

OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH NEWSLETTER



Fourth Sunday of Advent

24 December 2023

Joseph ~ A Just Man

When the birth of a child is imminent, the focus naturally shifts to the mother. But surprisingly in today's Gospel the focus is not on Mary, but on Joseph.

St Matthew's infancy narrative is centred on Joseph. The annunciation is made, not to Mary, but to Joseph. In his genealogy of Jesus, Matthew tells us that Jesus is 'son of David' through Joseph who was descended from the line of David.

Even though Joseph was not Jesus' actual father but by naming the child, he legally became his father. But all that did not really matter as Joseph fulfilled his duty as a father towards Jesus and Jesus as a son towards him. Later Jesus was known simply as 'the son of the carpenter' (Mt 13:55-56).

What kind of person was Joseph?

The Hebrew Bible does not use the word 'saint' to describe someone who is holy. It uses the word 'just' or 'righteous' to describe someone for whom duty is everything. Someone who makes the Law of God the guiding rule of his/her life. By referring to Joseph as a 'just' man the Bible goes right into the core of who and what he was. Joseph was a man of action rather than words. Through the opening chapters of Matthew's Gospel he never says a word. It is in his actions that we see his love for Jesus and for Mary. St John says that love is not a matter of words or speech but of action and truth (1 John 3:18).

In today's Gospel we see his sensitivity and unselfishness in the way he handled difficult situations in which he found himself. His wife, Mary, was with child and he thought of her and honouring her. By taking Mary to his home he saved her from becoming a social outcast. He was always there - in a supporting role. You will not find him complaining, he just got on with it. He steered the holy family through the rough times doing his best, providing for his family. He is typical of many fathers. But like many saints, he was hidden and therefore go unnoticed. But that doesn't mean they have no effect on the world. In dark age they maintain a candle light of humanity so that darkness does not have the last say. Jesus spoke about God as a father but his human experience of a father would have come in great part from Joseph. *A child is not likely to find a father in God unless he finds something of God in his father.*

FLOR McCARTHY SDB

PARISH NEWS

Parking Permits

Please have them displayed on your dashboard every time you are visiting the parish to prevent your car from being towed away. Please use until further notice.

Thank you ~ Parish Council.

Newsletter & Office Closure

This is the last newsletter for 2023. The parish office will be closed from **Monday 25 December to Friday 19 January 2024**. Please note that the hall will not be available for bookings during this period.

Office reopens on **Monday 22 January 2024**.

Thank You!

The Parish office wishes to thank each and everyone of you for your support and generosity throughout 2023. Enjoy the holidays with friends & family. Be safe and we look forward to seeing you all in 2024! God Bless.



Christmas & New Year's Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve

9.00am / 10.30am /
6.30pm Carols ~ 7.00pm Family Mass
11.30pm Carols ~ 12.00am Midnight
Mass

Christmas Day

9.00 am & 10.30am



The Holy Innocents

9.30am & 6.30pm

New Year's Eve

9.00am / 10.30am / 5.00pm / 10.30pm

New Year's Day

9.00am



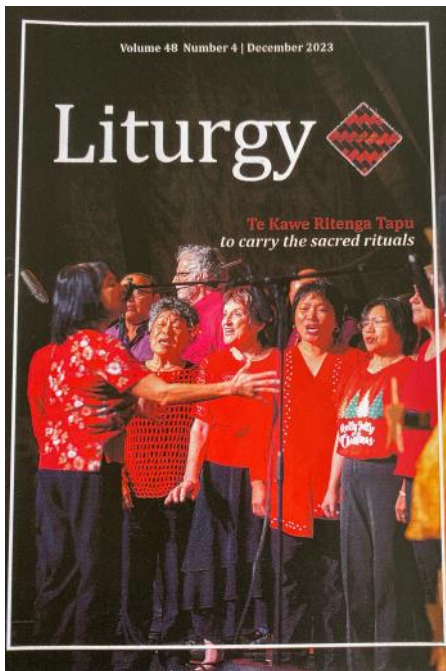
Mass Times

Monday: 9am
Tues/Wed/Thurs 6.30pm
Wed: Novena 6pm
Friday: 9am
First Friday: 6.30pm
Saturday: 5pm Vigil
Sunday: 9am, 10.30am, 5pm

**Reconciliation by appointment.
Please contact the parish office.**

Please pray for our sick parishioners:

Violet Furtado, Yvonne Sommers, Mary Holmes, Kanesi Masae, Ethan Peter Lelo, Rosalen Ahearn, Saulius David Balsys, Kalameli Tauta, Joan Unkovich, Pauline Caffell, Louisa Baptist, Robert Shearman, Siufaga Maileoi Lili, Lee Dunn, Alex Soniega, Barbara Lynch, Fata Peter & Lenora Fuiava, Priscilla Fernandes, Nellie Lemusu-Kea, Aaron Ablan, Joy Rapcsak, Gerard Hoover.



Parish Music Group ~ Front Cover

Liturgy Mag Dec 2023



If you wish to place a notice in our parish newsletter, please email the parish office by Wednesday.

Last Week's Collection:

House - \$ 1,048.50

Parish - \$ 1,459.60

Thank you for your generosity.

Readings For The Upcoming Week

Mon 25 Dec: The Nativity of the Lord

Tue 26 Dec: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59

Mt 10:17-22 Ps 30:3-4,6,8,16-17

Wed 27 Dec: 1 Jn 1:1-4

Jn 20:2-8 Ps 96:1-2, 5-6, 11-12

Thu 28 Dec: 1 Jn 1:5 - 2:2

Mt 2:13-18 Ps 123:2-5, 7-8

Fri 29 Dec: 1 Jn 2:3-11

Lk 2:22-35 Ps 95:1-3, 5-6

Sat 30 Dec: 1 Jn 2:12-17

Lk 2:36-40 Ps 95:7-10

Sun 31 Dec: Gen 15:1-6, 21:1-3

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

Ps 104:1-6, 8-9

Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

The Birth That Changed The World



The Lord our God saw fit to announce what was unquestionably the greatest event in history to a small band of shepherds on the hillsides around Bethlehem where many of their sheep were destined to be offered in sacrifice. And they were tending their flocks by night because December was lambing season. So, their anticipation of the arrival of lambs destined for sacrifice on the altar of the temple of Jerusalem, was superseded by the announcement by the angels of the birth of the Saviour of humankind, the Lamb of God.

The haste of the shepherds in rushing to witness the glorious event testifies to their wonder and joy, just as the haste with which Mary had journeyed to visit Elizabeth testified to her elevated state of mind. The shepherds carried the message of faith, hope and love to the surrounding countryside with great fervour.

Everything we say and do should reflect the Light of Christ so that we, like the shepherds, carry the Good News wherever we go.

**St Mark's Catholic Mission Parish Pakuranga
Advent Reflection Guide 2023**

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