Ward, Stella Borg, Fabri Family, Suzanne Portelli, Ross Nelson, Pasquale & Maria Paoletti, Josephine Clayton, Edna Fernandez, Adrian Coppolino, Marie & Claude Strange, Nellie Rodrigues, Brian Hollings, Franco & Lucia Paoletti, Joe Mangion, Sebastian Pereira, Therese Farrugia, William Wilson, Sam Vella, Paul Gove and Mario & Maria Coppolino.

RCIA BECOMING CATHOLIC

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

RCIA resumes on Monday 18th January
If you know of anyone who is interested in learning about the Catholic Faith please have them contact the Parish Office.

Mass of the Holy Innocents: 28 December

The annual Mass of the Holy Innocents will be celebrated by Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv, Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne, at 11am at Our Lady of the Rosary Church, 8 Diana Ave, Kellyville. Mass will be followed by Rosary procession to the Franciscan Shrine of the Holy Innocents, 8 Greyfriar Place, Kellyville. Lunch available – please bring a plate to share. Everyone is welcome to pray for the protection of all human life from conception to natural death.

Inquiries **9629 2595**

WYD Pilgrimage Details

Full travel details, including pricing, of World Youth Day 2016 Diocese of Parramatta pilgrimages to Poland are now available online. Young people (16-35) are invited to register their interest via the web page:

parrawyd.org/the-pilgrimage/

For more information contact:

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