The Nativity of the Lord

The Catholic Parish of Pittwater

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



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 & Fr Zyga SDS

Thoughts of Fr Francis Jordan We hope the feast of Christmas this year will be a doubly happy one because the Apostolic Journey undertaken by your spiritual sons and daughters.

> 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



Continue to practise good hygiene. *Please use the* hand sanitisers provided in both of our Churches.

POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.



1 Keenan Street Mona Vale NSW 2103 • Tel:9157 0999 • email: office@pittwaterparish.org • website: www.pittwaterparish.org

IKE US ON

Parish

of Pittwater

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bulletin, please take it

home with you.

acebook

MASS TIMES

SACRED HEART CHURCH 1 Keenan Street, Mona Vale

Weekday Masses Tuesday 8.30am **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**, Adoration, Reconciliation and Benediction from 8am, followed by Mass at 9.30am Wednesday 9.30am Thursday 7pm **Exposition of the** Blessed Sacrament, Adoration, Reconciliation and Benediction from 7.30pm to 9pm Friday 9.30am First Friday of the Month, Exposition of the **Blessed Sacrament**. Adoration, Reconciliation and Benediction from 9.30am, followed by Mass with Anointing of the Sick at 10.30am

Weekend Masses Saturday Vigil 5.00pm Sunday 8.00am • 10.00am • 6.00pm (SOUL)

Reconciliation 4.00pm to 4.30pm Saturday

> Baptism 4th Sunday - 11.30am

MARIA REGINA CHURCH 7 Central Road, Avalon

Weekday Masses Monday 8am Wednesday 8am Thursday 10am 9am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration and Benediction at 9.45am Friday 8am

Mass with Anointing of the Sick - First Friday of the Month at 8am

Weekend Masses Saturday Vigil 6.00pm Sunday 9.00am

Reconciliation Before Vigil Mass on Saturday

> Baptism 3rd Sunday - 11.00am



Deceased Anniversary Boris Olivari Neville <mark>P</mark>ikulich

Recently Deceased

Kath Maher If you would like the names of your relatives or friends and offerings included, please drop the

Prayers for the Sick

Anna Smigowska Nick Moullakis M. Miller Avelino Samartin **Barbara** Clarke **Andrew Hood** Jeff Langley Mark Lindfiels Nick Moullakis **Bill Evre Brian Gregan Mrian** Poe **Marcia Bailey Bec Burroughs Susan Hickey** Sophia Burfitt Margaret De Landre **Maeve Robinson** Jenny Carroll Matt Ukishima Pietrina Maiorana Mina Lee **Denise Wagner Tom Murphy** Leonie Ariemetto John Graham

<u>Liturgy for the Week</u>

- 26/12 Monday,St Stephen Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
- 27/12 Tuesday, St John 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:2-8
- 28/12 Tuesday,The Holy Innocents, Martyrs 1 Jn 1:5-2:2; Mt 2:13-18
- 29/12 Wednesday, 5th Day in Octave of the Nativity 1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:22-35
- 30/12 Thursday, The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
- 31/12 Friday, 7th Day in Octave of the Nativity 1 Jn 2:18-21; Jn 1:1-18

BOOK REVIEW

Mother Theresa's Secret Fire by: Joseph Langford



This book helps readers come to a deeper understanding of what motivated Mother Teresa to take on the task of going into the streets of Calcutta to love and be proud of the poor and instagate her Missionaries of Charity.

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.







Scan the QR code above with your camera app and follow the prompts

Use this App to support our Clergy through the first collection and our Parish through the second collection. Donations can be made weekly, fortnightly,monthly or one-off.

GIVING

Thank you for your continued contributions and support. Your financial contributions and your generous donations throughout the year are greatly appreciated.







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We Pray for

the Souls of

Francesco & Maria Romeo Annamaria & Antonio Lentini Grace Prato Michele Mete Giuseppe Cervonaro Alfonzio & Eli Muoio Maria Monteleone Sam Maletta Bruno Romeo Joe Romeo Barbara & John Cincotta Cincotta Family Ragen Family Margaret <mark>& Sino</mark>n Gleeson Colleen Atkinson Ron Fisher Eric Kempster Arthur Norman John Sheerin

We wish to thank everyone for the amazing community support we receive.

We Wish you all a Merry Christmas, Safe Holiday Season and Happy 2023!

Love all the Staff, Families and Students at María Regina , Catholic Primary School Avalon





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The Parish Office will be closed at Christmas and will Re-open on the 9th of January 2023 The phones & emails are monitored regularly. So please don't hesitate to contact us and leave a message. Have a Blessed Christmas and have safe and fun Holiday.

Here is the Incredible History of the Nativity Scene



For hundreds of years around Christmastime, the Nativity scene has graced homes, churches and other sites throughout the world. Although it is now a familiar sight, and one that is already beloved by many, the sight of a Nativity scene can constantly give us new opportunities throughout Advent and the Christmas season to reflect on the deeper truths and mysteries contained in the simple scene. Christmas in the year 2018 is, in some ways, far different than the Christmases of long ago. As Catholics, it can be difficult to remove ourselves from the onslaught of materialism, excess and consumerism that tends to surround the Christmas season in the present day. The season can so easily become filled with the busy hum of gatherings, meals and gifts.

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Parish Directory

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Parish Office Hours

Monday to Thursday

9.00 am to 4.00 pm

9.00 am to 12.00 pm

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MONA VALE

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Sacred Heart School

Principal: Mr Jamie Wahab

AVALON

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e Maureen Wooldridge

acrament Coordinator

Sonia Samartin

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> Yet to Catholics, our Christmas season is one that, at its center, is a steady stream of peaceful quietude. The reality of Jesus' birth into the world is of such great importance to us that it seems that a hush should draw over the earth when we consider the impact of God becoming man. Seeing a Nativity scene gives us the opportunity to allow that silence to draw over our hearts, even for a moment, and meditate on the beauty of the Nativity and the Incarnation.

Contemplation, however, is not necessarily done somberly. Although there certainly is a time and a place for the quietest of contemplative hours, it is important for us to remember that the time surrounding the Nativity should be one of deep and resounding joy. The joy that is able to be experienced at Christmas as we consider the birth of Jesus and the reality of the Incarnation is only surpassed by the joy we can have in the Resurrection.

If we think that we are alone in thinking that this joy is all too often camouflaged by the secular aspects of the season, we are wrong! St. Francis of Assisi seemed to be thinking similar thoughts nearly eight hundred years ago, and it is to his credit that we possess the concept of the Nativity scene today.

In the year 1223, St. Francis was preparing to say Midnight Mass in the small town of Grecio in central Italy. According to writings about him at the time, it seemed that Francis was becoming distraught with the cavalier attitude that many possessed towards Christmas and the increased focus on gift-giving and material goods. Many people seemed to consider it an occasion for celebration without pausing to recognize the import of the event which they were commemorating, and Francis found this regrettable. He decided that he would, to the best of his ability, create an opportunity for the general public to see the events of the Nativity as though they were present in Bethlehem, and perhaps in doing so better preach the magnificence of Jesus coming to earth as a child. He thought a simple recreation would be best. Francis obtained a blessing to do this from Pope Honorius III.

Francis worked to recreate the scene as he thought it must have appeared in Bethlehem on the night that the Savior was born. He was committed to doing so with the utmost respect and worked hard to ensure that he would not be accused of levity or frivolity in his creation of the first Nativity scene.

St. Bonaventure, who was born several years before Francis' death, wrote of these events later on, and told of how Francis built the scene by placing a wooden manger in a niche in the rocks of Grecio, and soon brought to the manger the hay on which Jesus might have rested his head and the ox and the ass who might have kept Him company. It is not clear if townspeople played the roles of Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and wise men or if the scene was kept as simple as this.

Francis revealed in the simplicity of his new Nativity scene and himself found it profoundly impactful. As the people of Grecio began to celebrate the Mass and sing hymns and psalms of praise, Francis was so deeply moved tha he wept as he preached about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

It seems that he was not alone in finding the Nativity scene so wondrous, for by the end of the following century, the concept had grown in popularity to such an extent that all Catholic churches in Italy were eventually expected to have a Nativity scene at Christmastime.

We can see that the Nativity scene is much more than simply another Christmas decoration. It is an image of God who is Himself an image of Love. As we make our way through this Christmas season, let us take the sight of a Nativity scene as an opportunity for us to remember the mystery of the Incarnation and the love which God has for us.

> By: Gillian Weyant The Mystical Humanity of Christ Publishing

The Living Word Mass of the Night

Entrance Antiphon

Ps 2:7

The Lord said to me: You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day.

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

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

Communion Antiphon Jn 1:14

The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

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.

© Dianne Bergant CSA



The Living Word Mass of the Day

Entrance Antiphon

A child is born for us, and a son is given

Cf. Is 9:5

Is 52:7-10

to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder,

and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

First Reading

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 the 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

Communion Antiphon Cf. Ps 97:3

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

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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LOCAL PEOPLE CARING FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

Our team live, work and play on the Beaches. We understand the local community and a re here for you when you need us most. Whether it 's to plan an immediate funeral for a loved one or plan ahead for your own with a p repaid funeral, we' re here to help.

ANN WILSON FUNERALS

Contact us to find out mo re.

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