



**Sunday 19th December 2021**

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priests:** Fr. Tao Pham & Fr. Dixon George

**Parish Pastoral Associates:** Jacinta Bright & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

**The Partnered Parishes of:**

**St. Mary's**

204 Grimshaw St.,  
Greensborough, 3088

**Parish:** 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

**Email:** [Greensborough@cam.org.au](mailto:Greensborough@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.cam.org.au/greensborough](http://www.cam.org.au/greensborough)

**Secretaries:** Francesca Olofsson & Sharon Prosser

**Mass Times**

**Tuesday to Friday:** Mass 9.15am

**Saturday:** Vigil Mass 6.30pm

**Sunday:** Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

**Reconciliation Times**

**Saturday:** By Appointment only please call the Parish Office

**Parish School Principal**

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**  
[principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au)

**Sacred Heart**

25 Gipson Street,  
Diamond Creek 3089

**Parish:** 9401 6361

**Email:** [DiamondCreek@cam.org.au](mailto:DiamondCreek@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek](http://www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek)

**Secretary:** Pat Guatta

**Mass Times**

**Wednesday & Friday:** Mass 9.15am

**Saturday: 1st & 3rd Saturday 7.15pm at**

**St Peter's**

**Sunday:** Mass 9.00am

**Reconciliation Times**

**Friday:** 9.45am to 10.15am

**Parish School Principal**

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**  
[principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au)

**St. Thomas the Apostle**

251 Diamond Creek Road,  
Greensborough Nth 3088

**Parish:** 9434 7373

**Email:** [greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au](mailto:greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth](http://www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth)

**Secretary:** Lisa Leahy

**Mass Times**

**Tuesday & Thursday:** Mass 9.15am

**Saturday:** Vigil Mass 6.00pm

**Sunday:** Mass 10.30am

**Reconciliation Times**

**Saturday:** 9.30am to 10.00am

**Parish School Principal**

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**  
[principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au)

**THE CELEBRATION OF MASS IN OUR PARISHES**

Weekday Masses has resumed in our 3 Parishes.

**Sacred Heart:** 9.15am Wednesday & Friday. **St Mary's:** 9.15am Tuesday-Friday. **St Thomas:** 9.15am Tuesday & Thursday.

Mass is recorded each weekend and uploaded onto our Websites for you to view.

St Mary's: [www.cam.1.org.au/greensborough](http://www.cam.1.org.au/greensborough) Sacred Heart: [www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek](http://www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek)

St Thomas: [www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth](http://www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth)

**Mass at Home: St Patrick's Cathedral:** On Channel 31, 44 on Digital TV, for Sunday Mass at 11.00am

**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**



*Trust*

**WITNESSING TO NEW BEGINNINGS**

*Blessed is she who believed  
that there would be a fulfilment of what was  
spoken to her by the Lord.*

LUKE 1:45

**Sacred Heart, St Mary's & St Thomas the Apostle are all members of the Diamond Valley Deanery.**



[www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au](http://www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au)

**Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne**

[www.cam.org.au](http://www.cam.org.au)



**Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



**Parish Pastoral Council** met recently. Topics discussed were:

Mercy Cottage will be repaired and cleaned so as to be more habitable. Hall will be tidied up and graffiti removed. PPC will have a Formation Day early in 2022. This may also involve St Mary's and St Thomas PPC.

Encourage new members for the Social Justice Group.

Vine Baptist Church Hurstbridge Community request to use St Peter's Church in December.

Forthcoming Synod of Bishops.

**Next meeting: Thursday 10th February 2022. PPC Suggestion Box in back of Church.**

**Working Bee:** Thank you to Brian, Arthur, Patricia, Frank, Ted, Judy, Peter, Pat, Marg and Bernie for your efforts at the Working Bee last Saturday, and again to Arthur for cleaning windows and outside the church.

**St Peter's** 7.15pm Mass 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month is for people of unknown vaccination status. Trybooking link for Saturday 18th December: <https://www.trybooking.com/BWIXQ>

**Senior Moments:** Wednesday 19th January Coffee/Morning Tea 10am-11.30am at Platters. Wednesday 2nd February Planning Meeting. BYO lunch 12pm in Parish Centre. Enquires—Margaret Jose



**Sacred Heart Church Christmas clean up and vacuum will be at 10am on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December.**

*Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:*

Bridie Burke, Bernice Burke, Miran Kasalo, Martin Leonard, Joan Moran, Catherine Leonard,  
Tony Ledda, Margaret Holland, Jacob Draper, Thomas Keenan.

*We pray for those who have died including Shirley Curran and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of December that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:*

Adam Hibbert, Martin Padget, Eileen Dunn, Kevin Hewitt, Frank Orders, Julian Federico, Brian Bell, Bridgette Tancredi-Roberts,  
Leo Glennon, Rose Hegarty

### Roster for Weekend 18th & 19th December

**Saturday Hurstbridge 7.15pm:** Reader: B. Greaves      Eucharistic Minister: A. Perera

**Sunday Sacred Heart 9.00am:** Reader: A. Pieper      Eucharistic Minister: C. Bell, C. Ledda

**Diamond Creek Christmas Mass times: 24th December Christmas Eve: 6.00pm & 9.00pm**

**25th December Christmas Day: 9.00am.**



### PRAYER, WORSHIP & WELLBEING

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK WITHIN OUR PARISHES:** If you wish to have someone added or removed from the sick or Anniversaries list for our newsletter could you please notify **Sacred Heart Pat: 9401 6361 St Mary's Sharon /Francesca:9435 1543**

**St Thomas Lisa 9434 7373**

**THE WAY PRAYER GROUP:** You are most welcome to join us for the final Charismatic Mass for 2021 and Christmas break-up on Thursday, 16th December at St Thomas the Apostle Church, 251 Diamond Creek Rd, Nth Greensborough commencing at 7.30pm with praise & worship. Bookings are not required. For further details, please contact Rose 0411 650 339 or Emilia 0418 120 902.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS

*Please pray for Chiara, Ariana, Lia, and Mary who are being baptised in December.*

*We look forward to welcoming these families into the St Thomas Parish community.*

*Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be  
healed & comforted during this time:*

Peg Wilcox, Dawn Ellis, Miran Kasalo, Trevor Corcoran

*We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of December that they  
may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:*

Emilia Micomonaco, Adrian DeGier, Doris Morfea, Frank Jordan, John Winter, Arthur Eames, Cass Sheehan,  
Nancy Marzella, Giovanni Marzella, Leo Glennon, Rose Hegarty

### Rosters for Weekend 25th & 26th December

Saturday 6.00pm Mass **No 6.00pm Vigil Mass**

**WE WILL HAVE NO ROSTERS FOR JANUARY AS MANY WILL BE AWAY.**

**COULD YOU PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH ANYTHING THATY MAY BE NEEDED.**



**Tuesday 21st December 10.00am after Mass**

*Last year a group of us got together to give the Church a  
clean before Christmas.*

*If anyone is available on Tuesday 21st December at 10.00am  
for approximately 1-2 hours could you please let me know.*

*Thank you Lisa*



### ENRICH YOUR MARRIAGE WITH THE MARRIAGE KIT

An enrichment course for married couples wanting a lasting, passionate relationship as God intended. Accessed from the privacy of your home on your own timetable, this online course will energise your relationship, revitalise your passion and equip you with practical tools for every day. To find out more visit: [smartloving.org/marriage-kit](https://smartloving.org/marriage-kit) Get 50% off with the coupon code: **Advent**



### ALL THINGS NEW 2022 - IGNATIAN GATHERING FOR YOUNG ADULT (18-30YRS)

The Society of Jesus (Australian Jesuits) invites you to its Ignatian Gathering for Young Adults (18-30 years), to take place in Melbourne on 17 – 21 January 2022, at Newman College. This gathering is a chance for young people to 'reset, reconnect and re-engage' through building friendships, sharing values, celebrating gratitude, offering service.

To register go to : <https://www.trybooking.com/BUNRC>

Cost: \$320 + Trybooking fee (\$8.50) - (includes all meals, individual rooms and all program activities).

For any questions, please contact us at: [magisaustralia@sjasl.org](mailto:magisaustralia@sjasl.org)



*We journey through these last  
days of Advent in Mary's company.  
Fourth Sunday of Advent Year C,  
19th December 2021*

© *Australian Catholics Magazine*

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

*Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"*



## PARISH OFFICE HOURS DURING JANUARY

The Parish Office will be closed from Monday 3rd January until Tuesday 18th January.

After the 18th, please call the Parish Office on 9435 1543 before coming to ensure someone is here to assist you.

Thank you.

## THANKSGIVING ENVELOPES

The remaining Thanksgiving Envelopes that have not yet been collected will be available in the Gathering Space. The envelopes will be sorted alphabetically by STREET NAME.

We would be grateful if you are able to pick up and deliver some envelopes that may be in nearby streets to where you live.

## Resources for Sanitising the Church

Thank you to those who faithfully sanitise after our Masses and we would always welcome more help at whatever Mass you attend without needing to go on a roster. Now that we are back to sanitising the whole Church for weekend Masses we are finding the costs rising to approximately \$300 per month. We would be very grateful if anyone would like to donate paper towel, disposable powder-free gloves (large), bin bags (small) so that our sanitising volunteers are ably equipped. Donations could be left in the kitchen in the Gathering Space. Thank you!

## Welcome back to St Mary's Library



St Mary's Library will be open again at most Masses (6.30 Saturday and 8 and 10 Sunday). All parishioners from the partnered parishes are very welcome.

We would love to see new volunteers and/or committee members. Volunteers need no literary or computer expertise – just a friendly face. Anyone interested can contact Anne on [huntleyajas4@gmail.com](mailto:huntleyajas4@gmail.com)

See the library catalogue at [cloud.collectorz.com/247780](http://cloud.collectorz.com/247780)

Can you please check your shelves for outstanding loans and return through the returns slot at the Library?

St Mary's Library Committee

**MASSES Tuesday to Friday at 9.15am, Saturday 6.30pm, Sunday 8am, 10am and 5.00pm.**

***COLUMBAN CALENDARS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT A COST OF \$10.00 EACH.***

**STAY TUNED** - Thank you to all who participated in last month's session – *The Whole Story of Mental Health*. The feedback indicated



that what Ros presented was very helpful and provided much fruit for reflection. A second session will be held in late February. Based on the feedback received, we have decided that this next session will delve deeper into this whole area of spirituality and mental ill health, perhaps with some exploration around listening skills. We will keep you posted. Also, keep an eye on our website [www.cam1.org.au/greensborough](http://www.cam1.org.au/greensborough) We are updating our resources page with a number of helpful resources, to support people in every aspect of life, including mental ill health. We will also be uploading a great video of a talk hosted by the Uniting Church Vic/Tas, Mental health: *Does Religion/Spirituality support or hinder?* with

John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology, University of Aberdeen. This video is highly recommended. John Swinton is very easy to listen to and engaging.

**Support Group for people experiencing anxiety during this COVID transition time** Whilst, as a society, we navigate coming out of lockdown, anxiety seems heightened, for various reasons. Whether we are vaccinated or not, and for whatever reasons we make our choices, we are all human and we are all made in the dignity and likeness of God. At a time when there is a danger of judging, let us be a community of compassion. This is an invitation for anyone feeling anxious at the moment, to come along to a small support group in the parish. It isn't a therapy group. It's a support group. There will be some ground-rules, such as confidentiality and listening, but also no discussion about politics or conspiracy theories. Whilst some who are anxious hold certain beliefs about the vaccine, that others don't, this needs to be a space where we find compassion and care and support and respect – and perhaps a sense that we are not alone, and that all will be well. If you are interested, even just to find out more, please contact Jacinta at [Jacinta.bright@cam.org.au](mailto:Jacinta.bright@cam.org.au) or call the parish office on 943.5 1543. We gather as a group of a Wednesday at 9.15am.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST MARY'S CONTINUED

### PLEASE PRAY FOR

#### PLEASE PRAY FOR

**December Baptisms:** Stella Bowen, Grace Rehlicki, Isla Tedesco Milani Dowling, Hollie Hull, Lucas Kent, Dakota Ilsley, Theodore Tink, Heath Kinkade, Archer Kinkade, Evelyn Drummond, Leon Castropil, Francesca Stelfox, Hannah Menichelli

**Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners & friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:**

Adele Wilkinson, Peter and Elsa, Larubina, Eileen Martin, Cecilia Chang, Isla Magann, Thomas Hyde, Miran Kasalo, Pat Garrard, Michael McAleer, Matt Lorkin, Julie Daynds, Trevor Corcoran, Eileen Dunn, Helen Sinnott

**Recently Deceased:** Mervyn Shedded

**We Pray for those whose Anniversaries occur this week, may they enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:** Saunday Fernando, Fredrick Willox, Joan Davis, Frank Pedretti, Robert Weekes, Baby Max Webster, Marilu Espacio, Albert D'Souza, Bernard Evans, Mary Puckeridge, Thomas Donahoo, Marie Greer, Colin Shewan, Tony Senive, Annette Augusta Pacey, Malcolm Evans, Robert Briscuso, Joseph Burkett, Margery Anderson, Pamela Miranda, Josephine Cannizzo, Andrew Campbell, G. Bruce Rohead, Kevin Evans, Molly Barry, Noline Caspersz, Aileen Fregon, Felix Castillo, Peter Schulze, Ernest Bolger, Rose Fagan, Rita Gambian, Peter Schulze, Mark James Pollock, S Mayerczak, Mary Diggle, Nora Winifred Allsopp, Annita Carafa, Margarita Pitcher, Ken Stewart, Rose Gibson, Michael Paes, Yves Lionet, Tom Gavarra Leopoldine Mimovich, Jeanette Fitzgerald, Michael Quinn, Sr. Joan D'Orsa, Lou Wronka, John Tiphange, Paddy McCloskey, William Harvey, Michael Green, Gilbert Hillman, Paul Giardina, Betty Scannell, Maria Cafarella

### EXCITING NEW STUDY TO COMMENCE MID FEBRUARY WITH GUEST SPEAKER!

The Mass Explained— why we do the things we do? Watch this space for further details.

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Francesca and Sharon will provide for our **secretarial needs on Mondays 9am-5pm and Thursdays and Fridays 10am-4pm** and Jacinta's **days will be Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-5pm.**

Please continue to send any bulletin contributions to Francesca and Sharon at [greensborough@cam.org.au](mailto:greensborough@cam.org.au) by 2pm Wednesday

### CASUAL WORK REQUIRED BY SEMINARIAN OVER SUMMER BREAK

Rajith Fernando is a Redemptorist seminarian who is looking for casual work over the summer break for him to earn some money. Rajith helps with Catechetics at St. Mary's on Sundays, helps with the Sunday morning Masses, is a leader in our Gospel discussion group and is one of the leaders of the "Alight" Youth Group of our partnered parishes.

If you can use some casual work over the summer break, please email Fr. Steven Rigo: [steven.rigo@cam.org.au](mailto:steven.rigo@cam.org.au)

### COLUMBAN CALENDAR 2020

The 2022 edition of the Columban Art Calendar are now available for purchase in all of our Churches.

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like one put aside for you to pick up from the Parish office please give you Parish a call.

**Calendars are \$10.00 (Cash only)**



### FORMATION OF MISSIONS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE - TAKE THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL

As you are aware, the Archbishop has outlined his vision for changing the current arrangements of individual parishes. We have been aware for some time that the existing structures are unsustainable with declining numbers of Catholics participating actively in parishes and a declining number of priests available to minister in individual parishes.

A combined group has been formed by the partnered parishes of St Mary's, Sacred Heart and St Thomas to begin the process of information sharing, discussion and discernment.

Please follow the link <https://youtu.be/cn7PXVsZhQo> or watch on the parish websites, also to obtain for further information on this project.

## ADVENT

We continue our Advent journey, focusing on the theme of  
*Witnessing New Beginnings.*

This week we light the fourth candle, a purple candle symbolising Peace.  
The saviour brings peace, as the angels announced: "Glory to God in the highest  
and peace among men with whom he is pleased."



### RECONCILIATION (For those fully vaccinated)

Individual Reconciliation will take place at **St Thomas** on Friday 17th December from 7:00pm-8:30pm.  
Bookings not required. Reconciliation will be heard on the Sanctuary at the Church.

### RECONCILIATION (for those of unknown vaccination status)

Will be available at St Mary's, Sacred Heart & St Thomas by booking an appointment by emailing the individual Priest:

Fr Steven Rigo: [Steven.Rigo@cam.org.au](mailto:Steven.Rigo@cam.org.au) Fr Dixon George [Dixon.George@cam.org.au](mailto:Dixon.George@cam.org.au) Fr Tao

Pham: [Tao.Pham@cam.org.au](mailto:Tao.Pham@cam.org.au)

## CHRISTMAS MASSES

### Sacred Heart

**Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December 6.00pm & 9.00pm**

**Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December 9.00am**

**Holy Family: Sunday 26th December 9.00am**



### St Mary's

**Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December Carols 6:00 pm - Mass 6:30pm; Carols 10:00 pm - Mass 10:30pm**

**Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December Carols 7:45 am - Mass 8:00am & Carols 9:45 am - Mass 10:00 am**

**(No 5.00pm or 6.30pm Vigil Mass)**

**Holy Family: 26th December 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm**

### St Thomas

**Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December 5.00pm & 7.30pm**

**Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December 10.30am**

**Saturday 25th December (No 6.00pm Vigil Mass)**

**Holy Family: Sunday 26th December 10.30am**



*Face coverings no longer need to be worn at weddings, funerals, or worship.*

*Face coverings continue to be required indoors in limited high-risk settings including retail, health care and agedcare.*

*It is recommended that face coverings be worn if you are with people who may be vulnerable to COVID-19.*

*There are no limits on participants at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, and general Worship— including the opening for private prayer.*

*There will not be any vaccination requirements nor any requirement for organisers to check vaccination status at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, and general Worship.*

*Places of Worship will not need to be cleaned between use, but good hygiene standards should be maintained according to a parish COVIDsafe plan. This includes the continued availability of sanitiser throughout the venue.*

***"We welcome this new provision for all people of faith to once again gather together for worship.***

## LECTIONARY ART AND REFLECTION BY JENNY CLOSE

In his retelling of the Visitation, Luke weaves rich threads of associations into the story so that Mary and Elizabeth are highly symbolic figures. Nonetheless, their flesh and blood reality is not entirely lost. On that level they are just like any other women who give each other support and share the joys and anxieties of pregnancy.

### Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year C

19 December 2021

#### First Reading Mi 5:1-4

*Out of you will be born the one who is to rule over Israel.*

The Lord says this:

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
the least of the clans of Judah,  
out of you will be born for me  
the one who is to rule over Israel;  
his origin goes back to the distant past,  
to the days of old.  
The Lord is therefore going to abandon  
them  
till the time when she who is to give birth  
gives birth.  
Then the remnant of his brothers will  
come back  
to the sons of Israel.  
He will stand and feed his flock  
with the power of the Lord,  
with the majesty of the name of his God.  
They will live secure, for from then on he  
will extend his power  
to the ends of the land.  
He himself will be peace.

#### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19. R. v.4**

**(R.) Lord, make us turn to you;  
let us see your face and we shall  
be saved.**

1. O Shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
shine forth from your cherubim throne.  
O Lord, rouse up your might,  
O Lord, come to our help. (R.)
2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore,  
look down from heaven and see.  
Visit this vine and protect it,  
the vine your right hand has planted. (R.)
3. May your hand be on the man you have  
chosen,  
the man you have given your strength.  
And we shall never forsake you again:  
give us life that we may call upon  
your name. (R.)

#### Second Reading Heb 10:5-10

*I am coming to do your will.*

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world:

You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation,  
prepared a body for me.

You took no pleasure in holocausts or  
sacrifices for sin;  
then I said,  
just as I was commanded in the scroll of  
the book,  
'God, here I am! I am coming to obey  
your will.'

Notice that he says first: You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them; and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

#### Gospel Acclamation Lk 1:38

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**I am the servant of the Lord:  
may his will for me be done.**

**Alleluia!**

#### Gospel Lk 1:39-45

*Why should it happen that I am honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?*

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'



#### Reflection by Greg Sunter

The gospel passages of the second and third weeks of Advent this year featured John the Baptist in his role of preparing the way for the coming of Jesus; the one who announces the arrival of the Christ. In this week's passage, which goes back to an earlier point in the gospel of Luke, we might say that the as yet unborn John is already recognising the presence of the Christ. When Mary goes to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, the child within Elizabeth's womb – John – leaps for joy. At the time of the Annunciation, when Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was to give birth to a child, Mary is also told that Elizabeth and Zechariah, although very old, were to also give birth to a child. Mary rushes to visit Elizabeth, not to make sure that the angel was telling her the truth but because the fact that Elizabeth was also pregnant was a sign of confirmation to Mary that she had indeed made the right decision. Elizabeth's unlikely pregnancy confirms for Mary the even greater truth of her own pregnancy. These two women, separated by age and distance, share a common experience of God acting in their lives to bring about unlikely events. The lives of their two children will be inextricably linked such that the one who leapt for joy in his mother's womb will eventually baptise the other and announce the arrival of his ministry to the people of Israel.

The joy expressed by Elizabeth and her child reflects the joy of all people of faith as we draw so close to the celebration of Christmas and the greatest expression of God's love – to enter into the world as one just like us and share our experience.

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