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**CATHOLIC CHURCH - DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG**

**St. THOMAS MORE PARISH, RUSE**  
 WELCOMES YOU  
 Parish Priest: Fr Michael Healy

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH  
 27<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020

**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.  
**(R.) 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.  
**(R.) Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
 In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets; now he speaks to us though his Son.

**GOSPEL READING -**

**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.  
**(R.) Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

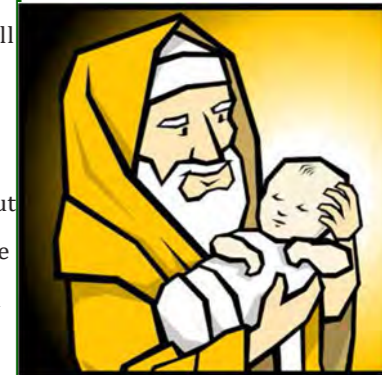
Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

**REFLECTION - by Fr Michael Tate.**

In today's Gospel, Mary, having given birth, is regarded as ritually unclean. She could not take part in public worship until she was 'purified'. This involved offering up a couple of pigeons which she and Joseph had to buy. No wonder that, at the Cleansing of the Temple, Jesus shatters the cages in which the pigeons were kept! He was angry with a Temple system which saw Mary that way, which thought of all women giving birth that way. Indeed, his whole ministry is full of instances when women breach religious and cultural taboos in his presence, because of his presence.

This Feast of the Holy Family gives us the opportunity to thank God for our mothers who, like Mary, helped fulfil God's plan for humankind by birthing us into the world. We could pause for a moment to pray that the Church changes rules and structures which confine women in cages built from ideologies foreign to the Gospel, lest those rules become swords which pierce Mary's soul.

[mtate@bigpond.com](mailto:mtate@bigpond.com)



*'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'* Luke 2:34-35.



**MASS TIMES**

**TUESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER**  
 9.30am. - Mass.

**WEDNESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER**  
 9.30am. - Mass.

**THURSDAY 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER**  
 9.30am. - Mass.

**2021**  
**FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY**  
**MARY, the HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**  
 9.30am. - Mass.

**SATURDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY**  
**Saturday Vigil for**  
**The EPIPHANY of the LORD**  
 6.00pm. - Mass.

**SUNDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> JANUARY**  
**The EPIPHANY of the LORD**  
 9.00am. - Mass.

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH DIRECTORY**



43 Acacia Avenue, Ruse NSW 2560  
 P. O. Box 200N Campbelltown North 2560

PARISH PRIEST  
**Fr Michael Healy**  
 PARISH OFFICE  
**Secretary: Mrs Carmel Munro**  
**(TUES-FRI) 9.00am - 3.30pm**  
 Telephone: 46 282967  
 Email: [ruse@dow.org.au](mailto:ruse@dow.org.au)  
 Website: [www.stmruse.org.au](http://www.stmruse.org.au)  
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**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

*Secretary: Mrs Carmel Munro*  
**TUESDAY - FRIDAY**  
**9.00am - 3.30pm**

Parish ☎: 4628 2967  
 Email: [ruse@dow.org.au](mailto:ruse@dow.org.au)  
 School ☎: 4625 6561

**STEWARDSHIP**

**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - YEAR B**

*"Whatever you do," says St. Paul to the Colossians, "... do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through Him."*

*And so it is that we offer our gifts in the Eucharist "through Him, with Him, and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit."*

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS**

**3<sup>rd</sup> JANUARY 2021**  
**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - YEAR B**

**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 60:1-6.**

*The glory of the Lord shines upon you.*

**Second Reading:**  
**Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6.**

*The revelation means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.*

**Gospel Reading:**  
**Matthew 2:1-12.**

*We have come from the East to worship the king.*

**HUMOUR CORNER**

**NOW THAT WE'RE MARRIED .....**

Linda decided to tie the knot with her long time boyfriend, Roy.

One evening, after the honeymoon, Linda was was organizing her law books. Her husband was standing nearby watching her. After a long period of silence he finally speaks: "Linda, I've been thinking, now that we're married maybe it's time you quit lawyering. You spend so much time in the courtroom. You could probably get a good price for your books."

Linda gets this horrified look on her face.

Roy says, "Darling, what's wrong?"

"For a minute there you were beginning to sound like my ex-husband."

"Ex-husband!" he shouts, chagrined. "I didn't know you were married before!!"

"I wasn't." replied Linda

Mary, Mother of God



Mary, Mother of God.

This day has been celebrated as part of the Octave (eight days) of Christmas since around the sixth century.

It is a feast which talks about both Jesus and Mary. It is a celebration of the fact that Jesus was truly God and truly human.

Because this is true of Jesus, it is also true that Mary is the "God-Bearer" - the Mother of God.

**THE HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**



27<sup>th</sup> December 2020

**PARISH MISSION STATEMENT**

*"St Thomas More Parish, Ruse, is a Christ-centred Catholic Community that is committed to living Gospel Values, united by faith as we bring God's Kingdom to life. Our Mission is to welcome all, and respect and support each other in our spiritual journey. We encourage the gifts of people in building our community.*

*"Anymore who welcomes you, welcomes me and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me."*

**Matthew 10:40**

**DO YOU WISH TO ATTEND A WEEKEND MASS?**

**You cannot just turn up for Mass as previously!! YOU HAVE TO REGISTER WITH THE PARISH OFFICE BY THE FRIDAY (12noon) BEFORE THE WEEKEND MASSES.**

**We are unable to accommodate more than 90 in our Church, and it will not be possible to admit parishioners who have not pre-registered.**

Please arrive early for Mass (at least 15 minutes beforehand). Church doors are locked as Mass begins, No collections are taken up at Mass. Usual Parish Collection donations can be placed in the baskets provided on the table at the Church entrance door. If you are elderly (70 years +) or not feeling well, the ruling states that, (for your own safety) YOU MUST STAY AT HOME.

When entering the Church for Mass, your hands will be sanitized and your temperature taken. (This is obligatory) then a Monitor will show you to a seat, where Social distancing (4 sq meters) must be strictly observed, (except for people of the same house-hold). Holy Communion (in a single file) must be Received in the hand Nobody will be permitted to socially assemble in the courtyard before, during and after Mass.

**FATHER MICHAEL'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE:**

*A heartfelt THANK YOU to all those who gave me cards and gifts for Christmas. I am deeply touched by your generosity. Thank you to all who have worked for and been of service to our Parish in so many, many ways over the past year.*

*Your sense of responsibility, regular service, generosity, support, hospitality, courtesy, integrity and deep faith are most appreciated.*

*May the child Jesus touch all the hearts and the homes of the Parish with peace, happiness and good will throughout the New Year.*

*Also, that the Holy Spirit will lead us into the New Year with confidence to guide us forward in our journey with a sense of hope, peace and confidence.*

*God Bless you all.*

**Fr Michael**

**LOW GLUTEN HOSTS:** If you require *Low-Gluten Hosts* for Holy Communion please see Fr Michael *before* Mass and they will be available for you at Holy Communion.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR: The recently deceased and the Anniversaries that occur at this time:** Maria Ta Thi Tinh (Anniv), Maria Tran Thi Diep (Anniv) Gioan Nguyen Van Thanh (Anniv), Jim McKenzie, Mary McInerney, Ev McInerney, Betty Shearman, Edmund Pew, Steven English, Thomas McVittie, Fr Tony Daly, John Read, Mary Writer, Maree Laming, Bobby Cameron, Jay Jablonskis, Alice Harris, Deborah Rix, Marg Davis, Bernard Hoffmann, Maurya Hutton and all the people who have died in this current pandemic. **May eternal rest grant to them O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace.**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:** For the *many* sick in our Parish Community including: Sue Boyd, Maria Byron, Chris Hayes, Tresora Wyer, Trish Spackman, Katy Carolan, Jan Vaughan, Peter Gabas, Ron Fredericks, Kathleen Sidebottom, Kerry Walker, Jessica Nilsson, David Jabour, Dennis Jabour, Samantha Glover, Shirley Starr, Kenny Wilson, Antonio David, Mary Dolan, Frank Byron, Sean Scanlon, Kellie Brandes, Brian Harris, Francisco Carmona, David Minogue, Daphne Pew, Steve Foreman, Luke Van Der Burg, Briege Glover, Fr John Whitty, Elaine Hoffmann, Betty Berthon, Moria Harris, Betty Byrne, Rosa Santos, Aimiti Seufatu, John Hill, Freda and Wilfred Miranda, Beryl Purcell, Jeannie and George Nicholson, Mary Fredericks and Flynn Griffiths.

**Parishioner's Birthday this coming week:**

26<sup>th</sup>: *Jim Writer*

**Parishioner's Wedding Anniversary this coming week:**

30<sup>th</sup>: *Christine and Russell Goodall (31 years)*

**FOR ANY PARISHIONERS:** who would like to have their birthdays and/or wedding anniversaries included in the Parish Bulletin, please contact the Parish Office: 4628 2967 or email: [ruse@dow.org.au](mailto:ruse@dow.org.au).

**PARISH READER'S: for the next fortnight:**

**Saturday Vigil Mass: 2nd Jan: Carmel & James Munro**

**Sunday 9.00am Mass: 3rd Jan: Tess and Feyise Writer**

**Saturday Vigil Mass: 9th Jan: Annette Read & Carmel Munro**

**Sunday 9.00am Mass: 10th Jan: Julie Writer & Bill George**

**PARISH CHURCH CLEANER'S:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Jan: Group 2: *Cathy & Michael Bye, Kathy Donachie and Barry Daley*

9<sup>th</sup> Jan: Group 3: *Christine Foreman, Christine Charlton, James & Carmel Munro*

*Wishing all our Parish School Children, their families and Teacher's a very happy, restful, Holy and Blessed Christmas and the very best for 2021.*

**THANKYOU:** Parishioner's and Visitor's to our Parish Masses during the week and weekends, who help with the sanitising of their seats plus the many areas that are touched eg: door handles, the Lectern, Sactuary etc. **Also, to the Parishioners who have kindly donated: sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer and face masks.**

**ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY:** "For more than one reason, 2020 has been a difficult year. In the context of higher unemployment, we expect 2021 will also present challenges, not the least of which will be how to run appeals in a Covid environment.

For your St Vincent de Paul Conference, this year hasn't been especially busy and Covid has restricted the things we could do, especially given many of our most experienced members are also in the "high risk" category. Having said this, the last month or so have been quite busy and Christmas, as always, was especially so.

None of what we achieved in 2020 could have occurred without the support of our wonderful Parishioners.

While Covid rules prevented our usual Jesse Tree, the toys received this year were of high quality and will brighten Christmas for many families. We are encouraged in our work by such generous support. We thank you all!

**God bless and Merry Christmas on behalf of your St Vincent de Paul Society Ruse/ Airds conference."**

**ADVERTISING ON THE BACK COVER OF THE PARISH BULLETIN:**

If you would like to advertise your Business on the back cover of the Parish Bulletin please see/contact either Fr Michael, Barry Daley (Chairman Parish Finance Council) or the Parish Office. A business card size is \$275.00 (includes GST) or double business card size is \$550.00 (includes GST) this cost covers advertising for 12 months.

**PARISH COLLECTIONS:** With the current situation it is imperative that you please keep up your weekly contributions, as the Parish runs on a limited budget and without these regular contributions to both the First and Second Collections, we will be in real financial difficulties. For this reason, I strongly encourage parishioners who currently give by envelope to change to Direct Debit or Credit Card contributions (*please read the following notice on how to arrange this or contact the Parish Office*) to ensure the regular income of the parish continues. **I Thank you.** Otherwise, please drop your Planned Giving Envelope Contribution into the secure letter box outside the Church in Acacia Ave, each week. Please don't forget the first collection for the sustenance of the clergy (as we still have to live too!) For this collection please place your donation in a plain envelope and mark it 'FIRST COLLECTION' and drop it in the secure letter box outside the Church in Acacia Ave.

**ELECTRONIC PARISH PLANNED GIVING:** Parishes are urgently needing the ongoing financial support of parishioners more than ever, as their overhead costs will not change. The majority of parishioners give physically to their parish in the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> collection baskets during Mass, we are encouraging all parishioners to join the electronic parish planned giving program. The Diocese has created a page with 2 simple options for parishioners to give to their local parish electronically. You can view the page and forms at the following link: <https://www.dow.org.au/plannedgiving>. If you have any questions about the form, please contact the CDF Wollongong: Trevor Kellam at [trevor.kellam@dow.org.au](mailto:trevor.kellam@dow.org.au)

**Bishop Brian Mascord DD:** I am very proud that as a diocese we have collectively worked to keep our communities safe as we have had to significantly disrupt the liturgical life of our Church and the faithful.

**PRAYER TO THE HOLY FAMILY**

Dear Lord,  
Bless our family. Be so kind as to give us the unity, peace, and mutual love that You found in Your own family in the little town of Nazareth.



*Saint Joseph,*  
pray for the head of our family. Obtain for him the strength, the wisdom, and the prudence he needs to support and direct those under his care.

*Mother Mary,*  
pray for the mother of our family. Help her to be pure and kind, gentle and self-sacrificing. For the more she resembles you, the better will our family be.

*Lord Jesus,*  
bless the children of our family. Help them to be obedient and devoted to their parents. Make them more and more like You. Let them grow, as You did, in wisdom and strength and grace before God and man.

*Holy Family of Nazareth,*  
by your intercession, love, and holy example, make our family and home more and more like Yours, until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with You.

*Amen.*



**Pope Francis 10 Suggestions for the New Year:**

1. "Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God,"
2. "Take care of your family life,"
3. "Take care of your relationships with others,"
4. "Be careful how you speak."
5. "Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness."
6. "Look after your work."
7. "Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings."
8. Watch out for anger or pointing the finger at others."
9. "Watch out "for complaining continually."
10. "Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker."

