



City Pastoral REGION

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

St Benedict's Inner Newcastle Parish: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West; St Joseph's Church, The Junction; St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill; St Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow. **Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West. **Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER 2023

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

Our Clergy

Fr John Lovell
Fr Paul Chackanikunnel
Fr Raphael Madukwe
Deacon Kevin Gadd

Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

25 Farquhar Street, The Junction
PO Box 6, The Junction 2291
P: (02) 4979 1101 F: (02) 4962 4644
E: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au
W: www.newcastlecatholic.org.au
W: www.sacredhearthamilton.org.au

Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)
Monday, Tuesday, Friday

Anne Warren (*Business Manager*)
Tuesday and Thursday

Thelma Dickson (*Administration*)
Monday-Friday

Elul Teclé (*Administration*)

Dr Anne Millard (*Music, Liturgy, Sacraments*)

Other Contacts

Bereavement Team: P: (02) 4979 1252
Mercy Pastoral Team: Sr Patricia Whitten rsm
0448463679

St Joseph's Pastoral Team: Contact the Parish Office



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

On this feast of the Holy Family, we might want to reflect on what family really means to us. What are its dimensions or limitations, if any? For in God's Kingdom we know *everyone* is family, since Jesus taught us to call God 'Our Father'. With this in mind, let's pray for *all* our brothers and sisters, and do our best to be reconciled with everyone, beginning with those in our own immediate family circles.

Parish Bulletin: Prayer requests and items for the Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.

Promoters of Safeguarding

Fr John Lovell p: (02) 4979 1106
Gail Lovell P: (02) 4979 1256
Anne Millard P: (02) 4979 1252

Our Parishes incorporate suburbs located on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, pay respect to their Elders past and present, and commit ourselves to work together for reconciliation and justice.

THE PARISH DIARY...(for the week ahead)

Week before Epiphany, Year B

Monday—1st January

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

11:30am Polish Mass @ The Cathedral

Tuesday—2nd January

Memorial of Sts Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

Wednesday—3rd January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

Thursday—4th January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

6:00pm No Choir Practice @ The Cathedral

Friday—5th January

10:15am Mass @ The Junction

11am Exposition, Adoration, and Reconciliation
@ The Cathedral (until 12pm)

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Saturday—6th January

9:15am Mass @ The Cathedral followed by
Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
(followed by Reconciliation) *Cancelled
this week

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West

5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

Sunday—7th January

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

7:30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

Live streamed via the Diocesan website:

www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/

11:00am Italian Mass @ The Junction

11:30am Polish Mass @ The Cathedral

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral

3:00pm Divine Mercy Devotion @ Mayfield West

5:00pm Taize Service @ Tighes Hill

6:00pm Vietnamese Mass @ Mayfield West

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: The Epiphany of the Lord, Year B

Is 60:1-6

Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

Mt 2:1-12.



PRAYER REQUESTS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Val Smith, Johny Benwell, Jim Eaves, Pamela Errington

ANNIVERSARIES: John Hilton, Ken Hurtz, Clem Ross, Bessie Maurer, Doris Pearson, Loreta & Gerardo Rufo, Basilio Rufo, Antonia & Antonio Leone, Angelonrio & Emilia Torti

SICK: Julianne Galbraith, Joshua Zalanardo, Cooper James, Rosa Silivinec, Neil McGoldrick, Sr Rosemary Jackson rsj, Gerard Pearce, Harry Melville, Doreen Mason, Elaine Johnson, Stewart McKinnon, Mark Caesar, Peter Kefecsek, Carlo Rossi, Neil Thomas, Kathryn Gray, Emilie Tseronis



Names may be placed here by contacting the Parish Office. Please refer to the Policy Document on the Parish website—visit www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads.

2024 – LENTEN REFLECTION – TRANSFORMATION THROUGH REVELATION

During the season of Lent, we are called to look deeply at the human condition, just as Jesus, the Son of God, experienced. We are reminded during this time of hardship, suffering, and ultimately dying that we must stretch ourselves. We must pray and fast from whatever is taking hold of the fullness of life. This time calls for personal reflection and encourages us to look out with missionary eyes to intentionally give to those in need.

To access our Diocesan Resource, Transformation Through Revelation, please visit <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/media/6680/0003733-dio-2024-lenten-program-06.pdf>

TAIZE SERVICE

Sunday 7th January

Immaculate Heart of Mary
Catholic Church Tighes Hill
5.00pm – 6pm followed by a
shared supper.



USED STAMPS FOR MARY MACKILLOP TODAY (MMT)

"Mary MacKillop Today" is helping the poorest of the poor with used stamps. Please leave any used stamps in the box provided at the entrance to St Joseph's Church The Junction, or drop them off at the office. Money raised through their sales provides access to learning opportunities for the poorest communities in Australia and internationally.

SEASONS FOR GROWTH

No season lasts forever, not even winter.

Our lives, like the seasons, are constantly changing. These changes often involve many losses and deep grief. Learning how to recognise and adapt to the stressful events and changed circumstances we experience, as well as the ongoing challenges these may bring helps to bring peace and hope into our lives.

The Seasons for Growth small group, peer-based educational program offers the opportunity for individual reflection and group discussion by gently and symbolically using the metaphor of the seasons to support adults to:

- **Learn** about how different people respond to change, loss and grief
- **Understand** that it is normal to experience a range of grief reactions
- **Explore** new approaches to dealing with change, loss and grief in their lives
- **Build** communication, decision making and problem solving skills
- **Participate** in a supportive network of peers and adults
- **Integrate** their new learning into their relationships with family, friends and others.

Please consider joining this supportive space in 2024 if you would like to share conversation and learn together with others who are also navigating the different seasons of life and loss.

Seasons for Growth is a four week program, which we will offer during Lent, 2024. The program will run for four Saturday afternoons from 1pm until 4pm on the 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd of March. Contact the office to sign up.



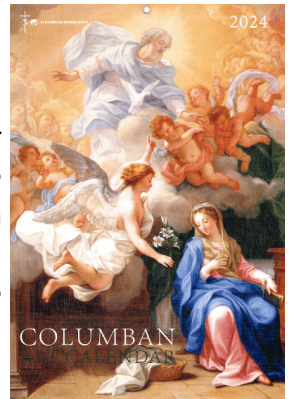
OFFICE CLOSURE

The office will reopen on January 2nd. We wish everyone a very happy new year! Thank you for your support over the past year. It's been an honour to work with our beloved parishioners.



COLUMBAN ART CALENDAR

This iconic Catholic Calendar, well-known for its traditional religious paintings and liturgical information is a major fundraiser for Columban Missionaries. The calendars are available through St Vincent de Paul for \$10 each. They can be purchased from the office



BOOK CLUB

Sunday, 4th February @ 6:15pm: Bookclub meets to discuss *That Bligh Girl* by Sue Williams (postponed from December). If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au



THE CHUCKLE

If you want to get your children's attention, sit down and feel comfortable.



BEQUESTS

To help our Catholic Pastoral Region of Parishes continue its important mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus, you might consider including us in your Will. You would just need to specify which parish or parishes you would like to help with your bequest.

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AT TIGHES HILL

This is non-denominational and everyone is very welcome. Please come.

WHEN: Monday afternoon 3.30 for 3.45 start

WHERE: Mercy Offices, 20 Union Street

(Next door to Mercy Services)

Off street parking available

The Meditation session begins with short guided relaxation exercises then we have a reading from Fr. John Main which leads into 20 minutes of silent meditation

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

by Dianne Bergant CSA

The phrase, 'the word of the Lord came to Abram' is a technical expression for prophetic revelation. However, God's promises seem to be of little value since Abram is childless. Without an heir, the future of his family is in jeopardy and so Abram prepares to adopt one of his servants (Eliezar, whose name means 'God is my help'). God then promises Abram as many heirs as there are stars in the night sky. In the face of what he perceives as a natural obstacle (his advanced age), Abram believes, and his faith is credited to him as righteousness. What God said, came about; what God promised, was fulfilled. Abraham was faithful to God; now God is faithful to Abraham.

The psalm calls for thanksgiving and praise for the wondrous deeds of the Lord. Since one's name contained part of one's essence, to praise God's name, was to praise God. Since one's face was considered a reflection of one's interior, to seek the face of God was to seek God's presence. God cut a covenant with Abram and thereby assumed certain responsibility for fulfilling the promises made. The descendants of the ancestors are now proof of God's faithfulness. They too were called to seek God's presence and to be faithful. Today we are the beneficiaries of God's promises, we are the descendants of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob who have been invited into covenant with this gracious God.

The second reading describes the faith of Abraham. It was out of generosity that God promised him land. It was out of faith that Abraham obeyed God's directive. Here faith has less to do with the content of religious belief than with the trusting attitude toward God that enables belief. At the time of the conception of Isaac, Abraham's faith became apparent a second time. Beyond his childbearing years, he believed that the impossible was possible with God. Finally, Abraham's faith is manifested in his willingness to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Even though Isaac was not actually sacrificed, Abraham did indeed offer up his son. His receiving Isaac back is a symbol that life is in God's hands.

Mary and Joseph observe the religious requirements of purification (cf. Lev 12:1-8) and redemption of the firstborn (cf. Exod 13:2,12). The first ritual sprang from the belief that the life-power within blood was sacred and belonged to God. The second ritual reclaimed the firstborn male child who, it was believed, really belonged to God. Buying back the child acknowledged God's initial claim. Like the prophets of ancient Israel,

Simeon was directed by the Spirit. He recognised the child as the object of his own longing for the messiah. Anna, the prophetess, proclaimed the identity of the child to all those who cherished messianic hopes. Though the child grows up like other children, he is merely waiting for his time to come.

© Dianne Bergant CSA

"TILLING THE CHURCH: THEOLOGY FOR AN UNFINISHED PROJECT." ZOOM DISCUSSION.

While Father Richard's visit was short, he last left our Diocese with riches that we can continue to explore together, as our church is an unfinished project and in need of tilling.

So, let's continue the discussion!

You are invited to discuss Father Richard's latest publication, "Tilling the Church: Theology for an Unfinished Project" chapter by chapter over the next several months online.

Wednesday 21 February: Chapter 3. The Pilgrimage Community of Faith and Hope

Wednesday 20 March: Chapter 4. Engaging the Graced World

Wednesday 17 April: Chapter 5. The Future-Oriented Past

Wednesday 15 May: Chapter 6. The Art of Faithfulness and conclusion To register go to:
www.eventbrite.com.au/e/tilling-the-church-theology-of-an-unfinished-project-tickets-708150125087

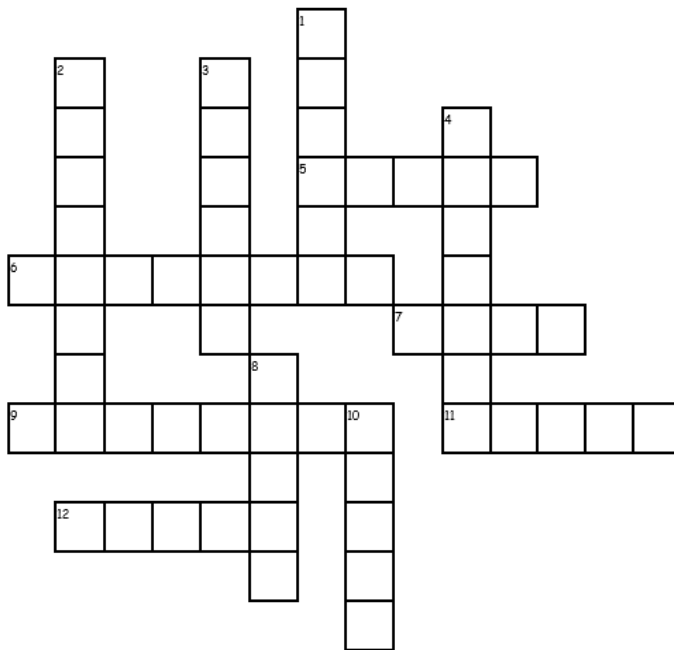
Historical Context Ritual

The ritual of purification referred to in today's passage would take place 40 days after childbirth. It was a ritual for the mother, not the child. Mary and Joseph took the opportunity of attending the Temple to bring Jesus into the presence of God who, according to tradition, dwelt in the Temple. The tradition associated with this purification of women after childbirth dictated that a lamb and a turtledove or pigeon be sacrificed. However, for the poor, an extra turtledove or pigeon could be substituted for the lamb. This fact gives us an indication of the status of Mary and Joseph.

CROSSWORD

The Lord's promise came true

Sir 3:2-6
Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, R. see v.1
Col 3:12-17
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23



Across

- 5: this king was looking for Jesus and wanted to harm him
6: something very valuable (tr_____)
7: we _____ psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God
9: very young people
11: the angel told Joseph to take Mary and Jesus to this place
12: Herod's son Archelaus became the ruler of this place

Down

- 1: the opposite of father
2: after King Herod died Joseph took Mary and Jesus to live in this place
3: we are all part of the body of _____
4: to accept someone's apology is to _____ them
8: the angel appeared to Joseph in a _____
10: the time when the moon and stars appear in the sky

SENIOR WORDSEARCH

The Lord's promise came true

Sir 3:2-6
Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, R. see v.1
Col 3:12-17
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

U S J I E C K F Q J U S W H B B E
K X D B K G H S V A F F S W A H X
Q Y V P Z P A I N Q Q J G S B W E
D D U V H F H A L T R F Q L J T T
T A H L A S Z V J D T U B G P Q I
P R T K Q A E D U J R L D T F F D
X N A F R Q O A B W X E R Z O X Y
B Q Z E R P V I B K V E N R H G W
W L T X O I J T H A A Z G T K Z Z
I H K L D Y S R S S A I X G G R Y
Y J C B T M N E U N V M O T H E R
M W G P H S O R D E T R E M A M M
V J S J H E E X E Z O H A G L L H
U V C Y S H R V G C B E G X Y D H
Y C H R I S T O Q E R V N I C P D
U T A E K B U R D D M W I B N D T
P G F R X U S S T K Q P S A L Z L

Try to find these words:

children
Christ
dream
Egypt
forgive
Herod
Judea
mother
Nazareth
night
sing
treasure

REFLECTION

When I was sixteen, I read the works of Jesuit Fr John Powell. In one of his books he wrote, 'We should never leave this world not having the people that we love know that we love them.' Now, I don't come from a particularly demonstrative family. We do not make regular declarations of our love accompanied by long hugs. So I took John Powell's line as a personal challenge.

At the time my sister was working with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, and my brother was working in another city, so I wrote them both letters and told them I loved them. I never heard a word back.

That left my mother. I stayed in one Saturday night and, with my heart pumping and my tummy churning, I approached my mother after dinner while she was watching the news on the TV. 'Mum, I have something very important to tell you.' My mother, not taking her eyes from the screen, casually said, 'Oh yes, what's that?' 'Mum', I responded, 'I've never told you this before and I need to say it tonight.' As she slowly turned off the TV and faced me, I could tell there were now two hearts pumping and two tummies churning in that room!

I plucked up all my courage and came straight out with it. 'Mum, I just want to tell you that I love you.' And such was her relief that my mother replied. 'I hope so!' And quickly turned the TV back on. There were no hugs and kisses, no violins playing or statements about how long Mum had been waiting to hear one of us talk of our love for her. As I walked back to my room I thought I would never take John Powell's advice again!

My brother and sister wrote to my mother asking her what was wrong with me. They all concluded it was a phase I was going through. I hope it is a phase I never get over!

Today's feast of the Holy Family is about faithful love that looks after the most important people in our lives. We all know that fights and bitterness can wreck families for generations. If today's feast means anything it is not about romanticising how difficult family life can be these days. It is about naming that forgiveness, compassion and kindness are the blocks upon which Christian family life is built. Without these virtues family life crumbles.

The best way to honour today's feast is to do something about the faithful love it celebrates. I have often been with people on their deathbed when they speak about things they have left undone and would have liked to have achieved in their life. No one ever says that they wish they had spent more time at work. No one says they wish they had made more money.

But many people say that they wish they had told those that they love, that they loved them. We shouldn't assume that our families know about our love for them if we haven't said it. If we show it, we should be able to say it. So write a letter, make a call or go and see them, but let's pluck up our courage and tell our families that we love them. It's too late once we're dead.

And the best news is that when we profess our love to our families we'll see that today's celebration is in fact a moveable feast.

© Richard Leonard SJ

Richard Leonard SJ is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

OUR BELOVED DEAD

We remember those in our Columbaria whose anniversaries occur in December.

At Sacred Heart

Mario Cannavale	Kevin Fuge
Aileen Joyce Carey	Louis William Harris
Kathleen Mary Cashman	Margaret Ireland
Joan Cunningham	Anthony (Tony) Losurdo
Bertha Docherty	Helen O'Sullivan
Paul Ferry	James Savage
Maria Franceschi	Patrick Scott
	Margaret Tuxworth

At St Joseph's:

Frank Hawkins Jnr	Joan Payne
Ernst Koch	Byeena Winifred Saxby
Cecily Clare Leslie	Pat Skehan
Margaret McGlynn	Patricia Margaret Smith
Athol Moore	Joseph Timbs
Kevin Smith	Grace Hickey
Robert Wakely	Harold Casey
Stan Walters	Kelvin Davis
Dorothy Wilson	Mary Doyle
Franz Schmuck	Bill Edser
Noreen Heaney	Alan Fogarty
Rodger Ryan	Maree Green

Eternal rest grant unto them and may perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace, Amen.

ENROLMENTS FOR 2023 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

A child's catholic faith journey began with the Sacrament of Baptism and continues by the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation, Confirmation and First Eucharist.

The preparations for these sacraments in the Inner Newcastle Parish run between February and June of every year and is designed for children going into Year, 4, 5 or 6 in 2024. Preparations are completed as a family with online activities and volunteer work within the community.

Enrolments are now open for the 2024 program. If you are interested in being apart of the program this year please visit the parish website and complete the online enrolment form.

<https://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/sacramental-enrolment-form/>

For more information please contact the office on 49791101 or newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

FOOD BASKETS FOR THE NEEDY

Items of dry goods or tin food e.g. (Vegemite, cornflakes or breakfast foods, sugar, packet or tin soup, sardines, tea, coffee, tin fruit etc), can be placed in the basket at the back of **St Joseph's Church**, The Junction and in the foyer of **Immaculate Heart of Mary Church**, Tighes Hill. St Vincent de Paul members will pick up for distribution to the needy who are very grateful to receive the items. When donating please check expiry dates. Thank you. Questions to Sr Carol Woodland rsj (mob) 0423 700 523 or 4967 2998. The St Joseph's community kindly requests that you do not donate peanut butter.

Thank you!



SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL & ST MARY'S, NEWCASTLE:

If you would like to donate, any of the following types of non-perishable items would be most gratefully received: UHT milk, cereal, jam, vegemite, peanut butter, tinned veggies, fruit, soup, fish, meat, dried pasta, rice, pasta sauces, teabags, coffee, biscuits, crackers, custard, jelly, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, conditioner (even the travel sized ones from hotels), deodorant.

MEDITATION GROUPS AT LIVING WATERS CENTRE

LIVING WATERS CHRISTIAN MEDIATION CENTRE, 34 Kenrick Street, The Junction, offers meditation sessions on Wednesdays at 7.30am and Fridays at 11.00am – and has done so for the last 25 years, in which time many hundreds of people have taken up this prayer form. After meditation on Fridays Lectio Divina, a personal interaction with Sacred Scripture, is offered. Through both practices we open ourselves to the fullness of life; we come to know ourselves by knowing that we are known and loved by God. For more information: Carmel Moore rsj -0412122297 - or just come.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

The writer of the gospel of Luke uses this presentation event to announce or forecast the ministry of Jesus. The explicit identification of the poverty of Mary and Joseph is an indicator of the emphasis that Jesus will give to the poor throughout his ministry. The gospel writer also makes plain the link between the Temple (the Jewish tradition) and the ministry of Jesus. Tying these events into the prophecies of both Simeon and Anna reinforce the prophetic nature of this whole episode. Jesus is portrayed in this gospel as the fulfilment of the prophecies of scripture.

OUR CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

St Joseph's Primary School

Karen McGinlay (*Principal*)

Union Street, The Junction NSW 2291

P:(02) 4961 2827

W:www.merewether.catholic.edu.au

Holy Family Primary School

Ann Jackson (*Principal*)

Pell Street, Merewether NSW 2291

P:(02) 4963 3009

W:www.merewetherbeach.catholic.edu.au

St Columban's Primary School

Danielle Reed (*Principal*)

Church Street, Mayfield NSW 2304

P:(02) 4968 3315

W:www.mayfieldsc.catholic.edu.au

St Peter's Primary School

Mark Konik (*Acting Principal*)

Dunbar St, Stockton NSW 2295

P:(02) 4920 1736

W:www.stockton.catholic.edu.au

TODAY'S LITURGY

Entrance Antiphon: Luke 2:16

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

Your own son shall be your heir.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 104:1-6. 8-9. R.vv.7.8

(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

The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

Communion Antiphon: Baruch 3:38

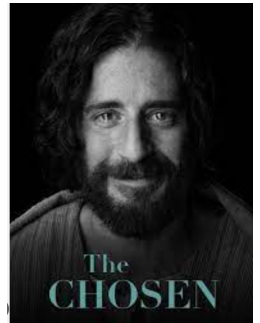
Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

VIEW, CHEW, CHAT, AND LECTIO

View, Chew, and Chat is in hiatus for the month of January. We begin the series *The Chosen* in February. To participate, please email the parish office.

THE CHOSEN

The Chosen is a series that brings to life an interpretation of what life might have been like for Jesus starting his ministry. The series has been creatively produced and includes the backstories for each of the disciples that were individually chosen by Jesus. We are first invited into each of their lives, into their struggles and baggage. But once introduced to Jesus and the invitation to spend time with him, we are invited to witness the transformation of each of his first followers.



LIVING THE GOSPEL

Faithful

A strong image that emerges from this passage is the faithfulness of Mary and Joseph. Their whole purpose in visiting the Temple is to fulfil the requirements of their faith. They are faithful to the Jewish tradition and it is into this tradition that they initiate Jesus. The faithfulness of Mary and Joseph is a hallmark of their life as a family. Their faithfulness is a significant element of what we celebrate in the feast of the Holy Family and their faithfulness to God and to one another is a model for all families and for all people.

SAFEGUARDING

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: P 4979 1390, E childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au or www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au