

Sunraysia Catholic Communities



Parish Office: 5021 2872 Fax: 5023 0337
 257 Eleventh Street Mildura
 P.O. Box 10037 Mildura, Vic 3502
 Presbytery Mildura: 5022 9959
 Presbytery Red Cliffs: 5024 1966
 Parish House Merbein: 5025 2716
 parish@sacredheartmildura.org.au
 www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parishes

Newsheet: Week 51

Fr. Michael McKinnon PP Fr. James Kerr Fr. Pat Flanagan

Parish Secretary: Carmel Russo
 Office Hours: Tues - Fri 9:00am—4:00pm

Sacred Heart
Mildura

Our Lady of Lourdes
Werrimull

St. Francis Xavier
Irymple

St. Joseph's
Red Cliffs

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Merbein

*The Sunraysia Catholic Communities are committed to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable people in our care.
 Child Safety Officers:- Mildura—Christine Slattery, Merbein—Kevin Aston, Red Cliffs—Bernadette Gardner*

WEEKDAY MASSES

Changes to Weekday Mass times will be listed under Parish Heading

	MILDURA	RED CLIFFS	MERBEIN
MONDAY		9:30AM	
TUESDAY	6:00PM	5:30PM	
WEDNESDAY	9:15AM	9:30AM	
THURSDAY	9:15AM	5:30PM	AS ADVISED
FRIDAY	5:40PM	9:30AM	
SATURAY	9:30AM	9:30AM	

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

	IRYMPLE	MILDURA	RED CLIFFS	MERBEIN
SATURDAY		6:00PM		
SUNDAY	8:30AM	9:00AM	10:00AM	10:30AM
		5:00PM		

WERRIMULL 11:00AM (LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH)

MILDURA

Recent Deaths: Frank Tonc, Angela Gilardi, Maria Ciccarello

ANNIVERSARIES:

Saturday 6pm: Gennaro Palazzo (1st year anniversary),
 Alessandro & Caterina Piscioneri, Vincenzo, Caterina, Francesco
 & Leo Monteleone

Sunday 9am: Sergio Malcotti, Maria Surace

Sunday 5pm: Bessie Hague (30 day mass), Kylie Davis, Maria
 Grazia Pagano (30 day mass), Timothy Farrelly, Domenico & An-
 gela Ficarra, Leo & Antonietta DeMaria

RED CLIFFS

Anniversaries:

MERBEIN

Recent Death: Eileen Gallagher

Anniversaries: Dec. 23rd Betty Stirrat; 24th Betty Clifford; 25th
 Marcel Meredith, Michael & Lee-Anne Rogers, Anne Cox, Richard
 McDonald, 26th Jessie Manno, Thomas Murchie, 27th Noreen

Jenkins; 28th Mary Barling. (Only immediate family members of the deceased are
 permitted to arrange anniversary Masses.)

4th Sunday of Advent / Year C 22nd & 23rd December 2018

The fourth Sunday of Advent draws us closer to the celebration of the Christmas mysteries. The gospel offers the story of the young pregnant woman, Miriam of Nazareth, travelling in haste from her home town of Nazareth to the hill country of Judaea, some 130 kilometres to the south, to be with an older woman who is also pregnant, her cousin Elizabeth. Mary enters "the house of Zechariah" who remains silent and in the background throughout. While Zechariah is the householder according to Jewish law, his earlier reluctance to believe renders him silent and powerless to offer hospitality. Elizabeth's contrasting openness to recognise and affirm the living presence of God in their midst makes her the true householder and foreshadows the reversal that is to characterise the new order, an order that is yet to be fully realised. The two women embrace and, in their loving embrace, the Spirit-filled life gestating within Mary encounters and physically affects the life that is coming to birth in Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's words resound throughout the ages in the prayer we know as the Hail Mary: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb..." These are the words of one woman prophet to another. Elizabeth recognises that Mary is blessed by God because she believed that God's promise to her would be fulfilled. As God's prophet, Elizabeth gives expression to the faith that is to be embraced by all who accept that Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Miriam of Nazareth, is the Holy One of God (Luke 1:35). The lives of both women have been transformed through the power of God's Spirit. The birth of their children will bring to birth unprecedented events in human history.

Elizabeth's proclamation of the blessing of God on Mary is found daily on the lips of countless faith-filled Christians across the globe. It echoes the blessing prayer of Moses to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 28: 2-4): "May you be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. Blessed is the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil and the offspring of your livestock..." This ancient blessing recognizes the interconnection of all God's creation. We might make it our own blessing prayer. In our times, God's blessing on the whole Earth community can only become a reality when we stop playing politics in the interests of short-term gains or personal greed, when we read the signs of the times and work together to address the underlying causes of global warming and its effects. Advent is not a time of passive waiting. It is a time to ponder the various ways that God sustains life in its diverse forms. It is a time to become householders, like Elizabeth, who clear the paths and open our doors for the God of life to enter in.



Veronica Lawson rsm

Our Parish Schools

Sacred Heart Mildura Principal: Des Lowry 5023 1204

St Paul's Mildura Principal: Vince Muscatello 5023 4567

OLSH Merbein Principal: Narelle Gallagher 5025 2258

St. Joseph's Red Cliffs Principal: Mark Gibson 5024 1654

St. Joseph's Secondary College Mildura

Principal: Marg Blythman 5018 8000

**This Weekend's Responsorial Response: Lord, make us turn to you;
 let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

Sacred Heart Mildura



Sacred Heart Parish | Mildura

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

If you want a sick person prayed for, ask their permission. Names will be included for the duration of one month after which family or friends can request more time.

Sandra McCarthy, Jean Lanigan, Mick Joslyn, Albis Dy, Jill Antonie, Brian Ramsey, Graeme Lewis, Vince Alicastro, Fr Denis Dennehy, Geraldine Brunner, Hailey Crossan

Sacramental Life & Liturgy

BAPTISM

We welcome into our Parish Community Jason Mecwan, Tobias Allford, Paige Flores & Adaline, Harrison & Evelyn Miller whose Baptism occurs this weekend.

BAPTISM

VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED FOR THE CHRISTMAS MASSES. ROSTER SHEETS AT THE BACK OF CHURCH.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

MONAGHAN CENTRE—DEFIBRILLATOR

Sacred Heart Soup Kitchen have provided an automatic defibrillator which has now been installed in the Monaghan Centre kitchen. Signs are located at the entrances of the church.

REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM FR. MICHAEL

May all of our families be specially blessed over these coming days with peace and joy. I pray especially for all those families who have lost loved ones over recent times. Thank you to everyone, your support and encouragement is deeply appreciated. I thank Fr. James, Fr. Pat, the Sisters in our Communities of Mildura and Merbein, Carmel Russo, Margaret McDonald, Gwen Hill and Sylvia Orr, as well as the many others who assist us with the weekly care of the Parishes: Readers and Minister of the Eucharist, Altar Servers, Church Cleaners, Musicians, Counters, Gardeners, St. Vinnies Members and Soup Kitchen Volunteers, Knights of the Southern Cross, Bereavement Team Members, Principals, School Teachers and Catechists, Parish Council Members and Members of the Finance Committees. I also acknowledge in this Christmas message the Ouyen Parish – it is a pleasure to be a part of your communities, and I thank you for your inspiring commitment. Bill Lowry, our seminarian, will be leaving after Christmas. We wish Bill all the best for the coming year and hope he will be back with us again before too long.

Wishing you a happy and holy Christmas.

Fr. Michael

Weekly Prayer Opportunities Mildura

Prayer of the Church: Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri. 8:40am

Charismatic Prayer Meeting: Tuesday 6:30pm

Devotions and Exposition: Friday 3:00pm

Reconciliation: Saturday 10:00am—10:30am

Christian Meditation: Sat 11:30 am Prayer Room

REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS cont.

THE GIVING TREE—ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Grateful thanks from the members of the Sacred Heart Conference of St Vincent de Paul Society to all those who contributed so generously to this year's toy appeal. Many families were helped because of your outstanding response.

MILDURA & REGION CHRISTMAS MASSES 2018

CHRISTMAS EVE

6:00pm Werrimull

6:00pm Mildura

7:30pm Merbein

7:30pm Carols Red Cliffs

8:00pm Mass Red Cliffs

8:00pm Mildura

12 Midnight Mildura

CHRISTMAS DAY

8:30am Irymple

9:00am Ouyen

9:00am Mildura

10:30am Merbein

NEW YEAR'S DAY

9:00am Mildura

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

We remember Fr Frank Monaghan's 90th Birthday, on Saturday 29th December.

BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Bishop's Christmas Appeal is one way by which the diocese can respond to the many communities from near and far who turn to us for assistance. Often these requests come through people who have bonds with the diocese of Ballarat. The amount raised throughout the Diocese last year was \$51,000. Distribution of this money is listed on the Notice Board. Please support this very worthwhile appeal in 2018 (A leaving collection will be taken up after each Christmas Mass)

STEWARDSHIP—PLANNED GIVING STATEMENT

Please collect your Planned Giving Statement available from the back of the church for the period 2/9/2018 to 30/11/2018.

Your collection will save on postage.

If there are any discrepancies or concerns please contact Carmel at the Sacred Heart Parish Office on 5021 2872.

MILDURA PARISH FINANCE

Last week's collections

1st Collection (support of Priests & Presbytery)	\$1316.95
2nd Collection (includes DD, CC & EFT)	\$2761.95
Loose Plate	\$ 621.00
Monaghan Centre	\$ 140.00
The Shared Table	\$ 239.00

continued from back page article.

(a) is in good faith in accordance with the doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings of a particular religion or creed; and (b) is done by, or with the authority of, an educational institution that is conducted in accordance with those doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings.'

The government is prepared to put such a statement in legislation. Let's hope all members of parliament after Christmas can agree to the insertion of such a clause in the legislation providing assurance to religious educators that they can continue to teach their doctrine in good faith while assuring all students and their families that they will not suffer any detriment while sitting at the feet of religious educators. Even with an election in the wings, it should not be too much to expect that our elected leaders commit to a *Religious Discrimination Act*, enhance the role of the Australian Human Rights Commission, and get some uniformity in the states and territories when it comes to selection criteria for students and staff in religious schools.

Fr Frank Brennan SJ was a member of the Religious Freedom Review chaired by Philip Ruddock. This article first appeared in the Weekend Australian 15-16 December 2018.

St. Joseph's Red Cliffs Our Lady Of The Sacred Heart Merbein



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

If you want a sick person prayed for, ask their permission. Names will be included for the duration of one month after which family or friends can request more time.

Jean Lanigan, Brendan Bell, Caterina Brizzi, Marie Adams, Raymondo Chan, Albis, Roman & Joe Dy, Graeme Lewis, Robert & Elizabeth Young, Joe Cufari, Maurice O' Connor, Joe Mammone



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

If you want a sick person prayed for, ask their permission. Names will be included for the duration of one month after which family or friends can request more time.

Martin Rogers, Anne-Maree Whitechurch, Kit Coogan, Maria Pyatt, Ted Verryt, Frank Chandler, Fr Frank Smith CSSR

NO CHANGES TO THIS WEEK'S MASS TIMES

CHRISTMAS SINGING PRACTICE

Straight after Mass today.



ROSTERS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

Readings

Introduction to Mass: Natalizia Tassone

First Reading: Margaret Bell

Second Reading: Lou Grivec

Prayer of the Faithful: Gabrielle Spataro

Servers

Thurible: Ella Briggs & Katie Hawkes

Book: Liam Dowling

Cross: Rustyn McCarthy

Candles: Aidan Ban & Sebastian Morello

Ring the Bells: Gabrielle, Abby, Megan, Isabella & all other servers who are present

Offertory Procession: Hilda & Sylvia

Giving Communion

Plates: Bay 1. Tom Dowling 2. Tomas Hawkes 3. Carmel Russo 4.

Flags 5. Maryanna Cavallaro 6. Naomi Morello

Cups: Bay 1. Sylvia Orr 2. Janene Cameron 3. Patricia Hill 4. Mar-

yanne Matotek 5. Carmel Markham 6. Chen Cavallaro

A reminder that Bay 1 is the Bay nearest to the Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary.

THE CREED AT CHRISTMAS

A reminder that when we are reciting the Creed at Christmas, and we come to the line about Jesus birth, we kneel. After reciting this part, we reflect for a few moments in silence. Then we stand and continue.

YEARLY PARISH BULLETIN

Is now available, please collect your copy at the front and side entrances of the church.

ROSTERS 2019

Are now available—it's a different format and is from January 6 to March 31st. (1st quarter). If there are any changes please contact Carmel Russo on 5021 2872.

**SACRED HEART PARISH OFFICE
WILL CLOSE AT 4PM ON
FRIDAY 21ST DECEMBER 2018 AND
REOPEN ON WEDNESDAY
2ND JANUARY 2019
ALL CALLS & ENQUIRIES TO
PRESBYTERY 5022 9959**



4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Symbolizes Peace with the "Angel's Candle" reminding us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

RED CLIFFS PARISH FINANCE

Last week's collections

1st Collection (support of Priests & Presbytery)	\$264.20
2nd Collection (includes DD, CC & EFT)	\$379.00
Loose Plate	\$ 49.75

PARISH COUNCIL

The end of year 'thank you' lunch will be held on Sunday 16th December (today) at the Merbein Club. Parish Council members are warmly invited to attend.

PLENARY COUNCIL – Parish/School Gathering

Please keep February 14th 2019 free to attend this important event. This date was chosen purposely to coincide with the annual school Information Evening on which new families are welcomed and introduced to the school community which next year will include the whole parish community. Our school is a **Parish Primary School** and many of our parishioners attended that school but over the years have lost touch with the school community. This evening will be an opportunity to re-establish connections with our school and to meet the teachers, parents and students and enjoy a meal together and so help to build our Parish Family.

SCHOOL NEWS.

The end of school year for staff is Thursday 20th December. We thank the school community for their cooperation and participation in the Parish over the past year and wish them all a blessed and peace-filled Christmas and a restful and safe holiday.

Results of the major school Christmas raffle were: 1st: Remy Hudson; 2nd: Gavin Marks; 3rd: Lawrence Family; 4th: C. Dunne; 5th Tony Seale; 6th Dean Driscoll; 7th Jasmine Smith.

THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

Monday, Dec 24: Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 25: Christmas Day

Sunday, December 30: Feast of the Holy Family

Tuesday, January 1, 2019: Feast of Mary, Mother of God

Sunday, January 6: Feast of the Epiphany

Sunday, January 13: The Baptism of Our Lord. The Season of Christmas is completed by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his Baptism in the River Jordan, to fit him for the mission the Father has entrusted to him.



Wishing all every blessing for a very happy and peace-filled Christmas & an energizing New Year

MERBEIN PARISH FINANCE

Last week's collections

1st Collection (support of Priests & Presbytery)	\$100.50
2nd Collection (includes DD, CC & EFT)	\$229.00
Loose Plate	\$ 34.90

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN SECULAR AUSTRALIA

Seven months on, the Morrison government has published the *Religious Freedom Review* — a report of an expert panel chaired by Philip Ruddock. It has also published its response. The review was instituted by Malcolm Turnbull during the plebiscite on same sex marriage. Many 'yes' voters in the plebiscite were convinced that a change to the law of marriage would not make one iota of difference to freedom of religion in Australia. Many 'no' voters were worried that the changes could be frightful. The debate which then erupted about religious freedom when Parliament was legislating to recognise same sex marriage highlighted that Australian legislation at the Commonwealth and state level for the protection of all human rights, including freedom of religion, was at best patchy.

The expert panel included a variety of viewpoints on how best to protect human rights. Having chaired the Rudd government's National Human Rights Consultation in 2009, I favour a national human rights act. Fellow panel member Professor Nicholas Aroney has written passionately and elegantly against a proposed human rights act in Queensland. So the panel did not go looking for the magic panacea of human rights protection. Having heard from thousands of citizens about the deficiencies in the patchwork of legislation which usually focuses on discrimination, we agreed unanimously on proposed incremental solutions. We thought religious freedom needed better legislative protection at a Commonwealth level. We thought students and staff should be better protected in religious schools when it came to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or practice at variance with religious teachings. We did not think the sky was falling in after the plebiscite; nor did we think the patchwork deficiencies in human rights protections should be simply left alone.

In the absence of a constitutional bill of rights or a national human rights act, both sides of politics have responded pragmatically and sensibly each time we have signed up to an international treaty enhancing our commitment to human rights. Over time, we have legislated against racial discrimination, sex discrimination, age discrimination and disability discrimination in the wake of specific treaty obligations not to discriminate against persons on the grounds of a particular attribute. The Ruddock Committee thought the time had come for similar legislation prohibiting adverse discrimination on the basis of a person's religion.

We thought that was now all the more pressing, not because of the debate about same sex marriage, but because in an increasingly secularist Australia, religious folk, particularly more conservative religious folk, were worried that their most basic rights were not being adequately protected. Some even had a sense that their religious beliefs and practices were being needlessly parodied and demeaned in the public square. We thought that religious institutions, like other groups including political parties, should be free to employ or include members who subscribe to the group's ethos, practices and teachings. Australia is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which recog-

nises the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom 'either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest one's religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching'. There have been numerous Australian, inquiries by parliamentary committees, the Australian Law Reform Commission and the Australian Human Rights Commission which have highlighted the need for some further legislative protection of this right at a Commonwealth level.

Like all competing or conflicting rights, the right to religious freedom is limited in its scope. There is often a need to balance conflicting rights. For example, Article 26 of the ICCPR recognises the right of all persons to equality. The most recent report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief to the UN Human Rights Council notes that 'it is not permissible for individuals or groups to invoke "religious liberty" to perpetuate discrimination against groups in vulnerable situations, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, when it comes to the provision of goods or services in the public sphere'.

In the wake of the same sex marriage plebiscite, the Australian challenge has been to strike the right balance between the right to freedom of religion or belief for religious educators and the rights to equality and non-discrimination for teachers and students. If we had an *Equality Act*, we might consider the need for a *Religious Freedom Act*. As we have a *Sex Discrimination Act* which deals with discrimination on the basis of various criteria including sexual orientation, the Ruddock panel thought it desirable that we at least have a *Religious Discrimination Act*. The government agrees, and hopefully so too will the Opposition and cross benchers. We thought the protection of religious freedom should be put up in lights as part of the day job of the Australian Human Rights Commission. The government agrees and has gone one step further, proposing a Freedom of Religion Commissioner.

Both sides of politics are agreed that it is time to repeal section 38(3) of the *Sex Discrimination Act* which allows a religious educational institution to discriminate against a student on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or relationship status or pregnancy provided they discriminate 'in good faith in order to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of adherents of that religion or creed'. I welcome this bipartisan commitment of the parliament. As an expert panel, we did not see our way clear to recommend complete repeal of this provision which had been introduced by Labor as recently as 2013. As a panel of experts rather than policy advocates, we had recommended significant hurdles which would have made such discrimination all but impossible.

Both sides of politics are agreed that the repeal of this provision should not be permitted to work any interference with the right of religious institutions to teach their doctrine in good faith. The Labor Party has agreed to specify that 'nothing in the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* renders it unlawful to engage in teaching activity if that activity: (continue bottom page 2)

NEXT WEEKEND'S ROSTERS AND READINGS

Feast of the Holy Family Year C / 29th & 30th December 2018

First Reading: Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28
Responsorial: Ps 83:2-3, 5-6, 9-10
Response: How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.
Second Reading: St John 3:1-2, 21-24
Gospel: Luke 2:41-52



Werrimull Last Sunday of each month 1:00am	Sacred Heart Saturday 6:00pm	Sacred Heart Sunday 9:00am	Sacred Heart Sunday 5:00pm	Irymple Sunday 8:30am	Red Cliffs Sunday 10:00am	Merbein Sunday 10:30am	Merbein Lay Led Assembly Last Sunday of the month
Leader / Reader	Anita Naray	Mary Jackson	Greg Johnston	M Hoy	T Lewis A Higham / P Hunt	Janine Dannatt	December 30th
Music	M Hammond J Macri	Meg Sullivan B Lewis/B Prescott	M Sullivan M Issanchon		Guitar		Nancy Prevedello Kevin Aston
Offertory		Mary Gobbo			M Suppa	Knight Family	
Altar Servers	Volunteer please	Volunteer please	Volunteer please		Gabriella Strangio	Volunteer please	
Eucharist Ministers	Maria Cirillo	Renata Byra	Judy Hall	M Jensen	Sebastian Morello	Natalie Besgrove	
	Christine Carmichael	Kapeli Mapapalangi	Myrna Rodi		Jessica Bertoli	Volunteer please	
	Ellen Frauenfelder	Sonia Opie	Maree Irvin		Tenzin Bertoli		
	Jacinda Deacon	Philip Opie	Sue Hermans		C Russo		
	Katy Quinlan	Catherine McErvale	Naomi Kennedy		J Strangio	CHAFFEY AGED CARE	
	Vince Pileggi	Elvira Mazza	Mario Zema		M Suppa	Vi Barling Margo Farnsworth	
	Jill Joslyn				FLOWERS Janine Cameron		
Counting Team	TEAM 6	JIM O'DONNELL 5021 4939			C Russo / T Gardiner		
Church Cleaning	As per arrangement			As per arrangement	Volunteers	As per arrangement	