



# ST. AGATHA'S PARISH

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 Facebook: facebook.com/St. Agatha's Catholic Parish Clayfield  
 Aggies Youth: facebook.com/aggiesyouth  
 Parish Priest: Fr. Anthony Mellor (ph: 0448 840 040)  
 Associate Pastor: Fr. Prem Kumar Rethnamony (ph: 0411 263 390)  
 Parish Secretary: Mrs Rosemary Greer Admin. Assistant: Mrs Jane Cameron  
 Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 8.30am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm  
 Friday: 8.30am-12.00pm  
 Local Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Representative: Georgia Allan (0456 441 717)



**St. Agatha's Catholic Primary School** 6 Hunter Lane Clayfield Qld 4011. Phone: 3326 9222  
 School Principal: Mrs Carol Sayers APRE: Mr Nick Fogarty Outside School Hours Care Coordinator: Ashleigh Amps

## Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C) - 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2018

Readings

1st Reading: Micah 5:1-4; 2nd Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10; Gospel: Luke 1:39-44

### WEEKDAY MASSES

**Monday 24 December:** 6.30am  
 Christmas Eve Vigil 6.00pm  
 Midnight Mass  
**Tuesday 25 December**  
 Please note 8.00am Mass only  
**Wednesday 26 December:** 9am  
**Thursday 27 December:** 9am  
**Friday 28 December:** 9am

### WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 5.00pm  
 (1st Rite of Reconciliation:  
 Saturday 4.30pm)  
 Sunday 7.00am  
 9.00am  
 5.30pm

Rosary before Mass.

### Parish Calendar

#### JANUARY

• Monday 7<sup>th</sup>  
 SVDP Meeting 5pm Parish Office

Merry  
 Christmas



*Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb.*

Dear friends,

This will be my final weekend here at St. Agatha's. After Christmas, I will take a short break before beginning at the Cathedral in the first week of January. The closer I have gotten to finishing the more I have felt that I was only really beginning here at St. Agatha's. Nevertheless, at my ordination I handed my life over to the church and I hope that I will always remain faithful to that. So, in the new year, I will begin a new role even if I have a sense of unfinished business at St. Agatha's. I hope that I have contributed something to your journey of faith. You have certainly contributed to mine. I am grateful and humbled by the good wishes and kind words people have offered to me the past few weeks. Thank you for your kindness, generosity and friendship.

There are a few people that I would, in particular, like to mention. I would like to acknowledge Carol Sayers and the school community for the openness to partnering with the parish community. The children of our school and parish community are a source of great joy and blessing for us all. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication to "the world's most committed sacristan", Peter Bowden. Peter's generosity to this community has been a great assistance to me — but there is a special prize for the person who discovers Peter's secret chambers in the church! I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our parish staff, Rosemary Greer and Jane Cameron. Rosemary and Jane have picked up much of the slack of organisation and communication while I have been otherwise occupied. They have always greeted people in the parish office with open and generous hearts while always working efficiently and diligently. They have been confidantes who have often offered wise and fearless counsel, and for this, I thank them with a sense of gratitude and appreciation. Finally, thank you to you all. I wish you every joy this Christmas season and may the new year shower many blessings upon the community of St. Agatha's. I have no doubt that you will enjoy Fr. Kevin Smith's ministry and that you will welcome him warmly in the early days of January. If you are ever wandering through the Cathedral precinct, come in and say "hello". May God's blessings be upon you all, today and always.

Fr. Anthony

### The Wisdom of Pope Francis

Mary and Joseph, for whom there was no room, are the first to embrace the One who comes to give all of us our document of citizenship. The One who in his poverty and humility proclaims and shows that true power and authentic freedom are shown in honouring and assisting the weak and the frail. The One who had no place to be born is proclaimed to those who had no place at the table or in the streets of the city.

## Clayfield Conversations

*This is a reflection on the meaning of Christmas in our contemporary Australian context.*

### To Receive the Gift We Must Recognise the Giver

As we hear John Lennon repeatedly sing this time of year: “So this is Christmas.” Do we sing along with a sense of excitement, exhaustion or resignation? Try as we might, Christmas is hard to ignore. But what does it mean for modern Australians? Many describe Australia as a secular society and around 30% of the population now claim to have no religious affiliation. Yet, conversations about the role of religion today are never far below the surface. Think of the recent debates on religious freedom or same sex marriage. Despite the ebbing tide of religious connection, there is still some residue of spiritual instinct that hangs in the air. Perhaps we are more a pluralist society than a secular one. Most Australians don’t want to exclude religion completely; they just don’t want it to decide our social norms or dominate our political discourse. But there are some things we Australians like about religion, particularly Christianity. Leave out the doctrine, and most Australians accept these values: peace, love, joy, forgiveness, compassion, justice. Wrap these values in swaddling clothes and flashing lights and “viola!”: Here is a Christmas story marketable enough to cross the great secular divide.

Is that why most Australians still acknowledge the Christian Christmas season with parties, decorations, lights, music and gifts? It is hard to ignore the drawing power of the feast. We love the nostalgic, sentimental spirit of these days. Herein lies the contradiction. The birth of Jesus as told in the gospels is a story about as far from nostalgia and sentiment as you can get. The origins of Jesus’ story tell of a family on the outer, having to place their newborn in a food trough, and then run for their lives while being pursued by a violent political regime which forces them into exile. It’s a very modern story in its own way. Our contemporary celebration of the Christmas season is a lesson in what happens when consumable story-telling becomes detached from sacred memory. It’s all very cute as long as we don’t look too closely.

So much of what we associate with Christmas really only serves to distract us. Christmas seems to exhaust us rather than fill us. We are forced to face the tensions of difficult family relationships; we are pressured into equating people’s worth by the cost of their presents; we have the constant round of Christmas gatherings with people we might or might not know; and let’s not mention the high-stakes challenge of finding a car-park at the shopping centre which takes Christmas stress to a whole new level. Christmas, in its origins, was about none of these things. Yet, all these distractions take centre-stage. What if we established a new Christmas commandment: Resist consumerism, focus on the spiritual and relational meaning of the feast, and reduce the consumptive, environmental impact of our feasting. Above all, spend less money on things and more time with one another.

What is at stake here is not so much about how we understand Christmas but about how we understand what is most important during the rest of the year. Christmas is simply an intensified experienced of the priorities that we live unconsciously in the ordinary rhythm of life. We indulge, but we have forgotten why. For all the feasting, we forget the necessity of fasting. For all the buying, we are forgetful of the letting-go needed for true giving. For all the lights, we chose to ignore the lingering darkness. For all the company, we can still feel alone. For all this, we remain unchanged by all the tinselled sentiment and the lovely, familiar carols. These lull us into a false sense that true peace and joy and beauty can be manufactured by our wishing it to be so. But it is not so. We must realise that peace and joy and beauty come to us as a gift — and to receive the gift we must recognise the Giver. That presumes, of course, that we truly want to allow the heart of the season to transform us. Maybe we are happy to stay the way we are and be content to merely paddle around in the shallow end of sentimentality during this summer time; to sing the sweet lullabies and then move, with haste, onto the Boxing Day sales. But maybe, on the other hand, we aren’t happy to stay the way we are. Maybe there is some truth that catches us every year; maybe there is some quiet voice of wisdom that murmurs something wordless in our soul, as soft as a baby’s sigh. Maybe something or someone from beyond can teach us all we need to know about living here and now. Is such a revelation even possible? Have all our modern wisdoms superseded these lovely but infantile ancient truths?

The real question is: why does Christmas still tug at the heart? What does the Christmas story offer to a modern, pluralist society that it doesn’t receive from somewhere else? Perhaps amid all the gifts, we are still looking for the Giver. For all the rush of experiences that we have in life, maybe we don’t have time to unwrap the gifts that come our way and discover what lies at the heart of everything; to discover that there is something underneath all the gloss of daily living and truly gives life meaning and purpose. If we were able to reconnect our deepest human yearnings with the whole of the Jesus story (his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection), we might be able to change the metre of John Lennon’s words from one of weariness to a cry of discovery: “So! This is Christmas!”

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** - Vacancies to be filled in the following Ministries: **Hospitality, Welcomers at Mass, Altar Servers, Counters and Communion Ministers.** Please contact the Parish Office 3262 2859 for more information or email: [clayfield@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:clayfield@bne.catholic.net.au)

*Our parish has implemented the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.*

*We are committed to high standards of recruitment, screening and selection of all of our employees and volunteers and undertake intentional strategies to maintain a safe and healthy ministry environment for all.*

## In our prayers we remember



### Those who have died recently:

Fr John Dobson, Warwick Jones, Daphne Quirk, Camie Ashton

### Those whose anniversaries occur about now:

Peter Turnbull, Noel Turnbull, Eve Turnbull, Dell Murphy, Douglas Munt, Barbara Joyo, Stan McKenzie, Florence Hinson, Sean Cochrane, Phyllis Agnew, John Agnew, Mary Dethlefs

### Those who are sick:

Harrison (Harry) Wiseman, Bryan Weaver, Val Barrett, Lorraine Douglas, Alexander Clark, Rosemary Douglas, Danielle Johnson, Gordon Hodge, Maureen Long, Anne Seymour, James Elliott, Camille Butler-Storms, Mary Ann Marcelo, Isabel Leddick, Carmel Elms, Helen Orosz, Lisa Bowes, Sophia Horrocks, Mario Di Filippo, Norma Fiore, Joan Healy, Dell McHugh, Ken Kipping, Paul White, Edward Clark, Joyce Rodgers, Carmel See, Regina Hwan, Val Boevinlic, Deanne Du Bour, Melissa Waka, Agnes Tam, Kerri Smith, Ann Tully, Patrick Gallagher, Mel Purwo, Hellen Passente

**Reminder to let us know when names are no longer required to be shown on the sick list.**

**CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF TYING THE KNOT** As part of our centenary at St Agatha's, we are also planning to celebrate 100 years of *tying the knot* at the parish. By sending in your wedding image, you will have a chance to be part of a commemorative poster to mark the centenary. So if you were married at the church or know someone who was, feel free to email your wedding shot (at the church) to [stagathasweddings@gmail.com](mailto:stagathasweddings@gmail.com). Please use the following wording in the subject line of the email: "WEDDING - (YOUR SURNAME)". This will make it easier for us to keep a track of the photos. Please also include the names of the couple, their wedding date and a contact number in the email so we can get in touch. Some images may be used on our social media platforms. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Ainsley Crutcher on 0417792212.

### **CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

Monday 24 December 6pm Vigil Mass

with carols from 5.30pm

Midnight Mass

with carols from 11.30pm

**Tuesday 25 December 8am Mass only**

with carols from 7.45am

### **PARISH CENTENARY**

#### **RECOLLECTIONS BOOK –**

#### **DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?**

Commemorating our Parish Centenary is all about the people of our Parish, past and present. We need your stories, memories, photographs, snippets, recipes. All contributions are welcome – even if it is only a few lines! The Book of Parish Recollections will not be the same without YOUR contribution. Please pass this onto those who have left the Parish – we would love to hear from them too. The Book Team:

[stagathascentenarybook@gmail.com](mailto:stagathascentenarybook@gmail.com)

### **CHRISTMAS RAFFLE**

Raffle Drawn this Sunday 23 December after 9am Mass.

**Heartfelt thanks** to everyone from **Fr Prem** for his card. Fr Prem would like to wish you all a holy and blessed Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

### **DATE CLAIMER**

St Agatha's Feast Day Mass and Celebrations

Sunday 3 February 2019

Mass at 9.00am followed by Family Fun Day at Presentation Centre (St Agatha's School)

Cost: \$5.00 per person

More details in the new year.

the lights of  
**CHRISTMAS**  
CATHEDRAL OF ST STEPHEN

Each night  
until  
Christmas Eve



With great joy we welcome **Charlotte Hillier, Julius Dugan, Frederick Coe and Lola-Rose Coe** who will be baptised this weekend.



### **PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR CLOSURE**

The Parish Office will re-open 8.30am Monday 7 January 2019. Merry Christmas everyone!!!

### **PLenary COUNCIL 2020** Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

The last time the Catholic Church in Australia held a Plenary Council was in 1937. It has been more than 80 years since we gathered all of the Church together and much has changed. In 2020, we will have a Plenary Council about the future of the Catholic Church in Australia.

What are we called to do? Who are we called to be? How do we need to change?

The journey toward the Plenary Council will help us to prepare to listen to God

by listening to one another. We invite all people to engage, to be a part of the listening and dialogue encounter in the next two years. <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au>



**Plenary Council 2020**  
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...



**PARISH ROSTERS** - Please arrange a substitute if you are unavailable on your rostered day.

**5.00pm**

**7.00am**

**9.00am**

**5.30pm**

**READERS:**

22/23 Dec

Cate Barrett  
Phil Zammit

Annette Riba  
Kirsty Stevens

Tim Hancock  
Don Macpherson  
Lauren Mitchell

Life Teen Mass

29/30 Dec

Edward Foley  
Jenny Close

Mark Burton  
Aleira Egan

Wilma O'Connell  
Dominic Ryan  
Trish Ryan

Life Teen Mass

**COMMUNION MINISTERS:**

22/23 Dec

Jan Zammit

Paulette Archer

*Volunteer*

Life Teen Mass

29/30 Dec

Ann Goves

*Volunteer*

Julianne Ryan

Life Teen Mass

**"HOME" COMMUNION MINISTERS:**

23 Dec

Geraldine Swindells

30 Dec

Karen Birtles

**ORGANISTS:**

22/23 Dec

*Volunteer*

*Volunteer*

Jenny McKeon

Life Teen Mass

29/30 Dec

*Volunteer*

*Volunteer*

Robyn Cuming

Life Teen Mass

**ALTAR SERVERS:**

15 Dec - 27 Jan

*Volunteer/s*

*Volunteer/s*

*Volunteer/s*

*Volunteer/s*

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:**

16 Dec - 10 Feb

*No Children's Liturgy - School Holidays*

**SANCTUARY CARERS:**

5 Jan

Victor Podesta

ST AGATHA'S PARISH 2019 CALENDARS are available for free.  
One calendar per family only as stock is limited.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE** Pack of 8 for \$5.

**BAPTISMS**

We celebrate baptisms on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month.

For bookings and further information, please phone the parish office on 3262 2859.

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT THE CATHEDRAL**

This Christmas St Stephen's Cathedral will host a spectacular sound, light and projection show to celebrate the season of peace, joy and goodwill. From the creators of Sydney's Vivid Lightwalk, the Lights of Christmas will illuminate the side of the Cathedral with an enchanting 12 minute show, which will run continuously from 7:30pm until midnight every evening until 24 December. We are thrilled to invite all parishioners to join us on the lawn at St Stephen's for this magnificent event.

**PLENARY CHRISTMAS POSTCARDS** are available on the church seats. Please take one and tell us "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia?"... You can either place them in the red box provided at the back of the Church or post to the address shown on the card or there is a QR code for those who are a more tech-inclined. You can also place them in the collection plates. *Have your say!!*

The annual **Christmas Lights Festival** at St Gerard Majella, Chermiside West is now on and will continue every night till 23 December. Huge lights display, gift shop, coffee shop, barbecue, drinks, ice creams and op shop all operating from 6pm till 10pm nightly. Free entertainment every night. The program for our free concerts can be found on our website: [www.olaparishchermiside.org.au](http://www.olaparishchermiside.org.au).

**DATE CLAIMER** World Day of Prayer Friday 1 March 2019, 10am  
St Augustine's Anglican Church, Hamilton  
"SLOVENIA - Come - Everything is Ready"



**MERRY CHRISTMAS** from Aggies Youth.

Thank you to everyone who helped throughout the year.

There will be no refreshments after the 5.30pm Sunday Masses during January.

We will start again on 3 February. See you there.



**Readings - The Holy Family and Jesus, Mary & Joseph (Year C) - 30 December 2018**

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28; 2nd Reading: 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24; Gospel: Luke 2:41-52