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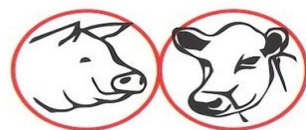
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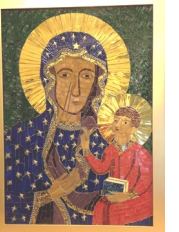


Our Parish is under the Pastoral Care of the Order of St Paul the First Hermit (known as the Pauline Fathers) who for more than 630 years are renowned Custodians of the Miraculous Icon of Our Lady of Jasna Gora, Poland.



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



The Holy Family

OF JESUS, MARY
AND JOSEPH
Year B

31 December 2023

WEEKEND MASSES:

Saturday: 6:00pm Vigil

Sunday: 7:30am

9:00am

10:30am

6:00pm

WEEKDAY MASSES:

Monday: 9:15am

Tuesday: 9:00am & 7:00pm

Wednesday: 9:00am & 7:00pm

Thursday: 9:00am

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

VESPERS- 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



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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

FIRST READING

Genesis 15:1-6. 21:1-3

A reading from the book of Genesis

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, ‘Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great’. ‘My Lord’, Abram replied, ‘what do you intend to give me? I go childless...’Then Abram said, ‘See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.’ And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, ‘He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be one of your own flesh and blood.’ Then taking him outside he said, ‘Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants,’ he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified. The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) *The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.*

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works! (R.)
2. Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face. (R.)
3. Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose. (R.)
4. He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac. (R.)

SECOND READING

Hebrews 11:8. 11-12. 17-19

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore. It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel’s comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said: ‘Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.’As the child’s father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, ‘You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.’ There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem. When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God’s favour was with him.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.



MEDITATION

Do you know the favor of the Lord? After Jesus' birth, Mary fulfills the Jewish right of purification after childbirth. Since she could not afford the customary offering of a lamb, she gives instead two pigeons as an offering of the poor. This rite, along with circumcision and the redemption of the first-born point to the fact that children are gifts from God. Jesus was born in an ordinary home where there were no luxuries. Like all godly parents, Mary and Joseph raised their son in the fear and wisdom of God. He, in turn, was obedient to them and grew in wisdom and grace. The Lord's favor is with those who listen to his word with trust and obedience. Do you know the joy of submission to God? And do you seek to pass on the faith and to help the young grow in wisdom and maturity? Is there anything holding you back from giving God your unqualified trust and submission to his will for your life? Allow the Lord Jesus to flood your heart with his peace, joy, and love. And offer to God everything you have and desire - your life, family, friends, health, honor, wealth, and future. If you seek his kingdom first he will give you everything you need to know, love, and serve him now and enjoy him forever. *Lord Jesus, you are my hope and my life. May I never cease to place all my trust in you. Fill me with the joy and strength of the Holy Spirit that I may boldly point others to your saving presence and words of eternal life.*

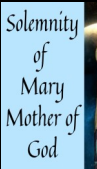
NEXT WEEK’S READINGS
07 JANUARY 2024
The Epiphany of the Lord (Year B)
Is 60:1 - 6; Eph 3:2 - 3, 5 - 6; Mt 2:1 - 12



OUR PARISH PRAYER



Father, through the intercession of St. Margaret Mary, 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.



Monday 1st January 2024
MASSES - 9:15AM & 7:00PM

The Church puts the feast of this solemnity on the first day of the New Year to emphasize the importance of Mary’s role in the life of Christ and of the Church.

We commemorate the various saints on different days of the year, but Mary is the most prominent of them all. She has a special role and mission given to her by God. As Mother of our Redeemer and of the redeemed, she reigns as Queen at the side of Christ the King.



ON 05 JANUARY 2024 AT 7:00PM
(ALLIANCE OF THE TWO HEARTS)

Please join us in responding to 'Our Blessed Mother's Appeal for Prayer & Reparation for World Peace & the Sanctity of Family Life'. Followed by Adoration, Scriptural Rosaries & Nine Office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, until Midnight.
"IN THE END, MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL TRIUMPH"

MEN’S ROSARY CRUSADE
(SATURDAY - 06 JANUARY 2024)

St Margaret Mary's parish has joined the Men's Rosary Crusade! For several years, Catholic men from around the world have been gathering outside churches on the first Saturday of each month to pray the five Joyful Mysteries of The Holy Rosary.

On Saturday, 06 January, at 10:00am, our men are invited to participate in this powerful prayer in our church forecourt – rain, hail or shine! - in a public demonstration of devotion to Our Blessed Mother. Afterwards there'll be fellowship and morning tea in the Pastoral Centre, so please bring a plate to share.



THE EPIPHANY BLESSING
20 C + M + B 24

(Marking Homes with Blessed Chalk for the New Year)

On Sunday, 07 January 2024, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. We rejoice that the light of Christ has come into our world.

Today, we invite families to take home a piece of this chalk to mark the front door of your homes as a blessing for the New Year.

Kindly ensure one pack per family is taken. Thank



FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
Monday 8th January 2024
MASSES - 9:15AM & 7:00PM

The Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This brings to an end the season of Christmas. The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or Epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan; when God his father revealed His love and favour for his Son – Jesus Christ our Lord. During the Mass there will be a special Blessing of Water.

Please bring your own bottle of water to be blessed during the Mass.



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

PRAYER REQUESTS

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| ◆ Reuben Dias | ◆ Rita Figredo | ◆ Marcelina Domingo |
| ◆ Shelly Barnes | ◆ Chau Tran Chon Chau Maria | ◆ Jacqueline Parr |
| ◆ Robbie Barnes | ◆ Salam Awkar | ◆ Cheryl Fortini |
| ◆ Therese Nicolas | ◆ Leila Rouhana | ◆ Margaret Falzon |
| ◆ Hermie Alves | ◆ Charles Zammit | |
| ◆ Mary Callagja | ◆ David O'Connor | |



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

Thank you for your continued support and generosity. God bless.



SOLEMNITY OF ST. PAUL
THE FIRST HERMIT
MONDAY - 15 JANUARY 2024

To prepare for this Solemnity, the Novena to St. Paul will be recited after morning Mass commencing on **Saturday, 06 January** & concluding on **Sunday, 14 January 2024**. We ask all our Parishioners to pray for all the Priests, brothers & seminarians in the order of St Paul the First Hermit and for an increase in vocations to the order.

Invocations to St. Paul the First Hermit

Saint Paul, Patriarch of our Order, *Pray for us.*
Saint Paul, faithful follower of Christ
Saint Paul, man of strong and lively faith,
Saint Paul, lover of solitude,
Saint Paul, persevering in prayer and penance,
Saint Paul, patient in bearing the difficulties of the eremitical life,
Saint Paul, embracing with your devoted love the Church of Christ and the whole mankind,
Saint Paul, model of perseverance in your chosen way of life,
Saint Paul, prepared to meet God at the time of death, That we may be faithful to our monastic vocation,

Intercede to God for us

That through the observance of our religious vows, we may become more Christ-like, That we may fulfil Christ's command to love all men, That we may pray well and unceasingly, That we may participate in the saving love of Christ through a penitential life, That we may not succumb to the temptation of mediocrity, That we may prudently profit from the fruits of the land and from technical and cultural achievements; That we may fearlessly strive to attain that love exemplified in the Gospel, That we may feel responsible for our Order and its apostolic works, That we may persevere in our Order until death, Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Hermits and Patroness of our Order,

We beg you Lord, hear us!

Through the merits of all the Saints of our Order,
That you may graciously grant our monastic community an increase in number and an enrichment of virtues, That you may generously provide graces for our families, confraters and benefactors,
That you may show your mercy to our brothers, who have left our community, That you may remedy the failures and defects of our love, That you may grant the grace of conversion to the enemies of the Church, That you may grant eternal happiness to our deceased brothers, parents, relatives, confraters and benefactors.

L. Pray for us St. Paul the First Hermit,

All That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

L: Let us pray:

O God, who willed that St. Paul, our Father, reach a high degree of sanctity through a life of solitude in the desert, grant that, through this intercession, we who are striving to develop in ourselves a spirit of prayer and service, may come ever closer to you in love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Our Parish office will be closed until **Monday, 08 January 2024** to celebrate the season of Christmas.

Reopens - Tuesday, 09 January 2024

