

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.



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 – 1st 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 11:00am Mass at Epping (no Mass at Carlingford that day).



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.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES are available near the bulletin boxes of 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 enve-

Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of Everlasting Life. Grant that life to all the recently deceased and those whose anniversaries fall at this time. Please pray for those who for all who are sick in both our communi-

Parish Office Hours Between Christmas and New Year:

Our Parish Office will be CLOSED from **12 noon on Christmas Eve** until **Wednesday 8th January**. For emergency sick calls or in the event of the need to contact a priest, please ring 9876 2853 as usual (the phone is always diverted to Fr Peter's home outside of office hours). Please leave a message, which will be returned promptly.



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

Email: parish@eppcarl.org.au

Parish Website: www.bbcatholic.org.au/eppingcarlingford



Assistant Priest: Fr Bogdan Skupien
Ph.: 9872 3400
Email: Bogdan.Skupien@bbcatholic.org.au

“Welcome “as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ!”

Dear brothers and sisters,

On behalf of Fr Bogdan and myself, I would like to extend every best wish and the promise of our prayers as we celebrate the Feast of the Birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! I would also like to extend a special welcome to all our visitors who are sharing in our Christmas Masses here at Epping and Carlingford over these days. **No matter where you come from or what faith traditions you may belong to you are all most welcome!**

The Feast of Christmas reminds us that Jesus did not need to claim his equality with God but rather emptied Himself of power, possessions and prestige to be open to love and to be loved. It is an invitation that is addressed to us not in our splendour but in our lowliness. We especially remember in a part way those separated from home or loved ones especially those seeking asylum in our country or overseas and prisoners or those in detention. We also are mindful of those who have been impacted by recent bushfires in NSW and beyond, especially those who have lost loved ones, livestock and property. We are especially grateful to our fire fighters and the many volunteers who provide signs of Christmas hope in the midst of such horrific devastation and chaos.

May we all experience the gift of hope and peace which the world cannot give.

A blessed Christmas to all!

Fr Peter

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.



2019 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

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!





Our Lady Help of Christians' Church
29 Oxford St, Epping

Sharing a covenant relationship with the Anglican Parish of Epping (incorporating St Alban's and St Aidan's Churches), Epping Uniting Church, West Epping Uniting Church and Epping Baptist Church

The Catholic Parish of
EPPING and CARLINGFORD
Diocese of Broken Bay



St Gerard Majella's Church
543 North Rocks Rd, Carlingford

25 December 2019

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, EPPING DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Dear parishioners and all parents of OLHC school Epping.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the future development of the Parish site at Our Lady Help of Christians, Epping. We take this opportunity to provide you an update on the development envisaged for OLHC.

As you would recall, earlier in the year we let you know of the one-year delay in the development of the parish site at Epping. Originally, we anticipated the school would be temporarily relocated to Pennant Hills from December of this year (2019). However, due to delays in the planning approvals process, this date was postponed for an additional 12 months. This resulted in the new temporary relocation dates to St Agatha's to be from December 2020 until the end of Term 1 2022.

Throughout much of this year, a great deal of work has continued with Stockland and Architectus in relation to finessing the design plans, along with continued engagement with Council with respect to the development application (DA). As a result of those very helpful discussions and Council's feedback, along with three presentations made to the Design Excellence Advisory Panel, a revised DA was submitted in early November. The changes to the design mainly impacted the Seniors Living development, with the original school and parish asset designs largely remaining the same.

You will recall, based on the initial advice of the Design Excellence Advisory Panel, the Seniors Living Component was designed as a more a slimmer, refined building which resulted in a better urban outcome. The original DA was based on 205 independent apartments. The revised design has been refined even further which resulted in the reduction of the number of apartments from 205 to 170 units.

As a result of these changes, Council recently advised us of the Design Excellence Advisory Panel's support of the revised DA. With that support obtained, the DA will now be considered by the Planning Panel in its meeting in February in the coming year.

If you have any questions, or would like more information about the development, please continue to let us know. Otherwise, we will be in touch with you once we know the Planning Panel's determination

Fr Peter Dowd and Ms Dominique O'Sullivan



EVERYONE HAS QUESTIONS

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith. To ask questions, and share their point of view in an open, friendly environment.



EXPLORE LIFE, FAITH & MEANING

What is Alpha?

Alpha is an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith, in a friendly, open and informal environment. Alpha is not so much a course, but an EXPERIENCE! Gathering once a week over a twelve week period, each Alpha experience brings together people from every walk of life. The format of Alpha is always the same. We begin each Alpha gathering by sharing a meal, then we watch a video, have a break for coffee and finally a small group discussion. Over 29 million people across the globe have done Alpha.

Who is Alpha for?

Alpha is for everyone and anyone. The symbol for Alpha is the Question Mark? The beauty of Alpha is that there are no questions that are taboo, too silly or too simple. You 'can ask that!' You don't have to be or have done anything to come to Alpha. Just 'Come and See'. So if you are new to the area, new to Australia, new to the parish, just come. We come together with one another as we are, free to be ourselves.

Want to learn more about Alpha?

Upcoming Alpha experience in 2020

Evening Alpha starts 3rd March. This Alpha runs on from 7.00-9.00pm in a Parish Hall Epping, and is a great choice for those coming from work.

"We would like to express our appreciation to all members of our parish family for their prayers, care and concern for us over the last few months." **Margaret and Gordon**

Thank You to Dick Porter and his daughter, Tricia for the cleaning of the glass doors at St Gerard's, top and bottom. That is a lot of glass and a lot of cleaning. Thank you and bless you both!

Prison Fellowship, along with the chaplains and inmates at Long Bay Correctional Centre and Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre thank our Parish for the wonderful support given to Angel tree, providing a Christmas gift to children of an incarcerated parent. Each parent is able to give their child the gift when they come to Visit over Christmas. You gave a total of 81 gifts and donated \$620. Beautiful Christmas bags were bought for each family and Lots of Chocolates and goodies were added to each bag. There was also included a gift of chocolates for each Carer of the children. Chaplains particularly than Natalie Viset for her wonderful and dedicated work in bringing this altogether.. Also Carole Wilson for all her time given. We also thank the Antioch group. Joanna Mak, Alyssa Gatenby-Moore, Stephen Cumiskey, Anthony Burnet-Smith and Raven Tinonga and Prison Ministry team, Betty Hillier, Helen Barry, Doug Viset for all your help in sorting and wrapping the gifts. May you all have a joyful and peaceful Christmas.



Margaret Wiseman, Chaplain
Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre

Dads' Club The monthly gathering of the parish Dads' Club (for all dads in both the Epping and Carlingford communities of the parish) takes place on the first Friday of the month at 7:30pm in the parish meeting room at Carlingford. For details contact Tim Paxton 9945 0151. All dads are welcome for a relaxing and enjoyable evening

Gerry's Playgroup

St Gerard's hosts a "Playgroup" for families in our community.

It is an informal session where parents, grandparents, carers, babies and children aged 0 to school age come together in a relaxed and friendly environment.



- Playgroup gives children an opportunity to have fun, make new friends and develop new skills through informal play.
- Playgroup provides parents and carers with an opportunity to meet other parents and carers, make friends and share ideas and experiences.
- St Gerard's playgroup is a great way to get to know other families in our school community.

The playgroup meets every Monday morning during the school term in the parish hall. Parking is available via Roselea Way in the car park behind the school. Access to the parish hall is via the gate at the back of the school.

The Antioch Community is having its Annual Outreach Weekend

Friday 21st – Sunday 23rd February 2020

The Antioch weekend is run for youth, by youth and is filled with,

TALKS & DISCUSSIONS, Music, FOOD, FRIENDS and FUN!!

It's a great chance to find out more about yourself, meet heaps of great young people from the parish, and grow closer to Jesus!

Anyone in year 10 – Age 20 is invited to come along (and bring a friend!)

for an awesome weekend away from the hassles of everyday life.

Email Alison for information
Joanne 0416 030 927 &
Joanna 0404 710 588

"CANA" Youth Group

Our two communities currently operate a junior group named "Cana" and serves school children between Years 7 to 9. This group has activities each Friday evening during the school terms from 7:30pm – 9:00pm at the Parish Hall Carlingford. This is a great opportunity for children to gather together, have fun and grow deeper in their faith and strengthen friendship in a welcoming and safe environment.

Cana is named after the place where Jesus performed his first miracle in the Gospel of John: "The first of these miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana" (John 2:11). Further information about the activities is advertised in the Youth Page in the parish bulletin.

If you know of a young person who would be interested in coming along or if you would like to assist as a young adult leader (aged 16 to 30), please contact the Youth Ministry Co-Ordinator or the Parish Office.

A big Thank You to the Martelli Family for all the beautiful flowers they have donated throughout the year. The Parish is most appreciative of your generosity!