

Diocese of Broken Bay

Parish Priest: Fr Jim McKeon
Jim.McKeon@bbcatholic.org.au

Assistant Priest: Fr Aldrin Valdehueza
Aldrin.Valdehueza@bbcatholic.org.au

Our Lady Help of Christians'

31 Oxford Street, Epping

St Gerard Majella's

543 North Rocks Road, Carlingford

Phone

02 9876 2853

Website

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Email

eppcarl@bbcatholic.org.au

Giving

Click here for:

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[Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament](#)

[Sacrament of Reconciliation](#)



The Catholic Parish of Epping & Carlingford



26 JANUARY 2025 THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

2 FEBRUARY 2025 THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

YEAR C

Fr Joey Frez and Seminarian Matthew French

are joining the parish this week!

Please make them welcome.

WELCOME

THANK-YOU to OUR VOLUNTEERS

We would like to invite you to join us
for Mass & Dinner

Tuesday 18th February 2025
at 7pm
St Gerard's Church, Carlingford
followed by dinner in the hall

Volunteers: We have more than 300 people in rostered volunteer ministries in our parish!

If you're one of them, please pick up your invitation to the annual Volunteers Mass and Dinner to be held on February 18th from the back of both churches.

Your invitation is in an envelope with your name on it. Instructions to RSVP or dietary requirements within.

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Also known as Candlemas, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is celebrated on the 2nd February. It commemorates Mary and Joseph presenting Jesus at the temple 40 days after His birth, fulfilling Mosaic Law. It also marks their encounter with Simeon and Anna, who recognised Jesus as the Light of the World. The Church blesses candles on this day, symbolizing Christ's light shining in darkness. Families often bring their own candles to be blessed, signifying the growing light leading to Easter.



To celebrate this feast, on the weekend of the **1st/2nd February**, you are invited to bring your Baptismal candles or other specially blessed candles when you attend Mass that weekend. Bring one or bring a stack of candles to be blessed for use over the year! Children are also welcome to bring their Baptismal candle.

Presbytery: This year Fr Aldrin, Fr Joey and Matthew French will be living at the Carlingford presbytery. Fr Jim has moved temporarily to an apartment in Smith St Epping until the new presbytery apartments at OLHC are completed.

Fr Jim will be away with the Seminary of the Good Shepherd retreat from January 31 – February 7th.



Readings

26 JANUARY 2025 - AUSTRALIA DAY

Isaiah 32:15-18
Romans 12:9-13
Matthew 5:1-12

2 FEBRUARY 2025

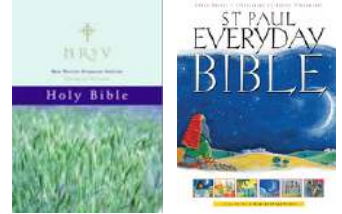
Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-32

GROW IN FAITH

The Catholic Church in Australia celebrates **Word of God Sunday** this year on the **9th February 2025**. It is a day devoted to the celebration, study, and spreading of the Word of God. Pope Francis impresses that the relationship between the Risen Lord, a community of believers, and sacred Scripture is essential to who we are as Christians. Reading the Bible is emphasised as a direct means of connecting with God. During Lent, there will be a focus on reflecting on Jesus' ministries through one of the Gospels, followed by reading the Acts of the Apostles during Easter.



To celebrate the Word of God Sunday, we will be **selling Bibles** on this day **at OLHC 8:30am & 10:15am, and at St Gerard's 9:30am & 5pm**. You can also purchase one at our Vinnies Piety Store. For our children, we once again have the very popular St Paul's Everyday Children's Bible available for sale, which has made its way to several household shelves already. You can pay by cash or card. \$15 for a Bible and \$25 for the Children's Bible. All at cost!



Join us for **Men Alive!** A space for men to connect, grow, and share in faith with bible study. Every **fortnightly Thursday, 7PM, at St Gerard's Parish Hall**. For more information please contact men.alive@eppcarl.org.au or 0401 208 694. See you there!



'For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.'

~Heb 4:12

Be Transformed by Daily Prayer with *The Rosary in a Year* Podcast with Fr. Mark-Mary Ames!

Starting January 1, 2025



By listening to this podcast, Catholics will discover:

- How to deepen their focus and enter into the mysteries
- How to build a meaningful habit of daily prayer
- The power of Mary's influence in your life

...and more!

Get the **FREE** Prayer Plan!

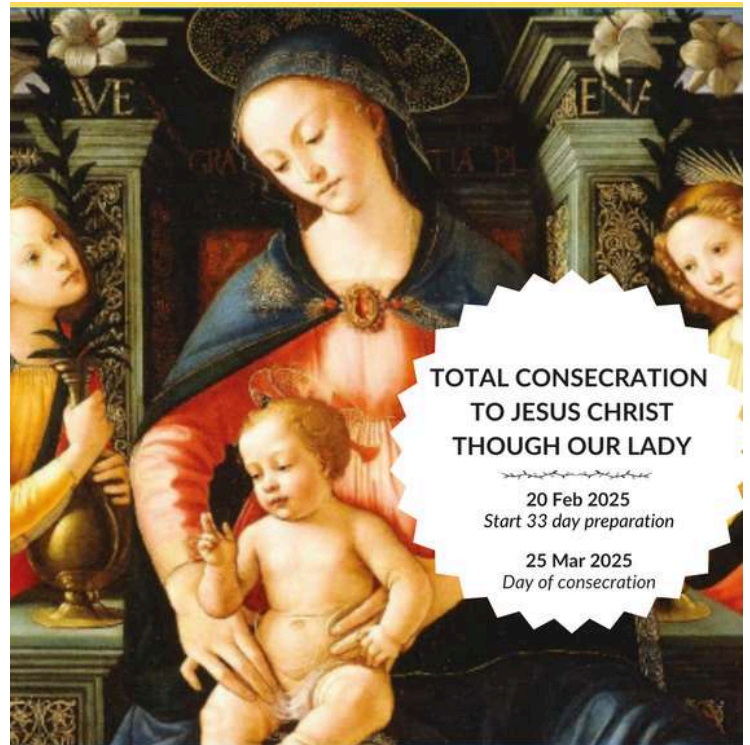
Scan this QR code with your phone to learn more.

ascensionpress.com/riy



Reflection and Meditation on Sunday's reading runs during school term. It is a small group gathering held Friday mornings 10.15am at St Gerard's meeting room - contact mariefblack3@gmail.com

Our Devotions Team brings us:



Have you ever questioned the providence and love of God? Are you prepared to rely only on God for everything? Do you want to be in charge of your own security and well-being? Do you think that a little bargaining with evil, is perhaps necessary to live in this world? Have you ever pondered on purpose of your life?

The high standard of ordinary Christian living can often seem daunting, but it becomes so much easier when we realize that it simply means remaining with our Mother and allowing her to shape us into her Son. Who was ever lost that had recourse to the most Blessed Virgin?

More information and a sign-up form are available at the back of the church

Poco a Poco, learn to pray the Rosary: Use the QR code to learn more. In Ascension's Rosary in a Year podcast, Fr. Mark-Mary Ames, CFR, guides listeners in a step-by-step journey that will change the way you pray – no matter where you are in your spiritual life. You can start anytime and go at your own pace. Each day's podcast is on the website for you to listen to at your convenience. You can sign up here <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/riy-signup> to download the prayer plan and you can follow the Episodes at your own pace here: <https://rosaryinayear.fireside.fm/episodes>

A LOOK AT OUR PARISH FAITH FORMATION TEAM:

The Faith Formation team supports spiritual growth by developing and sustaining programs that deepen faith, encourage discipleship, and foster community. These programs are offered in various formats, including small group meetings, Zoom meetups, video-dinner discussions, year-round or 4 to 12-week sessions, and community events like Pentecost praise and worship gatherings.

The team currently consists of: Gail Gill, Joanna Mak, Lynne Slocombe, Marie Black, Mery Auwyang, Philip Senger, Leon D'Sylva, Regina Soeryanto and Vivienne Saverimuttu.

The programs that have been offered include The Bible Timeline, Catechism in a Year, Friday Reflection of the Sunday's Gospel, Metanoia, Alpha, Wild Goose, Lenten groups, just to name a few. The ongoing activities, groups and evolving content of the programs being offered is evidence of the Spirit at work amongst us, growing and fulfilling our parish community's appetite for our continuous search for knowledge to deepen our understanding. Here are a few testimonies:

*"The thought of NOT cooking dinner on 10 consecutive Tuesdays was a great motivator to attend **Metanoia** with my husband Geoff.*

On the first night we were warmly greeted by John and Marie Black, good friends over many years. We were placed into groups; my team leader was John Black and he introduced me to my fellow team members.

I knew many members by sight however had not been formally introduced prior to this.

After enjoying a sumptuous meal we watched a entertaining and provocative video. This was followed by a group discussion. I found these discussions intelligent, stimulating and powerful. Ordinary people talking about the impact God has on their lives.

Each week despite the cold we attended and grew in getting to know each other and allowing the Holy Spirit to breathe in our lives. Metanoia became a sanctuary and an opportunity to become closer with God." ~Karen Childs

*"I joined the **Friday 10am Bible Study Group** after the 9.30am Mass a month ago by accident! Wondering what was going on in the meeting room, I asked a lady and she invited me to join. This lady is Goretta, whom many of you know. It's a wonderful way to reflect on the Sunday Mass readings.*

That morning, I learnt that Hope is not the same as Optimism. I also learned that Hope is ultimately a gift from God given to us to sustain us during difficult times!

What an important insight especially in terms of the challenges we face daily and to be able to live well just for today. And if and when we wake up the next day, it is another new day! Feel free to experience and there is tea and tidbits afterwards." ~Anonymous

Parish Team

Parish Secretary

Marcella Letteri Ph: 9876 2853

Email: Marcella.Letteri@bbcatholic.org.au

Business Manager

Deacon 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: Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Holly Lawton Ph: 0404 710 588

Email: Holly.Lawton@bbcatholic.org.au

New Parishioner Engagement Coordinator - St Gerard's

Belinda Shi Ph: 0414 753 362

Email: Belinda.Shi@bbcatholic.org.au

Sacristan - OLHC

Dennis Porteous Ph: 9876 2853

Email: Dennis.Porteous@bbcatholic.org.au



Please note parish email address for general

enquiries: eppcarl@bbcatholic.org.au

parish@eppcarl.org.au is now obsolete.

Updating your contact details for the Parish Office:

Please contact our Parish Secretary, Marcella Letteri, if you need to update your contact details, for eg: mobile number, email address, home address.

You can either pop in to the parish office to see Marcella in person, contact her using details above.

Pictured here: The Bible Timeline group



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



FIRST RECONCILIATION 2025

Enrolment for **First Reconciliation** is underway and will **close on Sunday 16th February**. **Parent information sessions** will be held on **Wednesday 19th February and Thursday 20th February at 7:30pm**. You will need to have enrolled to receive the meeting details. In our Diocese of Broken Bay, children who have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and who are in Year 4 or above are invited to enrol. First Reconciliation is generally prepared for in Term 1, before enrolment of First Eucharist.

Our Sacramental Programme is advertised through the parish website, bulletins, announcements at Mass, both parish school newsletters, catechists and word-of-mouth. If you know of anyone who may wish to enrol their children, please feel free to spread the word for us and have them drop me a line (contact details below).

A brochure outlining the key dates for the celebration of children's sacraments will soon be available once all dates are finalised for First Eucharist and Confirmation. Please keep your eyes peeled!



Lynn Siau

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

Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au or

phone Parish Office 9876 2853

Kidz Word resumes 2 February 2025



St Gerard's KidzPlay playgroup



Welcome to 2025!!

Yippee.... we will be starting up again on **Friday 7th February 9:30-11:30am in the Parish Hall**.

We welcome you and your little ones to join us for some stories and craft whilst learning & having fun.

For more information please contact Belinda on 0414 753 362 or via email: Belinda.Shi@bbcatholic.org.au



Baptism enquiries? Please visit the parish website here:

<https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/epping-carlingford/sacraments/baptismforchildren>

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 5th February 2025**. 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. Do note that PDFs will have to be reformatted and the clarity of your notice will be compromised. Remember to provide an email address, a contact name and number in your article. Thank you.

Other ways to connect:



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM

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](https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/epping-carlingford/news-events/parish-newsletter)

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Youth group	Resumes in 2025 on...
Antioch (year 10-22 years old)	Sunday, 12th Jan 6-8pm St Gerard's meeting room
Cana (year 7-9) <small>*Please note new date*</small>	Friday 7 th Feb 7:30-9:00pm St Gerard's parish hall
Emmaus (23-30years old) <small>*Please note new date*</small>	Thursday 6 th Feb 7-8:30pm St Gerard's meeting room



Antioch Weekend 2025

*"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever."
Psalm 107:1*

Place: St Gerard's Church grounds, 543 North Rocks Rd, Carlingford
Dates: Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th February
Times: Saturday 10am-10pm, Sunday 10am-9pm
Cost: \$50
Age: Year 10 to 23 years old

For more information please contact:
 Fr Jim Jim McKeon@bbcatholic.org.au
 Parent Support: Cres - 0490 472 258 | Lui - 0468 476 009

SCAN to Get Tickets

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1321692>

Enjoy talks, discussions, music, prayer and food.
We can't wait to see you there!

The Antioch Youth Group has been a defining feature of our parish for 40 years. Nowhere else is there a youth ministry with such continuity and stability. Its success and genius is that while it is supported by the clergy, parents and youth minister, it is young people in Year 10 up to aged 23 who lead each gathering, who give the talks and lead the prayers. Young people begin as participants and gradually as their faith and confidence grow they take up leadership in the group and become the ones who witness faith to the younger ones.

In February this cycle starts again as we invite people in Year 10 and up (from the whole parish) to our **annual retreat weekend here at St Gerard's on Feb 15th and 16th**. In the coming weeks you'll hear Antioch members speak at Mass, inviting young people in Year 10 up to age 22 to take part.

Go to trybooking.com/events/landing/1321692 or use the QR code for information and registration or take a flyer from the back of the church. We'll also be asking the whole parish to support the weekend with food donations as you have so generously done each year.

Contact Antioch parent support if you have any questions: email Cres & Lui Yparraguirre on cresyparraguirre@outlook.com or Mobile: 0490 472 258.

For all youth ministry enquiries, please contact our Youth Minister, Holly, on 0404 710 588 or send her an email at Holly.Lawton@bbcatholic.org.au You can also check out the parish website for more details:

<https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/epping-carlingford/groups-ministries/children-and-youth/youth-ministry>



PARISH SOCIAL JUSTICE

r A y

It's hard to believe that what was started over thirty years ago, by Ian Kiernan, AO, an "average Australian" who had a simple idea to make a difference in his own backyard has now become the nation's largest community-based environmental event, held annually on the first Sunday in March.

In 2025, Parish Social Justice Committee will be facilitating a Parish event that will allow Parishioners to come together and contribute to cleaning up our local area. All you have to do is register your name and meet up at our location. We will also be having a sausage sizzle when we return, so please book via the following form for catering purposes using the link,

<http://tinyurl.com/3jc6rkd5>



- **When:** Sunday 2nd March 9am - 11am
- **Where:** Boronia Park, Epping (meet at the Train Play Equipment)

~In anticipation from the Parish Social Justice Team

A REMINDER FROM OUR CATECHISTS



o t i t

Your child is very welcome to attend Catholic SRE classes at their Public Primary and Secondary Schools. Parents/carers nominate the religious faith and/or denomination they wish their child to attend when they enrol their child at the Primary school. It is also true for parents preparing their children for Year 7 next year. They have the choice to enrol into Catholic SRE to continue their faith in the High School. Parents/carers also have the right to change the SRE class their child attends at any time or withdraw them from SRE. This can be done by notifying the principal of your child's school in writing.

Keep an eye out, in your school's enrolment package for a form to sign up for SRE. Contact your Primary or High School for further information or check the "Religion and Ethics" page on your school's website.

The catechists of Epping and Carlingford send you their **BEST WISHES** for a great new year of learning in 2025.

Please also pray for them to continue taking the **WORD** to your children.

~Katherine Tam



PARISH NOTICES & EVENTS

the **OLHC Hospitality Ministry** are back in action and look forward to providing supper on the *1st Sundays in February* at the 5pm OLHC Vigil Mass and morning tea at the 8.30am and 10.15am Mass on the **2nd February**. Morning tea is currently served on the *1st and 2nd Sundays* at the 8.30am Mass. We plan to cover the other Masses when we have more volunteers! If you would like to help make this happen and join the hospitality ministry at OLHC, please email Felicity fmkm100@gmail.com





Healing Mass at St Gerard's: Join us for the Healing Mass on **Tuesday 4th February**. 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.



Nametag Sunday is coming up: Both St Gerard's and OLHC at all weekend Masses on **Saturday/Sunday 1st/2nd February**.

FOR LEASE

NEW STUDIO APARTMENT AVAILABLE: BEECROFT (in family home). One large room, one smaller room. Furnished, kitchenette, bathroom. Garage space, own entrance. **Suit single person only.** Private and self-contained. Enquiries: Pat 0407 908 640



OTHER NOTICES

Celebrations this Week

Ordinary Time Week 3

27 January Mon: *Sts Timothy and Titus, St Angela Merici*
 28 January Tue: Thomas Aquinas
 31 January Fri: St John Bosco

Ordinary Time Week 4

3 February Mon: *St Ansgar, St Blaise*
 5 February Wed: St Agatha
 6 February Thur: St Paul Miki and Companions
 8 February Sat: *St Jerome Emiliani, St Josephine Bakhita*



CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Sharing the love of the Good Shepherd and our Catholic faith with the youngest children in our parish through joy, beauty, and love.



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a program for young children in Montessori methodology (3-6yrs and 6-9 yrs) - will be commencing on **Monday Feb 3rd, at 2/423 Pennant Hills Rd (Broken Bay Diocesan Centre)**. Our weekly sessions run for 90 minutes each and is a powerful Montessori-based formation program where children, through the use of tactile materials and trained catechists, can grow in their relationship with God through a deep engagement in scripture and liturgy. It began in Rome in 1954 and has since spread throughout the world.

Our Atrium in Pennant Hills is authentically Catholic, and as well as helping the child to understand the beauty of the Mass, Eucharistic Adoration and the power of scripture, we also include presentations on all the major feast days of the year.

Enquiries and bookings: cgs.marymount@gmail.com

You can also visit <https://cgsaust.org.au/> for more information and resources.

Father Ireneusz Czech's Jubilee Year 2025 Homilies Book

We are pleased to announce that hard copies of "Proclaiming the Truth Without Fear" by Fr. Ireneusz Czech, a collection of brief and simple homilies for Liturgical Cycle C, are now available for purchase!

Price: \$50 per copy

All proceeds will go to support Salvatorian seminarians from East Timor in the Salvatorian Australian Region, studying in the Philippines.

Support this important cause and get your copy today from:

Sacred Heart Church Piety Store, OLPS Sacristy, or the Pymble Parish Office - 9144 2702



Kindle Version available via this link tinyurl.com/yck25ape or QR Code:



SAPIENTIA RETREAT: Single adults, ages 18-30, are invited to join the Dominican Friars and Dominican Sisters of St Cecilia for a weekend retreat at **St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park, NSW, from 7-9 February 2025**. The retreat will consist of talks, discussion, silence, Eucharistic Adoration, the Sacrament of Confession, Mass, and time for fun and fellowship. Fee: \$300 per person. Please complete the google form (<https://forms.gle/hHyBFDjN3A5pexXJA>) to register your intention. Registrations close 31 January.

AUSTRALIA DAY - 26 Jan 2025

Ps 84:9-14 Response: The Lord speaks of peace to his people.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia!

Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called children of God.

WEEKEND MASSES

Epping	5:00pm Vigil, 8:30am, 10:15am and 7:00pm (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	-	-	-	8:00am	
CARLINGFORD	9:30am	-	9:30am	9:30am	9:30am	-	

EXPOSITION OF THE EUCHARIST: Epping Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm and Saturday 8:30-9:00am

Carlingford Thursday 10-10:30am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Epping Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm and Saturday 8:30-9:00am

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'S PRIMARY SCHOOL: PH - 7256 2140 Email - sgc@dbb.catholic.edu.au

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



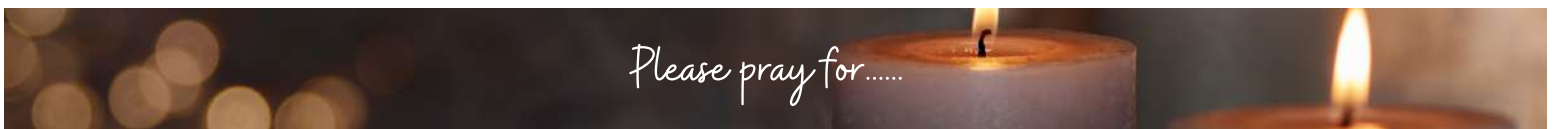


BE YOUR BEST SELF here





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



For those who are sick and suffering (new requests):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Leslie • Leonie Oliver • Sr Rosalie Carlon • Guy Chan • Louis Yeung (Goretti's brother) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lillian Chan • Margaret Hall • Roslyn Rodriguez • Anita Hoffman • Elizabeth Barton • Desiree Mathias |
|---|---|



Prayer request from Reg Mathias: "My wife Desiree is in hospital, seriously ill. Please have her name mentioned in the bulletin asking for parishioners' prayers. Thank you."

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

Recently deceased - Bryan Smith, John Holt (father of Lucia Smith), Marina Alves, Lubina Paes, Elin Joyce Childs

Obituary: *Passing of Elin Joyce Childs on Sunday 19th January, beloved mother of Geoff Childs and grandmother to Clare & Katherine. Funeral details to be advised.*

Anniversaries & Remembrance - Betty Brennan (wife of Cliff Brennan), Giuseppe Papallo (6-month anniversary - father of Marcella Letteri)

The Presentation of the Lord - 2 Feb 2025

Ps 23:7-10 Response: Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia!

This is the light of revelation to the nations, and the glory of your people, Israel.