



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.

VERSION OF PARISH BULLETIN FOR PHONES

FOR THE VERSION FOR LARGE SCREENS PLEASE CLICK THE OTHER LINK ON THE PAGE WHERE YOU ACCESSED THIS.

SOLEMNITY OF THE LORD'S BIRTH 25-12-21
SOLEMNITY OF HOLY FAMILY 26 - 12 - 21

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*

NOTICE OF CHANGED WEEKDAY MASS PROGRAMME IN CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR PERIOD

Our weekday Mass programme will be a little different in the week between Christmas and New Year, and also in the first few weeks of the New Year. Please watch the bulletin each week for details.

For this coming week :

Mon. 27th Dec	8:00am at Killara
Tues. 28th Dec.	8:00am at Killara
Wed. 29th Dec	No Mass
Thurs.30th Dec	10:00am at Lindfield
Fri. 31st Dec.	10:00am at Lindfield
Sat. 1st Jan.	11:00am at Lindfield

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

This week: open Wednesday (29th) only.

NEW YEAR'S DAY: SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD



One of the special feast days of this Christmas Season is the greatest & 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.

There will be a combined Mass on that day for the whole parish at 11:00am which will be celebrated in Holy Family Church at Lindfield .

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

are available **on the pews** in both our churches.

Ways to give:

- ◆ cash or cheques can be placed in the envelopes and placed on the collection bowls over the next few weeks along with the normal collections.
- ◆ If you wish to contribute by credit card there are small sheets for recording credit card details inside the envelopes which can then be placed in the envelopes.
- ◆ Online contributions can be made to the First Collection account (putting 'Christmas Offering' as the reference) - see the parish website—'Supporting Parish Finances' on the homepage.



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 diocesan 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.

He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.

St Augustine

The idea that there's a force of love and logic behind the universe is overwhelming to start with, if you believe it. Actually, maybe even far-fetched to start with, but the idea that that same love and logic would choose to describe itself as a baby born in straw and poverty is genius, and brings me to my knees, literally. To me, as a poet, I am just in awe of that. It makes some sort of poetic sense. It's the thing that makes me a believer, though it didn't dawn on me for many years.

Bono



In the beginning
was the Word;
the Word was
with God and
the Word was
God

...through him
all things came
to be, not one
thing had its
being but
through him.

All that came to
be had life in
him, and that
life was the light
of people, a light
that shines in the
dark, a light that
darkness could
not overpower.

...The Word was
made flesh, he
lived among us,
and we saw his
glory, the glory
that is his as the
only Son of the
Father, full of
grace and truth.

...Indeed from
his fullness we
have, all of us
received, grace
in return for
grace.

John's Gospel
Chapter 1

Something
which has
existed from
the beginning,
that we have
heard, and we
have seen
with our own
eyes;

that we have
watched and
touched with
our hands:

the Word who
is life

that is our
subject.

That life was
made visible:
we saw it and
we are giving
our testimony,
telling you of
the eternal life
which was
with the
Father and has
been made
visible to us.

1 John 1: 1- 2

Food for the soul

GIVING BIRTH TO GOD

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, & 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 & appears as a helpless infant that has to be picked up, nurtured, and 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 and 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, 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. It's 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 and 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 had to spend years nursing, cajoling, teaching, and nurturing an infant into adulthood.

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 marveling 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,
The Centre for Liturgy, University
of St Louis*

A HUGE THANK YOU to all those who have worked so hard to make our Christmas celebrations special in the very demanding circumstances of 2021: 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

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME DATES FOR 2022



As advised earlier, while retaining the proper order of the sacraments in which Confirmation precedes First Communion, Bishop Anthony Randazzo has raised the age for each sacrament by a year so that the children may be better

prepared.

The letter giving all the details and dates for our Sacramental Preparation Programmes for 2022 is now available **on the parish website under 'Sacraments' → 'Children's Sacraments.'**

Please download the letter and note all the dates involved in the sacraments which your child will celebrate next year. We look forward to helping them prepare for these precious encounters with the Lord.

THIS SUNDAY 26TH is the Solemnity of the Holy Family of Nazareth, patronal feast of our Lindfield church and our Parish School.

NEXT SUNDAY 2ND JANUARY is the great Christmas feast of the Epiphany of the Lord.

A home celebration for Advent:

Blessing of your Christmas Crib

The Christmas Crib or manger scene helps us to focus our celebration of the Word made flesh. You might like to pray this prayer at home before your Christmas crib.

Leader: As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we pause to bless this Christmas manger scene. The practice of erecting such mangers was begun by Saint Francis of Assisi as a means to set forth the message of Christmas.

When we look upon these figures, the Christmas Gospel comes alive and we are moved to rejoice in the mystery of the Word made flesh.

Leader: Let us ask God's blessing on this Christmas manger and upon ourselves, that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus may share in the salvation he accomplished.

1. For the Church of God, as we recall the birth of Jesus, that we may always proclaim his gift of new life for all people. **R. Come, Lord, dwell with us.**

2. For the world in which we live, that it may come to recognise Christ just as he was recognised and welcomed by the angels & shepherds. **R.**

3. For our homes, that Jesus who was laid in the manger may dwell with us always. **R.**

A Prayer of blessing

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Saviour was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,
bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Saviour of all,
and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen



聖家節（慶日）27.12.2020

讀經一（你親生的兒子要做你的承繼人。）

恭讀創世紀 15:1-6;21:1-3

答唱詠 詠105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9

【答】：他是我們的天主；他永遠信守自己的盟約。（參閱詠105:7,8）

領：請眾感謝上主，呼號他的聖名；請眾在萬民中，宣揚他的功行。請眾歌頌他，詠讚他，傳述他的奇妙化工。【答】

領：請你們以他的聖名為光榮；願尋求上主的人，樂滿心中。請眾尋求上主和他的德能，要時常不斷追求他的儀容。【答】

領：天主的僕人亞巴郎的後裔，上主揀選的雅各伯的兒子！上主是我們的天主；他的統治遍及普世各處。【答】

領：他永遠懷念著自己的盟約，直到萬代不忘自己的許諾；就是向亞巴郎所立的盟約，向依撒格所起的誓諾。【答】

讀經二（亞巴郎、撒辣及依撒格的信德。）

恭讀致希伯來人書 11:8,11-12,17-19

福音前歡呼

領：天主在古時，曾多次，並以多種方式，藉著先知，對我們的祖先說過話。但在這末期，他藉著自己的兒子，對我們說了話。天主立了他為萬有的承繼者，並藉著他，造成了宇宙。（希1:1-2）

福音（孩子漸漸長大，充滿智慧。）

恭讀聖路加福音 2:22,39-40

按梅瑟的法律，一滿了他們取潔的日期，耶穌的父母——若瑟和瑪利亞，便帶著孩子上耶路撒冷，去獻給上主。他們按照上主的法律，辦完了一切，便返回加里肋亞，他們的本城納匝肋。孩子漸漸長大而強壯，充滿智慧；天主的恩寵常在他身上。——上主的話。

**華人天主教會北區中心Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Killara 12月27日正午12時

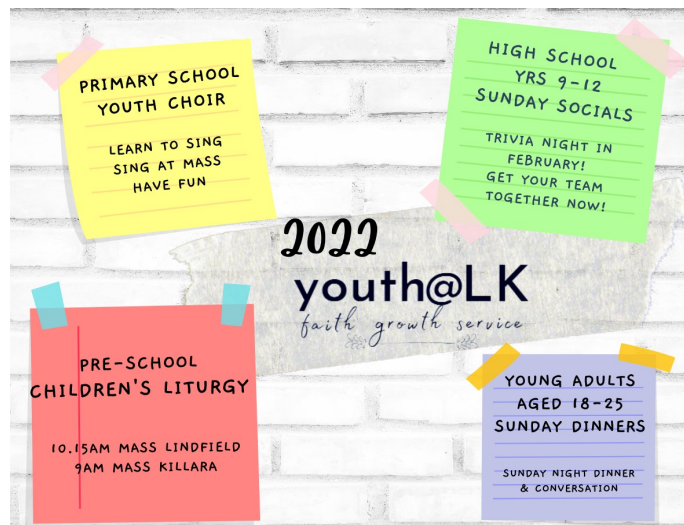
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**北區中心聯絡 Gloria Cheung ☎0416-118089

Young people and our parish

Our youth programme invites all young people from birth to young adult to participate in one of our programmes. A strong faith life provides foundation for the young offering comfort & hope in at a time when many are anxious. With a motto of “faith, growth, service” we aim to help young people become faithful, caring & productive members of society.

Please join us for one of the programmes below, or suggest one of your own! You can sign up by emailing us at youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au or check our website www.lindfieldkillara.org.au for the latest information.



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

Recently deceased: Brian Anthony McGrane, Shirley Smith, Keith Smith, Marco Lamberti, Lorraine Grace, Anna Asnicar, Romano Gazzoli, Margaret Nakkan, Vince Bryant.

Anniversary: Mollie Curtin, Henry Yee Joy.

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

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Trevor Swift, Morna Sutherland, Albert Yu, Barbara McMullan,, Sally Cogle, Nicholas Sutherland, Jesse Langford, Anthony Ellison, Wolfgang Liers, Cyril Ferriere, Alex Noble, William Wise, Lise Therese Ferriere, Ian Coffey, Maureen Hobbs, Russell Adams.

And for all affected by COVID.