



St Kevin's Catholic Parish



Parish Office Hours: Tue to Fri: 9am to 4pm
26 Herlihys Road, Lower Templestowe 3107
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Finance Administrator: Mrs Frances Johnson
Pastoral Worker: Mrs Ana Saro
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Parish Priest: Fr Charles Balnaves

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VISION STATEMENT

St Kevin's Templestowe Parish is a Catholic community called by God and trusting in Jesus. We aspire to care for and connect with the wide world and to be hospitable and generous so that all may live life to the full.

Year B

Feast of the Holy Family

30th/31st December, 2023

Our Presider today is: Fr Charles Balnaves

From the desk of our Parish Priest...

Thank you to the over four hundred people who filled St Kevin's Church with life and joy for our Christmas Masses. We had a technical hitch or two usually caused by me not understanding things fully but that only added to the sense of family gathering that pervaded the Masses.

And ... Thank you Lord for helping me be a little careful not to catch Covid-19 again on Christmas Eve. Phew!

And ... many, many thanks again to the Choir for the vigil/family Christmas Mass who played and sang with gusto and drew the people along. And thank you to the many people who organised and planned and prepared each of the Masses so that they flowed smoothly and helped us remember and to witness to the birth of our saviour.

Thank you also to: Adrian, Penny, Marietta, Gabee, Miranda, Peter, Helen, Ali, Nafi, Romena, Amir, Willowbrae Aged Care, Ashby Aged Care, Lisa, Tiziana, Nadia, Frances, Ana, Gerry, Carmel, Jan, Peter, Vianney, Carmel, Pauline, Ashwin, Liz, Mary, Jo, Allan, Angela, Louis, Nancy, Mick, Lynne, Tony, Lyn, Lyn, Brian, Raffaella, Bruno, Fiona, ... everyone who attended Mass raised me up, lifted me in some way but those names listed are people I remember specifically in some way via—letters, handshakes, hugs, gifts, affirmations, thanks. Your gift of self to me added greatly to my celebration of Christmas and my sense of Christ present with me. There were many more people I should name than this – I know – but I cannot recall everyone. Even if not named, you warmed my heart.

2024: HAPPY NEW YEAR

We are very near the beginning of a New Year, a leap year, a year of Olympics, a year of seeking to grow our faith and our capacity to share it. 2024 will see us embark on a number of new efforts:

- A renewed Parish Pastoral Council, awake to helping guide the parish forwards.
- The start of the Alpha program—a pilot first to allow me and others in leadership to know the program personally and then find leaders for the longer term. Alpha is a gentle series of conversations that leads people towards a personal experience of Jesus Christ. A meal, a DVD, an open conversation, an opportunity to talk about Jesus and share our own feelings and understanding.
- The start of the Landings program—inviting people who have stopped being an active part of the Catholic church—asking them to come and sit and talk and open up about what has gone wrong for them in faith and to provide a safe space to talk and re-discover Jesus.
- New staff with the hope of someone to help lead a communications effort and someone to help take up some of the operations needs.
- A new Assistant Priest Fr Isaac

Thank you for your help and your willingness to journey with me as your shepherd, with all my peculiarities and failings. It is a joy to me to be placed here with you by Jesus Christ.

God bless, Fr Charles

Important Dates to Remember/Save...

- **Monday, 1st January – New Year's Day – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God** Mass will be celebrated at 9.00am
- **Weekend of 6/7th January – Solemnity of The Epiphany of the Lord** Masses will be celebrated as usual
- **Friday, 26th January – Australia Day** Mass will be celebrated at 9.15am
- **Saturday, 10th February – Chinese New Year**
- **Weekend of 10/11th February – St Kevin's Parish Volunteers Acknowledgement and Celebration** more details to come
- **Wednesday, 14th February – Ash Wednesday** Masses will be celebrated at 10.30am and 7.30pm

What's happening in our Parish this week?...

Saturday	5.30pm	Mass
Sunday	8.30am & 10.00am	
Tuesday	8.30am	Adoration
	9.15am	Mass
Wednesday	10.15am	Adoration
Thursday	8.30am	Adoration
	9.15am	Mass
Saturday	5.30pm	Mass
Sunday	8.30am & 10.00am	



We pray for Better Health:

Fr Brendan Dillon, Bastine D'Cruz, Mary Calleja, Batoul Barak, Louise Dipetro, Mary Hodgekinson, Lianney Susanto, Kevin Parker, Melissa Wirata, Jane O'Brien, Dorothea (Dot) Sharkey, Trish Wilson, Danielle Hardy, Maeve & John Reardon, Eugenia Pozzebon, Margaret Turner, Graham & Jason Gooden, Lynda O'Meara, Milda Sarzetakas, Andrew Amalfi, Ana Saro and Tracey Tucker.

Anniversaries: John Rowland and Nina Luca

Recently Deceased:

Feast Days during January:...

1st January

Mary, the Holy Mother of God Celebrates Mary's role in the mystery of the incarnation, enriches the octave of Christmas with a Marian perspective and provides a solemn beginning to the New Year.

2nd January Ss Basil and Gregory

Basil and Gregory are commemorated together because of their friendship in life and their enduring influence on the Church, especially in the East.

7th January The Epiphany of the Lord

The mystery of the incarnation is now revealed to everyone in the world, represented by the wise men from foreign lands.

8th January The Baptism of the Lord Commemorates the revelation of Jesus as God's beloved Son, the Christ, anointed by the Spirit.

17th January St Anthony

Remembered as the father of monasticism.

24th January St Francis De Sales

Remembered as a most influential preacher, writer and spiritual director, who combined firmness with patience and gentleness.

25th January The Conversion of St Paul

Celebrates the work of God's grace at a major turning point in the life of Paul himself and in the history of the infant Church.

26th January Australia Day

The liturgy marks Australia's national day with prayers seeking God's blessing on all its peoples and commending its destiny into God's hands.

31st January St John Bosco

Remembered – like the order's patron, St Francis de Sales (24 January) – for his cheerfulness and total trust in the providence of God.

2nd February

The Presentation of the Lord Christ is the 'light to enlighten all nations'.

LITURGY ROSTER

Feast of the Holy Family – 30th/31st December 2023

1st Read: Gen 15: 1-6, 21: 1-3 2nd Read: Heb 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19 Gospel: Luke 2: 22-40

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Rachel Marini	Christine Marini	Lawrence Ceconello
9.00am	Julie O'Donnell		Adrian Teo

Feast of the Epiphany – 6/7th January 2024

1st Read: Isaiah 60: 1-6 2nd Read: Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6 Gos: Matt 2: 1-12

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Margaret Turner	Daniel Marini	Maryanne McNamara
8.30am	Paul Polidano		Mary Waddick
10.00am	Carmel Purdey	Miriam Ayoub	Raffaella Dinelli

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – 13/14th January 2024

1st Read: 1 Samuel 3: 3-10, 19 2nd Read: 1 Cor 6: 13-15, 17-20 Gos: John 1: 35-42

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Rachel Marini	Bredenia Raquel	Anne Maguire
8.30am	Jessica Bartholomeusz		Frances Bettiol
10.00am	Frances Johnson	Julie O'Donnell	Tony Robinson

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time – 20th/21st January 2024

1st Read: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 2nd Read: 1 Cor 7: 29-31 Gos: Mark 1: 14-20

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Daniel Marini	Christine Marini	Lynne O'Brien
8.30am	Frank Ozzimo		Penny Teo
10.00am	Lucy Halliburton	Bernard Butler	Geraldine Williams

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 27/28th January 2024

1st Read: Deuteronomy 18: 15-20 2nd Read: 1 Cor 7: 32-35 Gos: Mark 1: 21-28

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Janet Parsons	Kathy Pearce	Lawrence Ceconello
8.30am	Pauline Erickson		Pat Rowland
10.00am	Hannah Halliburton	Liz O'Connell	Lyn Robinson

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 3rd/4th February 2024

1st Read: Job 7: 1-4, 6-7 2nd Read: 1 Cor 9: 16-19, 22-23 Gos: Mark 1: 29-39

Time	Commentator	Lector	Communion
5.30pm	Daniel Marini	Margaret Turner	Margaret McNamara
8.30am	Paul Polidano		Adrian Teo
10.00am	Tony Byrne	Frances Johnson	Kaye Byrne



Thank you

two small words to reflect our appreciation for the HUGE amount of work our hard-working volunteers undertook to make our Christmas celebrations the wonderful successes that that were. St Kevin's Parish is truly blessed. Thank you.



Pope Francis: Christ is our true food

In his homily for Christmas, Pope Francis encouraged people to 'rediscover the meaning of Christmas' by reflecting on the significance of Christ being born in a manger—the trough where animals feed.

Advent and Christmas is a season where, these days at least, we not only seem to consume more but are *consumed* by more: more stresses, more events, more worries, more distractions. In the midst of this, it is important to slow down, pause and consider that God wants to feed us with his own life, his own love.

Pope Francis says:

He comes there, to a feeding trough, in order to become our food. God is no father who devours his children, but the Father who, in Jesus, makes us his children and feeds us with his tender love. He comes to touch our hearts and to tell us that love alone is the power that changes the course of history. He does not remain distant and mighty, but draws near to us in humility; leaving his throne in heaven, he lets himself be laid in a manger.

Dear brother, dear sister, tonight God is drawing near to you, because you are important to him. From the manger, as food for your life, he tells you: 'If you feel consumed by events, if you are devoured by a sense of guilt and inadequacy, if you hunger for justice, I, your God, am with you. I know what you are experiencing, for I experienced it myself in that manger. I know your weaknesses, your failings and your history. I was born in order to tell you that I am, and always will be, close to you.'

The Christmas manger, the first message of the divine Child, tells us that God is with us, he loves us, and he seeks us. So take heart!

Since the start of the war, millions of Ukrainians have fled their home country, with thousands of refugees coming to Australia.

In response to the continued conflict in Ukraine, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli is launching a special appeal, the proceeds of which will go towards providing aid and practical assistance to those who have been displaced and are without basic supplies, especially as winter approaches.

'There are no winners in war, only families torn apart. Sadly, this is the painful reality facing so many at this time,' Archbishop Comensoli reflected.

'I'm inviting the faithful of Melbourne to offer whatever they can at this time. And I pray that, together, we can be a sign of God's nearness to those who need it most.'



Photo on the left:

Archbishop Peter Comensoli at the Garrison Church of Ss Peter and Paul, viewing the photos of fallen soldiers and civilians.

Appeal for Ukraine

On the table in the Gathering Space, you will find cards from the Archbishop of Melbourne. These have been distributed to all Catholic Churches in Australia in the hope for any support we can provide. We are not conducting any special collections during the month of January so please make sure you collect your copy of this card before leaving today.

For information on our Parish Schools please contact:

St Kevin's Primary School
Phone: 9273 9999

St Charles Borromeo Primary School
Phone: 9842 7634

Responsorial Psalm

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Response to Prayers of the Faithful

Gracious God, hear our prayer.

REFLECTIONS ON THE READINGS OF THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

First Reading

[Sirach 3: 2-6. 12-14](#)

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus

Whoever fears the Lord honours his parents.

It's not unusual for lectionary readings to be a hybrid of verses, for the sake of either brevity or intelligibility. What distinguishes today's text from Genesis is that its two parts are several chapters apart. The first, from chapter 15, recounts God's promise of a natural heir to Abram. The second, from chapter 21, reports the subsequent birth of Isaac to Sarah and the renamed Abraham.

Producing an heir was all-important in ancient times. The birth of a child assured the continuance of the family name, the security of property, and care in old age. The childless Abram has been forced to consider adopting an heir, but not only is he promised a child of his own but a multitude of descendants.

Abram responds by putting his faith in God, and this was counted "as making him justified." Given that this verse plays such a critical role in Paul's argument in Romans and Galatians (and in Reformation polemics) about the primacy of faith over works, it's good that it's heard again in Lent (Second Sunday, Year C), and not just in this optional reading during summer holiday time.

The reading interweaves narrative and the dialogue between God and Abram. The sentences are short and straightforward enough, though Sarah does appear unannounced in the latter part of the reading. The end result is a story that's interesting both for readers to tell and for the assembly to hear.

Second Reading

[Corinthians 3: 12-21](#)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians
Concerning the Christian life in the world.

Whoever composed the letter to the Hebrews was steeped in Jewish tradition and well versed in Jewish scripture. The unknown author (in all likelihood a male) would therefore have been well aware of passages like 1 Maccabees 2:51-46, and above all the several chapters of Ecclesiasticus 44-50, that are spent in praise of Jewish heroes and heroines of faith. Accordingly, he devotes a full and lengthy chapter of Hebrews to the same enterprise.

Today's reading is a combination of extracts referring to Abraham and Sarah. Three examples of exemplary faith are cited. The first is Abraham's decision to leave his homeland for an unknown destination. The second is Sarah's trust in God's promise of a child in spite of her advanced years. The third is Abraham's willingness to sacrifice the one on whom all his hopes of posterity were pinned, his only son Isaac. There is no mention of Abraham and Sarah in the gospel that follows, but Luke's account of the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple is peopled with characters who emulate the faith of their forebears.

The letter to the Hebrews is a literary and theological masterpiece. It is written in a high rhetorical style that is evident in today's text.

January 2024

The Parish Office staff will be taking a well-deserved break during some of January 2024. The Office will be run with a skeleton staff during this time. Weekday and weekend Masses will continue as usual.

Fr Charles? He will be around – catching up on things, thinking and taking things a little easier but still available. So if there is something you are thinking about doing during January – you need to let Fr Charles know so we can plan it – and Fr Charles knows what is happening.



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The Archdiocese is committed to the safety, wellbeing and human dignity of children, young people and adults.

