

St. Joseph's Catholic Church Oatley

PO Box 105 (21C Frederick Street) Oatley 2223 Rev Paul Hilder – Parish Priest

Mrs Nicky Rodrigues – Parish Secretary (Thurs & Fridays)

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Parish website: www.stjosephschurch.com.au **Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oatley**

Mrs Kylie Brakel – Principal Phone: 9580 6588

| Schedule of Masses | | Baptisms | By appointment (usually Sunday, 11am) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Thursday | 9am only | Confessions | Saturday 4:00-4:45 pm |
| Friday | 8am (Rosary 7.45) | | |
| Saturday | 8am (Rosary 7.45) 5pm (Vigil) | | |
| Sunday | 8am, 10am | | |
| Monday | 8am (Rosary 7.45) | | |
| Tuesday | 8am (Rosary 7.45) | | |

25 December 2019 – The Nativity of the Lord

THE LOVE OF CHRIST: He was a very small unhappy boy. He was standing outside a brightly-lit shop in a busy London street – a pathetic dwarf of misery among the giants busy with their Christmas buying. He was in floods of tears which vented themselves in loud whimpers of distress. A little crowd of sympathisers had formed. "I've lost my Daddy", he wailed.

He looked terribly forlorn and the ladies were making clucking noises of compassion. All about him was bright and happy with Christmas decorations but to him all was dark and insecure. Suddenly from out of the crowd stepped the father – the boy saw him and immediately, like sunshine after a storm, his face lit up, his eyes shone like stars, the tears vanished like magic and a great grin of happiness and relief replaced them.

Darkness and insecurity arise from the absence of the one thing that makes life worth living – love in its multiple forms. Human beings must love and be loved if they are to remain human. It is love that makes the world go round – as poets and song writers tell us in their various ways. Without God's love we human beings are in the dark and insecure. If the little boy's father had never come back what a fearful tragedy it would have been for him. If God had never come into our world what a calamity it would have been for us. Darkness would have enveloped us – human existence would have been wrapped in mystery. But our joy is in the fact that we know that God so loved the world that he sent his son into it to shed his light amid the darkness – to give us security and peace and spread his message of love among us.

Today we are thinking of this immense act of love. We think of a child in a manger who is love itself. Here is the Christ child with a human heart so that he can love us in a special way and through that human love lead us to a love that is infinite and divine.

Father Paul's Message to the Parishioners of Oatley: As we all reflect on the many blessings of the past year, let us thank Almighty God for all the good things we have and for the strength He has given us in our struggles and sorrows. May our faith in the Word made flesh which we celebrate with faith at Christmas strengthen our hope and bring joy and peace. I wish all our families and parishioners the brightest joys of the Christmas season, and many blessing for the coming New Year. Fr. Paul.

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).

Please take time to visit our Christmas Crib in the Church and reflect on the greatest gift we have received – God made man.



Wishing you and your families the brightest joys of Christmas and many blessings for the coming New Year