

CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR: *What a dramatic period this 'so-called' restful Season has been for every one of us! Dare I say, even unique! Not the beneficial 'unique' that you and I seek at this celebratory time of the year. This has been a diabolical period in which, in a practical sense we each have felt the fear of and very real danger from the surrounding 'fire storms' that have prompted those evacuation calls, many times in the middle of the night!*

Fire authorities invited us to depart this locale ASAP, leaving only a much smaller residential population 'in situ'. Needless to say, the normal tourist inflow never eventuated. Hence numbers of people were way down compared to any other year. Few attended any of our Christmas/New Year rituals/Masses, including Mt. Victoria's 7.00am early Mass. Too, cash flow was measured in a few dollars only. Financially, for us this was a non-event! Similarly, the same situation prevailed for all traders in/around Blackheath and the wider parish. Those left here never capitulated, never stopped praying, never stopped attending our Masses. No lives were lost though up to 30 homes (Bell, Dargan, Clarence, Mt. Wilson, Mt. Irvine, and Lithgow) were destroyed by the raging inferno. The rest of NSW, Queensland, ACT, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia suffered a similar fate with some loss of human life as a consequence. Heroes all, these dedicated volunteers to whom every one of us owes a sincere debt of gratitude that we can never repay! Please pray for the deceased, their families and friends and for all who have lost so much. Amen!

2020: While it is certainly true that 2019 was, in many ways, a watershed year both for our parish (and me too), the challenge sown in the second half of last year will be answered during this year. Unfortunately (for me), I will not be around to see the fulfilment of all that needs to be done. In colloquial terms, I have given Sacred Heart Parish my best 'shot' in the 11 years you have shared yourselves with me and our joint efforts. So my time here is about to reach its end on April 12 (Easter Sunday). However, we still have a garage sale, Lent, Holy Week and Easter to share. Let's make this a great time for Bishop Vincent and support him in all that he seeks to achieve through this wonderful community of my family and friends.

AUSTRALIA DAY: *Would you believe it! Next Sunday is Australia Day! Special arrangements are in hand to join with Blackheath Rotary Club at the Blackheath cricket ground (near the public school) for a picnic with rides and other entertainment the order of the day. While the day's activities begin at about 10,00am, we can join them once Mass ends at 10.30am. More will be revealed, verbally, at today's Mass.*

PARISH COUNCIL COMMISSIONING: *Will take place immediately following the homily. Given that this is a year of 'change', we pray that God will endow all councilors with the wisdom to make this a truly great year for both parish and parishioners.*

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE: *Despite all the horrors mentioned above, our raffle netted the parish an amount of \$794! What a magnificent result! Congratulations to everyone involved!*

*P.S: The office re-opened last Wednesday for the ensuing year! Here's to the year ahead!
God Bless! Fr. Bob*

The Bishop's Conference Statement "CATHOLIC CHURCH PLANS NATIONAL RESPONSE TO BUSHFIRE CRISIS" is available on the notice board for you to read.

GARAGE SALE ~ Saturday and Sunday 1 & 2 Feb.
We will be needing volunteers to help collect, sort, set up and price the items for sale in the hall. **ALL ARE WELCOME.** Please fill out the time sheet on the noticeboard to say when you can come. This is our main fundraiser for the year to sustain the parish and its works. Please help. Thank you.



ALPHA TEAM TRAINING WORKSHOP
9 February 2019, 9.30am- 4.30pm at the Institute for Mission, 1-5 Marion Street BLACKTOWN
FOR REGISTRATIONS & FURTHER INFORMATION
Pastoral Planning Office:
lisa.bright@parracatholic.org 8838 3497
Alpha in a Catholic Context:
lorraine.mccarthy@alpha.org.au 0402 217 123

PLEASE PRAY for the sick and their carers: John & Marion Crowley, Shielagh Kirkham, Maria Slater, Marie Johnson, Pat Frazer, Tatiana Schultz, Trennah Portelli, Ray Wood and Elizabeth Farrar's sister Mary Rose

In Memoriam

10th	Henry Columbine	
11th	Gerard Johnston	
14th	Joyce Malkin (d 2012)	
19th	Roma Ziolkowski (2018)	
20th	Jan Roberts (2019)	
20th	Henry Columbine	
22nd	Bridget Chan (d 2011)	

Happy birthday

1st	Robyn Ann Bogart	
20th	Connor Lillis	
22nd	Grahame Adams	
23rd	Marjanna Gilchrist	
25th	Patricia Frazer	

PLENARY 2020
You are invited to attend a Listening and Discernment session on the 6th February at the Institute for Mission| 1-5 Marion Street, Blacktown starting at 10.30 am to 1.00 pm. At this session we will be covering the six themes for discernment:
* Missionary and Evangelising
* Inclusive, participatory and synodal
* Prayerful and Eucharistic
* Humble, healing and merciful
* A joy, hope-filled and servant community
* Open to conversation, renewal and reform

At this session you will have the opportunity to select and explore one of these themes. Could you please advise your attendance to tanya.quinn@parracatholic.org ASAP.

Morning tea will be provided

Family Spirit | ABN 35 623 563 422 2C West Street, Lewisham NSW 2049 | PO Box 360, Summer Hill NSW 2130 R:\OPR\07 CE\Program Marketing\FAMILY SPIRIT\FOS_113 Special Carer Recruitment\FOS_113 Carer Recruitment.docx 14 January 2020

Family Spirit is seeking urgent assistance to find a safe and permanent home for a 14 year old boy named Joshua*. Joshua is a student at Katoomba High School so the ideal placement for him would be with a couple or a single person who live within a reasonable travelling distance to his current school.

Family Spirit is a partnership between Marist180 and Catholic Care Sydney, who, by working together strive to improve the lives of children, young people and families in need. Family Spirit operates across the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta and the Archdiocese of Sydney.
* Name changed for privacy

Happy Anniversary!
23rd Louise and Laurie Noyes

