



St Mary's Parish Concord

The Epiphany of the Lord

7 January 2024

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 72

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:2-6

The Gentiles have become fellow heirs of the promise.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

We have come from the East to pay homage.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for peace in the world and especially for people suffering because of war and violence.

We pray for reconciliation between all people who share this land, especially with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We pray for communities facing bush fires, floods and storms and for those who are working to protect them.

We pray for Anna La Barbera, Shirley Winning, Fr Bill Aliprandi, Mgr Michael Berbari, Marisid Babista-Fortinez, Jimmy Ashby and all who have died recently; for Carmelo Iannelli and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time; we pray for Edmund Walsh, Clement & Lois Walsh, James & Helen McKenzie and all our deceased family members and friends.

THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

In the Church's calendar the Christmas season begins on Christmas Eve with the Vigil Mass and continues until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord which this year is celebrated on Monday 8 January.

Traditionally the Epiphany is celebrated on 6 January, the twelfth day of Christmas. In many countries, including Australia, the feast is transferred to the Sunday closest to 6 January. This year we celebrate the Epiphany on Sunday 7 January.

The word **Epiphany** comes from the Greek word for "manifestation". In the western Church, the feast became associated with the manifestation of Jesus to the non-Jewish peoples through the visit of the Magi. Each year we read the account of the coming of the Magi that is found only in Matthew's Gospel (Mt 2:2-12). In Matthew's Gospel the Magi or wise men came from the East; that presumes that they were probably from Persia, modern Iran.

In the Eastern Churches the Epiphany was the original feast of Christ's birth. The Nativity of Jesus (Christmas) only began to be celebrated in the Western Church in the early 4th Century. It was celebrated on 25 December. Later when the Western Church also celebrated the feast of the Epiphany, it became a celebration of the revelation of God's eternal plan of salvation in Christ, manifested as "the light to enlighten all nations".

As Jesus came to reveal God's love for all peoples so we too are called to bring a message of peace and good-will to all the nations. That is an invitation to work with men and women of every race, religion and culture to bring peace to the world.

Paul Crowley

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Wangal people of the Eora nation, the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

LIVE STREAMING MASS: We began live streaming the parish 9.30 am Mass in December 2020 after the first COVID lockdown. When we were confronted with the second COVID lockdown from June to October 2021, the live streaming provided a valuable link for our parish community.

The very professional coverage is made possible because someone is directing the video cameras.

We thank Angela Kwa and James Kennedy, our two video directors, who enable that to happen each Sunday. In 2024 we need to expand our team.

We also need more volunteers to operate the PowerPoint presentation that provides the words of the hymns each Sunday at 9.30 am Mass.

Are you interested in becoming part of the roster for the 9.30 am Mass? Please speak to Fr Paul or contact the parish office.

The 9.30 am Sunday Mass can be viewed on the parish YouTube channel and on the parish Facebook page (St Marys Parish Church Concord).

CARDINAL PELL MEMORIAL MASS

Archbishop Anthony Fisher will celebrate a Memorial Mass to mark the first anniversary of the death of Cardinal Pell. The Mass will be on Wednesday 10 January 2024 beginning at 5.30 pm in St Mary's Cathedral. All are welcome.

BAPTISM OF CHILDREN 2024 Parents wishing to present a child for Baptism please note that Baptism is not celebrated at St Mary's Concord during the season of Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 14 February. Please contact the parish office for a booking.

COLLECTIONS: The practice of passing around the collection plates during Mass remains suspended. There are two containers at the back of the church and at the side door marked 1st and 2nd Collection. Your regular donations can be placed in the appropriate containers. For your convenience "Tap and Go" stations are available at the doors of the church. Tap to donate the set amount. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for donations and the "Tap & Go" transactions cannot be reversed.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office Phone (02) 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org.

You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: **New members are needed for 2024.** The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body entrusted with the task of reflecting on the parish's Vision and Mission. In a spirit of service to the community, the Parish Pastoral Council works with the parish priest to foster and support appropriate pastoral actions. Members serve a four-year term with half the Council changing every two years. The Pastoral Council meets on the first Tuesday of every second month from February to December. Any parishioner 18 years of age or older may be nominated or may nominate his/herself. If you are interested, please contact Fr Paul.

VOTIVE CANDLES: A long Christian tradition has linked the lighting of a candle to prayers of petition. When we pray for a particular intention or for someone who has died, lighting a candle is visible expression of our prayer.

That is also why we give a donation so that it becomes "my candle" that I am offering to God as a sign of my prayer.

For safety reasons many churches have moved to electric votive candles. We have two electric votive candle stands to give parishioners an opportunity to "light" a candle. You simply need to touch the button in front of the candle.



In 2018 we also added a new votive candle stand in the shrine of *S Maria Vergine Annunziata* at the back of the church. It offers parishioners an opportunity to light a specially designed candle that fits into a glass holder.

If there are no candles in the glass cups, simply place the candle into the cup and use the lighter that is provided. Please do not lift the glass holders out of the stand. A donation can be placed in the box at the front of the stand.

The parish buys the special candles for that stand and your donations also help to cover the cost of the candles.

PARKING FOR MASS: Thank you to all who take the time to find parking in the streets near the church. On-site parking is only available in the Church Forecourt via the Parramatta Road gates. **Please park rear to the buildings to avoid reversing after Mass.**

The Burton Street entrance to St Mary's Villa must be kept clear at all times for emergency vehicles. Please also note that on Christmas Day many Villa residents go out to spend the day with their family. Access is essential.

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE FOODBANK

The JRS continues to support those seeking asylum and temporary migrants in Australia, as they remain excluded from all forms of Federal government support. This has meant that people who were once working and self-sufficient have had to rely on charities, like JRS, for rent, medication, bills and food. To help keep everyone fed, we are asking those who can to donate one item a week (1 or 2 Kg bags of Basmati Rice, Tuna in oil, Cooking Oil (750ml/1L/2L bottles), tinned tomatoes, tinned lentils, chickpeas, red kidney beans, pasta (spaghetti, penne, spiral) but please not tinned spaghetti. Donations can be placed in the blue bin on the table at the back of the church.

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH There are many ways parishioners continue to support the Mission and work of the parish: the Planned Giving program, Tap n' Go donations and cash donations placed in the collection buckets each Sunday.



For your convenience this QR Code allows secure credit donations to be made to the parish through the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

The QR Code will take you directly to the Donation Page on our parish website. If you

select the default option (Sunday collections) your donation will automatically be split between the normal parish 1st and 2nd collections. Alternatively, you can scroll down for other options.

St Mary's Church Concord

The painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary that is the dominant image of Mary in the church is a copy of *The Immaculate Virgin of Los Venerables* painted by the Spanish artist Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1618-1682) in about 1678.

It is believed that the original painting was commissioned from Bartolomé Esteban Murillo by Justino de Neve, who was ecclesiastical president of the *Hospital de los Venerables* in Seville. He later donated it to the chapel at the hospital. The original painting is now in the Prado Museum in Madrid.

In this painting Murillo combined two different iconographic traditions: the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption.

The title of *Immaculate Virgin* reflects the belief that Mary was without sin from the first moment of her being. Although it was only officially declared a dogma of the Church in 1854, belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary had been a popular devotion in Spain since the 16th century. The Assumption of Mary was only declared to be a dogma in 1950. It too had been a popular devotion for many centuries.



The parish's copy was cleaned and restored in February 2020 to mark the Sesquicentenary of the founding of St Mary's Parish (1870-2020)

PARISH HERITAGE SIGNS

In 2020 St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the founding of the parish in 1870. They can be seen in the Church Forecourt and recall historical parish buildings that once existed on the parish site: the first church (1845), the second church (1874), the presbytery (1882), the first school building (1894) and the convent (1898). The signs have been placed close to the original locations of the buildings.

THE FIRST CHURCH

The first church built on the St Mary's Parish site was blessed and opened by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845.

Prior to European settlement, the Burwood-Concord district was occupied by the Wangal clan. They called themselves the Eora, meaning 'the people' and they had been living in the Sydney area for at least 10,000 years.

The British colony of New South Wales had been established in January 1788 with the arrival of the First Fleet under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip.

In late 1788 a small settlement was established at Parramatta and by 1791 a bush track had been built between Sydney and Parramatta that became what is now Parramatta Road. In 1793 some free settlers received grants in the area then named Liberty Plains. In that same year, land grants were made to six non-commissioned officers in the district that came to be known as Concord.

The Concord-Burwood district continued to grow and in 1844 land was purchased by the Catholic Church on Parramatta Road at Concord for the site of a church and school.



The First Church 1845

The painting is based on a photograph taken in 1917 when the hall was under construction behind the first church. That painting now hangs in the parish hall

THE PRESBYTERY

When Father McCarthy was appointed parish priest in 1870, he lived in a cottage on the Burwood side of Parramatta Road until the Presbytery (the priest's residence) was built in 1882. It stood on the northern side of the 1874 church facing Burton Street.



The Presbytery c 2003

The original building was extended several times as the needs of the parish changed. As well as providing a residence for the priests, it also served as the office for the parish until 1994 when the Parish Office was relocated to a cottage at 4 Ada Street. The Presbytery continued to be the residence for the priests of the parish until 2002.

In 2002 the residence for the parish priest was relocated to a cottage at 6 Ada Street that the parish had purchased in 1995.

In 2008, as part of the strategic plan for the development of the parish site, the Presbytery, the Convent and the 1950s school building were all demolished to make way for the new St Mary's Villa.



St Mary's Villa Residential Aged Care 2010

ST MARY'S SCHOOL

The 1845 church also served as a hall and from 1846 as a classroom for a one-teacher school with John Clancy as the first schoolmaster.

When John Clancy retired due to ill health in 1858, he was followed by a series of lay teachers. Records are unclear about the school's operation in the 1860s but when St Mary's Parish was established in 1870, the

existing one-teacher school became part of St Mary's Parish.

When the New South Wales Colonial Government withdrew funding for denominational schools in 1879, it became more difficult for the parish to pay the salary of the teacher and to maintain the school.

Fr Callaghan McCarthy, the first parish priest, asked the Sisters of Charity to take charge of the school and in 1883 the Sisters began travelling each day from Ashfield to teach in the school-hall



The photo of the 1894 school was taken 1917 as the hall was under construction (on the left).

The first school building was erected on the parish site in 1894. It stood on the western side of the present Church Forecourt on what is now the "grass" area within the school precinct. The foundation stone

laid by Cardinal Moran can now be seen on the western side of the church steps

St Mary's School continued to expand. In 1940 a new infants' school was built facing Burton Street and in 1956 a Commercial College for girls was built on the site of the second church. When more classrooms were needed in the 1970s, the first school building was demolished to make way for a new block of classrooms that were blessed and opened by Archbishop James Freeman on 3 September 1972. They became the Kindergarten block until almost forty years later in 2011 when another classroom block was built for Kindergarten along the Parramatta Road boundary of the school precinct on the western side of the hall.



The 1972 classroom block was then demolished to create the present "grass" area.