



ST AGATHA'S PARISH

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Web <http://www.clayfieldparish.org.au>

Aggies Youth [facebook.com/aggiesyouth](https://www.facebook.com/aggiesyouth)

Administrator

Fr Anthony Mellor

Assistant Priest

Fr Stephen Jeon

Parish Secretary

Mrs Rosemary Greer

Administrative Assistant

Mrs Jane Cameron

Parish Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 8.00 am to 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm to 4.30pm

Please note Office is closed 12.30 - 1.30pm.

School Principal

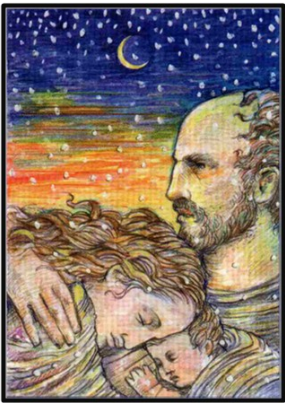
Mrs Carol Sayers **APRE:** Mr Nick Fogarty

Outside School Hours Care Coordinator

Ms Harmony Domaille

A Parish of the North East Deanery in pastoral association with Hamilton Hendra Northgate Nundah Banyo Wavell Heights Aspley Geebung Zillmere Bracken Ridge Sandgate and Brighton

A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL



They say that St Francis of Assisi developed the display of the Christmas nativity scene. In Italian, the Christmas crib is called the *precepio*. The story goes like this: *In 1223, Francis of Assisi told his friends, "I want to celebrate Christmas in a new way". Francis had a friend in the lovely mountain town of Greccio. His friend owned some land on a hillside opposite the town. Several grotto-like caves lined the hilly property. His friend gave him and his brothers the land to use as a hermitage. Francis and a few of his disciples moved there at the beginning of advent. Francis confided to his friend that he would like one cave to be transformed into a Bethlehem scene. His friend lined the cave with straw. He installed a manger filled with straw and brought in an ox and a donkey. On the side he placed a small altar for Mass. About an hour before midnight, the people of the village of Greccio came in procession to celebrate Christmas with Francis. Their stream of lanterns and candles looked like stars coming across the valley. As they sang the laude, the ancient Christmas carols of Umbria, they seemed to echo the Gloria of the angels in Luke's Gospel.*

When they arrived at the cave, they were charmed by the sight of the ox and donkey and manger. And none more delighted than their children. The Eucharistic celebration began. At homily time, Francis stood by the manger to talk about the birth of Jesus. A spell of religious awe overtook the listeners. One account says that at the end of the homily, a gold light filled their assembly. They saw Francis reach into the empty manger and lift out a baby and cradle him in his arms. And then he held the baby out to them, saying: "My brothers and sisters, behold the Saviour of the world." And all of them were joined as one in the mystery of the Incarnation.

This all sounds very spiritual and miraculous, but St Francis' intent was really quite simple. He wanted people to know three things: the simplicity of the mystery of God; the humility into which Jesus was born; and the incarnational beauty of being human. As we contemplate the Christmas scene over the next few days, we need to keep these three lessons in mind. Firstly, God is as uncomplicated as an infant. Parents know the transforming gift of new life and how this small, helpless presence changes your life. Christmas is a feast of transforming love – God's extravagant love for us. Jesus begins life with us in the same way that we all start of in life – as a small, helpless infant. Christmas is as simple as that. Secondly, God comes amongst in Christ, not in a palace or in grandeur, but in the poverty of homelessness. As his first bed, Jesus is placed in an animal's feeding trough – a manger. Mary and Joseph surely felt very poor looking at their child without a proper bed. Then the shepherds come. No shepherd has ever made it into the Forbes' rich list. But here they find God. God is to be discovered among the poor. Finally, Francis' wished to tell us something of the beauty of human life. God is found as close as the person beside us. God is found within us, at our most human. The *precepio* shows us these three things: God's simplicity, God's poverty, and God's extravagant embrace of our humanness. And that is the miracle of Christmas.

Peace and joy to you all this Christmas season, Fr Anthony.



*Safe travels Fr Stephen.
We hope you have a wonderful
visit back home to Korea.*

Fr Stephen leaves on
Tuesday 29 December
and returns
Tuesday 2 February 2016



Fr Stephen, the parish staff and I wish you all a joyous and blessed Christmas season, and may the new year shower upon you every kind of good gift. May the Christ-child be a light of peace, love and faith for you all. ...Fr Anthony

PARISH CALENDAR

Mass times for week commencing Monday 28 December:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and **Friday** - 9.00am
Friday is the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.
(No Adoration/Benediction on Friday 1 January)

Parish Office reopens: Monday 4 January 2016

QUOTE....

Peace and war begin at home. If we truly want peace in the world,
let us begin by loving one another in our own families.
If we want to spread joy, we need for every family to have joy.
... *Mother Teresa*



Happy New Year
2016

