



The Monica December 2017

St Monica's Parish Moonee Ponds

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Greetings from the Editorial Team

What a busy time it has been in St Monica’s Parish! Soon we will celebrate of the birth of Christ. Fr Tony reminds us that we should stay true to the real message of Christmas and let go of the pressure to conform to the less meaningful, increasingly commercialised aspects of the Holy Day.

The wonderful volunteers of St Monica’s Parish are a testament to this—dedicating time to the needy every week and drawing inspiration from the life of St Vincent de Paul.

In October, Year 3 students received the Sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time. It was a joyful celebration for the whole community as the photos show.

St Monica’s School Fete was a tremendous success and raised many thousands of dollars for the students of our Parish School.

The editorial team wishes our Parish a joyful Christmas celebrated with family and friends.

See you in 2018!



A Pastoral Letter



Christmas 2017

This might sound almost heretical, but with each passing year I like Christmas less and less. At the same time, with each passing year, I like the Feast of the Nativity, the birth of the Lord, more and more!

Maybe some of you feel the same?

The craziness surrounding the secular season of Christmas – *the endless ads on television and online, the crowded stores, the busy roads, the pressure to spend money and to buy* – seems to drown out the real meaning, the religious meaning, of Christmas – the coming of Emmanuel, God-with-us!

Maybe that is why I enjoy the season of Advent, which invites us to slow down and to ponder; to ponder along with Mary, this awesome mystery, the wondrous gift, we are preparing to welcome (yet again) and to celebrate with great joy!

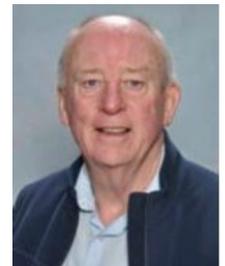
Advent invites us to ‘*find time*’ or ‘*make the time*’ to ‘withdraw’ a little from the busyness that the shops, the buying of presents and the preparation of food, would thrust upon us; to ‘withdraw’ a little and to ponder; to wonder and to sit with God, with God who is already with us.

We can all become so busy that our busyness can threaten to overwhelm the true meaning of the Feast we are preparing to celebrate, the coming of the One who comes to bring ‘peace on earth’ to each one of us and to all humankind.

May we all find some of that peace in the busyness of our pre-Christmas preparations and so come to celebrate the birthday of Jesus, the love of God made flesh, with joy in our hearts, rather than a ‘thank God that’s over for another year!’

Happy and a Peace-filled Christmas everyone from all in the Parish Office: Fr. Tony, Fr. Minh, Sonya, Abygaile and Bernard

- Fr. Tony Feeney



Christmas 2017

**SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS EVE**

Mass 6.30PM - Carols from 6.00pm
 Mass 8.30pm - Carols from 8.00pm
 Mass 12 midnight - Carols from 11.15pm

**MONDAY 25TH DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS DAY**

Mass 8.00AM
 Mass 9.15AM (Italian)
 Mass 10.30AM



Parish Profile : Abygaile Cukavac Lisa Mammola



Introducing Abygaile Cukavac as Secretary of the Parish

Many of you may already be familiar with Abygaile Cukavac. She has been an active member of the St Monica's parish for 8 years. She has a vibrant personality and connects instinctively with those around her.

Earlier this year Abygaile was appointed as Secretary of the Parish. She now works at the presbytery three days a week, fulfilling the many day-to-day administrative duties of the Church; responding daily to enquiries, coordinating weddings, baptisms and funerals, corresponding with participants of weekly services, assisting affiliated groups like the Children's Liturgy, and coordinating the weekly newsletter.

Abygaile has also been greatly active within the St Monica's Primary School. This year she is Vice President of the Parent Association and for the two years prior to that, she held the position of Assistant Treasurer.

Outside of work, Aby enjoys the roles of wife and mum to three beautiful boys (Caleb 10, Nathan 8 and Leonard 4). She pressed pause on her official working life as a Pharmaceutical Rep, 10 years ago, to have her family. Whilst she has cherished these years, this new job has been a welcomed addition to her life. As a people person, she is relishing working with people, especially the people of her local parish and community.

She also loves the works /life balance that this position offers her. She continues to be there for her family, walking her boys to and from school (and their other activities) whilst contributing and assisting people of her local community. "What's not to love about that!" she says as she unstacks her dishwasher.

St Monica's and its' community has played a very significant role in her life. Aby came to Australia with her parents, her brother and sister, 30 years ago. Moving to a foreign country meant Aby often felt disconnected, missing her native Filipino culture and community. St Monica's, with all its' wonderful people, has given Aby renewed a sense of community and belonging.

Her passion for St Monica's and it's parishioners, coupled with her business experience, make Aby a great addition to the Parish's administrative team. We hope you continue to enjoy your work at St Monica's, Abygaile!



First Communion – Isla Quick



On Sunday the 15th October I made my First Communion and it felt very special. My family (Grandma, Aunties and cousins) came from the country to be at the Mass with me. A very special parishioner to us, Pat Joyce, also came to the Mass. I was really excited as I had been looking forward to this day for such a long time. I wore a beautiful dress and had a lovely celebration afterwards. Thank you to Fr. Tony, Fr. Minh and my teachers at St. Monica's for preparing us for this terrific day!



Isla Quick



"I feel like I am more included in the Holy Church" Emily McCleave



Miller Dennert— Had a great night celebrating with my family and friends.

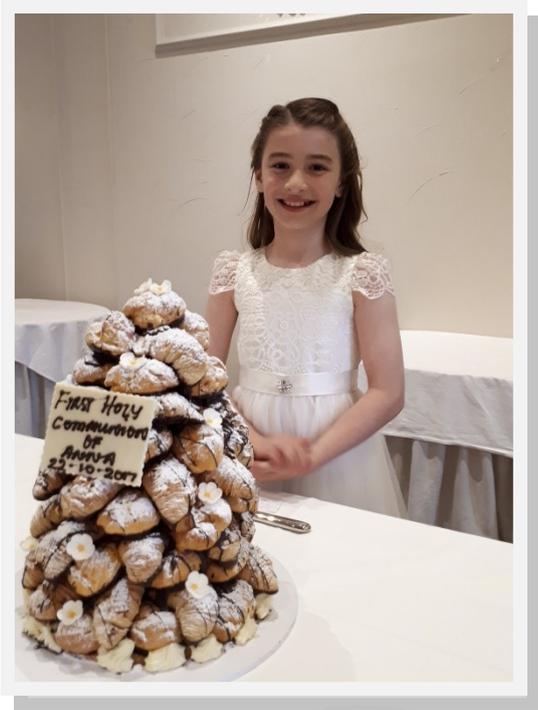


Alexander and Thomas Barlow

Congratulations!



Alessandro Scarpino and Olivier Leone of 3M and Anna Sergakis of 3O celebrated their first holy communion on Sunday 22nd



Anna Sergakis



April Garvey—A very special celebration with family and friends and here with Father Minh.



Grace Kulyk - Making my communion was even more special than I expected. I was so happy all day, and felt so much love from my family and friends. Father Minh's smile made me smile. And now I'm so happy I can have communion whenever I go to mass!"



Annabel Akers



Lucas Makdesi



Maxx Stevens, Thomas and Alexander Barlow, Lucas Makdesi (and Eamon Makdesi)



Christian Marchionno—
"I enjoyed celebrating my First Holy Communion with family and friends. It was a great day! Thank you Father Tony."



Sienna Taylor





CHRISTMAS CAROL

Away in a Manger (English)

Flow Gently, Sweet Afton

Lyrics: v.1,2 unknown; v.3 John T. McFarland (1851-1913)

Music: William J Kirkpatrick (1838-1921) (Wales)

D Em/GA Bm A D/F# Em/G



A - way in a man-ger, no crib for His
The cat-tle are low-ing, the ba-by a-
Be near me, Lord Je-sus; I ask Thee to

A7/E Em/GA G/B A/C# D D/F# Em/G



bed, The lit-tle Lord Je-sus lay down His sweet
wakes. but lit-tle Lord Je-sus no cry-ing He
stay close by me for-ev-er, and love me I

A D Bm Em/G A



head; The stars in the
makes. I love thee Lord
pray. Bless all the dear

D/F# D F#m Bm A7/E Em/GBmF#



heav-ens looked down where He lay, The
Je-sus! Look down from the sky, and
chil-dren in Thy ten-der care, and

A7/E G/D A/C# D Bm D/F# G6 A D



lit-tle Lord Je-sus, a sleep in the hay.
stay by my side un-til morn-ing is nigh.
fit us for heav-en to live with Thee there.

St Monica's Tennis Club — Margaret Mogg



Peter Stevens announced his retirement from The Tennis Committee in August 2017. Peter joined the Tennis Club in 1987, was elected President in 2000 and was President for 15 years. The Club experienced significant changes during this period . Court lights were installed, new classic clay courts laid, fencing renewed, new coaching programme initiated and new clubhouse built. At the Annual General Meeting on 10th September, President Peter Clarke made a special presentation in recognition of his outstanding service to the Club. The award is in addition to the Honorary Life Membership he already holds, along with his Wife Margaret who was Secretary for 15 years.



The AGM also saw an Honorary Membership awarded to Robert Chapman for his dedication to the Club over many years. Robert's contribution to the success of night tennis has been considerable. Not always the easiest of jobs to ensure all players are financial and registered Rob has managed to keep it all under control. It is to Rob's credit that a small club like ours has up to 12 night teams and the envy of many bigger clubs in the area. Robert has also stepped down from the Committee, Peter Clark thanked him and wished him well for the future.



HAPPY 80th BIRTHDAY WENDY!

Wendy Bethune is a loyal Parishioner who volunteers weekly to count our Parish Money. Wendy enjoyed a lovely 80th birthday celebration with family and friends.



Immaculate Conception— Eleanor Colonico

On December 8, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which recognises the Blessed Virgin Mary being free from original sin at the moment of her conception in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne.

The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was conceived by normal biological means in the womb of her mother, but God acted upon her soul keeping it “immaculate.” Specifically, this doctrine says she was not affected by the lack of sanctifying grace that afflicts humankind, but was instead filled with grace by God and lived a life free from sin. In many Catholic countries the Feast is a holy day and in some a national public holiday.

It is believed that a feast of the Conception of the Most Holy and Pure Mother of God was celebrated on 8 December perhaps as early as the 15th Century in Syria. However, it was not until December 8, 1854 when the Immaculate Conception was solemnly defined as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in his constitution, *Ineffabilis Deus*. It was consecrated by Pope Pius XII in 1942.

Interestingly, there is widespread misunderstanding of the doctrine, with many people believing it refers to the conception of Jesus. The feast of the Annunciation, which celebrates the virginal conception and incarnation of Jesus is celebrated on 25 March, nine months before Christmas Day. The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – her birth – is celebrated on September 8.

For differing reasons, belief in Mary’s immaculate conception in the Catholic doctrinal form is not part of the official doctrines of the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant churches.



Teach your child how to keep themselves safe

As your child gets older, they become increasingly independent and may spend time away from you or with a babysitter/ carer. As part of the journey of growing up, it's important to speak to your child about being safe. Let them know:

Tip 1

It's OK to say NO if they think what they're being asked to do is or feels wrong.

Tip 2

If they feel they're in danger, it's OK to yell, scream, kick or run to a safe place that you and your child have both agreed on – such as a neighbour or friend.

Tip 3

Make sure that you tell your child that you would never send a stranger to pick them up.

Tip 4

They can tell a lie, even to an adult, if they need to get away from someone who makes them feel unsafe.

Tip 5

To use a 'code' word you both have agreed on, to let you know they're not feeling safe; as an example, using your first name when talking to you on the phone.

Tip 6

Their body is their own – once a child no longer needs nappies to be changed or help with toileting, a carer or any other person should not touch their private areas.

Tip 7

To tell you or another adult if they have any problems or if someone is making them feel unsafe.

Tip 8

A babysitter or any other adult should not ask a child to keep a secret.

Tip 9

Not to give out personal information online, including their school, suburb, sporting team or nicknames and to never meet someone they have met online in person.



St Vincent De Paul — Margaret Mogg

St Vincent de Paul Volunteers Celebrate!

The St Monica's Conference of St Vincent de Paul volunteers celebrated the end of another year assisting the needy in our local area during their Christmas gathering at Moonee Valley recently.

Amongst the crowd were the Western Suburbs Soup Van volunteers who prepare food and the "Vannies" who deliver and distribute food parcels to the needy at the Western Oval, Social Housing and Boarding Houses every Tuesday night. These selfless volunteers assist around 400 needy people on their round, dedicating many hours so that others may enjoy a nutritious meal and some social interaction once a week. We salute your generosity of time and spirit you're an inspiration to us all. A joyous dinner was enjoyed by those in attendance.



St Jude — Jo Barrett

St Jude, also known as Thaddaeus, was one of the 12 Apostles of Jesus. His brother was St James the Less, his father was the martyr Clopas and his mother Mary was the Virgin Mary's cousin. St Jude preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Idumaea, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Libya. He is known as the apostle who asked Jesus at the Last Supper why he would not manifest himself to the whole world after his resurrection. Scholars have uncovered little else of his life. There is some debate about where Jude died, though most Biblical scholars agree he was martyred. He is believed to have been martyred either in Armenia or Beirut.

The iconography of St Jude often depicts a flame around his head, which represent his presence at Pentecost, when he accepted the Holy Spirit alongside the other apostles. St Jude's attribute is a club, while another is St Jude holding an image of Christ, in the Image of Edessa. Sometimes he can also be seen holding a carpenter's ruler or is depicted with a scroll or book, the Epistle of Jude. This famous Epistle to the Churches of the East was directed against the heresies of the Simonians, Nicolaites, and Gnostics. The Apostles Jude and Bartholomew are believed to have brought Christianity to Armenia, where Jude was rumoured to have later been martyred.

Jude was interred at St Peter's Basilica in Rome. Pilgrims came to St Jude's grave to pray and many reported a powerful intercession, leading to the title, "The Saint for the Hopeless and the Despaired." Two Saints, St Bridget of Sweden and St Bernard, had visions from God asking them to accept St Jude as "The Patron Saint of the Impossible."

Saint Jude is *not* to be confused with Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Our Lord and despaired because of his great sin and lack of trust in God's mercy. The name Thaddaeus may have come into use when describing St Jude as a means of avoiding this confusion.

The Novena to Saint Jude

"Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor for all who invoke thee, special patron in time of need; to thee I have recourse from the depth of my heart, and humbly beg thee, to whom God hath given such great power, to come to my assistance; help me now in my urgent need and grant my earnest petition. I will never forget thy graces and the favours thou dost obtain for me and I will do my utmost to spread devotion to thee. Amen."



A Healing Prayer to St. Jude

Most holy Apostle, St. Jude, friend of Jesus, I place myself in your care. Pray for me; help me know that with you at my side, I am never alone. Please join me in asking God to send me consolation in my sorrow, courage in my fear, and healing in the midst of my suffering. Ask God to fill me with the grace to accept whatever may lie ahead for me and to strengthen my faith in His healing power. Thank you, St. Jude, for the promise of hope you hold out to all who believe, and inspire me to give this gift of hope to others. Amen.

**St. Jude,
pray for us.**



Advent Wreath

1st CANDLE – (purple) **THE PROPHECY CANDLE** or **CANDLE OF HOPE** – We can have hope because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. Our hope comes from God. (Romans 15:12-13)

2nd CANDLE – (purple) **THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE** or **THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION** – God kept his promise of a Savior who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to “get ready”. Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! (Luke 3:4-6)

3rd CANDLE – (pink) **THE SHEPHERD CANDLE** or **THE CANDLE OF JOY** – The angels sang a message of JOY! (Luke 2:7-15)

4th CANDLE – (purple) **THE ANGEL CANDLE** or **THE CANDLE OF LOVE** – The angles announced the good news of a Savior. God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us! (John 3:16-17)

5th CANDLE – (white) **“CHRIST CANDLE”** – The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins! His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! (John 1:29)

St Monica's Fete— Lisa Mammola



Saturday, November 18 was a wonderful day on the St Monica's Primary School calendar. Thousands of people from the parish and the local community came together to celebrate our first-ever twilight fete! As the photos below will attest, it was a fabulous event for children of all ages.



COME & JOIN THE FUN

ST. MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL TWILIGHT FETE

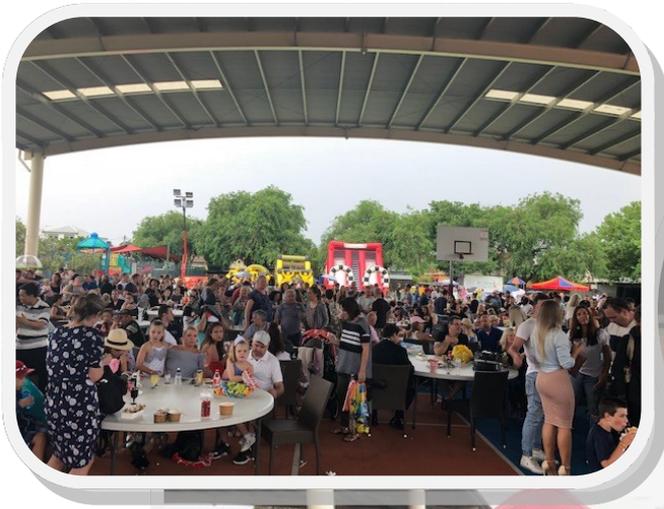
SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2017

ROBINSON & HUTCHESON STREETS, MOONEE PONDS
RIDES • FOOD • CRAFT • GOURMET DELIGHTS • SHOW BAGS

3.00 - 8.00PM

ENQUIRIES TO STMONICASFETE2017@GMAIL.COM

The poster is blue with white and pink text and features a central illustration of a white tent with a blue top and a pink umbrella to the left. The background is decorated with colorful confetti.



"Congrats to everyone who was involved in pulling another successful St. Monica's fete together. Even though there were moments of dubious weather, the atmosphere with the people who came was one of great fun. I saw people with full bags and full tummies." Michelle Christian

"Thank you to Rose, Sharon and Kelly for what was an absolutely sensational Fete. Yesterday's magic was a complete reflection of your love, passion, energy and sheer hard work. You worked tooth and nail, endless hours with nothing but the best interests of our kids at heart. The Fete was hands down the highlight of my kids schooling life. So many big hearted incredible volunteers, led by you ladies, all having a great time. You absolutely nailed it!! Congratulations on a phenomenal job and here's a cheers to you!"

Chloe Colman

Our fete was very much the culmination of a huge community effort. Local businesses were generous in their support and many school mums and dads spent hours of spare time on their particular tasks to ensure the day was successful, profitable and most of all - fun! A huge vote of thanks also to Fete Coordinators Kelly Clark, Sharon Lourdes and Rose Greco. I hope you all had as much fun as I did!





BibleWise

Word Search - The Story of Jesus' Birth

Circle the words in red.



a	n	a	z	a	r	e	t	h	b
g	a	l	i	l	e	e	c	a	m
o	d	a	n	g	e	l	e	i	a
d	f	h	d	a	v	i	d	l	n
j	e	w	s	b	m	a	r	y	g
e	s	l	o	r	d	t	u	v	e
s	w	b	n	i	a	n	n	a	r
u	j	o	s	e	p	h	n	m	b
s	u	n	b	l	e	s	s	e	d
v	i	r	g	i	n	t	b	l	e
s	h	e	p	h	e	r	d	s	m

Luke 1:26-28

And in the sixth month the **angel Gabriel** was sent from **God** unto a city of **Galilee**, named **Nazareth**,

To a **virgin** espoused to a man whose name was **Joseph**, of the house of **David**; and the virgin's name was **Mary**.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, **Hail**, thou that art highly favoured, the **Lord** is with thee: **blest** art thou among women.

Luke 2:7

Mary "brought forth her firstborn **son**, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a **manger**;"

Luke 2:15

"the **shepherds** said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass,"

Luke 2:36-38

Anna was a prophetess who recognized that the infant **Jesus** was the Messiah.

Matt 2:1,2

...there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the **Jews**? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

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