Welcome to OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH

153 Holberton St, Toowoomba | p: 4634 1453
Email: ourladyoflourdesparish@twb.catholic.org.au | https:/www.ololparish.org.au
Priest Director: Fr Jamie Collins | Associate Pastor: Fr BJ Perrett
Parish Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am - 1:00pm
Pastoral Coordinator: Jenny Ferguson - olol.pastoralcoordinator@twb.catholic.org.au
Mass times: Saturday: 6:30pm Vigil | Sunday: 9.45am
Weekday Liturgy of The Word/Mass – Tuesday and Thursday 10am
Primary School: e: lourdes@twb.catholic.edu.au | p: 4591 1200
https:/www.ololtwb.catholic.edu.au

We would like to acknowledge the Giabal and Jarowair peoples, Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Sunday, 21st December 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent - Year A

First Reading
Isaiah 7:10-14
A reading from the prophet Isaiah
The virgin will conceive.
The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.' Then Isaiah said: 'Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 23:1-6. R. see w 7. 10

(R.) Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples. It is he who set it on the seas; on the waters he made it firm. (R.)

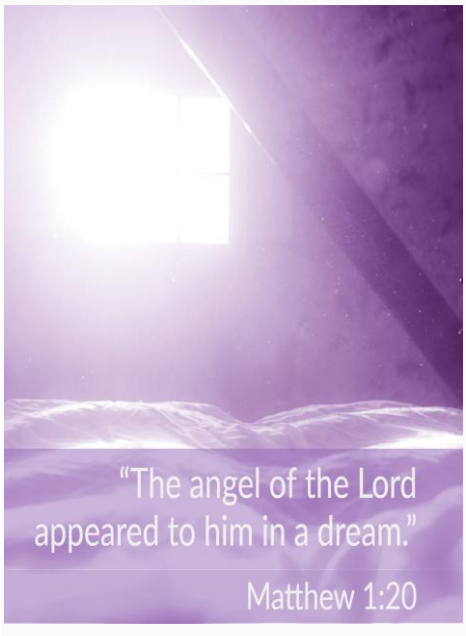
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things. (R.)

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord and reward from the God who saves him. Such are the men who seek him, seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

Second Reading
Romans 1:1-7
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.
From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures. This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

Gospel Acclamation
Matthew 1:23
Alleluia, alleluia!
A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.
Alleluia!

Gospel
Matthew 1:18-24
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.
This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.



Next Week's Readings (27th/28th Dec) – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph - Year A
1st Reading: Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14 2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12-21 Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

Parish Activities

ANAM CARA – Wednesday 9.00am in the Presbytery

BAPTISM information mornings are held on the 1st Sunday of the month at 10.45am. Please phone the office if you wish to attend.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY - 9.45am Mass (except school holidays) for children in Prep - Yr 4.

FRIENDSHIP & CRAFT GROUP - meet in the Quiet Room at the Church every Thursday after the 10am Mass.

ECUMENISM GROUP - meet the 4th Saturday of each month at 9:45am in the Children's Liturgy Room followed by a cuppa.

LITURGY GROUP - meet every 4th Tuesday of the month at 1pm in the Presbytery.

LOURDES PRAYER GROUP - meet in the Quiet Room every Tuesday after the 10am Liturgy of The Word.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL – meet the 1st Monday of each month at 6.30pm in the Presbytery Meeting Room.

SOCIAL JUSTICE - meet 1st Sunday of the month at 10:45am in the quiet room at the Church.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL - meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday afternoons in the quiet room at the church at 2pm.

Parish Councillors

Jo Johnston, Jeni Bonell, Jessica Ramos, Emma Dever, Melissa McLean, Julie Whittaker, Peter Castles, Georgina Humphrys, Brandon Joseph, Clare Watson

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at risk

In Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, we commit ourselves to ensuring the safety and well-being of children, young people and adults at risk in our Parish community. The best interests of the child, young person or adult at risk come first.

Our Parish takes a zero tolerance approach to all forms of abuse. If you have any concerns about the safety of children, young people and adults at risk please contact our Parish Safeguarding Representatives, Sue Whitelegg or Jo and Ray Johnston on **0437 839 838**. If you believe anybody is at immediate risk of harm you should phone 000. You are encouraged to provide feedback on Safeguarding policies and procedures. **Toowoomba Diocese Safeguarding Resources** can be found at https://www.twb.catholic.org.au/safeguarding-policy-resources/

Living the gospel

Advent

Emmanuel; God-is-with-us – that's what we celebrate through Christmas and that's what we've been preparing for during Advent. We celebrate God-with-us in a particular time and place through our celebration of the birth of Jesus. But we remember it every year because we also use the Christmas celebration to remind ourselves that God continues to be with us. That is what is so remarkable about the Christmas season: that God-is-with-us now, not just in a stable in Palestine so many years ago, but now! Advent is the time to remind ourselves of this incredible truth and prepare ourselves to acknowledge it once again.

Sunday Reflection...

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Despite all of the excitement associated with eschatological fulfilment, despite all of the assurance we have that it will be an experience of peace and abundant life, the mystery for which we long requires the risk of faith. Despite all of the times that we have celebrated the Nativity, we still do not have full comprehension and understanding. Still we are invited to enter deeply into the event that is before us. Will we step into a life of deeper faith and commitment, or will we merely participate in the external celebration of the feast? Only we can decide, and only we will really know the decision that we make.

The circumstances of our lives influence the way we live out our faith. As Christians, we are called to devote ourselves to the service of Christ. Our primary commitment must be to Christ and to the way of being human that he has shown us. We must be committed to what enriches life and not to what diminishes it. We must be committed to the good of people and not to the hoarding of things. We may not be official heralds of the gospel, but we proclaim our faith in the way we live our lives, in the kindness with which we treat others, in honesty of our business transactions. We proclaim the gospel when we stand for justice, when we forgive those who have offended us, when we show compassion to those who suffer. As we step into the eschatological age, we are called to recommit ourselves to genuine Christian living.

Scriptural context

Today's first reading is from the prophet Isaiah and contains the prophecy that is quoted in the gospel passage. The book of Isaiah was written at a time when the people of Israel were under threat and had once again fallen away from their covenant with God. Isaiah's prophecy is one of the 'Messiah' prophecies but despite the future-focus is a promise to the people of the time that God-is-with-us. The promise is that God-is-with-us now, despite the conditions we find ourselves in, and God-will-be-with-us in the future when God's Messiah is born of a young woman.

Gospel focus

What's in a name?

It appears from the passage that Mary's child is to be called both Jesus and Emmanuel. Emmanuel is not intended as a different name for Jesus but rather one of the many titles that will be applied to him. The title means God-is-with-us. That one word, Emmanuel, sums up the essence of Jewish and Christian belief. The Jewish people's faith in God was built on the basis that God travelled with them and through their lives. Christians believe that God took on an even closer sense of being with us through God's incarnation in the life of Jesus.

Thought of the week...

Hiking in your 40s is a great way to meet people.

Today I met two paramedics, three nurses, a cardiologist... and nearly met Jesus.

Please Pray For…

Recent Deaths: Pam Berlin (Jo Johnston's sister), Lillian (Lil) Dolan, Gregory Ahearn

Anniversaries: (19th Dec – 25th Dec) Margaret Shelley, Rose Smith, Catherine Kruger, Chahira Coorey, Malisa Golightly, Bill Walsh, Patricia Wright, Frank Connolly, Marlene Devlin, Jessie Webber

Those Who Are Sick: Garry Birch, Sr Cecilia Bailey, Peter Reynolds, Peter Hickey, Kathie Ober, Brian Reardon, Van Vu, Eileen Reedy, Kevin Arnott, Carmel Green, Jasmine Fletcher, Margaret Conrick, Hazel Soriano, Tim & Olivia Zvirblis, Audrey Bentley, Yvonne Oliveiro, Gregory and Genia Casey, Noel Lipp, Michael (Micky) Lynch, Carmel & Ron O'Brien, Lillian Roberts, Brian Thomson, Peggy Thies, John Axtell, Noel O'Mara, Mick O'Mara

December Birthdays: Mary McConachy, Carmel Ryan, John Axtell, Peter Castles, Diann O'Mara, Evie Ward

Parish News…

Sat 20th	○ 8am Salo Centre Setup. All welcome ○ 9am Choir Practice at Salo Centre ○ 6.30pm Mass
Sun 21st	○ 9.45am Mass
Mon 22nd	○ 11.30am Funeral Lil Dolan
Tues 23rd	○ 6am – 6.55am Reconciliation ○ 7am Mass ○ 10am Liturgy of the Word
Wed 24th	○ 10am Funeral of Gregory Ahearn ○ 6pm Christmas Eve Vigil at Salo Centre
Thur 25th	○ 8am Christmas Day Mass at OLOL Church
Fri 26th	

Date Claimers:

- 27th/28th Dec – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- 3rd /4th Jan – The Epiphany of the Lord
- 5th – 9th Jan – No masses or Liturgy of the Word at OLOL this week due to retreat.

Christmas Mass Setup & Choir Practice

Set up is this Saturday, 20th December at 8am at the Salo Centre. All welcome to help. Many hands make light work! Choir Practice will be held at 9am this Saturday, 20th December at the Salo Centre.

Office Closure Over Christmas & New Year

The Parish Office will close the afternoon of Wednesday 24th December and reopen on Monday 5th January. We extend special thanks to all members of our parish community for your amazing support throughout the year. We hope the Christmas season brings much peace and happiness to you and your families and the New Year brings opportunities for rest and many moments of joy.

2025 Annual Christmas Collection

The annual Christmas Collection will be shared between the OLOL St Vincent de Paul Conference for back-to-school support of families in our community and the missionaries of St Francis de Sales' Parish of Our Lady of Mercy in Rioverde, Ecuador where many are suffering from extreme poverty. Your generous support will ensure that these communities, despite their many setbacks, can face the future with hope and resilience.

Christmas Eve Mass – Salo Centre Rome Street Toowoomba

Time	Welcomers	Altar Servers	Commentator	Ministers of the Word	Offertory Procession	Host Ministers	Wine Ministers	Collectors
Wed 24th Dec at 6pm	Poulton Family Ward Family	A Mendoza L Ward	C Ferguson	J Bonell S Kelly	M & J Wells	R O'Brien M McLean K Ward	J Kelly M Whitelegg B Bambosek W Hoopert	K Roberts P Kelly P Hoopert M Kelly

Christmas Day – OLOL Church Goodwood Street Toowoomba

Time	Welcomers	Commentator	Ministers of the Word	Offertory Procession	Extraordinary Minister	IPad Operator	Collectors
Thurs 25th Dec at 8am	A Suhr J Burke	J Axtell	M Conrick P Murphy	Dias Family	H. M Ondrus W. J Axtell W. A Cournane	M Cushway	Winder Family

Date	Welcomers	Commentary	Ministers of the Word	Offertory Procession	Extraordinary Ministers	Ipad Operator	Piety Stall
27th Dec at 6.30pm	J & P O'Sullivan	P Kelly	J Joseph J Kelly	M Cushway J Joseph	H. B Witham W. S Kelly W. J Johnston	K & G Regan	W Hoopert
28th Dec at 9.45am	Anderson Family	C Hudson	D Young T Ryan	Coonan Family	H. M Hohn W. A Cournane W. C Anderson	M Conrick	A Suhr

Fourth Sunday of Advent

In the child born to Mary, we see the fulfilment of our deepest longing: to be known, to be loved, to be accompanied. God is no longer distant. God walks with us, stands with us, suffers with us, heals and transforms us. The Incarnation doesn't remove life's burdens and sufferings but changes them because now God carries them with us – the holy breaks into the ordinary.

As Advent nears its end, we are invited to stand with Joseph in quiet courage and trust. We may not have all the answers, but we are called, like Joseph, to rise, to believe, and to walk forward. For Emmanual, God with us, is not an idea. It is a presence that transforms everything: our waiting, our ordinary days, and our call to carry Christ into the world.

(Taken from In Holy Stillness Daily Reflections for Advent Archdiocesan Ministries) formation@bne.catholic.net.au

Prayer for the Bondi Tragedy

God of Mercy,
We pray for those who lost their lives in Bondi and entrust them to Your eternal care.
Surround their families with Your strength and love as they walk through this deep sorrow.
Bring peace to hearts that are broken, light to those in darkness, and hope to all who mourn.
Guide our nation toward unity and peace, so love may overcome fear and division.
Amen.
Mount Alvernia College, Brisbane

Mass times during Clergy Retreat

Clergy Retreat will be held from Sunday 4th January through to Friday 9th January. Masses will be held at the following times:

Our Lady of Lourdes
Sunday 4th January 9.45am
St Patrick's Cathedral
Monday 5th January 5.30pm
Tuesday 6th January 9.00am
Wednesday 7th January, Thursday 8th January and Friday 9th January at 7.00am

ENEWS UPDATE

A newsletter from the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba for clergy, parishes, schools, staff and the wider community.

STATEMENT ON THE BONDI TRADEGY

I call on the people of our Diocese to pray for our Jewish sisters and brothers at this time of trauma and tragedy. We stand with you in your pain. We pray for all involved - those who have died, those injured, their families, the police and first responders and all medical personnel. Let there be peace, especially in this season of peace.

Bishop Ken Howell

Read the full statement by the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB.

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

When: *19/12/25 Friday* ***Time:*** *3:00pm*
Where: *Village Green TRC Annex, Toowoomba*
All are welcome to attend this event of solidarity and prayer in light of the terrible event in Bondi. See flyer for details.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

The Christmas Mass Times directory is now live on the Diocese's website. Visit www.twb.catholic.org.au/christmas-timetable/ to find Mass times and seasonal office closures. The page is being updated all the time with new information.

SAVE THE DATE: SPRED 40 YEARS IN TOOWOOMBA DIOCESE

When: *22/3/26 Sunday* ***Where:*** *St Theresa's Parish Toowoomba*
The wonderful ministry of SPRED is celebrating 40 years in our Diocese in 2026. Mark the date in your calendar; more details to follow in the new year.
(Note: for parishes who have already kindly promoted this event, there has been a change of date)

DIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Ken Howell advises that he has appointed Fr Jamie Collins as Parish Priest of Dalby, Priest Director of Jandowae, and Administrator of Tara parishes. This new appointment will begin from 1 January 2026, although Fr Jamie will not arrive in Dalby until towards the end of January. This fills Fr Jim Cronin's role as he now enters retirement.
Please keep Fr Jamie, Fr Jim, and all our clergy in your prayers.

RESTORATION OF CATHEDRAL STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

We are excited to announce that **Raffle 30 is now open and includes some amazing prizes!** The Play For Purpose raffle is a national raffle run by The Lott, and 50% of every ticket sold through this link goes directly to support the restoration of St Patrick's Cathedral.