



ST BRIGID'S, MARRICKVILLE

*In the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia
Est 1886. Under the Pastoral Care of the Passionists since 1887
One Family, Alive in Christ. We stand at the Crossroads of life for many people.*

392 Marrickville Rd, Marrickville 2204
PO Box 237, Marrickville NSW 1475

8577 5670 www.stbrigid.org.au parish@stbrigid.org.au

After hours emergency: 0401 772 139

PARISH TEAM

Fr Giltus Mathias CP	Sr Elenita Flores CP	Paola Yevenes
Fr Joachim Rego CP	Sr Rosana Estoque CP	Jenny Ryan-Cook
Fr Joseph Sy Ho Doan CP	Elena (Len) Di Perna	Pongia Fenukitau
Fr James Nguyen Van Cong CP	Jim Yeo - Safeguarding Officer	

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD - 25 December 2025

St Brigid's Parish Marrickville, acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners of the land on which it is built; the Gadigal people of the Eora nation.

PASTORAL MINISTRY CONTACTS

Adult Faith Formation

Mary Leask

Adult Sacraments

Sr. Rosana

Altar Society

Fr Doan Sy Ho CP

Bereavement Ministry

Sr Elenita & Michael Schiano

CCD in State Schools

Sr Elenita

Children's Sacraments

Sr Elenita

Family Group

Adrienne & Jonathan Harverson

Justice & Peace Network

Peter Jennings

Liturgy Committee

Patricia Thomas

Maintenance Committee

Michael Daher & Pongia Fenukitau

Men's Club

Arthur Kassis, John Skinner & Mick Ward

Ministry of Care

Sr Rosana

Passionist Companions

Margaret Turner

Safeguarding Officer

Jim Yeo

Seniors' Group

John Freeman & Peggy Blackall

Youth Group

Jenny Ryan-Cook



Dear Parish Family

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

As we draw close to the end of the year and prepare our hearts to welcome the birth of Jesus, it is good for us to pause, look back, and gently count our blessings. This past year has been full; full of life and loss, celebration and sorrow, prayer and action, endings and new beginnings. Through it all, God has been faithfully at work among us, often in quiet ways, always through people.

One of the great joys of the year was celebrating our **parish feast as a true cultural day**, bringing together food, music, and cultural entertainment. It was a beautiful expression of who we are, a parish made up of many cultures, yet one family in faith.

Our **RCIA journey** was another source of deep gratitude, as **13 young people were received into the Church**, each with their own story, courage, and faith journey.

Alongside this, a new ministry, **Sacred Union**, took root, a ministry for young married couples, organised and led by the couples themselves, showing faith lived in everyday family life.

Faith formation continued to grow in meaningful ways. The **Adult Faith Formation team** engaged closely with parents whose children were preparing for the sacraments of initiation, while **children's sacramental programs**, conducted in collaboration with St Brigid's Primary School, helped families walk these important milestones together. Our **Little Church (Children's Liturgy)** has grown significantly, and this year we were delighted to see a **children's choir formed for the first time**, and singing on the first Sunday of Advent, adding lively joy to our liturgies.

This year also marked important milestones in our Passionist story. We celebrated the **60th anniversary of Fr Kevin's ordination to the priesthood** and the **60th anniversary of Fr Lex's profession as a Passionist**, and also the **25 years of Passionist Sisters' presence in Australia**, moments that invited us to give thanks for lives generously given in service of God's people.

We rejoiced in the celebration of **many cultural saints' feasts**, each one reflecting the richness of devotion within our community. At the same time, we held one another through the full spectrum of parish life, celebrating the sacraments and accompanying families in times of grief. Over the year, our parish celebrated over **147 infant Baptisms, 61 first Holy Communions, 61 first Reconciliations, 53 Confirmations, 60 Weddings**, and we prayerfully accompanied **52 funerals**, standing with families as they entrusted their loved ones into God's care.

Our school communities continued to flourish. **St Brigid's Primary School and Casimir College** maintained full enrolments and remain among the most sought-after schools, thanks to strong leadership and dedicated staff. Fr. Cong and Fr. Doan were deeply involved in the life of the schools throughout the year, ensuring a strong parish and spiritual presence. We farewelled **Mrs Antonella Mazzucco**, our much-loved primary school principal, with gratitude, and we look forward to welcoming **Ms Carolynne Cavanagh** in the coming year.

This year also brought changes and growth within our

parish team. **Fr Joachim** joined us, enriching parish life, and **Paola** became part of the parish staff, adding her gifts and support to the daily life of the parish.

On the practical side, we reached long-awaited milestones, receiving **council clearance for much-needed renovations** to both the church and parish hall. A **new fundraising committee** has been formed to support these upcoming projects, helping us care responsibly for the spaces entrusted to us.

Our faith also took us beyond parish boundaries. We shared in a meaningful **pilgrimage**, as part of the **Jubilee year of Hope, from St Paul of the Cross Parish**, stopping at **St Maroun College** and the **St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church**, experiencing prayer, hospitality, and Christian unity along the way. October was beautifully marked with the **celebration of the month of Mary**, highlighted by a Marian concert, and we enjoyed another joyful year of **Community Christmas Carols**, bringing neighbours and parishioners together in song.

Our **parish youth** continued to engage beyond the local parish, participating in the **International De La Salle Conference** and **ACYF 2025**, in addition to their weekly liturgical participation. Through our **Justice and Peace committee**, in collaboration with the Marrickville Refugee Movement, we were also privileged to assist a refugee family in resettling in Australia, a powerful reminder that faith is most alive when it is lived in compassion.

As we look back, one thing is clear: **we are growing into a vibrant, multicultural parish where faith is alive and lived**, in prayer, service, relationships, and everyday generosity.

With grateful hearts, we now turn toward Christmas, trusting that the same God who has walked with us throughout this year continues to be born anew among us.

As we pause to take all this in, we do so in the spirit of Advent, a season that teaches us to watch, to wait, and to recognise God quietly at work among us. In the midst of busy lives and full calendars, Advent gently reminds us why we gather, serve, and hope. As the angel said to the shepherds on that first Christmas night: **"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."** (Luke 2:11)

It is this promise, God choosing to be with us, among



us, and through us, that gives meaning to all we have shared this year. With grateful hearts, I now offer a heartfelt word of thanks to the many people who have made our parish a living sign of that Emmanuel presence.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



Our parish is alive and flourishing because of the generosity, commitment, and love of you, its people. For that, I simply say: *thank you, from the bottom of my heart.*

To all who serve in our parish ministries, thank you for the many ways you give of yourselves. I mention a few groups below, not to rank or separate, but to honour the rich tapestry of service that makes our parish what it is.

Adult Faith Formation Team: I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the generosity, thoughtfulness, and faith you bring to this ministry. Your willingness to walk alongside parents, parishioners, and seekers, meeting them where they are, reflects a mature and compassionate faith. By sharing your own experiences, insights, and time, you help make faith accessible, grounded, and relevant to everyday life. Your work strengthens not only individual journeys of belief, but also the wider parish community, reminding us that faith is something we continue to grow into at every stage of life. Thank you for your commitment, patience, and quiet leadership.

Music Ministry: You lift our prayers heavenward and give voice to our faith. Through song and harmony, you touch hearts, bring joy to our liturgies, and remind us of the beauty of worship. Your commitment, rehearsals, and willingness to serve week after week transform sound into prayer and help our community sing with one heart and one voice.

Pastoral Council, Finance Committee, and Maintenance Committee: Your leadership, wisdom, and often unseen work ensure that our parish remains strong, welcoming, and well cared for. Your discernment and care ensure that decisions are made prayerfully, responsibly, and always with the future of the parish in mind. Particularly this year the maintenance committee had more than usual to shuffle and deal with.

Liturgy Committee: Thank you for the prayerful preparation and thoughtful care that shape our celebrations. Through your attentiveness to detail and deep sense of prayer, you help create spaces where hearts are opened, and God is encountered.

Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion: As proclaimers of the Word and ministers of the Eucharist, you help us encounter Christ in Word and Sacrament with reverence and faith. Your faithful presence helps the assembly listen more deeply and receive Christ more fully.

Collectors and Counters: Your quiet, faithful service reflects the trust and generosity of our parish and supports the mission of our community. Your integrity and consistency allow the parish to plan, serve, and respond generously to the needs of others.

Altar Servers and Acolytes: You serve the altar with dignity and devotion, helping us focus on Christ's presence among us. Your faithfulness encourages reverence and reminds us that service at the altar is a sacred calling.

Altar Society (Linen and Altar Decoration): Often unseen, yet essential, your care, devotion, and creativity honour the Eucharist and enhance our worship spaces. Through beauty, colour, and quiet dedication, you teach us that reverence and praise can be expressed in countless loving ways.

Catechists and Sacramental Preparation Leaders: You sow the seeds of faith in the hearts of our children, families, and adults, especially the kids in the public schools. Your witness often speaks louder than words, shaping lives long after the sessions have ended and bearing fruit for generations.

Little Church (Children's Liturgy): Thank you for guiding our youngest parishioners with joy, patience, and creativity. Through your care, our "little church" continues to grow, planting seeds of faith that will last a lifetime.

Justice and Peace Committee: You keep before us Christ's call to compassion, mercy, and action. Your ministry challenges us to move from comfort to compassion and from belief to lived discipleship.

Bereavement Team: Thank you for your sensitivity, kindness, and dedication to this important ministry. Your gentle presence brings comfort and hope to grieving families. Your quiet strength and listening hearts offer sacred companionship when words often fall short.

Ministry of Care: Through your visits, prayers, and companionship, you bring Christ's love to the sick, elderly, and isolated, making the Church present well beyond its walls.

Prayer Groups and Daily Rosary Groups: You are the spiritual heartbeat of our parish. Your constancy in prayer carries intentions we may never hear but whose fruits are deeply felt throughout our community. To all other prayer groups, your gatherings foster faith and unity, reminding us of the power of prayer in our lives. Your devotion is a true gift to our parish, and we are deeply grateful.

Hospitality Team: Through your generosity and behind-the-scenes work, you create warmth and welcome. Through the simple yet meaningful act of sharing food and drink, you foster connection, joy, and fellowship among us. You help strangers become friends and gatherings become moments of grace.

Men's Club: For quietly and generously stepping in whenever help was needed. At each of our parish events, you were there, setting up, packing down, lending a hand, and doing whatever was required without fuss or fanfare. Your willingness to serve, your reliability, and your strong sense of belonging make a real difference to parish life. Please know how deeply grateful we are for your constant support and for the spirit of fraternity and generosity you bring to our community.



RCIA Team: You accompany those seeking to join our faith with patience, joy, and openness. Your faithfulness reminds us that the Church is always being renewed through welcome and accompaniment.

Youth Leaders: Your energy, creativity, and courage inspire hope for the future. You show us that faith is alive, relevant, and courageous in today's world. Your leadership inspires the young and old alike, reminding us that the Church's future is vibrant and full of hope.

Media Ministry: Thank you for keeping our parish connected through livestreaming and digital outreach. Your service extends the walls of our church into homes, hospitals, and hearts far beyond Marrickville.

Crib Team: Thank you to our Crib Team for the generous gift of your time, imagination, and gentle attention to detail. Through your hands, the Christmas story is made visible and tangible for our parish. The cribs you have prepared invite us to pause, to look again, and to enter into the mystery of God choosing to dwell among us. The quiet delight of children and the reflective stillness of adults alike are a testament to the care you have taken. Your work enriches our celebration of Christmas and helps us encounter its message of humility, peace, and hope.

Synod Group: Week after week, your joyful service sustains our parish through generosity and hard work. Your teamwork reflects a parish that serves not out of duty, but out of love. Thank you for the countless hours you dedicate to cooking, serving, and organizing, all done with such kindness, warmth, and generosity.

Sacred Union: This new ministry for young married couples, shaped and led by couples themselves, is a powerful witness to faith lived in love, mutual commitment, and shared responsibility. By choosing to walk alongside other young couples, you have created a space of encouragement, listening, and genuine belonging. Thank you for the generosity of your time, your openness, and your willingness to share both the joys and challenges of married life. Your journey together strengthens not only individual couples, but also the wider parish community, reminding us that marriage is a vocation nurtured best when it is lived and supported in faith.

Cultural Ministry Team: I am deeply grateful for the way you have stepped forward to nurture and grow this ministry within our parish. Through your dedication, our community has been given opportunities to share traditions, stories, prayer, and celebration in ways that bring people closer to one another. Your work builds bridges across cultures and helps our parish reflect the rich tapestry of God's people. By creating spaces where everyone feels welcomed and valued, you strengthen our sense of belonging and unity in Christ. Thank you for your commitment, enthusiasm, and generous service to our parish family.

Gift Shop: Thank you, Judy, for another year of your faithful care and warm presence. Through your gentle welcome, many find meaningful reminders of God's presence in daily life.

Seniors Group: A special word of appreciation also goes to our Parish Seniors Group. Their presence may be quiet, but their contribution is deep and faithful. They not only support the parish through prayer,

wisdom, and gentle encouragement, but they also support one another with genuine care and solidarity, checking in on each other, sharing life's joys and burdens, and ensuring that no one feels alone. In their mutual support and quiet companionship, they offer a beautiful witness to community, resilience, and faith lived out day by day.

Our Ethnic Communities: Our parish is truly alive because of the presence, faith, and generosity each of you brings. Through your traditions, prayers, and ways of gathering, you share something precious of your heritage and invite us all to experience faith through a wider and richer lens. The colours, rhythms, and flavours of your cultures deepen our worship and strengthen our sense of belonging. You remind us that the Church is not confined by language or borders, but flourishes when many peoples walk together in faith. Thank you for enriching our parish life and for helping us live more fully as one community rooted in the Gospel.

Our School Communities: I offer my sincere thanks to the dedicated staff of **St Brigid Primary School and Casimir College** for the care, commitment, and passion you bring each day to the lives of our students. Through your guidance, patience, and encouragement, young people are supported not only to learn, but to grow in confidence, character, and faith. Your work reflects a deep sense of vocation, forming hearts as much as minds and nurturing a spirit of compassion, curiosity, and responsibility.

This year's outstanding HSC results stand as a proud affirmation of that dedication. They reflect the hard work of students, the professionalism of teachers, the leadership of school communities, and the strong partnership with families who support and believe in their young people. We give thanks for these achievements and the hope they inspire for the future. As the academic year draws to a close, I wish all staff, students, and families a restful and joy-filled summer break. May this time offer space to slow down, reconnect, and be renewed, returning refreshed and ready for the year ahead, with God's blessings upon you all.

Fundraising team: Thank you for generously stepping forward to be part of our newly formed Fundraising Committee. Your willingness to take on this responsibility, knowing the challenges involved, is deeply appreciated. The work you are embracing is vital in helping to sustain our parish and ensure that our church remains a welcoming place for prayer and gathering in the years ahead. I am grateful for your commitment, courage, and sense of shared responsibility. Wishing you every blessing as you begin this important work together.

St Vincent de Paul Society: Your service to the vulnerable restores dignity and hope. Your commitment to serving those in need, through your outreach, provision of essential goods, and personal care, reminds us of Christ's call to serve the poor with humility and compassion. Your dedication to this mission of love reflects the heart of our faith, showing that charity is not just about giving but about recognising the dignity and worth of every person. Through your presence, Christ's compassion becomes tangible and real.

Passionist Leadership and Community: I wish to acknowledge, with sincere appreciation, the leadership of the Passionist Province for the trust and opportunity given to me to serve at St Brigid's. It is a privilege to minister in this parish, and I am grateful for the confidence placed in me and for the ongoing fraternity that sustains our shared mission.

I also wish to express my deep gratitude to my brothers in the Passionist Community for the gift of your companionship, prayer, and generous service. Our life together, rooted in shared faith and mission, is a constant source of strength and encouragement for me. Your quiet fidelity, compassion, and willingness to serve reflect the heart of our Passionist vocation and draw people gently closer to Christ. I am especially thankful to Frs Tiernan, Kevin and Lex for their remarkable generosity and faithful presence week after week; your service continues to be a blessing to our parish community.

Passionist Companions, Family Groups, Seniors Club, and Men's Club: Your wisdom, fellowship, and readiness to help create spaces where people are known, supported, and never alone.

Parish Team: I want to express my deep appreciation to each member of our parish team for the care, commitment, and generosity you bring to your roles. Much of what you do happens quietly and without recognition, yet it is your steady presence and reliability that allow our parish to function, grow, and remain welcoming to all. To Sisters Rosana and Elenita, your gentle accompaniment and faithful dedication to pastoral care touch lives in ways that often go unseen but are deeply felt. Through your compassion and attentiveness, many experience God's closeness, comfort, and mercy.

To Elena, Paola, Jenny, Jim, and Pongia, you are central to the rhythm of everyday parish life. With professionalism, patience, and genuine care, you attend to countless details that hold everything together—**To Frs Cong, Doan, and Joachim:** I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Frs Cong, Doan, and Joachim for the generosity, humility, and pastoral care you bring to our parish community. Each of you



contributes in your own way to the life and mission of the parish, and together you model a spirit of fraternity and shared ministry.

To Frs Cong and Doan, I am especially grateful for the shepherds you have become. Your openness to learning, your attentiveness to people, and your willingness to walk with the community in both ordinary and challenging moments speak of hearts shaped by genuine pastoral love. The care you show, the time you give, and the trust you build with people are signs of a ministry grounded in compassion and presence.

To Fr Joachim, thank you for the grace and generosity with which you have joined a young and relatively inexperienced team. After many years of leadership and responsibility, your readiness to step into a collaborative role, to support and encourage others, and to blend in so seamlessly has been a powerful witness to humility and fraternity. Your wisdom, calm presence, and steady support continue to enrich our community. I am deeply thankful for each of you and for the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that strengthens our shared ministry.

If I have overlooked anyone, please know that your service is seen by God and deeply appreciated. Every act of love matters.

I want to express my deepest thanks to each of you for the love, prayers, and kindness you have shown my family and me at the sudden loss of my mum. These past days have been deeply difficult, and there are no words that can fully capture how much your support has meant to me. Your prayers, messages, hugs, tears and gentle presence have truly carried me through this time of grief. I am continually sustained by the warmth, faith, and compassion of this parish. The love and energy you have expressed has been a source of

strength and comfort, reminding me that I am not walking this path alone. My family and I are eternally grateful for your care and solidarity. Thank you once again for holding us in your hearts and prayers. May God bless each of you abundantly for the love you so freely share.

After Christmas, I will be travelling to India to spend some time with my family. During my absence, please feel free to contact Fr Cong should any pastoral or parish matters need attention.

Please note that the parish office will be closed until **12 January**. This would be the last newsletter of the year, and the next one will be when the office reopens.

I encourage everyone to rest, recharge, and enjoy the gift of summer with family and friends.

As I conclude, I do so with a profound sense of gratitude and humility. I am deeply aware of how privileged and blessed I am to share life and faith with you as your parish priest. Thank you, personally and sincerely, for the trust, encouragement, patience, and love you continue to show me. Your support, especially in moments of challenge and vulnerability, has been a great source of strength. I look ahead to the coming year with genuine excitement and hope, grateful to continue this journey together. As we prepare for the significant renovation works of our church next year, I count on your continued prayers, generosity, and support, confident that together we will meet these challenges with faith, unity, and hope. It is a joy and an honour to serve among you, and I thank God each day for the gift of this parish community.

As we turn our hearts toward Christmas and the New Year, may the light of Christ fill your homes with peace, joy, and hope. I pray for God's abundant blessings to surround you and your loved ones during this holy season. May your Christmas be filled with warmth, love, and the joy of the Saviour's birth, and may the New Year bring new opportunities, renewed strength, and countless reasons to give thanks.

With heartfelt gratitude for all we have shared, and every blessing for the journey ahead.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



HELP US BUILD A LEGACY

Dear Friends and Family,

We are delighted to announce an exciting new fundraising initiative to preserve the beauty and structural integrity of our cherished **St Brigid's Catholic Church, Marrickville**, as well as the historic **Shrublands Hall**. We are all beneficiaries of the generosity of past generations of parishioners and friends of St Brigid's, who worked tirelessly to build our beautiful church and keep it in good repair. It is now our turn to carry that baton forward.

As many of you know, the church floor is in need of repair. The current tiles were installed in the 1950s and, while they have largely served us well, there are now areas where the tiles are worn and potentially a safety hazard, as outlined by Fr Giltus in the parish newsletter in October. Given their age, further deterioration is expected, making it important that we act now.

Replacing the floor tiles will require a short period of works between **May and July 2026**, during which the *church building* will be closed, but parish life will continue. Weekday and weekend Masses will be celebrated in an alternative space. This period will also allow us to complete the repainting of the church interior, refurbishment of the pews, and several other essential repairs. In addition, urgent repairs are required to the roof of **Shrublands Hall**, which will also be covered by this fundraising campaign.

OUR GOAL

Our total fundraising target is **\$650,000**. This is a significant amount, and we are appealing to the generosity of our friends, family, current and former parishioners, and supporters to help us achieve this goal. Every contribution, large or small, will be deeply appreciated.

HOW WILL WE RAISE THE MONEY?

We have launched a **"Buy a Tile"** fundraising initiative. Re-tiling the floor will require approximately **12,000 new tiles**, in varying quantities of black, ivory, red, and yellow. These tiles are named after saints whose spirituality has been integral to St Brigid's heritage (the Carmelite Nuns, Passionists, Good Sams, and De La Salle).

Each tile has a set donation value, and supporters are invited to contribute by funding the purchase of tiles. Donations of **\$5,000 or more** will be acknowledged appropriately. Additional fundraising events may also be announced in the New Year.

HOW CAN I DONATE?

We have established a dedicated fundraising website. You can access it at <https://app.galabid.com/stbrigidslegacy/items> or by scanning the QR code below.

Please register on the website so that we can issue you a tax receipt. **All donations are 30% tax deductible.** If you prefer to donate by cash or cheque, donation envelopes are available at the church doors. For alternative arrangements, please contact the Parish Office.

Together, this goal is truly achievable. We are blessed to be part of a strong and committed parish community that can ensure **St Brigid's Catholic Church and Shrublands Hall continue to serve as pillars of faith, love, and community for generations to come.**

Thank you in advance for your generosity, prayers, and support.



BUY A TILE. LEAVE A LEGACY.

Contribute to the restoration of St Brigid's
- the heart of Marrickville.

HOW IT WORKS



Select your
tile



Purchase
your tile



Be apart of
our story



galabid.com/stbrigidslegacy

\$650,000 GOAL
12,000 TILES

St. Brigid's Community Day

Celebrating Our Uniqueness

St Brigid's Parish,
one family, many cultures,
alive in Christ

Sunday
15th February 2026

Started with Mass at 10:30 am

Followed by: *Family time fun*

Celebrating Cultures *Music*
Entertainment
FACE PAINTING KID ACTIVITIES
MAGIC



LITURGICAL TIMETABLE

MONDAY - FRIDAY: Mass at 6:45am followed by Exposition and Rosary, then Adoration and Benediction at 8.45am, followed by Mass at 9am and Rosary.

SATURDAY: Mass at 8am followed by Holy Rosary.

Sacrament of Reconciliation at 4.15pm.

Mass at 5pm (Livestreamed) and 6.30pm (Vietnamese).

SUNDAY: Mass at 8am | 10.30am (bilingual) | 4pm (Vietnamese) | 6pm.

MINISTRY OF CARE & SUPPORT TO THE AGED AND INFIRMED:

Communion is taken to sick residents in Nursing Homes and in their homes on a weekly basis, either by Ministers of Care or family members. Please contact the Parish Office to organise Communion to be taken to those who are home-bound.

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is offered after 6.45am and 9am Mass on the first Friday of each month.