

The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!
**Welcome to the Catholic Parishes of
St Mary's Mudgee, St John the Baptist Gulgong,
St Dominic's Kandos/ St Malachy's Rylstone.**

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and pray.
We walk on Wiradjuri country. May we continue to love and respect the land as they have.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD—25TH DECEMBER 2024

CHRISTMAS 2024

Helpless but not hopeless



Dear Friends in Christ,

At Christmas, we look to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. The name of the town means “house of bread (food)”. This has great significance for us who believe that Jesus is the bread come down from heaven: for the life of the world. An important detail in Luke’s account of the Nativity is that, after he was born, Jesus was placed in a manger. “Manger” is an old word, no longer in common use, which means feeding trough. From the outset, Jesus is presented as the living bread offered for those who desire to live with God forever.

As our gaze turns to Bethlehem, we grieve for the present reality of the land where the Son of God took his first human breath. The words I wrote earlier this year, at Easter, are still sadly true: “Violence has begotten more violence; and ordinary and defenceless people are being ground up in the unforgiving wheels of history, politics and the arms trade.”

We may feel helpless, but let’s not give in to hopelessness. The true message of Christmas is that a light has shone into our darkened world. God has entered our world to redeem it from within. Each one of us can say yes to this hope every time we say yes to the acts of forgiveness, reconciliation and love that we can decide to do. And we can find the strength to keep doing that when we come to Mass and are nourished by the living bread who is our Saviour.

+Michael McKenna

Bishop of Bathurst



“The Journey of New Beginnings” - by Hunter, St Joseph’s Primary School, Molong - winner of the Bishop’s Award in the Diocese of Bathurst’s 2024 Christmas Story and Art Competition.

Parish Priest

Fr Owen Gibbons
Fr Cong Hoang

Parish Deacon

Rev Charles Applin

Parish Secretaries

Mrs Kristie Newman
Ms Krista O’Brien

Phone: 02 6372 2122

Parish Office Hours

Mon 10.00am - 4.00pm

Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri

9.00am - 4.00pm

Closed for Lunch 1.00pm

- 2.00pm

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CHRISTMAS BLESSING

"Lord God of heaven and earth,
You revealed your only-begotten Son to
every nation
By the guidance of a star.

Bless this house and all who inhabit it.
Fill them with the light of Christ,
That their concern for others may reflect
your love.

We ask this through Christ our Lord".
Amen



*May the joy of Christmas bring peace
and happiness to you and your family.*

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

We would like to wish everyone a very holy,
peace filled and safe Christmas and New
Year.

We thank all those who have generously
contributed to the building up of our parish
family this year, in so many ways, in the
giving of your time, your gifts and talents,
your prayer and know how.

As we continue to strive to be the loving
presence of Jesus our Saviour, for our
community and beyond, may the Lord bring
forth the fruits of our efforts this year.

God bless, Fr Cong & Fr Owen



"The Word
was made
flesh and
dwelt
amongst us."

John 1:14

Quietness

Bless us, Lord,
this Christmas with
quietness in our mind.
Teach us to be patient
and always to be kind.
Show us that in
quietness we feel your
presence near
and filling us with joy
and peace through out
the coming year.

MASSES AND PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING.

For the recently deceased especially:

Tony Dimmock, Lance Tito, Eileen Csuba, Carmen Archer,
Clare Van Oploo.

For the deceased, especially at Christmas time:

Miriam Byers & Family, Ashley Knight, Alm, Cliff & Ashley
Thomas, Jack, Julie, John Paul & Brian Bennett,
Members of the McGuinness & Clayton Families, Lawrence
& Margart McGuinness, Graham Hawkins, John O'Brien,
Kay Daly (Ireland), Nikki & Craig Lynch, Michael Azar,
Nauma Buchanan, Blake Pool (Denman), Eleanor Bryant,
Fr Max Blumenthal, Denis Flynn, Mick Batson, Ken Brown,
Denis Matthews, Eileen Ellsmore, Ervine McDermott,
Francis McDermott, Tom & Edna Power, Paul Power,
Peter Power, Patrick Power.

CHRISTMAS HYMN

Once in Royal David's City

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love.
For that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

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REFLECTION

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

St Francis of Assisi is credited with setting up the first nativity scene and thus establishing a tradition that is carried on today in homes, churches and public spaces in Christian communities everywhere. In 1223, in the town of Greccio he created a life size tableau of the nativity scene to heighten the awareness of the celebration of the birth of Christ. It included statues of the holy family and a live ox and donkey. The inclusion of the livestock has no scriptural support and it is to Francis that we owe the array of sheep, oxen and donkeys that have become standard inclusions in our nativity scenes.

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The Nativity of the Lord

First Reading: [Isaiah 9:1-7](#)

A son is given to us.

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 95:1-3. 11-13 R. Lk 2:11](#)

***(R.) Today is born our Saviour,
Christ the Lord.***

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.

O sing to the Lord, bless his name. **(R.)**

Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples. **(R.)**

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,
let the sea and all within it thunder praise,
let the land and all it bears rejoice,
all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,
he comes to rule the earth. **(R.)**

With justice he will rule the world,
he will judge the peoples with his truth. **(R.)**

Second Reading: [Titus 2:11-14](#)

God's grace has been revealed to all people.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Good News and great joy to all the world:
today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!

Gospel: [Luke 2:1-14](#)

Today a saviour has been born for you.



*"A saviour
has been
born to
you; He is
Christ the
Lord."*

Luke 2:11



Each Christmas, Bishop McKenna highlights a grassroots project that transforms lives in places of great need. This year, we are supporting the construction of classrooms on Santo Island, Vanuatu, where students are learning in makeshift tents after devastating volcanic eruptions and cyclones.

Help rebuild hope and create lasting change for these children and their communities. Your donation today can give them the safe, inspiring learning spaces they deserve.

Visit our website to learn more about this vital mission and give the gift of a brighter future this Christmas.

How can I make a difference?

- ⇒ **In Person:** At any parish office
- ⇒ **Post:** PO Box 246, Bathurst NSW 2795

- ⇒ **Phone:** 6334 6400
- ⇒ **Online:** <https://bathurst.catholic.org.au>

HELP BUILD A FUTURE: SUPPORT THE BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Meet Verongo, a dedicated teacher on the island of Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu. Each day, Verongo works tirelessly in a simple UNICEF tent with a dirt floor, teaching children whose lives were uprooted after volcanic eruptions forced their families to flee from neighbouring islands. Her students learn in overcrowded, makeshift shelters, yet their dreams for a brighter future remain alive.

For the past six years, the Diocese of Bathurst has fostered a strong partnership with the Diocese of Port Vila, supporting initiatives that strengthen both educational and community foundations. This relationship has led to meaningful projects, from improved financial stewardship to providing young people from Port Vila the opportunity to attend World Youth Day.

Now, Bishop Michael McKenna, in collaboration with Bishop John Bosco Baremes SM of Port Vila, has pledged to focus the Bishop's Christmas Appeal on constructing cyclone-resistant classrooms.

Bishop Bosco is eager to offer these children and their families a safe, stable place to learn – a crucial step towards restoring a sense of normalcy and hope.

By supporting the Bishop's Christmas Appeal, you can help make Bishop Bosco's vision a reality for Verongo's students. This Christmas, please consider a donation. Together, we can provide children with a place to learn and build a future they deserve.



The makeshift classroom on the Island of Espiritu Santo where Verongo teaches.

All donations to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal are Tax Deductible

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SUPPORT THE BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL >>>



Reading for next Sunday: THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

1 Sam 1:20-22, 24-28

Ps 83:2-3, 5-6, 9-10

1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24

Luke 2:41-52