Diocese of Broken Bay

Parish Priest: Fr Jim McKeon <u>Jim.McKeon@bbcatholic.org.au</u>

Assistant Priest: Fr Aldrin Valdehueza <u>Aldrin.Valdehueza@bbcatholic.org.au</u>



Our Lady Help of Christians'
31 Oxford Street, Epping

St Gerard Majella's 543 North Rocks Road, Carlingford

Phone
02 9876 2853

Website

<u>eppcarl.org.au</u>

Email

<u>parish@eppcarl.org.au</u> _____

Single Donation

Click here for:

Weekend Mass Times

Weekday Mass Times

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Sacrament of Reconciliation





3 DECEMBER 2023 Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1,3-8 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:33-37

> 10 DECEMBER 2023 Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 2 Peter 3:8-14 Mark 1:1-8

17 DECEMBER 2023 Isaiah 61:1–2, 10–11 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24 John 1:6–8, 19–28



YEAR B

3 DECEMBER 2023 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10 DECEMBER 2023 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 17 DECEMBER 2023 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christmas Mass Times



OLHC Epping

- Christmas Eve 5pm Family Mass
- · Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 9pm
- Christmas Day 8:30am & 10:15am

St Gerard's Carlingford

- Christmas Eve 6pm Family Mass
- Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 10pm (join us for carols at 9:40pm!)
- Christmas Day 7:45am & 9:30am

There are no evening Masses on Christmas Day

Christmas Invitations: Invite your neighbours to Christmas Mass with us! We've printed 10,000 Christmas postcards and invitations to the Boronia Park Carols plus our parish Playgroup cards and we need your help to deliver them to letter





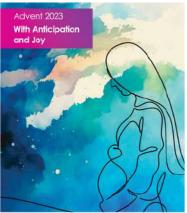
boxes in your street. Pick up a bunch for delivery (it's great exercise!) from the back of the church and cross off the street you're delivering to so we don't do the same street twice.

Christmas volunteers: There is much preparation and practice already underway to make our Christmas Masses joyful, engaging and worshipful. There are a few additional roles at each Christmas Mass for which we need volunteers. If you can assist, please put your name on the list at the back of the church:

- **Communion Ministers:** With large numbers at Mass we will need up to 4 additional ministers for each Mass. Please assist if you are already or have been a designated Communion Minister
- **Welcomers:** St Gerard's needs several welcomers at each Mass so that we can greet the many people who only occasionally come to Mass with joy. OLHC has already rostered but more are needed.
- **Collection Wardens:** We will be taking up a cash collection during Mass, so several money collectors will be needed.
- Chair Wardens: We expect to need extra chairs at the 5pm OLHC vigil.

Christmas Carols in Boronia Park is the biggest gathering in Epping each year. We and the other local Christian churches are the sponsors for this event, so come join us on *Sunday Dec 10th* with *food and entertainment from 5.30pm, carols from 7pm and fireworks at 9pm.* Boronia Park is behind Coles at Epping and borders Bridge St, Kent Rd and Carlingford Rd. Bring a picnic rug or some foldable chairs!

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS



Advent Program "Anticipation and Joy" from the Maitland/ Newcastle Diocese. Advent is a time for us to understand that God is always doing something new for us. It is all about watching and waiting. We are called during this holy time to wait with anticipation knowing the joys of what is to come with the arrival of Christ. This is a time we come together to celebrate this joy.

You are invited to join us for this program *each Friday morning*, *starting 1st December* in the *St Gerard's Meeting room from 10:15 – 11.30am* during Advent. Morning Tea will be served. Please contact Marie on 0408 495 193 for information or to join a group on Friday mornings.



The Sacrament of Reconciliation continues to be available at the usual times. As many people will likely want to attend in the week before Christmas there will also be Reconciliation available

- after 9.30am Mass on Mon Dec 18th at St Gerard's,
- after 6pm Mass on Tues Dec 19th at OLHC (as well as from 5pm 6pm),
- and both Fr Jim and Fr Aldrin will be available after 9.15am Mass on Sat Dec 23rd at OLHC.

We would also like to invite you to an evening of Reflection, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation and Sacred Music. Priests from our neighbouring parishes will be there to assist us in providing reconciliation.

A Holy Hour is a devotion in which we spend one hour in prayer, dedicating that time to be with Jesus. The tradition officially goes back to 1674 when Christ appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque multiple times over a 13-month period. Christ's appearances to this saint emphasised his human heart – how he loves as both human and divine.

Eucharistic Adoration is a continuation of the worship of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood outside the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is an occasion of abundant grace and a special way of showing devotion to him.



There is no single way to make a Holy Hour; this format is a suggestion to assist you in entering into a prayerful hour with Jesus. You are not obliged to stay for an hour. You can leave after having the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

There is also a 2nd Rite of Reconciliation at St Agatha's Church, Pennant Hills on Tues Dec 12th at 7pm.

Ecumenism: We will celebrate Advent ecumenically with our neighbouring Christian churches at St Alban's Anglican Church Epping on *Tues Dec 5th 7.45pm*. This will also be an opportunity to farewell Rev Greg Woolnough from Epping Uniting Church before his retirement.

Formed.org: There's still time to explore FORMED this Advent. **Rooted** is a new 22-episode series that presents a beloved tradition in a new light. It guides Catholics through a daily Advent reflection using the Jesse Tree model traditionally practiced by families. Each seven-minute episode introduces the ancestors of Jesus Christ, shares a Scripture passage, and offers an engaging, practical reflection. Visit **formed.org** (signing up is FREE as a parishioner!) or use the QR code for more Advent resources.





Hosted by Dr. Scott Hefelfinger, *Rooted* helps viewers apply the passage and related teachings to each day of Advent, guided by the Church's teaching. Episodes begin on December 3, the First Sunday of Advent, and end on December 24, the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

Please contact the parish office if you require assistance to sign up on formed.org.

New Christmas Tradition

Beginning December 1st read one chapter of the book of Luke in the Bible each evening.

There are 24 chapters.

On Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus's Life and wake up Christmas morning knowing WHO and WHY we celebrate!!



Fantastic response from parishioners! So we are reviving our Bible Reading Group on Facebook.

Never too late to begin! Please join us for daily reflections until Christmas Eve via QR code or:

www.facebook.com/groups/1148887152176778



LET'S TRY THIS!

GIVING

Christmas collections: Christmas is a time when there are so many visitors we would like to give them the opportunity to contribute to the parish by doing a single collection at the preparation of the gifts time at each of our Christmas vigil and Christmas Day masses. The proceeds of this collection will be divided 50/50 between the Pastoral Revenue (1st collection) which supports the priests of the diocese and the Parish Account (2nd collection) which runs all of the ministries of the parish.



2023 Vinnies Christmas Appeal:

- Envelopes are available on the seats and at the entrance to the Church.
- You are invited to make your donation with the assistance of one of the members of SVDP at the entrance to the Church after Mass. They will also be able to accept your credit card donations utilising an EFTPOS Terminal. A receipt can be provided to you straight away.
- Alternatively donations can be made by completing the 'Vinnies Envelope' and placing it in the 'Second Collection Box'. We will mail the receipt to you.
- Please also note that at St Gerard's Carlingford you may make your donation at the Piety Store. Thank you for your generosity.

The cost of living crisis is hurting many families. Your support will provide the relief they need to survive.

Parish Team

Parish Secretary

Marcella Letteri Ph: 9876 2853 Email: Marcella.Letteri@bbcatholic.org.au

Parish Facilities & Operations Coordinator Richard Houwing Ph: 9876 2853 Email: Richard.Houwing@bbcatholic.org.au

Admin. Assistant

Michael Davies Ph: 9876 2853

Email: Michael.Davies@bbcatholic.org.au

Coordinator of Sacramental Programmes, Children's Ministries & Parish Communications

Lynn Siau Ph: 9876 2853 Email: <u>Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au</u>

Youth Ministry Coordinator
Joanna Mak Ph: 0404 710 588
Email: Joanna.Mak@bbcatholic.org.au

New Parishioner Engagement Coordinator Belinda Shi Ph: 0414 753 362

Email: Belinda.Shi@bbcatholic.org.au



Angel tree gifts at OLHC: Please place your gifts at the Tree *by next weekend 9th/10th December* at the latest. With gratitude from Margaret Wiseman.





Thinking of Christmas gifts? That Catholic Shop's mission is to bring Christ into hearts and homes. It has a collection of rosaries, spiritual books, Bibles, olive wood products, and sacramental gifts for baptisms, confirmations, birthdays and other special occasions. The proceeds from the sales of That Catholic Shop go to supporting the projects of Aid to the Church in Need, a foundation focused on providing pastoral and spiritual care to persecuted and suffering Christians.

Visit https://thatcatholicshop.com/shop/christmas-catalogue-2023

All monies raised from the sale of products from That Catholic Shop go towards the projects of Aid to the Church in Need.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME & CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



Formed.org: Drawing Closer to God prepares your family for the Messiah's coming.

Journey through Advent with the whole family! Join art teacher Ms. Kim as she teaches children to draw different scenes from the Christmas story, including the Annunciation, shepherds' visit, the Nativity scene, and more. With compelling storytelling, Ms. Kim points out key details from Scripture and Catholic tradition.

As kids follow along and learn new art skills, they also learn to see the connections between the big picture of God's story and their place within it.

It's never too late to join in on **formed.org** this Advent. Signup is FREE for parishioners. Explore more today using the link above or via QR code:



Christmas Eve Family Mass!





Preparations for 2023 Christmas Eve Kidz Masses at both churches: All children are invited to take part in the Christmas Eve Masses (5pm at OLHC and 6pm at St Gerard's on Sunday 24th December Christmas Eve). We would love your children to participate in one of the many roles available:

- · Reading the Welcome at the start
- · Leading the Penitential Rite
- Various roles for the Gospel Mime of the Nativity yes they get to dress-up... too cute!!!
- · Leading the Prayers
- Preparation of the Gifts and Gospel processions

via QR code:

Parents and children who are participating are requested to attend a practice according to the church you choose to go to for the Christmas Eve Mass. See below for practice dates and times:

OLHC Epping - Wednesday, 20th December

- 10am 11am Gospel mime learning and procession
- 11am 11:30am Readers and Offertory procession

To sign your child up for **OLHC** 5pm Mass, please use this link: https://volunteersignup.org/MFD3Y or via the QR code on the right.



St Gerard's Carlingford - Saturday, 23rd December

- 10am 11am Gospel mime learning and procession
- 11am 11:30am Readers and Offertory procession

To sign your child up for **St Gerard's** 6pm Mass, please use this link: https://volunteersignup.org/KTYMM or via the QR code on the right.



As always, please feel free to send me an email if you have any questions. Our Christmas Eve Kidz Masses are the BEST. So make sure you contact me if you need assistance signing up.

Lynn Siau - <u>Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au</u>, Phone: 9876 2853 Coordinator of Children's Ministries, Sacramental Programme & Communications

COMMUNICATIONS



Article submission deadline: If you would like to submit an article from your ministry for inclusion in the next edition of our parish bulletin, please send it to Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au before 10am on Wednesday 20th December 2023. Kindly understand I am unable to accommodate late submissions. Please send in a Word document. Photos or graphics are acceptable in PNG or JPEG format. Please note that PDFs will have to be reformatted and the clarity of your notice will be compromised. Do provide an email address, a contact name and number in your article. Thank you.

Other ways to connect:







eBulletin: If you know someone who would like to receive the electronic version of the bulletin, please forward this link for them to fill in via a desktop, the form on our website: **bbcatholic.org.au/epping-carlingford/news-events/parish-newsletter**

YOUTH MINISTRIES



Cana (Year 6-9): Last meeting is on the 8th Dec in the parish hall 7:30-9pm. Pizza and food provided!
543 North Rocks Road, Carlingfordentrance via North Rocks Road.



Antioch (Year 10/16 year olds-23 year olds) - We will have our final meeting on the 3rd December for our

Christmas party, 6-8pm at St Gerard's hall.

Contact the parent support if you have any questions: Kirk Koelmeyer (0420 874 824) or Louise Koelmeyer (0404 496 554).



Emmaus young adults (23-30 year olds) - Our young adults group will have their final meeting for the year on

the 5th December, 7-8:30pm in the meeting room at St Gerard's for a pot luck dinner.

Youth ground Christmas Party @ St Gerard's Parish Hall (543 North Rocks Road, Carlingford)

CANA (yr 6-9)

8th December (Fri) 7:30-9pm Bring a \$5 secret santa

ANTIOCH (yr 10-23)

gift

3rd December (Sun) 6-8pm

Bring a \$10 secret santa

gift

EMMAUS (23-30yrs)

5th December (Tues) 7-8:30pm Bring a \$20 secret

santa gift



To enquire more, or to RSVP, please contact th Youth Minister, Joanna Mak on Email: Joanna Mak@bbcatholic.org.au or Phone: 0404 710 588

For more information on any of our 3 youth groups and our Antioch and Emmaus social media pages, please contact the Youth Minister, Joanna Mak on 0404 710 588 or send her an email at <u>Joanna.Mak@bbcatholic.org.au</u>

NEWS FROM OUR CATECHISTS



On the weekend of November 25/26, we celebrated the service and formation milestones of some of our Catechists with Fr Jim and Fr Aldrin. Shown on the left, they presented the certificates to the awardees.

We also conducted an Invitation to Ministry where our Catechists shared with the congregation their experience in the Ministry. They shared their views about the importance of giving our young people a framework of reference and a guiding LIGHT: the Word of God and Jesus Christ, as they march through the journey of their lives. Shown below: Cliff Brennan speaking at one of the Masses last weekend.



On Thursday November 30, both of our Primary and Secondary School Catechists came together for a THANKSGIVING Mass at St Gerard's Church followed by a Christmas Lunch, a well-earned occasion to have some nice food and time together after a year of hard work..... see photos on the next page.







Buffet photo credit: Nina Deacon

We thank all the Catechists for their continuous effort and dedication in taking the Gospel to our children and young people.

OTHER PARISH NEWS & UPDATES

Saturday 16th December 2023



MANY HANDS MAKE WORK LIGHT!

Do join us at:

- St Gerard's from 9:30am 12pm, and/or
- OLHC from 1pm 3pm

Please come with any general tools.



Working Bee for Christmas: Please contact Richard Houwing at the parish office 9876 2853 or send him an email at Richard.Houwing@bbcatholic.org.au if you are able to assist.

50++ OUTING TO WATSONS BAY: Eight ladies headed off to Watsons Bay for an advantageous day. It was a day full of potholes and opportunities! We dodged the potholes and didn't miss one opportunity to have a great day. We have some good ideas for 2024. Farewell for 2023. Look forward to seeing you in the New Year for the next exciting episode! Blessings to all. "The Intrepid 50++ Gang".



Sunday night Mass at OLHC will move to 7pm from the first week of January. Our bishop has asked each parish to review the number and timing of weekend Masses to ensure that we both have the right fit for each parish, but also so that it is sustainable for when one priest is away or sick, as happened recently. Moving the evening Mass to 7pm allows one priest to celebrate evening Masses at both St Gerard's at OLHC when necessary. It also creates an alternative time to our neighbouring parishes who have Mass at 6pm, and will also create space for the Antioch youth group to return to Epping next year.



Healing Mass at St Gerard's: Join us for the Healing Mass on *Tuesday 5th December*. We gather in the meeting room for Mass at *10am*. Please stay for morning tea following Mass, and if you are able to, do bring a plate to share. If you would like to attend and are in need of transport, that can also be arranged. Please contact Carole Wilson at 9869 1036.

St Gerard's School will join us for Mass on **Thurs Dec 14th** at 9.30am. No adoration and benediction this day.

The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation

Start 2024 on the right foot by embarking on a spiritual journey with us as we explore the Bible together. Join our weekly Zoom meetings to delve into "The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation" with Jeff Cavins.

Participating in a small group not only enhances your chances of success but also allows you to experience community as intended by God. It builds the good habit of reading the Bible and encourages you to grow together as Catholics.

To benefit from a discount on workbooks and materials and communications from Philip Senger, *please sign up before* 1st January 2024. Sessions are expected to commence on

9th January 2024 Tuesday or as soon as the materials are received, expected within 1-2 weeks. The anticipated cost will be \$50. While the course is expected to last a little over a year, we will take breaks during holidays and vacations.

Sign up can be found here: https://forms.gle/Xa5CeAnJVTxM1c5U6 or via the QR code on the right.

~ Phil Senger, Faith Formation Team





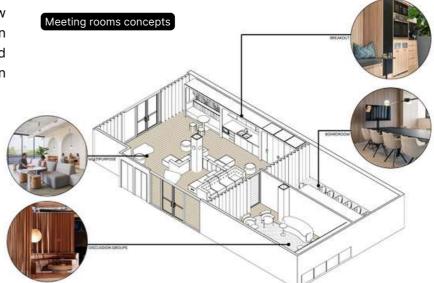
The Epping redevelopment has progressed admirably, thoughtful design showcasing and community engagement. As we approach the prospect of moving in, our focus turns to accommodating the diverse needs of our Parish, especially those in Epping who have patiently awaited its completion.

Over the next few months, we plan to consult with you on specific requirements for the Epping precinct. This includes understanding the needs of various groups, exploring new ideas, and ensuring the facility serves as a

vehicle for community engagement and evangelisation. Practical considerations such as meeting rooms, booking procedures, storage, parking, wheelchair access, and toilets will be addressed collaboratively.

To effectively utilize the facilities, knowledge flow within our Parish is crucial. We've created an introductory web page, subject to your feedback, and will conduct parishioner briefings and consultation sessions in early 2024 to address questions directly.

During our consultation, we are also keen to turn our minds together towards how we will build resilience runnina the precinct or accommodating unintended minor defects in construction, inevitable consequence of any large-scale building project. While our building managers have industry practices for this, we need, as a community, to consider how we will respond as users that demonstrate our values.



As we approach the Christmas holidays, we encourage you to reflect on your requirements or the needs of your interest group. In early 2024, a survey will be conducted to prepare for our initial consultation session, establishing a framework for discussions. It is with immense joy that we look forward to the new facilities becoming available in 2024. We hold in our hearts deep gratitude for the legacy prepared by past parishioners and the great enterprise and creativity of a broad range of people in preparation, design, and construction today. We thank God for the personal contribution of so many in building foundations to praise and honour Him and the opportunity to nurture a community that will grow in understanding, hope and love.

OTHER NEWS & NOTICES

Celebrations this Week: Please visit https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/resources/liturgical-calendars/2023- <u>liturgical-calendar/</u> for Solemnities, Feast Days or Memorials.

Advent Masse: You are warmly invited to join in for a time of spiritual reflection and community fellowship at the "Simbang Gabi" (Christmas Novena Masses). This cherished tradition will be held at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral from 15-23 December 2023, each evening at 7 PM, located at 23 Yardley Ave., Waitara. Experience the peace and joy of the season as we gather together in prayer and celebration. After each mass, we invite you to stay for fellowship, an opportunity to connect and share in the spirit of Christmas. If you feel called to contribute by sponsoring food and drinks for these gatherings, please kindly contact Vilma Tolosa at 0411250593 or via email at bbfc.hornsby@gmail.com.

This event is lovingly coordinated by Fr Roger Del Monte (0420 610 629), and Deacon Roberto Corpuz (0414 525 448).

1st Sunday of Advent - 3 Dec 2023

Ps 79:2-3, 15-16, 18-19, Response: Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia!

Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. WEEVEND MACCEC

| | WEEKEND PIASSES | | | | | |
|-------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Epping | 5:00pm Vigil, 8:30am (Family/Children), 10:15am and 6:00pm (Youth)★ | | | | | |
| Carlingford | 6:00pm Vigil, 7:45am, 9:30am (Family/Children) and 5:00pm (Youth) | | | | | |

| | WEEKDAY MASSES | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--|--|--|--|
| | Mon. | Tues. | Wed. | Thur. | Fri. | Sat. | | | | |
| EPPING | - | 6:00pm | ě | • | <u> </u> | 9:15am | | | | |
| CARLINGFORD | 9:30am | (40) | 9:30am | 9:30am | 9:30am | 3-1 | | | | |

EXPOSITION OF THE EUCHARIST: Epping Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm and Saturday 9:45-10:15am,

Carlingford Thursday 10-10:30am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Epping Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm and Saturday 9:45-10:15am,

Carlingford Thursday 10-10:30am and Saturday 5:15-5:45pm, OR BY APPOINTMENT at either church

BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS: BY APPOINTMENT

POSTAL ADDRESS FOR THE PARISH OFFICE: PO Box 369, Epping NSW 1710

ST GERARD MAJELLA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL: PH: 9871 1633 Email: sgc@dbb.catholic.edu.au

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS' PRIMARY SCHOOL: PH: 9868 3322 Email: olhc@dbb.catholic.edu.au

IMPORTANT

Healing Mass: 1st Tuesday of the Month, 10am at St Gerard's Meeting Room, Carlingford.

st Sunday night Mass at OLHC will move to 7pm from the 7th January 2024.

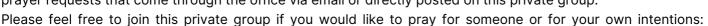


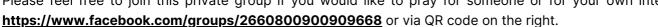
For those who are sick and suffering:

- Cohen Hadden (family of Pat & Margaret McArdle)
- Peter McArdle (brother of Pat McArdle)
- · Graham Yeates
- Dennis Porteous (our retired Parish Secretary)
- Paul Grassi
- Ethan Seng Mestanza (grandson of Mario and Graciela Mestanza
- · Beryl and John Day

- Kevin Saul (Marie Saul's nephew)
- Maureen Carlon (Marie Saul's sister)
- Mary Chernov (sister of Trish Harrison)
- · Bev and Geoff Gibbeson
- Colette Murray
- Margaret Hall
- John Haydon
- Eileen Rourke
- Melvin Enriquez
- · Eileen Brownlow

Thank you for your prayers for all our brothers and sisters who are on our prayer list. They are strengthened by our united prayers for them. Our parish also has a Prayer Ministry group on Facebook. There are occasional prayer requests that come through the office via email or directly posted on this private group.







Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of Everlasting life. Grant that life to:

Recently deceased - John Dowd, David Birch, Shaun Cowell, Fr John Alt, Peter Whittaker (twin brother of Paul Whittaker), Vida Noble, John O'Reilly, Beryl Porter, CS Goretti, Fareeda Daniels, Susie Tuite

Anniversaries - Gerard Lazarus, Teresa Dobosz

2nd Sunday of Advent - 10 Dec 2023

Ps 84:9-14, Response: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

3rd Sunday of Advent - 17 Dec 2023

Luke 1:46-50, 53-54, Response: My soul rejoices in my God.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God.