



# Sacred Heart Parish

LUDDENHAM-WARRAGAMBA

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

YEAR 1/A

25 December 2022



Holy Family Church - Luddenham



St Mary Church - Mulgoa



Sacred Heart Church - Warragamba



St Francis Xavier Church - Greendale

## PARISH TEAM

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Giovanni Presiga Gaviria  
PARISH SECRETARY: Bernadette Morton  
ADMIN ASSISTANT: Colleen Nicholas  
SACRAMENTAL COORDINATOR: Janet Borg

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS** Tuesday - Friday: 9.00 am - 3.30pm

**CONTACT US** 02 4773 4321  
[www.warragambaparish.org.au](http://www.warragambaparish.org.au)  
[admin@warragambaparish.org.au](mailto:admin@warragambaparish.org.au)  
32 Willowdene Avenue, Luddenham  
PO Box 56, Luddenham NSW 2745

**PARISH BARGAIN CENTRE** 16/18 Weir Road, Warragamba  
Tuesday: 9:30am - 4:00pm  
Thursday: 9:30am - 4:00pm

## HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal: Ms Donna Mc Fadzean  
Assistant Principal: TBA  
Contact Number: 02 4773 7100

## HOLY MASS TIMES AND SACRAMENTS

Saturday: 6.00 pm (Vigil) at Luddenham  
Sunday: 7.30 am at Luddenham  
9.30 am at Warragamba  
Italian Mass: 11.00 am at Luddenham (*3rd Sunday of the month*)  
Spanish Mass: 7.30 pm at Luddenham (*4th Saturday of the month*)  
Weekday Mass: 9.00 am at Warragamba - Wednesday  
7.00 am at Mulgoa - Thursday  
9.30 am at Luddenham - Friday  
9.00 am at Luddenham - Saturday (*except 3rd Saturday*)  
9.00 am at Greendale - 3rd Saturday of the month

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:  
8.30 am at Luddenham - Friday

## BAPTISMS AND MARRIAGES

Baptisms are held 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month by appointment only.  
Marriages by appointment only at least 6 months prior to marriage.

## RECONCILIATION

Saturday after 9.00am Mass & from 5.00pm till Vigil Mass

## ANOIDING OF THE SICK

By appointment. Please contact the Parish Office.

We moderns love Christmas with all the lights, gifts and good cheer of friends and family. To celebrate Christmas is to share life with another, for that is what God has done, shared divine life with created life in a simple yet profound way: the birth of a baby. It may surprise us to know that the first thousand years of Christianity likely did not celebrate Christmas with a nativity scene, for the early Church was an Easter Church not a Christmas Church.

Emphasis was on the risen Christ not the birth of Jesus. In the Middle Ages, however, a new emphasis on the Word made flesh, the Incarnation, took place. The Cistercians were among the first to focus on the Incarnation and hence the earthly life of Jesus, drawing on the imagination and spiritual senses to identify with the miracle of God's birth in the flesh.

In the thirteenth century, Francis of Assisi celebrated Christmas in a new and profound way, as a liturgical celebration of all creation awakened to the indwelling presence of God. His biographers tell us that three years before his death, Francis decided to celebrate the memory of the birth of the Child Jesus with the greatest solemnity, in order to awaken devotion to the splendour of God among us. He petitioned Pope Innocent IV for permission to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the small mountainous village of Greccio.

Francis wanted everyone to see the drama of Christ's birth, so he had a manger prepared and hay carried in; an ox and an ass were led to the spot of the manger. Two things about the Greccio story are significant: First, Christmas is a present reality for Francis, the act of God becoming flesh. It is a drama, a dynamic reality that we are invited into. It is the story of the great marriage between heaven and earth. Second, we are to awaken to this reality and respond to God's overflowing love with an outpouring of love. As Francis himself sang: "The love of him who loved us is greatly to be loved." His biographer, Bonaventure, wrote that as the people of Greccio arrived at the manger, all creation sang with joy: the forest amplified its cries, the night was rendered brilliant and solemn by a multitude of bright lights and by resonant and harmonious hymns of praise. The man of God stood before the manger, filled with piety and overcome with joy. He had an altar built over the manger to celebrate the Eucharist, the sacrament of the cosmic Body of Christ. Francis, dressed as a deacon, chanted the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was made flesh and dwells among us" (Jn 1:1). Hence, our third lesson from Saint Francis is that all creation is made holy by the celebration of Christmas. The biographers tell us that Francis was "bathed in tears" as he stood by the manger because he believed wholeheartedly that God was present in the trees, the stars, the ox, the ass and the people gathered. All of heaven and earth were brought into a unity of love in the celebration of Christmas, symbolized by the Eucharist.

Perhaps this Christmas we can reflect on the way Francis of Assisi celebrated Christmas and be attentive to how we are celebrating Christmas. Are we too worried about the dinner meal? Or the gifts we did or did not buy for another? Are we too focused on ourselves? Or are we bathed in tears at the profound mystery of God bending low to embrace us, to become one of us. Christmas is the celebration of deep relationship. We are invited to realize that we are not alone in the universe. God, who is a trinity of love, searches for human hearts, where God seeks to dwell. Bonaventure wrote: "God bends low in love and lifts us up so that we may be where God is."

We do not have to worry about things going right on Christmas day, or any day for that matter. God has come to us, is with us, and will forever be born in us as our future, if we make space for God in our lives. Let us celebrate this Christmas with song and dance, for all creation is bubbling with the Spirit of Love, alive with the presence of God.

*Ilia Delio*



God has spoken to us, the Word has become flesh. Let us allow God's word to sink into our hearts.

*"May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,  
give us a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring us to full knowledge of him.  
May he enlighten the eyes of our mind so that we can see what hope his call holds for us,  
what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit."*



*Wishing you all a blessed and holy Christmas filled with love, joy and peace.*

*Fr Giovanni, Colleen, Bernadette and Janet.*