



St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

# Our Parish

Sunday of Finding of Our Lord in the Temple  
and New Years Day: World Day of Peace

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

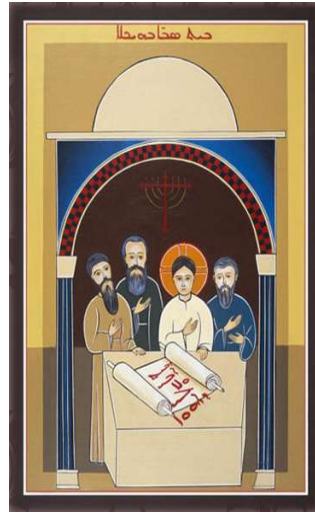
Year 2024, Issue #1

## The Gospel

Luke 2: 41-52

Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

## Season of the Birth of Our Lord



Next Sunday  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the  
Epiphany

Old Testament  
Reading

Isa 40: 6-11

Epistle

2 Cor 10: 1-11

Gospel

John 1: 29-34

## الإنجيل

لو ٢: ٤١-٥٢

كَانَ أَبُو يَسُوعَ يَذْهَبَانِ كُلَّ سَنَةٍ فِي عِيدِ  
الْفِصْحِ إِلَى أُورُشَلِيمَ. وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ يَسُوعُ اثْنَتَيْ  
عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً، صَعِدُوا مَعًا كَمَا هِيَ الْعَادَةُ فِي  
الْعِيدِ. وَبَعْدَ أَنْقِضَاءِ أَيَّامِ الْعِيدِ، غَادَ الْأَبَوَانِ،  
وَبَقِيَ الصَّبِيُّ يَسُوعُ فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ، وَهُمَا لَا  
يَدْرِيَانِ. وَإِذْ كَانَا يَطْنَانِ أَنَّهُ فِي الْقَائِلَةِ، سَارَا  
مَسِيرَةَ يَوْمٍ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَا يَطْلُبَانِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَقْرَابِ  
وَالْمَعَارِفِ. وَلَمْ يَجِدَاهُ، فَعَادَا إِلَى أُورُشَلِيمَ  
يَبْحَثَانِ عَنْهُ. وَبَعْدَ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ، وَجَدَاهُ فِي  
الْهَيْكَلِ جَالِسًا بَيْنَ الْعُلَمَاءِ، يَسْمَعُهُمْ  
وَيَسْأَلُهُمْ. وَكَانَ جَمِيعُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَهُ  
مُنْذِهِلِينَ بِذَكَائِهِ وَأَجُوبَتِهِ. وَلَمَّا رَأَهُ أَبَوَاهُ بِيْهِنًا،  
وَقَالَتْ لَهُ أُمُّهُ: «يَا ابْنِي، لِمَاذَا فَعَلْتَ بِنَا  
هَكَذَا؟ فَهَذَا أَنَا وَأَبُوكَ كُنَّا نَبْحَثُ عَنْكَ  
مُتَوَجِّعِينَ!». فَقَالَ لَهُمَا: «لِمَاذَا تَطْلُبَانِي؟ أَلَا  
تَعْلَمَانِ أَنَّهُ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ أَكُونَ فِي مَا هُوَ لِأَبِي؟». أَمَّا  
هُمَا فَلَمْ يَفْهَمَا الْكَلَامَ الَّذِي كَلَّمَهُمَا بِهِ. ثُمَّ  
نَزَلَ مَعَهُمَا، وَعَادَ إِلَى النَّاصِرَةِ، وَكَانَ خَاضِعًا  
لَهُمَا. وَكَانَتْ أُمُّهُ تَحْفَظُ كُلَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمُورِ فِي  
قَلْبِهَا. وَكَانَ يَسُوعُ يَنْمُو فِي الْحِكْمَةِ وَالْقَامَةِ  
وَالنَّبَغَةِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالنَّاسِ.

### Divine Liturgy and Services

Sundays: 9:00am (Arabic), 11:00am (Arabic/English), 6:00pm (English)

Mondays – Wednesdays: 9:00am Thursdays – Saturdays: 6:00pm

Confessions: By Appointment Sick Visits: Contact Clergy or the Parish Office (contact details below)

### Parish and Ministry Team and Contact Details

Parish Priest: Msgr Marcelino Youssef 0404 272 272

Assistant Parish Priest: Fr Bechara Trad 0403 725 134

Deacon: Nagi Dimian 0403 750 613

Subdeacon: Jason Maait 0415 771 461

Administration: Rose Zeaiter and Mary Issa Flynn Phone: (02) 9481 7388 or 0422 275 199

Office Hours: Tuesdays – Wednesdays 9:00am – 3.00pm; Thursdays – Fridays 9:00am – 5:00pm

Parish Safeguarding Officers: Margaret Simpson 0408 895 798, George Takchi 0419 651 229

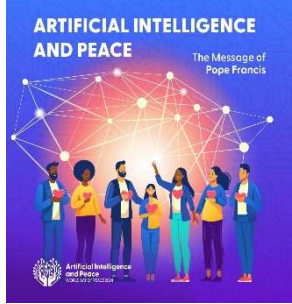
Parish Address: 2 Yarrara Road (Corner Wells Street), Thornleigh, NSW, 2120

Website: [www.stgeorgemcc.org.au](http://www.stgeorgemcc.org.au) Email: [info@stgeorgemcc.org.au](mailto:info@stgeorgemcc.org.au)

## Bishop's Message World Day of Peace

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we approach the end of this year and anticipate the arrival of 2024, we celebrate a significant day, January 1<sup>st</sup>, recognised as the World Day of Peace. Instituted by His Holiness Pope Paul VI in 1968, this day extends an invitation to individuals, communities, and nations to engage in reflection on the importance of peace. It serves as a call to action, urging us to commit to endeavours that contribute to the overall well-being of humanity.



This year, His Holiness Pope Francis, in his message for the 57th World Day of Peace, titled "Artificial Intelligence and Peace," addresses the intersection of technological progress, specifically artificial intelligence (AI), and examines the question of the progress of **science and**

**technology as a path to peace.** Acknowledging their positive contributions to society, Pope Francis also emphasises the ethical challenges and potential risks associated with the rapid advancement of AI, urging us to tread carefully and responsibly. Here are some excerpts from the message of His Holiness:

"Human intelligence is an expression of the dignity with which we have been endowed by the Creator, who made us in his own image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26), and enabled us to respond consciously and freely to his love. In a particular way, science and technology manifest this fundamentally relational quality of human intelligence; they are brilliant products of its creative potential.

... The remarkable advances in new information technologies, particularly in the digital sphere, thus offer exciting opportunities and grave risks, with serious implications for the pursuit of justice and harmony among peoples. Any number of urgent questions need to be asked. What will be the consequences, in the medium and long term, of these new digital technologies? And what impact will they have on individual lives and on societies, on international stability and peace?"

The Pope calls for a cross-disciplinary dialogue, ethical development of algorithms (algo-ethics), and the inclusion of diverse voices in decision-making processes. By reminding us that the measure of **true humanity lies in how we treat the least among us**, he concludes with a hopeful vision that AI development may contribute to human fraternity and world peace: "It is my prayer at the start of the New Year that the rapid development of forms of artificial intelligence will not increase cases of inequality and injustice all too present in today's world, but will help put an end to wars and conflicts, and alleviate many forms of suffering that afflict our human family..."

May the World Day of Peace inspire each of us to contribute to the creation of a more just and peaceful world as we step into the days of the coming year filled with hope.

I wish you a safe, blessed, and Happy New Year!

+ Antoine-Charbel Tarabay

The full message is available on the Vatican website:

<https://www.vatican.va/>

## Reflection of the Week "Finding in the Temple"

We title this Sunday's Gospel passage the Finding in the Temple. It is the only Gospel account we have of Jesus as a child.

Mary and Joseph are looking for Jesus whom they have lost. They find him in the Temple and 'were astonished' (v48). It is an interesting description. One would think his parents would know him well enough to have guessed he would be found in the Temple. Jesus thinks the same, stating, 'Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' (v49). Oddly enough, the Temple that Jesus here describes as the Father's house, would be later criticised (Lk 21:5-6). However, let's return to the point about Jesus and his parents.

From a young age children develop their interests and tastes. Parents can encourage or discourage their children. Like Mary and Joseph sometimes parents are too afraid to allow their children to explore and grow, or haven't been very perceptive of their child's interest or maybe they do not want their child to venture off on a particular road. Parents feel they need to protect their children but sometimes at what cost? However, we read something in today's Gospel, that is important for good parenting, 'His mother treasured all these things in her heart' (v51).

Children need parents but they most need a listening ear and a patient adult. Parents who can give and take and be open to new ways of understanding things are those who enable their children. Mary teaches us how to be one who can nurture children to attain their potential. Amen

Sr Margaret Ghosn mshf

## عيد وجود الرب في الهيكل

تدعونا الليتورجيا الى الاحتفال بختانة الرب ودخوله الى الهيكل في عمر ١٢ سنة معلنا انتماءه الى ابوة السماء قبل ان يكون ابن الانسان. قراءات هذه الاعياد تكشف لنا عن جوهر رسالة المسيح: فهو الذي صالح الشعوب والامم والبعيدين والاقربين مع بعضهم ومع الله؛ وهو رب السلام وصانعه، كما يقول لنا القديس بولس الى اهل افسس؛ وهو يجسد كمال الكهنوت والوساطة بين الله والناس على ما تقوله الرسالة الى العبرانيين. وهو اعطانا سلامه، لا كما يعطينا اياه العالم، فلا نضطرب ولا نخاف، كما يقول يوحنا في انجيله. وهو يدعونا للتشبه به في الاولويات فنكون اولاً في بيت الله، على ما يقوله الانجيلي لوقا. فعبثاً نفتش عن السلام في الرفاهية والغنى والراحة، وعبثاً نفتش عن السلام خارج بيت الله.

## اليوم العالمي للسلام

سنة ١٩٦٨ اعلن قداسة البابا بولس السادس اليوم الاول من كل سنة يوم سلام. والسلام قيمة مسيحية تركز على روح جديدة تنعش الحياة المشتركة بين الشعوب، وعلى ذهنية جديدة حيال الانسان ومصيره. والسلام هو امنية كل الحكام والشعوب والمنظمات الدولية والمؤسسات والكنيسة.

## لو كنا نعرف أن نعيش السلام

البشرية نهر دمّ جاري، تغذيه الحروب عبر التاريخ، مصدره دماء الابرياء التي تُسْفَك كل يوم، العالم بأسره مقتنع بأهمية السلام، ولكن هم كثيرون من يصرفون أموالاً طائلة ليفتعلوا الحروب، أو يخترعوا قنبلة واحدة بإمكانها أن تقني العالم، بهذا يجعلون يسوع بنزاع مستمر الى منتهى الدهور. مع الأيام والسنين يشوّهون ما خلقه بيديه، ويقتلون من افتداهم بدمه. اخترعوا الحروب وجعلوا يسوع في الوسط، يُعيدون تشريده وفقره وجوعه وتغذيته، بكل فقير مشرد ومجروح وجائع، يجلدونه ويهينونه بكل مخطوف ومُهَان، عندما تُفرع طبول الحرب، تُفرع أجراس الكنائس لتصلي من أجل السلام، لتتهيء نبيحة مَنْ وُلِدَ لأجلنا ولأجل سلامنا يموت. لو كنا نعرف أن نعيش السلام لكانت أرضنا سماء.





**FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY  
OF OUR LORD**  
**WITH RITE OF BLESSING OF THE WATER**  
**FRIDAY 5TH JANUARY 2024 @ 10PM**  
**SATURDAY 6TH JANUARY 2024 @ 6PM**

**PARISH  
OFFICE  
CLOSURE**

Our Parish Office will be closed on the following days:

Monday 25th December 2023  
Tuesday 26th December 2023

Monday 1st January 2024  
Tuesday 2nd January 2024

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0408 895 798

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Nagi or Josephine Zeaiter

**Senior  
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**Wednesdays  
9:00am - 4:00pm**

If anyone is interested in joining the Seniors Program or volunteering, please contact:  
Zaride 0417 427 661  
Josephine 0426 239 129



## Memorial Masses

## نوايا القداسات

Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2023	6pm	1 Year Mass for the Late Rosa Moit	قداس السنة المرحومة رمزا معيط	٦:٠٠	السبت ٣٠ ك ٢٠٢٣ ١
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2024	6pm	Mass for the Late Massoud Habkoug	قداس المرحوم مسعود حبقوق	٦:٠٠	السبت ٦ ك ٢٠٢٤ ٢

## Parish Financial Updates

**Parish Income (fortnight 25/12/2023 –07/01/2024)**  
TBA

**Parish Operations Account**  
\$42,712.06

**Parish Loan Balance**  
\$445,450.31

Donations to support our ongoing Parish mission can be made at the Parish Office or by internet banking or direct debit - (Account Name: St George Maronite Church, BSB #062-784, Account # 16948504)

To receive our eNewsletter please email

[info@stgeorgemcc.org.au](mailto:info@stgeorgemcc.org.au)



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## Business Community Corner

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Principal  
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[chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au](mailto:chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au)

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Pennant Hills NSW 2120  
[lsre.com.au/pennant\\_hills](http://lsre.com.au/pennant_hills)

### Homefront real estate

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