

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 MASS

4pm (every third Friday of the month).

Next Mass: 16 February 2024 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

Third Sunday of Advent Year B

17 December 2023

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

Making straight the path for God means opening the door to a relationship with God. Like all relationships it is built on trust. Trust that the other person is interested in your wellbeing.

Many of us have seen the effects of self-centeredness in marriages. When one person either marries primarily for their own advantage, using the other, or proceeds to live a life centred on what they want out of life. Unhappy marriages and divorces.

The Incarnation shows us how God approaches us for relationship. God approaches each and every one of us individually. He gave everything for us including His life. In this He showed us that He is not entering into a relationship with us out of self-interest. He is only coming to us for our good. Therefore, we can trust Him.

Trust, that's what faith is. Trusting in God to guide our us through our lives so that we can each walk with our God through life bringing about the new heaven and new earth.

This is where Adam and Eve took a wrong turn. They wanted to take control of their lives. The original sin.

We all carry self-interest, the innate instinct to protect ourselves, and our interests are a manifestation of ourselves, so we instinctively protect them.

But God is inviting us to loosen the grip and turn our attention outwards rather than be caught up in "belly gazing".

If I was asked by a person who knew nothing about our faith what it was about, I'd say it's about looking outwards rather than inwards at our own selves.

We can do this without concern because God assures us that He can see the big picture and He will guide us along the best possible path towards our happiness and wellbeing, and the happiness and wellbeing of others and world around us.

In fact, the more will try to maintain control the more trouble we cause.

This is what the first reading is talking about. God sets us free from fear so we can live life to the full and help others live life to the full in freedom. Not binding people in guilt and shame, locking them into categories of people who are acceptable and not acceptable but being like Christ who longed to establish relationships with all people. Who ate, drank and talked with sinners, the poor and the socially and racially unacceptable. His life was focussed on the other. So, let's think before we do or say something, as the second reading says, and determine if its Christ like in focussing on the other.

In this we will be making a straight path for God to enter our lives. Then we will be able to say that our souls glorify God because we will be reflecting the love of God into the world because we will be in relationship with Him. In this our spirit will rejoice in God our Saviour.

Deacon Alan.

Please mute your mobile at Mass.

Thank-you for your courtesy.



**WHAT'S ON IN THE
UPPER MOUNTAINS THIS
WEEK**

SATURDAY 16 December

Mass 6.00pm Mt Victoria.

SUNDAY 17 December

9.30 am Blackheath

MONDAY 18 December

Mass at 9.00am Katoomba

TUESDAY 19 December

Mass 9.00am Leura
Confession after mass

WEDNESDAY 20 December

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

THURSDAY 21 December

Mass 9.00am Wentworth Falls

FRIDAY 22 December

Mass 12pm Katoomba

SATURDAY 23 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 16 th Dec 2023

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

Sunday 17.12.23

1 St Reader: Monica Bright
2nd Reader: Brian Bright

Welcome/Intercession: John Tweedie

Server: Diane Stewart

Church Care: Phil and Pat Wicks

Counters: Marilyn Rowe

Flowers: Cate Mitchell

Morning Tea: Pamela and Julie

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 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

GARAGE SALE 2024

It's that time of the year when we start to Spring Clean.

Don't throw away you unwanted goodies give them to our Annual Garage Sale.

Next year it will be held on 3 & 4 of February.

Please keep safe until after Christmas and we will make a date to start bringing to hall.

Happy Downsizing. Social Club

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: 24. 12.2023

1 St Reader: John Tweedie

2 nd Reader: Pamela Nash

Welcome/Intercession: Frank Portelli

Server: Paul Harris

Morning Tea: 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.

Thank you

We would like to thank Marlene and Marcus Nguyen for the generous donation of the lap top which is now being used at Mass in the Church.

Also we would like to thank Murray Stewart who have done some wonderful work recently at Mt Victoria. He cleaned the outside walls of the church and made some great improvements to the signs.

Reminder:

Please note that the next mass at Megalong Valley will be this Friday 15th December 2023 at 4.00pm.

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, Megalong 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

****Traditionally, the third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday of Joy. The joy of this Sunday comes both from the message of the readings and from the anticipation that Christmas is nearing. As described in the Isaian passage, the Messiah is the one imbued with the spirit and with the power of the prophet, the one who will fulfill the promises of God. It becomes obvious in the Gospel that the Messiah is the one proclaimed by the Baptist. John cleared a path for the coming of the anointed one, and from that time on the lives of believers have been the pathway through which the Messiah has entered the world.



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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.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS – URGENT!

The Flower Team will be putting our Parish Christmas flower arrangements together on Friday 22 December – commencing at 9:30am.

Of course, if you can help with some of the arranging, that would also be much appreciated!!

With so many hot days lately, our gardens are looking rather 'worse for wear' – so if you can help us with flowers from you garden (or someone else's), this will be greatly appreciated too.

We will have some buckets of water on the verandah from late Thursday afternoon, 21 December.

Any queries please let one of us know.

Thank You .

Cate Mitchell, Julie Hodgkinson and David Buckley

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, John Barclay, Noeleen Cliff, Sue Gracey, Patricia Dee, Pat McCauley, John Crowley, Maria Johnson, Trennah Portelli, Leashy Dowling,

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

29th Jorgan Kallane (2016)



3rd Sunday of Advent Year B

ENTRANCE

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

First Reading.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11)

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.
'I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.
'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

RESPONSE My soul rejoices in my God.

Second Reading.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 5:16-24)

Rejoice at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (John 1:6-8. 19-28)

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these people had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

COMMUNION

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.