

St. Joseph's Catholic Church Oatley



PO Box 105 (21C Frederick Street) Oatley 2223

Rev. Paul Hilder – Parish Priest

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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: Mass at 12 md **Public Holidays:** 9 am only

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

ST JOSEPH'S OATLEY CHRISTMAS MASSES 2022

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

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

Monday 26th December (Feast of St. Stephen): 9am only

Tuesday 27th December (St. John the Evangelist): 9 am only.

Friday 30th December 2022- The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: 9am only.

WELCOME

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

18th December 2022 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Masses for the Deceased: Veronica Kellert recently deceased; Maria (Mia) Van Der Velden-Hundscheid, John Saunders, Ronald Rowley, Max Rowley, Judith Sinclair, Lucia Tesoriero, Karen Smith, anniversaries.

THE CHRISTMAS NOVENA

This began yesterday, the 17th December. At this point the Advent proclamation of the coming of the kingdom by the Prophets and John the Baptist gives way to the Christmas story in which the impending birth of Saviour and the Blessed Virgin Mary take centre stage. These days serve to prepare us more directly for Our Lord's birth. During this time, it is customary to erect the Christmas crib, to decorate the tree and to sing Christmas Carols.

THE O ANTIPHONS

These are also known as the greater Antiphons. In the Roman rite they are sung with the Alleluia as the verse before the Gospel on the seven days before the vigil of Christmas (17th December to 23rd). Each antiphon begins with the interjection "O". During the season of Advent the Old Testament readings announce the coming of the Messiah, and the closer the feast of Christmas approaches, the more the liturgy accentuates the call of the Saviour with the cry "Come".

The seven antiphons: *O Sapientia* (Wisdom), *O Adonai* (the Lawgiver), *O Radix Jesse* (tree of Jesse), *O Clavis David* (Key of David), *O Oriens Splendor* (Dayspring from on high), *O Rex Gentium* (King of the Nations), *O Emmanuel* (God with us); in verse order form an acrostic from the initials of each invocation "ERO CRAS" (tomorrow I shall be there). This is the Lord's response to those who have faithfully prepared for His coming during the season of Advent through prayer and penitence. A metrical version of the "O" antiphons is the hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel".

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 of 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).



The Fourth Candle: is for the Angels who heralded Christ's birth and sang their hymn of joy.



St Vincent de Paul's Christmas Appeal: Beautiful handmade Angel jewellery and gifts which were purchased last weekend by St Joseph's parishioners raised \$642 in funds for the homeless men at Matthew Talbot Hostel, which is run by the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Matthew Talbot Services were very grateful with the amount which will be used to purchase toiletries for the men at the shelter, and for those who "drop in" for a wash and a meal. We are grateful to Susan Canham and Maris Cummins who helped with the sales at the masses on the weekend, as well to Maris for making and donating the special gifts.

Also, the Parish Community and St Joseph's Primary School further collected \$2400 to the St Vincent's Christmas Appeal, as well, an abundance of food items, toys, and gift vouchers were donated.

These donations will be assisting many families to make sure they all have a Magical and Joyous Christmas which they truly deserve. **St Vincent de Paul** sincerely thank St Joseph's parishioner's and the community for the wonderful and generous donations that have been given. And wishes everyone a very Blessed and Holy Christmas and New year.

PARISH CHRISTMAS MORNING TEA: Our final Morning tea for 2022 was held with a great turnout. Everyone joined in with lots of conversations, laughter as well as the singing of Christmas carols. Truly a delightful afternoon was enjoyed by all. We thank everyone who attended the morning, as well the parishioners who donated the delicious cakes and snacks. The next morning tea will be held in February 2023, further details will be posted in the parish bulletin in the new year.



MASS READERS: Volunteers are needed to read at the Masses on the weekend. Please contact the office 9580-1864 or email oatleycc@bigpond.net.au if you are able to assist on some weekends.

SINGERS REQUIRED TO FORM A CHRISTMAS CHOIR: As Christmas is nearly upon us (next week), an appeal is made for singers to form a Choir for the 9pm Mass on Christmas Eve. Marion Binns, our Organist at the 10am Mass on Sunday, would like to hear from you if can help in this regard.

The Parish now has the facility to stream our Sunday Masses: You can access this on YouTube by following this link: bit.ly/stjoatley OR



Thank you to all who have kindly contributed to our parish. If you wish to support your Parish, St Joseph's Oatley, please click on the tab below.

