

Vox Populi

7 September 2022

Everyone has a birthday and for many it is a joyous time.

This week we celebrated the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on its traditional fixed date of 8 September, nine months after the 8 December celebration of her immaculate conception as the child of Saints Joachim and Anne. The Church has celebrated this day since at least the sixth century.

The circumstances of the Virgin Mary's infancy and early life are not directly recorded in the Bible, but other documents and traditions describing the circumstances of her birth are cited by some of the earliest Christian writers from the first centuries of the Church. We are also told Mary was raised as a child of God, and when the angel Gabriel told Mary that she had been chosen to be the Mother of Jesus, she already had great faith and trust that allowed her to say "yes" to God's plan.

Next week we celebrate another feast day of Our Lady, but can't say this one is joyous. It is 15 September and is Our Lady of Sorrows. This title focuses on the intense suffering and grief during the passion and death of her Son and the seven dolours or sorrows.

In a unique way Mary suffered alongside her Divine Son as he gave His life for us. This devotion is particularly remembered this month.

We also acknowledge this month those children and vulnerable people we have not protected and cared for and who have been harmed by abuse, both directly and indirectly.

This Sunday, 11 September is Safeguarding Sunday, however in the Diocese of Broken Bay we are particularly remembering safeguarding awareness for the entire month, and encouraging families to build meaningful connections with their children and young people around them.

For a range of activities, resources and support visit

<https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/about/diocesan-safeguarding/safeguarding-month-2022>