

PARISH OF ASCOT VALE

ST MARY'S CHURCH, 123 ST LEONARDS ROAD, ASCOT VALE
ST MARGARET'S CHURCH, BARB STREET, MARIBYRNONG

Parish Priest:	Rev Fr Justin Ford
Assistant Priest / Lithuanian Chaplain:	Rev Fr Joseph Deveikis
Presbytery / Parish Office:	123 St Leonards Rd, Ascot Vale (Postal: PO Box 468 Ascot Vale 3032)
Telephone:	9370 6688
Website:	www.stmaryschurch.org.au
Email:	ascotvale@cam.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue & Fri, 10am – 3pm. Secretary: Carmen D'Rosario
Principal, St Mary's School:	Mr Paul Hogan T: 9370 1194
Principal, St Margaret's School:	Mr Gavin Brennan T: 9318 1339

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday Vigil:

6.00pm St Mary's

Sunday:

8.30am St Margaret's

10.30am St Mary's

6.00pm St Mary's (Spanish)

Live streaming of our 10:30

Sunday Mass is continuing,
accessible on our parish website.

Weekday Mass Times

Mon 10.00am St Mary's

Tue 9.00am St Mary's

Wed 9.00am St Mary's

7.00pm St Mary's

Thu 9.00am St Mary's

Fri [Christmas timetable]

Sat 9.30am St Mary's

Reconciliation (Confession)

Saturday

10.00–10.30am St Mary's

5.30–5.45pm St Mary's

Baptisms at St Mary's

Our normal schedule of Baptisms
and Baptism Information
Sessions remains on hold.
However, announcements
will soon be made about the
resumption of Baptism
ceremonies for individual
babies, with up to two
ceremonies every weekend.

Weddings at St Mary's

For information on weddings
please ring the parish office.

Private prayer in our churches

St Mary's, although its doors
remain closed, is now available
for private prayer by
contacting the parish office.

4th Sunday of Advent – 20 December 2020

Christmas Masses

Bookings on the parish website are required to ensure a place at Christmas Masses.
(If you don't have internet access, it is requested that you have a family member or friend
book in your name if at all possible, rather than do this through the parish office,
as it would be difficult for our office to handle the number of manual bookings.)

Christmas Eve, Thursday 24 December

5:00 pm St Mary's (Carols from 4:30 pm)

7:30 pm St Mary's (Carols from 7:00 pm)

9:00 pm St Mary's (in Spanish – book through the Spanish Chaplaincy)

12:00 Midnight St Mary's (Carols from 11:30 pm)

Christmas Day, Friday 25 December

8:30 am St Margaret's

10:30 am St Mary's

Please print out your TryBooking ticket and give that in at the church door, as this will
speed registration for yourself and everyone else. If you do turn up without booking,
you might still get in, but you could miss out on a place if number limits are reached.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

In preparation for Christmas, extra Confessions are available:

Wednesday 23 December 7:30-8:30 pm (following 7:00 pm Mass)

Baptism at St Mary's

We warmly welcome into the family of God's Church **Savannah Morizzi**, baptised at St
Mary's this weekend.

Collections at Masses

From today, we resume the collections at Sunday Masses, organised in a COVID-safe way.

Helping to take registration of contact details at Masses

If you are able to volunteer on-the-spot to help register arrivals at any Mass you happen to
be at where you see that help is needed, that will be welcomed. With more assistants, we can
speed the admission of the congregation. **(Registrars should write the names of arrivals
themselves rather than have numerous arrivals share the same pen!)**

At Christmas Masses, help with registrations will be especially necessary, and we will of
course need to organise many welcomers/registrars in advance. If you can help with this,
please email the parish office (rather than phoning, or making a verbal offer) and we will get
back to you. Assuming we go ahead with electronic registration by QR Code so as to greatly
increase permitted numbers in the churches, we will especially need people who are able to
help others do this. But those who only consider themselves able to take manual registrations
(then to be electronically entered by others) are also very much encouraged to volunteer.

St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal

You are encouraged to donate, either by using the envelopes at the church doors, by calling
13 18 12, or online at vinnies.org.au (A button on the home page of our parish website will
take you to the donation page.)

Recently Deceased: Sr Margaret Condon rsm; Phillip Raymond McLoughlin;

Luigi Marchetti; Angelina Raffaele; Maria Calleja; Kerry Ann Barby

Anniversaries: Anthony & Ines Cassar; Novella Tamburin; Giuseppe Gentile;

Margarita Giaquinta

Feast Days: 21 Dec: St Peter Canisius 23 Dec: St John of Kanty 26 Dec: St Stephen

For the 150th Anniversary of Saint Joseph being named Patron of the Universal Church, Pope Francis has declared a 'Year of St Joseph', from 8 December 2020 until 8 December 2021. We continue to read his Apostolic Letter 'Patris Corde' ('With a father's heart') promulgated for the occasion.

APOSTOLIC LETTER PATRIS CORDE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

ON THE 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF SAINT JOSEPH AS PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

A beloved father

The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. [cf. Pope St John Paul II 'Redemptoris Custos' 7, explaining (following St Augustine) how Joseph is rightly called father of Jesus even though not physically his father; cf. Mary's words in Lk 2:48] In this way, he placed himself, in the words of Saint John Chrysostom, "at the service of the entire plan of salvation".

St Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood "by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home".

Thanks to his role in salvation history, Saint Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious Institutes, Confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and the many traditional expressions of piety in his honour. Innumerable holy men and women were passionately devoted to him. Among them was Teresa of Avila, who chose him as her advocate and intercessor, had frequent recourse to him and received whatever graces she asked of him. Encouraged by her own experience, Teresa

persuaded others to cultivate devotion to Joseph.

Every prayer book contains prayers to Saint Joseph. Special prayers are offered to him each Wednesday and especially during the month of March, which is traditionally dedicated to him. (Every day, for over forty years, following Lauds [Morning Prayer] I have recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a nineteenth-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. It expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph: "Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen.")

Popular trust in Saint Joseph is seen in the expression "Go to Joseph", which evokes the famine in Egypt, when the Egyptians begged Pharaoh for bread. He in turn replied: "Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do" (Gen 41:55). Pharaoh was referring to Joseph the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers (cf. Gen 37:11-28) and who – according to the biblical account – subsequently became viceroy of Egypt (cf. Gen 41:41-44).

As a descendant of David (cf. Mt 1:16-20), from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan (cf. 2 Sam 7), and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, Saint Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

The most immediate action the Holy See has taken regarding the Year of St Joseph now begun, is the granting, by mandate of Pope Francis, of quite a number of plenary indulgences. These have been offered by the Holy See rather extravagantly of late! But we might as well take advantage of this, and help the souls in purgatory to the maximum extent possible (thus also gaining for ourselves many grateful long-term intercessors whom, under God's grace and in virtue of the merits of Christ and his Saints, we will have been instrumental in releasing from purgatory into heaven).

One finds Catholics who are dismissive of indulgences; but the Ecumenical Council of Trent, while correcting abuses of indulgences, condemned 'with anathema those who assert that they are useless or who deny that the Church has the power to grant them.' (Decree on Indulgences 4 December 1563 (DS 1835); after Vatican II, Pope St Paul VI reaffirmed these same words (*Indulgentiarum Doctrina* 8 (1 January 1967)); cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1471-79.) The usefulness of indulgences, and the Church's power to grant them, are thus infallible teachings; so anyone denying these teachings departs from full communion with the Catholic Church.

So: indulgences are real. This 'Year of St Joseph' offers fairly easy opportunity for even daily plenary indulgences. Now, unless we specify otherwise, indulgences are applied to ourselves and the removal of

our own remaining 'debt' of purification in purgatory for sins already essentially forgiven. So suppose for example we gain a plenary indulgence on two consecutive days: if we leave that to be applied to ourselves, the second one just removes all the 'debt' we had built up in the sins of only that one day since the previous plenary indulgence. If then we are gaining plenary indulgences frequently, it makes much more sense to generously offer the bulk of our indulgences for the souls in purgatory – that same plenary indulgence we gained on the second day could instead release into heaven a soul that had still been owing the debt of a lifetime of sin. (We cannot guarantee that an indulgence will be applied to any particular soul, but of course, we can ask this of God.)

Rather than having to think about making this offering with every individual indulgence, you can form a habitual ongoing intention of offering your indulgences in this way. For example, you might say to God, 'My God, I intend in my life to gain all the indulgences that are available to me for my actions, and I give them to Mary, my heavenly Mother, to be applied as she chooses, for my good and the good of the souls in purgatory, perhaps that they be applied to that soul who has the greatest claim on my love.' (And from time to time, if you are anxious you have built up a notable debt of purification, you may wish to make exceptions to this intention and specifically apply an indulgence simply to yourself.)

SAINT OF THE WEEK – 14 December – St John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

St John of the Cross was born on 24 June 1542 at Fontiveros, near Avila in Spain. He entered the Carmelite Order in 1563, and was ordained priest in 1567. Later that year, he met the Carmelite nun St Teresa of Avila (1515-82), who persuaded him to collaborate with her in reforming the Carmelites. In 1568, he took on as his religious name, 'of the Cross', and established the first reformed monastery for Carmelite friars at Duruelo. Further foundations followed. From 1572 he was five years in Avila, where he was spiritual director for many, including St Teresa and her convent of 130 nuns. Resistance from some Carmelite friars to the reform movement led to increasing tensions, and in 1577, opponents captured John and imprisoned him in a monastery in Toledo in harsh conditions, accusing him of disobedience. Here he wrote his poem, *The Spiritual Canticle*. John escaped from captivity in August 1578. In 1580, Pope Gregory XIII authorised the separation of the old Carmelites and the reformed 'discalced' Carmelites, easing the tensions. St John continued to establish new reformed monasteries and to make visitations to them. From 1578, he wrote deeply about the spiritual life and mystical union with God, producing four masterpieces at the pinnacle of mystical theology: *The Spiritual Canticle*, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, and *The Living Flame of Love*. (His 'dark night of the soul' has now become a well-known phrase; St John's meaning is not just any suffering, but a stage of higher purification in which God 'hides himself' from the soul, which now goes forward only by faith.) St John of the Cross died at Ubeda in Andalusia on 14 December 1591, aged 49. He was beatified by Pope Clement X in 1675, and canonised by Benedict XIII in 1726. In 1926, Pius XI declared him a Doctor of the Church.

Among the plenary indulgences for the Year of St Joseph, one we can easily gain daily is for reciting the *Litany of St Joseph* (below), with the intention of praying 'for the persecuted Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*, and for the relief of all Christians suffering all forms of persecution'. ("The flight of the Holy Family to Egypt shows us that God is there where man is in danger, where man suffers, where he runs away, where he experiences rejection and abandonment.") Also, with COVID-19, the plenary indulgence is extended to the sick, the elderly, the dying, and those who for legitimate reasons cannot leave their homes – if they are detached from any sin and have the intention of fulfilling, as soon as possible, the three usual conditions and recite an act of piety [*such as the Litany, or the prayer 'To you, O blessed Joseph'*] in honour of St. Joseph, offering to God the pains and hardships of their lives.

Recalling the meaning of indulgences: Even when a sin is forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, normally some purification remains to be temporarily undergone in purgatory after death. But a plenary indulgence remits by authority of the Church all this 'debt' of purgatorial punishment for past sins, the guilt of which has already been forgiven. One can apply an indulgence to oneself, or as a prayer for the souls in purgatory. For the full indulgence, besides the specific indulgenced work, the usual three conditions must be fulfilled of Confession within 20 days before or after; Holy Communion; and prayers for the Pope's intentions (e.g. 1 Our Father and 1 Hail Mary). Also, one must be free from all attachment to sin, even venial sin. But even if all the conditions are not fulfilled, a partial indulgence can still be obtained. (One Confession suffices for multiple plenary indulgences, but Holy Communion must be received and prayers for the Pope's intentions recited for each indulgence. Normally only one plenary indulgence can be gained per day. We recommend reciting the indulgenced prayers vocally, not just in one's mind – indeed, the older law made explicit that this was actually required; but it is legitimate to alternate with others who are reciting, as in the Rosary.)

During the Year of St Joseph, a plenary indulgence is granted (under the usual conditions) for reciting the *Litany of St Joseph* for the intention: 'For the persecuted Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*, and for the relief of all Christians suffering all forms of persecution'

LITANY OF ST JOSEPH

Lord, have mercy	<i>Lord, have mercy</i>	Example to parents	<i>pray for us</i>
Christ, have mercy	<i>Christ, have mercy</i>	Guardian of virgins	...
Lord, have mercy	<i>Lord, have mercy</i>	Pillar of family life	...
God our Father in Heaven	<i>have mercy on us</i>	Comfort of the troubled	...
God the Son, Redeemer of the world	...	Hope of the sick	...
God the Holy Spirit	...	Patron of the dying	...
Holy Trinity, one God	...	Terror of evil spirits	...
Holy Mary	<i>pray for us</i>	Protector of the Church	...
St. Joseph	...	Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	
Noble son of the House of David	...	<i>have mercy on us</i>	
Light of patriarchs	...	Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	
Husband of the Mother of God	...	<i>have mercy on us</i>	
Guardian of the Virgin	...	Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	
Foster father of the Son of God	...	<i>have mercy on us</i>	
Faithful guardian of Christ	...	God made him master of his household.	
Head of the holy family	...	And put him in charge of all that he owned.	
Joseph, chaste and just	...	<i>Let us pray. Almighty God, in your infinite wisdom</i>	
Joseph, prudent and brave	...	<i>and love you chose Joseph to be the husband of Mary,</i>	
Joseph, obedient and loyal	...	<i>the mother of your Son. As we enjoy his protection</i>	
Pattern of patience	...	<i>on earth may we have the help of his prayers in</i>	
Lover of poverty	...	<i>heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.</i>	
Model of workers	...		

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B – READINGS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (if no hymn is sung) Is 45:8

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

FIRST READING 2 Sam 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.' But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."'

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 88

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. (R.)

2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)

3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me."
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure.' (R.)

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (for those unable to receive sacramentally)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Hymns: Entrance – CWB 242 (ps 1, 6, 7) O come, O come Emmanuel

Offertory – CWB 247 The angel Gabriel from heaven came

Communion – CWB 533 Let all mortal flesh keep silence

Reflection – Mary, crowned with living light

Recessional – CWB 251 Wait for the Lord

Readings Next Week: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: Gen 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40

SECOND READING

Rom 16:25-27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (if no hymn is sung)

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;
and his name will be called Emmanuel.