

# Parish Bugle

Issue 39  
November, 2022



Marguerite Higgins was an award-winning journalist who was imbedded with the American troops during the Korean War. She tells this story; One night the soldiers ended their march early for dinner. They were bone tired and filled with anxiety and the fear of death. One young soldier leaned against a jeep, eating his cold dinner out of a tin can. He had been in the field for weeks. His clothes were stiff with dirt and the cold. His heavily bearded face was impacted with mud and almost without expression. Then one of his buddies asked a surprising question. He said, "Pete, if I were God and could give you whatever you wish, what would you want the most?" The soldier stood motionless for a few moments, and then he said, "Just give me tomorrow."

You and I have a tendency to become stuck in things that are depleted and dead. We are cemented to these places because of hurt or because of our desire that our life would be different. In whatever dark, angry or hurt place we might be stuck, God has the power to call us out and give us a new beginning.

Christ knows well the many obstacles to peace we encounter in our own local surroundings and certainly in the world that we live in but he does not want us to lose heart, to let fear or prejudices blind us to the greatest gift we can share with others; His peace.

This Christmas as we ponder the great gift of Christ let us find the time to ask ourselves, 'How do I and how can I bring the gift of peace I have received from Christ to those around me?' At the same time this Christmas let us develop an even deeper closeness to our Lord and Saviour Jesus, so that He and His power will work more through us and our human efforts.



*Fr Subin Thomas,  
Your Parish Priest*

*We acknowledge and pay respect to the land and the traditional families of the Yugambeh region of South East Queensland, including the Kombumerri, Mununjali, Wangerriburra and others, and their Elders past present and emerging.*

**ST PATRICK'S**

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## Q & A - The Birth of Jesus and other children

Recent reliable studies of world trends in population growth have revealed that growth rates are declining everywhere including sub-Saharan Africa where population rates have traditionally been the highest in the world. Europe and the western world have been in decline since the late 60s and 70s - in part due to the efforts of Paul Ehrlich and other doomsters - their predictions on demographics were so far wide of the mark as to be laughable but they were taken seriously by governments around the world with disastrous results as in China and elsewhere. It makes one wonder whether any predictions anywhere, on any subject, should be taken seriously.

Predictions now indicate that in the future there will never be as many children as there are now currently in the world. Since the year 2000 these trends have been indicated, but the UN have now confirmed them. The governments of around half of all the countries in the world have been actively encouraging their people to have children long before the UN realised these trends. I wonder when those countries and organisations that so actively promote sterilisation, abortion on demand and other anti-child policies will quietly drop them.

Aging populations across the globe mean fewer workers supporting more and more longer living people, putting great stress on medical services and the general economy. Recently, I was reading some Old Testament stories about the seven famines in Egypt for my grandchildren and it struck me that we are now seeing modern day famines - a famine of children - of infertility. Despite our so-called mastery of the Universe, it would seem we are no further advanced in controlling our destiny than the Pharaohs!

The figures produced by the UN are conservative compared to other organisations that predict an even faster decline in population growth. It will mean that countries will compete for migrants and refugees on a world market. They will be in demand rather than being a source of fear, irritation and disruption!

At this time of celebration when we welcome the birth of Christ it reminds us of the hope and salvation he will bring and also that children are a gift and not always forth coming. The current hostility that exists within our own society towards children is ill considered at best and disastrous at worst, for the good of us all. I was once told by a priest that visiting prisons was a most saddening event, made even more striking by the total absence of children. Of course, that is not what we think when we encounter a primary school yard at playtime or in our own backyard with every child in the neighbour there! Going into Christmas then let us all treasure the children that the Lord has entrusted us.

Terry O'Shea



### Bequests to the Parish

*Should any Parishioner be considering making a financial bequest to St. Patrick's Parish, such a bequest must be included in your Last Will and Testament.*

*There is an exactly worded statement required to be used when making such a bequest. This exact statement can be obtained from the Parish Office.*

### Disclaimer

*The views, opinions and comments expressed in the Bugle are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Roman Catholic Archdioceses of Brisbane, the Catholic Parish of St Patrick's Parish Beenleigh, or any other agency, organisation or company.*

# St Patrick's Youth Mass

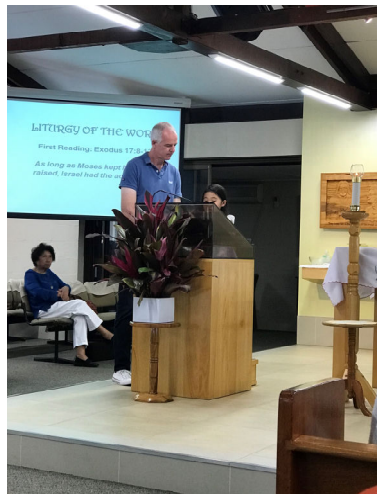


Our Parish Family Masses have been lovely celebrations this year. Here are some photos from our Family/Youth Mass on October 16th at 9am.

Children from St Joseph's and Mother Teresa schools did a wonderful job of reading, our youth band provided great music, and a young lad from our parish reverently served as an 'apprentice' altar server.

After Mass we enjoyed each other's company with conversation and refreshments. Thank you to everyone involved.

*Cathy Korzeniewski*



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## Pope Francis—All Souls' Day

On All Souls' Day, Pope Francis urged Christians not to “compromise with the Gospel” but to take Jesus' words seriously when he says we will be judged by how we treat the poor.

“Often, out of convenience or comfort, we tend to tone down Jesus' message, to water down his words. Let's face it, we have gotten pretty good at compromising with the Gospel,” the pope said in St. Peter's Basilica on Nov. 2.

“From simple disciples of the Master, we become masters of complexity, who argue a lot and do little, who seek answers more in front of the computer than in front of the Crucifix, on the internet rather than in the eyes of our brothers and sisters; Christians who comment, debate, and expound theories but do not know even a poor person by name, have not visited a sick person for months, have never fed or dressed someone, have never made friends with someone in need,” he said.

In his homily, the pope reflected on Jesus' words in the Gospel of Matthew: “For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.”

The pope said that these words in the Gospel help prepare for death and the final judgment. He said God is “waiting for us among the poor and wounded of the world.” Pope Francis warned that there is a continual risk to “put the expectations of the world before the expectation of God” and to end up “losing sight of what matters.”

“The best careers, the greatest achievements, the most prestigious titles and awards, the accumulated wealth and earthly gains, all will vanish in an instant, everything,” he said.

The pope said that All Souls' Day is a good occasion to ask, “if our desires have anything to do with heaven.”

Pope Francis offered Mass on All Souls' Day for the repose of the souls of more than 150 deceased bishops and cardinals who died in the past year.

After the Mass, Pope Francis made a private visit to a cemetery inside Vatican City. The Teutonic Cemetery, located next to St. Peter's Basilica, is the burial place of people of German, Austrian, and Swiss descent, as well as for people from other German-speaking nations, particularly members of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady. The cemetery is built on the historic site of Nero's Circus, where early Christians in Rome were martyred, including St. Peter.

On All Souls' Day and throughout the month of November, the Church makes a special effort to remember, honour, and pray for the dead. There are many different cultural traditions around this period, but one of the most consistently honoured is the practice of visiting cemeteries.

As we approach this season of Advent, Christians begin preparations for the coming of the Messiah and the celebration of Christmas with the birth of Jesus Christ. So let us ponder the Pope's words and how we will include this Christmas some of the marginalised. On the contrary, the joyful season of Christmas can elicit great sadness and anger because of being unable to provide the luxuries which society tells us are essential.



By Courtney Mares , Rome Newsroom, Nov 2, 2022 , Submitted by Denise O'Shea

# All Souls' Day—St Patrick's



St Patrick's celebrated All Souls' Day on November 2, a day when we commemorate our Faithful Departed, the souls of Christians who have died.

Fr Subin celebrated a beautiful Mass, which concluded with prayers in the Columbarium.

Afterwards we had the opportunity to write the names of our loved ones on little butterflies, which we pinned to material on the wall, where they will be displayed and prayed for during the month of November. There was a shared supper and chat in the Truelson room, which we all very much enjoyed.



**The Columbarium & Memorial Garden** has been built to provide a permanent resting place for parishioners and their families who have chosen to be cremated. It is situated within a gated area on the western side of St Patrick's Church. The niches are set in a walled area within a tranquil and peaceful garden setting.

Niches may be reserved at any time prior to an interment with many parishioners choosing to purchase several years ahead. To purchase or to reserve a niche, families are asked to contact the Parish Office.

Once the ashes of your loved ones have been interred, families are welcome to visit the Garden at any time. Loved ones interred in St Patrick's Columbarium are remembered in the Prayers of the Faithful at each Sunday Mass. The columbarium and garden is maintained in a dignified condition by members of our parish community.

St Patrick's Parish Columbarium, has niches available as a single, double or triple niche at a cost of \$440, \$880 and \$1200 respectively.

If you wish to view the Columbarium please contact the Parish Office – Ph:07 3287 2282 or email: [beenleigh@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:beenleigh@bne.catholic.net.au)



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## Country of the Month: Fiji



St. Patrick's country of the month in October, was Fiji, and although our little parish community is only small, we managed to put up a little special treat for our parishioners to enjoy on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October - a new initiative by our Parish Council and Fr. Subin.

We have a parish that is blessed with great diversity of cultures and what better way to enjoy and acknowledge our fellow parishioners and their different cultures. The morning tea delights included, Fijian doughnut (Babakau), Fiji Indian doughnut (Gulugula), Fijian Cassava (Tapioca) Cake slices, Chicken curry with rice, Dahl (Indian flavourful Lentil Soup), Fiji biscuits (Fiji's version of a SAO biscuit) topped with jam and butter and other little Fiji/Indian snacks commonly eaten in Fiji.

Tables were dressed in Fijian cultural wear (Sulus) known as sarongs, lined with Fijian artefacts, such as the 'Lali' (like little wooden drums) used in cultural events to summon or address the community, Fijian 'Kava' bowl set used to hold a traditional drink known as Kava, a hand woven fan, and a very petite sized traditional woven handbag for women and a few Fiji flags displayed up high.

It was happy moment for us and a pleasure to see and welcome all. I would like to thank Beverley Croft, Uini Falani (my husband) for their contribution in making this day a success by bringing a little taste of Fiji to our parishioners, who we think enjoyed the spread. We look forward to celebrating our next cultural morning tea on the last Sunday in November with our Indian parish community. Thank you all and God Bless.

*Meryline Croker-Falani*



# St Patrick's Reconciliation Action Plan



As part of the Reconciliation Action Plan this year we have participated in many truth telling opportunities across the Archdiocese to hear Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories and voices of Australia's shared history. A reflection of these events and the year of 2022, along with the beautiful area within which we live inspired the following prayer for Christmas.

*To our Creator God,*

*As the year draws near an end to celebrate Christmas, we are reflecting on the year 2022 that was.*

*We are reflecting on troubled times of our global pandemic, the ravages of war and severe climate and weather events in our communities. Many have lost their lives and many have lost their lives in helping others. Many people have become homeless and many people have been separated from each other, living without love.*

*We are also reflecting on the strength of God the Creator through these troubled times, who has lifted the spiritual fabric of our global, national and local community, who has encouraged us to find the humanity in each other and within the natural environment within which we live.*

*Our Creator God has helped us to recognise and remember the value of life and our relatively short journey on earth. To value the connections both small and large, with each other and the natural environment, for this is what holds the most value when we reach the end of our earthly journey. Through these times the Creator God has helped us to find truth and true meaning.*

*This Christmas we are grateful for enlightening us with this understanding of true meaning. We are grateful for the guidance that the Creator God provides in our hearts and minds to live in truth on a day to day basis. We are grateful for the reminders the Creator God contrives on a day to day basis to remind us of this truth.*

*This Christmas we are thankful and pray for continued guidance for our global communities and national and local communities. We pray that we will continue to find the humanity in each other, to love each other without conditions. To love and give without expectation of any return.*

*Finally, we pray to God our Creator for continued guidance with living our earthly journey and beyond in a true spirit that honours Creation itself. Amen*  
**Fiona Rowe Minniss**



Mt Tamborine, Yugambah Country,  
out to Beaudesert

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# Trinity College

## Year 12 Graduation 2022

On Thursday 20 October the Trinity family gathered for Mass in the Marcellin Champagnat Auditorium to mark the conclusion of 13 Years of schooling for our Yr 12 Cohort. This was a special time for the whole community as we farewelled the graduating class of 2022. The Mass, celebrated by Fr Subin, reinforced for our graduating class that, as they moved forward into their future lives, God would be with them always.

It was wonderful to hear the many special tributes offered to the Year 12 cohort as each year level thanked the graduating class for their leadership of the student body over the past 12 months, mentioning along the way special moments across the year.

There were many smiles and a few tears as the Yr 12's processed out of the Auditorium for the last time. As they passed through the guard of honour, which stretched across the school grounds, formed by our Yr 7 and Yr 11 students, our year 12's were cheered and clapped by the younger year levels. Certainly, a special time.

In the evening our Yr 12 parents joined the graduands at a Graduation Dinner which combined the Yr 12 awards evening. It was a wonderful gathering where students had the opportunity to celebrate their achievements in the company of their parents.

Amongst the proceedings of the evening each graduand was presented with a gift from the College. Part of their graduating gift was a small Olive Wood heart, fashioned in Bethlehem, with the following message attached.

*Like the heart of Mary our good Mother may you be forever blessed with:*

*faith and hope, love and humility;*

*strength in hardship and patience in adversity;*

*kind heartedness and compassion toward others.*

*May you always and everywhere know that you are forever protected and cherished within the Sacred Heart's of Mary and Jesus and that God's love for you endures forever.*

*As you hold this wooden heart may you be reminded of the Marial virtues of Humility, Simplicity and Modesty that you might live these in your life.*



## Collecting for ROSIES

Recently the Trinity College community has been collecting non-perishable food goods suitable to make up Christmas hampers that Rosies will give to those doing it tough.

These donations are being bought forward at the end of year Christmas liturgy for each year level and placed under the giving tree. The response has been an extremely generous one as evidenced by our Yr 11 giving tree pictured.



*Nancy Rodgers,  
APRE, Trinity College*





## Raising funds for charity

Each Year the College runs a variety of fundraising events to raise funds to give to several Charities including Caritas, Rosies, Catholic Mission, The Mary MacKillop Fund, St Vincent De Paul, Emmanuel City Mission.

New to our fundraising this year was the College's 'Fun Run - Crazy Colour Day' held in term 4. It was an amazing afternoon of fun for both staff and students. Running around an obstacle course on the Oval being splashed with water and coloured powder was the source of laughter and smiles all round. We certainly sent some very colourful students home that afternoon, so too staff.

This afternoon was the culmination of a fund-raising drive for the Charities the College supports. In total this event raised \$8,900 which will go a long way in supporting people in need both locally and internationally. Not only do our fundraising events raise money but they provide timely reminders for our whole College community that we are all called by the Gospel of Jesus to reach out to others in need with love and compassion, a concept that lies at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching as well as our Marist story. Our Marist Theme for the year "Known and Loved – Dignity for All" has kept in clear focus our need to recognize that every human being, no matter who they are or where they come from, possesses dignity because they are created in the image and likeness of God.



*Happy student covered in coloured powder*

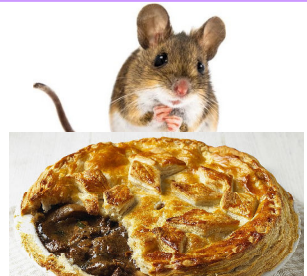
*Nancy Rodgers,  
APRE, Trinity College*

## CHRISTMAS FIELD MOUSE PIE

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 c. macaroni               | 1 c. cracker crumbs        |
| 5 fat field mice            | 1 c. Cheddar cheese grated |
| 1/2 med. onion, sliced thin | 1 med can tomatoes         |

Boil macaroni 10 mins. While it is cooking, fry field mice long enough to get the fat out. Grease casserole dish with fat. Layer mice, macaroni, onions and tomatoes. Repeat and sprinkle with cracker crumbs and cheese. Bake at 350 for 10 minutes or until mice are done.

Note: If rainy weather, as mice are hard to find, you may substitute with sausages



*Submitted by Linda Boucek*





# St Joseph Tobruk Primary School

## Socktober 2022

St Joseph's continued its great support for Catholic Mission in 2022. This year our student Ambassadors spoke to the Parish and School community raising awareness and asking for prayer and financial support for children and families in Ethiopia, a beautiful and deeply historic place.

Ethiopia faces many challenges including conflict, poverty and famine and the impact of climate change is exacerbating these issues. As a school community we have raised \$1063 for these families.

Students enjoyed an afternoon of fun and soccer shootouts with star Soccer Goalies – Fr Subin, Mr Billion, Joey staff and Nic from the A Grade Logan Lightning Team. We totalled 184 goals in an afternoon and loved wearing our crazy socks!! Please continue to keep the children and families of Ethiopia in your prayers.



## Remembrance Day – 11th November

On the 11th November we paused for one minute of silence to remember those who have served and died in wars, conflicts and peacemaking operations. This day is significant for our school titled 'Tobruk Memorial' as we remember the young men and women who served at the "Siege of Tobruk" from April 10 to November 21, 1941.

There were many ways our classes acknowledged this day in their classrooms. Here is one example from a Year 1 classroom. Every child created a portion of a poppy and then they joined their pieces together to symbolise how in these times humans all come together.



Over the last few weeks, we have welcomed our 2023 Preps and their families as they look forward to beginning their educational journey with St Joey's in 2023. This is always a very exciting time for our school community. We are looking forward to our upcoming School Christmas Celebration as we pause to remember the joy and gift of Jesus.

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of another school year. As we reflect on a year of continued pandemic impacts and the floods at the beginning of the year, it has been a time we have had to be '*strong and courageous*' people, filled with hope and an ongoing determination to look for opportunities for growth and success.

We are very grateful for the opportunities we have experienced and the camaraderie and welcome of those in our school and parish communities. We thank the parish for their continued prayers and support for the important work we do in our school. We wish our Year 6 graduating class every success as they head off to high school and pray that they continue to walk with **courage, faith and love**.

To all our school and parish families we wish you each a Christmas season filled with joy and happiness. We look forward to the many new possibilities and opportunities that await us in 2023.

*Kathryn O'Toole, APRE, St Joseph's Tobruk Memorial School*



## Blessing of the Animals

Early in the term our Years 1 and 2 students hosted our whole school liturgy. During the liturgy they celebrated the life and works of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology. Viewed as the original Earth Day advocate his devotion to God was expressed through his love for all of God's creation. St. Francis cared for the poor and sick, he preached sermons to animals and praised all creatures as brothers and sisters under God. To commemorate the great works of St Francis, the students were invited to bring in pictures of their pets so our school leaders could perform a blessing of the animals on the Friday morning before school commenced.

The students thoroughly enjoyed celebrating the wonderful pets in their lives!



## Year 5 Leadership Morning

This term our Year 5 students explored the idea of what leadership looks like at Mother Teresa. The morning provided a great opportunity for the students to explore the journeys of St Paul, discuss the model of servant leadership within a Catholic school and meet with our current School and House Captains to ask them questions about the challenges they faced as student leaders and what they enjoyed about the role. Our school principal Mr Mirto also met with the students to discuss the school and community expectations associated with each role.

## Remembrance Day

On Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, the Year 6 students hosted the Remembrance Day liturgy so classes could lay wreaths at the foot of the cross during the liturgy and observe a minute's silence for all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. It was a great opportunity for the school community to gather and pray for all those who have lost their lives in war.

*"The coming of Jesus at Bethlehem brought joy to the world and to every human heart. May his coming this Christmas bring to each one of us that peace and joy He desires to give." - Mother Teresa*

From the staff, students and school community of Mother Teresa, we would like to wish everyone a safe, happy and holy Christmas.

Adam McCoy, APRE, Mother Teresa School





## St Vincent De Paul Society - St Patrick's Conference

### FESTIVAL MASS

We would like to thank Fr Subin for supporting our conference in the celebration of the South Coast Diocesan Festival Mass in our Parish recently. These are special Masses held regularly throughout our Diocese to induct new members and presidents, to recognise long serving members in our region and to thank God for his guidance in our work with the poor and needy.

The Mass, celebrated by Bishop Ken Howell and concelebrated by Fr Subin, was spiritually rewarding. Many conferences of the Diocese were represented and it was especially wonderful to have our new State President Patricia McMahon in attendance. She is the first woman elected to this role in 128 years.

As always, we are grateful for the support of our Parishioners and their attendance at Mass and supper. And last but certainly not least, our sincere thanks to the ladies of our Parish for providing such a wonderful supper which was most enjoyable and made for a nice finale to a successful, happy and sociable celebration.



### CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Once again we ask you, our parishioners, for your support for this year's Vinnies Christmas Appeal. As you would all realise, we are experiencing seemingly ever worsening problems such as the housing crisis mentioned in the last issue of The Bugle, rising inflation, price of fuel, fruit and vegetables and just about anything else you need to buy including the cost of essential services. People are hurting and there is no end in sight.

This year most of the money raised will be spent on Christmas Hampers which will hopefully bring some cheer to families celebrating Christmas and the birth of Jesus our redeemer.

In our Parish, this Australian wide Appeal will be held on: **Sat 3 and Sun 4 December**. Donation envelopes will be made available or can be obtained from the piety stall. Your donation can be placed in the collection bag at any Mass throughout December.

### SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE ASSISTANCE for September & October:

Total Number of Contacts: 122. Value of Assistance Provided: \$12 701.00  
We assisted 122 single parents with children and 20 partnered. There were 266 children under 17 years. THANKYOU.

We take this opportunity to thank the parishioners of St Patrick's, the staff, parents and pupils of Trinity College, St Joseph's and Mother Teresa schools for their prayers and ongoing support throughout 2022. We wish you all a Happy, Holy and safe Christmas !!

*John Maksimas, Vice President SVDP*

# The Christmas Story as told by Luke



In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"



*Photos from St Patrick's Holy Land trip: Painting of the Nativity, inside the Church of the Shepherds in Bethlehem, the location where the angels appeared to the shepherds to lead them to the birth-place of Jesus, the very place where Jesus was born indicated by the star in the Church of the Nativity, crib in the Church of the Nativity.*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

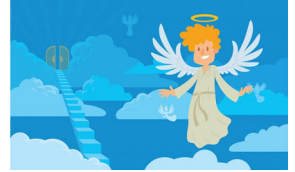
*Luke 2:1-14(15-20)*



# Children's Christmas Story

The story begins more than 2,000 years ago with a woman named Mary, who lived in the town of Nazareth. She was about to marry a man named Joseph when an angel came to visit her. This angel was named Gabriel, and he had some very important news.

Gabriel told Mary that she would become pregnant. He also said that her son would be named Jesus. This baby Jesus was going to be a very special baby. Gabriel said that Jesus would be the son of God. Jesus was going to be a king, just like King David of the olden days. He would be a savior, a messiah, and his kingdom would never end.



This was a very important moment. All babies have a human mum and a human dad, but this baby was different. For the first time ever, a mother was pregnant with a baby, and the baby did not have a human dad. That's because Jesus's dad was God. This miracle is called the "immaculate conception." It is one of the most amazing things that has ever happened.

When Joseph heard the news, he became confused. How could such a miraculous thing be possible? Joseph thought that Mary was lying, and that she wouldn't be a very good wife. Luckily, Gabriel visited Joseph in a dream. Gabriel told Joseph that it was true: Mary's baby boy would be the son of God. This calmed Joseph, and he and Mary got married.



Gabriel also told Joseph how important Jesus would be. Gabriel said that Jesus would save people from their sins. He would help people during his life, and make them very happy.

While Mary was pregnant with her baby, the Roman emperor made a declaration. He said that all people must be counted so that he would know how many people lived in his empire. This counting is called a census. Because of the census, Mary and Joseph had to leave their hometown of Nazareth and travel to the town of Bethlehem.

Mary rode to Bethlehem on a donkey. The journey took a few days. When they arrived, they got some bad news. All of the inns were already full. They had no place to sleep. This was especially bad news because Mary was about to have her baby. Luckily, an innkeeper told Mary and Joseph that they could stay in their stable. It was in this stable, a house for horses and other animals, that Jesus was born.

After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph put him in the manger. The manger was the trough for the animals' food. Because he was born in a stable and not in a house or hospital, baby Jesus had to sleep in the manger.



# Children's Christmas Story



It's amazing that the son of God was born not in a palace or in a mansion, but in a simple stable. This shows us that we should always be humble. The baby's surroundings were simple, but it was his soul that really mattered.

Baby Jesus had many visitors. There were shepherds around Bethlehem, taking care of their sheep. Angels came to tell the shepherds that Jesus, the son of God, had been born. The angels also told the shepherds where to find Jesus. They said that he would be in the manger. The shepherds hurried to visit baby Jesus.

Jesus had other important visitors: **the three wise men (the Magi)**. These men were very smart and came to visit Jesus. They also made sure to keep baby Jesus safe.

The three wise men lived in a distant land. One night, they looked up at the stars. One light was shining especially bright. That bright star was directly above Bethlehem, where baby Jesus rested in his manger.



The three wise men decided to set out on an important journey. They would travel toward the star. They knew that when they arrived at the spot beneath the star, they would find a new king there.

As the three wise men travelled, they passed King Herod, the king of Judah. He told the three wise men to find baby Jesus, and then tell him where Jesus was. King Herod claimed he wanted to visit and worship Jesus. But the three wise men were very smart, and they knew this was a lie. King Herod wanted to find baby Jesus so that he could kill him. The Three Wise Men knew they couldn't let this happen.

The three wise men continued, always heading toward the brightly shining star. Finally, they arrived in Bethlehem. When they saw baby Jesus, they fell on their knees, worshiped him and prayed. They knew that Jesus was the son of God. He was the messiah. He was the saviour. He would change the world forever.

The three wise men also gave baby Jesus gifts. They left him with gold, myrrh, and frankincense. They knew this was important to do, since Jesus was the son of God.

When it was time for the three wise men to leave, they returned to their country by a different route. They never saw King Herod, and baby Jesus was safe.

This is a very important story, and it is the reason we celebrate Christmas. A long time before Jesus was born, God promised he would send humanity a saviour. He said He would send a very special person to help people. He said He would send a messiah. Jesus was this person.



*Adapted from The Christmas Story for Kids (Birth of Jesus Christ) - Jacobs Christmas*

<https://www.jacobschristmas.com/christmas-story-kids-birth-jesus-christ/>



# Christmas Toys

I've been stumped on what to gift the boys for Christmas this year. Matt is determined to get them a pack of magnet tiles to add to their already significant collection of toys.

It's just a plastic toy- said Matt.

While I'm all for them adding to the collection, at what cost? I had a small breakdown after the boys pulled out every toy they owned onto the floor. No part of the tiled floor was in sight... and it was triggering.

'It's just some plastic toys' - I said.

I pull myself together, gathered the boys into the car and drove to the shops. I'm going to purchase a bunch of boxes to store all their toys into to keep them out of sight.

'It's just another plastic toy'- I hear a lady say to her partner.

I feel the shelves filled to the brim with brightly coloured and noisy toys loom over me.

'It's just more plastic toys' - the shop assistant says.

The statement doesn't sit well with me. As I stand in line with my storage boxes and two napless toddlers in-tow it dawns on me.

'It's just one plastic toy'- said seven billion people.

As soon as I get home I get the boys to help me tidy the horrific mess in our living room. I put aside a bunch of toys for donation. I realise there's no way to rid the world of these toys, but at least they can go to someone who will get more use out of them than the boys who insist on using them to decorate the floor.

I realise this message isn't particularly religious, and I'm sorry if I've disappointed you; but this issue is just as important. We are in charge of caring for this earth that God gifted us. We are in charge of ensuring our kids have a future where the world isn't burning or melting before our eyes. So if a fraction of the world's population said,

"We don't need that one plastic toy", could you imagine the difference it would make on this planet? It would be huge.

Matt is still insistent on getting magnet tiles, but perhaps I can convince him to at least purchase second hand.

*Erica Ng Philips*



Picture submitted by Mary Se



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A voice roared forth  
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Of life  
Of harbour  
Of surety  
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Stinging in intensity  
Flailing with urgency  
Nearly spent but not quite  
Fountains of pure water from  
Crevices so deep they were themselves dense black-  
ness

Entering the garden of chaos  
the eyes of the wounded blinked,  
scanning for safety  
For hope  
Forced into recovery by nature's brutality  
The scent of survival pungent and raw  
They are the animals who had been vigilant and resilient  
Now waiting for kindness and shelter and warmth  
Longing for peace but sensing this was their lot, their life.  
A sharp knowing that a new order was in place

*"When you look  
after Country,  
Country will look  
after you"*

- ELDER BRUNO OF THE  
NYUL NYUL COMMUNITY

Not of their doing  
Who weeps for them?  
Who will enter the storm and  
change the narrative?

*Judith Floyd, fmm*



When a family experiences the heartache and difficulty of the loss of a loved one, funeral arrangements can be a stressful time for everyone involved. Organising for a prepaid funeral can lighten some of that burden and relieve your family in a time of sorrow.

## Planning for the future is a prudent approach

Nobody likes to think about it, but the fact remains that we are only on this earth for a short time. Pre-arranging a funeral is no different from saving for a holiday or putting money away for an investment. Pre-planning a funeral is a logical and sensitive way to ensure your passing can be celebrated with as little stress possible on the ones who love you. Our professional and helpful funeral director can guide you in completing the appropriate paperwork – nothing morbid or sad, just like filling out a will – practical, sensible and easy.

## Holy Cross Funerals can ensure you have the funeral you want

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# Always Guided by God



Peter Meerleveldt says that 'I have always been guided to help people. It hasn't always worked out, but I still want to help, as it makes me happy'.



*Peter and Alice celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary with Fr Joseph Kanatt, family and friends at St Patrick's Church, in January 2017*

Peter and Alice both originally came from Holland, where they met dancing in the streets, during celebrations at the end of the war. Peter had to serve in the military for another two years, before they could marry and plan their life together. Life was difficult in Holland after the war. The family business was struggling and Peter wanted to move forward, look to the future and he hoped that Australia was just the place for a family.

Peter and Alice had one daughter in Holland with another two daughters and a son born in Australia. Peter soon found work in the construction industry, starting off as a machine operator and driver, eventually being offered the princely sum of 28 pounds per week. Peter soon moved on though, and started his own earth moving business in Lorne, Victoria.

When asked what made him to come to St Patrick's Peter said 'The Lord is my shepherd and he brought us to Beenleigh'. St Patrick's priests and parishioners have been very grateful over the years. Their strong faith, willingness to get involved in parish activities and enthusiasm for life has enriched us all.

At St Joseph's school fetes in the 1980's, the Meerleveld family's Dutch donuts (oliebollen) stall was very popular and profitable. Peter said they needed four 20kilo bags of flour to keep up with the demand. Together with Tony Bellekom, John Truelson, John Eley, Jeffrey Graver and others, Peter was one of the skilled parishioners involved in the building of our current church which opened in 1980.

For Peter and Alice, St Patrick's has been very important throughout the years 'It has been a bed-rock and a wonderful, extended family'.

*Anne Erbacher and Monica Boucek*