

## ST PETER CHANEL & ST JOSEPH BERALA



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Stpeter Stjoseph Fr Thomas@TKurunthanam

**The Nativity of the  
Lord -Year A  
25 December 2013**

### Parish Priest

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### Priests in Residence

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Cor Bishop  
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Fr Mark Spora  
Pastor Emeritus SJW  
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### Secretary

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### Pastoral Council

Charlie Scully (Chair)  
T. 0402071849  
Karim Kassis(Vice Chair)  
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Joji Salar (Secretary)  
Pat Kavanagh(Asst  
Secretary), Jenny Michael,  
Kay Scully, Joseph Vu, Joe  
Moses, William Andrews,  
Arthur Doumit and  
Principals of the Parish  
Schools.

### Finance Committee

John Le Mottee (Chair)  
T (02) 9644 8859  
Micheline Botham  
(Secretary) 0422939342,  
Joe Moses, Edward Duffy

### Parish Schools

St Peter Chanel  
Regents Park  
Principal—Jo Fox  
T. 96449083

St Joseph the Worker  
Auburn South  
Principal—John Kennedy  
T. 96461434



Crib designed and made by Pam & Noel Snell for  
Christmas Lunch Venue

### Peace and Joy be with you

Christmas is a gifting time. Without the exchange of gifts Christmas celebrations are not complete. Finding the most appropriate gift for others is not easy. There are stories of embarrassment because someone forgot to buy the gift. Once a man forgot his dear wife's birthday. As he returned from work, she asked him, "where is my gift". The man did a quick thinking and said, "I am your gift darling" and gave her a passionate kiss. She was very happy with that. In fact what we give is only secondary. What is more important is how you make others feel special. Yes the best of gift you can give others is to present yourself as someone special to them. There is no greater joy than

making ourselves as the gift.

God gifted humanity with his Son. The Son of God became a human child and was born in the lowliness of a manger. In return God wants us to make a gift of ourselves to others.

I, as your priest, am gifted with a beautiful parish with all its challenges and success. My parish is the best gift I could ever have. My parishioners share their joys, sorrows, success and failures with me. They celebrate sacraments with me. Having been blessed like this, I always try to be a gift to my parishioners. The more I succeed in doing it, the greater will be my joy.

For God to interact with our community, we the God-bearers, need to interact with one another. For the Good News of God to be heard by others we need to be people of good will to each other.

I wish the peace and joy of Christmas to all people of goodwill.

**Holy Mass at Berala:** Monday-Friday:6.45AM; Tuesday 7PM Novena & Mass;  
Wednesday - Friday 9.15 AM Saturday 8 AM Lord's Day: Saturday 5 PM (Vigil), Sunday 10 AM.  
**Holy Mass at Auburn South:** Tuesday 9 AM (school term only); The Lord's Day Sunday 8 AM.  
**Reconciliation at Berala:** Saturday 9.30 AM

## History of Christmas:

People are often surprised to find that Christmas was not celebrated by the earliest Christians. The custom was to celebrate a saint's birth into eternal life—in other words, his death. Thus Good Friday (Christ's death) and Easter Sunday (His Resurrection) took center stage.

To this day, the Church celebrates only three birthdays: Christmas; the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and the Birth of John the Baptist. The common thread in the celebrations is that all three were born without sin: Christ, because He was the Son of God; Mary, because she was sanctified by God in the Immaculate Conception; and John the Baptist, because his leap in the womb of his mother, Elizabeth, at the Visitation is seen as a type of Baptism (and thus, even though John was conceived with Original Sin, he was cleansed of that sin before birth).

It took a while, though, for the Church to develop the feast of Christmas. While it may have been celebrated in Egypt as early as the third century, it did not spread throughout the Christian world until the

middle of the fourth century. It was first celebrated along with Epiphany, on January 6; but slowly Christmas was separated out into its own feast, on December 25. Many of the early Church Fathers regarded this as the actual date of Christ's birth, though it does coincide with the Roman festival of Natalis Invicti (the winter solstice, which the Romans celebrated on December 25), and the Catholic Encyclopedia does not reject the possibility that the date was chosen as "a deliberate and legitimate 'baptism' of a pagan feast."

By the middle of the sixth century, Christians had begun to observe Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas, with fasting; and the Twelve Days of Christmas, from Christmas Day to Epiphany, had become established.



Ginger bread house prepared by Joyce McDonald for Christmas Lunch in the Jubilee Hall

To the singers, musicians, to the people who cleaned and decorated the church, to those who prepared the cribs (4 in total), to those who helped with Christmas pageant, to those who assisted with liturgy, and to the volunteers who helped with Christmas Luncheon.

*Thank you!*

### Special Mass on Boxing Day.

Tomorrow which is the feast of St Stephen, there will be a special Mass at 11.30 AM at St Peter Chanel Berala. A number of priest friends will be concelebrating with Fr Thomas. There will not be a Mass at 9.15 AM. Mgr Berbari will celebrate the usual 6.45 am Mass.

*A priest said to a precocious six-year-old boy, "So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?" The little boy replied, "Thank God he's in bed!"*



### Mass Intentions

**Recently Deceased:** Stephen Ross; **Deceased:** *deceased members and friends of the following families* Ross & Mitchell, Mullens, O'Connor & Willoughby; **Sick:** Terry Flanagan & Mary Fraser, Adrian Lynch, Stipe Lisica.