



St George Maronite Catholic Church, Thornleigh

Our Parish

1st Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday 7th January 2024

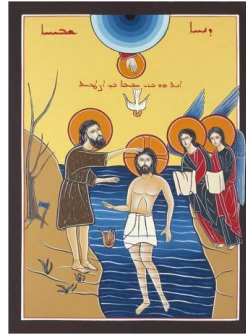
Year 2024, Issue #2

The Gospel

John 1: 29-34

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.'

Season of the Epiphany



Next Sunday
2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Old Testament Reading

Jer 1: 4-10

Epistle

2 Cor 4: 5-15

Gospel

John 1: 35-42

الإنجيل

يو ١: ٢٩-٣٤

في الغدِ (بعد شهادة المعمدان) رأى يُوحَنَّا يَسُوعَ مُقْبِلًا إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ: «هَذَا هُوَ الَّذِي يَرْفَعُ خَطِيئَةَ الْعَالَمِ. هَذَا هُوَ الَّذِي قُلْتُ فِيهِ: يَا تَبِي وَرَأْيِي رَجُلٌ قَدْ صَارَ قُدَّامِي، لِأَنَّهُ كَانَ قَبْلِي. وَأَنَا مَا كُنْتُ أَعْرِفُهُ، لَكِنِّي جِئْتُ أَعْمِدُ بِالْمَاءِ لِكَيْ يَظْهَرَ هُوَ لِإِسْرَائِيلَ». وَشَهِدَ يُوحَنَّا قَائِلًا: «رَأَيْتُ الرُّوحَ نَازِلًا كَحَمَامَةٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، ثُمَّ اسْتَقَرَّ عَلَيْهِ. وَأَنَا مَا كُنْتُ أَعْرِفُهُ، لَكِنَّ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَنِي أَعْمِدُ بِالْمَاءِ هُوَ قَالَ لِي: مَنْ تَرَى الرُّوحَ يَنْزِلُ وَيَسْتَقِرُّ عَلَيْهِ، هُوَ الَّذِي يُعْمِدُ بِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُّوسِ. وَأَنَا رَأَيْتُ وَشَهِدْتُ أَنَّ هَذَا هُوَ ابْنُ اللَّهِ».

Behold, the Lamb of God,
who takes away
the sin of the world!

John 1:29

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 Email: info@stgeorgemcc.org.au

Bishop's Message

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this first Sunday after the Epiphany, we read from the Gospel of John (1:29-34), where Saint John the Baptist provides testimony regarding the Baptism of Jesus. Reflecting on this passage, we are reminded of the profound significance that the sacrament of Baptism holds in the Christian faith. It goes beyond being a mere formality; instead, it is an act that deeply impacts our existence, transforming us and connecting us as living members to Christ and His Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 1262-1266) outlines two primary effects of Baptism. Firstly, Baptism serves as a purification of sins, symbolised by the proclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Through Baptism, all sins, both original and personal, are forgiven.

Secondly, Baptism is the descent of the Holy Spirit, as articulated in the statement, "He baptises with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:34). This transformative sacrament makes us a "new creation," adopted children of God, participants in the divine nature, members of Christ, co-heirs with Him, and temples of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity bestows upon us sanctifying grace, enabling us to believe in God, hope in Him, and love Him. It empowers us to live under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, utilising His gifts, and to grow in goodness through moral virtues.

The Feast of the Epiphany is a day often chosen by families for baptising their children, and our parishes celebrate numerous baptisms on this special day. Our prayers extend to all the children recently baptised, that the graces of their baptism may accompany them all their lives.

Inspired by Pope Francis' call to "reawaken the memory of our Baptism," we are urged to live out our Baptism daily as the present reality of our lives. Despite our limitations, weaknesses, and sins, if we follow Jesus and remain in the Church, it is precisely through the Sacrament of Baptism that we become new creatures and are clothed in Christ. "It is by the power of Baptism, in fact, that, freed of original sin, we are inserted into Jesus' relation to God the Father; that we are bearers of a new hope, for Baptism gives us this new hope: the hope of going on the path of salvation our whole life long. And this hope nothing and no one can extinguish, for it is a hope that does not disappoint." (General Audience, 8 January 2014).

May we continuously embrace the transformative power of Baptism, living in communion with God and our neighbour, and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our lives along the path of virtue and love.

+ Antoine-Charbel Tarabay



Reflection of the Week

"Lamb of God"

In the Season of the Epiphany the focus is on Jesus, the baptised one, who in today's Gospel is referred to as the Lamb of God.

We get the reference Lamb of God from the Passover story we read in Exodus 12:21 where a lamb was slaughtered and the blood painted on the post of the homes of the Hebrews in order to avoid the Angel of Death. Jesus was referred later to as the Paschal (Passover) Lamb, who saved the people from death, by his salvific life.

However, we can see another side to this title. Jesus is described as the Lamb of God and yet in John's Gospel we also read Jesus describing himself as the 'good shepherd' (Jn 10:11). He is both lamb and shepherd and if we think about this more deeply, it is a lesson for us to learn.

Jesus is God's Son, and he can do nothing without God. Jesus is obedient to the Father, just as the lamb (sheep) follow the Shepherd. Yet it is not a paternalistic image. In following God, one learns and grows to become like God. The one who is the lamb, obedient to death, is the one who became the Shepherd.

God calls us to follow him not to be mere spectators and servants but in order that we too may become like God. On our own we can do very little. With God we can become so much more. Amen

Sr Margaret Ghosn mshf



كلمة الحياة غذاءً للنفوس

في إنجيل اليوم، يتحدث يوحنا المعمدان مع إسرائيل الجديد، أي جميع الذين سيؤمنون بيسوع المسيح رباً ومخلصاً، ليدخل بهم إلى العهد الجديد الكامل والأبدي. ويؤكد لهم أن المسيح يأتي، لا في صورة ملوكية مجيدة كما يظن اليهود، بل كإنسان متألّم، مجده الحبّ الذي سيحمل خطايا العالم.

نرى هنا أنّه، برغم أن يوحنا المعمدان كان مبشراً معروفاً ومشهوراً جذب إليه جموعاً كثيرة، إلا أنه كان مسروراً أن يأخذ يسوع المكانة الأسمى، فلم يحتفظ بشيء من المجد لذاته بل أعطاه بالكامل لمن هو له.

لقد كانت مهمة يوحنا المعمدان هي توجيه الشعب إلى يسوع المسيح الذين كانوا يتطلعون إليه. اليوم يتطلع كثير من الناس إلى من يعطيهم الأمان والسلام في عالم غير آمن.

مهمتنا أن نساعد الجميع ليتوجهوا إلى المسيح، ليعرفوا أنه هو فقط من يجب أن يبحثوا عنه، وأنه فيه فقط سيجدون جميع الكنوز التي يحتاجونها، وأنه هو وحده من يستطيع أن يمنحهم السلام والأمان الحقيقيين.

في هذا الإطار، علينا أن نشهد للمسيح كما شهد له يوحنا المعمدان وخاصةً بالتواضع الذي يبقى أساس العظمة في الكرازة والتعليم أو أي خدمة أو عمل رعوي نؤديه للمسيح. فحينما نقوم بعمل يكلفنا به الرب، علينا، كي يكتمل فرحنا، أن نترك كرامة العمل ومجده له، فهو الذي يصنع بنا ومن خلالنا أعمالاً عظيمة لخلاص النفوس.

علينا أن نسعى في حياتنا، على الدوام، أن يكون لدينا وضوح الرؤية فمميّز وجه الرب يسوع وحضوره، في الأحداث والأشخاص، فنشهد له بقوة وبجرأة على مثال يوحنا المعمدان .

www.kobayat.org

Parish News and Upcoming Events

Epiphany Sweets For Sale

Saturday 6th January 2024

Sales starting from 1:00pm

Traditional Epiphany sweets will be on sale including Zalabieh/Awamat



2024 CALENDAR

NOW AVAILABLE

Collect from the Parish through a donation

Two designs available - wall hanging and table stand



2024 FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

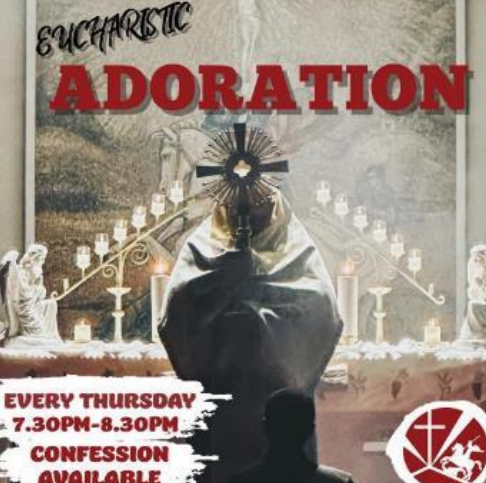
To register your child, please contact Margaret Simpson 0408 895 798



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

EVERY THURSDAY 7.30PM-8.30PM

CONFESSION AVAILABLE



MARONITES AUSTRALIA

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR MONTHLY FOOD RUNS

MEAL ITEMS SUCH AS: Sandwiches, Fruit, Hot Meals, Cakes, Bread

For more information please contact:
Ann-Marie Boumerhe 0420 309 677
George Takchi 0419 651 229

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP GROUP



Senior Program

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



ST GEORGE PLAYGROUP

EVERY FRIDAY 10am - 12pm during school term

ALL WELCOME

Children 0-5 Years

For more information, please contact Mary 0422 871 197



FERSEN 2024

EVERY FRIDAY 4PM-5.30PM

COMMENCING TERM 2 FRIDAY 3RD MAY

CHILDREN WILL BE TAUGHT HOW TO SPEAK ARABIC, PRAY IN ARABIC AND LEARN THE MARONITE FAITH AND WILL ALSO HAVE A 15 MINUTE BREAK TO ENJOY SPENDING TIME WITH EACH OTHER

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ENROLLED BY 22ND DECEMBER CONTACT EVETTE ZEAITER 0406997100



CHURCH CLEANING

We are seeking volunteers to assist with the Church cleaning roster.


For more information or if you are able to assist, please contact the Parish Office.



Children's Corner: Baptism Find-a-Word and Colour in Jesus the Lamb of God

E	N	S	O	H	C	V	A	E	H
N	L	A	M	D	B	E	N	L	E
B	E	S	O	S	M	A	L	O	N
S	A	V	P	Y	A	S	T	E	O
S	R	P	A	I	L	R	S	I	N
E	S	A	T	E	R	O	S	L	W
N	I	B	I	I	H	I	H	A	E
T	L	T	S	C	S	O	T	R	I
I	I	N	E	I	Y	E	V	O	D
W	E	S	N	L	R	A	T	A	W

LAMB
SIN
ISRAEL
WATER
SPIRIT
HEAVEN
DOVE
BAPTISE
HOLY
WITNESS
CHOSEN
ONE




JESUS THE LAMB OF GOD

Christmas Raffle Winners

On Christmas Eve at the 4pm Christmas Family Mass, our Christmas Raffle was drawn. We congratulate the following parishioners whose names were drawn:

- 1st Prize - \$3000 Travel Voucher from Taveltime: **Matt Zeaiter**
- 2nd Prize - iPhone 15 valued at \$1500: **Johnny Saade**
- 3rd Prize - \$1000 Christmas Gift Basket: **Anthony Symin**
- 4th Prize - Play Station 5 valued at \$500: **Juliet Simon**
- 5th Prize - Women's Christian Dior Gift Hamper valued at \$700: **Leanne Khamis**
- 6th Prize - Two Brothers Mediterranean Dinner Voucher valued at \$500: **Michael Zeaiter**
- 7th Prize - Nintendo Switch valued at \$500: **Fred Aoutal**
- 8th Prize - \$400 Bunnings Gift Voucher: **Richard Moit**
- 9th Prize - \$300 Gift Voucher for L'Yvonne's Hair and Body: **Georgina Simpson**
- 10th Prize - \$200 Mecca Gift Voucher: **Lucie Michael**

Thank you to all those who donated prizes towards our raffle. Your generosity and support is greatly appreciated.

Memorial Masses			نوايا القداسات		
Sunday 14 th Jan 2024	11am	Mass for the Late Georgette Romanous Zeaiter	قداس المرحومة جورجيت رومانوس زعيتز	١١ :٠٠	الاحد ١٤ ك ٢٠٢٤ ٢

Parish Financial Updates		To receive our eNewsletter please email	
Parish Income (fortnight 25/12/2023 –07/01/2024) \$14,281.25		info@stgeorgemcc.org.au	
Parish Operations Account \$46,974.34	Parish Loan Balance \$442,504.21	 YouTube	Subscribe to our Channel St George Maronite Catholic Church
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)		 'like' us on Facebook Follow us on Instagram	

Business Community Corner

<p>Chris Khoudair Principal 0405 122 331 02 9875 1777 chris.khoudair@lsre.com.au</p> <p>Pennant Hills 100 Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills NSW 2120 lsre.com.au/pennant_hills</p>	<p>BUYING, SELLING or RENTING ? Contact your local active Agent 274 Pennant Hills Road, Thornleigh 9484 0555 info@homefront.com.au</p>	<p>EXOTIC NURSERIES & LANDSCAPING</p>	<p>PENRITH PARTY HIRE</p>
<p>24 Hour Personal Attention Ph: 02 9484 3992 E: director@albertmeyer.com.au</p>	<p>Rebecca Pincott General Manager</p>	<p>ETERNITY LASER & AESTHETICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laser Hair Removal • HydraFacial • Cosmetic Injections • ISClinical Skins Care • Skin Needling • Eyelash Extensions • Eyebrows • Waxing <p>1/500 Old Northern Rd., Dural (02) 8415 0692</p>	<p>travelttime</p>
<p>NORTHLAND Live. Experience. Enjoy.</p>	<p>CONCRETE NSW 0417 216 125</p>	<p>INSURE P/L www.insureus.com.au</p>	

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