

# HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

Worshipping Communities of St Clair, Erskine Park and parts of Kemps Creek

## CELEBRATING 30 YEARS of THE AUGUSTINIANS 1995 - 2025

Under the Pastoral Care of the Augustinians

Catholic Diocese of Parramatta

### Lovingly Advent! – ‘Waiting for the Child !’

Dear Friends,

Last weekend, I wrote the first draft of this reflection on how we treasure our ‘freedom’ – even in the face of those who abuse this gift through violence and assault on human life. Little did I realise that this text would ring true in the horror of the Bondi shooting which has impacted heavily on the Jewish Community and the rest of our Australian Society.

Sadly, this event occurs at a time when we prepare to celebrate the freedom we share in the gift of Jesus’ birth – perhaps an invitation to sharpen our appreciation of the expansive love of our God, the power of goodness, the fragile gift of freedom, and the universal call to love one another.

Such raw evil affects all of us and many lives are changed forever. Bishop Vincent writes:

*‘Such violence is a grave assault on human dignity and can never be justified. We condemn this act unequivocally and reject all hatred that seeks to harm innocent people. There is no place for antisemitism, especially in Australia.’*

In a message to Archbishop Anthony Fisher, Pope Leo expressed his deep sadness and offered the ‘assurance of his spiritual closeness to all those affected by this senseless act of violence’ and his prayers for those still recovering, ‘as well as consolation for those grieving the loss of a loved one.’ He invoked ‘the divine blessings of peace and strength upon all Australians.’

Tragic events often sharpen the meaning of our Christmas celebration. Both ‘freedom’ and ‘obedience’ protect the quality of our faith and family life and relationships and underpin our mature response to what we believe in our hearts – so evident in the obedience of John the Baptist and of Mary and Joseph too, enabling God’s promise of a Saviour to be fulfilled - **God-with-us**.

Today’s Gospel reminds us of Mary’s obedience to God’s call but we remember too the obedience of Joseph, confused and uncertain, who faced a massive social challenge with Mary carrying a child that was not his. Mary carried Jesus in her womb quietly and unacknowledged by most, and found in Joseph a partner who believed in the treasure that she bore.

Jewish by birth, Jesus would ultimately become our model of obedience to God’s will. Obedience is ‘**going-with**’ the Lord – as Mary and Joseph discovered – coming to the realisation that the Lord lives in our hearts and is our wise guide always. In faith we obey the teaching of the Gospel, personified in the life and ministry of Jesus.

Very few life issues and decisions are simple and straightforward; some offering massive challenges to us personally and socially. Ideally, obedience emerges from our loving relationship with the Lord and his love with us, and from the quality of love we enjoy within our family life, marriage and friendships too. As we prepare to celebrate the great Feasts of Christmas and the Holy Family, let us be more attentive to those closest to us and recognise ‘**God with us**’ in one another, responding in love even when our hearts are breaking.



*Fr. Alan*

21st December 2025  
FOURTH SUNDAY OF  
ADVENT, Year A

**First Reading**  
*Isaiah 7:10-14*

The virgin will conceive.

**Responsorial Psalm**  
*Psalm 23:1-6*

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

**Second Reading**  
*Romans 1:1-7*

Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.

**Gospel Acclamation**  
Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us. Alleluia!

**Gospel**  
*Matthew 11:18-24*

Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.

### MASS & LITURGY TIMES

#### MASS

Mon & Wed - 7 am  
Tues, Thu & Fri - 9:05 am  
Sat (Vigil) - 6 pm  
Sunday - 8 am, 9.30 am & 6 pm  
Public Holiday - 9:05 am

#### RECONCILIATION

Saturday, 5.00 to 5.45pm

#### ANointing of the Sick

First Friday of the month, 9:05 am

#### Blessed Sacrament Exposition

First Friday of the month, 7:30 pm

#### Divine Mercy Devotion

Second Friday of the month, 7:30 pm

#### Children’s Liturgy

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday during school term  
Vigil Mass on Sat @ 6 pm  
& Sun Mass @ 9:30 am

#### Filipino Mass

First Sunday of the month, 11:30 am

*Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals,  
Anointing of the Sick by appointment*

# Welcome

Want to receive the bulletin via e-mail?  
Email [admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au](mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au)

We are a welcoming parish. No matter your current status in the Catholic Church, family or marital situation, past or present religious affiliation, personal history, age, background, race, color, or sexual orientation—regardless of your self-esteem—you are invited, welcomed, accepted, loved, and respected by the Catholic Community of Holy Spirit.

If you are not an active member of our community, we encourage you to explore what we have to offer. We serve the community through outreach, education, social activities, sacramental preparation, and providing comfort to the sick and those in mourning. In addition to our spiritual and outreach organizations, you may be interested in joining one of our many liturgical ministries, such as Minister of Holy Communion, Lector, Welcomer, or Choir.

To formally register, please fill out a form that will be entered into our parish data system (all information provided will remain confidential). These forms are available at the parish office or in the church foyer.

To learn more about parish life, you can pick up a copy of our Welcome Newsletter available in the foyer or visit this link on our website

<https://holyspiritstclair.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Holy-Spirit-Parish-Welcome-Newsletter.pdf>

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the People of God at Holy Spirit Parish is to witness to and to proclaim the word of God, and to pray and celebrate the Liturgy in word and sacraments so that we may be of service to others and form a community of *"one mind and one heart on the way to God."*

*(St Augustine)*

We are grateful to those who continue to financially support our Parish.

*God bless you!*

Our clergy and pastoral care ministers bring the sacraments of Eucharist, reconciliation, and anointing of the sick to members who are unable to participate because of illness or aging. For more information and to arrange receiving the sacraments, contact Parish Office at 9670 8222 or [admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au](mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au).



## PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

*There is strength and peace that comes from when we pray for one another. If you have a prayer request or want to offer a Mass for a special intention, go to: <https://holyspiritstclair.com.au/mass-prayer-requests/>. We ask you to please submit your prayer intentions a few days before preferred Mass.*

### SICK

Judy Younes Scott, Andrew Boulos, Robert Bucholtz, Yael De Leon, Ida Martirez, John Cassar, Michael Hay, Joe & Dot Gray, Julian Giuliano, Steven Johns, Hayden Young, Janice Salmon, Sheila Francis, Connie Schembri, Alexandra Di Censo, Colleen Lobo, Ģiga, John Grieve, Ashley, Alan, Glenda, Brendan Pereira, Frances & Family, John Thomas, Brendan Pereira, Pratik, David, Magda & Family, Bea Molina Quint, Raj Prasad, Keirin Marquellero, Rossana Armitage, Natividad Martinez, Feliz Martinez

### RECENTLY DECEASED

Ian Camilleri, Jerry Gernale, Hans & Renate Wagner, Alex C. Miranda, Ricky Misa, Kevin Munn, Gloria Cutcliffe, Nenita Barcelona Felix, Renato Cannalire, Jean-Marc Chauvet, Joseph Buttigieg, Maria Dolores Camilleri, Rolly Cruz, Trendafilka Ristevski, Ann Santos, Nenita Barcelo Felix, Lorraine Auckland, Carlton Francis, Margaret Ann Aguis, Bondi Victims,

### DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

Connie Mifsud, Irene Kirby, Philip Punla, Fathiraj, Chaiel Balcombe, Dotizia D'Souza, Julie Fonseca, Dolores Busttil, Mario Reyes, Pedro Sealtiel, David Lee Wallace, Reymundo P. Balao, Benjamin Santiago, Timothy Tien Ngo,

*Names submitted to Parish for the sick list will show for 4 weeks at a time. Please contact admin if you have an ongoing illness and wish to remain on the sick list for longer than 4 weeks.*

### **PARISH COLLECTIONS & REGULAR CONTRIBUTION**

If you are a new parishioner to Holy Spirit or an existing one and you would like to participate in the Regular Parish Contribution, forms are available for completion in the foyer of the church or go to the link provided below. Please complete your details and email it to [accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au](mailto:accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au) or hand it to any of our priests. 30% of the collection is for the care of our Augustinian clergy and the 70% is for the administration and maintenance costs of the parish. Regular Parish Contribution Form and other ways to donate: [www.holyspiritstclair.com.au/donations](https://holyspiritstclair.com.au/donations)

### **Donation by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**

**Account Name:** Holy Spirit Parish St Clair

**Bank:** CBA

**BSB:** 067 950

**Account Number:** 000 005 78

**Please enter your Surname and Initial as a reference.**



# HEARERS OF THE WORD

So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Fr. Kieran O'Mahony OSA - [www.tarsus.ie](http://www.tarsus.ie)

Lord, inspire me to read your Scriptures and to meditate upon them day and night. I beg you to give me real understanding of what I read, that I in turn may put its precepts into practice. Yet, I know that understanding and good intentions are worthless, unless rooted in your graceful love. So I ask that the words of Scripture may also be not just signs on a page, but channels of grace into my heart. Amen. (*Origen, AD c.184-c.254*)

## Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel

### Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

1 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

In a culture where God is, apparently, absent, it may sound strange to hear words such as "Do not be afraid" and "God is with us." Such assurances are at the heart our biblical faith from start to finish. Everyone who is anyone in the Bible is told not to be afraid. And the assurance "I will be with you" is found throughout starting with the very name of God in Ex 3:14, I am who I am. The God—in whom we live and move and have our being—is there all along, whether we are aware of it or not. Faith is the moment of discovery and recognition.

### POINTERS FOR PRAYER

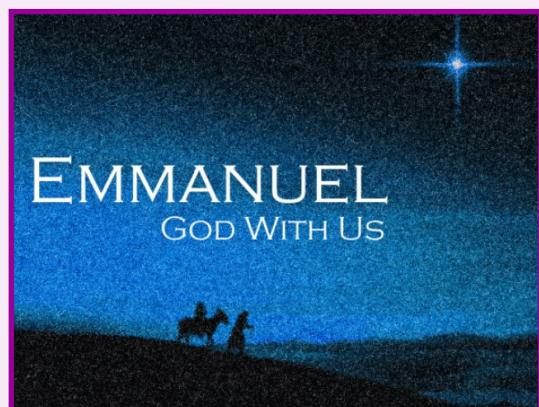
1. It took some time for Joseph to accept the fact that in Mary there truly was Emmanuel—God

with us. God is with us now, but at times we struggle to perceive God's presence. Where have you unexpectedly discovered the presence of "God with you"? Recall those experiences and give thanks.

2. Joseph was confused and uncertain about what he should do. It was difficult for him to discern what his next step should be. Perhaps you have also had to make difficult journeys on the way to some decisions or commitments. Recall that journey and the moments when it became clear to you what was being asked of you. Give thanks for the angels who helped you along the way
3. Mary bore Jesus within her, unseen to all, and unacknowledged by most. In Joseph she found one who believed in the treasure that she bore. We can be bearers of Jesus to others, and they to us. When have you been a bearer of Jesus to another? Who has been that to you?
4. The experience of having a gift that others do not see or recognise can be painful and isolating. Then someone comes, like Joseph to Mary, who gets to believe in what we have to offer. Has that happened to you? What was it like?

### PRAYER

You are with us always: you are with us in creation in all its splendour, in our fellow human beings in all their generosity, you are with us in the quiet where we are alone with you. Amen.



# PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

**24 DECEMBER:**  
6 pm—Family Mass  
8:30 pm—Carols  
9 pm—Mass  
11:30 pm—Carols



**25 DECEMBER:**  
12 Midnight Mass  
8 am Mass  
9:30 am Mass

**NO 6 PM Mass on Christmas Day**



## CHRISTMAS LOVE CHALLENGE

Grow in your observance of Advent and Christmas — the seasons in our Church when we give special attention to the birth of our Saviour and what his coming means for us today.



You are invited to take a "Christmas Love Challenge" card from the Christmas trees on both sides of our Nativity scene. Each card suggests a simple act of love or kindness you can do for others.

*Be blessed this Christmas... by being a blessing to others.*

## Sri Lankan Appeal

Our sincere thanks to the generous parishioners who contributed to our school stationery appeal. The goods have arrived in Colombo and will be distributed to disadvantaged children as Christmas gifts.

*Social Justice Commission*

## PARISH OFFICE CLOSURES



Holy Spirit Parish Office will be closing for the Christmas Season from

**December 24th 2025 at 1 pm and re-open on January 13th 2026.**

The Parish Staff wish to thank you all for your ongoing support throughout 2025 and look forward to working closely with you in 2026.

We wish you all a very Merry and Blessed Christmas from our Family to Yours ...

Mila, Joyce and Sonia.

## Christmas Eve Family Mass

We invite children to dress up as **Angels** or **Shepherds** and join in a dance number as we celebrate the ***Birth of our Lord***.



### Practice Details

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December  
Holy Spirit Parish 4:00—4:45 pm

If you cannot make the rehearsals but would still like to be involved text the number below for more information.

All enquiries to Karen: 0423 974 801

# PARISH NEWS

## Volunteers Appreciation Evening – *A Night of Gratitude and Community*

Last Saturday, 13 December, our parish gathered for a Volunteers Appreciation Evening—a joyful celebration of gratitude, fellowship, and community. It was a simple yet meaningful way to say *thank you* to the many volunteers who generously give their time, energy, and hearts in service of our parish.

The evening truly reflected what our parish values most: support, selfless service, and a strong sense of community. It was a beautiful reminder that parish life is built on people who quietly and faithfully serve one another.

A special word of thanks goes to **Seaview, Savio, Sarah, and Trina** for their dedication and hard work in organising the evening. Your generosity behind the scenes, your attention to detail, and your quiet willingness to do whatever was needed helped create a warm and joyful night for our parish family. **Big thanks also to Mo** for providing the music and sound. And to everyone involved in the preparations, cooking, and aftercare—**thank you** for serving with such generosity.

In a real way, you embodied the heart of Christ's service—not seeking recognition, but serving with humility, patience, and love, so that others might feel seen, valued, and appreciated. Please know how deeply grateful we are for you and for the spirit you bring to our parish.

To all our volunteers: **THANK YOU**. You are a blessing to our parish community.



## SAFEGUARDING is EVERYONE'S responsibility

The **Parish and Diocese of Parramatta** takes the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons seriously. This includes past or present forms of abuse. Safeguarding those who are vulnerable is part of the mission that Jesus Christ entrusts to our Church. We all have a role to play in safeguarding those who are vulnerable.

If you have any concerns about someone's immediate safety, or you suspect a crime may have or is likely to occur, please contact NSW Police on Triple Zero (000).

Concerns about safeguarding in the Parish and the Diocese may be referred to our Parish Priest:

**Fr. Percival Sevare, OSA**

Ph (02) 9670 8222

Email: pp@holyspiritstclair.com.au;

or directly to the:

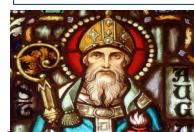
**Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards**

Ph (02) 8838 3419

Email: safeguarding@parracatholic.org.

Information about the Diocese's response and support about safeguarding children and vulnerable people are available at [www.safeguarding.org.au](http://www.safeguarding.org.au).

***Thank you for helping keep our parish safe for all!***



**"What is prayer but the pouring out of our hearts to God?"**  
***St. Augustine, Expositions on the Psalms, Psalm 62:8***



## Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv DD STL

Bishop of Parramatta

Bethany Centre, 470 Church St, Parramatta NSW 2150, Australia  
PO Box 3066, North Parramatta, NSW 1750

02 8838 3400 02 9630 4813

bishop@parracatholic.org

parracatholic.org

15 December 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The tragedy at Bondi Beach yesterday has shocked and deeply saddened our entire community, with many carrying fear, grief and unanswered questions.

Such violence is a grave assault on human dignity and can never be justified. We condemn this act unequivocally and reject all hatred that seeks to harm innocent people. There is no place for antisemitism, especially in Australia.

Together with all people, and with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, we stand in solidarity with the Jewish community and pray for all those affected – those who have lost their lives or been injured, and the many individuals, families and communities whose lives have been changed in an instant.

We also pray for the first responders, healthcare workers, and members of the public who acted with courage and compassion in the face of danger – protecting others, offering help and bringing calm and support amid uncertainty. These acts of self-giving love and care reflect the very best of our humanity, our shared values, and our hope for each other.

Let us continue to offer our care, compassion and prayers, calling on Mary, our Mother and Queen of Peace, to intercede for us.

At times like this, it is vital that we do not allow fear or anger to divide us. Violence, retaliation and discrimination are never the answer, even in the face of terrorism and antisemitism.

As Pope Leo XIV reminds us, peace is "an unarmed peace and a disarming peace, humble and persevering. It comes from God, God who loves us all unconditionally." This is the peace to which we are called, even when the path is difficult.

I invite our Diocesan community to pray for healing, for comfort for all who mourn, and for a renewed commitment to unity, mutual respect and peace across our diverse faiths and cultures. May we continue to stand together against violence in all its forms. May God be close to all who are suffering, and may His peace rest upon our community.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv.  
Bishop of Parramatta

**NEXT WEEKEND:  
The HOLY FAMILY of Jesus,  
Mary and Joseph, Year A**

**First Reading**

*Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14*

Whoever fears the Lord  
honours his parents.

**Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 127:1-5*

Happy are those who fear the  
Lord and walk in his ways.

**Second Reading**

*Col 3:12-21*

Concerning the Christian life in  
the world.

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in  
your hearts, and the fullness of  
his message live within you.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel**

*Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23*

Take the child and his mother,  
and flee to Egypt.

**Cleaners: Group 5 (27/12)**  
**Banners: WHITE**

**OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF THE  
21st December 2025, Year 2**

Mon 22nd Dec: Monday of the 4th Week of Advent

Tue 23rd Dec: Tuesday of the 4th Week of Advent

Wed 24th Dec: Wednesday of the 4th Week of Advent

Thu 25th Dec: **The NATIVITY of the LORD**

Fri 26th Dec: St Stephen, the first martyr

Sat 27th Dec: St John, apostle, evangelist

**PARISH BULLETIN – DIGITAL COPY**

If you wish to be added to our mailing list to receive a digital copy of our weekly Parish Bulletin, along with other important parish news and updates, please email the Parish Office at [admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au](mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au)

If you have changed your details, please send us an email so you do not miss any important information.

**PARKING REMINDERS**

Please be mindful of our neighbours — do not park across their driveways. Also, do not leave valuables in your car to avoid the risk of break-ins.



**BAPTISM PREPARATION MEETING**

Parents wishing to have their child baptised are asked to contact the Parish Office prior to attending a preparation evening. Next Baptism Preparation session is on **January 13th at 7.00pm**.  
Presenter - Fr. Saju.

**Holy Spirit Parish St Clair • Erskine Park • Parts of Kemps Creek**

Under the Pastoral Care of the Augustinians since 1995

Diocese of Parramatta

[www.parra.catholic.org.au](http://www.parra.catholic.org.au)

<b>Facebook</b>	Holy Spirit Parish St Clair-Erskine Park	●Holy Spirit Parish St Clair Family Ministry	●BASICGIFT (Youth Ministry)
<b>Parish Office</b>	5 Todd Row (PO Box 103) St Clair NSW 2759	P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au">admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a>	W <a href="http://www.holyspiritstclair.com.au">www.holyspiritstclair.com.au</a>
<b>Office Hours</b>	9.00am to 4pm (Monday to Friday)	<b>Emergency after hours only:</b> M 0404 938 696 (NEW NUMBER)	
<b>Priory</b>	3 Peter Pan Glen, St Clair , NSW, 2759		
<b>Parish Staff</b>	<b>Parish Moderator:</b> Fr Percival Sevare, OSA P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:pp@holyspiritstclair.com.au">pp@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Asst Pastor:</b> Fr Dave Austin, OSA P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:daustin@holyspiritstclair.com.au">daustin@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Asst Pastor:</b> Fr Peter Tangney, OSA P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:ptangney@holyspiritstclair.com.au">ptangney@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Asst Pastor:</b> Fr Joseph Aresseril Jacob "Saju" , OSA P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:saju@holyspiritstclair.com.au">saju@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Admin Assistant:</b> Joyce McMahon (Tuesday, Wednesday) P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au">admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Admin Assistant:</b> Sonia Sultana (Thursday, Friday) P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au">admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Parish Bookkeeper:</b> Mila Llamas P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au">accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> (Mon and Wed) <b>SRE Coordinator (Catechists):</b> Peter Moriarty P 02 9670 8222 E <a href="mailto:sre@holyspiritstclair.com.au">sre@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Sacramental Coordinator:</b> Germaine Gil M 0451 279 934 E <a href="mailto:sacraments@holyspiritstclair.com.au">sacraments@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a> <b>Safeguarding Support:</b> Carol Vella P 0422 429 043 E <a href="mailto:admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au">admin@holyspiritstclair.com.au</a>		
<b>Parish Council</b>	<b>Chair:</b> Seaview Kama • <b>Vice Chair:</b> Peter Moriarty • <b>Secretary:</b> Dominic Dimech <b>Members:</b> Michael Paulo, Andrea Bouche, Trina Esguerra Cruz, Corinne Brooker, Deepu Thomas, Aaron Smith Fr Percival Sevare OSA, Fr Dave Austin OSA, Fr Peter Tangney OSA, Fr Saju OSA		
<b>Schools/College</b>	Holy Spirit Primary School (7 Todd Row St Clair) P 02 8886 3200 W <a href="http://www.hsstclair.catholic.edu.au">www.hsstclair.catholic.edu.au</a> Trinity Primary School (61 Bakers Ln, Kemps Creek) P 02 8856 6200 W <a href="http://trinitykempscreek.catholic.edu.au">trinitykempscreek.catholic.edu.au</a> Emmaus Catholic College (87 Bakers Ln, Kemps Creek) P 02 9670 8300 W <a href="http://emmauskempscreek.catholic.edu.au">emmauskempscreek.catholic.edu.au</a>		

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"I am a son of Saint Augustine, an Augustinian, who said, 'For you I am a bishop, with you, I am a Christian.' In this sense we can all walk together toward that homeland that God has prepared."

- Pope Leo XIV

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## Bateman Battersby

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Holy Spirit Parish St Clair

Bank: CBA

BSB: 067 950

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70% of the collection covers parish  
running costs, while 30% supports  
our priests and the Augustinians'  
ministry. For assistance, email Mila @  
[accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au](mailto:accounts@holyspiritstclair.com.au).

Thank you for your support!

