

OUR LADY OF THE WAY PARISH, EMU PLAINS

What does the Lord require of you but to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8



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Saturday, 24th December 2022 **CHRISTMAS VIGIL**

Welcome to the celebration of the mass.

Christmas Eve readings:

Entrance Antiphon Cf. Ex 16:6-7

Today you will know that the Lord will come, and he will save us, and in the morning you will see his glory.

First Reading Is 62:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord takes delight in you.

About Zion I will not be silent, about Jerusalem I will not grow weary, until her integrity shines out like the dawn and her salvation flames like a torch. The nations then will see your integrity, all the kings your glory, and you will be called by a new name, one which the mouth of the Lord will confer. You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the Lord, a princely diadem in the hand of your God; no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken', nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be called 'My Delight' and your land 'The Wedded'; for the Lord takes delight in you and your land will have its wedding. Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the one who built you wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you.

Responsorial Psalm.

Ps 88:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 R. see v.2

(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)
2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face, who find their joy every day in your name, who make your justice the source of their bliss. (R.)
3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me." I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure.' (R.)

Second Reading Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak: 'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out. 'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth
will be destroyed:
the Saviour of the world will be our king.

Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 1:1-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew

A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David.

A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of
David, son of Abraham:
Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob was the father of Judah and his
brothers, Judah was the father
of Perez and Zerah, Tamar being their
mother, Perez was the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram, Ram was the
father of Amminadab, Amminadab the
father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father
of Salmon, Salmon was the father
of Boaz, Rahab being his mother,
Boaz was the father of Obed, Ruth being
his mother, Obed was the father of Jesse;
and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose
mother had been Uriah's wife,
Solomon was the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Joram,
Joram the father of Azariah,
Azariah was the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah;
and Josiah was the father
of Jechoniah and his brothers.
Then the deportation to Babylon took
place.

After the deportation to Babylon:
Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud,
Abiud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
Azor was the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Achim,
Achim the father of Eliud,
Eliud was the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob;
and Jacob was the father of Joseph the
husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus who
is called Christ.

The sum of generations is therefore: fourteen
from Abraham to David; fourteen from David
to the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen
from the Babylonian deportation to Christ.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His
mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but
before they came to live together she was
found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.
Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour
and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to
divorce her informally. He had made up his
mind to do this when the angel of the Lord
appeared to him in a dream and said,
'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take
Mary home as your wife, because she has
conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit.
She will give birth to a son and you must
name him Jesus, because he is the one who
is to save his people from their sins.' Now all
this took place to fulfil the words spoken by
the Lord through the prophet: The Virgin will
conceive and give birth to a Son and they will
call him Emmanuel, a name which means
'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he
did what the angel of the Lord told him to do:
he took his wife to his home and, though he
had not had intercourse with her, she gave
birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

Communion Antiphon. Cf. Is 40:5

The glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all flesh will see the salvation of our
God.

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PARISH CHRISTMAS WALL HANGING:

Our Christmas wall hanging was created in December 1986 by parishioners Margaret Merrick, Carol Burke and Lorraine Stratton. It was hung up in time for the last school mass of that year. Margaret designed the banner and it is made of taffeta fabric. All three ladies cut out the fabric and Carol joined all the pieces together on her sewing machine, which took many hours. Lorraine incorporated some patchwork and applique techniques to give the banner a three-dimensional appearance. The banner took six weeks to complete and was featured in the Penrith Press at the time.



Parish Notices:

Office Hours:

The Parish Office will be closed from Tuesday 27th December 2022 until Tuesday 10th January 2023. Please visit www.parracatholic.org to keep updated on what is happening in the Diocese. In an emergency, call 4735 1041.

New Year Week Masses:

Monday 2nd Mass: 8.30am
 Tuesday 3rd : No Mass
 Wednesday 4th: Communion Service 9.00am
 Thursday 5th: Communion Service 9.00am
 Friday 6th: Anointing Mass 9.00am,
 Saturday 7th: Mass 6.00pm.
 Please note that Mass times will remain the same between Tuesday 27th December, 2022 and Sunday 1st January, 2023.

The **Epiphany Pilgrimage and Fiesta** will commence on Monday 2nd January with a Commissioning Mass at OLOW at 8.30am. All are welcome to attend Mass. If you would like to write a prayer intention, please place it into the orange box labelled 'Epiphany Pilgrimage' in the Church foyer. These prayers will be offered to God throughout the Pilgrimage.



Let us pray: We pray for those recently deceased, and for Frank Barglik whose anniversary is at this time. We pray that their families find comfort in the fact that they are safely in the arms of their loving Lord.

We also pray for all our brothers and sisters in our community who are unwell, especially, Henry O'Malley, Elisabeth Robens, Marion Betker, Andrew Keenan, and Catherine Allabyrne. If you know someone who needs prayers, please contact the parish office on 4735 1041 and we will add them to our prayer list.

VINNIES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS - THANK YOU.

Through the generosity of parishioners and the OLOW and PENOLA school communities, Vinnies was able to distribute over \$5000 to individuals and families this year. Thank you and Merry Christmas. Emu Plains Vinnies Conference.

Columban Art Calendars are available in the church foyer for \$10 each. Please place the money in the envelopes labelled 'Columban Calendar' and drop them in the sacristy

Hospitality Notice: In 2023, we would like to resume our hospitality after weekend Mass. If you are able to assist in any way, please contact the Parish Office on 4735 1041.

Sacramental news: Reconciliation 2023

The sacrament of Reconciliation will be held in term 1 next year, for children who will be in year 4 and above in 2023. If you would like your child to make this sacrament, please contact me on 47351041 or emuplains@parracatholic.org. Blessings, Cate.

Readers/ Commentators roster:

Dates:	6.00pm	8.00am	9.30am
24/25 December CHRISTMAS SERVICES	John Cowen Mathew Topp Pat Edwards Barbara Ryan JS: Evie Milroy JS: Matthew Hamilton C: Phillip Youngman R: Bellinda Henderson	8.00pm Stevenie Harman JS: N/A C: TBA R: Trish Ryan	John Cowen Connie Reid Denise Robens JS: Stevenie Harman C: Marianne Castor R: Trish Boyle
31 December / 1 January	Stevenie Harman Anne Deutscher JS: N/A C Louise Goderie R: Marie McLennan	Stevenie Harman Pat Edwards JS: N/A C: Maria Sirotti R: Jessica Topp	John Cowen David Green Connie Reid Heather Barlow (Visit only) JS: N/A C Lisa Samojlowicz R: Courtney Hamilton

Parish Bank Details:

If you would like to support our priest and church financially through **online banking:**
 Name: Emu Plains Catholic Church
 BSB: 067950
 Account Number: 00000289

Parish Information

Parish office open Tuesday to Friday from 9:30am to 3pm. (ph: 4735 1041)

Parish priest: Fr Michael G. Gathuku
Deacon: George Bryan
Parish Office Administrator: Michele Norbury
Sacramental Co-ordinator: Cate Kensey
Baptism Coordinator: Jo Hamilton

Our Lady of the Way principal:
Donna McFadzean (ph: 4777 7200)
Penola Catholic college principal:
Jim Fanning (ph: 4728 8100)
St Vincent de Paul Contact Centre:
For assistance call 1800 606 724.

Weekend mass times:

Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 8am, 9:30am

Weekday masses:

Tuesday 6pm;
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 9am.
Adoration of Blessed Sacrament till 10am
Thursday after mass.
First Fridays of the month – healing mass.

Reconciliation: Saturday 5pm.

Sacraments: baptisms and weddings by appointment. Please contact the parish office (emuplains@parracatholic.org) for information on reconciliation, communion and confirmation.

Christmas message 2023

Dear Parishioners,

Merry Christmas to you, your family, and to all your loved ones May the peace of God and the joy of the season illumine your heart and lead you to the heart of God, who has chosen to become one of us as Emmanuel- God with us. God who comes to our sorrows and brokenness. Christmas this year once again comes with its own challenges for many of us. The world is changing thus there are so many fears to confront, the COVID-19 pandemic, influenzas, looming recession, World-wide wars, and tensions among other adversities of life. Yet the promise of God remains sure and steadfast.

The familiar scripture passage of the Christmas story states “Do not be afraid” fear not. Like Mary, Joseph, the shepherd as well as Zachariah we also need re-assurance to hear those words “Do not be afraid”, have courage, and hope things are going to be better. In the midst of all our current challenges and concerns, the love of God the Father is made manifest to us in the wonderful gift of His son, Jesus.

It is my prayer that each of you would find opportunities to reflect on your faith journey, reflect on your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Whatever it is that our hearts and soul desires, whether we realize it or not, our ultimate desire is Jesus himself. For this reason, we are filled with joy and consolation at Christmas to know that all we hoped for has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

If you are returning to Church today from a long absence, or even a short one, let the joy of Christmas fill you. Let the light of Christ enter your heart so that you will grow and become a beacon of hope to others, I welcome you, we journey together. My sincere thanks to all who have been faithful parishioners, for all you do even through the tough times. Thank you for supporting our lovely Parish, you have been truly witnesses of God’s Love. Your commitments and contributions have made the Parish continue running, owing your spiritual and material support, we are where we are.

May mercy be born anew in the deep places of your heart, bringing you home to where you truly belong within the loving kindness of God our creator.

Every blessing for this Christmas season and for all your endeavors for 2023.

Fr Michael.