



*We are a welcoming Christian community which embraces all people.
We support each other to grow in faith and create a loving and compassionate community.
We aspire to live as Christ's witnesses of God's unconditional love.*

SOLEMNITY OF THE BIRTH OF THE LORD 25 -12 - 23 CHRISTMAS DAY



Why is Christmas usually regarded as the principal Christian feast, whereas in fact that honour of course belongs to Easter?

Perhaps it's because we have 'tinsellised' Christmas and made it 'nice': a feast that seems to say nothing about suffering and death, a feast that we in fact can't bear to be associated with suffering and death.

But in fact Christmas is all about what it is to be human:
'The Word became flesh':

the mystery of the Incarnation, the becoming-flesh, of God says that God is to be found in all the struggles of human life: the searching, the failing, the sinfulness, the suffering, the sickness, the dying: not to take those things away, *but to be present within them*, and ultimately, as Easter proclaims, to transform them into life.

Christmas isn't a 'nice' feast, but we make it so.

But it *is* a joyful feast: the joyful feast that God became all that we are. *Fr Colin*

WELCOME

A very warm welcome to anyone visiting our parish this Christmas. It is good to have you with us. If you have any questions or would like to know more about our community please visit our parish website at www.lindfieldkillara.org.au for information on parish programmes and ministries.

We wish you a holy and happy Christmas. Please visit us again.

WEEKDAY MASS THIS WEEK THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

Only Christmas and Easter have an Octave - eight days which count liturgically as One Great Day. Please try to come to weekday Mass to celebrate the great Christian feast of the Lord's birth - and after the Octave we continue with the remainder of the Christmas Season until the feast of the Epiphany on Sunday 7th January.

Tues. 26th Dec 10:00am at Killara (Feast of St Stephen)
Wed. 27th Dec. 10:00am at Lindfield (Feast, St John, apostle)
Thur. 28th Dec 10:00am at Lindfield (Feast of the Holy Innocents)
Fri. 29th Dec. 10:00am at Lindfield

Next Sunday 31st December is the celebration of the Holy Family - a feast with the rank of 'Solemnity' in our parish as it is the patronal feast of one of our two Parish Churches.



One of the special feast days of this Christmas Season is the greatest and the most ancient of the feasts of Mary - 1st January, New Year's Day: (the Solemnity of Mary as Mother of God).

New Year's Day is the Octave Day of Christmas and celebrates Mary's role in our salvation: that it was through her acceptance of God's call and placing herself at the service of God that the Word was made flesh in and through her. As such this feast celebrates Mary as our model as she challenges us likewise to be 'mothers of God' bringing Jesus to birth in our world through our own lives.

The sacraments for the children 2024

All the details (including dates) regarding our preparation programmes and the celebrations of First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion in 2024 can now be found on our website at:

www.lindfieldkillara.org.au → 'Sacraments' →
'Children's Sacraments'



A HUGE THANK YOU to all those who have worked so hard to make our Christmas celebrations special: to our Parish Office staff for all their work in coordinating the preparations for our celebrations; all those who helped to prepare our two churches for our celebrations, our musicians and singers, liturgical ministers, those who coordinated the preparations for our Children's Masses and so many more.

Fr Colin

As we gather in worship on this day we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which our parish is found.
We also pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Some sad news

Sadly, the time of Fr Thomas' appointment as Assistant Priest at our parish of Lindfield Killara is soon to come to an end. Bishop Anthony is in the process of making a number of clergy appointments and has advised Fr Thomas and myself that Fr Thomas is to be appointed Assistant Priest at our Cathedral Parish at Hornsby as of 9th February.

We will of course organise a proper farewell for Thomas once the coming holiday period is over, but I'm sure I speak for all of us in thanking Fr Thomas for his presence with us and his rich ministry among us over the last seven and a half years. We are blessed that his term of appointment has been much longer than is usually the case for an Assistant Priest.

I know there will be sadness in Fr Thomas' heart too, as it is always difficult to move from the community you have loved and served. Let's hold him in our prayers that his new appointment will bring him great blessing. In the meantime we're glad that we still have Fr Thomas with us for a little while yet.

Bishop Anthony assures us that a priest will soon to be appointed to assist us in our parish though there may be a gap between Fr Thomas' departure and the new appointment. If that is the case our neighbour, Chatswood parish, will assist us.
Fr Colin

Food for the spirit:

I did my doctoral thesis on the classical, philosophical proofs for the existence of God. The concept had always intrigued me: "Can you prove that God exists?" After researching the thought of Aquinas, Anselm, Descartes, Leibnitz, and Spinoza (all of whom assert that you can "prove" the existence of God through rational argument) what was the conclusion? Can you prove that God exists?

No, at least not in a way that would compel anyone to make an act of faith on the basis of a mathematical or scientific argument.

God can't be proven in that way, albeit these "proofs" point to some important things. The existence of God can't be empirically proven because God doesn't work that way. God doesn't appear in the world as the conclusion to a mathematical equation. God-as we know through the way Christ was born-comes into our lives at the end of a gestation process.

That also describes how faith is born in our lives. God never dynamites his way into our lives with a force so powerful that we can't resist. The divine never takes us by storm. No.

God always enters the world in the same way that Jesus did on the first Christmas. God is gestated in a womb and appears as a helpless infant that has to be picked up, nurtured, & coaxed into adulthood. The presence of God in our world, at least within the dynamics of the incarnation, depends upon a certain human consent and cooperation.

For God to take on real flesh & power in the world we must first do something. What? The answer to that lies in the way Jesus was born. Mary, Jesus' mother, shows us a certain blueprint, a pattern for how God is born into our world and how faith is born in our lives. What's the pattern?

When we look at how Mary gave birth to Jesus, we see that there are four moments in the process: 1) Impregnation by the Holy Spirit; 2) gestation of God within one's body and soul; 3) the stretching and agony of giving birth; 4) and the nurturing of an infant into adulthood.

What's implied in each of these?

Impregnation by the Holy Spirit: Mary, we are told, became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. What an extraordinary notion! This doesn't just mean that Jesus didn't have a human father, but also that Mary so let the seed of God's spirit (charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, fidelity, mildness,

'Giving birth to God'.

faith, and chastity) take root in her that it began to grow into actual flesh.

Gestation of God within one's body: As we know, pregnancy is not followed immediately by childbirth. A long, slow process first occurs, gestation. In the silent recesses of her heart and body (and surely not without the normal morning-sickness that accompanies pregnancy) an umbilical cord began to grow between Mary and that new life. Her flesh began to give physical sustenance to the life of God and this steadily grew into a child which, at a point, as in all pregnancies, demanded to be born into the world.

The agony of giving birth: Only with much groaning and stretching of the flesh can a child emerge into this world. It is always excruciatingly painful to birth something to the outside world, to take what's precious inside & give it birth outside. Mary, despite all the over-pious treatises that would make Jesus' birth something unnatural, experienced the normal birth-pains common to all mothers. Nothing secretly gestated is born into the world without pain, Jesus included.

Nurturing an infant into adulthood: Annie Dillard once suggested that we always find God in our lives as Jesus was found in Bethlehem on Christmas: a helpless infant in the straw who must be picked up & nurtured into adulthood. "God's works are as good as we make them. That God is helpless, our baby to bear, self-abandoned on the doorstep of time, wondered at by cattle and oxen." Mary gave birth to the baby, Jesus, but what she ultimately gave the world was the adult, Christ. Like all mothers she spent years nursing, cajoling, teaching, & nurturing.

In that pattern, the incarnation, looking at how Mary gave birth to Christ, we are given a blueprint that invites imitation not admiration. Mary is the model of faith. What she did each of us too is called upon to do, namely, give birth to God in our lives. Christmas is for marvelling at what once took place, but it's also for imitation, for continuing to give God flesh in the world.

How do you prove to anyone, yourself included, that God exists? You don't. The object of our faith and worship doesn't appear as a compelling proof at the end of a rational experiment. God has to be gestated into the world in the same way as Mary did all those years ago at the first Christmas.

Fr Ron Rolheiser omi

OUR CHINESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY 將臨期第四主日 24.12.2023

讀經一 (達味的王權·在主面前永遠存在。)

恭讀撒慕爾紀下 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

讀經二 (這奧秘從永遠以來·就是秘而不宣的·現今卻彰顯了。)

恭讀聖保祿宗徒致羅馬人書 16:25-27

福音 (你將懷孕生子。)

恭讀聖路加福音 1:26-38

那時候·天使加俾額爾奉天主差遣·往加里肋亞一座名叫納匝肋的城去·到一位童貞女那裡·她已與達味家族中·一個名叫若瑟的男子訂了婚;童貞女的名字叫瑪利亞。

天使進去向瑪利亞說:「萬福!充滿恩寵者·上主與你同在!」【在女人中你是蒙祝福的。】瑪利亞卻因這話驚惶不安·便思慮這樣的請安·有什麼意思。

天使對她說:「瑪利亞·不要害怕·因為你在天主前·獲得了寵幸。看·

你將懷孕生子·並要給他起名叫耶穌·他將是偉大的·並被稱為至高者的兒子;上主天主要把他祖先達味的御座賜給他·他要為王·統治雅各伯家·直到永遠;他的王權沒有終結。」

瑪利亞便向天使說:「這事怎能成就?因為我不認識男人。」

天使答覆她說:「聖神要臨於你·至高者的能力要庇蔭你·因此·那要誕生的聖者·將稱為天主的兒子·且看·你的親戚依撒伯爾·她雖在老年·仍懷了男胎·本月已六個月了;她原是素稱不生育的·因為·在天主前·是沒有不能的事。」

華人天主教會北區中心

主日彌撒正午12時

彌撒後午餐聚會

主日學 24/12 - 28/01 假期, 4/02 恢復

牧職修女 司徒金美修女

0419 426 899

北區中心聯絡 Gloria Cheung

0416 118 089

31/12 — 正午12時 盧伯榮神父 主禮 Lindfield彌撒

31/12 — 下午 2時至 4時半 盧伯榮神父 主持粵語講座: 亞巴郎的信德及愛德

THE PRAYERS AND RESPONSES OF MASS

GLORIA:

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen

THE PSALM

PS 97 (j98):1-6

Sing a new song to the Lord
for God has worked wonders.
The Lord's right hand and holy arm
have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
The Lord
has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord
with the harp,
with the sound of music.
With trumpets
and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

Save us, Saviour of the world; for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free.

Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of everlasting life. Grant that life to:

Recently deceased: Patrick Haynes, Alex Newton, John Playoust, Moya Dwyer, Robert Webb, Peter Rodgers, Teresita Borthwick, Johnny Alackakunnel, Gerry McCormack,

Anniversary: Mollie Curtin.

And for: deceased members of the Curtin, Rolfe, Hughes and Egan families.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Evina Wong, Mary Moran, Peter Tsang, Wolfgang Liers, Tanya Walsh, Jutta Mathur, Jessica Keen, Therese Playoust, Ali Crawford, Morna Sutherland, Barbara McMullen, Nicholas Sutherland, Jesse Langford, Anthony Ellison, Cyril Ferriere, Alex Noble, William Wise, Opheilia Mari Umali, Rosanna Comastri, Janette Brennan

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all
ages.

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were
made.

For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow at the words in bold)

**and by the Holy Spirit was
incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.**

For our sake he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was
buried,

and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the
Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no
end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father &
the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the
prophets.

I believe in one, holy,
catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism
for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward
to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen

Contacting the Parish Team

26 Dec - 8 Jan

During the holiday period between
Tue 26 Dec to Mon 8 Jan, the Parish
Office's opening hours will be limited.

If you require urgent assistance or
would like to make an appointment,
please leave a voicemail at **9416 3702**

; alternatively, please email to:
parishoffice@lindfieldkillara.org.au

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES



are available on the pews in both
our churches.

The contributions via the
Christmas Offering supplements
the funds raised via the First
Collection for the support and

upkeep of the priests of our parish and diocese. The fund it
goes to depends very much on these special contributions
at Christmas and Easter, without which it struggles to meet
its commitments.

This fund not only provides the living allowance and
household costs for the priests of the parish, but also
provides funds for health care for priests and maintains
priests in their retirement. Please support the Christmas
Offerings. The envelopes can be placed on the collection
plates along with the normal collections over the next few
weeks.

Ways that you can support our parish

- ♦ **BY DIRECT DEBIT CONTRIBUTIONS** from your bank account
to our parish accounts:

1st Collection: (providing for Frs Colin & Thomas & retired &
sick clergy of the diocese): **BSB 062 784 Ac 10000 1624**

Second Collection: (providing for all the operating costs of
the parish): **BSB 062 784 Acct 10000 1623**

OR

- ♦ **CREDIT CARD** : scan this code & then select each of our two
collections:

OR

- ♦ **PERIODIC PAYMENTS FROM YOUR CREDIT
CARD:** just click on the hotlink box
entitled 'Supporting parish finances' on
the homepage of our website
(www.lindfieldkillara.org.au) **and scroll
down to 2i.b. for the form.** or simply
email accounts@lindfieldkillara.org.au
for assistance.



What's on for the kids, youth and families in 2024?

CHILDREN'S MASS, WITH CHILDREN'S CHOIR

is celebrated at the 10:15am Mass at Lindfield on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month (except January). If your child would like to join the choir please contact the Parish Office.

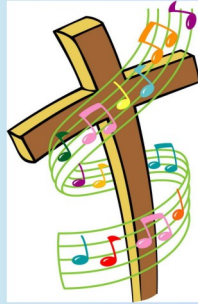


Mass is followed by morning tea in St Brigid's Hall above the church - a relaxing cuppa for parents and other parishioners, a time for the kids to relax and play together.



Youth and Family Mass - a NEW LOOK in 2024

In 2024, instead of a monthly Youth and Family Mass on the third Sunday of the month at the earlier time of 5:30pm, the Sunday evening Mass at Lindfield will be a Youth and Family Mass EVERY week, with its great music and choir, and will always be at the same time of 6:00pm.



On the third Sunday of each month however we will still have something special - Mass will be followed by a Parish Pizza Night in St Brigid's Hall above the church: a simple but fun meal together which still allows you to have the kids home by 7:30pm.



Altar serving

A wonderful way to serve God and the community while having a birds-eye view of what's happening at the altar! All children who have received their First Holy Communion are welcome to be trained as an Altar Server. Please contact the Parish office.



Other activities for young people and families will be advertised on this page as they draw near.

COMMUNION: SILENT NIGHT

Silent night, Holy night,
All is calm, all is bright.
Round the virgin mother and child
Holy infant so tender and mild.
Sleep in Heavenly Peace.
Sleep in Heavenly Peace.
Silent night, Holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight:
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia.
Christ the Saviour is born.
Christ the Saviour is born. .
Silent night, Holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams your holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

RECESSIONAL: JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world!
The Lord has come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing.
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing
Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns;
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy
He rules the world with truth and grace

ENTRANCE HYMN:

1. O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
born the King of Angels:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord

2. God from God,
Light from Light,
here in the Virgin's womb,
he deigns to lie;
Son of the Father,
Begotten, not created: **R.**

3. Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of
heav'n above;
Glory to God in the
highest: **R.**

4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning
Jesus, to you be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing; **R.**

DEDICATION OF THE GIFTS:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the newborn King.

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold Him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the newborn King!

Hail, the heav'n-born prince of peace!
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the newborn King!

And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders of His love.

