

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

eppcarl.org.au

Email

eppcarl@bbcatholic.org.au

Single Donation

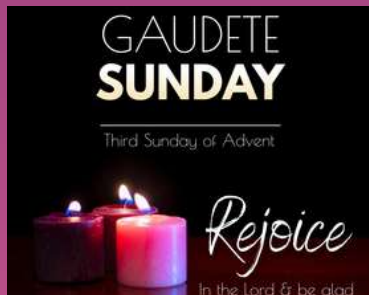
Click here for:

[Weekend Mass Times](#)

[Weekday Mass Times](#)

[Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament](#)

[Sacrament of Reconciliation](#)



Readings

8 DECEMBER 2024

Baruch 5:1-9
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

15 DECEMBER 2024

Zephaniah 3:14-18
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18



The Catholic Parish of Epping & Carlingford



8 DECEMBER 2024 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

15 DECEMBER 2024 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR C

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 Card Deliveries: Let's invite our neighbours to join us for Christmas Mass. Please take a handful of the invitation postcards and deliver them to the streets on the list at the back of the church, and cross out the streets to which you're delivering to avoid doubling up. Consider giving a card to your neighbour personally, rather than just dropping it in a letterbox.



The lists of streets for Epping and North Epping are in OLHC Church. The list of streets for Carlingford, Beecroft, Cheltenham and West Pennant Hills are in St Gerard's Church. Although many of our parishioners live outside the parish boundaries, it would not be respectful to deliver our cards in another parish, so please only do the streets and suburbs listed.

The Healing Mass has been rescheduled to **Tuesday Dec 10th at 10am** in the St Gerard's meeting room. There is *no healing Mass in January*. We look forward to offering a additional monthly healing mass / seniors Mass at OLHC once the new building is available next year.

Farewell to Joanna Mak who is stepping down after 6 years of incredibly fruitful youth ministry in our parish. Very few parishes have any youth groups, let alone three strong groups ministering to people from ages 12-30, and this is because of Joanna's dedication and passion for evangelisation. We will thank her at the **5pm Mass at St Gerard's on Sunday 8th**. Fr Jim will be able to announce a new youth ministry coordinator soon. **Farewell also to Simone Noel** who in one year as OLHC Pastoral Worker has been able to connect and engage with so many people. We will thank her at the **10.15am Mass on Sunday Dec 22nd at OLHC**. Fr Jim will be able to announce a new pastoral worker soon.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Theft from parish office: We wish to inform you that unfortunately, on the evening of Saturday 30 November 2024 there was a break in at our Carlingford Parish office. The door had been forced and we were devastated to find that the safe had been broken into and some Pastoral Works Fund Broken Bay envelopes were stolen that contained personal information and credit card details.

As soon as we discovered this, we notified the police.

Information that may have been stolen includes credit card details, parishioners' names, phone numbers, email addresses and addresses.

Please be assured that we are engaging with all the relevant authorities and working to assist everyone as much as possible.

We have been contacting parishioners directly who made donations by card, and those who made a cash or cheque donation and who asked for a receipt.

However, if you made a cash donation to our Pastoral Works Fund at St Gerard Majella Carlingford, between 3 November and 24 November 2024, and provided your personal information on the envelope, but did not ask for a receipt, I ask that you contact me as soon as possible, as your personal information may have been stolen when the safe was broken into.

Please exercise caution if you receive messages or notifications in respect of accounts that you are not expecting and check any suspicious activity by contacting the relevant institution directly or via an app, rather than by using any contact details that are provided in an email or text message and do not provide any information such as your date of birth to any person who contacts you purporting to be from your bank before independently checking with your bank.

I understand you will be concerned by this news, and I apologise for any inconvenience it has caused.

I am grateful to the parish staff who have worked longer hours this week as notified the people affected. I am grateful for the graciousness and understanding of parishioners whom have been affected.

Of course, please contact me on 9876 2853 or Jim.Mckeon@bbcatholic.org.au if you have any questions or concerns.

~Fr Jim McKeon

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS



Advent night of
adoration and
reconciliation

Thursday, 19 December
7:00pm - 8:00pm

St. Gerard Majella's Carlingford

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available for an extended time on **Tuesday Dec 17th before and after 6pm Mass at OLHC**, and for an extended time, **as long as needed on Saturday Dec 21st after 8am Mass**.

Our Devotions Team would like to invite you to an evening of Reflection, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation and Sacred Music on **Thursday 19th December 7pm at St Gerard's Church**. Priests from our neighbouring parishes will be there to assist us in providing reconciliation.

**24 Chapters of
Luke in 24 days**



Keep Christ in Christmas: It's not too late to join in reading the Gospel of Luke, a chapter a day. In fact, it is never too late to pick up the Bible! You read at your own pace but you still get to read the reflections of Seminarian Shayne who is currently residing at our parish and those of some of our parishioners each day. To join, please text "24" to Leon at 0422509848.



A few minutes each day read or
listen to a Chapter using your
Bible or SmartPhone



Reflect on the reading



Share your Reflection in WHATSAPP

About Seminarian Shayne D'Cunha



Hello everyone, I am a 6th year seminarian. I am 28 and I have a younger sister, who is recently married.

Growing up, I never wanted to be a priest. All I cared about was playing football, enjoying time with my friends/family, and I just assumed I would get married.

By high school football had become religion. While my body was at Mass on Sundays, my mind was imagining scoring goals. I soon realised that while it was good, football could not bring me the deeper happiness and peace that I was longing for, only God could.

This experience of God drove me further and further into the life of Church, so much so that I realised God was calling me to help others experience Him too through the Priesthood.

I will be giving 2 talks in December before I leave the parish on Christmas Day. Please do come. The invitation is open to all. Details below:

Talk: Why you need silence!

How do I listen to God? What can I do to develop my relationship with God?

Our seminarian Shayne will address these questions and more, as he explores the importance of silence in our Christian lives. There will be time for discussion and Q &A.

- Time: 1015-1115am
- Date: Wednesday, 11th December
- Venue: Meeting room @ St Gerard's
- Who: All our welcome!

Talk: Why Beauty will save the world

At times, it can seem like our spoken words fall on deaf ears. I will explore why the experience of the beautiful is crucial to evangelising a culture which seems to speak a different language to Christians. There will be time for discussion and Q &A.

- Time: 7-9pm
- Date: Tuesday, 17th December
- Venue: Meeting room @ St Gerard's
- Who: 18+



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

Joanna Mak Ph: 0404 710 588

Email: Joanna.Mak@bbcatholic.org.au

New Parishioner Engagement Coordinator - St Gerard's

Belinda Shi Ph: 0414 753 362

Email: Belinda.Shi@bbcatholic.org.au

Pastoral Worker - OLHC

Simone Noel Ph: 0414 753 799

Email: Simone.Noel@bbcatholic.org.au

Please note parish email address for general enquiries: eppcarl@bbcatholic.org.au

Please note parish@eppcarl.org.au will be 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.

Hospitality is such a big part of our parish, with morning teas, suppers and BBQs after so many Masses and events. Most of these will be taking a break towards the end of the month and over January, so it's fitting we say thanks to everyone who has cooked and served for us this year. **Thanks especially to our coordinators Felicity at OLHC and Alice at St Gerard's.**



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

LAST CALL for 2024 Christmas Eve Family Masses at both churches: All children are invited to take part in the Christmas Eve Masses (**5pm at OLHC or 6pm at St Gerard's on Sunday 24th December**). 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... gorgeous!
- Leading the Prayers
- Preparation of the Gifts and Gospel processions

There are separate signup links below for each church. You pick the Mass you wish to attend, use the correct link to sign up **by 16th December** and our Children's Ministries Coordinator, Lynn Siau, will contact you closer to the date.

Our Lady Help of Christians

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.



Practice dates and times:

OLHC Epping - Saturday, 21st December

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

St Gerard's

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.



Practice dates and times:

St Gerard's Carlingford - Monday, 23rd December

- 10:30 to 11:30am - Gospel mime learning and procession
- 11:30am - 12pm - Readers and Offertory procession



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

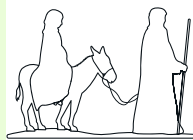
Journey through Advent with the whole family! Join art teacher Ms. Kim as she teaches children to draw different scenes from the Christmas story, including the Annunciation, shepherds' visit, the Nativity scene, and more. With compelling storytelling, Ms. Kim points out key details from Scripture and 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 <https://watch.formed.org/drawing-closer-to-god>



Our Christmas Eve Family Masses are wonderful and are a long standing tradition with many families. So make sure you contact Lynn (details below) if you need assistance signing up. We are all looking forward to this and sharing in Jesus' birthday cake after Mass!



Lynn Siau

Coordinator of Children's Ministries, Sacramental Programme & Parish Communications
Lynn.Siau@bbcatholic.org.au or
phone Parish Office 9876 2853

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 18th December 2024**. 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:



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

YOUTH MINISTRIES



Cana (Year 6-9): The last Cana of the year is the **13th Dec (Christmas party), 7:30-9pm** in the parish hall. *We will have pizza and bring a \$5 Secret Santa gift.* Entrance to the premises is via 543 North Rocks Road, Carlingford.

Cana resumes in 2025 on the 31st January, 2025! Also, Cana will be having a summer school excursion on the **21st Jan 2025. 10am-1pm, laser tag and lunch at Macquarie Centre.** Permission forms to come! Anyone from year 7-9 welcome to join! Contact Fr Jim for more details.



Antioch (Year 10/16 year olds-23 year olds): Antioch will have their final meeting of the year on **Sunday 8th December, 6-8pm** at St Gerard's meeting room. All welcome!

Antioch will resume on the 12th Jan 2025.

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

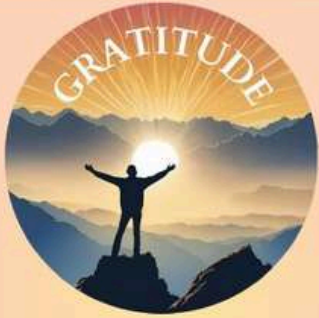


Emmaus young adults (23-30 year olds): Emmaus will have the last meeting on the **10th Dec, 7-8:30pm** at St Gerard's meeting room for our Christmas party! Bring a \$20 Secret Santa present.

Emmaus will resume on the 4th Feb 2025. Location to be advised closer to the date.

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

SCAN to Get Tickets



<https://www.trybooking.com/txvnewstanding/1321692>

For more information please contact:

Fr Jim Jim.McKeon@bbcatholic.org.au

Parent Support: Cres - 0490 472 258 | Lui - 0468 476 009

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

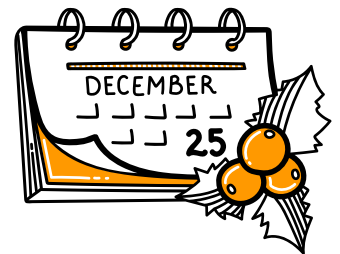


It has been an incredible privilege and honour being the youth minister for the past 6 years. The highlight of youth ministry is definitely the people who I've journeyed and ministered over the years and all those involved in youth groups. Thank-you to the wider community for supporting the youth and a shoutout to the parish team and everyone that I have worked with over the years. A big thank-you to Fr Jim for supporting all our youth initiatives, retreats and courses. And finally, all the glory goes to God!

For now, this will be my last time posting about the youth groups in the bulletin as the Youth Minister. God bless!

~Joanna Mak

Advent calendar



30 of our youth and young adults are participating in our own **Advent calendar challenge** where every day from the 1st-24th December, we complete different challenges to help prepare us for Christmas. These range from different prayers like the litany of humility, divine mercy chaplet, attending Adoration to donating to a charity or providing an act of service to a stranger. Similar to the Fiat and Exodus 40 for Lent, this will be a time of drawing us closer to Jesus through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Pictured left are some of our young adults going out for dinner after Adoration.

GIVING AT CHRISTMAS

ANGEL TREE

GIVE TO SOMEONE IN NEED



The **Angel Tree at OLHC** will have tags inviting you to buy a gift card which allows a prisoner to give a Christmas gift to their child. Please place your gifts at the Tree by the weekend **14th/15th December at the latest**. With gratitude from Margaret Wiseman.



- The **Giving Tree** at St Gerard's has tags inviting you to buy a gift card to assist a woman fleeing domestic violence or residing at Parramatta Womens' Shelter. **We are starting to collect your gifts each weekend. Please place them at the tree inside St Gerard's Church.**
- You can also give directly at <https://parrawomensshelter.org.au/make-a-donation>. Our parish will also make a direct donation of \$600 to the shelter to assist with a Christmas party for these families.

Escaping domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness and poverty. The Catholic Church provides teaching and resources for this difficult issue, and this inspires us to offer the practical help we're seeking your engagement with:

- <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/resources/social-justice-statements/> and
- <https://www.dbbsafeguarding.com.au/resources/adults-at-risk-general-resources/>



Help shine a light on refugee mothers this Christmas.

Donate today!

www.caritas.org.au/Christmas



Caritas: This Christmas, families like Sakhina's are facing the devastating risk of disease due to a severe lack of clean water and proper sanitation in the world's largest refugee camp. But with your support, we can bring hope to these families. As part of the second-largest humanitarian network in the world, Caritas Australia and our partner Caritas Bangladesh are on the ground, ready to act. Together, we can improve access to clean water, provide better sanitation, and help reduce the spread of deadly waterborne diseases this Christmas. You can give at caritas.org.au/christmas or via the QR code.

PARISH SOCIAL JUSTICE

BACK TO SCHOOL!!! Over the past few years, Mums4Refugees NSW (a registered charity of local mums and carers) has collected NEW school items for refugee and asylum seeker families so that their children have the core supplies they need for school. The kits have been distributed locally by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Parramatta. Last year more than 120 loaded backpacks were given to primary and high school students in need.

In January 2025 we will be asking for your help in this. We will give you a list of items needed and hopefully as you shop you add an extra book, pen etc. This list will be available in the Christmas bulletin next fortnight.

~With much thanks from the Parish Social Justice Team



PARISH NEWS & EVENTS



The **9.30am Mass on Wednesday Dec 18th** will be the end of year Mass for St Gerard's School. All parishioners are welcome but be aware of the longer time for Mass and the greater demand for parking.

Congratulations!

Rachel Murphy celebrated her 50th year of her First Holy Communion on the 25th November. After morning Mass, there was morning tea to celebrate the special occasion. Congratulations Rachel!



The G Majors will sing on Christmas Day at St Gerard's 9:30am Mass

NOW IS THE TIME TO REJOIN THIS GREAT GROUP OF MEN'S VOICES!
THIS INVITATION TO PRAISE GOD ON THIS GLORIOUS DAY IS OPEN TO:

- Men of all ages from both Epping and Carlingford
- ANY lapsed G Majors
- Anyone who thought they might be singing in G minor instead of G major (WE CAN FIX THAT)
- Anyone who's wanted to join but was abit scared/relevant/bashful
- Anyone who's not allowed to sing at home
- Anyone who may not make it on the day but would like to join in the Christmas spirit with others from the parish



These are the Rehearsal dates and times:

- Sunday 1st & Sunday 8th December 6.30pm – 8.30pm St Gerard's Church (we won't go for two hours)
- Saturday 14th December 6.30pm – 8.30pm, St Gerard's Meeting Room (we won't go for two hours)
- Sunday 22nd December 6.30pm – 8.30pm, St Gerard's Church

All beloved and well-known Christmas carols, so you will most likely already know them!
PLEASE CONTACT **PAT FERNANDES ON 0407 908 640** IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.



We are excited to announce the **International Carol Singing Event**, a great opportunity to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ through carols in different languages. We warmly invite individuals, families or groups to participate by singing carols in your native language or a language of your choice. Your participation will add joy and meaning to this celebration. If you are interested in participating, please contact **Mery Auwyang: meryauwyang@yahoo.com or 0416 259 068**. Let's come together to sing praises to our Savior and spread the message of hope and peace this Christmas season!



OLHC Welcoming & Hospitality Ministers' Get-Together

Dear smiling greeters, brilliant bakers and anyone keen on building community,

Join us for a simple afternoon tea at the back of the church on **Saturday 14 December 3pm – 4pm**.

Bring your usual smile, a prayer in your heart for our parish and a small plate if you can. (I'll have a big batch of brownies 😊 and the urn boiling for a cup of tea).

RSVP to Mary Jo 0447 122 523 or marywadiwel@gmail.com

Let us know if any of your friends or acquaintances are keen to join us. Once our new building is open, we will have our team to welcome at the lift, the carpark as well as the front door! Newbies who would like to volunteer are welcome to the afternoon tea of course!

OTHER NOTICES

Celebrations this Week

Advent Week 2

9 December Mon: THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

10 December Tue: *Our Lady of Loreto*

11 December Wed: *St Damasus I*

12 December Thur: *Our Lady of Guadalupe*

13 December Fri: St Lucy

14 December Sat: St John of the Cross

Advent Week 3

21 December Sat: *St Peter Canisius (commemoration)*

Better Gifts: www.thatcatholicshop.com has religious gifts where the proceeds go to support Aid to the Church in Need, or www.globalgifts.org.au where the proceeds go to Caritas Australia, the Catholic Church's overseas aid. Brochures are in the church.

2nd Sunday of Advent - 8 Dec 2024

Ps 125 Response: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation 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

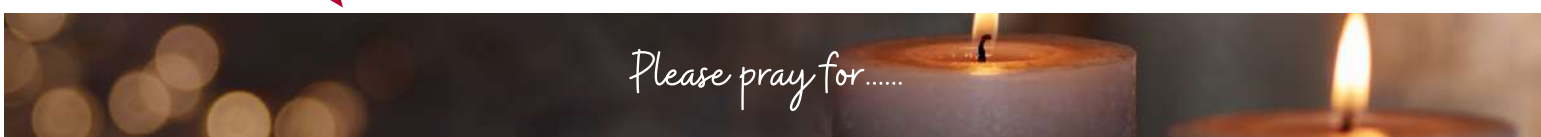



BE YOUR BEST SELF *here*



ATTENTION PLEASE

There is no Healing Mass in January.



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

- Ken Leslie
- Baby Sophia (Marie Saul's great-granddaughter)
- Jema Oshana
- Sr Rosalie Carlon
- Guy Chan

- Lillian Chan
- Margaret Hall
- Roslyn Rodriguez
- Anita Hofman
- Elizabeth Barton (we ask for your continued prayers for Elizabeth as she is still very ill, as well as for her husband, Charles, please.)



Our parish Prayer Ministry also has a private group on Facebook where you can post your requests directly or email us to do so. Please feel free to join this private group if you would like to pray for someone or for your own intentions: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2660800900909668> or via QR code on the right.



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

Recently deceased - Alan Flanagan (91-year-old brother of Betty Connors), David Pickering, Fr Michael O'Toole, Michelle Patterson, Maria Wang, Nick Papallo

Anniversaries & Remembrance - Gerard Lazarus, deceased Sisters of St Joseph, Peter Lin, Rosa Huang, Joe & Peggy Sally, Henry Yeoh, Teresa Dobosz

3rd Sunday of Advent - 15 Dec 2024

Isaiah 12:2-6 Response: Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.