

<b>Responsorial Psalm Response</b> Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.	<b>Gospel Acclamation</b> <b>Alleluia, alleluia!</b> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. <b>Alleluia!</b>
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**WEEKEND MASSES**

<b>Epping</b>	<b>5pm Vigil, 8:30am, 10:15am, 6:00pm</b>
<b>Carlingford</b>	<b>6:00pm Vigil, 7:45am, 9:30am</b>

<b>WEEKDAY MASSES</b>	<b>Mon.</b>	<b>Tues.</b>	<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Thur</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat.</b>
<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:** Patricia Amy, Anna Ortner, Mary Anne, Anthony & Hugh Mulligan, Frank Holmes, Sr. Agnes Chong ocd, Robert Tan, Eddie Tam., Michael Appadurai,

**Anniversaries:** Padmini Saverimuttu, Helen De Luca, René & Iris Nina, George & Jeanne Ally, Des Howard,

**Also for:**

**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, Rose Prior, Mark Di Palma, Anthony Conlon, Andrew Hannam, The Craig Family, Fr Mick Court, Margaret Maher, Cooper Rundell, Anna & Leo Bruzze, Gerhard Stieger, Fred Saad, Ron Jenkins, Mike Van Werdt, Tammy Birch, Dorothea Ellis, Veronica Hartwich, Rebecca Lawler, Ben Thornton, Elaine Finlayson, Jan Doherty, Brian Walsh, Greg Walsh, John Gilberti, Stella Nathan, Catherine Walsh, Brendan Stone, Melanie Loudoun, Mary Wijewardana, Pam Taig, Elaine Hunt, Arnold Day, Maureen Carlon, Fr Adrian Borst, Ausustine Hong, Luba Charlton, George Khouri, Martin Sill, Antony Hogan, Ingrid Connor, Steve Toth, Rob Neil, Josie Scully, Martin & Gay Flood, William Jones, Kath McCarthy, Nicholas Rajanayagen, Maria Lee, Joyce Fewtrell, Patricia Muschalik, Ernest Lau, Sr. Pauline Wicks rsj, Delma Soria, Sn Atanasia Lee.

*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
22/12/18	5:00pm	Fr Joey Frez	6:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd
23/12/18	8:30am	Fr Joey Frez	7:45am	Fr Peter Dowd
23/12/18	10:15am	Fr Joey Frez	9:30am	Fr Peter Dowd
23/12/18	6:00pm	Fr Joey Frez		

Date	Mass	Epping	Mass	Carlingford
24/12/18	6:00pm	Fr Joey Frez	5:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd
25/12/18	Midnight	Fr Joey Frez	10:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd
25/12/18	8:30am	Fr Peter Dowd	7:45am	Fr Joey Frez
25/12/18	10:15am	Fr Peter Dowd	9:30am	Fr Joey Frez

  
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## 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

**Assistant Priest: Fr Joey Frez**  
**Ph.:** 9872 3400  
**Email:** joseph@eppcarl.org.au

**Email:** parish@eppcarl.org.au

**Parish Website:** [www.eppcarl.org.au](http://www.eppcarl.org.au)

**Parish Office: 9876 2853**

**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 C THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT [Gaudete ('Rejoice') Sunday] 16-12-18**

**Zephaniah 3:14-18**

**Philippians 4:4-7**

**Luke 3:10-18**

### CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS



**Christmas Eve Evening, 24th  
December**

**Christmas Vigil Mass**

5:00pm at St Gerard's

6:00pm at Our Lady Help of Christians

These are both Children's Masses. If possible the children are invited to bring a small gift to place under the tree. We invite you to provide your child with a gift wrapped card containing a small monetary donation towards the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

The children will be invited to place their gifts under the tree during the procession of gifts in the middle of the Mass.

**St Gerard's, Carlingford**

Night Mass: 10:00pm Mass

Preceded by Carols at 9:30pm

**Our Lady Help of Christians, Epping**

Midnight Mass

Preceded by Carols at 11:30pm.

**Christmas Day 25th December**

**St Gerard's Carlingford**

7:45am, 9:30am

**Our Lady Help of Christians' Epping**

8:30am, 10:15am **NO** 6:00pm Mass

### Advent -The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

In preparation for Christmas there will be a celebration of the Second Rite of Reconciliation for both our communities at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church at Epping this Wednesday 19th December at 7:30pm.



**RECONCILIATION**

Please make this a priority as a number of priests will be available.

### Our December Healing & Anointing Mass and Christmas Luncheon:



**Epping:**

the Mass will be celebrated in the Church on **Wednesday, 19th December** at 11am. To be followed by a light Christmas luncheon in the parish meeting room. Could both catering teams help out. Thank you!

All are welcome - and we especially invite all our senior parishioners to this end of year gathering.

*To celebrate Ann Milling's 11 years of leadership as  
Principal at St Gerard's Catholic School,  
a Mass of Thanksgiving will be held on  
Wednesday, 19th December at 9.30am  
St Gerard's Church, Carlingford  
Morning tea will follow Mass.*



### The Spirit of Christmas at St Gerard Majella's 2018



**THANK YOU to Parishioners, School Dads' Club, W.W., Coles, Antiochers, SVDP members, Office & Clergy.**

**140 HAMPERS TO 60 FAMILIES**

### ANGEL TREE

A big thank you to all who responded to the request for presents for children of prisoners, and all those who provided funds for postage. I would also like to thank Joanna Mak, Agnes Mak, Clare Sa, Louise Hui, Erin O'Donnell, Helen Barry, Betty Hillier, Natalie Viset, and Antony Burnet-Smith for all their help. Once again the parish community has demonstrated magnificent generosity and compassion. The Prison Ministry thanks you.

A picture of all our present bags lined up in the parish meeting room ready to be taken away.



### Catechist (SRE) News:

Thanks to our wonderful speakers and the Catechists providing the information and invitations to our Ministry after each Mass in the Parish over the past 2 weekends, **we have at least 10 people who have volunteered to join the SRE Ministry (become Catechists).**

**However, only 1 of these is able to assist in the High Schools when we need at least 3 people to assist at Cheltenham High on Thursday mornings once a fortnight.** Please contact **Mary (see below)** to discover more about this wonderful ministry.

Please pray for **Margaret Lau** and **Rob Neil** & their families.

**Our Christmas luncheon was a wonderful celebration with Fr Peter leading us in prayerful reflection and in thanking Ana da Costa Covacha who retired this year from many years as Coordinator of the Primary Catechists.** Many thanks to all who attended and contributed to our Festive Feast! See Photos below.

**Many thanks to Nina & Ken Deacon for the wonderful photos**

Please contact  
Mary O'Byrne (High Schools) on 9871 2120 or mfobyrne@gmail.com  
or Katherine Tam (Primary Schools) on [218catechists.ps@gmail.com](mailto:218catechists.ps@gmail.com)  
or via the Parish on 9876 2853  
with any enquiries or offers to assist in this exciting and rewarding Ministry .



*L. Fr Peter leading Us in prayer.*

*Below: Fr Peter thanking Anna for all her hard work.*

*More pictures on page 7*



Christmas Lunch Friday 30th Dec.

### 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 **16th 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.'

**The Truth Justice and Healing Council**  
[www.thecouncil.org.au](http://www.thecouncil.org.au) Ph.: 6234 0900

### 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, **At the words that follow, up to and including 'and became man', 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.



R. SVdP Carlingford Conference Christmas lunch held at the Epping Club last Saturday.



L: Christmas lunch in the PMR at Carlingford on Friday 30th Dec. for the Catechists.



## Reflection on this Sunday's Gospel—Our Struggle to Celebrate

*Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! (Second Reading)*

It's hard to celebrate properly. We want to, but we don't know how.

Mostly we celebrate badly because our idea of celebration is to overdo things. We try to celebrate by taking ordinary things (eating, drinking, singing, telling stories, playing) to excess. Celebration, for many of us, means over-eating, over-drinking, loud socializing, drunken singing, and staying at parties into the wee hours of morning, all in the hope that somehow in all that excess we will achieve celebration (whatever that means). But, for all our frenzied effort, there is precious little genuine enjoyment.

The very purpose of celebration is to heighten and intensify the meaning of something. Occasionally we do succeed and genuinely celebrate. At those times we feel ourselves more deeply joined to others, widened, made larger, made more aware, made more playful, and sense more deeply the love and joy that lie at the heart of life. But that rarely happens and it never happens when we are in frenzy. Too often our celebrations are followed by a hangover (of one kind or another). Why? The reasons for this are complex, deep, and mostly hidden from us.

Perhaps the primary reason why we find it so difficult to genuinely celebrate is that we seem to lack the capacity to simply enjoy things, to take life, pleasure, love, and enjoyment as a gift from God, pure and simple. It's not that we lack the capacity to do this, it's more that this capacity in us is generally buried under a mound of guilt. What this means is that often we cannot enjoy legitimate pleasure because somehow, however unconsciously, we sense what is articulated in the ancient myths, namely, that in enjoying pleasure we are somehow stealing something from God.

We tend to blame religion for this, but this neurosis is universal, as much outside of religious circles as inside of them. Somehow, in the name of the divine, most everyone feels guilt in pleasure.

And because of this, we tend to alternate between rebellious enjoyment ("pleasure we steal from God") and joyless duty (a dutiful life, but without genuine pleasure and enjoyment). We never seem to be able to genuinely celebrate. I say genuinely because, paradoxically, our incapacity to enjoy is the very thing that pushes us into pseudo-celebration, hedonism, and an unhealthy pursuit of pleasure.

Simply put, because we struggle to enjoy ourselves simply we pursue enjoyment too much and substitute excess for enjoyment.

And this often leads to a dangerous confusion wherein we substitute pleasure for enjoyment, excess for ecstasy, and the obliteration of consciousness for heightened awareness. The champagne-soaked athletes celebrating a major victory and the mindless frenzy of a Mardi Gras give us all the video footage we need to understand this. But excess isn't enjoyment, nor is obliterated consciousness heightened awareness. They are weak, unsatisfying substitutes.

The very purpose of celebration is to heighten and intensify the meaning of something (a birthday, a wedding, a major achievement, a victory, a graduation, the birth of a child, the beginning or ending of a year). These events demand to be shared, heightened, widened, trumpeted. We have a congenital need to celebrate and this is very healthy.

What does it mean to celebrate something? To celebrate an occasion is to heighten it, share it, savor it, enlarge it. We also celebrate in order to link ourselves more fully to others, to be playful, to intensify a feeling, to bring ourselves to ecstasy, and, more commonly, just to rest and unwind. But because of our incapacity to enjoy something simply we often try to create that enjoyment through excess and seek the ecstasy of heightened self-awareness in the obliteration of our consciousness.

Small wonder we often trudge home with a hangover, emptier, more tired, more alone. A hangover is an infallible sign that somewhere we missed a signpost.

But we must continue to try. Christ came and declared a wedding, a feast, a celebration, at the heart of life. He shocked people as much by the way he enjoyed his life as by the way he gave it up. In the end, he was rejected as much for his message of enjoyment as for his message of asceticism. That is still true today. We tend to read the gospels selectively so as to ignore Jesus' positive challenge to enjoy without guilt.

And in that lies our problem: Because we are never challenged religiously and in the name of Jesus, to enjoy, deeply and without guilt, the very human pleasures of our lives, our healthy, God-given, need for pleasure and enjoyment tends to go underground. We still seek pleasure and enjoyment, but now we split them off from what is religious and holy and "steal them from God" rather than enjoy them simply and religiously. That is one of the main reasons why we substitute excess for enjoyment and an obliterated consciousness for heightened awareness.

God has given us permission to enjoy life and its pleasures. That truth too needs to be a central part of our religious teaching. Pleasure is God's gift, not the forbidden fruit.

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](http://www.ronrolheiser.com).*

## PARISH DIARY FOR THIS WEEK

Day	Date	Time	Event
Sun.	16/12/18	9:30am	Kidz Word at St Gerard's Church
		10:15am	Kidz Word at OLHC no Children's Mass
		11:15am	PMR Carlingford Baptism Preparation Meeting
			Antioch on a break, resumes on 13th January
Mon	17/12/18	9:00pm	PH Epping Little Engines Playgroup
		9:30am	PH Carlingford Gerry's Playgroup
		9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's</b>
		7:30pm	PMR Carlingford SVdP meeting
		7:30pm	CH Carlingford Rosary Group
Tue.	18/12/18	12:15pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
Wed.	19/12/18	9:15am	<b>End of Year School Mass at OLHC Church</b>
		9:30am	<b>End of Year School Mass at St Gerard's</b>
		11:00am	OLHC Healing & Anointing Mass followed by a Light Christmas luncheon in the PMR
		7:30pm	CH Epping Second Rite of Reconciliation
Thur.	20/12/18	9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		12:15pm	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians Church
		1:00pm	St Gerard's School—Staff Liturgy
Fri.	21/12/18	9:30am	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>
		10:00pm	PMR Carlingford Scripture Reflection
		12:15pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		4:30pm	CH Epping Rosary for the Immaculate Heart of Mary
			NO Cana school holidays
Sat.	22/12/18	9:15am	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		9:45am	Exposition and Reconciliation
		10:15am	Benediction
		5:00pm	<b>Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church</b>
		5:00pm	Reconciliation at St Gerard's Church
		6:00pm	<b>Mass at St Gerard's Church</b>

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

### NEW YEAR'S DAY – the Blessing of Our Images of Our Lady



One of the special feast days of this Christmas Season is the greatest and most ancient of the feasts of Mary – 1<sup>st</sup> January, New Year's Day: (the solemnity of Mary as Mother of God) – we highlight it by annually inviting everyone to bring their images of Mary to be blessed during the 9:30am Mass at St Gerard's and the 12:15pm Mass at Epping. New Year's Day is the Octave Day of Christmas and celebrates Mary's role in our salvation: that it was through her acceptance of God's call and placing herself at the service of God that the Word was made flesh in and through her. As such this feast celebrates Mary as our model as she challenges us likewise to be 'mother of God' bringing Jesus to birth in our world through our own lives.

### The Light is ON for you

The Diocese of Broken Bay would like to advise that The Light is ON will be offered again Lent2019. The Light is ON is an initiative whereby Churches of the Diocese will be open on Friday evenings during Lent for prayer and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## PARISH STAFF

**Parish Secretary:**  
**Dennis Porteous** Ph.: 9876 2853  
Email: [dennis@eppcarl.org.au](mailto: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](mailto:maree@eppcarl.org.au)

**Children's Sacramental Coordinator:**  
**Lynn Siau**  
Ph.: 0407 255 593  
Email: [kids.sacrament@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:kids.sacrament@eppcarl.org.au)

**Sacramental Programme Assistant:**  
**Marcella Letteri**  
Ph.: 0407 255 593

**Cana Youth Group:**  
**Ashleigh Belic**  
Ph.: 0430 120 015  
Email: [ashleigh.belic@gmail.com](mailto:ashleigh.belic@gmail.com)

**Missionary Discipleship:**  
**Denis McNamara**  
Ph: 0410 041 944  
Email: [denismcnamara@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:denismcnamara@eppcarl.org.au)

### AFTER HOURS SICK CALLS— 9876 2853

Outside office hours our office phones divert to Fr Peter and Fr Joey 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.

**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.

### 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.

### 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.

### Safeguarding Message

During this Advent Season let us be reminded that Jesus sees children as recipients and models, and even the measure of the Kingdom (Gundry-Volf & Kelly).

### Children's Sacramental Journey Within Our Parish



Here at the Epping and Carlingford Parish, the preparation of children for the completion of the Sacraments of Initiation – Confirmation, Reconciliation and First Holy Communion is parish-based and family-centred. We hope to encourage and nurture parents in the preparation of their children through group sessions. The group sessions

facilitate parent-child interaction utilising activities to help children explore the key concepts of the sacraments in an age-appropriate and fun way. Parents' companionship and witness speak volumes to the children as they pass down their faith to their children.

In our Diocese of Broken Bay, the order of the Sacraments for children after Baptism, begins with Confirmation, then First Reconciliation, followed by receiving First Holy Communion to complete their initiation into the Church.

Our 2019 Sacramental Programme brochure is now available at the back of both churches and on our parish website, [eppcarl.org.au](http://eppcarl.org.au). This brochure outlines the key dates of the celebration of Sacraments for children in 2019.

Please take note of the next enrolment period in January 2019 for First Reconciliation. We will begin advertising closer to the date.

In the meanwhile, if you are wanting to find out more about your child's sacramental journey within our parish, please feel free to contact me.

Lynn Siau  
Children's Sacramental Co-ordinator  
0407 255 593  
[kids.sacrament@eppcarl.org.au](mailto:kids.sacrament@eppcarl.org.au)

### CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

Are available near the bulletin boxes in both our churches.

The contributions via the Christmas Offering supplements the funds raised via the First Collection for the support and upkeep of priests. The fund it goes to depends very much on these special contributions at Christmas and Easter, without which it struggles to meet its commitments.

This diocesan fund not only provides the living allowance and household costs for the priests of the parish, but also provides funds for health care for priests and maintains priests in their retirement. Please support the Christmas Offerings. The envelopes can be placed on either plate.

### ROSARY FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

The rosary for the intentions of the Immaculate Heart of Mary will be recited every Friday afternoon at 4:30pm in Our Lady Help of Christians' Church. You are most welcome!



### SCHOOL MASSES

There will be School Masses on **Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December** at **9:30am** at St Gerard Majella's Church and **9:15am** at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church to celebrate the "The End of Year School Mass." All Parents most welcome!

### A Plenary Council Christmas opportunity!

*What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?*

It is essential for ALL Catholics to respond to this question for the future of our Church. There will be an opportunity at the Christmas Masses for family or friends who have not 'Had their Say' to write their response on one of the Christmas message cards on the seats. It can then be placed in the Plenary Council box in the Church or posted at their convenience.

If you would like to contribute or ask questions you too can place your response in one of the boxes or **Contact:**

**Lynne Slocombe 0407138992 or Email [lynne.slocombe@gmail.com](mailto:lynne.slocombe@gmail.com)**

**Carole Wilson 9869 1036 or Email [carole.wilson@optusnet.com.au](mailto:carole.wilson@optusnet.com.au)**

For further information visit the Plenary Council website and explore:

**[www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/have-your-say](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/have-your-say)**



### 2018 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Commencing 8<sup>th</sup> December

**Make this a Christmas Filled With Joy. We need your help.**

**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 Could Change Lives**

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Our Parish Office will be **CLOSED from Midday 24<sup>th</sup> December** until Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January. For emergency sick calls or in the event of the need to make funeral arrangements please ring 9876 2853 (the phone is always diverted to Fr Peter's home outside of office hours.



## Year of Youth 2018

### CANA YOUTH GROUP



Next CANA Meeting Friday 21 December

If you're in Yrs. 7-9

Come along for a night jam-packed with **FUN & FAITH! EVERY FRIDAY** night of school term **7:30pm-9:00pm** in the parish hall @ Carlingford.

It's a great place to catch up with friends and meet some new ones! Please remember that a small donation when you come to the meeting would really help out with the cost of the night! Thanks :)

Any questions call Ashleigh 0430 120 015

### Alpha in Epping and Carlingford



Alpha success shows how your prayers and your invitations to come to Alpha, have changed lives.

Alpha has been offered 6 times in our parish and there is much to celebrate from the past 18 months.

At the recent evening session, 20% were young adults, 10% were learning about Christ and the Catholic Church from Catholics. About half of those attending are involved in parish ministries and after Alpha, more become involved.

Alpha happens because a very reliable "Task Force" have prepared food, set up the place, set out the smorgasbord and cleaned up. We are blessed to have 2 dedicated coordinators who ensure the tables will offer plenty of food with plenty of choice.

Our hosts and helpers have cared for guests in 30 groups, where strangers become new friends. Alpha is not a course about content to be learnt. It is an experience of discovering your own understanding and sharing your life.

It is a different experience each time, for the people are different and each time you see the videos, you see new things or see old things in a new way. You are a different person for Alpha helps you to grow as a person, grow in your faith. The change takes place through grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit at work in us making us better and more loving people.

Thank you to all who have come and to all who have made Alpha possible this year. Please continue praying and inviting more people to "Come and see".

### Preparing for Alpha in 2019

Our first step is to pray for the Holy Spirit to raise up hosts and helpers from among those who have done Alpha. They work with the Holy Spirit to welcome new guests and journey with them. If you are being called to be on team, please set aside Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February for training at Pennant Hills. We trust some experienced leaders will join us.

Fr Peter encourages all who have been in Alpha to join a Lenten Group. He will offer Lenten Groups in the two parish meeting rooms. You will hear more about Lenten Groups in February as we prepare for Lent which begins in March.

Holy Week is the time to be with Jesus as we remember his Last Supper, his dying on Good Friday and celebrate his rising on Easter Sunday. Alpha begins after Easter. recreation.

**Holidays** are set apart for being. Days away from being busy and producing. Days to be with those you love. Over the holidays, may your family time be full of fun and

### OUR PARISH ANTIOCH COMMUNITY:

**"We are currently having a break.**

**Meeting will resume in mid Jan 2019.**

**Wishing everyone a safe and peaceful Christmas! and a Happy 2019."**



Joanne—0416 030 927

*"It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians." ~Acts 11:26*

### Antioch Parent Support

Once again I ask for parishioners to seriously consider assisting in the parent role essential to the continuation of Antioch in our parish. If, as many of you have said on numerous occasions, the parish needs to be serious about youth being a priority and support the growth in faith of our young people, then it is up to you, the parishioners to provide the ministry required.

Anyone interested in finding our more information please contact Fr Peter via the parish office on



### Kidz Word

Interested in joining the Children's Liturgy of the Word Team-Kidz Word? is always looking for new members to join its dedicated team of volunteers.

Could you be one of them?

Team members are from varied backgrounds, and can be single, married, parents, or grand-parents.

The commitment consists of being placed on a roster for usually one session per term depending on the number of people on the roster. Those new to the role are paired with a more experienced leader. Working with Children Check is organised through the Parish office.

If you share a love of the liturgy and wish to assist in the spiritual development of young school-aged children, you are invited to attend and observe any of the Sunday sessions before committing to join the team.

For any further enquiries please contact the Parish office 9876 2853.



### PIETY STORE St. Gerard's Church

*come and browse*

**\*2019 Daily Missals commencing Advent**

**\*Christmas Cards**

**\*2019 Columban Calendars**

**\*Christmas gifts for all ages**

*...continued from previous column*

recreation.

Holidays are also **HOLY Days**, to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to be with Mary who pondered in her heart, that *God so loved the world, He sent His only Son*. During these holy-days, may your inner spirit experience re-creation, so you are energised for 2019 AD. It is called the "Year of Our Lord" or "Anno Domini" in Latin, which is shortened to AD. It will be 2,019 years since he came into our world, *so that we could have life and have it to the full*.