



Diocese of Broken Bay

MANLY FRESHWATER PARISH

Mary Immaculate, Manly and
St John the Baptist, Freshwater



CHRISTMAS The Nativity of the Lord 25th December 2020

"For today in the city of David a savior has been born to you who is Christ and Lord." Luke 2: 1-14

Centuries of hope in God's promise have come to fulfillment: the Messiah is born!

Luke's account of Jesus' birth (Gospel) begins by placing the event during the reign of Caesar Augustus. Augustus, who ruled from 27 B.C.-14 A.D., was honored as "savior" and "god" in ancient Greek inscriptions. His long reign was hailed as the **pax Augusta**: a period of peace throughout the vast Roman world. Luke very deliberately points out that it is during the rule of Augustus, the savior, god and peace-maker, that Jesus the Christ, the long-awaited Savior and Messiah, the Son of God and Prince of Peace, enters human history.

Throughout his Gospel, Luke shows how it is the poor, the lowly, the outcast and the sinner who embraces the preaching of Jesus. The announcement of the Messiah's birth to shepherds – who were among the most isolated and despised in the Jewish community – is in keeping with Luke's theme that the poor are especially blessed of God.

Typical of Luke's Gospel, it is the shepherds of Bethlehem – among the poorest and most disregarded of Jewish society who become the first messengers of the Gospel.

From the Christmas story in Luke's Gospel, we have a romantic image of shepherds as gentle, peaceful figures. But that manger scene image is a far cry from the reality: The shepherds of Biblical times were tough, earthy characters who fearlessly used their clubs to defend their flocks from wolves and other wild animals. They had even less patience for the pompous scribes and Pharisees who treated them as second and third-class citizens, barring these ill-bred rustics from the synagogue and courts.

And yet it was to shepherds that God first revealed the birth of the Messiah. The shepherds' vision on the Bethlehem hillside proclaims to all people of every place and generation that Christ comes for the sake of all of humankind.

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Bishop Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay, has asked us to reassure you of his thoughts and prayers. His Christmas video message is available online at <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/people/bishop/bishop-anthonys-christmas-message>. A printed version is on pages 3-4.

LIVE STREAMING OF MASS

**Manly Freshwater Parish Facebook
24/12 @ 6pm and 25/12 @ 9am**

CHRISTMAS 2020

First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
A son is given to us.

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt and consumed by fire. For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this. The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 95:1-3. 11-13

**R. Today is born our Saviour,
Christ the Lord.**

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless his name. R.
2. Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. R.
3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for he comes, he comes to rule the earth. R.
4. With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. R.

2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus
God's grace has been revealed to all people.

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from

all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Luke 2:10-11

Alleluia, alleluia! Good News and great joy to all the world: today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
Today a Saviour has been born for you.

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census - the first - took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: 'God to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour'. Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ



Most Rev Anthony Randazzo
Bishop of Broken Bay

Message for Christmas 2020

On the First Sunday of Advent I released my first Pastoral Letter as Bishop of Broken Bay, outlining my six key priorities for the Diocese. The Letter is entitled ***Jesus Christ, our beginning and end***, and it is addressed to each one of you, my brothers and sisters in the community of the Church of Broken Bay.

The first priority, *the person of Jesus Christ and his message of the Good News*, is a natural one to contemplate in this Advent Season as we prepare for the Christ Child, our heavenly King. The person of Jesus Christ comes to us at Christmas in the most pure and vulnerable state – as a newborn child. This Child comes in poverty and littleness, in lowliness and humility.

Perhaps this year we have become more acutely aware of our vulnerability. Right across the world, it seems no one has been spared the effects of the pandemic. Our health, our economy, our freedom and our way of life, have all been affected.

It's never comfortable to be made aware of our vulnerability.

In the midst of this discomfort, Jesus Christ shows us the way to respond. He understood what it was like to be fully human. God, the all-powerful Creator of the Universe, comes as a newborn baby, exposed to the powers of the world and susceptible to hunger and cold and loneliness.

More than once I have heard someone say they can't wait until 2020 is over. Yes, it has been a challenging year for our country and world, a year like no other. It is understandable that many hope to put the year of the pandemic behind us. However, if our desire is to close the door on 2020, get it over and done with so that we can get back to normal, then an opportunity has been lost.

This year has given us an opportunity to be grateful for the many blessings we have encountered amidst the difficulties. The blessing of family and friends at times of social separation. The blessing of home amidst the frenetic pace of everyday life and demands. The opportunity to address the poverty of loneliness by reaching out to others. The comfort of prayer and relationship with God in times of isolation.

This year has given us the opportunity to push the reset button. To come right back to basics. To discover anew the person of Jesus Christ, our beginning and end. (Rev 1:8)

There is much to prepare for Christmas. In our homes we display decorations and symbols that convey meaning and help tell the narrative of Christmas. We make preparations of hospitality to welcome family and loved ones into our homes. This year more than ever we might cherish the opportunity to gather together and be family in each other's presence.

The Church gives us the season of Advent in which to prepare. The physical preparations are important, but most important are the preparations we make in our hearts to welcome Jesus Christ.

Though there was no room at the inn, the Holy Family might find welcome and refuge in your heart and home this Christmas.

Christmas gives us an opportunity like no other to welcome the Christ Child into our midst. To contemplate him, and with all God's angels, to worship him with fervour and joy (Hebrews 1:6).

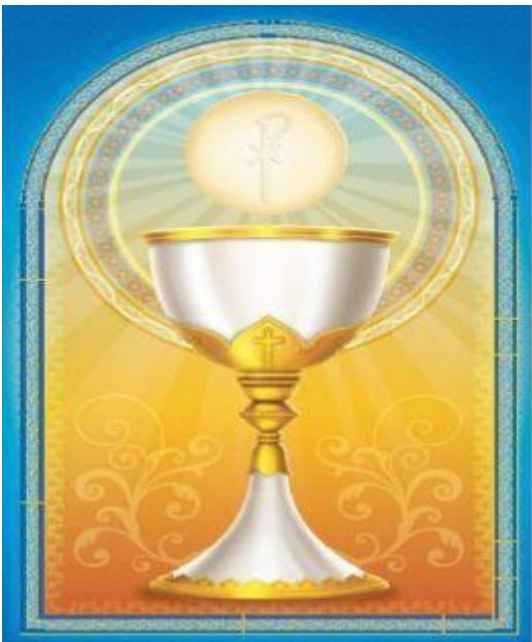
Advent and Christmas is a time for tenderness and welcome, for gratitude and giving, for peace and hope.

May the peace embodied in Jesus Christ born for us, rest upon you and your loved ones this Christmas and be a light of hope for the year ahead.

Many Christians across the globe and in Australia this year joined together during the pandemic to pray the blessing that God gave Moses to pray over the people of Israel. Let me pray that blessing over you now:

The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

May you have a blessed Christmas.

	<h2>Act of Spiritual Communion</h2> <p>My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.</p>
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