

# OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

17 DECEMBER 2023

REJOICING IN GOD, OUR SAVIOUR. Christmas is a feast of joy and light. We celebrate God who comes to dwell among us and save us. With the prophet Isaiah, we exult for joy in the Lord. With Mary, our spirits rejoice in God our saviour. We do not deny the pain and evil that exist in the world, but we rejoice in the knowledge that nothing can come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Phil 4: 4-5

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.**

**Indeed, the Lord is near.**

### GREETING

P. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**R. Amen.**

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**R. And with your spirit.**

### PENITENTIAL ACT

P. Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

P. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**R. For we have sinned against you.**

P. Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

**R. And grant us your salvation.**

P. May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

V. Lord, have mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

V. Christ, have mercy.

**R. Christ, have mercy.**

V. Lord, have mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

*The Gloria is not said during Advent.*

### COLLECT

P. O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's

Nativity,

enable us, we pray,

to attain the joys of so great a salvation

and to celebrate them always

with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever

**R. Amen.**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### FIRST READING

Isa 61:1-2, 10-11

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

*I exult for joy in the Lord.*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,

to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,

freedom to those in prison;

to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord,

my soul rejoices in my God,

for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,

he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise

spring up in the sight of nations.'

The word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Lk 1:46-50, 53-54

**R. My soul rejoices in my God.**

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.

He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R.**

2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. **R.**

3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. **R.**

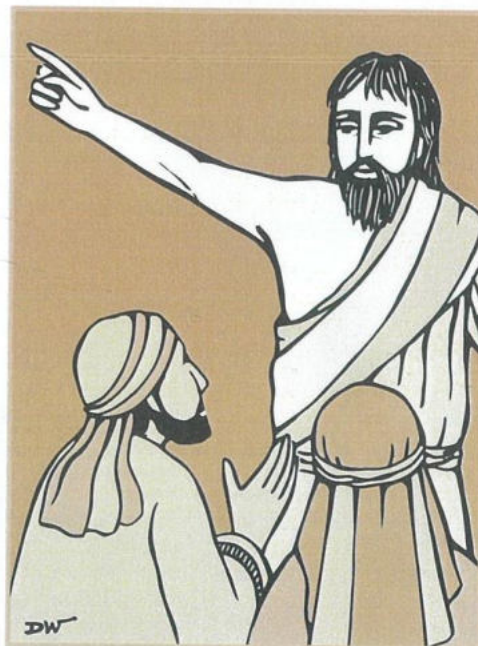
### SECOND READING

1 Thess 5:16-24

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians**

*May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.



Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Isa 61: 1 (Lk 4: 18)

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**The spirit of the Lord is upon me;**

**he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.**

**Alleluia!**

### GOSPEL

Jn 1:6-8,19-28

P. The Lord be with you.

**R. And with your spirit**

P. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**R. Glory to you, O Lord.**

*There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.*

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness,

as a witness to speak for the light,

so that everyone might believe through him.

He was not the light,

only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not





# ST MARTHA'S PARISH STRATHFIELD

**Parish Priest:** Father John Hayes

**Assistant Priest:** Father Liem Duong

**Administration Coordinator:** Nicolle Mazzaferro (Mon, Tues & Thurs) [admin@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:admin@stmarthas.org.au)

**Administration Support:** Larissa Argiro (Friday) [office@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:office@stmarthas.org.au)

**Sacramental Coordinator:** Linda Praum [sc@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:sc@stmarthas.org.au)

**Safeguarding Officer:** Dianne Dawson & Helen Williamson [safeguarding@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@stmarthas.org.au)

**Parish Ministries Coordinator:** Helen Williamson

**Music Ministry:** Marcella Ayoub

**Children's Liturgy Coordinator:** Alannah Hickry

**Plenary Council Ambassador:** Helena O'Neil



***'There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me' ... John 1***

70 Homebush Rd Strathfield NSW 2135

**Phone:** 9746 6131 **Fax:** 9764 3040

**Email:** [office@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:office@stmarthas.org.au)

**Website:** [www.stmarthas.org.au](http://www.stmarthas.org.au)

**Parish Office Hours:**

Mon, Tues & Thurs 9am-5pm & Fridays 9am-3pm



**St Martha's School:** 9764 1184

**Email:** [info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@stmstrathfield.catholic.edu.au)

**Principal:** Carolyn Parsell

**Assist Principal:** Steven Belcastro

**Acting REC:** Cindy Ronzini

THE PARISH OF ST MARTHA'S ACKNOWLEDGES THE WANGUL PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH THE CHURCH IS BUILT

## **Vision:**

**Welcoming  
Eucharistic  
Transformed by the Word  
Full of Grace  
Proclaiming Good News**



***Please  
continue  
to support the  
St Vincent De Paul Society  
through the Church  
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## **Mission:**

**Alive with the Spirit  
Inspired by St Martha  
We Celebrate & Witness  
God's love  
Using our Gifts & Talents**



## **MASS TIMES**

**Tuesday:** 7.30am

**Wednesday:** 9.10am

**Thursday:** 9.10am

**Friday:** 9.10am

**Saturday:** 9.10am, 5pm Vigil Mass

**Sunday:** 8.00am; 10.00am & 6.00pm



**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month:**

8.30am Adoration followed by Mass

## **RECONCILIATION:**

Saturday after 9.10am Mass or by appointment.

## **SYDNEY MALAYALEE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Rosary, Mass & Adoration from 6.30pm to 8.00pm on  
the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.



## **BAPTISM:**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 11.00am  
(One months' notice is required).

Baptism Preparation by appointment only.  
Contact the Parish office for more information.

**MARRIAGES:** By appointment only.  
(6 months' notice is required).

## **ROSARY:**

Tuesday & Saturday after morning Mass

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 8.30am

7.30pm on Fridays in conjunction with Marian Movement of Priests  
Cenacle and Divine Mercy Chaplet.



## **PRAYER GROUP / ADORATION AT ST MARTHA'S CHURCH:**

Resumes February 2024



***Please support our Catholic Press  
Copies of the Catholic Weekly \$2  
& Catholic Leader \$2.50 are available  
at the Church Entrance.***



## **SAFE GUARDING**



**A reminder to parents that the Notice-Board located at the side entrance  
contains various resources for children regarding Safeguarding.**

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY.**

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police.

If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can  
contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or

[safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org)

You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and  
guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

### **Commitment Statement**

The Archdiocese of Sydney is wholly committed to ensuring the safety, well-being and dignity of  
all Children and Adults at Risk, and it acknowledges its important legal, moral and  
spiritual responsibility to create a safe and nurturing environment for Children and Adults.



**Office of the  
Children's Guardian**

Please be aware that if you "TAG" St Martha's in photos on your  
Facebook page, the images also appear on an "unofficial" St Martha's  
Facebook page. This "unofficial" page was created automatically by  
Facebook and is not controlled by St Martha's. We kindly remind you to  
take care when uploading photos of any children without parent consent.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

**IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES YOU ARE  
REQUIRED TO SIGN IN - ACOLYTES; READERS; EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS;  
CHOIR; CHILDREN'S LITURGY (LEADERS & CHILDREN) & SACRAMENTAL  
PROGRAM (LEADERS & CHILDREN). SIGN IN FOLDERS ARE KEPT IN THE  
SACRISTY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.**

**ALTAR SERVERS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SACRISTY WITHOUT A  
PARENT/TEACHER. THE SIGN IN FOLDER IS LOCATED IN THE CORRIDOR  
OUTSIDE THE SACRISTY.**



**GLUTEN FREE HOSTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ANY  
CELIAC PARISHIONERS. IF YOU WISH TO  
RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION PLEASE TELL THE  
CHURCH WARDEN OR SEE AN ACOLYTE IN THE  
SACRISTY PRIOR TO MASS.**

# Prayer for Lighting the Advent Wreath Candles

## Third Candle - The Candle of Love



**Leader:** Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Leader:** Last Sunday we lit the Candles of Hope and Peace. We light them again as we remember Jesus, born in Bethlehem, our hope and our peace.

*(A person lights the Candles of Hope & Peace)*

Today we light the third Candle of Advent, the Candle of Love. In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elisabeth a son called John. John spoke to the people bravely in the desert denying his own comforts and prepared to die for what he believed. John taught that we should share what we have with others, treat each other kindly and show Gods love. He did this because he cared for people and wanted them to repent and find God's forgiveness.

*(A person lights the Third Candle, the Candle of Love here)*

Love is like a candle shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle we celebrate the love we have in Christ.

As Christmas Eve falls on a weekend this year, below are the Mass times.

<b>Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December</b> <b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December</b>  <b>Christmas Eve</b> 	<b>5.00pm</b> <b>8.00am</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Vigil Mass – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> <b>Mass – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> <b>Mass – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	
	<b>6.00pm</b> <b>11.40pm</b> <b>12.00am</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Vigil Mass</b> <b>Carols</b> <b>Christmas Midnight Mass</b>	
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December</b> <b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>8.00am</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Christmas Mass</b> <b>Christmas Mass</b> <b>(there will be no evening Mass)</b>	
<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December</b> <b>Boxing Day Public Holiday</b>	<b>9.10am</b>	<b>Mass - Feast of St Stephen</b> <b>(there will be no 7.30am Mass)</b>	
<b>Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>5.00pm</b>	<b>Vigil Mass – The Holy Family</b>	
<b>Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b> 	<b>8.00am</b> <b>10.00am</b> <b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Mass – The Holy Family</b> <b>Mass – The Holy Family</b> <b>Mass – The Holy Family</b>	
<b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January</b>	<b>9.10am</b>	<b>The Solemnity of Mary / New Year's Day</b>	
<b>Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>5.00pm</b>	<b>Vigil Mass – The Epiphany</b>	
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>8.00am</b> <b>10.00am</b> <b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Mass – The Epiphany</b> <b>Mass – The Epiphany</b> <b>Mass – The Epiphany</b>	



### Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion & Altar Servers

More Volunteers are **urgently needed** – if you are able to assist to fill any of the spaces below please contact Helen Williamson on 0408 970 120.

### CHRISTMAS ROSTER

	6PM VIGIL	MIDNIGHT	8AM	10AM
Special Ministers	Beatrice Bonett	Maria Soares	Marian McCluskey	Rachel Suriano
	Jacqueline Romanous	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
	6PM VIGIL	MIDNIGHT	8AM	10AM
Readers	Merlyn D'Souza	Natalie Bains	Greg Glass	Helen Williamson
	Donald Bonett	Mark Soares	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
	6PM VIGIL	MIDNIGHT	8AM	10AM
Altar Servers	Bonett Family	Lincoln M.	Liam D.	Marc K.
	Bonett Family	Hayden M.	Shannon D.	Suriano Family
	Bonett Family	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
	Bonett Family	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>

# Christmas Offering Envelopes are now Available at the Church Entrances



**The Christmas Eve Children's Mass** – There will be a practice for the Christmas Eve Children's Mass on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 10.30am. The children may come dressed as angels or shepherds. The specific roles of Mary, Joseph and The Three Kings will be allotted by Fr. John from amongst the children. The children will be practising their two special songs for the Mass. Further enquiries, please contact Linda Praum, our Sacramental Coordinator - [sc@stmarthas.org.au](mailto:sc@stmarthas.org.au)

**On Wednesday we celebrated the closing school Mass and farewelled our Year 6 Students who are heading off to high school along with some of our Year 4 Boys who are moving to other schools to finish their primary education next year. Although they are moving on, may they always feel welcome at St Martha's. We extend our congratulations and best wishes and ask everyone to keep them in your prayers over the holiday period. May God continue to guide them on their faith journey.**



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Rite of Reconciliation will be held at 7.00pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December



### Background on the Gospel Reading (Loyola Press)

This Sunday's Gospel invites us to continue our reflection on the person and mission of John the Baptist. Today we depart from the Gospel of Mark and read a selection from the Gospel of John. The Gospel for today combines a brief passage from the prologue to John's Gospel with a report about John the Baptist. As in Mark's Gospel, the Gospel of John contains no birth narrative. Instead, John's Gospel begins with a theological reflection that has come to be called the "prologue." This prologue places the story of Jesus in its cosmological framework. It speaks of Jesus' existence with God since the beginning of time. In John's Gospel, Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the culmination of the Word, the light that is coming into the world's darkness. Following this prologue, John reports on the ministry of John the Baptist. We learn about the attention that John

the Baptist received from the Jewish authorities. Messengers from the Jewish priests, the Levites and the Pharisees question John about his identity and the meaning of the baptisms that he is performing. John's Gospel uses these questions to establish the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist. John the Baptist is not the Messiah, nor is he Elijah or the Prophet. In John's denials, we hear echoes of the kind of messianic expectations that were common in first-century Palestine. The only affirmative response that John the Baptist gives is when he quotes the prophet Isaiah. Upon answering the next question, John announces that the savior they seek is already among them, but as yet unrecognized. John's response highlights for us an important Advent theme: Jesus has already come into the world as our savior. During Advent, we pray that we will be able to recognize Jesus' presence in our midst. Advent also reminds us that Jesus will come again to fulfill the promise of salvation. We pray that we will continue to be watchful as we anticipate that great day. The third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete, a Latin word which means "rejoice," is taken from the entrance antiphon for Sunday's Mass. This theme is echoed in today's second reading from the first Letter to the Thessalonians. It is a reminder that Advent is a season of joy because our salvation is already at hand.



**Family Connection:** In family life, we learn to trust other people for protection and care. This experience of trust within the family enables children to believe us when we testify about our faith in Jesus. John the Baptist was believed by those who heard him because he helped them to recognize Jesus in their midst. In our family life, we hope and pray that we lead one another to recognize Jesus' presence in our world. As you gather as a family, recall that during the Advent season we are invited to pay particular attention to the signs of Jesus' presence in our world. Consider some of the signs of Jesus' presence that you have experienced. During Advent, we remember how John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:6-8,19-28. Discuss the signs of Jesus' presence in our world that you named and explain what these signs tell us about God and God's love for us. Pray together that your family will be led to recognize that Jesus is present among us. Read and pray together the psalm for today's Mass, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55).

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.

## 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> December

Special Ministers	5PM	8AM	10AM
	Rick Herro	Yvonne Martins	Helen Williamson
	Grace Herro	Joseph Samarasinghe	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Readers	5PM	8AM	10AM
	Natalie Bains	Daniel Martins	Anne Marrins
	Marianna Soo	Greg Glass	Steve Doumit
Altar Servers	5PM	8AM	10AM
	Lincoln M.	Julian M.	Elijah M.
	Hayden M.	Lucas M.	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	Jacob M.	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Wardens	5PM	8AM	10AM
	Joy Li	Georgette Sahyoun	Trudie Rogers



**The New January to July Roster is now available from the side entrance of the Church and on the parish website.**





## MARY AS A MODEL OF FAITH by Ron Rolheiser

"Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" Picture the scene: Jesus has just impressed a crowd and a woman, probably a mother, shouts out: "You must of had a wonderful mother!" Jesus responds something to this effect: "Yes, I had a wonderful mother, though in ways you don't imagine. She was wonderful not because she gave me biological birth, all mothers do that. What made her a great mother is that she gave me birth in the faith." Here, as in others places, we have to be careful to understand what Jesus is really telling us about his mother. We see places in the gospels where he seemingly does not speak highly of her when in fact the reverse is true. For example, the instance when he is approached and told: "Your mother is here, trying to see you," and he answers, "Who is my mother?" Then, pointing to the people sitting around him, he says, "Those who hear the word of God and keep it are mother and brother and sister to me." Is Jesus distancing himself from his mother here? No. He's pointing out the real link between them, namely, among all the people in the gospels, Mary is the pre-eminent example of the one who hears the word of God and keeps it. For this reason, more than because of biological motherhood, Jesus claims her as his mother. Giving birth to Christ is something more than biological. Moreover, it's also something we're asked to do. How? Looking at how Mary gave birth to Christ, we see that it's not something that's done in an instant. Faith, like biology, also relies on a process that has a number of distinct, organic moments. What are these moments? What is the process by which we give birth to faith in the world? First, like Mary, we need to get pregnant by the Holy Spirit. We need to let the word take such root in us that it begins to become part of our actual flesh. Then, like any woman who's pregnant, we have to lovingly gestate, nurture, and protect what is growing inside us until it's sufficiently strong so that it can live on its own, outside us. This process, gestation, as we know, is often accompanied by nausea, morning sickness, and a stretching of the flesh that permanently scars the body. Eventually, of course, we must give birth. What we have nurtured and grown inside of us must, when it is ready, be given birth outside. This will always be excruciatingly painful. There is no painless way to give birth. Birth, however, is only the beginnings of motherhood. Mary gave birth to a baby, but she had to spend years nurturing, coaxing, and cajoling that infant into adulthood. The infant in the crib at Bethlehem is not yet the Christ who preaches, heals, and dies for us. Every mother needs to give birth twice, once biologically and once in faith, once to an infant and once to an adult. Finally, motherhood has still one more phase. As her child grows, matures, and takes on a personality and destiny of its own, the mother, at a point, must ponder (as Mary did). She must let herself be painfully stretched in understanding, in not knowing, in carrying tension, in letting go. She must set free to be itself something that was once so fiercely hers. The pains of childbirth are often gentle compared to this second wrenching. All of this is what Mary went through to give Christ to the world: Pregnancy by the Holy Spirit; gestation of that into a child inside of her; excruciating pain in birthing that to the outside; nurturing that new life into adulthood; and pondering, painfully letting go so that this new life can be its own, not hers. When the woman in the crowd told Jesus, "You must of had a wonderful mother!", his answer had precisely this in mind. Mary was a wonderful mother, but in ways that went far beyond the simple fact of motherhood. She heard the word of God and kept it. That obedience, more than biological motherhood, gave both an infant Jesus and an adult Christ to the world. And in this, Mary wants imitation, not admiration: Our task too is to give birth to Christ. Mary is the paradigm for doing that. From her we get the pattern: Let the word of God take root and make you pregnant; gestate that by giving it the nourishing sustenance of your own life; submit to the pain that is demanded for it to be born to the outside; then spend years coaxing it from infancy to adulthood; and finally, during and after all of this, do some pondering, accept the pain of not understanding and of letting go. Christmas isn't automatic, it can't be taken for granted. It began with Mary, but each of us is asked to make our own contribution to giving flesh to faith in the world.

## MASS OFFERINGS

### Recently Deceased:

Les Maley, Tony Grace, Sam Galluzzo, Bill O'Riordan, Sr Helen Aphthorpe, Josefina Sereno, Paul Maria To Ba Tuan.

### Repose of The Soul:



Fr Adrian Horgan, Fr Paul Ryan, Br Ray Dowding, Francesco Campanale, Francis Doumit, Frederick McDowell, Dorothy Harris, Daniel Lucich, James Brady, Ken Fraser, Elizabeth Keating, John McManus, Aldo Amarino, Salvatore Puglisi, William & Dorothy Starr, Bruce & Estelle Thurn, Anne Cecilia Glass, Reginald & Agnes Glass, Gerald & Frances Gleeson, Faado & Alice Herro, Patrick & Janet Reynolds, Jim Reynolds, Ken Rich, Monica & Patrick Ryan, Francesco & Mary Sorbello, Betty Warbrick, Gerald Wilson, Dr Stephanie Winfield, Philip Winfield, Mary Trefle', Anne Trefle', Elie Sahyoun, Alan & Peg Bailey, Matteo & Caterina Genova, Francesco & Maria Colagiuri, Lisa Cooke, Michael & Mary Cassar, Giuseppe & Romilda Reginato, Julian & Mabel Doyle & Jim Bradbury.

### Anniversaries:

Emily Mattar, Annie Bonett, Anna Torresan, Maria Pagano, Maria Rosa Natale, Ethan Yan, John St George, Dorothea (Dorothy) Starr, Jack Dawson, Michael & Nollia Donegan, Thomas Kenny, John Harrington, Mary Dinhvu & John Hao Vu, Margaret Raeburn.

### Sick Intentions:

Damien Gleeson, Dareth Flavell, George Bugeja, Rudy Raeburn, Carminella Tiberio, Theo McLean, Joseph Akkary, Sylvia Watson, Sheree Mouawad, Virgilio Lim, George Jabbour, Dr Maher Ishak Morian, Graham Byrnes, Stephanie Harrington, Phil Harriss, Sophie O'Donnell, Ken South, Ajith Antony, Pat Fraser, Siena Fabrie, Giuseppe Faraone, Joanna Jo, Simon Alam, Rosanne Sukkar, Henry D'Souza, Kevin O'Connor.

### Special Intentions:

Deceased friends, relatives & Benefactors of the Dominican Order. The Bowden Family, Antonia, Giuseppe, Raffaele, Teresa, Matteo, Filomena & Maria Pagano, Caterina & Francesco Agostino, Sofie & Jerome Druart.



### GAZA CRISIS APPEAL

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P: 13 18 19  
W: [www.catholiccare.org](http://www.catholiccare.org)

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W: [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)



only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:

Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## HOMILY

**PROFESSION OF FAITH APOSTLES' CREED**  
*Or the Nicene Creed may be said.*

**I believe in God, / the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, / who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, / born of the Virgin Mary, / suffered under Pontius Pilate, / was crucified, died and was buried; / he descended into hell; / on the third day he rose again from the dead; / he ascended into heaven, / and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; / from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, / the holy catholic Church, / the communion of saints, / the forgiveness of sins, / the resurrection of the body, / and life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

*After the priest raises the paten with the bread and prays, and then the chalice, we respond to each prayer:*

**R. Blessed be God for ever.**

P. Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**R. May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

P. May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray,  
be offered to you unceasingly,  
to complete what was begun in sacred mystery  
and powerfully accomplish for us your  
saving work.

Through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P. The Lord be with you.

**R. And with your spirit.**

P. Lift up your hearts.

**R. We lift them up to the Lord.**

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**R. It is right and just.**

## PREFACE I OF ADVENT

*After the Preface, we sing or say:*

**All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he  
who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

## THE MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

P. The mystery of faith.

**All: Save us, Saviour of the world,  
for by your Cross and resurrection  
you have set us free.**

## COMMUNION RITE

P. At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...**

P. Deliver us, Lord, we pray ...

**All: For the kingdom, the power and the  
glory are yours now and for ever.**

P. Lord Jesus Christ, who said ...

**R. Amen.**

P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**R. And with your spirit.**

P. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

*All exchange a sign of peace*

## LAMB OF GOD

**All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins  
of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of  
the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of  
the world, grant us peace.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P. Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**R. Lord, I am not worthy**

**that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed.**

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

cf. Isa 35:4

**Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and  
do not fear.**

**Behold, our God will come, and he will  
save us.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P. We implore your mercy, Lord,  
that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of  
our faults

and prepare us for the coming feasts.

Through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

## THE CONCLUDING RITES

P. The Lord be with you.

**R. And with your spirit.**

P. May almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy  
Spirit.

**R. Amen.**

P. Go forth, the Mass is ended.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

### SHEER JOY

What brings joy to you? What makes your heart sing? Joy is infectious. Joy rings out today from the beginning of our prayer with the Entrance Antiphon "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near." (Phil 4:4-5). Isaiah proclaims, "I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God" (Isa 61:10). The psalm, drawn from the Magnificat in Luke, invites us to respond: "My soul rejoices in my God" (Luke 1:46), and we hear "My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my saviour" (vv. 46-47). Paul's final exhortation from his First Letter to the Thessalonians begins "Rejoice always" (1 Thess 5:16). What is the cause of all this rejoicing? It is the story of the Good News unfolding from the prophet Isaiah, becoming flesh through Mary's faithful response; it is God's gift of God's son, Jesus, born among us who has been raised. We draw near to the celebration of Jesus' birth but we live in the light of resurrection, so we have reason to rejoice. Today's Gospel reveals the witness to the coming of Jesus, "a man sent from God" (John 1:6). We hear emphatic repetition of the truth with both "witness" and "light" repeated three times. John is the voice in the wilderness confirming "the one who is coming after" (1:27). Today our hearts lift with joy amid all that might distress us. We are faithful believers in God's saving grace. Take a moment to hear: "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks to God" (1 Thess 5:16-17).

DR ROSEMARY CANAVAN

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