

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Heb 1: 1-2

Alleluia, alleluia! In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets; now he speaks to us through his Son. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 2: 22, 39-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Longer form Lk 2: 22-40

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH / B

31 DECEMBER 2023

FAMILY TREASURE

What a treasured gift is a child, especially one longed for. In the story of Abram and Sarah we see how bereft they are to have no heir, no child, yet God gifts them Isaac. The Gospel tells us of another couple, Mary and Joseph, who also have a child gifted by God, Jesus. They "stood and wondered about the things that were said about him [Jesus]." While both of these sets of parents and their sons had a much larger role than many, let us not lose sight of the sacredness of family: the ability to bring a life into the world and to nurture that life to fullness.

The invitation on this feast of the Holy Family is to reflect on family – our own family, those around us and in our world. Families come in all shapes and sizes. The Holy Family is centred on Jesus and our families, centred on Christ, grow in holiness and love, face challenges together and are held in God's care. Parents and carers can identify with Mary and Joseph wondering and worrying about their son. A child raised in a loving environment has the opportunity to thrive and to grow into their full potential. The treasure of a family is not limited to the nuclear family but to the extended relationships through all of its members, centred on Christ, forming a community where all can thrive in faith and love whatever might come.

Dr Rosemary Canavan

FIRST READING

Gen 15: 1-6; 21: 1-3

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Your own son shall be your heir.

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great'.

'My Lord,' Abram replied 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless . . .' Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir'. And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood'. Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 104: 1-6, 8-9. R. vv. 7, 8

R. The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name, / make known his deeds among the peoples. / O sing to him, sing his praise; / tell all his wonderful works! **R.**
2. Be proud of his holy name, / let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice. / Consider the Lord and his strength; / constantly seek his face. **R.**



3. Remember the wonders he has done, / his miracles, the judgements he spoke. / O children of Abraham, his servant, / O sons of the Jacob he chose. **R.**

4. He remembers his covenant for ever, / his promise for a thousand generations, / the covenant he made with Abraham, / the oath he swore to Isaac. **R.**

SECOND READING

Heb 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.


It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

31 Dec 23
Holy Family Yr B

WELCOME TO ST PATRICK'S CHURCH
Website: <https://stpatrikswesttamworthparish.org>
Email: westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au



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|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Parish Priest | Fr Anthony Koppman | Office Hrs: Wed & Thurs 8.30-11.30 am |
| Pastoral Associate: | Sr Kathryn Sweeney RSJ. | |
| Administration | Di Bolitho, Anne Bowden | Presbytery 67658211 |
| Sacristan | Elaine Smyth | Pastoral Associate 0411703608 |
| School Principals | Greg O'Toole and Maree Holland | St Josephs School 67654079 |

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|-----------------------|---|--|
| WEEKEND MASSES | Sat: 5.30 pm Sun: 9 am Sun: 5 pm |  CONFESSIONS Sat: 4.30-5.00 pm *Or by appointment |
| WEEKDAY MASSES | Wed: 12 noon | |
| | Thur: 9 am Mass Fri: 12 noon Mass | |

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

May God have mercy on all those asked to be remembered in prayer:

RECENTLY DECEASED: Patricia Mooney, Grzegorz (Greg) Jurek, Cathie Mencke.

ANNIVERSARIES: Richard Bowler (1/12), Perce McInnes (2/12), John Paul Vella (4/12), John O'Brien (3/1), Pamela Mary Davy (nee Barry (6/1), Mary Sampson(18/1, Ivan Lillicap (18/1), Rod Taylor (20/1), Lawrence Vella (23/1).

DECEASED: Sr Iris Fittler rsj, Jacqueline Galvin, Father Morrie Clarke, Jack Sampson, Hugh and Dalis O'Brien, John O'Brien, Raphael, Evita and Philomena Smith, Peter Nally, Fr John Carey, Sandra Sheedy, Frank Koppman (Fr Anthony's Dad) Gwen Gerathy, Les Wallworth (Sydney), Margaret Marshall, Valerie Chillingworth, Sr Rita Vella, Barry Schipp.

SICK: Elaine Murray, Pauline Miller, Monica Austin, Margaret Doyle, Baby Walker MacAlpine, John Betts, Gerard Dunn, Shane Davidson, Joan Crowe, Lisa Foster, Norma O'Brien, Terry Dean, Barbara Brennan, Colin MacPherson, Graeme Bussell, Kate Harrison, Maureen Harrison, Deacon Peter Harrison, Alison and baby Huxley Gallagher, William Bonner, Fr Bernie Flood, Pauline Wiley.

VEENA'S VERSIONS

A man asks his buddy for a cigarette. His friend quips, "I thought you made a New Year's resolution and that you had quit smoking." The man replied, "I'm in phase one of quitting." Confused, his friend asked, "Phase one?" The man laughed, "Yes. 'Phase One' - 'I've quit buying.'"

COMING EVENTS:

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| 1 Jan | New Years Day - 57th World Day of Peace |
| 19th-28th Jan | Tamworth Country Music Festival |
| 26 Jan | Australia Day |

CHURCH COLLECTIONS: **BSB 082 105**

1st. Collection West Tamworth Presbytery (Diocesan collection) Acc No: 001023642

2nd Collection West Tamworth Church (St Pats Church) Acc No:001041198



"God expects that we love one another." (1874)



NEW YEAR MESSAGE

It is my prayer at the start of the New Year that the rapid development of forms of artificial intelligence will not increase cases of inequality and injustice all too present in today's world, but will help put an end to wars and conflicts, and alleviate many forms of suffering that afflict our human family. May Christian believers, followers of various religions and men and women of good will work together in harmony to embrace the opportunities and confront the challenges posed by the digital revolution and thus hand on to future generations a world of greater solidarity, justice and peace.

Pope Francis 8 December 2023

IMMACULATA MISSION SCHOOL 2024: FISHERS OF MEN: Daily Mass, Adoration and the Rosary, praise and worship, fellowship and more! There are two different programs, -Youth & adults (14 years & up): 1-6 Jan. 2024 Married couples & families (specifically designed for married couples. Includes children's and teens program): 7-10 Jan 2024. Special guest speakers: Dan & Stephanie Burke from the USA (co-founders of the Avila Institute, presenters on EWTN. Dan is an author of over 15 books on Catholic spirituality), plus Fr Francesco Gavazzi (from the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal). Held: NEGS (New England Girls' School), Armidale NSW. For costs, additional information and to register visit: <http://www.immaculata.org.au/ims>

2024 ROSTERS: Should anyone be interested in reading, counting, cleaning or other parish volunteer duties in 2024 please call or email the office and supply your contact details.

PRAYER FOR OUR NEW BISHOP

God our Father, in Jesus, your Son,
You have given to your Church the perfect model of priest,
prophet and king, and so You have blessed us through His sacrifice,
taught us through His Word, and guided us through His rule.
We ask You, Father, to guide and enlighten those who will be tasked
with helping to choose the next bishop of our diocese.
May the person they choose be one of deep and true prayer,
a person of a compassionate heart and firm resolve,
and a person of joy and peace, who desires above all to do Your will.
We entrust our prayers to our Patroness, Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary,
and ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

WEEK 2 ROSTER: 31/12/23

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| Vigil: | R Volunteer N Pullman |
| 9am Sun: | R S Brown R Paull |
| 5.00pm Sun: | R Volunteer D Bearman |
| Counting Team | S Brown, A Bowden |
| Fri Clean: 5/1 | K O'Brien M Brown |
| Altar Linen: | H Reid |

WEEK 3 ROSTER: 7/1/23

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Vigil: | R C Ledwos Di Bolitho |
| 9am Sun: | R M Holley A Sartori |
| 5.00pm Sun: | R Volunteer D Bearman |
| Counting Team | P Shiels; A Bowden |
| Fri Cleaning | J Hutt & J Moran |
| Altar Linen: | J Hutt |

We acknowledge the First Nations people who have walked upon and care for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations people to this land and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

