

Welcome

St Joan of Arc Parish Haberfield



TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY in Ordinary Time 8 September 2024 Year B

Parish Office:

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2045

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Office hours:

Tues, Wed, Fri, 9am - 3pm

Parish Priest:

Fr Thomas Kurunthanam
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Parish Team:

Secretary:

Parish Safeguarding Support Officer (PSSO):

Tony Mediati
0413 481 039
PSSO@stjoanofarc.org.au

Eucharist:

Weekend:

Saturday (Vigil): 5.00pm

Sunday: 9.00am & 6.00pm

(Check for changes on special
Feast Days)

Weekdays:

Wednesday 9.00am

Thursday: 9.00am

Friday: 9.15am

Reconciliation:

Saturday: 4:30pm - 4.50pm

Schools:

SJOA Primary:

Principal: Amanda Gahan

P: 9798 9780

Domremy College:

Principal: Antoinette McGahan

P: 9712 2133

From the Pastor

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

September 8 is the birthday of Mary. This year it happened to fall on Sunday and the Lord's Day takes precedence over the saints. Hence, there is no mention of this feast in the liturgical calendar 2024. That shall not stop us from celebrating the feast. The procession and the multilingual prayers during the 9am Mass will mark the day. Usually birthdays of saints are no feast days in the liturgical calendar, with two exceptions: John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, Mary mother of God.

There are no details on Mary's birth or her parents in the Bible. But an apocryphal writing, the Gospel of James, from the second century names Joachim and Anne as her parents. According to some traditions, Joachim was a rich man from Sepphoris, a town close to Nazareth.

Mary's birthday has been celebrated from the beginning of the sixth century, when after the Council of Ephesus, the cult of the Mother of God was greatly intensified. Prior to the 1954 liturgical reform, the feast was celebrated as an octave. Remnants of it can still be seen in some cultures. In Kerala, the St Thomas Christians fast from meat and praying rosary from 1 September in preparation for the feast day. In Mumbai, the feast of Mary's Nativity is celebrated with a week-long event starting on 8 September and it is called Bandra Fair.

For many cultures, including Italians, Malts, French, Filipinos, etc, Marian Nativity and related devotions are deep rooted. Mary, Mother of God, is our mother, too. We have high esteem for her.

Christian Approach to VAD

Last Tuesday, I was at the Sydney Archdiocesan Clergy Conference. The topic of the discussion was assisted suicide that was legalised under the title Voluntary Assisted Death (VAD). As of 28 November 2023, such suicides are legal in NSW, prompting to think that it is okay to end one's life voluntarily.

People at large seem to share the philosophy that a life of dependence on others lacks dignity. In reality, we begin and end our lives as vulnerable people, relying on others and responsible to others. Only for a certain period of our lives we are relatively "autonomous agents". Therefore, losing autonomy doesn't mean losing dignity.

We Christians learn from Christ and his cross. We do not despair at suffering. We recognise the limits of medicine. We all are destined to die one day. But until then we care for each other and accompany our Christian brothers and sisters. The family members, health professional, pastoral worker, and the priest are to offer best palliative care to the terminally sick specially. Like other priests, I am available to accompany the seriously sick from the beginning of their ordeal.

I have left a few copies of a booklet titled, *COMPANION GUIDE "To Witness and to Accompany with Christian Hope"* at the entrance of the Church. It is an abridged version of the Document produced by the Australian Bishops Conference. Help yourself with one.



First reading Isaiah 35:4-7

Then the ears of the deaf shall be opened and the tongues of the dumb speak.

Say to all faint hearts,
'Courage! Do not be afraid.
'Look, your God is coming,
vengeance is coming,
the retribution of God;
He is coming to save you.'
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
the ears of the deaf unsealed,
then the lame shall leap like a deer
and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy;
for water gushes in the desert,
streams in the wasteland,
the scorched earth becomes a lake,
the parched land springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm Ps 145:7-10. R. v.1

R. Praise the Lord, my soul!

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is He who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bound down,
the Lord who loves the just,
the Lord, who protects the stranger. **R**

The Lord upholds the widow and orphan,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.

The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **R**

2nd Reading James 2:1-5

Has not God chosen the poor of the world to inherit the kingdom?

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats'; then you tell the

poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest.' Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that?

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation of Matthew 4:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick.

Alleluia!

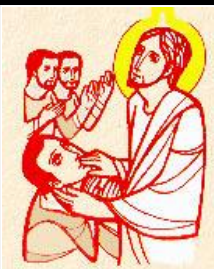
Gospel Mark 7:31-37

He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked Him to lay His hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put His fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven He sighed; and He said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more He insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said 'He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ



Un sordomuto. Assomiglia molto a noi, quando siamo nel peccato.

Possiamo avere accanto Dio, che ci sussurra le parole più dolci e imperiose. Non lo sentiamo. Possiamo aver vicino le persone più acute e più buone, che desiderano aiutarci. Non prestiamo

attenzione. O passiamo davanti a chi ha bisogno di un conforto, di una speranza. È come se fossimo soli al mondo, chiusi nel nostro egoismo.

Ma se il sacramento di Cristo ci raggiunge... Può essere la Chiesa che battezza o ci offre il perdono a nome del Signore Gesù. Le dita, la saliva, l'“apriti” possono essere l'acqua o la mano benedicente che si leva su di noi: “Io ti battezzo”; “Io ti assolvo”.

Allora avviene nuovamente il “miracolo”.

Diventiamo capaci, per grazia, di udire le consolazioni e i suggerimenti e gli imperativi di Dio. Diventiamo capaci di rispondergli con la preghiera e con la vita. E il prossimo è colui che dev'essere ascoltato e confortato. Nasce la fraternità.

Se ci lasciamo salvare dal Signore. Se aderiamo a lui con tutte le forze.

Prima lettura Is 35, 4-7

Si schiuderanno gli orecchi dei sordi, griderà di gioia la lingua del muto.

Dite agli smarriti di cuore:

«Coraggio, non temete!

Ecco il vostro Dio,
giunge la vendetta,
la ricompensa divina.

Egli viene a salvarvi».

Allora si apriranno gli occhi dei ciechi
e si schiuderanno gli orecchi dei sordi.

Allora lo zoppo salterà come un cervo,
griderà di gioia la lingua del muto,
perché scaturiranno acque nel deserto,
scorreranno torrenti nella steppa.

La terra bruciata diventerà una palude,
il suolo riarso sorgenti d'acqua.

Parola di Dio.

Rendiamo grazie al Signore.

Salmo Responsoriale Sal 145

R Loda il Signore, anima mia.

Il Signore rimane fedele per sempre
rende giustizia agli oppressi,
dà il pane agli affamati.

Il Signore libera i prigionieri. **R**

Il Signore ridona la vista ai ciechi,
il Signore rialza chi è caduto,
il Signore ama i giusti,
il Signore protegge i forestieri. **R**

Egli sostiene l'orfano e la vedova,
ma sconvolge le vie dei malvagi.

Il Signore regna per sempre,
il tuo Dio, o Sion, di generazione in generazione. **R**

Seconda lettera Gc 2, 1-5

Dio non ha forse scelto i poveri per farli eredi del Regno?

Fratelli miei, la vostra fede nel Signore nostro Gesù Cristo, Signore della gloria, sia immune da favoritismi personali.

Supponiamo che, in una delle vostre riunioni, entri qualcuno con un anello d'oro al dito, vestito lussuosamente, ed entri anche un povero con un vestito logoro. Se guardate colui che è vestito lussuosamente e gli dite: «Tu siediti qui, comodamente», e al povero dite: «Tu mettiti là, in piedi», oppure: «Siediti qui ai piedi del mio sgabello», non fate forse discriminazioni e non siete giudici dai giudizi perversi?

Ascoltate, fratelli miei carissimi: Dio non ha forse scelto i poveri agli occhi del mondo, che sono ricchi nella fede ed eredi del Regno, promesso a quelli che lo amano?

Parola di Dio

Rendiamo grazie al Signore.

Canto al Vangelo Mt 4, 23

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gesù annunciava il vangelo del Regno
e guariva ogni sorta di infermità nel popolo.

Alleluia

† **Dal Vangelo Mc 7, 31- 37**

Fa udire i sordi e fa parlare i muti.

In quel tempo, Gesù, uscito dalla regione di Tiro, passando per Sidone, venne verso il mare di Galilea in pieno territorio della Decàpoli.

Gli portarono un sordomuto e lo pregarono di imporgli la mano. Lo prese in disparte, lontano dalla folla, gli pose le dita negli orecchi e con la saliva gli toccò la lingua; guardando quindi verso il cielo, emise un sospiro e gli disse: «Effatà», cioè: «Apriti!». E subito gli si aprirono gli orecchi, si sciolsse il nodo della sua lingua e parlava correttamente.

E comandò loro di non dirlo a nessuno. Ma più egli lo proibiva, più essi lo proclamavano e, pieni di stupore, dicevano: «Ha fatto bene ogni cosa: fa udire i sordi e fa parlare i muti!».

Parola del Signore.

Lode a te, Signore Gesù Cristo

Writings by the Fathers of the Church

Christian wisdom

From a sermon on the Beatitudes by Saint Leo the Great

The Lord then goes on to say: *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.* This hunger is not for bodily food, this thirst is not for any earthly drink: it is a longing to be blessed with righteousness, and, by penetrating the secret of all mysteries, to be filled with the Lord himself.

Happy is the soul that longs for the food of righteousness and thirsts for this kind of drink; it would not seek such things if it had not already savoured their delight. When the soul hears the voice of the Spirit saying to it through the prophet: *Taste and see that the Lord is good,* it has already received a portion of God's goodness, and is on fire with love, the love that gives joy of the utmost purity. It counts as nothing all that belongs to time; it is entirely consumed with desire to eat and drink the food of righteousness. The soul lays hold of the true meaning of the first and great commandment: *You shall love the Lord God with your whole heart, and your whole mind and your whole strength,* for to love God is nothing else than to love righteousness.

Finally, just as concern for one's neighbour is added to love of God, so the virtue of mercy is added to the desire for righteousness, as it is said: *Blessed are the merciful, for God will be merciful to them.*

Remember, Christian, the surpassing worth of the wisdom that is yours. Bear in mind the kind of school in which you are to learn your skills, the rewards to which you are called. Mercy itself wishes you to be merciful, righteousness itself wishes you to be righteous, so that the Creator may shine forth in his creature, and the image of God be reflected in the mirror of the human heart as it imitates his qualities. The faith of those who live their faith is a serene faith. What you long for will be given you; what you love will be yours for ever.

Since it is by giving alms that everything is pure for you, you will also receive that blessing which is promised next by the Lord: *Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.* Dear friends, great is the happiness of those for whom such a reward is prepared. Who are the clean of heart if not those who strive for those virtues we have mentioned above? What mind can conceive, what words can express the great happiness of seeing God? Yet human nature will achieve this when it has been transformed so that it sees the Godhead *no longer in a mirror or obscurely but face to face* – the Godhead that no man has been able to see. In the inexpressible joy of this eternal vision, human nature will possess *what eye has not seen or ear heard, what man's heart has never conceived.*

Reflection on Gospel Mark 7:31-37

Gospel Focus – Ephphatha

The healing that Jesus works in this passage is perhaps one of the most 'physical' of His healing actions. He puts His fingers in the man's ears and places spittle on his tongue. It is an incredibly intimate contact with a complete stranger and someone regarded as outcast and unclean because of his disabilities. When Jesus speaks the word of healing, Ephphatha ('Be opened'), He appears to be speaking not only to the man but to all those listening. Be open to the possibility of embracing those you have cast out; be open to a different understanding of Messiah.

Scriptural context – Isaiah's Prophecy

All three synoptic gospel writers were at pains to demonstrate that Jesus was the fulfilment of the prophecies of the scriptures. This reference to Isaiah's prophecy appears in all three synoptic gospels. It is perhaps most familiar in the context of the Gospel of Luke, where the gospel writer actually combines it with a different passage from Isaiah and portrays Jesus as reading it in the synagogue as an announcement of His mission (Lk 4: 16-21). It is good to have the Isaiah text as the first reading this week and then see the way it is referred to in the gospel of the day.

Living the Gospel – Open to compassion

When Isaiah described the signs by which the Messiah would be recognised, he identified those people who were isolated from society by their physical afflictions. He portrayed a Messiah who released them from those afflictions and allowed them to re-enter society. That is what Jesus did time and time again. In the healing of the deaf and dumb man, Jesus called on all those around Him to also be opened – that their hearts may be opened to compassion. Jesus calls to us through today's gospel to also be open to compassion and open to the needs of those around us.

Greg Sunter

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REFLECTION TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY in Ordinary Time Year B

It's difficult not to make distinctions. Invariably, we favour some people over others. For example: we choose our friends, we choose a person to be our husband or wife, we choose 'sides' in disputes, we choose to avoid some people, and we choose to forgive some people and condemn others.

In the second reading, St James calls on believers never to make distinctions or show favour on the basis of social class, wealth, position, status or power. Everyone is to be treated equally regardless of their social background, and when it comes to worship, there are to be no seats of honour set aside for VIPs! Everyone ought to feel equally welcome and valued.

St Paul has a similar vision. In his letter to the Galatians (3:28) he declares that in virtue of baptism, "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

Jesus doesn't make distinctions based on social class. In fact, the gospels portray Him as having particular concern for the poor, the outcast, the voiceless, the afflicted, the vulnerable and the weak. Today's gospel is a classic example. A deaf man with a speech impediment is brought to Jesus by his friends.

In such an oral and aural culture where people were generally illiterate, not to be able to speak or hear properly was a significant disadvantage. Such people were virtually invisible. They couldn't communicate, and they couldn't be communicated with, in any meaningful way. Thankfully, the man in

the story is blessed to have caring friends who bring him to Jesus who has a reputation for giving new life.

Jesus gives very personal attention to the man. He takes him away from the crowd, so that they can be alone. Although the man can't hear or speak, he can experience the sense of touch, and so Jesus touches his ears, puts His fingers into them, and touches the man's tongue with His own spittle. Jesus also looks up to heaven, in prayer, for it was Jesus' relationship with God that will bring new life to the man.

It's important to remember that the man was not a Jew. The Decapolis ("ten cities") was predominantly Gentile territory. But, there's no distinction here. Jesus is the Messiah for all nations. He saw a brother in need, and in solidarity, lovingly reached out to him.

St James challenges us to 'look around' our faith community. Do we see any unhealthy favouritism? Are there people being forgotten, ignored or made to feel unwelcome? Are there voices not being heard? Are there people being discouraged from sharing their gifts and talents, or from becoming involved? Are people's contributions being devalued?

Hopefully, such things are not happening; however, it's important for us all to 'keep our eyes and ears open'.

David J Hore CSsR
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You are invited to celebrate Fr Thomas Kurunthanam's

*40th anniversary of Ordination
to Holy Priesthood*



Mass will be celebrated at St Joan of Arc Church on
Friday 25th October at 6.30 PM
Dinner will be held afterwards at St Joan of Arc School

RSVP by Eventbrite for catering purposes



If you do not have access to the internet please record your name on the list at the back of the church. Thank you

Holy Father's Monthly Prayer Intentions

September

For the Cry of the Earth

Let us pray that each of us hears with the heart the cry of the Earth and victims of natural disasters and climate change, personally committing to care for the world we inhabit.

October

For a shared mission

We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.

Recently Deceased: Vita Gennusa, Donata Maria Tauriello, Joseph Safety, Grace Balfamo, Ramute Sofija Loughman, Kevin McCarthy.

Please note: Names of **Recently Deceased** will remain for **1 month** period before being removed.

Anniversary: Joe Di Marti, Carmela Crupi, Francesca Castronovo

Rest in Peace: Maria Catina Arlotta

Please note: Names of **Anniversary and Rest in Peace** will remain for **2 weeks** period before being removed.

In your love and concern please pray for the following ill members of our community:

Silvana Cocilova, Enrico Cuomo, Neville Hill, John Kcoury, Mary Finios, Rose Uthappa, Glen Dixon, Venu Uthappa, Roberto Tramarin, Vittoria Lavecchia, Anna Attard, Rosa Santos, Elisha Lau, Liz Smith, Pat Rankine, Jerry Andre, Donna Neeley, Adeline Ashing, Annelise Buda, Giovanni Luci, Stephan Ferenc, Giancarlo Buda, Mario Bianco.

Bible Study – The Gospel of Mark

Fr Thomas is leading a Bible study on the Gospel of Mark.

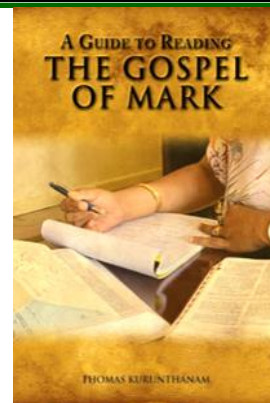
NEXT SESSION will be held on Thursday 12 September

Then Wednesday, 18 September

Wednesday, 25 September.

At 7 PM, Venue: St Joan of Arc Church

All welcome.



Sweet Treat Stall

After all Masses on the weekend of 14th & 15th September, we will have homemade goodies for sale to support our student at John Berne school. Cakes, biscuits, jams and much more. EFTPOS is available.



If anyone can assist with baking etc., please talk to Rhonda (0411 122 641). Looking forward to your support – bring your money with you!!!

HSC Mass and supper

On Sunday 29th Sept. @ 6pm, Mass will be celebrated for all those preparing for the HSC. Local schools will be notified by the Parish. We invite any students attempting the 2024 HSC to join us for this celebration even if they are not from SJA Parish. There will be a pizza supper to follow. Contact the Parish Office on 9798 6657 to RSVP.



Weekly Diary

Date	Time	To note
Tuesday, 10 September	5:00pm—6:00pm	Vinnies meeting
Wednesday, 11 September	9:00am	Mass
	7:00pm-8:30pm	Liturgy meeting
Thursday, 12 September	9:00am	Mass
	10:30am—1:30pm	Deanery meeting
	2:00pm—3:30pm	Catholic Charismatic Renewal Prayer Group
	7:00pm-8:30pm	Bible Study—The Gospel of Mark
Friday, 13 September	9:15am	Mass
	12:45pm	Reconciliation—Year 5 students
Saturday, 14 September	4:30pm –4:50pm	Reconciliation
	5:00pm	Mass
Sunday, 15 September	9:00am	Mass
	6:00pm	Mass

First Holy Communion Program 2024

The preparation for First Holy Communion will be commencing in the month of October.

All those who have registered for the preparation will make a solemn commitment on **12 October Saturday 5pm Mass** or at **9 am Mass on Sunday 13 October**.

On Wednesday, 16 October at 7 pm, Fr Thomas will meet with the parents of the Program in the Church. Details of the rest of the program will be announced at the Parents meeting.



Sacramental Program 2025

Confirmation 2025

Parents meet Fr Thomas	Wednesday 30 April, 7PM	@Church
Commitment Mass	Sat 3 May, 5PM & Sun 4 May, 9 AM	@Church
Catechesis 1	Wed. 7 May, 7PM	
Catechesis 2	Wed. 14 May, 7PM	
Catechesis 3	Wed. 21 May, 7PM	
Catechesis 4	Wed. 28 May, 7PM	
Retreat	TBA	
Confirmation	TBA by the Archdiocesan Office	

First Reconciliation 2025

Parents Meet Fr Thomas	Wed. 23 July, 7PM	@Church
Commitment Mass	Sat 26 July, 5PM & Sun 27 July, 9AM	@ Church
Catechesis 1	Wed. 30 July	
Catechesis 2	Wed. 6 Aug	
Catechesis 3	Wed. 13 Aug	
Catechesis 4	Wed. 20 Aug.	
Sacrament of Reconciliation	Wed. 27 Aug	

First Holy Communion 2025

Parents Meet Fr Thomas	Wed. 3 Sep, 7 PM	@Church
Commitment Mass	Sat 6 Sep, 5PM & Sun 7 Sep, 9AM	
Catechesis 1	Wed Oct 15	
Catechesis 2	Wed Oct 22	
Catechesis 3	Wed Oct 29	
Catechesis 4	Wed. Nov 5	
Retreat	TBA	
FHC	Sun 23 Nov, 11 AM	Feast of Christ the King

"Every conversation matters"

**SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY
8 SEPTEMBER 2024**



The Parish of St Joan of Arc, Haberfield and the Archdiocese of Sydney are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our community. Mindful of the theme for National Child Protection Week, may we work to create safe spaces where we can have meaningful conversations with children and adults at risk about their safety.

You can find out more about the Church's work in this area at:

<https://www.catholic.au/s/article/Safeguarding-Sunday-2024>

Safeguarding Prayer

*Gracious God,
you love and care for all of your children, especially the smallest and most vulnerable.*

We entrust to you the lives of children and adults at risk who have been sexually abused, neglected or exploited and whose trust and innocence has been destroyed.

Help us to hear their cries of pain and to take responsibility for those whose lives have been broken.

Help us to recognise the hurt felt by those wounded by abuse, and the failure to be heard.

We pray that with the help of your grace communities and families will find understanding

and support, so that now and in the future, their wounds may be healed, and they may find lasting peace.

Let your grace and love fall gently now upon our children and adults at risk, giving them the inner strength, peace and resilience to seek out assistance when required.

Help us all to listen with open hearts, so that when children and adults at risk speak, they are truly heard.

We ask this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever,

Amen

