

21 JANUARY 2018

HOLIDAYS OVER: Well! Christmas, New Year and the first half of January are now behind us. For many people, the Christmas Season has come to an end. Here in Sacred Heart Parish Blackheath, we have enjoyed our normal very busy Season imparting to both locals and visitors that genuine friendship which is so much a part of us. All liturgical celebrations went off without a hitch. Unlike our more suburbanised Diocesan cousins, our Christmases are never quiet because of the influx of so many tourists for which, incidentally, we are so grateful as they replace many of our local community who take this opportunity to visit other places and people. Whatever the reason, tourist numbers this year were marginally lower than for the previous several years. We pray that this trend will be reversed next time around. I trust that you have enjoyed your 'break' as you now harness up for another year of interesting toil. May 2018 be a great and memorable year – a year of good health and God's love and peace – for everyone in our community!

AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS: Friday next, 26th January, is Australia Day. This is also the day when we celebrate the birthday of our community in 1902 – 116 years ago! In so saying, we also acknowledge the contribution made by our indigenous brothers and sisters to preserve this wonderful country as its original owners.

We invite everyone to make that annual Australia Day trek to the Landsberg family's magnificent property, 'Withycombe', at Mount Wilson, to shelter and play under that remarkable grand old Oak Tree yet again, and be entertained by members of our own music group (and others) in that historic setting.

How good is that! And what better way to begin these celebrations than by attending Friday's special 9.30am Mass here at Sacred Heart Church. Thank you Diana and Joe for making this day's outing possible for us! 'Withycombe' is situated at the corner of The Avenue and Church Lane. We get there by turning from Bell's Line of Road left into Mount Wilson Road, then driving along that road for the next 8 kms into Mount Wilson until we see a sign for the picnic at a gate on the left. Enter through the gateway for parking. Alternatively, if you need easier access, turn left at the next corner and either park in the property or across the road which leaves only about 20 metres of flat walking to the site. Time: Any time after 10.30am. BYO picnic lunch and drinks. Hot water for tea and instant coffee and mugs will be provided. There are several picnic tables and chairs available should you so desire! Wet weather is not a major problem as we then gather on the substantial house verandah. It really is a great day. Come and enjoy!

EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE WALKERS: As always, this year's walk began at Our Lady of the Way Parish at Emu Plains, then passed through every parish in the Blue Mountains including our own Sacred Heart Parish, and ended at Bell 110kms and a week later. Interest in this trek is increasing with 57 walkers participating this year, ranging from 1 through to 77 years of age with 16 pilgrims completing the full journey. Led by Briony and Jesse, the pilgrims arrived at Blackheath Parish on an extremely hot Epiphany Feast Sunday afternoon, took over our parish hall overnight, shared a Mass and Monday morning prayers in the church and were hosted and dined by our volunteers on Sunday evening at a sumptuous meal supplied in the main by those same volunteers. While Carmen and Julie did most of the organising, many

more of our community were involved in preparing this inviting feast. Huge thanks to all involved, particularly from the pilgrims themselves who devoured just about everything in sight, and then some! Please see the notice board where their letter of thanks is displayed!

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: The first meeting of the newly elected council met last Sunday after Mass with the newly-elected executive being Diana Landsberg (chairperson), John Barclay (deputy chairperson) and Patricia Dee (secretary). Sincere congratulations!

God Bless! Fr. Bob

AUSTRALIA DAY PICNIC ~ Diana and Joe Landsberg have once again opened up their property "Withycombe" at Mount Wilson for our Australia Day picnic "Withycombe's" address is the corner of THE AVENUE & CHURCH LANE, MOUNT WILSON. If anyone is wanting a lift to Mt Wilson they should let Fr Bob or the office know so that carpooling can be arranged - where possible.

MONSTER GARAGE SALE ~ Don't forget our garage sale. We are still looking for more good quality items for sale, which will boost our Parish income for the year. We also need volunteers to set up on Feb 2 and sell on Feb 3 and 4. There is a volunteer sheet on the notice board. Not only does the Garage Sale help the parish financially, but it is also lots of fun, so come and get involved.



WORKING BEE ~. The Maintenance team will be holding their next working bee on Friday February 2 at 8am (the day before the Garage Sale). All are welcome. to come and help. Please bring garden gloves and a hat.

PALMS ENCOUNTERS ~ are ethically run group tours that provide participants with authentic, hard to come by experiences. The tours have been carefully designed to give you an insight into the daily life of people of another culture, an understanding of sustainable approaches to reducing poverty, and an insight into the life and work of Palms development volunteers.

We still have limited places available for our next trip to Timor-Leste 11-23 March if you book by 5pm Thursday 25 January. Please contact Palms on 02 9560 5333 or see www.palms.org.au/encounters

Happy Birthday ~
Connor Lillis ~ 20th January
Simon Maguire ~ 20th January
Grahame Adams ~ 22nd Jan
Marjanna Gilchrist ~ 23rd Jan
Patricia Frazer ~ 25th January

Happy Anniversary
Louise and Laurie Noyes ~23rd Jan

PARENTS' ROOM
The Sacristy is available for fof parents to use when young children are restless. It has a few books and toys. We hope this makes it a little easier for you