

Creation's great longing

It is often said that Australians have elevated the art of waiting into something approaching a national discipline. We queue with philosophical calm for our morning flat whites. We endure the seemingly endless roller-coaster ride of the season's footy matches with the resigned optimism of people who have been disappointed before and fully expect to be disappointed again.

We are a patient mob, albeit in a rather flat-footed, arms-folded, "she'll-be-right" kind of way.

This is precisely why Paul's extraordinary vision of a cosmos in waiting in this week's second reading (Romans 8:18-23) should catch us off-guard. Paul does not describe patient waiting. He describes something far more electric. The Greek word he uses, *apokaradokia*, is one of the great untranslatable treasures of the New Testament. It means something like straining forward on tiptoe with breathless, neck-craning expectation. Think less "she'll be right" and more a border collie at the back door when it hears the word "Walk!" whispered in a distant part of the house.

Who is doing this extraordinary craning-forward? Paul would argue that it is neither the faithful in the pews, nor the Church alone, but the whole of creation. Every gum tree, every reef, every dusty red plain from Longreach to Launceston, from Melbourne to Marble Bar: all of it, Paul insists, is caught up in an urgent, aching longing.

This is a remarkable claim which we need to reflect upon. Paul is not offering a romantic nature poem about rainbows and sunsets. He is making a serious theological argument: that the created order has been subjected to a kind of frustration, not because it is evil or abandoned, but because it is caught in a tension between what is and what is not yet. Creation, he says, "groans in labour pains" (v.22), straining toward a future liberation that has been promised but not yet fully delivered.

What is it waiting for? Here Paul is startlingly specific: the revelation of the children of God (v.19). Not a cosmic reset. Not the annihilation of the material world. But the moment when human beings finally become fully what God always intended us to be: people who live by the spirit, freed from the limitations of disease, decay and death.

We often speak of caring for the environment, as though creation is a passive recipient of our stewardship. Paul suggests something rather more humbling: that the fate of the natural world is, in some sense, bound up with our own destiny. Its healing and ours are intertwined. We too, Paul says, groan inwardly, carrying within us "the first fruits of the Spirit;" awaiting the full harvest when all will be freed of the limitations of mortality.



Today, as we celebrate our eucharist together, we should allow this vision of cosmic redemption and transformation to inspire us to adopt the attitude of the border collie at the back door, "straining forward on tiptoe with breathless, neck-craning expectation."

Ian J Elmer

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OUR VISION

"Everything is to be oriented towards the praise and glory of God."

OUR MISSION

The St Agnes' Parish Community strives to make our Vision a reality by a commitment to:

- holiness in the image of Christ.
- minister within the faith community.
- proclaim the good news of salvation.
- the service of all, particularly those in need.



UNCOMPROMISING
INTEGRITY

Adoration

There will not be the usual Wednesday Adoration next week. It will begin again on Wednesday, 22 July.

Every second Saturday of the month, Adoration in St Agnes' Church follows the Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion at 11.00 am, until Midday. You are invited to the next prayer opportunity on Saturday 8 August. These opportunities align with *providing ... prayer celebrations in different and varied contexts* (3.1.8 of the Parish Pastoral Plan) and with *Year One, Call to Prayer* in preparation for the Eucharistic Congress 2028.



The Cenacle

The Cenacle including Adoration and the Rosary is available weekly on Wednesdays at St Francis of Assisi Chapel at 11am. This Cenacle is also held with Adoration and the Rosary at Our Lady Star of the Sea church, Lake Cathie weekly on Thursdays at 2pm. For further information please contact Rose Camilleri on 0415435135.

Planned Giving Receipts

Planned giving receipts for 2025/2026 financial year were posted on Wednesday 8 July.

If you are new to our Parish and would like to become a contributor to the Parish Planned Giving program, please contact Denise Smith at Parish Administration on 6588 7444.



Wedding Anniversary Congratulations

Congratulations to Rene and Maria Barros who celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Tuesday 7 July.

Church Life Survey

Later this year our church will take part in the 2026 National Church Life Survey.

This survey happens every five years and is the longest and largest running survey of church life in the world. The survey aims to help churches reflect on life and mission and build for the future. **We are looking for volunteers to co-ordinate the distribution, completion and return of the survey for the parish.**

The survey is to be completed in September or October this year. For further information please contact the Pastoral Office



Adult Formation

Faith: 1. Cycle 5 Courses through the *Virtual learning Community for Faith Formation* (VLCFF) are now open. Close for registration on 16 July. Check out the VLCFF page on the Parish website.

Spiritual: 1. Women's Prayer & Reflection Day

All women are warmly invited to a prayer day on Saturday, 8 August 2026 at Emmaus Village Chapel, 16 Colonel Barney Drive, Port Macquarie.

The day will offer a sacred pause from the busyness of life, with time for prayer, reflection, Scripture, and meaningful conversation. Registration begins at 9:30am, with the program running from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Please bring a small plate of food to share for lunch. A \$30 donation to the Church is invited.

For more information, please contact Leanne Hyland on 0421 927 435.

2. Weekend Retreat on Prayer.

All adults are warmly invited to a weekend retreat on Friendship with God through the Wisdom of St Teresa of Avila, from Friday 27 November to Sunday 29 November 2026 at Mt Carmel



Retreat Centre, Varroville. Facilitated by Fr Aloysius Rego OCD, and supported by Sr Dedith, Deacon Shane and Leanne Hyland, the retreat will offer time for prayer, silence, reflection, the Liturgy of the Hours, Holy Eucharist, and spiritual direction by request. The weekend will explore St Teresa's teaching on prayer and invite participants to rediscover prayer as friendship with God.

Dates: **Friday 27 November – Sunday 29 November 2026**

Time: **3:00pm Friday to 1:30pm Sunday**

Location: **Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, 247 St Andrews Rd, Varroville NSW**

Register: livingspirituality.com.au

Baptisms

We pray for Ahava and Aviva Pravasi who will be gifted with the grace of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism. May the Lord look lovingly on these children and their families.



Baptism Information Session

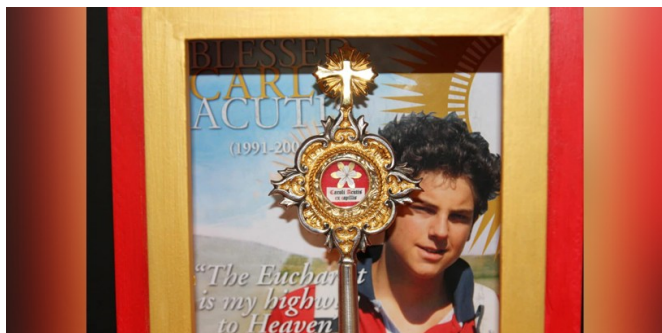
Parents who are considering having their child baptised, are invited to attend an information session on Wednesday 22 July at 5.30pm in St Agnes' Church. Please contact the Pastoral Office on 6583 1024 to register.

Save the Date....
St Agnes' Community Day,
Sunday 22 November, 2026
the Solemnity of Christ the King



Thank you - Relics of St Carlo Acutis

Thank you to all who visited the St Carlo Acutis Relic and Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition last Thursday. We are grateful to everyone who took the opportunity to reflect on the gift of the Eucharist and learn about the remarkable faith of this young saint. We especially thank all those volunteers that assisted on the day as guardians, musicians, photographers and general helpers.



Catholic Women's League

The monthly meeting for July will be held on Friday the 17 July at 1.30 pm in the John Worner Centre, Lourdes village. New members are most welcome. For further information please contact Veronica on 0413386686 or Helen on 65835391.



SVDP Renewal of Commitment

We ask you to keep members of the St Vincent de Paul Society in your prayers as they renew their commitment to service at the 9.00am Mass next weekend 19 July. May they continue to grow in their spiritual life, ministering to the marginalized and all those in need.

Did you know.....

Moments in Ministry

St Agnes' Parish welcomed 34 adults, teens and children into the Catholic faith through our Journey into the Catholic Faith program in 2025.

Sea Sunday

Sea Sunday is a time to remember, celebrate, pray for seafarers and their families and give thanks for their lives and work. Seafarers work tirelessly in the high seas throughout the year, bringing us more than 90% of the goods we need.

Stella Maris Australia is the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church and cares for the spiritual, social and material welfare of all seafarers. We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts and difficulties for seafarers and continue to pray for them.

Remember in Prayer

Recently Deceased: Margaret Kirby, Maureen Day, Janette Paris, Janice Brennan, Christopher Randall.

Anniversaries: Jack Rowley, Margaret Heagney, Peter Gaudy, Grace Gaudy, Madge Lindsay.

Other Intentions: Margaret Hawes, Rene and Maria Barros, Fred Basco, Helen Basco, Christopher Sharpe, Libby Harpley, Jill Brooks, Kathleen Woods, Susan & William Brooks, John A & John P Woods, John Brooks, David Woods, T.L. Jose, Raymond Conway, Marie and Patrick Mullens, Mary Clark, Margaret Gallagher, Barbara Riordan, Win Rohan, Peggy Collins, masses of thanksgiving and donor.



ENCOUNTER

Encounter Youth & Kids

Will return Week 2, Term 3, Friday 31 July. We are taking a break over the school holidays.

Encounter Young Adults

We'll be returning to bible study on Thursday this week. All young adults aged 18 to 35 are welcome to join us at the St Agnes Community Centre from 6pm. Don't forget to bring your bible. If you are a new young adult and would like to get connected, please contact Christa to join our WhatsApp group to stay up to date.

For Youth Ministry enquiries, please contact:

christa.morrow@stagnesparish.org.au

Volunteers Needed

Did you know that there are currently around 45 people in non-Catholic aged care residences in Port Macquarie who are visited weekly by one of our very generous and committed volunteers? As this ministry grows, we are seeking more volunteers to assist with these visitations which involving taking communion to the residents and spending some time in prayer with them. Formation and training will be provided before commencement. If you would like to know more or express your interest in joining this special ministry, please contact the Pastoral Office.

SAFEGUARDING YOUR CHILDREN

Would parents please keep their children supervised at all times in the church and surrounding grounds - including taking them to the bathroom. For their safety, please ensure you can always see them while on Parish grounds.





Parish Priest

Father Paul Gooley

Assistant Priests

Father Proencio Bognay

Father Alejo Despacio Jr

Pastoral Office

47 Hay Street: PO Box 23

Port Macquarie 2444

T (02) 6583 1024

E pastoraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au

Web: www.stagnesparish.org.au

Office Hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm Mon,

Tues, Thurs, Friday.

9.00am-4.30pm Wednesday

Parish Pastoral Council

PPC@stagnesparish.org.au

c/o St Agnes' Pastoral Office

PO Box 23 Port Macquarie 2444

Feedback to Parish

Complaints, concerns and feedback (both positive and negative)

can be made by emailing:

parish.feedback@stagnesparish.org.au

c/o St Agnes' Parish Administration

Feedback: PO Box 1736 Port Macquarie

Liturgical Celebrations

15th Week in Ordinary Time (Year A/2)

Monday 13 July

[St Henry](#)

Optional

Tuesday 14 July

[St Camillus de Lellis](#)

Optional

Wednesday 15 July

[St Bonaventure](#)

Memorial

Thursday 16 July

[Our Lady of Mount Carmel](#)

Optional



General Mass Times in St Agnes' Catholic Parish

(Please note: There are occasions when these Mass times may change.

Please ensure you read the inside of the newsletter for changes).

Monday: No Mass

Tuesday: 9.30am or 11.00am Residential aged care only

12.05pm St Agnes' Catholic Church

Wednesday: 9.30am St Francis of Assisi Chapel

6.00pm St Bernard's Church

Thursday: 12.05pm St Agnes' Catholic Church

4.30pm Christ the King Chapel

Friday: 12.05pm St Agnes' Catholic Church

Saturday: 5.00pm St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Lake Cathie

Sunday: 7.30am, 9.00am, 5.00pm St Agnes' Catholic Church

Reconciliation: Friday: 11.30am - 12 noon; Saturday: 11.30am - 12.30pm

COVID Awareness

Please continue to be mindful and respectful of each other and do not attend if you are unwell or have any cold/flu-like symptoms.

Suggested Streaming of Masses

Sunday 9.00am - Bishop Greg Homeming OCD, Lismore. [YouTube Channel](#);

Daily Mass on Demand

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRq7AjVimr-hcHFJD_HVaQ

Mass for you at Home: Sunday 6.00am streamed on Channel 10.

Reflections: Lismore Diocese [YouTube Channel](#); [Fr Paul Daily Reflections](#)

Roster 19 July 2026

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7.30am:

SAC: Denise Smith

R1: Sandy Luschwitz

R2: Pauline Day

C: Pat McLoughlin

EMHC: Geoff Leary

Denise Smith

Welcomer: Wendy Welsh

MO: Wendy Welsh

5.00pm

SAC: Sue Williams

R1: Cody Lee

R2: Cody Lee

C: Laura Hatherly

EMHC: Jodie Rich

Christa Pereira

Welcomer: Volunteer

9.00am:

SAC: Sandra Hartas

R1: David Johnson

R2: Peter Johnson

C: Beth Flynn

EMHC: Jenny Hayek

Maria Barros

Welcomer: Elizabeth Johnson (S)

Gavin Smith (W)

Tuesday 12.05pm, 21 July

SAC: Sue Williams

R: Rene Barros

Thursday 12.05pm, 23 July

SAC: Leone Flanagan

R: Trish McCann

Friday 12.05pm, 24 July

SAC: Sandra Hartas

R: Anne Hayek



**PAYS
3.90%**

St Agnes' Catholic Parish Library

Library opening times

Thursday 10am - 12pm

Friday 10am - 2pm

The Port Macquarie office of the DIF is open Monday to Friday

9.00am - 1.00pm. Phone Veronica or Mary for any enquiries on 6583 7439.

All enquiries outside these hours phone 1800 802 516.

Safeguarding Office



The Safeguarding Office is available to;

listen to your concerns respectfully and to offer support, to provide guidance in embedding Safeguarding Standards.

Safeguarding Office:

P: 02 6621 9444 (Chancery)

E: safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au