



TO BE ON EARTH THE HEART OF GOD

KIT
@ **KIPPAX**



WISHING YOU A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS

ST JOHN THE APOSTLE PARISH - KIPPAX ACT
DECEMBER 2025

Time for Reflection

By becoming human God has something important to tell us

There are moments in life when words are not enough—when the heart needs more than explanations, more than lessons, more than ideas. It needs presence. It needs someone to come close.

Christmas tells us this is exactly what God chose to do.

By becoming human, God steps into our world not with thunder or commands, but with the soft cry of a newborn. In the quiet of a stable, God whispers the message that has always been true but not always heard: **“You are not alone.”**

When God takes on our humanity, it is as though God leans in and says:

I know your tiredness.

I know your longings.

I know your joy and your sorrow.

I know the weight you carry and the hope you still keep tucked inside.

God does not stay far away. He chooses vulnerability. He chooses to feel what we feel, to walk where we walk. And in doing so, He shows us that our own humanity—our fragility, our tenderness, our tears—are not failures but holy places where God is waiting to meet us.

In Jesus, God tells us that love is stronger than fear, gentleness more powerful than force, and that even the smallest light can guide us through the darkest night.

Perhaps this year, the Christmas message we most need is simple:

God comes close. God is with you. God delights in drawing near.

There is nothing in your life too small for His attention, nothing too broken for His compassion, nothing too ordinary for His presence.

The God who became a child is not afraid of the messiness of our lives. He enters right into it and breathes peace where we least expect it.

So as we stand before the manger in our hearts, may we feel the quiet reassurance of Emmanuel—God-with-us.

Not demanding anything.

Not asking us to be perfect.

Just offering Himself, softly, lovingly, completely.

And may we hear, in that still, gentle coming, the message He has always wanted us to know:

“You are loved. You are held. And I am here.”



EDITOR'S NOTES

2025: A Year in the Life of Our Parish

A year of faith, farewell, resilience and hope

We Gather - Word | Worship | Community

From the quiet reverence of weekday Masses to the joy-filled celebrations of feast days, this year reminded us that our parish is first and foremost a praying community. Advent invited us to slow down and reflect on peace, joy and love, while Christmas drew us together in gratitude and wonder at the mystery of the Incarnation.

We Accompanied - Sacraments | Pastoral Care | Presence

Throughout the year, we walked alongside one another through baptisms, first sacraments, weddings, anniversaries, illness, grief and loss. In these sacred moments – often unseen – the heart of parish life was quietly revealed in compassion, listening and faithful presence.

We Served - Ministry | Volunteering | Generosity

So much of what sustains parish life happens behind the scenes. Liturgical ministers, musicians, readers, sacristans, counters, gardeners, cleaners, catechists, volunteers and pastoral carers generously offered their time and talents. Their service made the liturgies beautiful, buildings welcoming and community life possible.

We Gave Thanks - Milestones | Farewells | Gratitude

This year included moments of transition and farewell. We gathered as a community to give thanks for shared journeys – including Fr Chung's farewell and my own Thanksgiving Mass. These celebrations were rich with stories, laughter and deep affection, reminding us that love remains even as chapters change.

We Look Forward - Faith | Hope | 2026

As the year draws to a close, we carry forward all that has shaped us – challenges faced, relationships strengthened and faith deepened. With trust in God's unfolding work among us, we step into 2026 with hope, ready to listen, respond and grow together.

*Blessings
Marian*

Somewhere out the back

Here we go again;
we're back with the elves
for another spin
on the Christmas carousel.
Wall to wall reindeers, lights,
and candy cane;
inflatable Santas streamlined
as sumo wrestlers;
pine trees overdecorated
and artificial
as K-pop singers;
looped songs by Wham!
and Mariah Carey
that will drive you insane.

And somewhere out the back,
behind the overbooked inn
in a place often forgotten,
is the run-down manger
where two poor
and anxious parents
once took up temporary
residence,
setting themselves down
in hay and starlight
beside the murmuring animals
till Mary gave birth
to God's only Son:
Jesus the Lamb, our redemption.

Shane Murtagh





Christmas Flowers



Flower Ministry

The Flower Ministry is performed by volunteers. It is a liturgical art form where volunteers create floral arrangements to beautify the church, reflect the liturgical season, and deepen spiritual atmosphere, focusing on God's creation and offering quiet service, often coordinating colours with feast days (e.g., white for Easter, red for Pentecost) while adhering to principles of moderation and reverence for the sacred space.

THANK YOU to all our wonderful volunteers who lovingly beautify our church with flowers, enhancing our worship and helping create a space of reverence and prayer.

We offer special thanks to **Lorraine Kwong** for her dedicated service to the Flower Ministry over the past decade. Her creativity, care, and faith-filled attention have been a true blessing, bringing life, colour, and grace to our worship space and to all who gather here.

MENTAL HEALTH ● MINISTRY



Vulnerability and Mental Health

One of the most astonishing truths of our faith is that God chose to become human—not distant, not untouched, but flesh-and-blood, feeling and fragile. In Jesus, God entered the world not in power or perfection, but in vulnerability. He was born into uncertainty, lived with limits, felt deep emotions, and knew the weight of human struggle. This mystery of the Incarnation is not just a doctrine; it is an invitation. It tells us something profound about God and something healing about ourselves.

When God became human, God embraced the full spectrum of human experience—joy, delight, exhaustion, confusion, loneliness, fear, grief. Jesus wept openly at the death of a friend. He felt compassion move him so deeply it changed the course of his day. He grew tired. He withdrew to quiet places when the noise became too much. He experienced misunderstanding, rejection, betrayal, and the crushing sorrow of Gethsemane.

This vulnerability is not weakness. It is love choosing to be fully with us. It is God saying, “There is nothing human that is foreign to me.”

In a world where many of us struggle silently with mental health, the Incarnation speaks directly to our hearts. It tells us:

Your emotions are not signs of failure; they are part of being human.

Jesus had them too.

- Your struggles do not distance you from God.
- They draw you into the very place where God has chosen to dwell.
- You do not need to hide your inner world from God.
- God once had an inner world like ours.
- Asking for help, resting, withdrawing, crying, or seeking support are all things Jesus modelled in his own humanity.

The vulnerability of God also teaches us a new way to understand our own vulnerability. Instead of seeing it as something shameful or something to “fix,” we can view it as a place where grace lives. Mental health challenges—whether anxiety, depression, burnout, grief, or emotional overwhelm—do not remove us from God’s love. They place us right in the heart of the Gospel: the place where God meets humanity at its most tender.

The Christ who took on human flesh knows what it means to feel overwhelmed. The Christ who cried out on the cross knows the depths of anguish. The Christ who rose again reveals that our difficult seasons are not the end of the story.

The Incarnation, then, invites us to be gentle with ourselves. To accept that being human means being vulnerable. To let others support us, just as Jesus allowed others to care for him. To trust that our feelings are not obstacles to holiness but pathways through which God reaches us.

And perhaps most importantly, it invites us to look at ourselves with the same compassion with which God looks at us—as beloved, as worthy, as enough, even in our fragility.

When we honour our mental health, we honour the God who chose to have one.

Caring for Your Mental Well-being at Christmas and New Year

The Christmas–New Year season can be joyful, but it can also be emotionally demanding. Here are some gentle reminders for caring for yourself during this time:

Honour your feelings.

Christmas can stir joy, sadness, grief, or stress. Whatever you feel is valid.

Keep expectations realistic.

You don't need a perfect Christmas. Let "good enough" be enough.

Create small moments of quiet.

A walk, a cup of tea, a prayer, or a few deep breaths can calm the nervous system.

Hold onto an anchor routine.

A short daily practice—stretching, prayer, journaling, provides stability.

Protect your energy.

It's okay to decline invitations, take breaks, or leave early from gatherings.

Be mindful of loneliness.

Reach out with a message or phone call. Small connections matter.

Honour your grief.

Light a candle, name your loved one, or recall a memory. Grief and love share the same space.

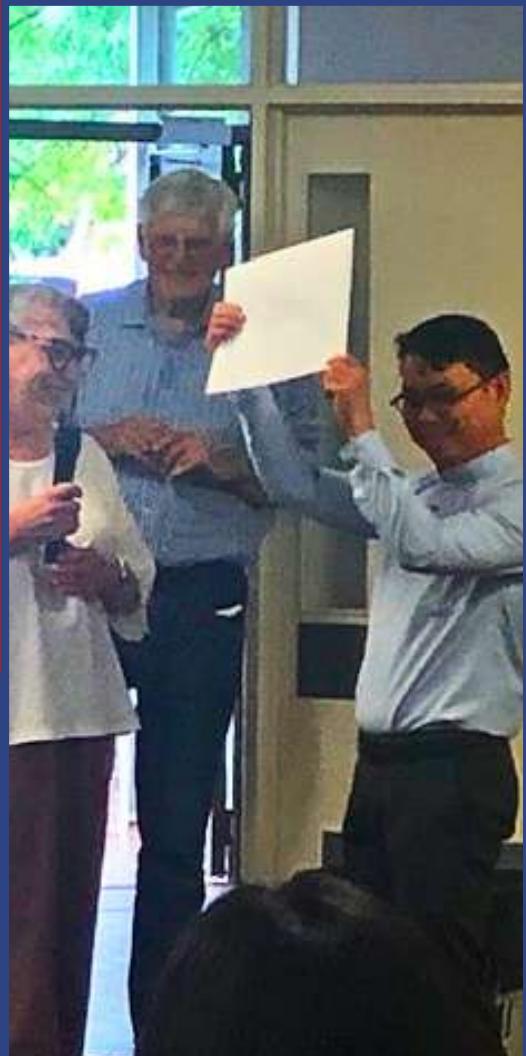
Start the New Year gently.

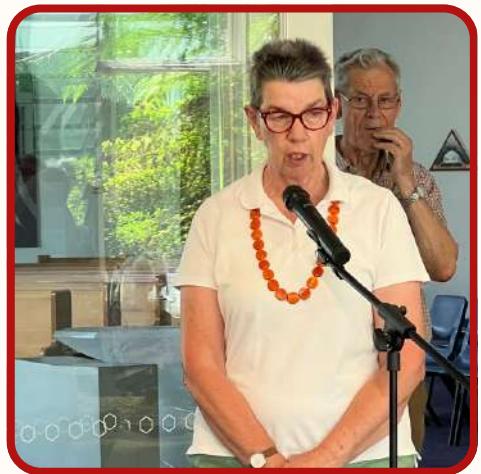
Choose kindness over pressure. A simple intention is enough.

*May the God who became vulnerable in Christ
be close to you
in every emotion,
every moment,
and every breath this season.*

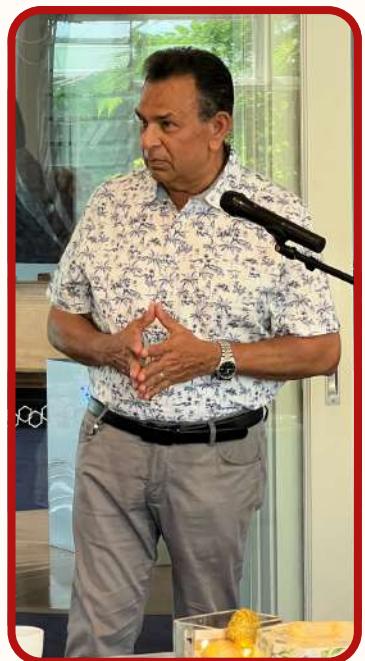


Father Chung's Farewell





Marian England Mass of Thanksgiving followed by Morning Tea



Fr. Gerard McCormick msc
and Fr John Bosman msc



A Prayer for the New Year

Loving God,
as we stand at the doorway of a new year,
we bring with us all that has shaped us—
the joys that lifted our hearts,
the struggles that stretched us,
the quiet moments that whispered Your grace.

You know the paths we have walked
and the ones we are hesitant to take.
You know the changes we face,
the endings we did not choose,
and the new beginnings that wait just beyond our sight.

As we step into this fresh chapter,
gently steady our hearts.
Give us the courage to release what no longer serves life
and the openness to welcome what is being born within us.
Help us trust that change is not a sign of Your absence
but often the place where You move most tenderly.

Bless the days ahead—
their ordinary rhythms and unexpected revelations.
Bless the choices that shape us
and the people who walk beside us.
Bless the hopes we carry,
even the fragile ones.

May this new year be a season
where we learn again how to listen—
to Your voice in our hearts,
to the wisdom of our own bodies,
and to the quiet invitations of Your Spirit.

Guide our steps, strengthen our compassion,
and let Your peace settle upon us
like morning light.

God of new beginnings,
walk with us into this year.
Make of our lives a place
where love can grow,
where courage can rise,
and where Your presence is felt in every unfolding day.
Amen.



2026 a year of Promise and Possibilities!

***2026 invites us to deepen rather than rush –
to practise faith in the ordinary, faithful rhythms of parish life.***

It is a “Threshold Year”

- A year for integration rather than intensity
- A year to live what we have learned
- A year to tend the soil after change

***In 2026, the Church continues learning how to walk together –
not perfectly, but faithfully.***

Synodality moving from “talk” to “practice”

- Learn to listen as a spiritual practice
- Sharing responsibility rather than “doing it all”
- Discernment instead of quick fixes



***If 2025 called us to proclaim hope, 2026 invites us to practise it –
quietly, steadily, together.***

A Year for hope that is lived, not declared

- ordinary hope
- hope expressed in small, faithful actions
- hope sustained through community



In 2026, our parish seeks not more activity, but deeper connection.

An invitation to belonging, not busyness

***2026 invites us back to the heart –
to a faith that is felt, embodied, and lived in love.***

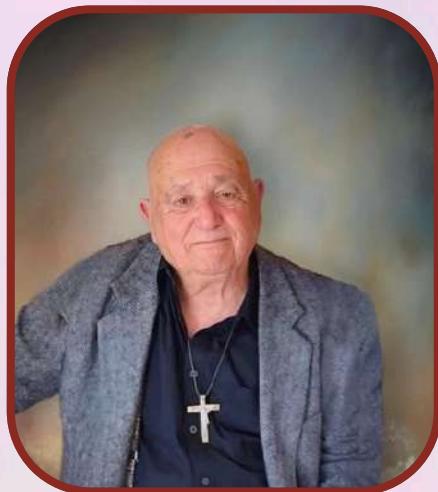
A Year to Rediscover the Heart of Faith

- God’s love experienced, not just taught
- compassion as a way of life
- prayer that engages the whole person



2026 could possibly be a year of space. Space to deepen our faith, to strengthen relationships, and to live more gently and faithfully in the midst of change. As a parish, we step into this year not with urgency, but with trust, listening for how God continues to shape us together.

Deaths



Joseph Galea
11/11/1931 - 5/12/2025

*He had a heart
full of love for God
and for his family*

IN MEMORIAM 2025



January

Fr Chris Murphy msc
Margaret Richardson

May

Marie Hill
Alice Kurylowicz
Cesar Leon

February

Teresa Bond
Fay Hodgetts
John Stefek

June

John Bourke
Helen Dodds
Marcia Jasper
Than Phan

October

Joanne Hoy

March

Syoutji Gozum
Waine Summerfield

November

Daphne Ashley

April

Elaine Carter
Fr. Michael Fallon msc
Mary Moran

July

Sue Ringshaug

December

Joseph Galea

August

Margaret Bailey
Douglas Boer
Mary French

Pope Leo's Prayer Intention

January 2026

For prayer with the Word of God.

Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.



<https://www.popesprayer.va/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ING-PRAYER-INTENTIONS-OF-THE-HOLY-FATHER-2026-1.pdf>



Advent prayer

Hail and Blessed
be the hour and moment
at which the Son of God
was born – of the most pure
Virgin Mary at midnight
in Bethlehem in piercing cold.
At that same hour and moment,
vouchsafe O my God
to hear my prayers
and grant my petitions
through the merits of
Our Lord Jesus Christ
and of His Virgin Mother.

Amen.

Eamonn Murtagh



ST JOHN THE APOSTLE PARISH - SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT



St John the Apostle Parish is committed to safeguarding and upholding the dignity and rights of all our children and vulnerable people.

We seek to empower children, their families and carers, and vulnerable people, to have a say, to be listened to, and to be protected. This approach is at the centre of all of our thinking and action.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING VOLUNTEERS

The role of the Parish Safeguarding Volunteer is to be an additional point of contact in the Parish on matters relating to the safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people, complementing the roles of the Parish Priest and Parish Secretary. They can provide advice on how complaints can be made, and forward concerns, relating to the protection safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people within the Parish to the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager.

Jenny McGee and Carl Madsen – safeguarding.kippax@cg.org.au

We love to celebrate mass with the children and vulnerable people of our parish.

Safeguarding and care is everyone's responsibility.



KIT @ Kippax

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St John the Apostle Parish Kippax ACT * 25 Blackham Street, HOLT ACT 2615

JOIN US AT ST JOHN'S!

WOMEN'S
BREAKFAST
4TH TUESDAY OF
THE MONTH



FRIENDSHIP GROUP
LAST WEDNESDAY
OF THE MONTH



MOVIE NIGHT
4TH FRIDAY OF
THE MONTH



PINS & NEEDLES
3RD MONDAY OF
THE MONTH



MENS GROUP
3RD FRIDAY OF
THE MONTH



COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS
3RD SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH



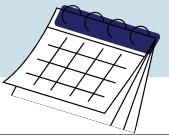
BOOK CLUB
4TH SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH



YCS BELCONNEN
AFTER SUNDAY MASS 7PM-8PM
2025



January 2026



1	Thursday	Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God
2	Friday	First Friday
3	Saturday	
4	Sunday	The Epiphany of the Lord
5	Monday	
6	Tuesday	
7	Wednesday	
8	Thursday	
9	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm Parish Library
10	Saturday	
11	Sunday	The Baptism of the Lord
12	Monday	Parish Office reopens
13	Tuesday	
14	Wednesday	
15	Thursday	
16	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm Parish Library
17	Saturday	
18	Sunday	2 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A Community Connections 3:30pm - Parish Library
19	Monday	Pins & Needles 7:15pm Parish Library
20	Tuesday	
21	Wednesday	
22	Thursday	
23	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm Parish Library
24	Saturday	
25	Sunday	3 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A Sunday Book Club 3:30pm - Parish Library
26	Monday	Australia Day
27	Tuesday	Women's Breakfast - Bean Origin Cafe Belconnen - 7:30am
28	Wednesday	Friendship Group - 10:15am Morning Tea Parish Centre
29	Thursday	
30	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm Parish Library
31	Saturday	

Commencing 2026 the parish office will be closed every Tuesday