



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

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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.



**ST ANDREW & ST AGNES
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Sunday 9 am
RECONCILIATION:
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Vigil Saturday 5:30 pm
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RECONCILIATION:
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Also available by appointment
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Sacred Heart School Matraville: 9311 2995



Our Parishes acknowledge and honour the Bidjigal and Gadigal People as traditional custodians of this land, that we stand on.



THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Go Make Disciples, The Mission Plan for the Archdiocese of Sydney

Please pray for the Faithful Departed:

Recently Deceased: **Jeanne Mirabitor, Doris Bonanno, Ian Vernon, Steven Fehir, Evaristo Pinto, Allan Hart, Paul Blackmore**, and all those who have died from the Covid-19 Virus.



Anniversary: Lucia Spano, John Donovan, Mary Carauna, Ethel Donohue, John Watts Cussen, Donovan, Hinks & Newman families, Maureen O'Brien, Malcolm Calum MacDonald, Dolores Blackmore, Annamaria Chovan, Joan O'Grady, Sylvia Fontanilla, Mary Cauchi, John Debono, Robert Franke, Anthony Rotta, Peter & Winnie Blyth, Joseph Panetta, and Carolina Sounios,

Deceased: Agnes Brisbane. All the souls in Purgatory

The Sick: Maureen Maron, Barry Dalton, Sandra Russell, Bishop Peter Ingham, Ange Portelli, Ha Oi Lan, Mario Assini, Sam Strano, Josephie Regan, Mary Vella, Beatriz Visperas, Michael Victor, Marcus O'Dean, Angela Beveridge, Merley Nate Fien, John Sarniak Thomson, Heracleo & Mamerta Dela Torre, Santa Viselli and Ernie Ross. Pray for the sick, the dying, the poor and homeless in our parishes, and those suffering from Covid.

Where will Fr. John be celebrating Mass next weekend?

Saturday - 6 January, 2024 - 5.00 St Andrew's Malabar (Livestreamed)
Sunday - 7 January, 2024 10.00am St Agnes' Matraville



Greetings dear parishioners and visitors of our Twinned Catholic Parishes of St Andrew & St Agnes Malabar-Matraville.

We continue to celebrate the Octave of Christmas Day, this Sunday being the Seventh Day of Christmas Octave. This year this Sunday is the Feast of the Holy Family, and we think of all families in particularly the Holy Family of Nazareth as Joseph and Mary were given the task of bringing up the child Jesus. God bless all families as they strive to bring all children with the respect and the love of all peoples.

Just a reminder that the Season Christmas has not concluded it has only begun, so leave those decorations up. Christmas season concludes following The Baptism of the Lord, Monday January 8 January, then we go into Ordinary time of the Church.

Many thanks for all greetings and presents I receive over the Christmas Masses much appreciated.

In concern with the massive storm on Christmas Eve our Parish/School Hall at Malabar was flooded. I wish to thank, Sultana, Hartmann, Wright, and Millward Families for their assistance in sopping up the flood waters in the Hall. We would have been lost without your assistance.

New Year's Day Masses St Agnes' Matraville at 7am and St Andrew's Malabar at 9am

In concern with the building project of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Matraville, the steps of St Agnes' Church is part of the redevelopment of church steps and forecourt. This work will begin 4 January 2024 and conclude towards the middle of February 2024, the front steps will be out of use, please use the side entrance. Please see notice board for drawings of the redevelopment.

God's Christmas blessings,

Fr John



We welcome into our Parish Community **Jack Christopher Allen Livemore**, who received the sacrament of Baptism on Saturday at St. Andrew's Malabar. **Congratulations.**

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney: Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguarding.enquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.



Congratulations to **Alan and Robyn Little** who will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Friday the 29th December 2023.