



The Catholic Parish of Pittwater

Sacred Heart & Maria Regina. Neighbourhoods of Grace, entrusted to the care of the Salvatorians.

May the hope of this sacred season settle in your soul.

May it be a foundation of courage for you when times of distress occupy your inner land.

May the wonder and awe that fills the eyes of children be awakened within you.

May it lead you to renewed awareness and appreciation of whatever you too easily take for granted.

May the bonds of love for one another be strengthened as you gather with your family and friends around the table of festivity and nourishment.

*May the coming year be one of good health for you.
May you have energy and vitality.*

May you care for your body, mind and spirit.

May you daily open the gift of your life and be grateful for the hidden treasures it contains.

May you go often to the Bethlehem of your heart and visit the One who offers you peace.

May you bring this peace and joy into our world.

Joyce Rudd



Thoughts of Bl Francis Jordan

God became a human being for us to redeem us, to rescue our souls. Therefore let us seek only the honour of God and the salvation of souls.



Dear Parishioners

As we celebrate the joyful and festive season of Christmas, we ask God's blessing to be upon you, your families and friends.

May the Birth of Christ, Our Saviour, bring you true peace, love, and hope and fill your hearts with His joyful presence.

We wish to thank you for your Christmas gifts, cards and best wishes.

May the Child Jesus bless you all.

Fr Richard SDS and Fr Pawel SDS

PARISH DIRECTORY

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1 Keenan Street Mona Vale NSW 2103
Tel 9157 0999
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Parish Office Hours
Monday to Thursday
9.00am to 4.00pm
Friday 9am to 12 noon


Sacred Heart Church
1 Keenan Street Mona Vale

Maria Regina Church
7 Central Road Avalon

Mona Vale
Sacred Heart School
Tel 9999 3264
Principal: Mr Jamie Wahab

Avalon
Maria Regina School
Tel 9918 2608
Principal: Miss Kirsty Thorpe

Warriewood
Mater Maria Catholic College
Tel 9997 7044
Principal: Mr Marc Reicher

 **facebook**
The Catholic Parish
of Pittwater

 You can find us on
Instagram
(pittwater_parish)

We Pray for the Souls of

Colleen Atkinson
Barbara Cincotta
Keith & Marie Cincotta
Ron Fisher
Pam & Ray Halls
May & Roy Tully
Vera & Edward Ragen
Sinon & Margaret Gleeson

Recently Deceased

Robyn Tuite
Pauline Brent
Leonilda Marcdangp

If you would like the names of your relatives or friends and offerings included, please drop the envelope in to the Parish Office by Midday on Wednesdays. Thank You.

Prayers for the Sick

Beryl Peo-Duncan
Michael Carrodus
Pat Regan
Garry Gleeson
Nazarena Custodio
Annette Davis
Andrew Hood
Jeff Langley
Warwick Chipman
Erin Ocampo
Mark Lindfield
Vicky Kalingasan
Bill Eyre
Brian Gregan
Marian Poe
Marcia Bailey
Bec Burroughs
Susan Hickey
Sophia Burfitt
Margaret De Landre
Maeve Robinson
Jenny Carroll
Matt Ukishima
Pietrina Maiorana
Marta Bizubova
Susan Makabenta
Dominic Ursino

The names on this list will be removed after four weeks unless otherwise requested or advised. Thank you

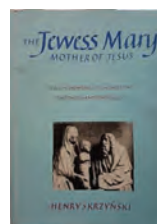


The Parish Office will be closed for Christmas from 12pm on Friday 24 December 2021 the office will reopen on Monday 10 January 2022

From Monday 10 January to Tuesday 25 January 2022, the office will be open: Monday to Friday from 9am to 12noon.

BOOK REVIEW

The Jewess Mary
Mother of Jesus
by Henry Skrzynski



This book is an attempt to reconstruct the everyday life of Mary in the Jewish society 2000 years ago, her family duties and social position as a Jewish maiden, wife, mother and lastly as a widow.

We welcome to Pittwater Parish
Eve Rose Willard
on 26 December 2021
at
Sacred Heart Church,
Mona Vale
for the
Sacrament of Baptism

Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions For December


For Catechists
Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Face Masks are not longer mandatory but are strongly encouraged

Share the News

Our Churches- Sacred Heart and Maria Regina are open.

Come for Mass.

Come and pray.

Come and light a candle.

Come sit and find peace.

Sacramental Coordinator - Pittwater

Permanent, part-time role
Up to 18 hours per week
(must have availability for after-hours and weekends)



The Pittwater Parish is seeking to recruit a part-time Sacramental Coordinator, up to 18 hours per week. This role plays an important part in the Parish team, coordinating support services to enhance the Sacramental program ministry within the Parish.

The ideal candidate will have relevant experience and/or qualifications in Sacramental Programs, experience working with volunteers in a Catholic environment, comfort working autonomously and an understanding of the need for accountability and ownership in a role, excellent administration and time management skills and proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite. You'll also have a good understanding of, and commitment to, Catholic values and teachings. The role will require flexibility with the working schedule, however you will need to have availability for after-hours and weekends. You will be working closely with Parish schools and those schools within the Pittwater community to strengthen the relationship between school and Parish.

If this role interests you, please email a brief cover letter and CV to: recruitment@bbcatholic.org.au. For further information please email recruitment@bbcatholic.org.au. Applications close Tuesday 4 January 2022.

The Diocese of Broken Bay is committed to and promotes a culture of safety and care for all people, especially for children and others in the community who are vulnerable. Our Diocese has no tolerance to Child Abuse and is committed to ensuring our staff and volunteers understand the joint responsibility to safeguard all those within our community. The successful applicant must have the right to work in Australia and will be required to undertake a National Police History Check and Working With Children Check.

A warm welcome to all our parishioners and visitors who are celebrating the Eucharist with us at Pittwater Parish - Sacred Heart Church and Maria Regina Church.

Praying With Mary by Chris Sullivan



The very essence of prayer is recognising that God is with us. That is the meaning of one of the Lord's names, one that we hear over and again in Advent, Emmanuel. The Lord is with Mary. The Lord is with us. What does it take for us to pause amidst the busyness of this season of preparation—between the shopping and decorating, the family gatherings and

holiday parties? Mary's life is dramatically interrupted by the visitation of an angel and a miraculous conception. How do I hear the angelic messenger, that still, small voice of God (1 Kings 19:12) in my days? What does God wish to conceive in me? How does God want to use my flesh to incarnate the living Christ?

As we journey through this Advent and Christmas season, we can seek Mary's intercession, looking to her example of how to welcome the overshadowing Spirit of God. As Mary said yes to the Spirit, I can trust in her to lead me to my own yes.

Here are some possible ways to practice praying with Mary this month.

Luke 1:26–56 chronicles Mary's encounter with the angel, her visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, and her song, which we call the Magnificat. Read this passage slowly. It's long, so you may want to read just a few verses each day or each week. As you read, notice whether there is a word or a phrase that speaks to you. Ponder it in your heart as you go about your day. Invite the Lord to speak to you through his Word.

If the Rosary is not already part of your life, consider incorporating it once a week, or maybe try praying a

decade a day. As the Joyful Mysteries recall the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, they are perfect for praying through the seasons of Advent and Christmas. As you meditate on each mystery, invite the Spirit to use the experiences of Mary and Joseph and Jesus to shine light on how the Spirit is moving in your life here and now.

The Angelus is a traditional prayer by which we can connect and reconnect with our ever-present God throughout the day. The Angelus is a brief reflection on the incarnation, recalling Mary's yes to God's invitation to bring Christ into the world. Prayed at 6:00 a.m., noon (often accompanied by a prayer for peace), and 6:00 p.m., the Angelus is a pause in the rhythm of our days in which we can recall Emmanuel, God with us.

How has praying with Mary enhanced your experience of Advent and Christmas?

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Chris Sullivan

Chris Sullivan is a writer, speaker, and spiritual director-in-training. Chris works within her own Roman Catholic faith community as well as in interdenominational Christian ministry in the areas of faith formation, training, and emotional and spiritual healing work.

Finding God under the Christmas Tree by Julianne B. McCullagh

Christmas should be an easy time to find God in all things, as St. Ignatius of Loyola calls us to do. But often it does not seem so simple. With all the distractions at home, school, and work, it is easy to lose sight of what is really important.

'Tis the Season



Sitting cross-legged under the Christmas tree, Kate looks up and squints her eyes. All the lights in the room are out, except for those on the Christmas tree. She can hear the wind blow outside, and she finds it easy to imagine that she is travelling on a donkey alongside Mary and Joseph toward Bethlehem down a long, winding road with a village in the distance, just like on one of the Christmas cards displayed on the piano.

Mum is busy with little Joey, so Kate has a few minutes alone just to sit here in her favourite spot. In front of her is the Nativity scene—a thin wooden manger with bits of straw glued to the top, and on the back wall a painting of a cow, sheep, and donkey looking into the space where the figurines have been carefully placed. There is Joseph, leaning on his walking staff, head bent in wonder. Mary is in a sitting

kneel, hands apart in awe at the sight before her. Shepherds crowd the doorway, and a few kings in colourful robes and their resplendent camels are lined up to enter this special place. They all face the little plaster child, who is dressed only in a tiny thin sheet where a diaper should be. This baby, this Saviour, with a halo behind his curls, has his arms outstretched in benediction toward his audience; toward me, too, Kate thinks.

"Kate, do you have your sweater, hat, and mittens? It's beginning to snow," Mum calls as she coaxes Joey into his snowsuit. "Oh, there is just so much to do these days before Christmas." Kate hears Mum talk to Joey in an exasperated and tired voice while she wrestles his kicking feet into the snowsuit.



And a Child Shall Lead Them

Kate is prepared for the cold night. Warm clothes are on the big chair near the front door, ready to be put on when she goes to the school concert her big brother is playing in. Dad and the older boys are already at school; she and Mum and her little brother will walk the three blocks to join them. Kate helps Mum open the stroller for Joey. He squirms and squeals delightedly as his mother and sister fuss over him, tucking him in with a soft blanket to keep him warm in the night air. As she tucks the blanket under her little brother's back, Kate impulsively kisses this little child she loves so much, touching his soft, warm cheek.

Kate holds the front bar of the stroller while Mum holds the handle, and together they maneuver the stroller down the front steps. The wind is picking up, and tiny bits of snow land on Kate's cheek.

"Ready, Kate?"

"Uh, I forgot something. I'll be right back."



She runs up the four steps and into the house. Kneeling once again in front of the manger, Kate takes one of her soft blue knit mittens from her pocket and tucks it around the smiling baby in the manger.

"Ready, Mom," she announces as she shuts the front door behind her.

Prayer for Christmas Dinner

God Our Father we thank you for the many ways you have cared for us in the past year. We are grateful for each person gathered around this table. Bless us, our food and our company today. Bless those we love who are not with us. Be close to our brothers and sisters who are poor and hungry today. We invite Jesus. Mary and Joseph into our hearts and we join with the Angels in their Christmas song: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will'. Amen.

The *Living Word* *Mass of the Night*

First Reading

Is 9:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

A son is given to us.

The people that walked in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who live in a land of deep
shadow
a light has shone.
You have made their gladness greater,
you have made their joy increase;
they rejoice in your presence
as men rejoice at harvest time,
as men are happy when they are dividing
the spoils.
For the yoke that was weighing on him,
the bar across his shoulders,
the rod of his oppressor,
these you break as on the day of Midian.
For all the footgear of battle,
every cloak rolled in blood,
is burnt
and consumed by fire.
For there is a child born for us,
a son given to us
and dominion is laid on his shoulders;
and this is the name they give him:
Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God,
Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.
Wide is his dominion
in a peace that has no end,
for the throne of David
and for his royal power,
which he establishes and makes secure
in justice and integrity.
From this time onwards and for ever,
the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will
do this.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 95:1-3. 11-13 R. Lk 2:11

**(R.) Today is born our Saviour,
Christ the Lord.**

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.
O sing to the Lord, bless his name. **(R)**

Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the
peoples. **(R)**

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,
let the sea and all within it thunder
praise,
let the land and all it bears rejoice,
all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,
he comes to rule the earth. **(R)**

With justice he will rule the world,
he will judge the peoples with his truth
(R)

Second Reading

Ti 2:11-14

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to
Titus**

God's grace has been revealed to all people.
God's grace has been revealed, and it has
made salvation possible for the whole
human race and taught us that what we
have to do is to give up everything that
does not lead to God, and all our worldly
ambitions; we must be self-restrained
and live good and religious lives here in
this present world, while we are waiting

in hope for the blessing which will come
with the Appearing of the glory of our
great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He
sacrificed himself for us in order to set us
free from all wickedness and to purify a
people so that it could be his very own
and would have no ambition except to do
good.

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia!
Good News and great joy to all the
world: today is born our Saviour, Christ
the Lord.
Alleluia!



Gospel

Lk 2:1-14

**A reading from the holy Gospel according
to Luke**

Today a saviour has been born for you.

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a
census of the whole world to be taken.
This census – the first – took place while
Quirinius was governor of Syria, and
everyone went to his own town to be
registered. So Joseph set out from the
town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled
up to Judaea, to the town of David called
Bethlehem, since he was of David's
House and line, in order to be registered
together with Mary, his betrothed, who
was with child. While they were there the
time came for her to have her child, and
she gave birth to a son, her first-born.
She wrapped him in swaddling clothes,
and laid him in a manger because there
was no room for them at the inn. In the
countryside close by there were
shepherds who lived in the fields and
took it in turns to watch their flocks
during the night. The angel of the Lord
appeared to them and the glory of the
Lord shone round them. They were
terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be
afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great
joy, a joy to be shared by the whole
people. Today in the town of David a
saviour has been born to you; he is Christ
the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you
will find a baby wrapped in swaddling
clothes and lying in a manger.' And
suddenly with the angel there was a great
throng of the heavenly host, praising God
and singing:
'Glory to God in the highest heaven
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

The Gospel of the Lord

**If you have used this bulletin, please
take it home with you.**

REFLECTION

by Dianne Bergant CSS

*The Gospel situates the birth of Jesus
within Roman rule of the first century.
Through the Incarnation, the ordinary
becomes transparent and reveals the
extraordinary; the divine is known in the
child. Only those of humble heart
experience this wonder. They behold it
and they come to embrace it. In fact, it is
the nature of this child, born in history,
to reverse the orders of power.
God is portrayed as a valiant liberator
who champions the cause of justice and
who brings a liberation that reverses
history and the ways of war, power and
oppression. This reversal is made more
shocking by the fact that the one who is
the mighty warrior and conqueror of the
nations is a child. This child is the weak
and voiceless one, the one who has
neither power nor legal rights. God's
reversal of the long-standing realities of
this world is accomplished through the
apparently insignificant, through the gift
of this child who is given to us in the
middle of the night.
Something new has happened: the age of
God's fulfilment has arrived. The age of
grace and fresh hope, made available to
all people of good will, is an era of
redemptive presence. Now all people can
walk in the newness of life and grace.
Yet, while this new age has begun, it is
not yet fully realised. We live believing in
its presence and awaiting its fulfilment.
Although we are celebrating Christmas,
we still await the final coming of the
Lord.*

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Dear parishioners,
Each year the Australian Region of
Salvatorians are humbled by the
overwhelming support from all the
Salvatorian parishes across Australia.
Our community is sincerely grateful
for the generous donations received
throughout this year to support the
formation of our seminarians and
missionary projects.
I would like to take this opportunity
to wish you all a very Merry and safe
Christmas with a joyous
New Year.
May God continue to bless you
abundantly.

Fr George Kolodziej SDS
Regional Superior.



The *Living* Word *Dawn*

First Reading

Is 62:11-12

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
Your Saviour is born.

This the Lord proclaims
to the ends of the earth:

Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Look,
your saviour comes,
the prize of his victory with him,
his trophies before him'.
They shall be called 'The Holy People',
'The Lord's Redeemed'.
And you shall be called
'The-sought-after',
'City-not-forsaken.'

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 96:1. 6. 11-12

**(R.) A light will shine on us this day:
the Lord is born for us.**

The Lord is king, let earth rejoice,
the many coastlands be glad.
The skies proclaim his justice;
all the peoples see his glory. **(R)**

Light shines forth for the just
and joy for the upright of heart.
Rejoice, you just, in the Lord;
give glory to his holy name. **(R)**

Second Reading

Ti 3:4-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

His own compassion saved us.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 2:14

Alleluia, alleluia!
Glory to God in the highest,
peace to his people on earth.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 2:15-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at

what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

The Gospel of the Lord

REFLECTION

by Dianne Bergant CSS

Christmas is really a time of universal good will. In response to God's gracious gift of transformation we are invited to rejoice with grateful hearts. The royal infant whose birth we celebrate is the one who was promised, the long-awaited messianic king, the one who inaugurates the age of transforming grace. He is the source of rejoicing in those who receive him with great gratitude. Only those who are open to God's gift can receive it with thanksgiving. When it is received, however, marvellous things happen. Their identities are changed, all the cosmos joins in the festivity, and righteousness blossoms in history. The life of baptismal fidelity is the grateful response to the gift of God's initiative. Such a life is rooted in the mystery of the triune God in whom believers are baptised. It is a life lived in the rebirth of the spirit of God that animates us to live blamelessly in a way that shows our appreciation of this gift. We are inspired to live lives that are manifestations of holiness. Christmas morning may be a time for opening gifts and for family celebrations, but it is also a time for people of means to reach out to those who are less fortunate. Christmas celebrates generosity, first the generosity of God and then our generosity with each other, especially with the poor. Solidarity with the outcasts of society, with those who are barred from the power structures of society, demonstrates the true spirit of Christmas.

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A solemnity is a feast day of the highest rank in the liturgical calendar of the Roman Rite, celebrating a mystery of faith such as the Trinity, an event in the life of Jesus, his mother Mary, or another important saint.

Saturday 1 January 2022
Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

There will be mass at 8am
Maria Regina Church and 9.30am
Sacred Heart Church.



The Spirit of Christmas

By the magical light of a small Christmas candle, a little old man tries to carefully handle, the small porcelain manger which serves as a bed for the wee Baby Jesus to lay down His head.

In wonder he brings the manger up to his view, smiles at the baby and whispers "I love you."

I love you for bringing this season of joy. I love you for growing to a man from a boy.

For being our light and leading the way, for being the spirit which makes Christmas Day!

You've been my mentor, my model, my hero and guide. Please continue to help me and stay by my side. I've tried to follow your teachings and give as you gave. Reminding all to be kind and that it's wise to behave.

Help me to serve others and bring them your light, especially the children, please bless them tonight!

Some have so very little, scarce food for their table. You know how it feels - you were born in the stable.

Bless all their mothers and fathers with a knowledge that's sure, the best gift they can give is their love, strong and pure. That's the Spirit of Christmas when all is said and done, God's gift of love, that came as His Son!

Then back to His mother the child returned. The nativity glows as the candle is burned.

In a wink the little old man slips quietly away. Some say he goes up the chimney and climbs in a sleigh.

Whatever the case, His mission is clear - Give unto others, bringing love and good cheer.

He flies into the night and bids us adieu.

Doing for others what Jesus would do!

Greg Olsen

Everyone must also stay 1.5 metres away from other people whenever possible.

The *Living Word* *Mass of the Day*

First Reading

Is 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.

How beautiful on the mountains,
are the feet of one who brings good news,
who heralds peace, brings happiness,
proclaims salvation,
and tells Zion,
'Your God is king!'
Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,
they shout for joy together,
for they see the Lord face to face,
as he returns to Zion.
Break into shouts of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord is consoling his people,
redeeming Jerusalem.
The Lord bares his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 97:1-6. R. v.3

**(R.) All the ends of the earth have
seen the saving power of God.**

Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.
His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. **(R)**

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

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

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. **(R)**

Second Reading

Heb 1:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name. God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

The word of 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!

Gospel

Jn 1:1-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.

In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
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 men,
a light that shines in the dark,
a light that darkness could not overpower.

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.
The Word was the true light
that enlightens all men;

and he was coming into the world.

He was in the world
that had its being through him,
and the world did not know him.

He came to his own domain
and his own people did not accept him.
But to all who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,

to all who believe in the name of him
who was born not out of human stock
or urge of flesh
or will of man
but of God himself.

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.

John appears as his witness, He proclaims:

'This is the one of whom I said:

He who comes after me

ranks before me

because he existed before me.'

Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received –

yes, grace in return for grace,

since, though the Law was given through Moses,

grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God;

it is the only Son, who is nearest to the

Father's heart,

who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord

**It is our responsibility to protect others
and ourselves and stop the spread of
COVID-19 in Australia.**

REFLECTION

by Dianne Bergant CSS

Today the Christmas celebration gains a new depth of theological meaning. At midnight, the birth in history was proclaimed. At dawn, the initiative of God's gift was declared and the community's joyful gratitude was announced. In this third celebration, the identity of Christ and the new way of life that he brings is announced.

If our eyes are open and alert, we can see that God has won a victory for us, one that is tangible and realised in our midst. It is an overwhelming victory, one that permanently conquers the enemy. This victory has a profound impact on every place, every time and every people. The birth of the infant, the king in David's line, promises salvation to all who long for it. This salvation is a new vision of wisdom, one that has been realised in Christ, God's agent of grace in the world. It is a new world, one of inclusivity and of righteous honour. It is a new age, one that is ushered in by the child who is leading a victory procession. Ultimately, only eyes of faith allow us to see the fullness of God's revelation. The glory of the infant king is the very presence of God made flesh. Jesus is the eternal incarnate Word who has pitched his tent among us. Ours is not a distant God; the incarnate wisdom of God is among us, and we are called to a change of heart that will allow us to see this wonder.

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My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Today, we will celebrate the Birth of our Savior when God entered the world in human form, giving us His only begotten Son.

Born in a darkened stable and placed in a humble manger, the birth of Jesus is the wonderful reminder God's love for us is so great He became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him. The Christmas story is also one of joy and hope.

For all of us, in varying degrees, it has been another challenging year.

However, during the Holy Season let us not forget this overriding message of hope which started with the miraculous, hidden and vulnerable act of a baby born for all people.

I pray you and your family all have a peaceful and blessed Christmas and are filled with the hope of the Christ Child.

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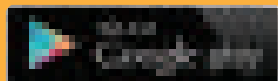
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Thank you to all our generous
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who raised \$1432 for Vinnies.
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out for us.

What Does the Holy Family Teach Us? FATHER EDWARD LOONEY



The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York houses a beautiful triptych of the Holy Family called the "Mérode Altarpiece," painted by Robert Campin. The left of the three-paneled piece of art captures an open door of two bystanders peering into the main panel of the Annunciation, while the far-right panel depicts St. Joseph in his carpentry shop. This artistic masterpiece captures who the Christian is as they examine the life of the Holy Family and the extraordinary events surrounding their life and calling from God. Catching a glimpse of that home in Nazareth, where the Christ Child grew in age and wisdom into his adult years, we experience how the Holy Family informs family life in the third millennium. In the biblical stories of Jesus, Mary and Joseph we see their example of virtuous living.

They Follow God's Lead

The Scriptures paint the early life of the Holy Family as God calls them to a special mission. With the angel Gabriel, we greet Mary and learn of her calling to become the Mother of God. Our introduction to St. Joseph consists of him deciding to divorce Mary quietly, believing she brought shame and dishonour upon him and his family. But an angel invites Joseph to change his mind and take Mary into his home, to become the guardian of Mary and Jesus, the husband of Mary and foster-father of Jesus.

In that home at Nazareth we meet a couple who shows an openness to allowing God to lead their life together. Mary surely had other plans for her life; as many believe, she took a vow of virginity at an early age, so becoming a physical mother was something she did not anticipate. Yet, she heard God's invitation, and knew that His plans were better for her life; therefore, she gives her fiat - that is, her "yes" to God.

St. Joseph opens his heart to the messenger sent by God and takes Mary into his home. This would not be the first or last time that St. Joseph followed God's lead in his life as he protected the Holy Family. After Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, they follow the prompting of an angel to flee into Egypt for safety and wait there until another angelic message leads them back home. The Holy Family is a great example for families everywhere to always be open to whatever God's will might be and to always be listening for God to speak. He might speak his will in prayer or through another person. By our own prayer and discernment, we too can follow God's lead for our life.

A Teacher of Virtue

The home should be the principal place of catechesis. Unfortunately, many families today allow the Church to fill that role alone. The home of Nazareth, in addition to the local synagogue, would have been the place of instruction for the Christ Child. The Holy Family taught Jesus how to read, and at the start of his public ministry Jesus would read from the scroll and declare the passage

to be fulfilled in their hearing (see Lk 4:21). Mary and Joseph would have taught the Christ Child how to pray, especially the Shema, and years later Jesus would teach his disciples how to pray with the Our Father. Joseph would have handed on his trade to his son, who later would die on the wood of a cross. Jesus had a great concern for the poor and the marginalised. In the home of Nazareth he learned generosity and kindness.

The home of Nazareth reminds us that families have the responsibility of teaching their children the Faith and to model the virtues. Jesus had most excellent parents; Mary was without sin and Joseph is described as a just and prudent man. Parents today can learn from Joseph and Mary on how to teach their children.

A Call to Chastity

The Catholic tradition upholds the belief that Mary remained ever-virgin. St. Joseph often is referred to as Mary's most chaste spouse, and in the Litany of St. Joseph is recognised as the chaste guardian of the Virgin. Perhaps this is yet another way the Holy Family provides an example to our modern world, often assaulted by sexual promiscuity and fleeting lustful thoughts. The chaste relationship of Joseph and Mary reminds all Christian faithful that, even in marriage, chastity is to be observed. The practice of natural family planning (NFP) is one way a couple observes chastity in their marriage. The fidelity of Joseph and Mary to each other also gives great example and encourages couples in their fidelity to one another, even in difficult circumstances. The chaste relationship between Joseph and Mary means they experienced intimacy in different ways through their common life together. Their purity of mind and heart of mutual love for each other and the Son of God is indeed worthy of imitation by all families.

Devotion to the Holy Family

Devotion to the Holy Family of Nazareth emerges in times when the family becomes weakened because of political and societal pressures. In the medieval period, Jean Gerson, theologian at the Council of Constance (1414-18), encouraged devotion to the Holy Family, and Pope Leo XIII said that imitation of the Holy Family would be a means to revitalize and strengthen family life. In the third millennium the institution of the family once again suffers attacks politically and socially. Perhaps now is the time for us to knock on the door of the Holy Family's home in Nazareth and move from being an onlooker peering in to a guest in their home. From them we will learn many virtues for Christian family life and, through their inspiration, to practice them in our homes and among our own families.

Liturgy for the Week

- 27/12 **Monday St John, apostle, evangelist**
1 Jn 1:1-4: Ps 96:1-2, 5-6, 11-12: Jn 20:2-8:
- 28/12 **Tuesday The Holy Innocents, martyrs**
1 Jn 1:5-2:2: Ps 123:2-5, 7-8: Mt 2:13-18:
- 29/12 **Wednesday 5th day in the Octave of the Nativity**
1 Jn 2:3-11: Ps 95:1-3, 5-6: Lk 2:22-35
- 30/12 **Thursday 6th day in the Octave of the Nativity**
Jn 2:12-17: Ps 95:7-10: Lk 2:36-40:
- 31/12 **Friday 7th day of the Octave of Nativity**
1 Jn 2:18-21: Ps 95:1-2, 11-13: (Jn 1:14,12) Jn 1:1-18:
- JANUARY 2022**
- 01/01 **Saturday MARY, the Holy MOTHER OF GOD**
Num 6:22-27: Ps 66:2-3, 5, 6, 8: Gal 4:4-7: (Heb 1:1-2)
Lk 2:16-21



The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Draw the angel speaking to Joseph in his dream.



Joseph listened to the angel's warning because he trusted in God. Write down some of the names of those who you trust.

DECODE THE PROPHECY

Use the code below to decipher the prophet's message

A		G		L		Q		V	
B		H		M		R		W	
C		I		N		S		X	
D		J		O		T		Y	
E		K		P		U		Z	
F									

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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The *Living Word* *Feast of the Holy Family*

Entrance Antiphon

Lk 2:16

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the
Infant lying in a manger.

First Reading

1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28

A reading from the first book of Samuel

For the whole of his life, Samuel shall be lent to the Lord.

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son, and called him Samuel 'since' she said 'I asked the Lord for him.' When a year had gone by, the husband Elkanah went up again with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go up, having said to her husband, 'Not before the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and present him before the Lord and he shall stay there for ever.' When she had weaned him, she took him up with her together with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the temple of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was with them. They slaughtered the bull, and the child's mother came to Eli. She said, 'If you please, my lord. As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord. This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord granted me what I asked him. Now I make him over to the Lord for the whole of his life. He is made over to the Lord.' There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 83:2-3, 5-6, 9-10. R. v.5

(R.) How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord, God of hosts.
My soul is longing and yearning,
is yearning for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God. (R)

They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.
They are happy, whose strength is in you;
they walk with ever growing strength. (R)

O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,
gave ear, O God of Jacob.
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,
look on the face of your anointed. (R)

Second Reading

1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24

A reading from the first letter of St John

He calls you his own children, and that is what you are.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed,
all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.
My dear people,
if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience,
we need not be afraid in God's presence,
and whatever we ask him,
we shall receive,
because we keep his commandments
and live the kind of life that he wants.
His commandments are these:
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ
and that we love one another
as he told us to.
Whoever keeps his commandments
lives in God and God lives in him.
We know that he lives in us
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Acts 16:14

Alleluia, alleluia!
Open our heart, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 2:41-52

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

His parents found him in the temple, sitting among the learned men, listening to them.

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere. Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when

they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant. He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Bar 3:38

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

The optional readings for the feast of the Holy Family provide us an opportunity to reflect on 'family values' in a slightly different way. Here the pivotal theme is the union that we enjoy with God, a union of love that makes us children of God, members of the family of God. All other families find meaning and inspiration in this fundamental gathering. The stories of Hannah, Elkanah, and Samuel as well as Mary, Joseph and Jesus are examples of how the plan of God unfolds within the everyday occurrences of family life. It is out of love that we are called to be children of God. As children of God, we are also joined to God's own Son, who has commanded us to love one another as God has loved all. If we are faithful to that commandment, Christ remains in us. We are bound to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. The human family plays a significant role in the fashioning of the broader family of God. The larger family that God initiates is specified in unique historical families, as strange and as complex as those family relationships may be, with their joys and sorrows, their barrenness and their fruitfulness. There is no way of separating this human family and the broader people of God. The plan of God does not unfold in a vacuum, but in the everyday family situations that include separation and misunderstanding as well as joy and celebration.

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Bishop Anthony and from the people
Vox Populi please go to
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News and events tile and Messages from
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A Family Prayer

Praise be to God
who made us a family.
Praise be to God
for the love that we share.
Praise be to God
for sending us Jesus.
Praise be to God
for teaching us to care.

Help us, Lord Jesus
fill our lives with your Spirit.
Help us, Lord Jesus
teach us how to forgive.
Help us, Lord Jesus
grant us wisdom and patience.
Help us, Lord Jesus
in your grace may we live.

Come, Holy Spirit
fill our lives with your gifts.
Come, Holy Spirit
help us serve other's needs.
Come, Holy Spirit
teach us faith, hope, and love.
Come, Holy Spirit
guide our thoughts and our
deeds.

Be with us, God
we ask Mary to help us.
Be with us, God
we look to Joseph for aid.
Be with us, God
may we respect one another.
Be with us, God
may our hope never fade.

Hear us, Lord Jesus
watch over our family.
Hear us, Lord Jesus
help our faith to grow strong.
Hear us, Lord Jesus
come and dwell in our hearts.
Hear us, Lord Jesus
to you we belong.

Spirit, we praise you
you invite us to know you.
Spirit, we praise you
may we walk in your light.
Spirit, we praise you
may we find you in all things.
Spirit, we praise you
all day and all night.



Thoughts of Bl Francis Jordan

Estote ergo semper laetantes! Therefore, always be joyful!



Thank you to the parents, children and staff of Sacred Heart Primary School, Maria Regina Primary School, Mater Maria Catholic College, Senior Servers, Lectors, Musicians and the singers (young and old), Communion Ministers, Collectors, Welcomers, Counters, Computer specialists and all who volunteered to make Christmas Special this year.

Fr Richard SDS and Fr Pawel SDS