

Sacred Heart Parish



Sacred Heart Church ~ Blackheath
Saint Paul's Church ~ Mount Victoria
Saint Joseph's Church ~ Megalong Valley

As a community bonded together through faith,
we are called to share our experience of God with those we meet each day,
in particular, those in our local community.

*We acknowledge the Darug and Gundungurra people, the traditional custodians of this land
and pay our respects to the elders past and present.*

PARISH CONTACTS

Fr. John McSweeney (Parish Priest)

Fr. Peter Lamont (Asst Priest)

Postal Address: PO Box 354, Blackheath NSW

2785. 165 Wentworth Blackheath

Phone: (02) 4787 8540

Office Hours: 10pm-3pm Thursday

After Hours Emergency Number: 0490 814 284.

Calls only; no texts please.

For all Office matters, call (02) 4787 8540

Parish email address:

blackheath@parracatholic.org

Parish website:

sacredheartblackheath.org.au

Parish Facebook: [Sacred Heart Parish](https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartParishCommunityBlackheath)

[Community Blackheath](https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartParishCommunityBlackheath)

MT VICTORIA VIGIL MASS

Vigil Mass at 5.00pm (June-August)

6.00pm (Sept-May)

MEGALONG VALLEY MASSES

4pm (every third Friday of the month).

Next Mass: 15 December 2023 at 4.00pm

BLACKHEATH MASSES

SUN: 9:30am.

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS PARISH SUNDAY MASSES

SAT: 5:00pm Leura (Vigil)

SUN: 8:00am Wentworth Falls

SUN: 10.00am Katoomba

Sun: 5.00pm Leura

BULLETIN ITEMS: Please contact the Parish

Office on Tuesdays or Thursday during office hours on 4787 8540 or email

blackheath@parracatholic.org

SACRED HEART CARE GROUP: Helping

parishioners in times of need. Monica Bright

0420 937 690.

BLACKHEATH VINNIES Support: 0490 709 547

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: If you would like an issue discussed, please submit it in writing to either Graham Beal

graham_beal@hotmail.com or Julie O'Keeffe

julesongodson@bigpond.com

Second Sunday of Advent Year B

10 December 2023

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

In response to this week's readings, I'd like to look at what repentance for the forgiveness of sins entails.

Sin is largely a symptom of something else that's wrong.

As an example, when a person tries to be funny, very often it is at someone else's expense. The sin is in the belittling of another, the issue is that the person trying to be funny is most likely trying to give the people around him or herself something that the others will find of value so that they will accept him or her. The issue the person has is that they feel that they need to invent something of value for others to gain acceptance, to be seen as having something to offer. The issue is a lack of self-worth.

Likewise with gossip. The sin is the judgements and character assassinations but in most cases the root cause is wanting to find common ground, wanting to have something to offer that would be of value, of desire, to others to gain acceptance.

Drinking also can have its driving force is overcoming social awkwardness, anxiety, and a myriad of other underlying issues. The problem is that in excessive drinking a person compromises their judgement and puts themselves in a vulnerable position with regards their own impulses and external influences which can be very detrimental.

In the same way the underlying issues make us more prone to making wrong decisions. They rob us of our freedom to deal with our physical and emotional impulses appropriately.

So, when we talk about repentance, we are talking about healing our own character scared by our sins and those we journeyed through life with. This involves a real change in attitudes and thought patterns and it highlights that we can't do it ourselves.

We cannot of ourselves just stop sinning, we need help.

St John came Baptising with water, symbolising to people that they were washing off their old ways and embracing a new way of being. But Christ comes Baptising with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings a whole new dimension to this change because the Spirit heals, changes our inner being.

What we bring to this situation is the real desire for change, a desire that brings with it self-discipline and taking time out to pray for the Spirit and to contemplate, notice and think about what drives us and how we see ourselves and our lives. Be honest with ourselves and see what we are afraid of, what we are uncomfortable with. This is making the path straight and level.

A great way to give the Spirit access to our lives is the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It's not about God overlooking or forgetting the things we've done wrong but having the Spirit of God descend on us to heal us and help us see and deal with those drivers that lead us to sin.

Deacon Alan.

Please mute your mobile at Mass.

Thank-you for your courtesy.



WHAT'S ON IN THE UPPER MOUNTAINS THIS WEEK

SATURDAY 9 December

Mass 6.00pm Mt Victoria.

SUNDAY 10 December

9.30 am Blackheath

MONDAY 11 December

Mass at 9.00am Katoomba

TUESDAY 12 December

Mass 9.00am Leura
Confession after mass

WEDNESDAY 13 December

Mass 9.00am Blackheath
Cuppa's together: 9.30 - 12.00pm
Blackheath Community Kitchen-Garden 10-12pm.

THURSDAY 14 December

Mass 9.00am Wentworth Falls

FRIDAY 15 December

Mass 12pm Katoomba
4.00pm Megalong Mass

SATURDAY 16 December

Mass 9am Katoomba
Confession after mass
Blackheath Community Kitchen-Garden 11-1pm
Mass 6.00 pm Mt Victoria.

Garden books: If you have garden books you no longer use or need our little kitchen garden library in the hall would love to receive them! Books can be dropped in on Wednesday mornings and after Mass on Sunday. Thank you!

Mt Victoria 9th Dec 2023

1 St Reader: Fran Leighton
2 nd Reader: Elizabeth Giddey

Sunday 10.12.23

1 St Reader: Pamela Nash
2nd Reader: John Tweedie

Welcome/Intercession: Paul Harris

Server: Ray Wood

Church Care: Phil and Pat Wicks

Counters: Pamela and John

Flowers: Cate Mitchell

Morning Tea: Christine and Dominic

Bpoint - Parish contributions using your credit card.

Bpoint is an easy way to contribute to both our 2nd collection (funds raised are for our Parish) and 1st collection (funds raised are for the clergy of the Diocese). You need a credit card (Visa or Mastercard only) and a mobile phone number. Please follow this link and make your choice of option. You will be asked to show your name and mobile phone number: <https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/CATHOLICPARISHOFSACREDHEARTBLACKHEATH>.

As an alternative to following the link, you can also use the attached QR



Mass and Morning tea

Wednesday

9am Mass is followed by morning tea from 9:30 until 12 noon in the parish hall. Join us for an uplifting morning of prayer, good company, conversation, and warming coffee.

All welcome!



CHRISTMAS WORKING BEE 16 Dec 2023.

Saturday morning 16 December 2023 commencing from 8am. Please come along and help us to tidy up our grounds for Christmas. There'll be mowing, sweeping, weeding, pruning (and anything else needed to make the church grounds look great for our parishioners and Christmas visitors). Please bring a sun-hat, sturdy shoes or boots, garden gloves and sunblock (also eye and ear protection if using mower or similar equipment). Please call Lance on 4787 8096 or John on 0407 288 957 for further information and to advise if you will be coming.



CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE 2023

It's that time of the year again to start preparations for our Christmas Hamper Raffle. As in the past we are asking parishioners to contribute to this **FUNDRAISING EVENT**. There will be a basket left inside the church for your contributions. Also on the noticeboard at the front of church there is a list of goodies required to make this Hamper bigger and better than last year. Please put your name against any of the items you would like to donate.



We are then asking that you then get a book of raffle tickets from Marilyn or Diane and Sell! Sell! Sell!

The Christmas Hamper will be drawn on Christmas Eve morning 24th after 9.30am Mass.

Thank you in anticipation for your help with our end of year Fundraiser.
Social committee

Bridge Club at the Hall

Make new friends, enjoy a great retirement hobby and have a lot of fun while enjoying the most popular mind sport in the world. To learn to play bridge at the "friendly club at the top of the mountains" call Sandy on 4010 312 827 or email admin@bluemountainsbridge.com.au

Sunday: 17. 12.2023

1 St Reader: Monica Bright

2 nd Reader: Brian Bright

Welcome/Intercession: John Tweedie

Server: Diane Stewart

Morning Tea: Pamela and Julie

Prayer's of the faithful Do you have topics for prayer relating to our current times and/or the life of Sacred Heart Parish and/or our communities in Blackheath, Megalong Valley and Mount Victoria, which you would like to see included in our weekly Prayers of the Faithful? If so, please contact either Clive Kanes (c_kanes@yahoo.com.au) or Mary Ryan. We would be glad to facilitate inclusions.

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2023 Weekend of 9/10 December



This weekend Blackheath Vinnies is having its 2023 parish Christmas Appeal. Envelopes will be available at Mt. Vic's 6:00pm Mass on Sat. 9/12 and at Sacred Heart at the 09:30am Mass on Sunday 10/12.

This Christmas, more families than ever are experiencing poverty. After struggling with the escalating cost of living crisis, they barely have anything left to hold onto.

For people already struggling to make ends meet, the cost of living crisis has a deepening impact. Higher food prices lead to families skipping meals. Higher energy prices mean people cannot afford to warm their homes in winter or cool them in summer. Higher rental prices are forcing people into homelessness.

Thanks so much for your wonderful support to our past Parish Vinnies appeals. We again need your help to assist those with the greatest needs in our community. Thanks

John Tweedie

President (Blackheath St Vincent de Paul Conference)

CKG - answering the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor: Our workshops for composting and worm farming have been transferred from last Saturday to next February as we didn't have the numbers a week out from the scheduled date. Quite a number of late bookings indicated it will definitely be a goer in February.

We are currently setting up compost bays next to our shed to expand our own composting activities in the CKG. We welcome your gifts of any vegetable matter for composting, instead of sending it to landfill in the red bin.

And If anyone has any star pickets (steel fencing posts) of any length that they no longer need, we could make good use of these in the garden.

Saturday 16th December 11am-1pm Potato Harvest - Come and help harvest, replant a second crop and take a few potatoes home for your Xmas celebrations.

Sunday 17th December, Xmas Table - Fresh organic produce from the garden and other goodies will be available for purchase before and after Mass. All proceeds to help finance the CKG.

Future Church, Our Church: The recent Church Synods in Rome and Paramatta are about our future as Church, the people of God. You are invited to an informal discussion on these Synods in the view of breaking open what they mean for us in our own parishes. The first discussion will dip into the Synthesis Report of the Synod on Synodality, further discussions will take place in the coming months. The discussion is an initiative of the Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council (Blackheath, Mergalong Valley, Mt Victoria) and is an open invitation to all Mountain's Parishes (and beyond!). **Please register** your interest by contacting Clive at the email address below.

Date: Saturday December 23 + Saturday Jan 27 (tbc)

Time: 2:00 – 3:30pm

Venue: Parish Hall 165 Wentworth St, Blackheath

Contact: Clive at c_kanes@yahoo.com.au

From the Pastor's Desk:

Dear Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Its great to be back among you after such a long time. I really enjoyed my LSL (the first in 25 years); I'm refreshed in mind and spirit, although still rather physically exhausted. I thank you for your prayerful support during my extended absence.

I would also like to thank Fr. Peter and Christine who together kept the ball rolling. They have been magnificent in their service of you, the parishioners.

God bless you all

Fr John

Please note:

Next Thursday there will be a whole School mass in St. Canice's church at 9.30am. All welcome. Also, on Tuesday 19/12 I will celebrate a Requiem Mass for Mary Harrison. Again, all welcome. Finally, please note that Boxing Day Mass at Leura is now 5.30 pm (not 9.00 am as in last week's handout)

Epiphany Pilgrimage 2024 Prayer Requests

Our parish community will be hosting the Epiphany Pilgrimage group again in 2024 as they journey up the mountains from 2 - 9 January. In preparation for the pilgrimage, you are invited to write any prayer requests on the cards provided and place them in the Epiphany Pilgrimage prayer box to be prayed each day by the pilgrims. To participate in some or all of the pilgrimage - including walks, Mass, Adoration / prayer sessions and meals - visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org, or to assist with hospitality when the group visits our parish, please contact the parish office.

VIRTUAL ADVENT SERIES 2023: A series of virtual Advent talks by four Australian biblical scholars from Yarra Theological Union. Each week this group of accomplished guides will work together to explore the readings for the week. This is a perfect opportunity to enrich your Advent journey.

EVENT DETAILS

WHEN: Tuesdays – December 5, 12, 19 2023

TIME: 7.00pm – 8.00pm AEDT

WHERE: Via Zoom meeting

COST: Free

REGISTRATION: google "Virtual Advent Series 2023"

Happy Birthday Dec

11th Elaine Jackson
18th George Commens
20th Robert Forbes
21st Dominic Burke
24th David Buckley
27th Sean Lillis



ANNIVERSARIES: Dec

28th Christa and David Buckley (m 1968)



Please Pray For the Sick and Their Carers: Alice Lonergan, Edith Burton, Anne Farindon, Duncan Hayward, John Barclay, Leashy Dowling, Noeleen Cliff, Sue Gracey, Patricia Dee, Pat McCauley, John Crowley, Maria Johnson, Trennah Portelli,

REST IN PEACE December: 13th Rosalie Sandor, 13th Marjorie Cullen (d 2014 aged 92 – Julie Hodgkinson's mother)

29th Jorgan Kallane (2016)



2nd Sunday of Advent Year B

ENTRANCE

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

First Reading.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11)

‘Console my people, console them’
says your God.
‘Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call to her
that her time of service is ended,
that her sin is atoned for,
that she has received from the hand of the Lord
double punishment for all her crimes.’

A voice cries, ‘Prepare in the wilderness
a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God
across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges a valley;
then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all humankind shall see it;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

Go up on a high mountain,
joyful messenger to Zion.
Shout with a loud voice,
joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear,
say to the towns of Judah,
‘Here is your God.’

Here is the Lord coming with power,
his arm subduing all things to him.
The prize of his victory is with him,
his trophies all go before him.
He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

RESPONSE Lord, let us see your kindness, and
grant us your salvation.

Second Reading .

A reading from the second letter of St Peter (2 Peter 3:8-14)

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, ‘a day’ can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
all people shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (Mark 1:1-8)

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, ‘Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.’

COMMUNION

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.