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 www.zimabtc.com.au
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ST. MARGARET MARY'S PARISH MERRYLANDS

 Our Parish is under the Pastoral Care of the Order of St Paul the First Hermit (known as the Pauline Fathers) who for more than 630 years are renowned Custodians of the Miraculous Icon of Our Lady of Jasna Gora, Poland.

Parish Priest
 Fr. Wojciech Sliwa
Assistant Priest
 Fr. Jeremy Santoso
Ordo Sancti Pauli Primi Eremitae

PARISH OFFICE:
 1-5 Chetwynd Rd, Merrylands NSW 2160
 Postal Address: PO Box 757, Merrylands.
Tuesday - Friday: 9:30am - 3:30pm
Phone: 9637 2526 9637 2014
Fax: 9637 2442
Email: parish@stmm.org.au
Website: stmm.org.au

PARISH GROUPS CO-ORDINATORS:

Parish Pastoral Council:
 ♦ **Chair:** Fr. Wojciech Sliwa & Belinda Tippetts
 ♦ **Secretary:** Rita Jacobson
 parishcouncil@stmm.org.au

Finance Committee:
 ♦ **Chair:** Tony Bougoide
 ♦ **Secretary:** Priscilla Newman
 financecommittee@stmm.org.au

Fundraising Committee:
 ♦ Mike Jacobson - 0438 590 136

Sacraments:
 ♦ Monique Kairouz
 sacraments@stmm.org.au

Acolytes / RCIA
 ♦ Peter Carroll - 0414 070 082

Safeguarding Officer:
 ♦ Alexandra Azzi
 safeguarding@stmm.org.au

Catechists:
 ♦ Sonia Abi-Rached

Music:
 ♦ Kerry van der Linden

Readers:
 ♦ Suzanne Mifsud
 lectors@stmm.org.au

Scripture Study:
 ♦ Gwen D'Silva

YOUTH GROUP:
 ♦ Fr. Jeremy Santoso
Pauline Junior/Teen: Rita Elbayeh/Rita Jacobson

Legion of Mary:
 ♦ Merwyn D'Souza - 0478 109 569

Playgroup:
 ♦ Kathy-lynn Azzi - 0416 225 815

Third Sunday of Advent
JOY
 Year B
 17 December 2023
 Rejoice Sunday

<u>WEEKEND MASSES:</u>		<u>WEEKDAY MASSES:</u>	
Saturday:	6:00pm Vigil	Monday:	9:15am
Sunday:	7:30am	Tuesday:	9:00am & 7:00pm
	9:00am	Wednesday:	9:00am & 7:00pm
	10:30am	Thursday:	9:00am
	6:00pm	Friday:	9:00am & 7:00pm
		Saturday:	8:30am

PRAYER: HOLY FATHER-POPE FRANCIS

MONTHLY INTENTION: DECEMBER

For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

FIRST FRIDAY:

11:00am: Maltese Mass
 06:30pm: Confession
 07:00pm: Holy Mass, Stations of the Cross followed by Exposition

ADORATION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT:

Thursdays-Eucharistic Adoration: 9:30am - 2:30pm
4th Sunday of the month: 1:00pm - 1:30pm - Divine Mercy Devotions
1st Friday of the month: approx. 8:30pm - midnight

VESPER- SUNDAY EVENINGS 5:15pm - 5:45pm

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) SESSIONS- SUNDAY MORNINGS

9:00am Mass followed by session 10:00am - 11:00am

DEVOTIONS:

- ♦ **Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Succour)**
Wednesday: after morning Mass
Wednesday: 6:00pm before 7:00pm Mass (Marian Movement Cenacle)
- ♦ **Veneration of the Holy Face of Jesus:**
Tuesday: 7:30pm - 8:30pm
- ♦ **Divine Mercy Devotions**
4th Sunday of the month: 1:00pm - 3:00pm, 3:00pm - Holy Mass

BAPTISMS: 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month

RECONCILIATION: **Tues - Fri** 8:30 - 8:55am
Sat 8:30am - 9:30am and 4:30pm - 5:30pm

MARRIAGES: By appointment only (6 months required)

SICK CALLS: 9637 2526 - option 3 - any time





Please remember to
switch off your mobile phone

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. ‘I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. ‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.’

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) *My soul rejoices in my God.*

- My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. (R.)
- The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. (R.)
- He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 1:6-8. 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, ‘I am not the Christ.’ ‘Well then,’ they asked, ‘are you Elijah?’ ‘I am not,’ he said. ‘Are you the Prophet?’ He answered, ‘No. So they said to him,

‘Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?’ So John said, ‘I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.’ Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, ‘Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?’ John replied, ‘I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal -strap.’ This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

MEDITATION

John the Baptist bridges the Old and New Testaments. He is the last of the Old Testament prophets who points the way to the Messiah. He is the first of the New Testament witnesses and martyrs. He is the herald who prepares the way for Jesus and who announces his mission to the people: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world! John saw from a distance what the Messiah would come to accomplish - our redemption from slavery to sin and our adoption as sons and daughters of God, our heavenly Father. Do you recognize who you are in Christ? The Lord Jesus has come to restore us to friendship with God and he has made us citizens of heaven - his everlasting kingdom of peace and justice.



Lord Jesus, make me a herald of your word of truth and grace. Help me to be a faithful witness of the joy of the Gospel and to point others to you as John did through his testimony.

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS
24 DECEMBER 2023
Fourth Sunday of ADVENT (Year A)

2Sam 7:1 - 5;8 - 12,14,16; Rom 16:25 - 27; Lk 1:26 - 38

SPEAK TO ME

L
O
R
D

OUR
PARISH
PRAYER

Father, pour out Your Spirit upon the people of this parish so that inspired by Your word, nourished at Your table and graced by Your empowering love, our lives may be devoted to the service of our brothers and sisters and the building up of Your Kingdom. May our parish community truly be, for this place and time, the Body of Christ Your Son, through whom we make this prayer. Amen

CHRISTMAS MASS 2023

Sunday - 24 December
6:00pm - Family Mass
(children are welcome to dress as shepherds, angels or kings)
11:00pm - Christmas Carols
followed by midnight Mass

Monday - 25 December
12:00am - Midnight Mass
7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am
NO Evening Mass

Simbang Gabi
The devotional nine-day series of Masses in anticipation of Christmas

Dawn Mass at 5:00am
St. Margaret Mary’s Parish
16 - 24 December 2023

Simbang Gabi is a Filipino Christmas tradition. It is a series of nine dawn masses on the days leading to Christmas. It begins on 16 December & ends on 24 December. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

Children’s Liturgy
of the Word

AT ST. MARGARET MARY’S PARISH
Every 3rd Sunday of the Month, (17 December 2023) there will be a Children’s Liturgy during the 10:30am Mass.
All children are welcome to attend.

WEEKLY
CHILDREN’S BULLETINS

All children are encouraged to take a copy of The Kid’s Bulletin. *(on the table outside the Church).*
A great resource to educate our Catholic kids to learn about their faith every week.

Parish Movie Night
Thursday - 21 December 2023

Please come join us in the Pastoral Center to watch a movie *(The Star)* at 6pm to celebrate the Grand opening of our new TV and sound system. Popcorns & poppers will be provided to the kids.
Please bring a pillow or mat to make yourself comfortable and enjoy!




FEAST DAYS

26 December - Tuesday
*** St Stephen, the first martyr**

27 December - Wednesday
*** St John, apostle, evangelist (Blessing of Wine)**

28 December - Thursday
*** The Holy Innocents, martyrs**

31 December - Sunday
*** The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**




Adoration
of the
Blessed Sacrament

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
THURSDAYS 9:30am to 2:30pm

The Lord invites us to take some time out of our busy lives to spend some time with Him in quiet adoration, prayer and reflection. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed after morning Mass every Thursday until 2:30pm. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

SCRIPTURE STUDY


You are invited to experience the joy of *“the Word of God”* in a weekly discussion meeting on Thursdays at 7pm at St. Margaret Mary’s Pastoral Centre.
For further queries, contact Gwen on 9632 9097



RCIA PROGRAM

RCIA is an ongoing Apostolate in this Parish. The RCIA Apostolate consists of a dedicated team of volunteers who have received instructions to guide anyone who wishes to join the Catholic Church through weekly preparations classes and regular Mass attendance.

If you know of anyone who wishes to enter the Catholic Faith, who has been baptised in another Faith or unbaptised and wishes to complete the Sacraments of Initiation in the Catholic Church; Please see our Priests after Mass during the weekends or contact the RCIA Coordinator Peter Carroll on 0414 070 082 or the Parish Office.



STMM PIETY SHOP

We request our Parishioners to support our Parish Piety Corner Shop with their generous purchase.
A variety of Advent & Christmas decorations and Piety Shop gift cards are available for purchase.
GOD’S WORD 2024 for a special price of \$22 and **Christmas Devotional Candles** for \$12 (limited stock available)
Purchases may be done from the Parish Office as well during working hours.



PRAYER REQUESTS

◆ Reuben Dias
◆ Shelly Barnes
◆ Robbie Barnes
◆ Therese Nicolas
◆ Hermie Alves
◆ Mary Callagja

◆ Rita Figredo
◆ Chau Tran Chon Chau Maria
◆ Salam Awkar
◆ Leila Rouhana
◆ Charles Zammit
◆ David O’Connor

◆ Marcelina Domingo
◆ Jacqueline Parr
◆ Cheryl Fortini
◆ Margaret Falzon




SUNDAY COLLECTIONS

First Collection (Priests)
Account: Order of St. Paul The First Hermit Merrylands
BSB: 062 202 Account Number: 10869892

Second Collection (Parish)
Account: Merrylands Catholic Church
BSB: 067 950 Account Number: 00438

Last weekend First Collection was **\$2319.00**
Last weekend Second Collection was **\$3486.80**
Thank you for your continued support and generosity. God bless.



VOICES NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS

We are seeking **Children & Adults** to join the Choir and be part of our festive celebration for the Christmas Vigil Mass at 6pm on 24 December 2023. Please contact Kerry at k.dainer1@gmail.com



Christmas Celebration

Let’s celebrate the true meaning of Christmas!
Sunday, 17 December 2023
after the 6pm Vigil Mass
at St Margaret Mary’s school playgrounds

* Free admission (donations welcome)
* Free sausage sizzle, soft drinks, bottled water, tea & coffee (donations welcome)
* 5 Raffle draws (tickets \$2 each, on sale until 7:30pm at the event)
* Christmas traditions from other lands
* Your favourite Christmas carols
* Special visit by Santa, with treats for the youngsters
* Message from the Missionaries of Charity
* Playground equipment (primary school children only)



Child SAFETY

For safety and safeguarding reasons, we kindly request all parents / carers to ensure to accompany their children to the toilets and the play area in the school premises at all times. **Thank you for your cooperation.**

MASS TIMES 01 – 31 JANUARY 2024

◆ **09:15 am - Monday**
◆ **09:00 am - Tuesday to Friday (NO Evening Weekday Masses)**
◆ **08:30 am - Saturday**
◆ **06:00 pm - Saturday (Vigil)**
◆ **07:30 am, 09:00am, 10:30am - Sunday**
◆ **06:00 pm - Sunday**

ALL DEVOTIONS, ADORATIONS & EVENING MASSES WILL RESUME ON 1st FEBRUARY 2024

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Our Parish office will be closed from **Tuesday, 26 December 2023** to **Monday, 08 January 2024** to celebrate the season of Christmas.

Happy holidays!

Reopens - Tuesday, 09 January 2024

