

# ST PIUS X, RAIWAQA, PARISH NEWSLETTER

## TO RESTORE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST

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## FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST, CYCLE A: 25/12/16

### 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 – 6:00pm

**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 are available at the Parish Office.

**RCIA:** Session every Sunday after the 7am Mass.

A Happy and Grace Filled Christmas to all our Parishioners both at home and abroad. A special word of welcome to all visitors who are Celebrating the Birth of Christ with us this year. To you who have come home for Christmas – enjoy the time with Family and Friends. Christmas is the Feast of the Family – Christmas is the Feast of the Heart.

### Reflection for the Feast of the Nativity:

Today we celebrate the Birthday of Christ who came on earth, not as a powerful prince but as a helpless baby of poor parents. He was greeted and visited by poor shepherds, probably smelly and unwashed. In their time and place they were regarded as nobodies. But it was to those shepherds that God gave his good and wonderful news: 'I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people.'

Choosing such people on the margins as the first to receive the Christmas message, shows that God's love is not focussed on the rich and famous and powerful, the movers and shakers of this world. As we know the God of the Gospel does have a special care and affection for the victims, the suffering, the poor and the downtrodden. God is on their side. This vital truth is illustrated by the condition of the Christ-child himself. The sign the shepherds are to look for is a baby wrapped in rags and lying in a manger, the feed box of animals. So within and beyond these signs of poverty, vulnerability and weakness, there is the power of love, which is to say, the power of God Himself expressed by the prophet. 'The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light.' 'Today a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'.

**Tomorrow - Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December, St Stephen's Day (Boxing Day) is a public Holiday and also Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> is a public Holiday. Thus Mass here tomorrow morning and Tuesday morning will be at 8.30am.**

**In Loving Memory:** Christine Emily Morell formally of 10 Soqeloa Lane Raiwaqa (59) died on 20/12/2016 and whose funeral took place after Requiem Mass on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. 2016 to the Suva Cemetery. **Antonio (Tony) Raisele,** Nairai Rd Raiwaqa died on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> Dec. Funeral arrangements later. (probably Thursday) May they rest in Peace.

**Mass of Thanksgiving to end 2016 at 7.00pm on 31st Dec and 9.00am Mass on New Year's Day 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2016.**

**St Vincent de Paul Society Thanks Parishioners and others:** The Society of St Vincent de Paul wish to thank all Parishioners for the generous contribution of groceries for the needy of the Parish and for cash donations which amounted to \$450.00. Vinaka Vakalevu.

**Apostolate of Fatima:** Meeting on Monday Evening at 4.30pm in the Parish Hall. **New Year's Eve Vigil Mass to Consecrate Fiji to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Programme is as follows: Get together at the Flea Margaret at 8.00pm on Sat Evening 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. Candle Light Procession proceeds through the city of Suva at 9.30. Holy Hour and Confessions at 10.30pm. Celebration of the Eucharist at 11.30pm.**

**Columban Art Calendars and Wall Calendars are available for Sale today.** The Art Calendars are \$5.00 each. The Wall Calendar is only a \$1.00 each. So too is the Fiji Catholic Times available @ \$1.00 each.

**Thanks Expressed to all who helped out with the Christmas Celebrations:** To Marjorie and her helpers for making statues for our special outside Eco crib; to Filo Ruru and her helpers for making our inside crib, and looking after the Altar Servers; to Celine & Visoni for all their help during the last few weeks and looking after the liturgies and construction of the outdoor crib; to Sophie for keeping the altar linen and server's cloths clean, ironed and fit for celebrations; to Community 4c (St John the Baptist) for animating the liturgy for the week; to Karalo and Thomas and members of the Parish Choir for the long hours of practice that they put in during the last 10/12 days; to Mrs Niseta Buatava and her little Drama Group who set the scene for the Christmas Eve Mass with a wonderful production of the Christmas Story –A special thanks to Pius and the Men of the Parish for their great work during the whole week at water-blasting and cleaning the entire church compound. Thanks to Maria Qaranivalu and the Liturgy Commission for the wonderful liturgies organised during Advent. We had a great Advent. Thanks to Vamarasi Mausio and the Evangelization Commission for organizing the most enjoyable Carol Service in conjunction with gifts for St Vincent de Paul. Thanks also to the many others who are always around, the Eucharistic Ministers, the Lectors and also to the parish executive team who can be called on at any time. Indeed thanks is expressed to everyone who did anything to help the running of the parish in 2016. And not forgetting our appreciation and thanks to the Eucharist Ministers who visit most of the house bound and sick Sunday after Sunday taking them the Eucharist and the Parish Newsletter which helps them to stay in touch with us. Vinaka Vakalevu to everyone who lends a hand. May you all have a Blessed and faith filled Christmas. (Fr John McEvoy P.P).

### **Men of the Parish:**

1. The Plans for the renewal of the Boundary Fence around the Church Compound has been submitted to Suva City Council for their approval or alterations. It will be then be submitted to the Archbishop and Copas.
2. The formation of a Parish Disaster Management Team still needs to be formed – Suggestions appreciated.

**For your Generous Contributions:** Thanks to members of St John the Baptist, Community (4c) for animating the Liturgy during the week and the clean-up of the church & compound yesterday. We invite Members of St Michael's (5a) to continue with this responsibility from tomorrow 26<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2016.

**Last Sunday's Collection:** First Collection - \$513.55; Second Collection - \$99.55 = \$613.10; Envelops \$110.00. Thanks for your continuous generous contributions towards the running and upkeep of the Parish.

**Christmas Message from Chairperson of PPC:** It would be very tempting - and no doubt more satisfying - but hardly realistic - to overlook the background against which we celebrate Christmas. Every year the Christmas story leads us to a manger where we find the newborn Jesus surrounded by true love, compassion and care, despite the poverty of the situation. Our Parish Community could take note of the Bethlehem Event - in all our ministries and providing a welcoming word of encouragement and trying to reach out to the other rather than revolving around complaints about a parishioner, the music, the temperature in the church, a burned out light bulb, a decision, etc. and rarely concentrating about spiritual realities. Simply, we cannot abandon people because we say they are evil, inactive in their respective communities, or the mere fact they are not Catholics!

Saint Teresa (Mother Teresa) shows us how to make the right choices and to have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires, a touch that never hurts. Amid the dirt and the dying in the Calcutta's slums, in the depths of the most appalling poverty, she revealed the face of God, gave witness to the power of love, its ability to light up even the darkest places when she bowed down before those who were spent, left to die on the side of the road, seeing in them their **God-given dignity**. At her canonization mass Pope Francis said, "**mercy was the salt which gave flavour to her work, it was the light which shone in the darkness of the many who no longer had tears to shed for their poverty and suffering.**"

We are challenged to extend the Christmas goodwill and embrace those outside of our immediate circle of friends and family. The methods may not be to everyone's taste and the parish vision may not be as ambitious as it should be, but it's simply to serve, and **NEVER** try to be above those we serve! Furthermore, our Parish community cannot be comfortable until it serves the forgotten, the down duntrodden, the broken and the helpless. Let's look towards 2017, the celebration of the parish 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018 in a more positive light and pray; "that our hearts may be the crib Our Lady chooses for Her Baby" (Veronica Rausuvanua).

**Readings for Next Week** Sun [25/12/16] *Christmas Day*: Isaiah 52: 7-10; Hebrews 1: 1-6; John 1: 1-18; Mon [26/12/16] *St Stephen, First Martyr*: Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59; Matt 10: 17-22; Tue [27/12/16] *St John, Apostle and Evangelist*: 1 John 1: 1-4; John 20: 2-8; Wed [28/12/16] *The Holy Innocents, Martyrs*: 1 John 1: 5; 2:2; Matt 2: 13-18; Thurs [29/12/16] 1 John 2: 3-11; Luke 2: 22-35; Fri [30/12/16] *Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph*: Sirach 3: 2-6, 12-14; Colossians 3: 12-21; Matt 3:13-15; 19-23; Sat [31/12/16] 1 John 2:18-21; John 1: 1-18; Sun [1/1/17] *Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God*: Numbers 6: 22-27; Galatians 4: 4-7; Luke 2:16-21.