



St Brigid's Marrickville

In the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia

One Family, Alive in Christ

Est 1886. Under the Pastoral Care of the Passionists since 1887

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Parish Priest: Fr John Pearce CP (pp@stbrigid.org.au)

Associates: Fr Peter Gardiner CP (peter@stbrigid.org.au)

Fr George Koloth CP (george@stbrigid.org.au)

Dc Erick Niyiragira CP; Sr Elena Daton CP (elena@stbrigid.org.au);
Sr Elenita Flores CP; Darren Dela Rosa (darren.delarosa212@gmail.com)

Parish Secretary: Ms Terrey Trethowan (9.30am - 4pm)

We stand at the Crossroads of life for many people

Christmas 2015

Archbishop Lahham Christmas message: "Christmas is mercy and brotherhood"

The Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan Archbishop Maroun Lahham's message is titled, "Christmas in the 'Jubilee Year of Mercy' is mercy and brotherhood" and was issued on Saturday December 19

Brothers and sisters,

Let us rejoice in the Lord because our savior was born today. Today, genuine peace descended from Heaven. The Messenger of Peace and the God of Peace has been born. Today, we are in dire need of peace more than any other time. What is beautiful about it, is that this very peace was brought about by a child born to a young mother in a cave and in a small country. Since this matter is nonpareil, it requires silence and thinking... edible silence, thinking, prayer and hope.

Regardless of our feelings and convictions with regards to celebrations marking the birth of Lord Jesus Christ, it is inevitable to look at the face of the divine baby and listen to His question. It is a question He addresses to us with the simplicity of children: "In what way am I related to you? And what space do you leave for me in your hearts and your life?" I hope that our response to these questions will be different from those of the Bethlehemites at the time, who said: "There is no room for you in this house." "In what way am I related to you? Am I childhood's beautiful memories and celebrations? Am I a philosopher and a social reformer? Am I just an advocate for goodness and righteousness in life?" All this does not suffice the reality.

The answer to these questions may be taken from the angels who brought the good tidings of His birth: "Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." The answer is "saviour". The baby of the manger wants to convey to us salvation and joy. He wants to dissipate all our fears. He wants to reassure us that goodness defeats evil, that light is stronger than darkness, that grace is stronger than sins, and that love is stronger than hatred. He wants to reassure us that the wave of violence, of elimination, and of forced displacement under way in our Arab world is just ephemeral. It will last, God willing. The status quo ante will be restored. The conviviality and neighborly ties will be restored. There will no differences among us with regards to religious affiliation, to ethnicity, to color, or to gender for "the most noble of us in God's view are the most righteous."

This is the message of Christmas under the current circumstances which we are experiencing. In order to comprehend the significance of this message, we have to remain silent, to think, to maintain solitude, and to pray. We should pray in front of the incarnated Word of God who loved us the like of which no one ever did. From now on, there will neither be darkness nor difficulties. There will never be pain that can overpower the bright light of Christmas. From now on, there will be no open wound in the heart of man that cannot be healed by the love of Lord Jesus Christ who had paid its price on the Cross.



We celebrate Christmas this year as we mark the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of "Nostra Aetate", which was issued by the Second Vatican Council. This declaration includes the first ever document endorsing Islamic-Christian dialogue in our modern time. Marking this anniversary is designed to look to the future with the intention of preserving intellectual and cultural achievements among the followers of religions, particularly in our dear homeland. The Church has inaugurated days ago the Jubilee Year of "Mercy". This very word is synonymous to fraternal love. We learn from the issue of mercy what prompts us to consolidate joint human endeavors towards brothers and sisters who suffer from poverty, disease, or from escalating human difficulties. As a sign of human solidarity in the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Latin Vicariate in Amman, in cooperation with Jordan Caritas, will shortly open the "Restaurant of Mercy" to serve free meals to the poor and to the needy on daily basis. It is hoped that this will contribute to enhancing charity work as well as to cooperation with all charity associations in our dear homeland.

We hope that with the advent of the new year, all bloody disputes in our dear Orient will come to an end, all people of the region will restore their conviviality, and all initiatives sponsoring brotherly love will be encouraged so that we can all restore the status quo ante as one united and loving family under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II.

Merry Christmas.

Our Parish on Mission

Christmas Week at St Brigid's

Sat 26th	9am	5pm
Sun 27th	7.30am, 9am, 10.30am,	6pm
Mon 28th	9am	Tues 29th 9am
Wed 30th	9am	Thurs 31st 9am
Fri 1st January	9am, 10.30am	
Sat 2nd	9am	5pm
Sun 3rd	7.30am, 9am, 10.30am,	6pm
Mon 4th	6.45am, 9am	

Our Liturgical Ministries

We Are Church when we are Gathered.
We Grow as Church when we Celebrate & Connect.
We Live as Church when we go out and Serve the common good of all humanity, sharing the Love of God.

At St Brigid's there is opportunity to engage fully in the Eucharist by taking one or more liturgical ministries. In February, please consider one of these:

Servers: male & female, Year 4 to Adult

Readers: Accent? We all have one. Clear reader? Good.

Communion Ministers: anyone from 15 years and up.

Church Cleaners: On a Monday after Mass

Musicians: new varieties welcome.

Singers: In one of the present choirs, or perhaps you have your own group

Liturgical Environment: help with setting up décor for big occasions.

Passionist Overseas Mission Outreach

Passionist Pilgrim Groups depart from this Sunday with Fr Peter for immersion and work experiences in Cambodia and Vietnam.

Thank you to these Volunteers. This year our Pilgrims come from Adelaide, Port Augusta, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart, Pretoria (South Africa), New Zealand, Walgett and Sydney.

Thank you to all who have supported the fund raising this year. We will be able to leave donations at various places to support these vulnerable children because of your help, as well as working as volunteer carers there each day. Our Cambodian mission will be to build two houses for poor families in Siem Reap.

Thank you all for your kindness, and please pray that God's love will shine in our world.



Our Marrickville contingent for Cambodia, Jono and Nat, Quoc, Katrina and Hoang



Casimir Catholic College HSC Results

We finished the 2015 school year celebrating the outstanding success of our Year 12 students. The College achieved its best HSC results ever with 80% courses above state average. These results are a credit to the quality of the staff and students at Casimir. The constant theme and mantra of these graduates was positivity and a personal ownership of learning. Well done!

The results reflect the rigour of the academic culture of the College: it's high expectations, talented teachers and hard working students who are both nurtured and challenged to do their best. The introduction of a number of new educational initiatives also assisted students in achieving these excellent results and it was particularly gratifying that all students, irrespective of their ability, achieved results beyond their expectations.

Many of these graduates will now be preparing for life at university. We wish them well for the journey ahead.

Finally, I take this opportunity on behalf of the staff at Casimir to wish you all a wonderful and blessed Christmas season with your family and closest friends.

May Christ's peace and joy be with you always.

Daniel McInerney
College Principal

Ministers of Care & Communion to the Sick & House Bound

Every day we see men and women, old and young, assisting at Mass as Ministers of Communion.

Behind the scenes, these people take Communion and company to homes and Nursing Homes. There are many isolated and lonely people who look forward to their weekly visit, for a chat, a prayer, communion and a cuppa with their visitor. In 2016 we want to expand this ministry. If you can help, or if you need communion, contact Sr Elena.



Thanks & Best Wishes

One of these angels is Antoinette Grigg. Antoinette has been a faithful and loving member of our outreach team for several years, as both a Communion Minister in our Church, and also at Maybanke Nursing Home, where she takes Communion to the residents. She is loved by both the staff and people living there. Now the time has come to move as she starts a new phase of life in the Southern Highlands. Well done, Antoinette, and God's grace as you go forward. Our grateful thanks and best wishes, as you take the next journey in your life.



Our Parish on Mission

Vinnies at St Brigid's



We have a variety of Vinnies Groups at St Brigid's, starting with Mini Vinnies at St Brigid's School, Young Vinnies at Casimir College, and our adult group the Vinnies Conference.

Our Vinnies Conference meets in our room behind Shrubland Hall at 7.30pm most Wednesday nights. From here we do home visitation on several nights and offer tangible help on your behalf. Thanks to St Brigid's Parishioners, we are able to leave food and other support to many people in need.

Interested? If you would like to look more closely at what we do and who we are, come along to a weekly meeting. Come and see. You might find this to be the ministry you are looking for.

Thank You for the recent support of over \$6,000 to our Christmas Appeal. This will be a great help over Christmas and the holiday season.

Cana Farm Days



The Cana Communities provide accommodation and support for people on the edge in various ways in Redfern and Surry Hills, and also run a farm at Orchard Hills, where people can get TAFE supported training

in horticulture, furniture making, Barista work, etc. Twice a year our families from St Brigid's School and Parish go out for a Sunday of work on the farm, pray at Mass in the Big Shed, and then hang out for a bar-b-q



Our Farm Days for 2016 are on Sundays 15 May & 21 August. From 10am.

Information will be in the Newsletter a few weeks before. All are welcome. Contact here is Paige Bullen.



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Passionist Family Groups at St Brigid's

Do you feel connected in this parish? Our Family Groups are one way many singles & couples, with and without children, have become connected. Our adult members are of all ages. Some of our kids are energetic children, some have become teens and young adults. Members are asked to make a commitment to the Family Group, and try to attend each monthly activity.. It might be a coffee morning, a bar-b-q, a picnic, fish and chips at Watsons Bay. Activities are low cost, and fun. It's a spirituality built on friendships, and for many has been very supportive.

PASSIONIST
FAMILY GROUP
MOVEMENT



AFAMILY FOR ALL

Information is at the back of the Church.



Children, Youth, Young Adult Ministries

Little things can have as great an impact as big things. We provide opportunities for people to connect with each other, and with faith and community. These are some of what's been happening here lately.



Children:

Liturgy of the Word at 9am Mass, Carols in Nursing Homes, Sacrament Programme. Room to expand.

Teenagers:

Activities on 2nd & 4th Sundays after 6pm Mass, engage in parish social and liturgical activities.

Young Adults:

Meets 4th Sunday after 6pm Mass; provide music for the Young Adult Mass; join parish events.

St Brigid's School:

Dad's Camp, Mini Vinnies, & Gift of Bread.

Casimir Catholic College:

Young Vinnies, No Hands But Mine, Night Patrol.

Youth Ministers:

Vanessa Penitani, p/time at Casimir College
Darren Dela Rosa, p/time at St Brigid's Parish.

The Gift of Bread Keeps Going for the Holidays

We really appreciate all the help that our parishioners and students from St Brigid's Primary and Casimir College provide every Friday with the collection, packing and distribution of bread for the **Gift of Bread**.

This year we will need extra help to pack bread for the Masses on Christmas Eve at St Brigid's and then back on Friday 8th January 2016 to continue our work for the new year. If you can spare an hour on Friday from 6:00 pm please come along to Shrubland Hall or phone <Marcel on **0448 812 211**.



Parish Calendar 2016

January to June

January

- 1 New Year Mass (9am)**
 17 Feast of Santo Nino, Filipino Mass (12 noon)
 27 Mass with Teachers from Casimir & St Brigid's
 28 Combined Meeting of Pastoral & Finance Councils
 29 NAPPA: Priests & Pastoral Associates Exec Meeting

February

- 3 Communion Prep (1)
 5 Casimir Opening Mass
6 Feast of St Brigid (transferred)
 8 SB School Opening Mass
 Gathering of Parish Ministry Groups
10 Ash Wednesday
 11 Inner West Schools Mass
 12 Berne School Opening Mass
 Marrickville Ministers Fellowship
 Deanery Meeting
 14 Youth Group
 17 Communion Prep (2)
 18 Family Group Leaders Meet
 23 Pastoral Council
 24 Communion Prep (3)
 23 Clergy Conference
 28 John's 40th Anniversary of Ordination
 SB School Mass (9am)
 Young Adult Mass (6pm)
 Youth Group (7pm)
 Young Adult Group (7pm)

March

- 2 Communion Prep (4)
 4 Communion Reflection Day
 5-6 First Communion
 12-13 First Communion
 13 Youth Group
 20 Palm Sunday
 24 Holy Thursday
 25 Good Friday
 26 Easter Vigil
27 Easter Day
 29-31 Province Assembly

April

- 5 Pastoral Council

- 6 Clergy Conference
 10 Youth Group
 24 SB School Mass (9am)
 Young Adult Mass (6pm)
 Youth Group (7pm)
 Young Adult Group (7pm)

May

- 4 Confirmation Prep (1)
 Youth Group
 8 Confirmation Prep (2)
15 Pentecost Sunday
 Cana Farm Day
 18 Confirmation Prep (3)
 19 Family Group Leaders Meet
 22 SB School Mass (9am)
 Young Adult Mass (6pm)
 Youth Group (7pm)
 Young Adult Group (7pm)
 24 Pastoral Council
 25 Confirmation Prep(4)
 26 Finance Council

June

- 3 Confirmation Reflection Day
 11 Ordination of Thanh & Truc
 12 Youth Group
 18 Ordination of Erick in Adelaide
 26 Proposed Confirmation Day (tbc)
 Young Adult Mass (6pm)
 Youth Group (7pm)
 Young Adult Group (7pm)

July to December

July

August

- 18 Family Group Leaders Meet
 21 Cana Farm Day

September

October

- 12 Reconciliation Prep (1)
 17-20 Diocesan Clergy Conference
 19 Reconciliation Prep (2)
 26 Reconciliation Prep (3)
 28 Reconciliation Reflection Day

November

- 10 First Reconciliations
 17 Family Group Leaders Meet
 19 Crib Set Up
 23 Memorial Mass
 26 Erect Christmas Crib
27 First Sunday of Advent
 29 Thanksgiving Gathering

December

- 10 Carols on the Lawns

Regular Events

- Tues Pastoral Council (4th)
 Multifaith Roundtable
 Wed Vinnies Conference
 Children's Sacraments
 Thur Finance Council (4th)
 Ministers Fellowship
 Fri Play Group (9.30am)
 Men's Club (1st)
 Sun Seniors Club (4th)
 Youth Group (2nd & 4th)
 Young Adult Group (4th)

Passionist Ministries in January

Frs George & Ron at St Brigid's.

Fr John, Dc Erick, Br Martin on annual leave

Fr Peter, Cambodia & Vietnam until 4th Feb

Fr Lex Marriages

Fr Phil in Port Moresby

With Thanks for Christmas

Thank you to all who have been part of St Brigid's this year.

In a recent consultation of key parish leaders, there was much excitement as participants named the many ways we have grown as a parish in the past 7 years, and the vitality that comes from inviting new people to share ministries. This has happened because of the generous and positive engagement of many. They recommended that in 2016 we consolidate these many initiatives.

Thank you to all who help shape and make us a great parish. May you all celebrate well with family and friends this Christmas, and receive many blessings. **John**

The Parish Office is closed

24 Dec to Wednesday 6th January.
 Emergency number on the Phone.

