

St. Joseph's Catholic Church Oatley

PO Box 105 (21C Frederick Street) Oatley 2223

Rev. Paul Hilder – Parish Priest

Mrs. Nancy Miletic – Operations Manager (Tues & Wed)

Phone 9580 1864, Email: oatleycc@bigpond.net.au

Parish website: www.stjosephschurch.com.au

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oatley

Mrs Kylie Brakel – Principal. Phone 9580 6588

St. Joseph's Mass Times

Saturday Vigil: 5.00 pm **Sunday:** 8 am and 10 am

Weekday Masses: at 8 am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday

Thursday: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction from 11 am and
Mass at 12 md

Public Holidays: 9 am only

Confessions are available before the 5 pm Vigil Mass (4 pm to 4.45 pm)

WELCOME BACK

St Joseph's Church is open from 7 am to 6 pm daily, and the usual Mass timetable as above apply. Will look forward to seeing everyone at Mass.

CHRISTMAS MASSES 2021 AT ST JOSEPH'S AT OATLEY

Christmas Eve Friday 24th December: 5pm, 7pm, 9.30pm Mass (carols at 9.00pm).
NO MIDNIGHT MASS.

Christmas Day, Saturday 25th December: 8 am and 10 am.

Sunday (Feast of the Holy Family): 8am and 10 am.

Monday (St. John the Evangelist): 9 am only. **Tuesday (Feast of the Holy Innocents):** 9 am only.

19th December 2021 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Masses for the Deceased: Mavis Levett, Karen Smith, anniversaries.

CONTRASTING PICTURES: What a splendid picture the author of the book of Genesis painted of the origin of the world. The Spirit of God moves over darkness, chaos and an inanimate world and with his fostering care brings light and harmony and life. What was a

waste-land forms itself into a pattern of sea and land as the first dawn broadens across a landscape made fertile by his breath. Voices are heard where before was universal silence, the cries of animals and the singing of birds in a garden of delights. Last of all man emerges, shaped into the image of his maker, male and female, with whom God walks on intimate terms in the cool of the evening air, into this idyllic scene chaos erupts in another form and darkness once again descends as sin in all its horror enters in.

St. Luke gives us a contrasting scene of beauty. He depicts the Spirit of God coming upon a woman to make her fruitful so that her cousin Elizabeth would cry out *Blessed is the fruit of your womb*. This fruit of her womb is to undo what sin had done. The darkness is now to be dispelled, what was barren is to be made fertile by the coming of the Light of the World. The first picture shows us evil in the form of a serpent tempting a woman and bringing about her downfall and that of the world. The second picture is that of an angel coming to a woman and asking her to be the mother of the one who would come to restore what had been lost. Her consent gave us the Saviour of the world. No wonder the two cousins were filled with joy; nor should we be surprised that Elizabeth's child should leap in her womb. This was a joy that all of us should share, a joy arising from the greatness of God's love for us all, that he should work out our redemption in this amazing way.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

The Jewish Festival of Hanukkah was instituted by Judas Maccabeus on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Chislev (i.e. 25th December). The story of the Feast and its institution is told in the Bible.....1 Maccabees 1:54, Daniel 9:27-11:31; 2 Maccabees 10:5.

After the death of Alexander the Great in 323BC, the Seleucid Kings became masters of Asia Minor. One of these kings, Epiphanes the Fourth, began a campaign of persecution against the Jews. He desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem and erected over the altar of Holocausts an altar where pagan sacrifices were offered. This act, referred to in the Bible as "The Abomination of Desolation" is mentioned both in the First Book of Maccabees and in the Book of Daniel. It took the form of a sacrifice in honour of the pagan god, Zeus Olympios, and was carried out on the 25th December, 168BC. Three years later, Judas Maccabeus, after his first victories, purified the sanctuary, built a new altar and restored the Jewish sacrifices on the same day, 25th December, 165BC, exactly three years after the profanation of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes. It was then decided that the Feast of the rededication of the Temple should be observed on the 25th December each year. The feast is mentioned only once in the New Testament. In St. John's Gospel we are told, "It was the time when the feast of the Dedication was being celebrated in Jerusalem. It was winter and Jesus was in the Temple walking up and down in the Portico of Solomon" (John 19:22-23).

The celebration of Hanukkah lasted for eight days and was a most joyful feast. Apart from the ceremonies in the Temple, green branches of trees and palms were carried around as a

sign of joy and joyful hymns were sung. The feast was also characterized by the use of lamps. Lamps were lit on the last day of the feast. On this account, the Jewish historian, Josephus, also calls Hanukkah the “Feast of Lights”.

The 25th December is now our Christmas Day. We too celebrate with great joy. The Christmas Tree with its lights and decorations remind us of the procession of branches and palms and the lighting of the lamps on the eight days of the feast. St. John, in the Prologue to his Gospel, gives prominence to the birth of Our Lord as “That life was the light of all people, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. The true light that enlightens all people; and He was coming into the world”.

Jesus, the Messiah, is the true Temple and His sacrifice on the Cross replaces all others.

THE CHRISTMAS CRIB

During the last week of Advent and during the Christmas Season, a feature of our churches is the Christmas Crib. This custom reputedly goes back to St. Francis of Assisi, who is thought of have made the first model of the Crib at Greccio in 1223. The figure of the Child Jesus is placed in the manger during the first Mass of Christmas on Christmas Eve, and the figures of the Magi are added on the Feast of The Epiphany (6th January).

CHURCH OPEN

Our church is open for weekday Masses and Sunday Masses at 5pm (Saturday Vigil), 8am and 10am, Sundays. We look forward to warmly welcoming everyone back to Mass.

When you arrive for Mass at the Church or the Hall, you will also need to use the QR code OR use the ‘pen and paper’ system for official registration. This is the NSW Government compliance requirement.

We look forward to welcoming everyone to Mass and we will be doing all that is reasonably possible to keep everyone safe who attends Mass. There will be good ventilation, hand sanitiser available and cleaning of the church between Masses. For regular updates on the current restrictions in the Church please refer to:

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-frequently-asked-questions>

Live streaming

The Vigil Mass will continue to be live streamed on YouTube, and if you are unable to attend Mass physically, you are encouraged to connect prayerfully to this medium. The streaming will begin at 5pm on Saturday and can be accessed at any time after the Mass has concluded via [bit. /stjoatley](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCstjoatley) Or



Revised Sacrament Program 2021/2022 for St Joseph's Parish Oatley

Dear Parents and Carers, unfortunately, our Sacramental Program will be suspended for the remainder of 2021. Specific dates for the 2022 Program will be finalised shortly; however, the proposed program for next year is as follows:

- **Reconciliation 2021 Catchup:** Term 1, 2022
- **Confirmation 2021 Catchup & Confirmation 2022:** Term 2, 2022. Our parish will combine the preparation for both groups from 2021 and 2022. It is with great pleasure I advise; Bishop Anthony Fisher has announced that our region will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral in June 2022.
- **First Holy Communion 2022:** Term 3, 2022
- **Reconciliation 2022:** Term 4, 2022

The Parish is also looking for parishioner(s) who are interested in running our Sacramental Program from 2023 onwards. If you have any questions about the program or getting involved in this very special and rewarding ministry, please reach out to our current coordinator Sandra Green at sandragreen@optusnet.com.au. Training will be provided.
Fr Paul

Sacramental Program for 2021/22: Please visit the Parish website:
www.stjosephschurch.com.au

CHARITABLE WORKS FUND OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY: This Sunday there will be collection for the Charitable Works Fund. Envelopes and pens are available on the table in the foyer.

The **St. Vincent de Paul Christmas** appeal is being held and they are asking for vouchers for adults and children. Please take a tag off the Christmas tree and then place it on the plate at your designated time you come to Mass. Please put it in an envelope marked St. Vincent de Paul. If you are not yet coming to Mass, you can also donate by clicking the GIVE NOW icon below.



Planned Giving: Your contribution to the 2nd collection goes towards the running and upkeep of our parish, and 30% of what you donate is eligible for a tax deduction.

New Contributors: If you wish to become part of our regularly giving programme at St Joseph's Parish Oatley, please fill in the planned giving form, which can be accessed by opening the attached hyperlink <https://www.stjosephschurch.com.au/donations>.

Click on the button planned giving program to access and fill out form. Otherwise, you may obtain the form from the church foyer or contact the parish office for the application.

Please email the form to oatleycc@bigpond.net.au or drop it in to the Parish Office. Alternatively, you can post it to: St Joseph's Parish, 21C Frederick St, Oatley NSW 2223.

If you wish to donate to the Church Account (Second Collection) please scan the encryption below, with your mobile phone. This automatically directs you to the parish's Bpoint facility. Please follow the links. If you do not wish to make an internet or online payment, please email the office oatleycc@bigpond.net.au or contact 9580 1864.



TAX RECEIPTS for 2020-2021 are available. If you wish to receive an emailed tax receipt, please email the parish office. Once again, we would like to thank all who have kindly contributed to our parish at St Joseph's Oatley.

Thank you for contributing to St. Joseph's Parish. I am very appreciative of your ongoing generosity and commitment to support our Parish in achieving its Pastoral Mission and meeting ongoing expenses. Fr. Paul.



CCareline: helping Sydney families with relationships, parenting, ageing services, disability, addictions and mental health concerns.
connect@catholiccare.org