



The Coastal and Hinterland Catholic Communities of

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY PARISH

Embracing the faith communities of Beerwah, Caloundra, Currimundi, Kawana, Landsborough, Little Mountain, Maleny and Unity at Caloundra West.

4th Sunday of Advent & The Nativity of the Lord

23/24/25 December 2023 Year B

Merry Christmas!

Whoever you are, wherever you're from, **welcome** to this celebration of Christmas. I'd like to really emphasise the **welcome** you are being offered for two reasons: first, one of Jesus' primary values was welcoming people no matter their religiosity, social or political status. Being welcoming is, therefore, one of our primary values as a parish and something we seek to grow in and cultivate at every opportunity. Second, Catholic communities can sometimes be perceived as exclusive clubs for those who attend Mass on Sundays. This perception is an unfortunate cultural relic from 20th century when everyone came to Mass because it was the done thing; for most of us, this would've been our parents, but we live in a different world today. Welcoming everyone, no matter who they are or where they're from is, therefore, more important now than it has ever been – so I say **welcome**.

There's something magical about Christmas. **The magic of Christmas** is one way of thinking about or describing the grace and joy which belongs to God and which we're given as gifts by God. If we're lucky enough to wake up on Christmas day with children in the house, this **magic** is amplified by the excitement of opening presents. I remember waking up on Christmas morning as a child – probably waaay too early – and groping in the darkness for the pillowcase at the end of my bed stuffed with presents. Looking back at these childhood memories, I had no capacity at that time to realise that the gifts were mere representations of my parents' and, therefore, God's love for me, but that is most certainly what they were and continue to be.

While we purchase or make gifts for those we love as concrete ways of displaying how we feel, **God did the same with his Son**. Jesus is the supreme representation of God's love for every person in the world. That God would come into our world as a helpless baby says something about the precious nature of the gift and invites our contemplation into the mysterious realm of **what God is like**. While many elderly people grew up with fire-and-brimstone images of God, the helpless child, Jesus – who even needed his nappies changed by his family – refocuses our attention on the true nature of God: gentle and unconditional love.

For many people however, Christmas is a time of isolation and loneliness. Remembering those for whom the Christmas season is difficult causes us to stand in solidarity with them. In this way, we become more alert for the ways that we can be the hands and feet of Jesus (Matthew 25:40), who came as a light to shine in this sometimes-dark world, so that all who put their trust in him will no longer remain in the dark (John 12:46).

Finally, thank you for being part of this Christmas celebration. When we gather together, we become an even greater sign and symbol of what we truly are: the Body of Christ. Jesus is our Head and we are the many parts who, together, form the Body. Please know that whoever you are, wherever you are from, you are **welcome** here in Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Parish.

With every Christmas blessing
Fr Josh Whitehead



CHRISTMAS RIDDLES

Q: If the end of the year is December 31st, what is the end of Christmas?

We acknowledge the First people of the land on which we celebrate our Eucharist and live out our faith.



PARISH OFFICE

61 Edmund St, Caloundra Qld 4551

Ph: 07 5430 9390

(After hours pastoral emergency 0431 099 854)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm

PARISH WEBSITE

www.caloundracatholicparish.net

PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS

caloundra@bne.catholic.net.au

PASTORAL CARE

olrpastoralcare@bne.catholic.net.au

Happy Holidays

The Parish office will be closed from Friday 22/12/23 and reopen Monday 8/1/2024
Mass will continue once-a-day ONLY at OLR church at 9am during this time,
(EXCEPT Wednesdays no Mass!) while the Parish office are taking a well deserved break.

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

From the beginning, the Christian Church has understood that Christmas is more than just the commemoration of Jesus' birth on 25th December. For nearly 2000 years, Christians have celebrated Christmas from December 25 through to the Epiphany. The church calendar today extends this celebration until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Christmas in fact celebrates the beginnings of the mystery of salvation – Jesus' birth, his revelation to the Jewish shepherds and the Gentile magi, his baptism by John in the Jordan and his first miracle: the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana.

While it is natural to focus on Jesus' birth at Christmas time, we should not stop there. When we celebrate someone's birthday, we reflect on the life of that person in its entirety, not just the day of their birth. Similarly at Christmas we remember not just Jesus' birth, but his life, death and resurrection and what it means for us.

Christmas is above all a celebration of the fact that, through the Incarnation, God is present in our everyday lives. The Jesus, whom we adore at Christmas, is no longer the infant in the manger; he is the risen Lord of the universe.

Christmas celebrates not only the light of the star over Bethlehem, but Jesus as the light of the world. *Elizabeth Harrington*



St Vincent de Paul

Members of the St Vincent de Paul conferences would like to thank all parishioners and friends for supporting this year's annual Christmas appeal. Your generous support enabled Vinnies to once again reach out to those most in need within our communities over Christmas. Fr Gerard blessed the hampers and the Vinnies members, who will distribute the hampers from the shop.

Merry Christmas & Thank You!

The Parish office would like to thank each and everyone of you for all your hard work and commitment to our Parish. The support in your chosen ministry does not go unnoticed and we thank you very much. Wishing you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and God-willing, a prosperous 2024.

From all the team in the Parish Office.



The priests of the
Sunshine Coast say

**"Thank you"
and
Merry Christmas**

to you and
your family.

Parish Diary

Saturday 30 December

Mass (OLR) 9am

Vigil Mass

Mass (OLR) 5pm

Mass (Beerwah) 5pm

Sunday 31 December

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Mass (OLR) 6.30am

(Landsborough) 7am

Mass (Unity) 8am

Mass (Kawana) 8am

Mass (Maleny) 9am

Mass (Currimundi) 9.15am

Mass (OLR) 9:30am

Mass (Lt Mt) 10.30am

Mass (Unity) 5pm

WATCH MASS LIVE

<https://www.facebook.com/caloundracatholicparish/>

PARISH PRIESTS

Fr Joshua Whitehead

Fr Joseph Hien Van Vo

Fr Francis Fernandes

Fr Gerard Lai

PARISH STAFF

Vicki Howard - Parish Secretary

Edgar Pitargue - Accountant

Bernadette Bain - Communications

Felicity Jones - Youth Minister

What's on around the Parish

You can scan the QR code below and this will give you what's on around the Parish.



Linktree QR Code

In Transition

We welcome **Lucie Hudson, Lincoln Emeny, Luca & Xavier McHugh** who will be baptised at OLR this weekend.

We pray for **Emily Saad** who died last week and her funeral was on Friday.

May the souls of our deceased priests, religious and parishioners **Rest in Peace.**