



SUNDAY MASSES

Sacred Heart, Mildura
261 Eleventh Street

Saturday 6pm

Sunday 9am

Sunday 5pm

St Francis Xavier's
2 Elms Street, Irymple
Sunday 8:30am

St Joseph's, Red Cliffs
8725 Calder Highway
Sunday 10am

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
20 Box Street, Merbein
Sunday 10:30am

St Mary's, Robinvale
19 Watkins Street
Saturday 6pm

St Patrick's, Manangatang
33 Pioneer Street
Sunday 9am

St Joseph's, Ouyen
94 Oke Street
Sunday 11am

Third Sunday of Advent (Year A)

Sunday 14th December 2025 | Edition 50

MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH PRIEST

This weekend we light the candle of 'Joy'. Well we are now only 10 days away until Christmas and the joy and excitement are among us with many Christmas party's taking place, people finishing work and school over the next few days. For me personally it is trying to take sometime in this final few days to prepare myself for the birth of Christ. On Wednesday we begin our Christmas Novena.

I thank everyone for all around the parish who have helped with the hamper and gifts for St Vinnies. It is overwhelming to see the generosity of you all.

Next Sunday evening 21st we formally farewell Fr John, at the 5pm Mass, there will be a light tea provided afterwards.

The Parish office will close on Friday 19th December and not re-open until the 6th January. The priests will be around and we ask you ring and leave a message and or email any requests during this time.

God Bless

Fr Matthew



PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Thomas

Assistant Priests: Fr John Corrigan and Fr Bill Lowry

Parish Secretary: Carmel Spagnolo

LET US PRAY

FOR THE SICK: Marian Keam, Natalina D'Anna, Brendan Bell, Catherine Bell, Aaron Needham, Terese Pain, Dennies Mendoza, Madeline Nolan, Mark Weir, Mary Moloney, Lynne McIntyre, Graeme Floyd, Less Gregg, Des Healy, Celia Dy.

Please obtain permission if you are submitting someone else's name. Intentions are printed for one month only, but these can be renewed each month.

FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED:

Recent Deaths: Francesco Strangio, John Blazinic

ANNIVERSARIES: Timothy Farrelly, Tony Leonardis, Frank Roccisano, Sylvester, Catherine, Lorna, Raymond & Kathleen Byrnes

Merbein: Lidia Forgione, Tony Dimasi, Regiina Dolenec, Sid Wells, Rocco Di Mase, Vincenzo and Angela Taglierini

Mildura:

Saturday 6pm: Anthony D'Rosario, Vincenzo & Caterina Monteleone, Leo & Giuseppe Monteleone, Peppina Timpano, Natale Tassone

Sunday 5pm: Nick Mazza, David Adolph, Jacob Nemtsas, Domenico Ficarra, Leo & Anoinetee De Maria

Thursday 9.30am: Ks Zacharias

Robinvale:

Josie Brigante (30 day Mass 20th Dec), Nicolina Orlando, Sebastiano Montalto, Pam Pisasale, Sr Ula Dempster

If you have booked a memorial Mass please inform the priest of your arrival before the Mass begins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th December

Fr Cay Trinh celebrating Masses this weekend

Friday 19th December

Parish Office closes at 4pm. Reopens 4th January

Sunday 21st December, after 5pm Mass

Fr John's farewell, Monaghan Centre

BAPTISMS

We welcome into our Parish Community

Sophia Gervasi and

Archie Miller

who are baptised at Robinvale.



FR JOHN'S FAREWELL

Sunday 21st December after the 5pm Mass.

All parishioners are invited to stay for a bite to eat and thank Fr John for his two and half years of ministry in the Sunraysia and greater region. If you wish to contribute to a gift for Fr John, there will be a leaving collection at the Mildura masses next weekend or you can leave your contribution at the Parish Office.

For catering purposes please contact the Parish Office by Wednesday 17th December.

ST VINNIES GIVING TREE

The members of St Vincent de Paul Conference wish to thank all those who donated toys for the Giving Tree over recent weeks. Your generosity is much appreciated and will help the conference to assist many families this Christmas. All gifts need to be returned either to the Parish Office or the church by the 16th December.



LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

Let us pray. **O Lord, as we light this candle of joy, we rejoice in your coming. Hear our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of your presence. Fill us with the joy of your salvation. Amen.**



NATIVITY PLAY

On Christmas Eve, the 5:30pm Carols and 6pm Mass at Sacred Heart Church will include the annual nativity play.

All children in the parish are welcome to join the production. A dress rehearsal will take place on Tuesday 16th December at Sacred Heart Church from 4:30pm.

OFFICE CLOSURE

The Parish Office will be closed from 4pm Friday 19th December and will reopen on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

Please note change of operating hours during the month of January. The Parish Office will be opened from 9am to 12noon from Tuesday 6th January until Friday 23rd January. Normal operating hours will recommence 9am to 4pm Tuesday to Friday from Tuesday 27th January.

CHRISTMAS CARDS & GIFTS

Between now and Christmas, the piety shops at Red Cliffs and Mildura will be opened after every Mass. We stock a wide range, including Christmas cards, sacramentals, small gifts and Columban Calendars.

MONDAY 15th DECEMBER
Third Week of Advent

9am Graduation Mass, Merbein

10.30am Funeral Mass, Mildura

5pm Soup Kitchen, Monaghan Centre

NB: CONFESSION IS AVAILABLE during all scheduled **Holy Hours**, and also after the 9:30am Saturday Mass in Mildura.

BULLETIN NOTICES: Please email or phone the Parish Office **by Thursday afternoon** to submit bulletin notices.

TUESDAY 16th DECEMBER
Third Week of Advent

4pm-5:30pm Holy Hour, Mildura

6pm Mass, Mildura

6pm Mass, Robinvale

WEDNESDAY 17th DECEMBER
First Day of Christmas Novena

9:30am Mass, Manangatang

2pm Anointing Mass, Mildura

3pm - 5pm Holy Hour & Mass, Ouyen

5pm Soup Kitchen, Monaghan Centre

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve Wednesday 24th December

6pm	St Patrick's Manangatang
6pm	Sacred Heart Mildura
6pm	St Joseph's Ouyen
8pm	Our Lady's Merbein
8pm	St Joseph's Red Cliffs
8pm	St Mary's Robinvale
10pm	Sacred Heart Mildura
Midnight	Sacred Heart Mildura

(Services will begin ½ hour earlier with Christmas Carols)

Christmas Day Thursday 25th December

8.30am	St Francis Xavier Irymple
9am	Sacred Heart Mildura

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Mildura, Nowingi Place

Date: Saturday 13th December 2025
Details: Starting from 6:30 pm

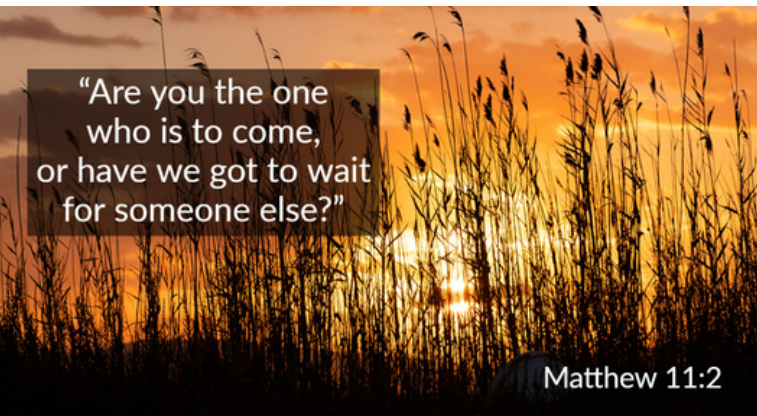


Red Cliffs Carols in Barclay Square

Date: Friday 19th December 2025
Details: Starting 8:15pm

Carols by Candlelight at the Garden of Hope

Date: Saturday 20th December 2025
Details: Starting from 7pm



STEWARDSHIP

Presbytery - Priests Support Cash (1 st Collection); Tap & Go	\$3070.80
Parish - Mission & Maintenance Envelopes, EFT, DD, and CC	\$2744.25
Parish - Mission & Maintenance Loose Plate (2 nd Collection)	\$1286.85

This week's counting team: No. 7 - L Welsh

Next week's counting Team: No. 8 - G Marci

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

When St Boniface evangelised the German people in the eighth century, he took an axe to Donar's Oak to break the pagan reverence for 'sacred trees.' According to legend, an evergreen tree grew overnight in place of the felled oak, symbolising the Trinity with its triangular shape pointing to heaven.

Many centuries later, Christians in central Europe revived the old Roman custom of bringing an evergreen tree into the home each December. The Romans' pagan beliefs were supplanted by the legend of St Boniface and the Trinitarian tree. An angel, representing Gabriel at the Annunciation, or a star, representing the Star of Bethlehem, was placed at the top of the tree. What began as a Protestant custom was soon adopted by Catholics too.

In 1982, Pope St John Paul II inaugurated the now annual practice of erecting a Christmas Tree in St Peter's Square to accompany the Vatican Nativity Scene. In some places the Christmas Tree is erected at the start of Advent; in others on Christmas Eve. Traditionally, it is not removed until 6th January – the Feast of Epiphany, and the twelfth day of Christmas.



THURSDAY 18 th DECEMBER Second Day of Christmas Novena	FRIDAY 19 th DECEMBER Third Day of Christmas Novena	SATURDAY 20 th DECEMBER Fourth Day of Christmas Novena
9:30am Anointing Mass, Merbein 9:30am Mass, Mildura 10.30am Mass, BUPA 2pm-4:30pm Adoration, Ouyen 5:30pm Mass, Red Cliffs 7pm RCIA, Monaghan Centre, Mildura	9:30am Mass, Underbool 10am Jacaranda Aged Care, Red Cliffs 4pm-5:30pm Holy Hour, Mildura 6pm Mass, Mildura	9:30am Mass, Mildura 10am Confessions, Mildura 11:30am Christian Meditation, Monaghan Centre, Mildura 6pm Mass, Mildura 6pm Mass, Robinvale

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-6,10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult,
let the wasteland rejoice and bloom,
let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil,
let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it,
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;
they shall see the glory of the Lord,
the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands,
steady all trembling knees
and 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 those the Lord has ransomed shall return.

They will come to Zion shouting for joy,
everlasting joy on their faces;
joy and gladness will go with them
and sorrow and lament be ended.

RESPONSORIAL

Psalms 145(146):6-10

(R.) Lord, come and save us.

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 bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. (R.)

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says:

'Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you.

'I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

SUNDAY 21 st DECEMBER Fourth Sunday of Advent	WE ARE A CHILD SAFE PARISH	NEXT SUNDAY'S MASS READINGS
8:30 Mass, Irymple 9am Mass, Manangatang 9am Mass, Mildura 10am Mass, Red Cliffs 10:30am Mass, Merbein 11am Mass, Ouyen 1pm Charismatic Prayer Group, Mildura 5pm Mass, Mildura	The parish of Saints Anne and Joachim, Sunraysia is a Child Safe Parish which adheres to Victoria's eleven Child Safe Standards. Our policies are displayed in our churches and on our website. Parish Safety Officers: Arthur Cassidy (Robinvale) Melanie Grace (Ouyen) Noreen Morris (Manangatang) Vince Pileggi (Sunraysia)	Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year A) First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14 Psalm: Psalm 23(24):1-6 Response: Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory. Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7 Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24