



MANLY FRESHWATER CATHOLIC PARISH

Mary Immaculate and St John the Baptist Churches

Fourth Sunday of Advent – 24th December 2023



ADVENT WREATH PRAYER

Jesus is the gift of the Father's love among us. It is a love that gives value and beauty to everything else; a love that gives strength to the family, to work, to study, to friendship, to art, to all human activity. Pope Francis

The fourth candle of Advent represents **Love**, the ultimate love of God that He might send His only Son for us.

Called the "**Angel's Candle**," the fourth candle of Advent is lit the Sunday before Christmas, leading us to eagerly await the new Kingdom of God on earth.

Light 4 Candles

Priest: Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of peace: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Lord Jesus, you are Son of God and Son of Mary: Christ, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Priest: Lord Jesus, you are Word made flesh and splendour of the Father: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen

Gospel Reflection

Today's Gospel on this Sunday before Christmas is Luke's account of the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary. The Annunciation story is filled with First Testament imagery (e.g., the announcement by the angel parallels the announcements of the births of many key figures in salvation history, such as Isaac and Samuel; the "overshadowing" of Mary recalls the cloud of glory covering the tent of the ark and temple in Jerusalem). Mary's yes to Gabriel's words set the stage for the greatest event in human history: God's becoming human. connectionsmediaworks.com



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES...

We invite you to join us at one of our Christmas Masses!!!

St Mary's Manly

Sunday 24th December

- 6pm Children's Mass
- 8pm Tongan Choir
- 10pm Parish Choir

Monday 25th December

- 8.30am & 10.30am

St John the Baptist Freshwater

Sunday 24th December

- 5pm Children's Mass

Monday 25th December

- 9am Parish Choir

New Parish Priest and Assistant Priest

Dear friends, last Friday Bishop Anthony announced a number of changes for Priests and Deacons in the parishes of Broken Bay Diocese.

Effective from 8th March 2024 I will no longer be parish priest of Manly Freshwater Parish and will move to lighter duties. I will still be an active priest but not administering a parish.

Fr Chima Ofor will be the new Parish Priest of Manly Freshwater from 8th March 2024 and Fr Marek Woldan will be the new Assistant Priest from 9th February 2024.

The Bishop and I will discuss in the New Year where I will be living.

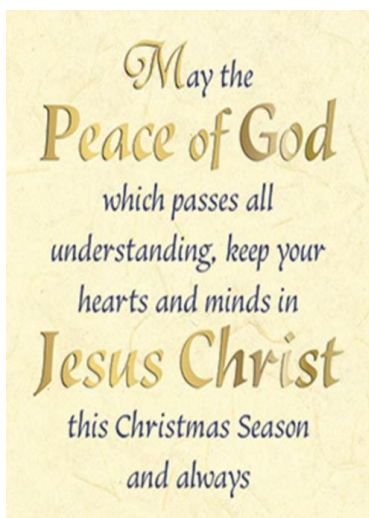
Fr John Puliparambil's appointment at the parish of Manly Freshwater will conclude on 30th December 2023 and in the following week he will relocate to Holy Name Parish, Wahroonga as priest in residence.

Please keep Fr John and myself in your prayers, and also make Fr Chima and Fr Marek welcome when they arrive.

Great news, we welcome Fr Eliseus Shin who will be helping us with weekend and Christmas Masses.

We also thank our good friends the Augustinian Fathers from Manly Vale and Brookvale for their continuing help with weekend and Christmas Masses.

Kindest regards and Christmas greetings and blessings, Fr David Taylor.



THE PARISH OFFICE

WILL BE CLOSED
Friday 22nd December and reopen Monday 8th January 2024.
May you all have a Happy and Holy Christmas!

LET US PRAY FOR 24th December 2023

Recently Deceased: Mervyn Hampson; Peter Cox;

Anniversary:

Prayers for the sick in our parish: "Lord, grant them and their carers strength and courage"

Margaret Burridge; Stephen Robertson; Maureen Williams; Gerry Wybrandt; Amy Farrow; Patricia Duffy; Florencia Lira; Ken Waller; Mary Helen Fogarty; Belinda Nicholls; Jacqui Dawson; Gerry Ring; Zacchaeus Ratnam; Pat Smith; John Connors; Don Hews; Joan Jacobs; Sheila Lee; Paul Donnelly; Julie Wallis; Lyn Hillard; Ian Flynn; Jake Usher; Wayne Smedley; Shirley Ford; Apolinar Anasarias; Kay Flenady; Annette Frances O'Leary; Anna Kalayzich; Bill Hipkiss; Veronica Rinaldo; Chinnamma Puliparambil; Paul Gallagher; Jim Turley; Rena Curll



St John the Baptist garden

The garden at the front of the Church needs to be tended to on a regular basis.

If you have spare time to weed and water it would be very much appreciated.

SUPPORT
your
PARISH

SUPPORT OUR PARISH & PRIESTS FINANCIALLY by using one of the following...

1. **Planned Giving:** through a monthly direct debit or credit card. Please contact the parish office for more information 9977 5822.
2. **Collection plates during Mass**
3. **Tap and Go machines** using your credit/debit card or **EFTPOS Terminals.**
4. **Scan to Donate** using the QR code to access our BPoint Donation page.
5. **Directly into Parish Bank Accounts**
6. **2nd collection Parish Bank Account**
Funds the running of the Parish
Account Name: Manly Freshwater Parish
Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank
Account # 100002025 BSB: 062 784
7. **1st collection** Supports our Priests
Account: Manly Freshwater Parish Pastoral
Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank
Account# 13958002 BSB: 062 784



CAN'T GET TO MASS ON SUNDAY AND WANT TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION?

Many of you have not been able to come back to Mass on Sunday for different reasons. If you would like one of the Priest to visit you at home, please ring the parish office on 9977 5822.



PARISH GIVING – thank you for your generous support. We encourage you to use the tap

machines at the Church entrances. If you prefer to use cash there will be **ONE** collection during Mass at the offertory at Manly and **TWO** at Freshwater.

PILOT PROGRAM –The Diocese has agreed for Manly to pilot a **ONE COLLECTION** at the weekend Masses. The Diocese will continue to monitor this.

The collection is for the First and Second Plates and will be allocated as follows:

- 25% to Supporting our Priests including the sick & retired in our Diocese.
- 75% to Parish operations and maintenance of building.



Pope Francis Prayer Intention for December – For persons with disabilities. We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Manly Freshwater Parish promotes **SAFEGUARDING** which involves the implementation of proactive, common sense and practical ideas that ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults in our **MANLY** community.

Livestreaming on Facebook Sunday 8:30am Mass
[manlyfreshwaterparishfacebook/videos](https://www.facebook.com/manlyfreshwaterparish/videos)

CHANGES TO WEEKDAY MASSES 9:15am
Mass will be held on the following days...
Manly: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
Freshwater: Wednesday



24/7 Telephone Crisis Support: 13 11 14

Message from the Parish Spanish Prayer Group

"...the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" John 1,5

Merry Christmas, we wish you a blessed Christmas, may Jesus be the center of your lives and the Holy Spirit illuminate you every day and the Father bless you.

Piety Store at Manly has a new selection of St Theresa Crosses and some new Christmas Nativity Candles.



You're invited To CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

St Mary's Catholic Church
Enter from Denison St, School Entrance
11am - 1pm

This year we will be providing a
Take Away Picnic Lunch and gift.

There will be some tables set up under
the big tree if you wish to enjoy your
Picnic with some other guests.

It's been a tough year for many, so no matter what your
circumstance, you are **always welcome** to come along!!

- ✓ COVID-19 Safe
- ✓ Free
- ✓ Special Gift Bag for all guests
- ✓ Family friendly
- ✓ Non-alcoholic
- ✓ Friendly Community

Hosted by
Manly Freshwater Parish
Tel: 9977 5822



CHRISTMAS REFLECTION FOR OUR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

There is something about newborn babies. When a newborn baby comes into the room, you can't help but to go over to where the baby is, want to hold it, smile at it, make all these funny faces at it and try to make it laugh (*imagine the reaction if we did that to an adult when one entered the room!*). But this joy that a newborn child brings us is something that I'm sure we can all relate to. The innocent newborn is someone that brings people together, fills our hearts with joy, with love, and with peace (*except when it doesn't want to go to bed or wakes us up in the middle of the night...*).

Perhaps this reaction that we make when a newborn baby comes into the room is the reason that God came to us as a baby. There is nothing intimidating about a baby. It doesn't sit on a throne in a high place. It isn't wealthy or powerful with an army ready to overthrow cruel authorities (like what the tyrant King Herod expected). So we have to ask ourselves, where do we find God whom we seek? We do so most clearly in the faces of the vulnerable, the poor, the helpless – the qualities we see in a newborn baby. And when we do so, Jesus reminds us that *"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me"* (*Matthew 25:40*). This is a key reason why so many saints were called to the service of the poor and needy.

One of those saints is St Francis of Assisi. He is the founder of the famous Franciscan Order. St Francis was born into a noble family, and instead of continuing with the noble life that he was born into, he became a Deacon of the Catholic Church and lived a life of service to those poor both materially and spiritually.

Whilst St Francis was in the Holy Land visiting the holy sites of Jesus's birth, life, death and resurrection, he received inspiration to do a live representation of the birth of Jesus. St Francis desired to represent the birth of the Jesus so that with our human eyes we could see what it was like to be born in such a way. During Christmas Mass in 1223, after St Francis proclaimed the Gospel and preached the homily, it is recorded that eyewitnesses miraculously saw a real infant appear on top of the straw in the empty manger that was there **between live wild animals, and that St Francis took the** beautiful child into his arms. Church tradition tells us that this was the first Nativity Scene.

In Nativity Scenes to follow, it has been tradition include a little lamb. To some, lambs are cute, and

having such a cute little animal included in the scene helps with the sentimental warm feelings we get at this time of year. However, there is a deeper reason. It is a reminder of Christ's death. We are reminded of the words of St John the Baptist who proclaimed Jesus as the "Lamb of God" and Jesus who ultimately becomes the sacrificial lamb.

Being God, Jesus could have been anything, but he chose to be born as human, as one of us. What does that mean? Amongst the many meanings of that, one is that He also chose to die. He chose to die because he wanted to do so out of love for us. An act of extraordinary humility, generosity and love that cannot be appropriately put into words.

This imagery and connection between the birth and death of Jesus can likely not be an easy read for us in a culture where Christmas is associated with happy and warm feelings and not feelings around the sadness of death. However, Christ's willingness to not only be born, but to therefore die is rather something overwhelmingly joyful.

This is a recognition that the suffering and death of Christ, a necessary consequence of His birth, is not a tragedy, but rather the restoration of humanity in total relationship with God.

One of my favourite things about being an Altar Server is that you get to be the closest

to the Altar and assist the Priest in the Celebration of the Eucharist. In doing so, you get to hear the Priest say some prayers as a whisper or in a low voice that the rest of the congregation may not hear. One of these occasions is when the wine and water is poured into the chalice, and the Priest prays these words: *"By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity."* This mingling of the water with the wine is symbolic of the exact thing we celebrate at Christmas - the coming together of divinity and humanity through the Birth of Jesus Christ.

And so when we look at our Nativity Scene, in that child lying in the manger, we see God who, because of his birth, has united himself to every human being. How? For at the moment of our Baptism and at every moment we go to receive the Body of Christ at the Eucharist, we truly do share in the divinity of Christ who has humbled himself to share in our humanity.

Wishing all a very joyful and peaceful Christmas, and many heavenly blessings for the New Year 2024. ~Ivica Covic





CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2023

**MOST REV ANTHONY RANDAZZO DD, JCL
BISHOP OF BROKEN BAY**

Peace is the essence of the message of Christmas.

It is a message that resonates through the scriptures. “For there is a child born for us... wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end”. Isaiah’s prophetic words remind us of a promised peace, a peace that transcends human understanding—a peace that finds its fulfillment in the birth of Christ.

Isaiah’s prophetic words remind us of a promised peace, a peace that transcends human understanding—a peace that finds its fulfillment in the birth of Christ.

In the scriptures, the peace of God is a recurring promise. From the serene teachings of the Beatitudes to the reassuring promises of Isaiah, we are reminded of the divine invitation to embrace peace in our hearts and share it with the world.

Over the past year we have witnessed an escalation of militant and warring communities world-wide. In a troubled world marred by violence and strife, the need for peace has never seemed more apparent.

However, we are not immune to unsettling challenges and destabilising events here in our own homes.

This year has seen many families struggle with cost of living pressures and Christmas can be a time of increased stress as many try to provide for loved ones.

But let’s not lose hope nor sight of the transformative power of joy. The Christmas season reminds us that the birth of Jesus Christ heralds a message of reconciliation, harmony, and goodwill to all; a gift from God, becomes our remedy for sorrow.

This Christmas, might we celebrate the birth of Christ and actively work towards fostering peace among ourselves. Embracing the spirit of hope, might we extend a hand of compassion, seek reconciliation, and promote understanding. May the peace of Christ be not just a sentiment but a guiding strength that shapes our interactions and relationships.

My sisters and brothers, during this holy season, pray for joy in our hearts, hope in our God, love to forgive, and peace upon earth.

May you all have a blessed Christmas, filled with the Peace of Christ, and may the New Year be a journey of joy and fulfillment for each one of you, and for your families.

ENDS

Office of Communications

Telephone: 02 8379 1622 **Email:** communications@bbcatholic.org.au

His name will be Jesus

4th Sunday of Advent, Year B



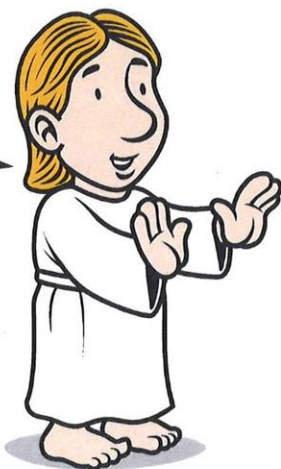
Draw a picture of yourself doing something special for your family or friends during Christmas



In the story of the Annunciation, the angel Gabriel tells Mary that God has chosen her to bring his Son into the world. What are some ways that we can bring Christ into the world for others?

Use the words below to find out what the angel Gabriel and the Blessed Virgin Mary are saying to each other.

 favoured one!
 The _____ is with you.
 Don't be _____!
 God is _____
 with you. You shall
 have a _____ and his
 name will be _____.



I am the

 of the Lord!
 Let this

 as you
 have said.

Jesus afraid happen servant Lord Greetings pleased son

Fourth Sunday of Advent – Year B

First Reading 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16 (JB)

A reading from the second book of Samuel

The kingdom of David will be established for ever in the sight of the Lord.

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."'

The word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm Ps 88:2-5, 27, 29 (JB)

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. R.

'I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' R.

He will say to me: 'You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me.' I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure. R.

Second Reading Romans 16:25-27 (JB)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be.

He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 1:38 (JB)

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38 (JB)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

You will conceive and bear a son.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



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manlyfreshwaterparish@bbcatholic.org.au

Assistant Priest: Fr John Puliparambil
john.puliparambil@bbcatholic.org.au

Parish Secretary: Jenny Beninati
manlyfreshwaterparish@bbcatholic.org.au

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6 Raglan St, Manly 2095
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www.bbcatholic.org.au/manlyfreshwater

St John the Baptist Church
cnr Johnson & Oliver St, Freshwater 2096
Presbytery: 9977 2100
After Hours Sick Calls: 0499 910 010

Parish Pastoral Council: Paul Pervan (Chair);
Michael McGrath (Deputy Chair); Margaret Dent
(Secretary); Patricia Carroll; Joanne Druery;
Val Buono; Ivica Covic; Robert Marshall;
Peter Nacard, Ian Press, Katalina Taefotu

Weekend Masses:
Manly: Saturday Vigil 6:00pm
Sunday 8:30am, 10:30am, 6:00pm
Freshwater: Saturday Vigil 5:00pm & Sunday 9am

Weekday Masses:
Manly: Tuesday – Friday 9:15am
Freshwater: Tuesday – Friday 9:15am

Baptisms: please contact the parish office
Manly: 4th Sunday of the month
Freshwater: 2nd Sunday of the month

Reconciliation: *Manly* Sat 10am – 11am

St Mary's Primary School 7256 2135
Principal: Paul McGuire

St John the Baptist Primary School 9939 6699
Principal: Alicia van der Merwe

St Paul's Catholic College 9977 5111
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