

# St Benedict's Parish Arcadia



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

20 & 21 DECEMBER 2025

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,  
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

### OPENING PRAYER

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son  
was made known by the message of an Angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross  
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy  
Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### SELF-REFLECTION: COURAGE & FAITH

This Sunday's Gospel, Joseph is faced with fear, uncertainty, and a future he did not expect. In the quiet of his confusion, God speaks to him in a dream. Joseph listens, trusts, and acts. Without words, he becomes a model of faithful obedience, welcoming Jesus into his life and accepting the role God has given him. Through Joseph's trust, Emmanuel—*God with us*—enters the world.

#### I Reflect

- Where in my life is God asking me to trust, even when I do not fully understand?
- Do I make space to listen for God's voice in moments of uncertainty?
- Like Joseph, am I willing to act with courage and faith?

## Obedient Love

#### Prayer:

Loving God,  
help me to trust you when the path ahead is unclear.  
Give me a listening heart and the courage to say yes to  
your will, so that I may welcome Jesus more fully into my  
life. Amen.

### Fourth Sunday of Advent



### PARISH MASS TIMES

#### Weekends:

Saturday 7:00pm Vigil

Sunday 9:00am

Sunday 10:30am

#### Weekday Masses for this week:

Monday to Wednesday 9:30am

Fridays 6:30pm Adoration

7:00pm Mass & Confession

(Reconciliation)

Saturdays 9:00am to 10:00am

Adoration & Confession (Reconciliation)

### MONASTERY CHAPEL Masses

Sundays 7:00am

Daily 7:00am

Please contact Father Shansana or Parish  
Office for the following:

Baptisms  
Reconciliation  
For the Sick  
Marriages  
Funerals

Parish Priest:  
Fr Shansana 0437 884 233  
Parish Office 9653 2312



**First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14 (JB)**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*The virgin will conceive.*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No,' Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David:

are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Emmanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**



*"They shall see the glory of the Lord".*

**Responsorial Psalm:** Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

**Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7 (JB)**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**A virgin will give birth to a son;  
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.  
Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-24 (JB)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.*

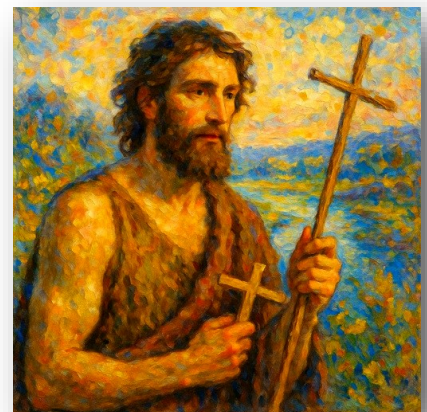
This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

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



*"Of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen".*

## GOSPEL REFLECTION

**Readings: Isaiah 7:10-14 / Romans 1:1-7 / Matthew 1:18-24**

Today's readings revolve around a simple yet demanding invitation: **to trust God when the way forward is unclear.**

In **Isaiah**, King Ahaz is offered a sign from God but hesitates. Even so, God remains faithful and promises a sign anyway—*"The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel."* God does not withdraw His promise because of human fear. He steps closer, assuring His people that **He is with them.**

In **Matthew's Gospel**, we see how that promise is fulfilled. Joseph faces confusion, fear, and potential shame. His plans are disrupted by God's unexpected work. Yet Joseph listens, trusts, and acts. He takes Mary into his home and names the child Jesus. Without words, Joseph teaches us that **faith is shown through obedience.**

**St Paul**, in his letter to the Romans, reminds us that this child—Jesus Christ—is not only born into history but **sent for the sake of the world.** Through Him we receive grace and are called to belong to God. Faith is not private or passive; it is a response to God's initiative.

Together, these readings proclaim a powerful truth:  
God keeps His promises. God comes close. And God asks for our trust.

### Key Thought

**Faith means trusting God enough to act, even when we do not fully understand.**

### Take-Home Challenge

This week, ask yourself: *Where is God inviting me to trust Him more deeply?*

Choose one situation where you are uncertain, anxious, or hesitant, and consciously place it in God's hands. Like Joseph, take one small step of faith.

**Loving God, You are Emmanuel, always with us. Give us the faith to trust Your plans and the courage to say yes, even when the path is unclear. Amen.**

## WEEKDAY LITURGICAL READINGS

### December 2025

Monday 22: 1 Sam 1:24-28. Lk 1:46-56.  
**R.** My heart rejoices in the Lord, my Saviour.

Tuesday 23: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24. Lk 1:57-66.  
**R.** Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.  
**St John of Kanty, priest**

Wednesday 24: 2 Sam 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16. Lk 1:67-79.  
**R.** For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.



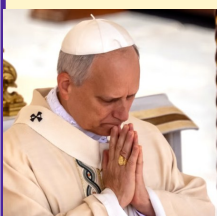
Source: Ordo 2025 image: mycatholic.life images: bible.art

## THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS



Next week, we joyfully celebrate the coming of **Christmas**, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a time to reflect on God's great love for us, made visible in the gift of His Son. As we gather with family, friends, and our parish community, may our hearts be filled with **peace, hope, and gratitude.**

Let us remember to welcome Christ into our lives, not only in our celebrations but also in our daily actions of love and kindness.



**Pope Leo XIV prayer intention for December 2025:**

**For Christians in areas of conflict**

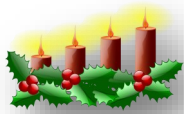
Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.



## PIETY SHOP NEWS

### THANK YOU TO ALL!

I would like to wish you all a **Blessed and Merry Christmas** and a **safe and happy New Year**.



Thank you for your purchases and continued support of the **Piety Shop**. Your generosity helps sustain this important ministry within our parish.

I extend a very heartfelt thank you to everyone who volunteers their time to keep the Piety Shop open. Without our volunteers, this ministry would not be possible.

Special thanks for your time and dedication throughout the year to:

**Rosie Sakkal  
Mary Aboud  
Paula El-Chaar  
Nerida Woodbury  
Rachael Rotton  
Josephine Letteri  
Megan Kocsis  
Tania Tassone  
Mary Camilleri  
Jules Ozolins**

My apologies if I have missed anyone.

Please note that the **Piety Shop** will have **limited opening hours in January 2026**.

God bless,  
**Lila Bacha**

### GIFT ITEMS NEEDED FOR FETE

Donations of new gift items are greatly needed for our upcoming parish fete.

Suitable items include gifts for adults and children, such as:

**hampers, candles, books, toys, kitchen items, home décor, games, or novelty items.**

All donations may be taken to the parish office during parish hours.

Thank you for your generosity and for supporting our parish fete — every donation helps make this event a success.

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE WEEK

This week's volunteers of the week nomination goes to:

**DANNY KAZZI & JASON SAKKAL**

For the mowing of the parish lawns — a big job that helps keep our grounds welcoming and well maintained.

**LUKE ROTTON**

For his hard work assisting Joe in maintaining the parish gardens.

**ANGELA EGIZIANO**

For her generous donation of a chasuble to the parish.

**TERESA MONARDO**

For the new oil candles at the altar.

Thank you to our Volunteers of the Week. We are grateful for your time, service, and the many ways you support our parish.

### CHRISTMAS ROSTER

The Christmas roster is now **displayed at the Sacristy window**. We warmly invite you to **help out at our Christmas Masses** by adding your name to volunteer.

**Every helping hand is appreciated!**

### NEXT DRAFT ROSTER

The next draft roster is now available at the sacristy window. Please check it at your earliest convenience and mark any changes that are needed.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and support.

### ONE YEAR MEMORIAL



**JOHN JOSEPH NIX**  
(*Gabrielle Wall's father*)



**28th December 2024**

Memorial Mass will be held on  
**Sunday the 28th December 2025 at 9am.**

*Eternal rest grant to him O Lord  
and let the Perpetual Light Shine upon him  
And may he rest in Peace  
Amen.*

## In Our Parish

(please let us know if you would like someone added here)

**We welcome into God's family all who were recently baptised.**

**We pray for the sick of our Parish, especially** *Kath Moran, Nora Pupili, Vincent Bacha, Charlie Micallef, Brother Mario, and Father Alberic.*

**We remember in our prayers all our dearly beloved who have died:**

***Gaston Florian**, Maria Pappallardo, Shannon Murray, Pellegrino Vaccarella, Najm Azzi, Carmel Russo, Margaret McKinley, Joe Guiana ~ May they rest in Peace.*



## PRAYER FOR THE BONDI VICTIMS

*Loving God,  
We pray for all those who lost their lives at Bondi,  
for their families and loved ones who grieve,  
and for all who are wounded in body or spirit.*

*May Your peace comfort those in sorrow,  
Your strength sustain those who suffer,  
and Your light shine in the midst of darkness.*

*We entrust all victims to Your loving mercy  
and ask Your blessing upon all who continue to bring  
help and healing. Amen.*

## MASS FOR THE CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE

Bishop Anthony extends a very warm invitation to the clergy and people of God in Broken Bay to join him for Mass and Closing of the Jubilee Year. The Relics from our three Shrines of Hope will also journey to the Cathedral to be present for this Mass.

**Date: Sunday 28 December 2025 Time: 9.30am**

**Location: Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral,  
Waitara**

## ST BENEDICT'S MAKER'S TABLE

Thank you to all the ladies who have joined us for our Makers Table workshops this year! We have had a wonderful time creating many various masterpieces.

Our workshops will begin again in March 2026.

Let us know if you have any suggestions or if you may be able to share your creative talents for future workshops!



Wishing you all a blessed Christmas.  
Nerida & Martine



## ST BENEDICT'S KIDS YOUTH GROUP

**Ages 8-12 years**

Our kids' youth group has finished for the year, with Friday being our last session. We sincerely thank everyone who attended and all who helped out throughout the year. What a wonderful group of children we have!

We pray that you all have a joyful Christmas and a happy New Year, and we look forward to seeing you again in the new year!

## ITALIAN ROSARY GROUP

Every **Monday 2.00pm.**  
Everyone welcome.



For more details call

Angela Egiziano on 9652 1358.

## CCC PRAYER GROUP



Prayer meeting held every  
**Wednesday morning:**  
after 9.30am Mass.

*Come and meet new people and  
have a cuppa!*

For more details call  
Mary Camilleri on 0403 116 987.

## CRAFT GROUP

Meets **4th Tuesday of the  
month, 10:30 am** in the parish  
meeting room.

**No meeting in December —  
back in January.**

## CATHECHISTS' NEWS

So many to thank this week! A big thanks to Gebran and Loreto for hosting our end of year Catechist Christmas dinner this week. It was a lovely time to relax and reflect on the year. Here is a photo:



Thanks also to Fr Shansana for Mass to start the evening and Violet's hymn during communion, thanks to those who were able to attend and brought so much food for us all to enjoy and thanks to John Donnelly and Maricel Mariposa from the CCD for making time to be present!

A big thank you to all Catechists, full time and part time, for giving their commitment and time throughout the year and to all in the parish for your prayers in support of this ministry!

Wishing all a very blessed and holy Christmas and New Year and a safe and enjoyable holiday break!

May God bless you all abundantly,  
Miriam Brown [srearcadia@gmail.com](mailto:srearcadia@gmail.com)  
Parish Catechist Co-ordinator

## FROM HURT TO HOPE

Life can feel heavy when someone close causes pain. Even small steps—like talking to someone trusted, setting boundaries, or accepting support—take courage. Each choice to care for yourself is a victory, helping you slowly rebuild strength, confidence, and a future filled with peace and respect.

## HEALING MASS

Healing Mass is held on the first Thursday of each month at 9.30am.



## SAINT OF THE WEEK

### Saint John of Kanty (Cantius), Priest

C. 1390-1473

**Feast Day: December 23**

**Patron Saint of teachers,  
students, priests, pilgrims, Lithuania, and Poland**

**Canonized by Pope Clement XIII on July 16, 1767**

Jan Kanty (John Cantius in English) was born in 1390 in the small town of Kęty, in the Kingdom of Poland. Kęty is about ten miles south of Oświęcim, which the Nazis renamed Auschwitz, the location of the largest and most horrific concentration camp in World War II.

Young John proved to be intelligent and devout, receiving his early education in his hometown. Around age twenty-three, he enrolled in the Kraków Academy where he studied philosophy. During John Cantius' studies, he was introduced to *Devotio Moderna* (Modern Devotion) that emphasized personal devotion, humility, and conversion through meditation upon Sacred Scripture and prayer.

Around 1418, John earned his doctorate in philosophy. He taught philosophy classes at the Kraków Academy while studying theology. Upon completing his studies, John was ordained a priest and became rector at the school of the Canons Regular of the Most Holy Sepulcher in Miechów, about twenty-five miles north of Kraków, where he served for about eight years. The Canons Regular followed Saint Augustine's Rule. With no printing press, one of Father John's duties was to work as a copyist of Scripture and books through which he grew in an intimate knowledge of Sacred Scripture. He also copied Saint Augustine's works, inspiring his deep love of Augustinian philosophy and theology. Father John copied more than 18,000 pages of text that still exist.

In 1429, Father John accepted a position at Kraków Academy where he became a beloved professor of Sacred Scripture, philosophy, and theology. He had a reputation for making complex philosophical and theological concepts accessible to his students, combining depth with clarity and practical application. He earned a doctorate in theology, becoming head of the Philosophy Department, and eventually, head of the Theology Department.

Besides being an excellent professor, Father John cared for his students' spiritual needs with compassion and concern. He was known as a powerful preacher and a defender of orthodoxy. One raging debate in the Church was conciliarism, an assertion that the pope should submit to Church councils' authority. Father John became a staunch defender of the papacy, with a profound effect upon his colleagues and students.

Father John also became well-known and well-loved in Kraków for his generosity and love of the poor. Whatever he had was theirs, minus the meager amount he required for his own needs. One story relates that he even gave away his shoes to a poor person. When asked why he was going barefoot, he replied that a poor person needed his shoes more than he did.

Father John's prayer life was greatly enhanced by his penitential life. He slept on the floor and ate very little. He made four 1,800-mile pilgrimages to the Holy Land, carrying his one sack of belongings. Many miracles were attributed to his intercession by those who visited his tomb. These later miracles drew pilgrims from across Europe to the university's Collegiate Church of Saint Anne, where he was buried.

*Saint John Cantius, though a great intellectual, your humility, deep faith, and genuine love for those to whom you ministered had a lasting effect upon your community and upon all of Poland. Please pray that I will imitate your virtues so that I, too, will one day be counted among the saints. Saint John Cantius, pray for me. Jesus, I trust in You.*



## ST BENEDICT'S COUNTRY FETE - SUNDAY MARCH 22, 2026



### VOLUNTEERS & DONATIONS NEEDED!

Our **Parish Fete** is coming up soon in March next year, and we need your help to make it a great success!

#### Volunteers Needed:

We're looking for enthusiastic helpers to assist at various stalls on the day. If you can lend a hand, please contact **Tania Tassone, Fete Coordinator**, on **0401 597 278**. Your time and support will make a big difference!

#### Donations Welcome:

We're also seeking **donations of prizes** for the **raffle** and **chocolate wheel**.

#### ITEMS NEEDED:

- Think of prizes people would love to win:  
**homewares, hampers, toys, gift cards, beauty items, etc.**
- Only **brand new**, quality gifts will be accepted.
- **No second-hand items or books**, please.

#### FETE MEETING

Our next Fete meeting will be held on

**Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 7pm**

Everyone is welcome to join us to bring ideas to make this fete successful and fun once more!

We have gift boxes available for anyone to take home and fill, or alternatively, you can bring your gift donations to the parish office where we will box and wrap them for you. This would be really appreciated.

#### CRAFT STALL:

We will be holding a **CRAFT STALL** at our parish fete, and contributions from our many talented parishioners would be greatly appreciated. **Handmade items, crafts, or any creative donations** are welcome to help make the stall a success!

Your generosity and support help make our fete a joyful community celebration. Thank you for your kindness and participation!

**COUNTDOWN: ONLY 13 WEEKS TO GO! Mark your calendars and great ready!**



#### MONASTERY CHAPEL Liturgy of the Hours

*"Seven times a day I will praise you"*  
Psalm 119:164

The liturgy of the hours is a set of prayers (psalms, hymns, readings and other prayers). It is recited in the Monastery Chapel daily at the following times:



- 5.45am** Office of Readings
- 6.30am** Morning prayer - Lauds
- 12.45pm** Midday prayer
- 6.00pm** Evening prayer - Vespers
- 8.00pm** Night prayer - Compline

ALL are welcome to attend at any time.

# Parish Roster

PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
MORNING TEA AFTER THE 9AM MASS

NEXT WEEKEND'S ROSTER  
27/12/2025 to 28/12/2025  
HOLY FAMILY - YEAR A

	SATURDAY 7.00pm	SUNDAY 9.00am	SUNDAY 10.30am
Acolyte		Lorraine D	
Reader1	Daniel V	Matt W	Sam J
Reader2	Margaret B	Gabrielle W	Lorna B
Prayers	Edyn V	Volunteer	Doug M
TV		Teresa G	Mawhinney's
EMHC 		Ann L	Lorna B
EMHC 		Nigel M	
Music		Melanie H	Melanie H
Music		Keith W	Sandra M
Music		Marisa Q	Volunteer
Music			
Morning Tea		Sophie R	
FLOWERS	Hannah A		

## DID YOU KNOW...

The Catechism of the Catholic Church contains over 2,800 paragraphs explaining the faith, sacraments, commandments, and prayers.

## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

### CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve Vigil  
Wednesday 24th Dec 2025  
7.00pm & 11.30pm  
(Midnight Mass commences 11.45pm)

Christmas Day  
Thursday 25th Dec 2025  
9.00am  
10.30am Latin Mass

### FEAST OF HOLY FAMILY

Saturday Vigil 27th Dec 2025  
7.00pm  
Sunday 28th Dec 2025  
9.00am & 10.30am  
4.30pm Latin Mass

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

Feast Mary the Holy Mother of God  
Thursday 1st Jan 2026  
9.30am

### EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Saturday Vigil 3rd Jan 2026  
7.00pm  
Sunday 4th Jan 2026  
9.00am & 10.30am  
4.30pm Latin Mass

### FEAST BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Saturday Vigil 10th Jan 2026  
7.00pm  
Sunday 11th Jan 2026  
9.00am & 10.30am  
4.30pm Latin Mass

### MONASTERY CHAPEL

Daily as usual  
7.00am

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and their enduring connection to country, waters, and culture.  
We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging.



## SAFEGUARDING MISSION STATEMENT

St Benedict's Parish is committed to the safety of all, especially children and vulnerable people.  
Concerns? Contact Fr Shansana 0437 884 233, or the Office for Safeguarding 8379 1605.  
For all parish OH&S and Safeguarding Children matters Contact: Lorraine Dailey on 0416 081 882.

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays & Fridays: 9.00am to 2.00pm

(Parish Office: Closed from Monday, 22nd December 2025, and will reopen on Friday, 30th January 2026)

Parish Office: 02 9653 2312  
Address: 2 Fagans Road, Arcadia 2159  
Email: [arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au)  
Website: [www.bbcatholic.org.au/arcadia](http://www.bbcatholic.org.au/arcadia)

Parish Priest: Fr Shansana Samarasinghe OSB  
Email: [sanshanasamarasinghe@yahoo.com](mailto:sanshanasamarasinghe@yahoo.com)  
After hours: 0437 884 233

Facebook: [stbenedictsarcadia](https://www.facebook.com/stbenedictsarcadia)



MONASTERY: 02 9653 1159  
121 Arcadia Rd, Arcadia 2159

PARISH BANK DETAILS for  
ONLINE only donations:  
BSB: 062 784 Account: 100002141  
Account Name: Catholic Parish of Arcadia Bank:  
CBA—Catholic Development Fund



Support our parish!  
Scan this QR code to make a donation.