



To know, love and serve Jesus
by sharing our gifts through our baptismal mission

We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.

2 January 2022
The Epiphany
of the Lord
Year C

Entrance Antiphon

Behold, the Lord,
the Mighty One, has
come; and kingship
is in his grasp, and
power and dominion.

First Reading
from the prophet
Isaiah 60:1-6

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13,
R. see v.11

Response: Lord,
every nation on earth
will adore you.

Second Reading from
the letter of St Paul to
the Ephesians 3: 2-3,5-6

Gospel Acclamation
Alleluia, alleluia!
We have seen his star in
the East; and have come
to adore the Lord.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel
according to
Matthew 2: 1-12

Communion Antiphon
We have seen his star
in the East, and have
come with gifts to
adore the Lord.

New Year's Greetings

Greetings dear sisters and brothers. What a year we have had. Just when we thought things were starting to settle down, suddenly we find ourselves in the middle of the latest COVID variant – Omicron.

Last Thursday I was returning from a burial at Kemps Creek when one of the friars in our community rang me to tell me that they had just returned from a COVID test and they were all in isolation awaiting their results. I went straight to Leumeah for my own test.

In the past I have had tests and the results are back by that evening. But when I arrived at the testing centre there was an enormous queue – it took me an hour and a half to get through. And then the wait for the result.

Suddenly plans for Christmas celebrations in our parish were turned upside down. I and the other friars in our community were unable to celebrate the liturgies of Christmas because we were still waiting for our negative results.

But OLMC is a special parish, who step up when needed. I was in isolation in my room watching the children's pageant, the carols, and the liturgy of the word and communion service on our YouTube channel. It was brilliant! Well done everybody, we weren't going to let a little thing like COVID stop us from celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The children, ably assisted by their parents and other helpers, presented a very moving account of the Nativity. The Varroville Gospel Choir led us in a round familiar Christmas carols, and the altar servers with guidance from Sr Ninfa, our parish associate, led us in celebrating the great mystery of our faith. A big thank you and congratulations to everyone involved:

from the monitors; the collectors; those who put out the chairs; Maurice who set up the sound system; and all who attended this very moving celebration.

I think we have learned something very valuable for this experience. Pope Francis said in his first apostolic exhortation: if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”. Well, we have certainly proved adaptable.

A little over a year ago the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia published an “important and substantial” document on the review of diocesan and parish governance and management in Australia, their response to the findings of the Royal Commission.

It is entitled: The Light from the Southern Cross.

Each community of believers over the centuries, in one way or another, has built itself around these foundations: Communion (Koinonia), Service (Diakonia), Liturgy (Liturgia), and Proclamation (Kerygma). These dimensions of Christian community life have been lived out and shaped Christian communities in different ways from the early baptismal churches, to the flourishing monastic communities in the west, to the spread of parishes across the globe, and in the last century more and more in large urban cities.

So let us take encouragement from the experience of our Christmas celebrations, as we prepare to embark on a new year as a community of faithful disciples accepting the “challenge to build the Kingdom in our parish.”

Many blessings in 2022, and may we bear the Good News to those in need.

God bless

*Please
pray for
the sick*

For the sick & homebound: Phyllis Cooper, Dorothy Jones, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Christabelle Adina, Gloria Gonzales Prudente, Allan & Kelvin Marquinez, Amelias Jimenez, John Ingster, Elizabeth Moore, Nelia Balingit, John Morgos, Greg Watson, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Ron Allen, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco

Carmona, Doreen Gibbons, Clayton Diack, Emily Rose Pavicin, Pat & Denise Furner, Tracey Bokor, Lily Pereira, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdryns, Erlinda Hermes, Aurelia Vertucio, Ofilia Mawson, Mary & Frances Raithi, Jeanna San Diego, Hugo Garzotto, Eileen Butcher, Josephina Duefries, Austin Taylor, Marisa Aquirre, Joan Wilson.

May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.

For our recently dearly departed: Silvano Stocco, Geoff Jones, Angela Tomarchio, Jovicen Delanon, Harry Loche, Angelito Bateria, Zephaniah John Klarnett, David Donovan, Domingo Furcciniti, Rozalia Astalosh.

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Ivan Astalosh, Therese Thompson, Resse Mangulabnan, Anthony Pinto, Pauline Marquinez, Angelo Tomarchio, *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*

Reflection by Greg Sunter

The gospels of Luke and Matthew both present a version of the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus. The two accounts of the infancy that we do have from the gospels tell very different stories because they have each been used to place the rest of the gospel in a particular context. Unfortunately, the two stories have been mashed together so much that we now have one notion of the Christmas story that is a poor amalgam of the two unique narratives.

In the gospel of Luke, Joseph and Mary are living in Nazareth and travel to Bethlehem and are forced to give birth out in a field because there is no room at the only inn in Bethlehem. The ones who bear witness to the birth in this account are shepherds – some of the lowest of the low – as the gospel of Luke identifies Jesus as having a preferential option for the lowly ones. In the gospel of Matthew, Joseph and Mary are living in Bethlehem and give birth in their own house. They later flee to Egypt and then settle in Nazareth. The two towns need to be included in both accounts because they are named in some of the ancient prophecies about the Messiah. In the gospel of Matthew, the witnesses to the birth are wise men, dignitaries from another land. The Matthew writer wants to emphasise the ‘kingship’ of Jesus and it is fitting that foreign dignitaries present gifts on the birth of a king.

In some translations, the ‘wise men’ of this passage are referred to as ‘Magi’. Magi was the name given to the Persian priestly caste. Persia (now, Iran) lies to the east of Israel. These wise men are also sometimes portrayed as astrologers, but that is largely because of the reference ‘We saw his star as it rose’. It is interesting that the passage describes ‘some’ wise men; tradition has developed a specific number of three – based on the three gifts presented. These anonymous (and purely literary) figures have been given names and their ‘relics’ lie in honour beneath the Cathedral of Cologne.

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus to humankind. The wise men are the representatives of humanity bearing witness to this revelation. However, the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus as not only the Messiah of Israel but the Saviour of the whole world. Interestingly, in this gospel that emphasises the ‘Jewish-ness’ of Jesus, the witnesses to the birth are gentiles from a foreign land. Their inclusion is a powerful declaration that the revelation of Jesus is for all people. Regardless of the liturgical year, this reading is always used on the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate this pivotal moment.

The wise men, or Magi, are warned in a dream not to go back to Herod and they go home by a different way. How could they do anything but go home another way – indeed, go home as different people? They are changed by their encounter with the child Jesus and they go home a different way; in a different state; in a whole different frame of mind. When we genuinely encounter Jesus – in scripture, in life, in prayer, in ourselves – then we cannot go home the same way; we must go home by a different way as the Magi did.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

We have come from the East to worship the king.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:



And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Mass times and contact

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Sunday Mass times	Weekday Mass times
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday Mass at 9am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm