

Responsorial Psalm Response To you, O Lord, I lift my soul	Gospel Acclamation Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!
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WEEKEND MASSES

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

WEEKDAY MASSES

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur	Fri	Sat.
EPPING	No Mass	12:15pm	9:15am	12:15pm	12:15pm	9:15am
CARLINGFORD	9:30am	No Mass	9:30am	11:00am	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: Paul Schwager, Jim Carmody, Betty Murdoch, Vicky Kennedy, Philip Ting (father of John Ting), Mary Ellis, Frankie Fernandes (brother of Irene Fernandes), Patricia Amy, Anna Ortner, Mary Anne, Anthony & Hugh Mulligan,

*We pray for Frank Holmes who died last Friday 23 November 2018.
The Funeral Mass took place on Thursday at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church last Thursday.*

Anniversaries: Hilda Cooper.

Also for: Vincent James Dellow, Alice Mary Dellow, Christopher Luke Dwyer, John Heagney, Clair Bowen, Lionel (Frost) Bowen,

Please pray for those who are sick: Sean Huhse, Joel Steinberg, Patricia Rumble, Dean Pan, John Davies, Nicole Greenfield, Michael Furlong, Saulius Dovydas Balsys, 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, Tony ?, 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, Frank Holmes, Joyce Fewtrell, Patricia Muschalik, Ernest Lau, Sr. Pauline Wicks rsj, Delma Soria, Sn Atanasia Lee, Kevin Torpey.

Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

BAPTISMS IN THE PARISH LAST SUNDAY

Welcome to:

Bella Marie Brennan, Zoe Maria Baines,
Henry Michael Tulloch, Chloe Milla Shortill



Please hold these children and their families in your prayers.

Date	Mass	Epping	Mass	Carlingford
08/12/18	5:00pm	Fr Joey Frez	6:00pm	Fr Peter Dowd
09/12/18	8:30am	Fr Peter Dowd	7:45am	Fr Joey Frez
09/12/18	10:15am	Fr Peter Dowd	9:30am	Fr Joey Frez
09/12/18	6:00pm	Fr Joey Fres		


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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

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**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT****02-12-18****Jeremiah 33:14-16****Thessalonians: 3:12-4:2****Luke 21:25-28.34-36**

Dear Parishioners,

This weekend at the 9:30 Mass at St Gerard's we have the opportunity to farewell and thank our current Principal at St Gerard's, Ann Milling for the wonderful way she has not only led both our of our parish schools at various times as Principal but also provided magnificent leadership and support for our mission as a faith community. Ann has constantly supported the goals and initiatives of the wider parish through her involvement on the PPC and in so many other practical and much-appreciated ways. Ann, words cannot express our deepest thanks for all your faith, love, friendship, support, and encouragement of our parish and especially your way of modelling true "servant leadership" within our schools. May you be blessed as you set out on your next leg in God's adventure for you!

Secondly, as followers of Jesus, we are about assisting each person to "belong", "believe" and "behave" within the Catholic Christian Faith family. While not always strictly in that order, experience does reveal that a sense of belonging opens people to grow in their faith in Jesus Christ which in turn leads to a certain way of behaving or relating to others and the wider world.

One of the great gifts of our Alpha programme is that it helps to provide the foundation for this Christian way of living. Over the past two years approximately three hundred parishioners have participated to some extent in Alpha. However, attending one series of Alpha is not enough. Research shows the real impact and indeed message of Alpha becomes evident normally only after participating twice in the programme and requires the experience of the community and the sharing which takes place there. Simply watching the videos at home only picks up one of the three essential elements of an experience of what Alpha is about and misses the point....Alpha is not simply a 'course' of information!.....it is a tool to build relationships within a faith community within which we discover our relationship with Jesus. The sharing of food and time with our brothers and sisters in Christ can sometimes be just as beneficial to our growth in Christ than the information contained in the videos, as wonderful as they are.

I would invite you to consider coming along to our "Come and See" evening next Wednesday. More details in today's bulletin.

Next year we are also planning the introduction of our parish "connect" groups which will follow on from Alpha assisting us to continue to grow in our primary mission as "missionary disciples" of Jesus Christ! Please keep this planning also in your prayers.

Finally, on the subject of our Christian "belonging, believing and behaving", I would like to thank everyone who came to our recent "Parish Thanksgiving" evening. Over a hundred parishioners of all ages came together for our Mass and the wonderful sharing of food and laughter in the parish hall afterwards. My special thanks to the PPC for organising the evening and in particular, a big thanks to Natasha Boswell and her faithful assistants, James and Liam, for the magnificent food they provided for us all to share....it was spectacular!

Fr Peter



The Greatest love Praise and worship night

When: Friday 7th December

Where: Our Lady Help of Christians Epping Church
29 Oxford Street Epping NSW 2121 Australia

Time: 6:45pm-9pm

Come and Join us for joyful and prayerful worship music and listen to a guest speaker. Dinner will be provided before the event and light refreshments will also be provided after.



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 & mime learning Saturday 15th December 3:30pm - 4:30pm
Dress Rehearsal Thursday 20th December 10:15am- 11:15am

Epping:
Parent run-through & dress rehearsals Thursday 13th December & 20th December 4:00 - 5.00pm .

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

Please detach and place the slip in the box at the back of the Church or scan in and email to parish@eppcarl.org.au by the 8th 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

Child's Name	Age	Role

try to give everyone his or her first preference, it is not always possible.

Parents: I am/am not able to assist with practices & during Mass.

I am/am not able to assist with packing away supper after Mass

Parent's name: _____

Email Contact: _____

Confirmation of roles etc. will be notified via email

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 9876 2853

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 on Wednesday 19th December at 7:30pm.



RECONCILIATION

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

Our December Healing Masses and Christmas Luncheons:



Carlingford:

the Mass will be celebrated in the parish meeting room this **Thursday, 6th December** at 11:00am.
To be followed by Christmas Luncheon.

Epping:

the Mass will be celebrated in the Church on **Wednesday, 19th December [please note change in date from 12th to 19th]** at 11am. To be followed by a light Christmas luncheon in the parish meeting room.
Both catering teams if possible.

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

Blessing of your Christmas Crib at Home

The Christmas Crib or manger scene helps us to focus our celebration of the Word made flesh. You might like to pray this prayer at home before your Christmas crib.

Leader: As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we pause to bless this Christmas manger scene. The practice of erecting such mangers was begun by Saint Francis of Assisi as a means to set forth the message of Christmas. When we look upon these figures, the Christmas Gospel comes alive and we are moved to rejoice in the mystery of the Word made flesh.

Leader: Let us ask God's blessing on this Christmas manger and upon ourselves, that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus may share in the salvation he accomplished.

1. For the Church of God, as we recall the birth of Jesus, that we may always proclaim his gift of new life for all people.
R. Come, Lord, dwell with us.

2. For the world in which we live, that it may come to recognise Christ just as he was recognised and welcomed by the angels and the shepherds.
R. Come, Lord, dwell with us.

3. For our homes, that Jesus who was laid in the manger may dwell with us always.
R. Come, Lord, dwell with us.

The Truth Justice and Healing Council

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.



Advent Ecumenical Liturgy held at St Alban's Anglican Church, Epping last Tuesday night.

L: Fr Peter, Rev Andrew Hall, Bishop Ross Nicholson, Rev Greg Woolnough, and Rev Paul Weaver.

Below: The Prayers, members of each Church community reading their particular prayer.



PIETY STORE St. Gerard's Church

come and browse

***2019 Daily Missals commencing Advent**

***Christmas Cards**

***2019 Columban Calendars**

***Christmas gifts for all ages**

Reflection on this Sunday's Gospel—Why do we have Advent?

You say, "I don't know, it always just comes along," or, "I don't know, no one ever told me." I have heard these answers and others, a number of times. Especially this one: if Christ has already been born, what is this Advent "waiting" about? Have we forgotten that he is already born, and a long time ago?

Strangely that is part of the answer. It does have to do with his birth long ago, but also into our hearts today. And our forgetfulness as well.

The day of the Lord will arrive, though long delayed. Our hearts get drowsy and lazy, tired out by the anxieties of daily life. Maybe we distract ourselves from our troubles by working very hard, or becoming depressed, or becoming fascinated with drink, or sex, or out-of-control emotions, or gambling, or email, or golf, or surfing the web, or pride, or, or, or. Whatever it is for you, the very clear message of Advent is, "Settle down for a while." Open the door just a crack to let God in. Jesus is to be born again.

Something you may not have noticed. The Church has a liturgical strategy in the Advent Sunday readings. Each week's First Reading is the carrot: usually positive, a promise of good. Then the Gospel hits you with a big stick to wake you up.

Take the encouraging First Reading this Sunday. It reminds us of the promise God has made to his people: rightness and justice will come to the earth. Security. The day of the Lord will arrive, though long delayed. Peace in our day.

What a lovely thing it is to think of such a time. Too good to be true? Just pious thought? Read the First Reading now and ask yourself those questions. Spend time with them. Pray to God for help. The Responsorial Psalm will help you. It asks God to make known his ways to us, to guide us and to teach us.

The Second Reading urges us to put God's promise of peace into action, even if we are not yet sure what it means. Love others and be loved.

Ah, and then the Gospel. It tries to wake us up, especially if the above has not helped. "But I am perfectly awake," you say. Alright then, go ahead and read the Gospel. It is the "stick."

Signs in the sun, moon and stars, nations in dismay, the roaring of the sea and the waves, people dying of fright, and the Son of Man appearing in the clouds with power and great glory.

Terrifying?

So you are all ready for it? Let yourself imagine what it might be like. Picture it scene by scene and don't worry about being exact. Just experience it.

Will such a shakeup really happen literally? We do not know.

Maybe much worse is to come, judging from the state of the world today. Do you live without fear of terrorist acts, of proliferating nuclear weapons, of a horrific climate change, of a crash of the entire world economy, of amateur leadership at the top, or the greed that fills so many hearts to overflowing in your city, in your state, your world?

If you can say "You are right, I am afraid of these," then go back to the Responsorial Psalm and pray. Beg that Christ be given birth in your soul and in so many others in this world that need it so badly.

Welcome to Advent.

John Foley, SJ

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COMBINED CHURCHES EVENT - CAROLS IN THE PARK - SUNDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2018 AT BORONIA PARK, EPPING

Come along to "Carols in the Park," and join with the people of Epping and Carlingford for an evening of fun and festivity, as we celebrate the heart of Christmas together as a community. **From 5pm** there will be an array of stalls from charities to food vendors. Come early to see how you can support local efforts, grab a bite and save yourself a good seat! **From 7:15pm** Carols Programme. **From 9:00pm** Fireworks! What else needs to be said.



Awesome service. Amazing results.

Betty Ockerlander
bettyockerlander@mcgrath.com.au
0408 505 080

McGrath

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.

PARISH DIARY FOR THIS WEEK

Day	Date	Time	Event		
Sun.	02/12/18		Catechist Recruitment Drive at Epping		
		9:30am	Children's Mass at St Gerard's		
		10:15am	Kidz Word at Our Lady Help of Christians		
		1:00pm	PH Epping—Concert Christine Beasley		
		5:30pm	PH Epping—Antioch Christmas Party		
		Mon	03/12/18	9:00am	PH Epping—Little Engines Playgroup
				9:30am	PH Carlingford—Gerry's Playgroup
9:30am	Mass at St Gerard's Church				
6:00pm	CH Carlingford Adult Choir Practice				
7:30pm	PMR Carlingford SVdP meeting				
7:30pm	CH Carlingford—Rosary Group				
Tue.	04/12/18			12:15pm	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church
		7:30pm	SVdP meeting at the Epping shop		
		Wed.	05/12/18	9:15am	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church
				9:30am	Mass at St Gerard's Church
				10:15am	CH Epping—OLHC Reconciliation Yr. 6
				11:00am	Mass at Rayward Nursing Home
				11:30am	CH Carlingford St Gerard's Graduation rehearsal
7:00pm	PMR Epping PPC Meeting and Christmas dinner				
7:00pm	CH Epping Midnight Mass choir practice				
Thur.	06/12/18	7:00pm	CH Carlingford Adult Choir practice		
		11:00am	PMR Carlingford Healing & Anointing Mass		
			followed by a light Christmas lunch		
		12:15pm	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church		
		2:00pm	CH Epping OLHC Yr. 6 Graduation rehearsal		
		7:00pm	CH Carlingford St Gerard's School Advent Celebration		
		Fri.	07/12/18	9:30am	Mass at St Gerard's Church
10:00am	PMR Carlingford Scripture Reflection				
12:15pm	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church				
4:30pm	CH Epping Rosary for the Immaculate Heart of Mary				
7:30pm	CH Epping + Grounds Praisefest followed by a				
	BBQ in the grounds				
7:00pm	PH Carlingford CANA Youth Group				
Sat.	08/12/18	9:15am	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians		
		9:45am	Exposition and Reconciliation		
		10:15am	Benediction		
		5:00pm	Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians' Church		
		5:00pm	Reconciliation at St Gerard's Church		
		6:00pm	Mass at St Gerard's Church		

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

PARISH STAFF

Parish Secretary:
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Email: TBA

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.

Safeguarding Message

Each of us can make a difference. Each of us can help to protect one another. We are called to Step Up and to Speak Out for the protection of all.



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 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.

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.



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. 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

Antioch Fundraiser

"Antioch is fundraising for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) Perth, 2019. We are selling Christmas wrapping paper for \$2 a piece; so come to this 6pm Saturday Mass (1st Dec) at Carlingford or 8:30am Sunday Mass (2nd Dec) at Epping to pick some up; there's lots of styles and limited availability - once they're gone, they're gone! We will be doing fundraising over a few weekends so we will keep you updated. Thank you."

**We will be on the:
1st Dec. at the 6pm Vigil Mass Carlingford and on
the 2nd Dec. at the 8:30am Mass at Epping.**

CHARITABLE WORKS FUND APPEAL

We are deeply grateful to our Parish community for supporting our Charitable Works Fund. The donations you generously share with us are helping our families, our friends and our neighbours in the Diocese of Broken Bay.

Shortfall after the fourth week is \$684

Envelopes can be found at the back of 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 \$17,064.

Alpha



Belonging and Believing

Do you ever wonder "What is it that brings people to Mass?" "What led them to believe in Jesus and pray with Jesus, *Our Father*?"

When we see the goodness and generosity of these people, do you feel good that you belong there with them? Do you feel good you can say with them "I believe!" As Catholics, our journey to believe begins with an experience, when people say "I belong".

Where people share their experience of life, they listen to others and share their personal journey with them. When this happens, both those listening and the one talking share a gift. It can be expressed in many ways, but the basic gift is an experience of being accepted.

This acceptance or attachment can grow into an experience of being loved. Where this happens and when it happens, people say "They belong". This happens at Alpha. People say they feel at home and sometimes say "It is like family". They experience they "belong". They are connected to others they like and admire. They share what is important to the group and for Catholics it is sharing our belief in Jesus. We share our relationship with Jesus and we too come to believe or we who believe, grow in faith.

When belonging and believing happens for us, we experience this as gift, a gift from God. We call it "grace" and know the giver of such a gift is so "gracious and generous". We come to know who we believe in as a loving God. We see Jesus as the 'gift', "For God so loved the world that He gave us His only son." *Jn 3:16*

Alpha can be the beginning and an easy place for people to enter the community of Catholics by experiencing belonging. The gift of the next step believing, is a grace that only God can give. At Alpha we welcome and want you to experience belonging and being loved.

All are welcome to our Alpha celebration this Wednesday evening at Epping

If you want to find out more about Alpha or you know someone with questions, ask them personally "Try Alpha!" We invite you "Come this Wednesday."

"Experience a taste of Alpha over a meal and ask the question *Is there more to life?*" We begin at 7pm in the parish hall in the school grounds. Enter at 8 Cambridge St Epping.

Year of Youth 2018

CANA YOUTH GROUP



Next CANA Meeting Friday 7 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

Voy and Gwen Ilic – newbies to respite

Voy and Gwen's story is not uncommon. Like many couples Voy and Gwen's meeting and ultimate marriage began by chance. Voy had sustained a spinal injury when he was in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF), an accident leaving him with a broken neck (C3/4/5/6). He was sent to the Prince Alfred Hospital following his injury and after he was stabilised he was transferred to the Concord Repatriation Hospital to the neurological ward. He was in plaster, neck to knee, had crutchfield tongs inserted into his skull for traction for about 12 months and eventually, having had some movement, was transferred to a wheelchair to get around. This enabled him to pursue Gwen (and apparently other nurses) who at that point wasn't interested!

Once Gwen graduated she worked at Prince Henry Hospital when one day Voy came in with a friend who was visiting his wife. He was able to walk with the assistance of callipers and renewed his pursuit of Gwen who finally relented and decided to go out with him. They became friends and some six months later he proposed. Six months after the engagement they were married and Voy, now 23, decided he would like to go to university. First, however, he needed to complete his Leaving Certificate so he attended Sydney Boys High in North Sydney where he passed with honours also earned a scholarship to the University of New South Wales.

His first day at university was the day their first child was born and because of difficulties previously experienced. Gwen was hospitalised for three months. It was difficult for Voy to see Gwen in hospital, attend lectures, when the parking in both cases was so far away, and also be able to study. During the first four months they lived with Gwen's parents at Maroubra. The following years meant long periods of travel from Beecroft to and from the university with children in tow.

Ultimately, Voy graduated with two degrees; a Bachelor of Law Degree and one of Jurisprudence, a truly remarkable achievement!

After articling with a Pennant Hills firm Voy established his own practice and Gwen became his business manager, secretary, articulated clerk etc. sorting out at the various administrative functions including many trips to the courts and settlements as well as working part-time as a registered nurse and pursuing two university, degrees and mothering four boys. Once the technology was available Voy really took to computers and this greatly lessened the load on Gwen.

Voy's condition gradually deteriorated from the year 2000 when he was suffering many falls and was unsteady on his feet. A motorised buggy was utilised and this caused further deterioration of his mobility. A further setback occurred three years ago when a perforated peptic ulcer caused him to be hospitalised for six months leaving him with further health problems.

OUR PARISH ANTIOCH COMMUNITY:

Christmas Party
this Sunday 2 December



Commencing at 6pm,
in the Parish Hall @ Epping

FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL

Joanne—0416 030 927



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



Gwen had been Voy's 24/7 carer for all their married life, now approaching 49 years!

When asked about what breaks she has had from being a carer all these years she replied 'Yes, I did have a break about five years ago when I had to go

to hospital for my gall bladder!

A major reason Gwen didn't have a break any earlier was the expense of bringing in outside support workers and the concern about this care if she went away, say to visit family or friends or just have some free time to herself without worrying about the quality of his care.

The four boys as well as three daughters-in-law need a mention as they are a great support: Matthew a Lieutenant Colonel in the Defence Force; Mark a Qantas pilot; Daniel a satirist and filmmaker and Nicholas a physiotherapist. They all come running from the four corners when there is an emergency.

As a result of buying supplies at the retail shop of BrightSky Australia bases at ParaQuad's headquarters at Newington. Gwen learned of the existence of Ferguson Lodge a specialised facility for people with spinal cord injury. She applied for Voy to have a short stay and, once accepted Voy adjusted to the new surrounding in a couple of days.

For Gwen also, respite has been wonderful in providing a much needed break. To date Voy has had three short respite visits to Ferguson Lodge. During the first visit Gwen couldn't bring herself to travel, fearing she would need to be close in case Voy, away for the first time, called and needed her. On the second occasion she confidently visited family across Australia and had a great break.

'It was wonderful'.

On this last occasion she said she just slept for two days. "I really needed just to de-stress".

