

REGULAR WEEKEND MASS LOCATIONS

St. Mary's Church, Woodend
1B Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305.
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Leichhardt
22 Old Toowoomba Road, Leichhardt 4305.
St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich
42 Pine Mountain Road, North Ipswich 4305.
St. Brigid's Church Hall, Rosewood
Railway Street, Rosewood 4340.
Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, E/Heights
33A Robertson Road, Eastern Heights 4305.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Parish Office Hours
Monday to Friday 9:00am - 1:00pm
1C Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305 | 07 3281 2133
ipswich@bne.catholic.net.au | ipswichcatholic.com
Parish Priest: Fr. Stephen Bliss OFM
Assistant Priests: Fr. Jose Panampuzha CMI
Operations Manager: Benjamin Leschke
Youth Animator: Jean Sajeev

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A

29th January 2023

Dear Parishioners,

Each year our Sacramental Program receives approximately 200+ children as they journey toward Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation. This is often an amazing experience for the children (and their families) as in one sense it is an opportunity for each child to take that step forward themselves, when it comes to the faith they are exploring. However, it can often be nerve racking and confusing too. To accompany these children, we need assistance. Rachel (Sacramental Program Coordinator) and our 4 APREs do a sterling job, but we do need more assistance. Each year we have this challenge, so Fr. Stephen has asked to 'put the request to the people of God.' That's you!

The Church will have to initiate everyone into this "art of accompaniment" which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other. (Evangelii Gaudium 169)

Accompaniment acknowledges the sacred. We are called to recognise each person as "holy ground", where the Spirit is already at work, where there is mystery and potential fruits. We are invited to "take off our shoes" and draw near in reverence (Christus Vivit 67). This openness of heart makes possible the recognition of the Spirit in others and inspires us to leave behind our assumptions and desires. It allows us to reveal ourselves to the other.

Without this acknowledgement we often fall into the habit of processing or over-programming those who are seeking Christ. "Providing pre-packaged answers and ready-made solutions, without allowing a person's real questions and challenges to emerge" (Christus Vivit 65) can result in working against the Spirit or leaving a person unfulfilled at the conclusion of a program. Accompaniment is about acknowledging the sacred in a person and helping them to recognise the sacred in themselves. With 200+ children, we can't achieve that with just Rachel and 4 APREs sharing the load.

We are seeking volunteers to assist with this year's program, and to help showcase the hospitality our parish has to offer. The children celebrate 3 sacraments, so perhaps you can assist with one of these sacraments. Dates for the program are on page 3 of the newsletter. We are seeking at least 10 volunteers.

Link to register your interest - <https://forms.office.com/r/5CBKDwyaqN>



Benjamin Leschke

PARISH CALENDAR

THIS WEEKEND

Sat 28
8:00am Mass at St. Michael's Church, Pine Mountain
10:30am Children Liturgy Coord Meeting, Parish Office
4:30pm Mass at Immaculate Heart Church
4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church
5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church
6:00pm Mass at Miraculous Medal Church

Sun 29
7.30am Mass at St. Joseph's, Church
8:00am Mass at St. Brigid's Church Hall
9.00am Mass at St. Mary's Church
Children's Liturgy
10.30am Baptisms, St. Mary's Church
5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church

NEXT WEEK

Mon 30 7.00am Mass at St. Joseph's Church

Tues 31 9:00am Immaculate Heart Church

Wed 01
8:30am Rosary, 9am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's
No MASS, St. Brigid's Church Hall
10.30am Mass Milford Grange
5:00pm Prayer Group, Parish Office
6.30 RCIA begins

Thur 02
9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church
10:00am Mass Villa Maria
6:30pm Liturgy Meeting at CWL House, Waghorn Street

Fri 03
9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
6.30pm Primary & High School Youth (St Mary's Primary Hall)

PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Please pray for those in our parish who are unwell or in need. We also pray for the following ...

Recently Deceased: Gilbert Belford, Delia Keller, John Duggan

Anniversaries: Tom Brown, Anthony John Nugent, and those in our Book of Life.



SUBSCRIBE FOR REGULAR UPDATES - ipswich.flocknote.com/digitalnews

PARISH UPDATE

WHAT IS ENGAGE 2023?

This year we are building our Parish Life Teams who will work with Fr. Stephen to maintain strong community engagement at each of our churches. We will also start to explore 'connect groups' and how they can help us connect with more people.

We will be facilitating parish formation sessions, leadership sessions, and workshops. Stay tuned for dates and detail for each of these. We will have some guest facilitators too!

STRATEGY GROUP – We have already begun! On Wednesday night a small group of parishioners were invited to start our Strategy Group. This team will start to develop a Parish Strategy, which will then be shared with the parish. This will involve workshops, small groups, and will result in all parishioners having an opportunity to give input on the final strategy. The strategy will inform our Parish Plan (2023 – 2026).

ONLINE FORMATION - This year we have also invested in online formation tools for families of the parish (including all of our schools) to assist with those who have busy schedules and for those who may not be able to attend sessions or workshops in person. We have purchased the following:

Formed - A revolutionary online platform providing access to the best Catholic audio talks, movies, eBooks, and video-based studies. Parish membership has an unlimited number of seats to suit any parish size. Content list - <https://formed.org/content-list>

Word On Fire Engage - This tool makes it easy and effective to reach busy parishioners particularly when they are away! The tool also brings the small group experience to them while they are away, extending discussion beyond our church walls.

So, we have lots happening already! At this stage we need everyone to start to pray for Engage 2023. Please start to pray! More to come....



YOUTH UPDATE



Friday Night Youth kicks off tonight with an Australia Day theme!

Primary School & High School students are invited to come and celebrate our diverse Australian culture.

When: Tonight 6:30pm – 8:30pm (with dinner)

Where: St. Mary's Primary School Hall

Both Primary and High School Programs will run each Friday during school term from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

SAVE THESE DATES

January 27th

February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th

March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st

Our Parish continues to respond to youth in many ways.

Please encourage your children, teens, grandchildren, and young adults to engage with us. We would love to meet them!

These are the programs we have on offer...

- The Atrium – Infants, toddlers, primary school aged children
- Friday Night Youth – Primary school and high school aged youth
- Sacramental Program – Primary school aged children
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Teenagers – High school aged youth
- Children's Liturgy of the Word – Primary school aged children
- Many ministries youth can participate in



From Monday, the Parish Office will have new office hours; 9am to 1pm Monday to Friday. This change has been something I have been discussing and discerning with the team over the last 6 months.

I will monitor this change and adjust if necessary, however before and after these hours, staff and priests will have a little more time to undertake activities which are essential for the smooth running of the parish.

Stephen

SOME KEY DATES

Sacraments for Children & Youth - Info Evening
 Wednesday, 15th February 6:30pm – 7:30pm
 St. Mary's Church

Ash Wednesday – 22nd February
Palm Sunday – 2nd April
Easter Sunday – 9th April
Pentecost – 28th May

MASS READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY



5th Sunday of Ord Time – Yr A

1st Reading	Isaiah 58:7-10
Psalm	Psalm 111:4-9
2nd Reading	1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Gospel	Matthew 5:13-16

PRIMARY SCHOOL & SECONDARY SCHOOL – CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENTS IN 2023

With school now returned, all parents/guardians across our primary schools and colleges will receive a letter from Fr. Stephen inviting students who have not yet celebrated their sacraments, to participate in this year's programs. Students of state schools (primary and secondary), as well as parisioners with children in schools outside of our parish are also invited to participate. The letter will be availble on the parish website next Tuesday, and can be shared by parishioners and families. Summary of details below.

SACRAMENTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH – INFORMATION SESSION

When – Wednesday 15th February, 2023 | 6:30pm to 7:30pm | St. Mary's Church. Woodend

Parents and guardians with children/teenagers interested in celebrating their Sacraments this year (and who are not already enrolled in a program) are invited to this information session. Key focus areas are

- Prep – Grade 12 students not yet Baptised.
- Grade 3 children starting their sacramental journey with the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2023.
- Grade 3 – Grade 6 students who haven't completed their Sacraments and are not currently enrolled in a program.
- Grade 7 – Grade 12 students who haven't completed their Sacraments.
- Grade 7 – Grade 12 students who are interested in becoming Catholic.

ONLINE ENROLMENT FORMS – SACRAMENTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Our online enrolment forms will be available for parents and guardians from Monday 30th January, from our parish website. Please bookmark this link

<https://www.ipswichcatholic.com/children/>



The Sacrament of Baptism for primary school aged children will be available in March/April, and July/August this year. Preparation Evenings are scheduled for Wed 1st March and Wed 19th July.



The Sacrament of Confirmation for baptised children in Year 3 and above will be celebrated in **May**. The program commences Wed 19th April. This will be the first time the parents of these children are enrolling in the program. Parents of children in Year 4 and above who haven't celebrated Confirmation are also invited.



The Sacrament of Holy Communion for baptised children in Year 4 and above will be celebrated **June**. The program commences Wed 17th May. Parents of children already enrolled and who celebrated Confirmation in 2022 will be contacted in March and invited to book their sessions. Parents of children in Year 4 and above who have not celebrated Holy Communion are also invited.



The Sacrament of Reconciliation for baptised children in Year 5 and above will be celebrated in **August**. The Program begins Wed 16th August. Parents of children already enrolled and who celebrated Confirmation in 2021, and Holy Communion in 2022 will be contacted in June and invited to book their sessions. Parents of children in Year 5 and above who haven't celebrated Reconciliation are also invited.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF TEENAGERS

RCIT is a program where high school students prepare for the Sacrament of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation.

This program is specifically designed for Catholic teens who have not celebrated all their sacraments, and non-Catholic teens interested in exploring the Catholic faith more, and who would like to consider becoming Catholic.

More information will be available about this program in the coming weeks.



Volunteering & Safeguarding – We are currently preparing for our annual safeguarding audit which will occur on Friday 3rd March. Maree is assisting me and will start to make email and phone contact with volunteers next week to ensure all volunteers have their records up to date. Where possible we will use electronic forms again to assist with updating any missing information. Thanks for your support! Benjamin

Liturgy Preparation Meeting - for those interested in assisting to plan and share ideas for Lent 2023, you are invited to meet on 2nd February at the old CWL House, 35 Waghorn Street. 6.30pm- 8.00pm.

Any Parishioner who would like to give feedback/comments - on the 2022 Christmas Masses, please email Fr Stephen with your reflections. sbliss@bne.catholic.net.au - ***I received no feedback so my assumption is that everyone was pleased with the celebrations. Stephen.***

St Edmunds Old Boys Association Annual General Meeting will be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday, 8 February 2022 at the Pender House, St Edmunds College, Arthur Street Woodend. All enquiries to be made to Andrew McGrath on 3389 6858 or 0438 164 452.



St Edmunds Old Boys Twilight Bowls Night

On Saturday, 11 February – at Ipswich Bowls Club - Merle Finimore Avenue, Queens Park Ipswich. Arrive 4.00pm for a 5.00pm Start. \$20 per bowler, includes 1 beer and a Barbeque Dinner after (7.00pm). 4 Person Teams, but single bowlers welcome. Contact Andrew McGrath at amcgrath59@hotmail.com or call 0438 164 452.

Ipswich World Day of Prayer - Those interested in planning for this important event are invited to a meeting at St. Thomas Anglican Church, North Ipswich – 10:30am Friday 3rd March. Details - nancy10akay@gmail.com



The Poor and the Lowly will be restored - Everything mentioned in the readings for this Sunday might be consoling to those hearers of Jesus who were oppressed, weak, poor or afflicted in any way, and are equally valid for such people today. Although there are some instances where Jesus met with rich or important people, most of His time was spent among the lowly, even the outcasts of His society.

Would His words be a true comfort to those who saw no chance of ever raising their status in the world, or those who were physically or spiritually disabled, or those living under the tyranny of Roman rule? These were words which carried warning, as well as consolation, as He asked them to be humble and lowly; to keep themselves from wrong -doing; to care for others and to remember that it is the Lord Who keeps them in His love.

How do these words resonate today, especially with those considered lesser in the eyes of the world? Would a blind person today feel empowered by this? Would someone who has been denied justice feel better for hearing His words? What about those suffering active or subtle persecution for their faith - would they be enabled to forgive those harming them?

All the readings speak of a humbled and lowly people being favoured by God and throughout their history, the Jews had cycles of being blessed and free, and being humbled, even enslaved and dispersed. Yet they still considered themselves the Chosen People of God. When things are tough for us, do we still think of ourselves as God's special people?

Judith Holznagel

PLEASE CONSIDER – coming to a weekday Mass, our times and locations are listed on the front page of the newsletter. We also have rosary on Wednesday's from 8:40am and adoration after Mass on Wednesday's from Approx. 9:30am – 10:30am. Please consider popping by for prayer.

GIVING TREE THANKS – Thank you to all those who contributed to the Giving Tree over Christmas. Given that times are hard for everybody, it is inspiring that you all are generous to help others in need. I also want to thank those who sent Christmas cards and gifts.

Also my heartfelt thanks for your contributions to the planned giving via envelopes, loose change, and electronic giving. If you would like to make a financial



contribution or be part of the regular planned giving program, please contact the parish office. Thank you to all!

Stephen

OUR SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT



Our parish supports and is committed to the Safeguarding Policies as set out by the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

The Archdiocese has zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and is committed to safeguarding everyone involved in its activities, ministries, and services. The safety and wellbeing of children and adults-at-risk is paramount.