

ST PIUS X, RAIWAQA, PARISH NEWSLETTER

TO RESTORE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - CHRISTMAS EVE/DAY - CYCLE B: 24/25/12/17

Sunday and Weekday Mass Schedule

Sundays: 7:00 am & 8:30 am

Weekday 6:30 pm - [Monday to Friday]

Saturday & Public Holidays: - 8.30am.

Wednesday Fijian Mass [Misa Vakaviti]

Thurs Holy Hour, Adoration & Benediction: 5.00pm – 6.pm

Holy days 7:00 am. & 7:00 pm. except Christmas & New Year.

Confessions: - Friday & Saturdays after Mass.

Baptisms: The 8.30am Mass on the first Sunday of the month is reserved for Baptisms. Parents seeking baptism for their child make arrangements with the Parish Priest before commencing session with Baptism helpers.

Matrimony: Those preparing for marriage must contact a priest at least 3 months before and are required to undertake preparation sessions. Guidelines available at the Parish Office.

RCIA: Session every Sunday after the 7am Mass.

Happy and Blessed Christmas to all our Parishioner both at home and abroad.

Christmas is the feast of the Family. Christmas is the feast of Humility. Like the Child Jesus – let us strive for Humility in our particular home situations and not do anything that would upset Family Peace.

Today's Advent Candle is Purple Colour:
Angel Candle or Candle of Love. Good News

4th Sunday of Advent:

Archbishop's Christmas Message -Christmas and Care for Mother Earth

Dear Brother Priests, Religious and Parishioners, what does the birth of Jesus mean for us today in a time when our mother earth is groaning with pain because of the way we have abused her? One of the rituals related to the birthing of a child is the burying of the umbilical cord. The umbilical cord connects the foetus to the mother's placenta, bringing the child nourishment. The umbilical cord also carries great, symbolic meaning. Throughout history, all over the world, rituals have accompanied the disposal of the umbilical cord after it falls from the baby's body. Among the Igbo people of Nigeria, a mother buries the umbilical cord at the foot of a young tree, the more fruitful, the better. The chosen palm tree, banana, or breadfruit, will become the child's tree, and Igbo beliefs hold that it will then give as many fruits as the child has successes throughout his life. It is also a way to bind the child to the earth, and to that special place in his community. In some parts of Mexico, the umbilical cord is also buried at the foot of a tree as a way to attach the child to his/her village and to the earth. Likewise, Native Americans of several tribes would bury the umbilical cord inside the Sacred Four Corners of their land. In the Itaukei (indigenous Fijian) culture the umbilical cord is buried with a fruit tree. In some Itaukei tribes, the female umbilical cord is thrown into the sea while a male's umbilical cord is buried with a fruit tree. Elders would make this remark when a child is too active: "It looks like this kid's umbilical cord was not buried." The ritual communicates how life is transferred from the biological mother to mother earth. After birth, the child will be sustained by mother earth. The burying of the umbilical cord symbolizes the connectedness of human life to the source of life, that is, our biological mother and mother earth.

If Jesus were born of an Itaukei woman, his umbilical cord would have been buried with a coconut. The burying of the umbilical cord reminds us that we draw life from our biological mother as well as from our mother earth. The ritual tells us that we are part of the earth and creation.

The Gospels and St Paul remind us that Jesus' birth and life is not limited to the stable at Bethlehem, but that he is present in all of creation. Therefore, Christmas is not only a time to reflect on the Jesus born in Bethlehem but also to see Jesus present in the whole of creation. Creation is filled with the presence God.

May Christmas Season be a time of re-weaving our relationships with God, families and with mother earth. Have a blessed and peaceful Christmas. + *Peter Loy Chong, Archbishop of Suva.*

In Loving Memory: Sr. Gerard - Cluny sister passed away Wednesday 20th Dec Her funeral is took place on Friday 22nd Dec. after Requiem Mass at 10am at the Cathedral. May she rest in Peace.

Parish Programme of Masses for the Christmas and New Year Period: Liturgical Commission

- **Tonight - Christmas Night Mass** will be celebrated at 9.00pm preceded by a half an hour Carol Singing.,
- **Children's Drama:** Will be performed as a reflection after the Gospel is Read. **Fr Frank Hoare is Homilist.**
- **Tomorrow - Christmas Morning Mass** only one Mass on Christmas Morning at 9.00am.
- **Mass on St Stephen's Day Tuesday 26th Dec.** Mass at 9.00am.
- **New Year's Eve – Sun 31st Dec.** Normal Masses at 7.00am & 8.30am. **No New Year's Eve Mass.**
- **Monday 1st Jan 2018 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Mass at 9.00am.**

Evangelisation & Bible Commission (E&B) would like to thank all community leaders and community members, parish organisations and children for having participated in the **carol singing and the generous donations towards the SVDP families**, rounding off with lighting and blessing of the Crib was a night to remember. Your presence and support contributed to the success of the carol singing night. It was a great feeling to witness the joy and laughter, to see everyone enjoying themselves. Without you all, the event will not be successful. To the ladies of E&B Commission and helpers in the kitchen, thank you for looking after our members. To those who helped with the putting up of the Crib, thank you for your commitment. To MC and Father Christmas, thank you for the willingness when approached and to Father, Executives and PPC members for the supportvinaka vakalevu and wishing you all a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. (Vama HOC). **See account and photos on the Parish Website www.stpiusxfj.com**

Senior Citizens: Last Sunday we honoured our senior Citizens. We started with the Mass at 8.30 where they received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick – followed by morning tea in the Hall – **provided by the Family Life Commission** – followed by community **Carol Singing** - while grog and other beverages flowed freely all the morning. **Enter the Men of the Parish** to provide a lunch (magiti) for all present – and even a substantial cash gift to the Parish Priest. While all this was going on **Members of St Vincent de Paul** assisted by a number of the **Parish Youth** delivered substantial rations of food to their family cases in the parish. For all who were involved in last week's activities we salute and say a huge word of Thanks and appreciation. It was all fitting for Christmas Preparation. **JME.**

Thanks to Visoni, Marj, Alan, Filo and Cecilia – for working so hard and erecting and decorating our two lovely cribs, the Echo Crib outside which was blessed at the end of the Carol Service on Sat last 16th Dec and the more traditional one in the church which will be blessed tonight before Mass. Both look magnificent. Thank you, folks.

Visitation of the sick and house bound: During the last few days Kele and myself visited all the sick in the parish. Twenty (20) of them received Confession, Anointing of the Sick and the Eucharist. Another appropriate preparation for Christmas for those who have given so much service over the past years to be treated well and with respect. But let us not forget the great service our Eucharistic Ministers give every Sunday morning as they are bringing the Eucharist to the house bound and the elderly. This is a great act of Love and Generosity on the part of our Eucharistic Ministers.

Catholic Time are available in the Parish Office: The latest edition of The Catholic Time is now ready to be picked up by Community Leaders and Community Financial Reps: Copies can be had after Mass today. \$1.00 each.

Bible Dairy's for Sale: After the Masses or from the Parish Office at \$15.00 each. (Only 16 left) There are still a few **Columban Calendars** available: The Art Calendar \$5.00 and the Colourful Wall Calendar at \$2.00 each.

Workshop on Stress Management, Anxiety, Depression and Suicide: which was held in the parish Hall on Thurs & Fri 21/22nd Dec. 2017 run by the Department of Health was really good. Some 18 participants availed of this great opportunity to hear and become aware of the stark realities that exist in families and communities. Thanks to Vero head of Justice and Development Commission for arranging with the Dept of Health for this 1st of its kind workshop to be held in a parish or faith community. For some years now, the parish has been promoting 'Wellness' by healthy living, exercising etc. All expenses for the workshop including the hire of the Hall was met by the Department of Health which we are truly thankful and grateful.

Come and See: Archdiocese of Suva: If you are a Catholic young man who has wondered about the priesthood, this retreat is a perfect opportunity to check out seminary life and discern the vocation God desires for you. When January 12-14, 2018. Where: Navesi Catechist Training Centre. To register and for more information contact: Fr. Timoci Kolodisi – Vocation Director, email: jimkolodisi@yahoo.com, mob: 9461017. The retreat will include Time to reflect of God's call and sharing it with others, Time for prayer and adoration Tour of the Seminary.

Charismatic Prayer meeting will recommence on 7th January 2018 at 3.30pm after Divine Mercy.

Mrs Mow on behalf of the elderly citizens would like to thank Fr McEvoy, Family Life Commission and Men of the Parish and Sophie for morning tea and lunch last Sunday. All are wished a Blessed and Happy Christmas. (Helen Mow).

Thanks: To Community 3 – St Joan of Arc - for animating the Liturgy during the week & cleaning of the Church & compound yesterday. Community 4a St Peter Chanel starts this week from Christmas Day Dec. 25th 2017

Thanks too for your generous Collection for last week. The following is a summary:

1st Collection \$612.65; 2nd Collection: \$101.25; Envelopes \$50.00 = \$763.90

Reading coming week: 4th Sunday of Advent [24/12] Sam 7: 1-5. 8-12. 14. 16; Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38; Mon [25/12] **Christmas Day**; Gen 15: 1-6. 21: 1-3; Heb 11: 8. 11-12. 17-19; Luke 2: 22-40; Tues [26/12] **St Stephen, First Martyr**; Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59; Matt 10: 17-22; Wed [27/12] **St John, Apostle and Evangelist**; St John 1: 1-4;

John 20: 2-8; Thurs [28/12] **The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**; St John 1: 5- 2: 2; Matt 2: 13-18; Fri[29/12] Ecc 47: 2-11; Mark 6: 14-29; Sat[30/12] Kings 3: 4-13; Mark 6: 30-34.