

**01 January 2023  
Solemnity of Mary,  
The Holy Mother of  
God**



**Entrance Antiphon**

Hail, Holy Mother, who  
gave birth to the King,  
who rules heaven and  
earth for ever .

**First Reading**

from the book of  
Numbers 6:22-27

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 66:2-3. 5. 6. 8. R. v.2

**Response:** May God  
bless us in his mercy .

**Second Reading** the  
letter of St Paul to the  
Galatians 4:4-7

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

In the past God spoke to  
our ancestors through  
the prophets; now he  
speaks to us through his  
Son . Alleluia!

**Holy Gospel** according  
to Luke 2:16-21

**Communion Antiphon**  
Jesus Christ is the same  
yesterday, today, and  
for ever .

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners & 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.*

*Have A  
Blessed  
New Year!*

**Background to New Years day**

by Father Dwight Longenecker

In 1582, the Gregorian calendar reform restored January 1 as New Year's Day. Although most Catholic countries adopted the Gregorian calendar almost immediately, it was only gradually adopted among Protestant countries. The British, for example, did not adopt the reformed calendar until 1752. Until then, the British Empire —and their American colonies— still celebrated the new year in March.

The irony of the Protestant countries celebrating New Year's Day on March 25 was that it was originally chosen for the New Year because of the Feast of the Annunciation—a Marian feast day which Protestants would not dream of celebrating.

In the church calendar, January first was celebrated as the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ because according to Luke 2:21 it was on the eighth day after his birth that he was circumcised. This feast is sometimes also called the Feast of the Naming of Jesus or the Holy Name of Jesus.

However, the earliest traditions of the Roman church are that the first of January was celebrated as a Feast of Mary, Mother of God. Around the seventh century the ancient tradition faded out and January first became the day that Jesus's naming and circumcision was commemorated.

In Pope John XXIII's 1960 revision of the church calendar, all mention of the circumcision of Jesus was removed and January first was called simply the Octave of the Nativity. Meanwhile in Portugal in 1914 the feast of the "Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary" had been established in October and in 1931 Pope Pius IX extended the celebration to the entire Catholic Church.

*...continued on inside page*

# Contact us

**Parish Priest:**  
**Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD**

**Assistant Priest:**  
**Fr "Sam" Ransom Rapirap OCD**

**Parish Associate:**  
**Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM**

**193 St Andrews Rd, Varroville**  
**Parish Office Ph:**  
**9603 7373 / 0434 705 176**

**Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday—Friday 9.30am-12.30pm**  
**Email: varroville@dow.org.au**  
**Website: varroville.dow.org.au**

# Mass times

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

**Diocese of Wollongong Mass Online:** for all of the online Mass options-  
please visit the DoW website <https://dow.sh/dailymass>

**Adoration Prayer** every Saturday at 9:30-10:30am after 9am Mass  
**Reconciliation** at 11am every Saturday

# Prayer intentions

**For the sick & homebound:** Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Phyllis Cooper, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Elizabeth Moore, Greg Watson, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys.  
*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Ron Allen, Norly Tuyor, Lydia Fajardo, Lily Pereira, Marita Waugh, Danilo Mercado, John McDermott,

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Hilda Young, John Peter Francis, Lio Feiloakitohi, Resse Mangulabnan, Florentine Menezes, Angelito Baterina,

**For special intentions:** Isidoro Alconaba

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



# Bulletin Notices

**Fundraising News:** Thank you for supporting the Christmas raffle. It was drawn at the pageant on Christmas eve. Congratulations to the lucky winners:

First prize: Sheena Rogan

Second prize: Maria Rawson

Third prize: Diane Redmayne

All prizes were donated and the \$475.00 was raised. The money will be banked and used for the renovation project.

**Property news:** The Construction certificate has been issued for the proposed foyer, toilet and kitchen refurbishment. The Property Committee will be able to finalise the tenders. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.

**The Family Fun Night** that was postponed in October will be held on Saturday 11 February 2023 at 7pm in the parish hall. Tickets will be available for purchase during January and all those who purchased tickets previously will be contacted to confirm they are able to attend the new date.

**Summer School of Evangelisation—8-15 January 2023: Mt Carmel Retreat Centre:**

Summer school is a week long, live in life changing retreat featuring live music, incredible worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill and learn...and more... in the midst of a community of 150+ young people ages 16-35. More info & bookings at [summerschool.org.au](http://summerschool.org.au).

## **Easter 2023**

Ash Wednesday will be 22 February 2023.

Good Friday will be on 7 April 2023

Easter Sunday will be 9 April 2023

*...continued from front page:* The 1969 revision of the liturgical calendar gathered up this tradition and moved it from October to January. Thus January first was established as “the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, and also the commemoration of the conferral of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.”

In his Apostolic Letter, *Marialis Cultus*, Pope Paul VI explained: “This celebration, placed on January 1... is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in this mystery of salvation. It is meant also to exalt the singular dignity which this mystery brings to the holy Mother...through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of life.”

So history has come around very neatly.

The First Sunday of Advent starts the new liturgical year, while on Lady Day in mid March we give the nod to the ancient tradition of the Annunciation being the start of a new year.

## Holy Gospel according to Luke 2:16-21

*The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the crib... When the eighth day came they gave him the name of Jesus.*

The shepherds hurried away to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.



When the eighth day came and the child was to be circumcised, they gave him the name Jesus, the name the angel had given him before his conception. Today the Christmas celebration gains a new depth of theological meaning. At midnight, the birth in history was proclaimed. At dawn, the initiative of God's gift was declared and the community's joyful gratitude was announced. In this third celebration, the identity of Christ and the new way of life that he brings is announced.

The Gospel of the Lord.

## Gospel Reflection by Diane Bergant

It is fitting that on New Year's Day we celebrate the calendar-shattering event in human history: the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

In the Western Church, the young woman is titled 'Mother of God'. This signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship. We know that it encompassed a mother's horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but Mother of God.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? In the Book of Genesis, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word', the human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began, the fulcrum of history from which our calendar begins.

We could pause for a moment to pray that at the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, we may share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.