

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)
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Website:	www.stmaryschurch.org.au
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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 remains on hold.
However, we are resuming
Baptism ceremonies for
individual babies, with up to
two ceremonies every weekend.

We are also resuming our
Baptism Information Sessions
in St Mary's Church at 7:30 pm
on the first Thursday of each
month, re-commencing 7
January. Those interested in the
baptism of their child should
attend one of these sessions.

Weddings at St Mary's

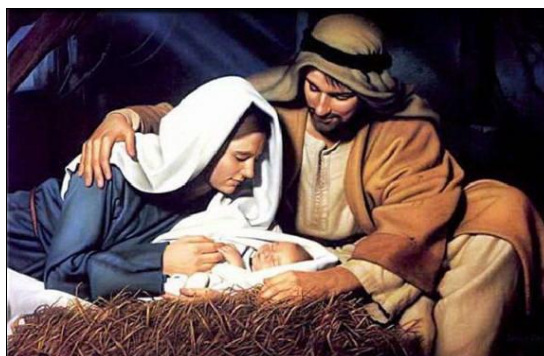
For information on weddings
please ring the parish office.

Christmas Day – 25 December 2020

YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH: 8 DECEMBER 2020 – 8 DECEMBER 2021

*'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife,
for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit;
she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.'*

The Gospel according to Saint Matthew, 1:20-21



*Joseph went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth,
to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem,
because he was of the house and lineage of David,
to be enrolled with Mary his betrothed, who was with child.*

*And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered.
She brought forth her firstborn son,
and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes,
and laid him in a manger;
because there was no room for them in the inn.*

The Gospel according to Saint Luke, 2:4-7

*Wishing you and your families every divine blessing
for a happy and holy Christmas, and a grace-filled New Year.*

The Good News: God has sent his Son

422 'But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.' (*Gal 4:4-5*) This is 'the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God': (*Mk 1:1*) God has visited his people. He has fulfilled the promise he made to Abraham and his descendants. He acted far beyond all expectation – he has sent his own 'beloved Son'. (*Mk 1:11*; cf. *Lk 1:5*, 68)

425 The transmission of the Christian faith consists primarily in proclaiming Jesus Christ in order to lead others to faith in him. From the beginning, the first disciples burned with the desire to proclaim Christ: "We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." (*Acts 4:20*) It and they invite people of every era to enter into the joy of their communion with Christ:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us – that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. and we are writing this that our joy may be complete. (*1 Jn 1:1-4*)

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Baby Who Made The Universe – going a bit deeper:

How can God have a Son?

God, who is infinite fullness of Life and Being, is Spirit without matter, so does not have a son in a physical way (as if he were one of the mythological pagan gods having children). But God the Father, infinitely perfect, brings forth from all eternity a perfect 'Idea' of himself (his 'self-image') so perfect that this eternal 'Idea' is equal in every way to himself – to the point of being one God with him, infinite, perfect, and personal. This divine Idea, Scripture calls the Word [Greek: *logos*] (since we express an idea by a word).

So the Person of the Word eternally comes forth from God the Father, and is of one substance and nature with him. Now, a human son is a person coming forth from his parents, of the same type of nature as them. So there is a likeness between God the Father eternally expressing his Word, and a human father begetting a son. Thus God the Word is also rightly called God the Son.

Is Jesus God, or the Son of God?

Both. The Eternal Word, God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, is one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In the mystery of the Trinity, each of the three co-equal divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is this one Creator God, and each is rightly called God. But the Word is also eternally the Son of God the Father. So when God the Son took to himself human nature as Jesus Christ, he affirmed his two natures, human and divine, by the titles 'Son of Man' and 'Son of God'. (e.g. *Mk 8:31*; *Mt 16:15-17*; *Mk 14:61-62*)

Why do we say Jesus is 'the Word made flesh'?

The Gospel of John begins with the mysterious words, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.' (*Jn 1:1, 14*) When the Word (who was eternally 'with God' the Father and himself 'was God', of one Being with the Father) took to himself human nature as the Son of Mary, he is said to have 'become flesh'. He did not stop being God (since the divine nature is unchangeable); yet a human nature,

complete with human body and human soul, also now belonged to the divine Person of the Word. From then on he was not only fully God but also (and for ever into the future) fully human, of flesh and blood like us – our brother.

Christ is not half-God, half-man, with an impossible 'hybrid' nature (as if like a centaur – half-human, half-horse). (Such a being would not be of the *same nature* with either God or us, but something strange, different and in-between.) Rather: the one person of Christ has two *complete* natures, unblended – in virtue of which he is just as much divine by nature as is God the Father; and just as much human by nature as we are, with the same right to the name 'human'.

From the unity of person, it is true to say God was born of Mary, and died on the Cross. These things truly happened to the person of God the Son – in his human nature. And it is correct to say that the baby in the manger created the universe: he, this same person, truly did this – in his divine nature that he has with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

This astounding claim of the union in one person of the infinite divine nature beyond time and the lowly human nature within time, seems almost incredible: we could not have dreamt that the Creator would do such a thing as enter his own creation. And yet it is proved by reason upon reason; and although in itself deep mystery, it shows forth its truth by casting divine light upon everything else.

So the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (n. 423) almost defiantly declares the contrast, the seeming 'intellectual scandal'. The passage in the *Catechism* piles up the things by which Jesus is truly human and just like us...then without taking any of that away, drives home what seems to contradict it, but does not:

We believe and confess that Jesus of Nazareth, born a Jew of a daughter of Israel at Bethlehem at the time of King Herod the Great and the emperor Caesar Augustus, a carpenter by trade, who died crucified in Jerusalem under the procurator Pontius Pilate during the reign of the emperor Tiberius, is the eternal Son of God made man.