

**Responsorial Psalm Response**

Ps 145:6-10 R: cf. Is 35.4

Lord, come and save us.

**Gospel Acclamation****Alleluia, Alleluia!**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
**Alleluia!****WEEKEND MASSES****Epping** 5:00pm Vigil, 8:30am, 10:15am, 6:00pm**Carlingford** 6:00pm Vigil, 7:45am, 9:30am**WEEKDAY MASSES**

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>EPPING</b>	No Mass	12:15pm	<b>11:00am</b>	12:15pm	12:15pm	9:15am
<b>CARLINGFORD</b>	9:30am	No Mass	9:30am	9:30am	9:30am	No Mass

**HEALING MASS** Carlingford—1st Thursday, Epping — 3rd Wednesday**EXPOSITION OF THE EUCHARIST:** Epping Saturday 9:45-10:15am, Carlingford, 4th Thursday 10:00am**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Epping Saturday 9:45-10:15am Carlingford Saturday 5:00—5:30pm  
OR BY APPOINTMENT**BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS: BY APPOINTMENT****PARISH OFFICE:** 29 Oxford Street, Epping NSW 2121 **PH:** 9876 2853 **Email:** parish@eppcarl.org.au**ST GERARD MAJELLA PRIMARY SCHOOL:** **PH:** 9871 1633 **Email:** sgc@dbb.catholic.edu.au**OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTANS PRIMARY SCHOOL:** **PH:** 9868 3322 **Email:** olhc@dbb.catholic.edu.au**Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of Everlasting life. Grant that life to:****Recently deceased:** Sandra (Sandy) Bradley, Daphne North, Mary Carroll, Tony de Luca, Luisa Guareschi, Monica Courtenay, Marlangela Ferragina, Alexander Steuerwald, Patricia Frear, Kathleen Prust (sister of Alan Ryan), Helen McKeon (mother of Fr Jim McKeon), Colin Randazzo (Bishop Anthony's father).*Please pray for Alan Hartman who died last week**The funeral Service will be held on Wednesday 18 December at 12:30am at Christ the King Church, North Rocks***Anniversaries:** Des Howard.**Also for:** Young Hwan Ho, Yong Min Ho, Young Seok Seo, Soo Woog Jin, Maria Hur, Mary Anne, Anthony & Hugh Mulligan,**Please pray for those who are sick:** Sean Huhse, Joel Steinberg, Patricia Rumble, Dean Pan, John Davies, Nicole Greenfield, Michael Furlong, Saulius Dovydas Balsya, Residents of Wesley Rayward Nursing Home, Mark Di Palma, Anthony Conlon, Andrew Hannam, The Craig Family, Fr Mick Court, Margaret Maher, Anna & Leo Bruzze, Gerhard Stieger, Dorothea Ellis, Rebecca Lawler, Ben Thornton, Elaine Finlayson, Jan Doherty, Brian Walsh, Patricia O'Connor, Kathy Noonan, Alice Eng, Peck Quah, Dorothy Bonaccorso, Narelda & Alan Ryan, Kit Smith, Margaret Floyd, Peter Baker, Bev Aliprandi, Barbara Madafiglio, Greg Walsh, John Gilberti, Stella Nathan, Catherine Walsh, Brendan Stone, Melanie Loudoun, Mary Wijewardana, Elaine Hunt, Arnold Day, Maureen Carlon, Fr Adrian Borst, Augustine Hong, Luba Charlton, George Khouri, Antony Hogan, Ingrid Connor, Steve Toth, Martin & Gay Flood, William Jones, Nicholas Rajanayagen, Maria Lee, Patricia Muschalik, Delma Soria, Sr Abanasia Lee, Maria Belisario, Stella, Edwards, Fara Vargas, Theo Stevens, Monica Weeden, Thomas Woodward, Wai Chun Wong, Heather Stoodley, Sr Pauline Wicks rsj,*Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.*

Date	Mass	Epping	Mass	Carlingford
21/12/19	5:00pm	Fr Bogdan Skupien	6:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd
22/12/19	8:30am	Fr Bogdan Skupien	7:45am	Fr Peter Dowd
22/12/19	10:15am	Fr Bogdan Skupien	9:30am	Fr Peter Dowd
23/12/19	6:00pm	Fr Bogdan Skupien		

**ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Our parish is strongly committed to ecumenism and a formal Covenant has been signed with the Anglican Parish of Epping, Epping Uniting Church, West Epping Uniting Church and Epping Baptist Church.

Date	Mass	Epping	Mass	Carlingford
24/12/19	6:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd	5:00pm	Fr Bogdan Skupien
24/12/19	Midnight	Fr Peter Dowd	10:00pm	Fr Bogdan Skupien
24/12/19	8:30am	Fr Bogdan Skupien	7:45am	Fr Peter Dowd
25/12/19	10:15am	Fr Bogdan Skupien	9:30am	Fr Peter Dowd
25/12/19	6:00pm	NO MASS		

**AFTER HOURS SICK CALLS—  
9876 2853**

Outside office hours our office phones divert to Fr Peter and Fr Bogdan at home.

In the event that they are unavailable, their answering machines will record your message or ring the number given in the message. However, if possible please restrict routine enquiries to office hours.

**The Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford  
Diocese of Broken Bay****Our Lady Help of Christians' Church**

31 Oxford Street, Epping and

**St Gerard Majella Church**

543 North Rocks Road, Carlingford

**Parish Priest: Fr Peter Dowd,****Ph.:** 9876 2853**Email:** peter@eppcarl.org.au**Parish Office: 02 9876 2853****Assistant Priest: Fr Bogdan Skupien****Ph.:** 9872 3400**Email:** Bogdan.Skupien@bbccatholic.org.au**Email:** parish@eppcarl.org.au**Parish Website:** www.bbccatholic.org.au/epppingcarlingford**Welcome to our Parish of Epping and Carlingford** consisting of our two worshipping communities of St Gerard Majella's at Carlingford and Our Lady Help of Christians at Epping. If you are new to the area or visiting today we are glad that you are with us, and we hope that our celebrations of the Eucharist together will provide both nourishment and challenge on your Christian journey.**YEAR A THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT GAUDETE ("REJOICE") SUNDAY 15-12-19****Isaiah 35:1-6.10****James 5:7-10****Matthew 11:2-11**

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is with sadness that I share with you that Colin Randazzo, the father of Bishop Anthony, died on Saturday 7 December surrounded by his family on the Gold Coast. Mr Randazzo had suffered a major deterioration on the Wednesday prior and Bishop Anthony has been present with his family since.

We extend to Bishop Anthony, his mother Caterina, and his three sisters our heartfelt sympathy at this sad time. I would ask that you remember them all in your prayer.

Also, I ask you to also keep Helen McKeon, mother of one of our diocesan priests, Fr Jim McKeon, who passed away peacefully on the early evening of Tuesday 10 December, aged 86, in your prayers. Helen had not been well for some time, having suffered a stroke several years ago. She is survived by Fr Jim and her five other older children. Fr Jim's father died in 2006.

Of course, I am also aware that there are many families from our parish who have lost loved ones in recent weeks. Over the past eight days, I have celebrated five funerals of parishioners and many others are grieving as Christmas approaches. While this time of year is usually presented as a "happy" and "joyful" season, many of our families and friends experience it as a time of sadness as they remember their loved ones who have died. Advent speaks of our Christian hope which is stronger than death.... we pray this gift of hope may strengthen and console all those who mourn.

Fr Peter

**Christmas Mass Times****CHRISTMAS EVE: TUESDAY, 24 DECEMBER**Family Masses in both our Churches  
Carlingford 5pm Vigil  
Epping 6pm Vigil

As part of our support for Vinnies Christmas Appeal we invite the children to consider bringing a monetary gift rather than foodstuff to the Mass. The children will be invited to bring their gift forward and place it in a box near the Christmas tree during the Mass.

**Carlingford:**  
Night Mass will commence at 10:00pm preceded by Carols at 9:30pm.**Epping:**  
Midnight Mass preceded by Carols at 11:30pm.**CHRISTMAS MORNING: WEDNESDAY,  
25TH DECEMBER****Carlingford:**  
7:45am Mass & 9:30am Mass**Epping:**  
8:30am Mass & 10:15am Mass  
NO 6pm Mass**THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**The Second Rite of Reconciliation will be celebrated for both our parishes on **Wednesday, 18th December at 7:30pm** at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church, Epping.

Please note that there will be the opportunity for Reconciliation before Christmas on:

**Saturday 21st December at 9:45am** at Epping and also **5:00pm** at Carlingford.Monday **23rd December after the 9:30am Mass** at Carlingford

**Parish Mission Statement**

We are a diverse Catholic community centred in the Eucharist. We gather for worship to serve and reach out to others as we grow in relationship with God and each other.

**Safeguarding Message December 2019**

We the people of the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford are committed to fostering communities of safety and care for all people, especially for children and others in the community who are vulnerable. Our commitment is underscored by our faith in Jesus Christ



**CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN'S MASSES**

All children are invited to take part in the Christmas Vigil Masses (5 pm at St Gerard's and 6 pm at OLHC on Christmas Eve in both churches.) We would like volunteers for many roles. We also need parent volunteers to assist at the practices, during the Mass and with supper.

The children participating in the Mass will be required to attend practices.  
Parent helpers will also be required to attend.

**Carlingford:**  
 Parent run-through & dress rehearsal for Gospel mime  
**Saturday 21st December 10am - 11am**  
 Readers: **Saturday 21st December 11am—11:30am**

**Epping:**  
 Parent run-through & dress rehearsals  
**Thursday 19th Dec. 4:00pm - 5:00pm .**

**Any questions? Please email:**  
**Lynn for Carlingford** stgchildrensmass@gmail.com  
**Therese for Epping** olhcchildrensmass@gmail.com

--Please detach and return no later than 17th December

**Epping / Carlingford**

(Please circle which church you will be attending)

Please provide order of preference for each child for roles from Gospel mime, readings and processions. Although we try to give everyone his or her first preference, it is not always possible

Child's Name	Age	Role

**Parents:** I am / am not able to assist with practices & during Mass  
 I am / am not able to assist with packing away sup per after Mass

Parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Confirmation of roles etc. will be notified via email*



**Australian Catholic Youth Festival**

The pilgrims are in Perth!!

A total of seven from our parish are at Perth (Fr Bogdan, Martino, Sam, Joshua, Phillip, Anthony, Joanna and Fr Joey from Lower North Shore Parish.

Here is what Martino (Seminarist) hopes to gain out of ACYF.

Dear Parishioners and Priests,  
 I am currently staying in Wyoming for the pastoral placement.

I will go to Perth for the ACYF event. I believe that many young people and I will have a good opportunity to experience the joy of the event through many activities in Perth. Although I appreciated the World Youth Day in Panama when I attended that event at the beginning of the year, I still look forward to attending this event in Australia where I will be able to meet young people around the country. For Advent, it is a good time to wait for the coming of Christ with hope. This helps me to be encouraged when I stay there. Please keep us in your prayers for our safety in Perth.

Fast forward to ACYF... we have spent the past 2 amazing days listening to talks, music, attending workshops, meeting new people and having dialogues with the Bishops of Australia. We have prayed, listened to the Holy Spirit and how it is working in young people's lives and in the church today. We hope to share more highlights in the upcoming weeks.

**The Truth Justice and Healing Council**

www.thecouncil.org.au

Ph.: 6234 0900



**National Drought Prayer**

Eternal God,  
 in wisdom and love  
 you created our earth  
 to sustain us and give us life.

We turn to you now  
 in faith, hope and love,  
 asking you to look with favour  
 on our drought-stricken land,  
 on our starving animals,  
 on our failing crops.

Strengthen, sustain and give  
 new heart to our farmers  
 and to all who are affected  
 by drought:  
 be with those who support them.

In your loving providence,  
 send abundant rain and  
 restore our parched earth.

Father of all compassion,  
 hear our prayer  
 through Jesus Christ your Son,  
 in whom the promise of new life  
 has dawned, and through the  
 power of the Holy Spirit,  
 the Lord the giver of life:

Renew your faithful people:  
 Renew the face of the earth.

Our Lady of the Southern Cross,  
 Mary, help of Christians –  
 Pray for us.  
 St Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
 Pray for us.

**THE NICENE CREED**

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

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
 the Only Begotten Son of God,  
 born of the Father before all ages.  
 God from God, Light from Light,  
 true God from true God,  
 begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
 through him all things were made.  
 For us men and for our salvation  
 he came down from heaven, (all bow)  
 and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
 and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
 he suffered death and was buried,  
 and rose again on the third day  
 in accordance with the Scriptures.  
 He ascended into heaven  
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
 He will come again in glory  
 to judge the living and the dead  
 and his kingdom will have no end.

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

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

**Have You Told Us?** If you have recently changed your address, phone number or email. For parishioners who give by credit card, does your credit card expire in the near future? Please give the parish office a call on 9876 2853 if you have received a new credit card and/or a new expiry date.



**2019 CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

Commenced last weekend 7<sup>th</sup> December

**HELP A FAMILY PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE AT CHRISTMAS**

**Our Lady Help of Christians Epping:** Envelopes on the pews and at Church entrances to be returned to the paper table or placed on the second collection.

**St. Gerard Majella Carlingford:** Envelopes on the pews to be returned to the Piety Store or on the second collection.

Receipts will be available for tax purposes.

**Your Gift Can Help End the Pain of Poverty!**

**Admitted to Hospital**  
 A reminder that if you are admitted to hospital, please try to ensure that you write down your religion as Catholic on the admission form, so that you can receive Catholic services during your stay.



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## Reflection on this Sunday's Gospel—Advent: Preparing for the Sublime

A couple of years ago, Robert Waller published a book that became a runaway bestseller and an immensely popular movie. Entitled, *The Bridges of Madison County*, it stirred the romantic imagination in a way that few other stories have in recent times, especially as it was played out in its film version by Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep. The story runs this way:

A photographer for National Geographic magazine is sent out to photograph a series of old bridges in Madison county. Lost, he stops at a farmhouse to ask for directions. As chance would have it, the man of the house has just left for a cattle show. His wife is home alone and she and the photographer instantly sense a deep connection and fall violently in love. Karma, soul-mates, mysticism, whatever, they experience a rare and powerful affinity. Within hours they are in bed with each other, triggering a love-affair that leaves them both sacramentally scarred for the rest of their lives.

Can anyone paint a masterpiece in a couple of hours? What the viewer of the movie or reader of this book is asked to believe is that something truly sublime has taken place, a masterpiece of love has been painted, and a noble thing worth more than life itself has just occurred. But can this be so? Can anyone paint a masterpiece in a couple of hours? Can a doctoral thesis be completed in two hours? Can sex with someone you met just two hours before be sublime?

To answer those questions, I suggest you watch another film which can be found online. It's a version of Jane Austen's, *Sense and Sensibility*, and tells the story of a young woman who has to carry a very painful tension for a long time (one that includes the same feelings found in *Bridges of Madison County*). But unlike the characters in *Bridges of Madison County*, she doesn't move quickly to resolve it. People are not in bed with each other within a couple of hours. She carries the tension for a long time, years, and then finally when it is resolved there is true sublimity. Why? Because something can only be sublime if first there has been some sublimation (and for more than two hours!).

In essence, this expresses the meaning of Advent: For something to be sublime there must first be sublimation; fasting is the necessary prelude to feasting; greatness of soul is contingent on first nobly carrying tension; great joy is not experienced if one is not first properly prepared; and what's truly divine can only appear after a certain kind of gestation. Advent is about proper waiting.

It should therefore not be confused with Lent. The crimson-purple of Advent is not the black-purple of Lent. The former symbolizes yearning and longing, the latter repentance. The spirituality of Advent is not about repentance, but about carrying tension without prematurely resolving it so that what's born in us and in our world does not short-circuit the fullness that comes from respecting love's rhythms.

What is the connection here? How does carrying tension help lead to the sublime? It does it by helping to produce the heat required for generativity. An image might be helpful here. John of the Cross, in his book, *The Living Flame of Love*, compares our pre-advent selves to green logs that have been thrown into a fire, the fire of love. Green logs, as we know, do not immediately burst into flame. Rather, being young and full of moisture, they sizzle for a long time before they reach kindling temperature and can take into themselves the fire that is around them so as to participate in it. So too the rhythm of love: only the really mature can truly burst into flame within community. The rest of us are still too self-contained, too green, too selfish, too damp. We don't burst into flame when love surrounds us. Rather our dampness helps extinguish the communal flame.

What helps change this is precisely the tension in our lives. In carrying properly our unfulfilled desires we sizzle and slowly let go of the dampness of selfishness. In carrying tension we come to kindling temperature and are made ready for love.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, a scientist, noticed that sometimes when you put two chemicals into a test-tube they do not automatically unite. They only merge at a higher temperature. They must first be heated to bring about unity. There's an entire anthropology and psychology of love in that image. In order to love we must first be brought to a higher psychic temperature. What brings us there? Sizzling in tension, not resolving things prematurely, not sleeping with the bride before the wedding, not trying to have the complete symphony within two hours.

The sublime has to be waited for. Only when there is first enough heat will there be unity. To give birth to what's divine requires the slow patience of gestation. In short-hand, that's the algebra of Advent.

Ron Rolheiser  
*Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Currently, Father Rolheiser is serving as President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio Texas. He can be contacted through his web site, www.ronrolheiser.com.*

### Advent and Hope

There are two days in the Season of Advent that mark a turning point: The liturgical colour for today, **Gaudete Sunday**, is rose - symbolising that the light of what we're waiting & preparing for is breaking through the darkness of our searching and waiting: it's as though the light of Christmas shines through the purple of our waiting, the purple of our searching, the purple of Advent - lightening it to a rose colour. Today is a day of hope, reminding us that the God who was made flesh is present with us even in our searching and longing and waiting, even in the dark moments of our life.

**The 17th of December** is a liturgical turning point in the Season of Advent. Until then Advent is focussed on the theme of preparing for the coming of the Lord, in each present moment, at the hour of our own death, and at the end of time. But from the 17th Advent focuses specifically on preparing our spirit to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We move from the first to the second Preface of Advent in our Eucharistic Prayers as it prays 'that when he comes he may find us watching... our hearts filled with wonder and praise.'

## PARISH DIARY FOR THIS WEEK

Day	Date	Time	Event
Sun.	15/12/19	9:30am	Kidz Word a St Gerard's
		10:15am	Kidz Word at OLHC—No Children's Mass due to Children's Mass on the 24th December.
		11:15am	PMR Carlingford—Baptism Preparation Meeting
Mon	16/12/19	6:00pm	PMR Carlingford Antioch Group
		9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		7:30pm	PMR Carlingford SVdP meeting
Tue.	17/12/19	7:30pm	St Gerard's Church—Rosary Group
		12:15pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		9:15am	<b>End of Year School Mass OLHC Church</b>
Wed.	18/12/19	9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		11:00am	<b>Healing &amp; Anointing Mass OLHC Church</b>
			PMR after Mass for lunch
Thur.	19/12/19	7:30pm	Second Rite of Reconciliation at OLHC Church, Epping
		9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		12:15pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians</b>
Fri.	20/12/19	4:00pm	Parent run-through & dress rehearsal for Children's Christmas Mass at Epping.
		9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		10:10am	PMR Carlingford—Scripture Reflection
Sat.	21/12/19	12:15pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		4:30pm	CH Epping—Rosary for the Immaculate Heart of Mary
		7:00pm	School Holidays—No CANA meeting
Sun.	22/12/19	9:15am	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		9:45am	Exposition and Reconciliation
		10:00am	Parent run-through & dress rehearsal for the
Mon.	23/12/19	11:00am	Readers' Rehearsal
			The above rehearsals are for the Children's Mass on
			Christmas Eve at St Gerard's
Tue.	24/12/19	10:15am	Benediction
		5:00pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		5:00pm	Reconciliation at St Gerard's Church
Wed.	25/12/19	6:00pm	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>

PH—Parish Hall, CH—Church, PMR— Parish Meeting Room



### Alpha begins Tuesday 3 March 2020

Our first task ~ please pray for all who will be blessed by Alpha for Alpha relies on the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire. Nothing happens without the Holy Spirit and everything happens with the Holy Spirit. Fr Peter asks us to pray to the Holy Spirit for us to be missionary, to go out to others and invite them to Alpha. We also pray for the Holy Spirit to move the hearts of people to come.

The Holy Spirit works through a team of people committed to their guests. These hosts and helpers and the hospitality Task Force are being called to join the team that makes Alpha available at Epping. Alpha begins on Tuesday 3 March in 2020.

*Come Holy Spirit, fill us with your love, use us to witness to your love and show us who to invite to experience your love.*

## PARISH STAFF

**Parish Secretary:**  
**Dennis Porteous** Ph.: 9876 2853  
Email: dennis@eppcarl.org.au

**Asst. Parish Secretary:**  
**Maree Balzulat** Ph.: 9876 2853  
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**Pastoral Care Assistant:**  
**Maree Balzulat** Ph.: 9876 2853  
Email: maree@eppcarl.org.au

**Parish Support Worker (PSW) Sacramental Programmes and Children's Ministries**  
**Lynn Siau**  
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Email: lynn@eppcarl.org.au

**Sacramental Programme Assistant:**  
**Lisha Abraham**  
Ph.: 0407 255 593  
Email: kids.sacrament@eppcarl.org.au

**Pastoral Support Worker (PSW) Youth:**  
**Joanna Mak**  
Ph.: 0404 710 588  
Email: joanna@eppcarl.org.au

**Missionary Discipleship Coordinator:**  
**Denis McNamara**  
Ph.: 0410 041 944  
Email: denis.mcnamara@eppcarl.org.au

**Parish Pastoral Council**  
If you have any questions, comments or feedback for the Parish Pastoral Council then please send an email to [ppsecretary@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:ppsecretary@eppcarl.org.au)

### Advent Wreath For Those Who Mourn

The link is:  
[bereavementsupport.org.au](http://bereavementsupport.org.au)

### The Legion of Mary

As I mentioned some weeks ago now, one of our parishioners has requested we consider re-establishing a Legion of Mary group within our parish. The Legion of Mary founded in 1921 by Frank Duff, has been in Australia since 1942. Members meet each week with rosary and prayers and discussion of Legion work performed during the week. Our closest group at present is in Dundas. The principle work other than weekly meetings includes the visitation of homes. The Legion is worldwide and has a strong underground presence in China. The Legion sees as it's priority the spiritual and social welfare of each individual.



After consultation with the PPC we are keen to gauge what sort of interest there may be in the Legion. If anyone is interested in becoming part of such a group please send your details to Fr peter at [peter@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:peter@eppcarl.org.au).



### Children's Liturgy of the Word – We NEED you!

Children's Liturgy (Kidz Word) is an age-appropriate Liturgy of the Word offered at the 9:30am Sunday Mass at Carlingford and the 10:15am Mass at Epping during school terms. The presiding Priest calls forward the authorised adult leaders and children just after the Collect (Opening Prayer). The children are invited to go on a little "pilgrimage" with the leaders to the parish meeting room to celebrate the Gospel.

During Kidz Word, the leaders lead the children through prayers, songs/mimes and readings. The children reflect on the same Scripture readings as the rest of the assembly. They are taught a simplified message of the readings and are encouraged to share that message with their family and friends after Mass.



Adult or youth volunteers are needed to lead Kidz Word each week, as well as to assist with the supervision of the children. This is a great opportunity for adults and middle/high school/university youth to help these eager youngsters celebrate God's Word. A Working with Children's Check will be required, which we can assist you with. Training will also be provided before you begin and you can be assured you are always part of a team!

If you would like to help bring this meaningful ministry to life so God's Word can reach the hearts of our young children, please contact the parish office on 9876 2853 or email me at [lynn@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:lynn@eppcarl.org.au). We look forward to hearing from you!

Lynn Siau  
Sacramental Programmes & Children's Ministries  
0407 255 593  
[lynn@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:lynn@eppcarl.org.au)

### Can you help please?

The **Hospitality Team at Carlingford** is in need of more volunteers to provide morning tea after the 9.30 am Mass on Sunday. Some of our Team are no longer able to continue and our sincere thanks go to them for the generous time and service they have given.

Even though it is for a short time, morning tea provides a friendly space in good company, to catch up and have a quick chat. We have our regulars – our oldest being 93 years of age – and of course, the littlies who don't even reach the height of the table and for whom it is a treat.

Please consider joining the Hospitality Team. There are just a few of us at present, but we are a hospitable lot – even if it wasn't our job.



Contact Lorraine 9872 4005 at Carlingford, or Maree at the parish office 9876 2853.

### MEMORY INNOVATIONS CENTRE OPENING 27 JANUARY 2020 IN WAITARA

Professionally run courses designed for seniors to enhance memory and wellbeing. Courses available in cooking, exercise, brain function, art and dance!

Have fun, connect with others and use emerging technologies. Carers welcome! Limited places. Please call Jessica on 9481 2659 or visit <https://www.catholiccareddbb.org.au/aged-care/>.



### CHARITABLE WORKS FUND APPEAL

The second CWF Appeal for this Financial Year continues this weekend.

#### Shortfall after the sixth week \$4,942

Envelopes can be found at the entrances to the churches. Please give generously as any shortfall from this appeal will have to be made up from normal parish funds – please support the appeal so that we can avoid this happening. Our Parish quota for this Appeal is \$18,577.

### EPPING HEALING MASS

Our Healing and Anointing Mass will take place this **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> December at 11:00am** in the Church. Lunch will be served at the conclusion of Mass in the meeting room. All welcome!  
Catering: Carmel Avis and Marie Herd, and Genevieve and team.

All are welcome to our monthly Healing Masses (on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month at Carlingford and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at Epping) as a time to pray for God's healing strength either for ourselves or those we know. Each third month (Mar, Jun, Sep and Dec) we also celebrate the Sacrament of the Sick (Anointing) within these Masses.



### The Spirit of Christmas at St Gerard Majella's 2019



**THANK YOU** to Parishioners, St Gerard's School, SVDP Members, Volunteers from the Dads' Club and Antioch, WW (bags), Parish Office and Clergy.

(140 Hampers to 45 Families)

## Youth Page

### CANA: OUR Yr. 7-9 YOUTH GROUP

If you're in Years 7-9 come along for a night Jam-packed with **FUN & FAITH! EVERY FRIDAY** night of the School Term, 7:30 - 9pm, in the Parish hall at Carlingford. It's a great place to catch up with old friends, and meet some new ones!

Please remember that a small donation when you come to the meeting would really help out with the costs of the night. Thanks

Enquiries to Joanna Mak  
0404 710 588

### OUR PARISH ANTIOCH COMMUNITY

Antioch youth are having a Christmas party and we want to invite you!

Anyone between year 10 up to 22 year old is welcome to join. And bring a friend along!

**Date:** From 6pm, 15th December (Sunday)  
**Location:** St Gerard's Parish Meeting Room  
543 North Rocks Rd, Carlingford  
**Theme:** Christmas! And bring a secret Santa present.

**RSVP:** Joanna on 0404 710 588 by the 8th December  
So we can cater for food.

### How do we welcome people to our faith: by being a missionary disciple!

**Q** How do members of the assembly help attract and welcome people to our faith?

**A** A simple invitation to come to Mass may be just what a spouse, neighbour, good friend, or acquaintance has been waiting for.



People are attracted to faith by the way others lead their lives – in the neighbourhood, school, workplace, or sports field. What they observe in us kindles a desire for something more.

Some people have no experience of any formal faith tradition and don't know how to access it, so a willingness to share our faith and extend an invitation opens the way for them.

We must become the hands and feet and welcoming voice of Jesus in the marketplace. The Holy Spirit is alive and working through us to lead others to Jesus. And when visitors cross the threshold of our church, we must pay attention.

Everyone needs a warm welcome – especially seekers.

Gael Gensler OSF. © 2017 Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications. All rights reserved. Art by Steve Musgrave.

Our God is coming ~ **Be not afraid**

Isaiah gave courage to the Jews in exile in Babylon. The prophet could see what would happen.

**Look your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.**

Justice did happen. Cyrus conquered the Babylonian empire, set the Jewish slaves free and even rebuilt their temple in Zion. Isaiah went on to say that when God comes. . .

*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy for those the Lord has ransomed shall return.*

This vision shows us how Jesus will ransom slaves, that is set captives free. He will heal the physical and set slaves of spiritual forces free. That includes all of us when we feel imprisoned in a world where evil is in control and love has no power.

This is our faith. We believe those promises are fulfilled in our time, in our hearts, with our families and around our world.

*They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy on their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament shall be ended.* Could we believe that we will see everlasting joy on our own face? We pray in the psalm for sorrow and lament to end.

**Lord come and save us!** Save us from what? We usually want to be spared pain and saved from bad times, bad people, bad luck, but what really matters? To be saved from fear, from being faint hearted, from failing to love, and afraid we cannot live our life to the full.

James wrote in the second reading to those who believed Jesus was the Son of God who came and saved them. *You have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon.* And when the Lord comes what will we see? John the Baptist asked Jesus the same question. "Are you the one who is coming, or do we have to wait for someone else?" Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah ~

**Blind see, lame walk, lepers cleansed, deaf hear, dead raised and Good News proclaimed to the poor.** Jesus ticks all the boxes and fulfils all the hopes of that prophet. This Christmas let us celebrate, **Our God has come.**

We include our environment as Isaiah prayed:

**Let the wilderness** in our country, **the dry lands** of drought **exult. Let the wasteland** from the fires, **rejoice and bloom.** *Let it bring forth flower. Let the environment rejoice and sing for joy.*

What is the challenge we face? Is it fear, poverty, paralysis of being without power to change anything? Isaiah says this is how you act; **Courage do not be afraid.** Look **your God is coming** in our time. He is coming **to save you.**

Denis McNamara *Supporting Missionary Disciples*

### Keeping the time of Advent

Please don't forget weekday Mass during this Season – an opportunity to centre our Advent day by reflecting on the Scriptures, meeting the Eucharistic Lord whose coming we prepare for, and being together in prayer as the Body of Christ.

Parking is available on-site at both churches for weekday Mass: on the driveway to the left of the church and on the paved area in front of the church at Epping; and in the carpark immediately behind the church at Carlingford.