

# CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



**ST JOHNS CHURCH**



**ST MARYS CHURCH**



**ST JAMES CHURCH**

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## SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A: 18 JANUARY 2026

I visited my mother quite often in the last years of her life and sometimes when she kissed me and gave me a big hug, I came away with the scent of 'Tea Rose' perfume lingering all over me. Mum loved that perfume and sometimes doused herself quite extravagantly. And some of it would rub off on me.

That is how we become 'holy'.

What does it mean to be 'holy'? It does not mean 100% morally correct, or separate from the great mass of ordinary people who aren't quite up to the mark in doing the right thing. It certainly doesn't mean an unattractive superiority: 'holier than thou'!

It means being so close to God, so much of an intimate with God, so much one of the close family of God, that God's holiness rubs off.

In today's Gospel, John says of Jesus that He will baptise people with the Holy Spirit. At our baptisms, we were given an extravagant dousing of the Holy Spirit, we were plunged and immersed into Holy Spirit, we emerged smelling of Holy Spirit, we were made holy.

Each one of us has heard at our baptism 'you are my beloved son' or 'you are my beloved daughter'. We are family.

We are adopted members of the Holy Family, and something rubs off.

So, if St Paul were writing to us today, he would use the same terms he used in writing to the Corinthians. This is how it would run: '... to the church of God that is in [your town], made up of those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called holy.'

Isn't that a beautiful understanding of who we are?

We are not a branch office of a multinational religious organisation with the Archbishop as the local manager. We have our own dignity. We are the church of God that is in this town made up of those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called holy.

But, we are not alone. There are many people gathering in a multitude of places around the world, people who have also been baptised and therefore share a certain family resemblance. As St Paul would put it, we are *who* we are 'together with all who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every meeting place'. St Paul recognises the bonds which link us. But, how is the 'togetherness' held together?

What quickly emerged in the early church was the need for strong bonds to develop between the leaders of those 'who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' in Jerusalem and the leaders of those who did the same out on the missions in the pagan world. With the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, it was natural that the linchpin, the strongest link, should be the successor of St Peter martyred in Rome.

Yes, we are 'Catholic', i.e. worldwide, and 'Roman Catholic' because we are in communion with the Bishop of Rome, the official role of the Pope.

So, at the base level, recall how St Paul describes us:

'Members of the Church of God that is in [this town], made up of those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called holy.' That is who we are. We are those to whom St Paul sends his greeting: 'Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' *Fr Michael Tate*

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON** (*Iluka*)

All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

**COLLECT**

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**FIRST READING***Isaiah 49:3. 5-6*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I shall be glorified';  
I was honoured in the eyes of the Lord,  
my God was my strength.

And now the Lord has spoken,  
he who formed me in the womb to be his servant,  
to bring Jacob back to him,  
to gather Israel to him:

'It is not enough for you to be my servant,  
to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back the survivors of Israel;  
I will make you the light of the nations  
so that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.'

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** *Ps 39:2 4. 7-10. R. vv. 8-9*

**R. Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.**

1. I waited, I waited for the Lord  
and he stooped down to me;  
he heard my cry.  
He put a new song into my mouth,  
praise of our God. (R.)
2. You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,  
but an open ear.  
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.  
Instead, here am I. (R.)
3. In the scroll of the book it stands written  
that I should do your will.  
My God, I delight in your law  
in the depth of my heart. (R.)
4. Your justice I have proclaimed  
in the great assembly.  
My lips I have not sealed;  
you know it, O Lord.

**SECOND READING***1 Corinthians 1:1-3*

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

I, Paul, appointed by God to be an apostle, together with brother Sosthenes, send greetings to the church of God in Corinth, to the holy people of Jesus Christ, who are called to take their place among all the saints everywhere who pray to our Lord Jesus Christ; for he is their Lord no less than ours. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us.  
He enabled those who accepted him to become the children of God.*

*Alleluia!*

**GOSPEL***John 1:29-34*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Seeing Jesus coming towards him, John said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. This is the one I spoke of when I said: A man is coming after me who ranks before me because he existed before me. I did not know him myself, and yet it was to reveal him to Israel that I came baptising with water.' John also declared, 'I saw the Spirit coming down on him from heaven like a dove and resting on him. I did not know him myself, but he who sent me to baptise with water had said to me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is going to baptise with the Holy Spirit." Yes, I have seen and I am the witness that he is the Chosen One of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**PREFACE; EUCHARISTIC PRAYER****COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (*Iluka*)

You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those you have nourished by this one heavenly Bread one in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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## SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

In continuity with last week's reading of the First Song of the Servant (Isa 42:1-4), today's First Reading takes up the Second Song, Isa 49:3, 5-6. The 'Servant', speaking in the name of faithful Israel, describes his calling and the dual role that he has received from God. Not only is he to restore and gather the survivors (from the Exile) amongst his own people. Israel's new mission is to be 'the light of the nations'. The bitterness and loss associated with exile has not been entirely negative. As those who have experienced God's faithfulness and liberating power in captivity, the people return with a new mission: that of being instrument of salvation for the entire world. Read with Christian hindsight, the Isaiah text writes the script for the destiny of Jesus to be not only Messiah of Israel but Saviour of the world.

Paul, of course, is the great instrument of that worldwide mission. In the Second Reading (1 Cor 1:1-3) we hear his introductory greeting to the Christian community of Corinth. It is important not to miss the rich nuances of the terms in which he addresses them. They are 'the church of God that is in Corinth, those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints.' This community, made up predominantly of converts from the pagan world, are not simply part of the worldwide church. They are the church (literally, 'assembly') of God in Corinth. In that city, renowned amongst other things for its immorality, they are to fulfil Israel's ancient destiny to be a 'light for the nations'. Likewise, the sense of being 'sanctified' and 'called to be saints' echoes traditional language Israel used of itself. In biblical understanding 'holiness' does not in first instance refer to the way one lives one's life. It denotes closeness to God. Holiness is where God is. The community in Corinth is 'holy', as Israel understood itself to be 'holy', because all its members have been chosen and, through the redemptive action of Christ, brought into intimate relationship with God. They are not removed from the wider world in which they live. But in that world they must live the kind of consecrated life that will mark them out as God's holy people. They are to be 'the Temple' in which God dwells in Corinth (1 Cor 3:16-17). This is the wonderful sense of Christian identity and dignity that Paul's simple greeting communicates.

In the Gospel John the Baptist is carrying out his role of witness. This has, of course, already been mentioned in the Prologue to the Gospel (1:1-18; see esp. vv 6-7, 15). He makes clear his own status vis-à-

vis Jesus. The usual understanding was that figures who came later in the scheme of salvation ranked lower than those who had preceded them. But the Prologue has established that Jesus, the embodiment of God's creative Word, has a priority in eternity that completely transcends the human history of John. Hence the One who comes 'after' him actually 'ranks before' him.

Besides this, there is the vast difference in what each has to give. John's water baptism is a simple preparatory rite of conversion, disposing people for salvation. Jesus, upon whom John has seen the Spirit come down and rest, is going to 'baptise with the Holy Spirit'. He is going to impart the Spirit of God.

To understand the full significance of what John is saying we have to look forward to the climax of the Fourth Gospel. The moment of Jesus' death upon the cross is not simply a final expiration of breath; it involves a majestic imparting of the Spirit (19:30). In the person of his Mother and the Beloved Disciple, the Church comes to birth at this moment through the gift of the Spirit and then in the hint of the sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist) in the flow of water and blood from his pierced side (19:33-34). Because his legs are not broken, Jesus dies as the Paschal Lamb. In the evening two days later, the risen Lord will stand among his disciples, breathe upon them and say, 'Receive, the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained' (20:22-23). Only when we have learned all this at the close of the Gospel will we truly grasp why John the Baptist points out Jesus, as 'the Lamb, that takes away the sin of the world' (1:29; cf. v 36). In this way, as Isaiah foretold, he is the instrument of salvation for the entire world.

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## ONLINE GIVING

Internet donations to assist our parish are always welcome. Details for donating online via Electronic Funds Transfer BSB: 032582 Account Number: 810033 [Surname, parish envelope no]

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Prayers for the Sick:** Tim Scherger, Jan Taylor, Miriam Scherger, Toni Murphy, Kathy Leseberg, Ava Blay, Mark Thurbon, Alma Bailey, Mary Wiseman, Sue Gravalin, Ron Weekes, Margaret Donges, Pam Lewis, Matthew & Paul Gallagher, Chris Naismith, Trevor Nicolai, Graham Courte, Peter Burns, Matthew Tierney, Matt Mohorovic, Sharon Grayson, Dennis Catheral, Allan Dick. **Anniversary:** Debra Lockhart, Stephen Ricketts. **Pray for:** Kristen Rooke, John Drum, Kerry Jones, Marcus Sims. All the suffering souls in Purgatory especially the dec'd members of F.O.S.S.

## MASS TIMES:

**Sunday Masses:** Yamba: 5:30pm (SAT); Maclean: 8:30am (SUN); Iluka: 10:30am (SUN).

**Weekday Masses:** Wednesday, 9:30am: Yamba; Thursday, 10:00am: Iluka; Friday, 12:00nn, Maclean; First Saturday: 11:30am, Maclean.

## RECONCILIATION TIMES

Saturday, 11:00am, Maclean; 5:00pm, Yamba

Sunday, 8:00am, Maclean

Wednesday, 10:00am, Yamba

Thursday, 10:30am, Iluka

## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

First Wednesday: 10:00am, Yamba

First Saturday: 12:00pm, Maclean

## MINISTRY ROSTER: 24/25 JANUARY 2026

**Readers:** Yamba: P Edgar/ F Robertson; Maclean: A Smith/ R Wiseman; Iluka: D Speirs. **Commentators:** Yamba: B Cullen, Maclean: J de Roos, Iluka: T Sullivan. **E Communion:** Maclean: S Winter. **Count team:** Smith.

## READINGS: 24/25 JANUARY 2026

**First:** Isaiah 8:23—9:3; **Second:** 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17; **Gospel:** Matthew 4:12-23.

## NEWS & EVENTS

**Emergency contact:** In case of emergency outside of parish office hours, contact Fr Roland 0401 508 812.

**Fr Roland's annual leave:** Please note Fr Roland will be on annual leave from December 29 for 4 weeks. During this time, visiting priest, Fr Proencio Bognay will be assisting with weekday and weekend Masses.

**Parish bulletin online:** Our bulletin is now uploaded weekly to our website <http://stmarysparish.org.au>

## Compassio – Lenten Program 2026:

**Yamba:** The Lenten program will be run each Wednesday from 18 February to 1 April after 9:30am Mass at Yamba in Ted Howe Room. Please place your details on the list at the rear of St James Church, Yamba. Contact Fran for further details: 0401 303 522 or [fishinstead@gmail.com](mailto:fishinstead@gmail.com).

**Maclean:** The Lenten program will be run each Friday from 13 February to 27 March before Mass at 10:30am in Cranney Room, Maclean. Please place your details on the list at the rear of St Mary's Church, Maclean. Contact John for further details: 0427 476 383.

## POSTPONED Renovation work to St James

**Church:** Further updates will be provided as more details become available.

**Parish Secretary position:** With Lucia and her family relocating to Sydney in mid-January, our parish is seeking a new Parish Secretary. This is a permanent part-time role, hours negotiable, and is based at the Maclean Parish Office. For more information, speak to Fr Roland or Lucia E: [office@stmarysparish.org.au](mailto:office@stmarysparish.org.au) P: 02 6645 1188

**St James Church Restoration Fund:** We have decided to continue with collecting cans/bottles to provide funds for ongoing restoration works in Yamba and throughout the parish. Please remember the cans/bottles must have the 10c symbol on them and no crushing! For queries, please call Fran 0401 303 522.

**Did You Know? – 1st & 2nd Collections:** The First Collection supports our priests and the clergy of the Diocese. The Second Collection contributes to the upkeep and running of our parish, including expenses such as electricity, insurance, building maintenance, and church equipment. A sincere thank you to all who continue to support our parish through planned giving and weekly collections. Your generosity sustains the mission and pastoral life of our parish community.

**Safeguarding:** If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Diocese of Lismore, we ask you to contact us. We will listen to you respectfully: offer support and discuss options you have available to you. Contact the Safeguarding Office – Phone: (02) 66219444 or Email: [safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au)

