



Bridgeside Bulletin



The weekly Bulletin of the Catholic Parish of Forster Tuncurry

"Unity in Christ"

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We acknowledge the Worimi people - the traditional custodians of this place

SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER 2021,

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

Dear Brothers and Sisters.

This coming week we will as a community of faith, gather to celebrate the parish Christmas party. I hope and pray that as many parishioners as possible are able to attend. Please see inside for details on how to RSVP. It is important that we mark the big things together. Please, do come.

As you are aware there is a fund raising drive happening at the moment to purchase new floor coverings for the Church. I ask anybody who is able to and willing to, to contribute to this endeavor. This needs to happen for both WHS reasons and for aesthetical reason. I commend this to your consideration.

Please note that Columban Calendars are still available they are now for sale for \$10.00. Advent books are also still available if anybody would like to spend some time deepening their prayer life as we await the coming of Christ at Christmas.

If anybody would like to volunteer to fulfill the ministry of reader at the Christmas Masses please contact the office and leave your name with Danielle.

These next two weekends SVDP will be having their Christmas appeal. Please note the giving tree. Please do take a tag and provide a gift for a needy child this Christmas. There are also envelopes around the Church, if you are not able to give this weekend, feel free to return it at Mass next week.

On the 15th of December there will be more freedoms returned to us as pandemic control measures continue to ease. Please be patient as I come to grips with the new health orders and what they mean for places of worship.

With the Christmas novena beginning on the 17th of December, I have decided that it would be appropriate to have a Mass on Monday the 20th of December, so that anybody who wishes to attend Mass each day of the Christmas novena may do so. This Mass will be at 9.30 am. Given the fact that Christmas still has an Octave, I will also say Mass on Monday the 27th of December, for anybody who wishes to attend Mass each day during the Octave, this Mass will also commence at 9.30am.

The Nativity scenes that are for use in the Church are both beautiful but, are in a state of disrepair. There are two of them but only one baby Jesus. I have been able to source a new nativity scene for the Church that is beautiful and large enough to be seen from various points in the Church. If anybody would like to contribute to the cost of the Nativity scene please see me after Mass or contact Danielle in the office during the week.

On a personal note, I ask that each of you keep me in your prayers. This Sunday the 12th is my anniversary of ordination. I am seven years a priest. I ask all who see this to keep me in your prayers. I have tried hard throughout my time as priest to serve God and our Holy Mother the Church as a good and faithful and holy priest. For the times that I have failed through my own weakness and sinfulness, I ask for your forgiveness and beg your understanding. I am privileged to be the Parish Priest of such a beautiful Parish, made up with so many wonderful people. Let us pray for each other as we journey on this pilgrimage to the Heavenly Father.

With Love.

Fr. Peter.

Parish Timetable

WEEKDAY MASS
13 DEC—18 DEC
 TUE: 4.30pm
 WED: 9.30am
 THU: 5.30pm
 FRI: 9.30am
 SAT: 9.30am

Mon 13 DEC	9am Counters— Team 5 12pm Community Kitchen
Tue 14 DEC	9.30am Christian Meditation 12pm Community Kitchen 3.30pm Holy Hour, followed by Benediction
Wed 15 DEC	11am Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help 12pm Community Kitchen
Thu 16 DEC	12pm Community Kitchen 5.30pm Mass followed by Parish Christmas Party No Holy Hour

Parish Notices

- The **readers roster** for 11 Dec—30 Jan has been emailed out. Printed copies can be found in the red folder in the church.
- **Columban Calendars** make a great Christmas gift for family and friends. They are now on sale in the church for \$10
- **Vinnies Christmas Cards** are on sale in church for \$5 a pack

You're invited to join Fr Peter for tea/ coffee after each weekend Mass. Please bring a plate of food to share for morning tea.

What's happening locally...



Christmas Eve: 5.30pm (Holy Name School) & 7.30pm

Christmas Day: 12am midnight, 8am & 10am

~If you would like to be a reader at any of the Christmas Mass please contact the parish office~

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

For the last 36 years it has become traditional for single people and families to gather in the Forster Church Hall on Christmas Day to celebrate the joy of Christ's birth and to share Christmas Day Lunch together. Everyone is welcome to join us.

The hall will be open from 11.30am and we will sit down to lunch around 1pm.

Thank you to Luke from **Barrington Coast Pest Management** for his services to our parish buildings. We appreciate the work he has provided at a discounted rate. There is a flyer on the parish notice board for his business.

Church Floor Covering Donations

If you feel that you are able to donate to the church carpet project, please place a labelled envelope in the collection plate at Mass or make a bank transfer using the details below:

BSB- 062 815

Acc#- 0032 8161

Reference- CDF 5575 + last name.

THE LATEST NEWS FROM OUR SAFEGUARDING PROMOTERS

The *Promoters of Safeguarding* continue to endorse a culture of safeguarding within the Parish. To this end, we mention for everyone, but especially for those in employment, **6 Tips For Staying Safe (and sane) This Christmas.**

STAY SAFE TIP #1

Welcome to the silly season. With the dash to the Christmas holidays, you're sure to have a full social calendar filled with end of year events. By planning out the next few weeks, you can properly allocate time and leave a buffer for when things don't go to plan.

STAY SAFE TIP #2

A main reason for so many workplace incidences occurring in December is the rush most of us are in to complete tasks before year end. Due to time pressure, we are more likely to cut corners that can easily result in serious injury which leaves families, friends, colleagues and communities devastated instead of celebrating.

STAY SAFE TIP #3

While many workers appreciate the necessity of wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) while at work, even if rushing to get things finished, you must wear your PPE.

STAY SAFE TIP #4

Many people feel exhausted, just living their life. By asking for help, you can lighten your load a little, build relationships, relieve stress and improve productivity.

STAY SAFE TIP #5

Further to the theme of asking for help, it's important to help each other. By working as a team, you can increase collaboration, lessen individual workloads, thus reducing individual stress, and improving productivity.

STAY SAFE TIP #6

It's the season of Christmas parties, and the best way to make sure everyone remains safe, is to be careful how you handle alcohol, make sure everyone has transport to get home safely, and everyone looks out for each other. If it's a work function, Section 19 of the WHS Act requires employers to 'take all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety...of...employees' including suitable risk controls to reduce or eliminate any hazard associated with the function or event, setting clear boundaries for employee's behaviour at work related functions, and have developed and communicated an internal policy addressing the responsible consumption of alcohol.

The Catholic Parish of Forster-Tuncurry

Christmas Party

Date: 16th December
Time: Mass at 5.30pm,
 followed by a Christmas Party in the hall.
Bring: Please BYO meat for BBQ.

The Parish will provide a few salads and drinks for a gold coin donation.
RSVP: Please contact the office to register your attendance at this event.

We look forward to sharing a meal with you this Christmas season 😊

Saints and Feasts



12/12/21 OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE is a title of the Virgin Mary associated with a celebrated pictorial image housed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in México City. Mexican national identity is entwined with that of Guadalupe. Official Catholic accounts state that on the morning of 9th December, 1531, Juan Diego saw an apparition of a young girl at the Hill of Tepeyac, near Mexico City. The girl asked that

a church be built in her honour and from her apparition Juan Diego recognised her as the Virgin Mary. After recounting his story the Archbishop of Mexico City instructed him to ask the lady for a miraculous sign. The first was to heal Juan's uncle. The virgin told Diego to gather flowers and, although December was very late in the growing season Diego found Castilian roses, not native to Mexico on the hilltop. The Virgin arranged these in his peasant cloak (tilma). When Juan Diego opened his cloak before the Bishop the flowers fell to the floor, and on the fabric was the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Juan Diego was canonised in 2002.

13/12/21 ST LUCY was a young woman from a wealthy Sicilian family who lived during the early fourth century. It is believed that her mother arranged for her to be married, but Lucy refused as she wanted to devote her life to serv-

ing Christ. She offered prayers at the tomb of St Agatha and her mother's illness was miraculously cured. She was eventually martyred during the persecution of Emperor Diocletian, but even in the face of death she showed great courage and faith in God. The name Lucy means 'light' and St Lucy is called upon as the patron saint of the blind.



14/12/21 ST JOHN OF THE CROSS was born into a poor Spanish family in 1542. After attending a Jesuit college, he joined the Carmelite Order, studied theology and was ordained a priest at the age of 25. St Teresa of Avila encouraged him to join the Discalced Carmelite Reform, which provided two houses for friars. But after several years he was seized and imprisoned by the Calced Carmelite friars, who rejected the reform. St John of the Cross was a mystic and poet, and it was during his captivity that he wrote some of his finest work. He eventually escaped and founded a college at Baza. St John's is regarded as a Doctor of Mystical Theology, and was officially declared a Doctor of the Church in 1926.



PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

The Twenty-fifth Day of December, when ages beyond number had run their course from the creation of the world, when God in the beginning created heaven and earth, and formed man in his own likeness; when century upon century had passed since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood, as a sign of covenant and peace; in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith, came out of Ur of the Chaldees; in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses in the Exodus from Egypt; around the thousandth year since David was anointed King; in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; in the year seven hundred and fifty-two since the foundation of the City of Rome; in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian Augustus, the whole world being at peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and when nine months had passed since his conception, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah, and was made man: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proclamation_of_the_Birth_of_Christ



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Recently deceased: Brian Malone, Peter Balzen & Christine Jackson

Anniversaries: John Green

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ:

Ken Vote, Connie Cachia, Joe Barnett, Monica Hunt

People will remain on the prayers for the sick for 4 weeks. You can resubmit names as needed.



UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Third Sunday of Advent Year C

Father: Dear friends, with prayer and thanksgiving let us bring our intentions before the Lord.

1. Reader: That the Pope and all priests and bishops will continue to spread the Good News. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

2. Reader: That the people of Australia and of all nations will be guided in the way of true peace. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

3. Reader: That those suffering addiction or distress may come to know the comforting message of God's Word. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

4. Reader: That Fr. Greg Barker will be nourished by the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit as he fulfils the role of Diocesan Administrator. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

5. Reader: That a new Bishop will soon be appointed to shepherd the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

6. Reader: That in this Advent time, our community may be filled with prayer as we reflect on the coming of Christ. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

7. Reader: That the sick and housebound will find strength and healing in the Lord, especially all those in our parish bulletin. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

8. Reader: That those who have died may come to everlasting life with Christ, especially Brian Malone, Peter Balzen & Christine Jackson who have died recently & John Green whose anniversary occurs at this time. In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Father: Lord God, the coming of your Son is near. Hear our prayers, and guide us in faith as we wait in joyful hope. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Sunday 12 Dec 2021
Third Sunday of Advent
Year C

Entrance Antiphon

Phil 4:4-5

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Indeed, the Lord is near.

First Reading

Zep 3:14-18

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah
Shout for joy, daughter of Zion, Israel, shout aloud! Rejoice, exult with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem!

The Lord has repealed your sentence; he has driven your enemies away.

The Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst; you have no more evil to fear.

When that day comes, word will come to Jerusalem: Zion, have no fear, do not let your hands fall limp. The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult with joy over you, he will renew you by his love; he will dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Is 12:2-6 R. v.6

(R.) Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

1. Truly, God is my salvation, I trust, I shall not fear. For the Lord is my strength, my song, he became my saviour. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. (R.)

2. Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name! Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples! Declare the greatness of his name. (R.)

3. Sing a psalm to the Lord for he has done glorious deeds, make them known to all the earth! People of Zion, sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (R.)

Second Reading

Phil 4:4-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to

the Philippians

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 3:10-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but

the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

The Gospel of the Lord

Communion Antiphon

Cf. Is 35:4

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.

Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.



Readings for Next Week 18/19 Dec

First Reading

Mi 5:1-4 The Lord foretells the coming of the Messiah from Bethlehem.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19. R. v.4
(R.) Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Second Reading

Heb 10:5-10 Paul reveals Jesus as the new sacrificial offering.

Gospel Acclamation

Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18) Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 1:39-45 Mary visits Elizabeth.

THE ORDER OF MASS

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen. either:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And with your spirit.** or:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **And with your spirit.** or:

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. either:

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, (striking the breast) through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

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

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

For we have sinned against you.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

And grant us your salvation.

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

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:

P: Lord, have mercy or: **P:** Kyrie, eleison.

R: Lord, have mercy or: **R:** Kyrie, eleison.

You came to call sinners:

P: Christ have mercy or: **P:** Christe, eleison.

R: Christ have mercy or: **R:** Christe, eleison.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:

P: Lord, have mercy or: **P:** Kyrie, eleison.

R: Lord, have mercy or: **R:** Kyrie, eleison.

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

The Kyrie follows, unless it has occurred in the Penitential Act. either:

P: Lord, have mercy. **R:** Lord, have mercy.

P: Christ, have mercy. **R:** Christ, have mercy.

P: Lord, have mercy. **R:** Lord, have mercy.

or:

P: Kyrie, eleison.

R: Kyrie, eleison.

P: Christe, eleison.

R: Christe, eleison.

P: Kyrie, eleison.

R: Kyrie, eleison.

Gloria (when said)

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Let us pray. At the end of the Collect, the people acclaim: **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

At the end of the reading:

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

At the Gospel:

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.

Glorify to you, O Lord.

At the end of the Gospel:

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come

again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, (all bow) born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray, brethren ... the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His name, for our good and the good of all His holy Church.

At the end of the prayer, the people acclaim:
Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right and just.**

After the Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The mystery of faith. either:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again. or:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again. or:

**Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.**

Through him, and with him, ... for ever and ever.
Amen.

THE COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil...

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles...

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And with your spirit.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. (X2)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The Body of Christ. **Amen.**

The Blood of Christ. **Amen.**

Let us pray. At the end of the prayer, the people acclaim:
Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the † Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

either:

Go forth, the Mass is ended. or:

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. or:

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your Life. or:

Go in peace.

Thanks be to God.

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

by Brendan Byrne SJ

This Sunday in Advent was traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday because of the theme of 'rejoicing' that pervades it ('Gaudete', the Latin for 'Rejoice', being the opening word of the old entrance ['Introit'] antiphon). The liturgy invites us to rejoice because at the halfway moment of Advent we are aware of how close we are to proximity of the salvation that will come to us at Christmas.

The main theme in the **First Reading**, from Zephaniah 3:14-18, is 'Do not fear'; Israel's God is so close as to be actually already 'in your midst'. Even more striking perhaps is the assurance that the Lord God 'will renew you by his love' and 'will dance with shouts of joy for you'. Scripture is constantly challenging our image of God. The idea of the Lord God as one who 'dances with Israel as on a day of festival' is perhaps novel in Australia – though I have been at liturgies in Africa where everyone, including the clergy, join in the dance. We have lost a great deal by reducing our liturgical celebrations to something so 'spiritual' and so cerebral. If Scripture invites us to think of God as dancing with shouts of joy, perhaps we should not be so hesitant to bring our bodies and their capacity for movement back into our celebrations.

Likewise, St Paul insists in the **Second Reading**, from Philippians 4:4-7, that his community rejoice. Joy stems above all from a sense of being loved. In the Christian community the experience of the Spirit is essentially a sense that one is loved by God and lovingly grasped within God's saving design (Rom 5:5; 8:15; Gal 4:6-7). Of course, anxieties and worries remain. Paul's remedy for this is that they be taken to God in prayer. Also, he urges the community to cultivate at all times a sense of thanksgiving. Thanking and blessing God, even for the difficult things that come our way, creates a mysterious sense of peace that is truly the gift of God.

The **Gospel**, Luke 3:10-18, returns to the preaching of John the Baptist. This comes in two rather different parts. In response to the people's query as to how conversion of heart might work itself out in practice, John first offers some concrete suggestions, addressed to three distinct groups: the crowds, tax collectors and soldiers. Beneath the advice in each case is a central Lukan concern: nothing so hinders relationship to God, nothing so dehumanizes human beings and ruins life in community, as attachment to wealth and possessions. In each case John urges justice and generosity. The tax collectors and the soldiers (soldiers in Palestinian society of the time had the role, more or less, of police in our society today) were both in a position to extort money from ordinary people. John exhorts the tax collectors to exact no more than is their due. The soldiers on the other hand were to 'be content with their pay' in the sense of not seeking to augment it by violence and extortion. Social justice is always the acid test of true conversion of heart.

The second part of John's message returns more directly to his role as precursor of Christ. Deflecting expectation away from the idea that he himself might be the Messiah, John points to the distinction between his role and that of the One who is to come. He baptises with water – a simple ritual of repentance. The Messiah will baptise 'with the Holy Spirit and fire'.

This description of the role of Jesus sounds rather threatening. In effect, however, the 'baptism' that Jesus brings should be understood in a metaphorical sense. It probably should be referred to the experience of the Spirit, where the Father's address to Jesus following his baptism ('You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you' [Luke 3:22]) is extended to believers. The love and favour that Jesus experiences from the Father will become the experience of all who respond in faith to the Gospel. The Church will undergo this 'baptism' at Pentecost when the Spirit comes down upon the disciples in tongues, 'as if of fire' (Acts 2:1-4), empowering them to take up the mission of Jesus.

John's final description of the Coming One's mission evokes the vivid image of wielding a winnowing fan to separate wheat from chaff. In fact, Jesus will hardly take up the threatening pattern of ministry that John sketches for him here. He will heal and forgive and warn, yes, but not judge or condemn; with sinners he will celebrate the mercy of God (5:27-32; 15:1-2). The divergence may explain why later, from prison, John sends messengers to ask whether Jesus is truly the One to come (7:20). As so often in Luke's Gospel, we find both continuity and surprise in equal measure.

**SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
POPE FRANCIS
ANGELUS
Wednesday, 8 December 2021**

Dear brothers and sisters, buongiorno!

The Gospel for today's Liturgy, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, brings us into the house of Nazareth, where she receives the angel's annunciation (cf. Lk 1:26-38). Within the domestic walls, a person reveals him or herself better than elsewhere. And it is precisely within that domestic intimacy that the Gospel gives us a detail that reveals the beauty of Mary's heart.

The angel calls her "full of grace". If she is full of grace, it means the Madonna is void of evil: she is without sin, Immaculate. Now, at the angel's greeting, Mary – the text says – is "greatly troubled" (Lk 1:29). She is not only surprised, but troubled. To receive grand greetings, honours and compliments sometimes brings the risk of provoking pride and presumption. Let us recall that Jesus is not gentle with those who go in search of greetings in the squares, adulation, visibility (cf. Lk 20:46). Mary, instead, does not exalt herself, but is troubled; rather than feeling pleased, she feels amazement. The angel's greeting seemed too grand for her. Why? Because she feels her littleness within, and that littleness, that humility attracts God's eyes.

Within the walls of the house of Nazareth, we thus see a marvelous characteristic of Mary's heart. How is Mary's heart? Having received the highest of compliments, she is troubled she because she hears addressed to her what she has not attributed to herself. In fact, Mary does not credit prerogatives to herself, she does not hold claim to anything, she accounts nothing to her own merit. She is not self-satisfied, she does not exalt herself. For in her humility, she knows she receives everything from God. Therefore, free from herself, she is completely directed toward God and others. Mary Immaculate does not look on herself. This is true humility: not looking on oneself, but looking toward God and others.

Let us remember that this perfection of Mary, the full of grace, is declared by the angel within the walls of her house – not in Nazareth's main square, but there, in hiding, in the greatest humility. In that little house of Nazareth beat the greatest heart that any creature has ever had. Dear brothers and sisters, this is extraordinary news for us! Because the Lord is telling us that to work marvelous deeds, he has no need of grand means and our lofty abilities, but our humility, eyes open to Him, and also open to others. With this annunciation, within the poor walls of a small house, God changed history. Even today, he wants to do great things with us in our daily lives: in our families, at work, in everyday environments. God's grace loves to operate there more than in great historical events. But, I ask myself, do we believe this? Or rather do we think that holiness is a utopia, something for insiders, a pious illusion incompatible with ordinary life?

Let us ask the Madonna for a grace: that she free us from the misleading idea that the Gospel is one thing and life is another; that she enkindle enthusiasm in us for the ideal of sanctity which has nothing to do with holy cards and pictures, but is about living humbly and joyfully, like the Madonna, what happens each day, freed from ourselves, with our eyes fixed on God and the neighbour we meet. Let's not lose heart: The Lord has given everyone the stuff it takes to weave holiness within our everyday life! And when we are assailed by the doubt that we cannot succeed, the sadness of not being adequate, let us allow the Madonna to look on us with her "eyes of mercy", for no one who asked for her help has ever been abandoned!

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters,

Two days ago I returned from my journey in Cyprus and Greece. I thank the Lord for this pilgrimage; I thank all of you for the prayer that accompanied me, and the populations of those two dear countries, along with their civil and religious leaders, for the affection and kindness with which they welcomed me. To all of you, I say again: thank you!

Cyprus is a pearl in the Mediterranean, a pearl of rare beauty, which however bears the wound of barbed wire, the suffering of a wall that divides her. In Cyprus I felt at home; I found brothers and sisters in everyone. I hold in my heart every encounter, in particular the Mass in the stadium of Nicosia. I was moved by the dear Orthodox Brother Chrysostomos, when he spoke to me about the Mother Church: as Christians we follow different paths, but we are children of the Church of Jesus, that is a Mother, and accompanies and keeps us, that keeps us going, all as brothers and sisters. My hope for Cyprus is that it may always be a laboratory of brotherhood, where encounter prevails over confrontation, where we welcome our brother and sister, especially when he or she is poor, discarded, a migrant. I repeat that, faced with history, before the faces of those who emigrate, we cannot remain silent, we cannot turn away.

In Cyprus, as in Lesvos, I was able to look into the eyes of this suffering: please, let us look into the eyes of the discarded people we meet, let us be provoked by the faces of children, children of desperate migrants. Let us allow ourselves to be moved by their suffering in order to react to our indifference; let us look at their faces, to awaken us from the slumber of habit!

Then I think with gratitude of Greece. There too I received a fraternal welcome. In Athens I felt immersed in the greatness of history, in the memory of Europe: humanism, democracy, wisdom, faith. There too I experienced the mystique of wholeness: in the meeting with my brother Bishops and the Catholic community, in the festive Mass celebrated on the Lord's Day, and then with the young people who had come from so many places, some from very far away, to live and share the joy of the Gospel. And again, I experienced the gift of embracing dear the Orthodox Archbishop Hieronymos: first he welcomed me into his home and the next day he came to visit me. I cherish this fraternity in my heart. I entrust to the Holy Mother of God the many seeds of encounter and hope that the Lord has scattered on this pilgrimage. I ask you to continue to pray that they may germinate in patience and flourish in trust.

Today marks the end of the Year dedicated to Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church. And the day after tomorrow, 10 December, the Jubilee of Loreto will come to a close. May the grace of these events continue to work in our lives and in the lives of our communities. May the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph guide us on the path to holiness!

And I greet all of you, Romans and pilgrims! A special wish for Italian Catholic Action: may it be a gymnasium of synodality in the dioceses and parishes. I greet the children of the "Milleunavoce" Choir, the faithful of Zaragoza and the young people of Valdemoro, diocese of Getafe, Spain - the Spanish are making themselves heard, all right! -As well as the delegation from the Municipality of Rocca di Papa, with the torch that will light the Christmas Star on the Fortress of the town. I greet the group of Mexicans from the State of Puebla.

And I wish you all a happy feast day, especially you children of the Immacolata, it is your feast! Please do not forget to pray for me, and I will for you. Enjoy your meal and arrivederci.



Vinnies Christmas Appeal



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO THE
SVPD CHRISTMAS APPEAL

A CHRISTMAS WITHOUT JOY
IS NO CHRISTMAS AT ALL



COMPENDIUM OF THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

To whom is the deposit of faith entrusted?

The Apostles entrusted the deposit of faith to the whole of the Church. Thanks to its supernatural sense of faith the people of God as a whole, assisted by the Holy Spirit and guided by the Magisterium of the Church, never ceases to welcome, to penetrate more deeply and to live more fully from the gift of divine revelation.

To whom is given the task of authentically interpreting the deposit of faith?

The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the deposit of faith has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone, that is, to the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome, and to the bishops in communion with him. To this Magisterium, which in the service of the Word of God enjoys the certain charism of truth, belongs also the task of defining dogmas which are formulations of the truths contained in divine Revelation. This authority of the Magisterium also extends to those truths necessarily connected with Revelation.

What is the relationship between Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium?

Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium are so closely united with each other that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way, under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE DIOCESE AND SURROUNDS...

Faith Matters | Share your story

Each fortnight Faith Matters aims to explore individuals and communities rich experience of their faith.

We invite you to share your faith story.

Everyone has a story.

No matter how ordinary yours may seem, we all have a story to tell and you never know what it can mean to someone until you share it.

You could use the following questions as a guide.

Who are the people who guided your faith journey? How did they do that?

Describe some defining moments of your faith journey? What made them significant?

How has your faith been reflected in your work, your hobbies, your values, your choices, and your priorities at various times in your life?

In what ways has your faith guided and supported you over your lifetime? How has your church/faith community guided and supported you?

We hope to use the stories as part of a Faith Matters.

For more information or if you would like to be interviewed, please contact rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au or send your story to shareourstory@mn.catholic.org.au.

Caritas Australia's Global Gifts

After a challenging year, Caritas Australia is calling on Australians to renew their faith and commitment to helping those less fortunate by giving a gift that makes a real difference for those in need this Christmas.

Caritas Australia is offering a range of print and digital Global Gift cards that you can give to your family and friends. When you buy a Global Gift, your loved one

receives a special card and you help raise much-needed funds for programs that provide essentials like food, water and education to people living in poverty.

Orders for printed cards need to be placed by December 10 so that they arrive in time for Christmas.

To learn more or to purchase a Global Gift, visit: www.globalgifts.org.au or call 1800 024 413.

CaritasNews

The latest CaritasNews, Spring 2021, is now available at www.caritas.org.au/media/3pxmj2pc/caritasnews_spring-2021_digital_updated-rm.pdf

Caritas Australia Advent Resources

Caritas Australia's Advent resources are now available at <http://www.caritas.org.au/advent>

Each resource is divided into the four weeks of Advent, with each week including the ritual of lighting a candle on the Advent wreath, the Gospel reading, an inspiring Caritas Australia story, guided reflection questions, ideas for action and prayer. There are five resources available to meet the needs of different audiences:

Parish Resource – for use with parish prayer groups or individuals

Children's Liturgy Resource – suitable for weekly catechist classes or for children's liturgy

Youth Ministry Resource – for young adults or youth groups

Primary School Resource – for morning class prayer or religious education lessons

Secondary School Resource – for religious education lessons or for homeroom classes

"Amoris Laetitia Family Year " 19 March 2021- 26 June 2022

The "Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love) Family Year" is an initiative of Pope Francis, which aims to reach every family around the world through several spiritual, pastoral and cultural proposals that can be implemented within parishes, dioceses, universities, ecclesial movements and family associations.

Over the course of ten monthly episodes, hear the Holy Father talk about each of the chapters of the Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, along with the testimonies of different families who will share some aspects of their daily lives.

This initiative is a joint collaboration between the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life and Vatican News, and aims to facilitate the reading of the Apostolic Exhortation, with the aid of downloadable material prepared for personal and community reflection.

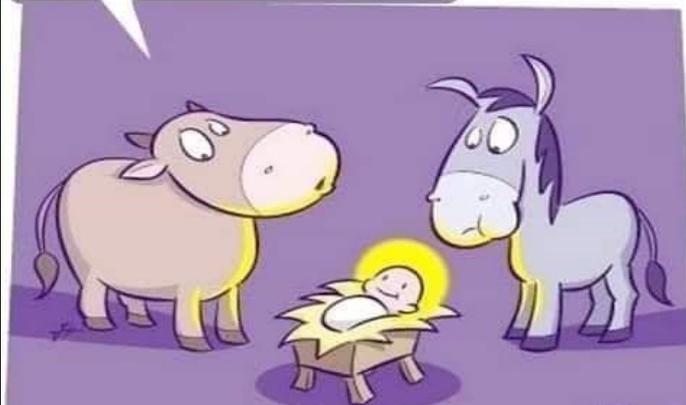
To access this resource:

<http://www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/en/amoris-laetitia/iniziativa-e-risorse/10-video-amoris-laetitia.html>

A video tribute in honour of Bishop Bill's life can be viewed at:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuvDIZpOTYs



Dude, there's a **baby** in the salad...





BAPTISMS

Celebrated most Sundays.
Bookings via the Parish website

MARRIAGE

Celebrated by arrangement with at least 3 months notice. Bookings via the parish website

SACRAMENTAL PROCESS

Enrolment via the Parish Website

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS
(RCIA) Parish Office 02 6554 6401

CATHOLIC CARE

Phone: 02 6539 5900 for services provided in Forster



PARISH TEAM

Fr Peter Street - Parish Priest
Peter.street@mn.catholic.org.au
Emergency Contact: 0458 327 219
(Please only calls to this phone no texts)

Danielle Kingdom
Admin Assistant
danielle.kingdom@mn.catholic.org.au

Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 9.00am- 3.30pm
Phone: 02 6554 6401

Website:
www.forstertuncurrycatholic.org.au

Follow us on facebook:
@catholicparishofforstertuncurry
Feedback, complaints or concerns can be communicated directly to the Parish Office, through our website (Contact Us) or if the concern is relating to the safety of a child, contact the Office of Safeguarding: 02 4979 1390 childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au

COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Serving meals to the community from the Parish Hall **Mon Tue, Wed & Thurs 12pm-1pm**

PARISH GROUPS

Christian Meditation

Forster Tues 9.30am
Greg 0427 918 568
Hallidays Point Wed 10am
John 0417 249 466

Gardening Group

3rd Monday of the month, 8am
Church grounds.
David Olliffe 0424 369 485

Family and Friends Group

Meets monthly, contact Carol and Terry Pearson on 0408768729.

Singing Practice

Ken Heffernan 02 6554 6401
(see parish timetable)

Holy Hour

Tues 3.30pm & Thurs 3.30pm in the Church

Finance Council

3rd Wednesday of the month, 5pm
Meeting Room

Pastoral Council

1st Thursday of the month, 6.00pm
Meeting Room

Novena to our Lady of Perpetual Help and Rosary

Wed 11.00am in the Church
Shiony 0411 493 086
Novena Benediction on the 1st Wednesday of the month.

Secular Franciscan Fraternity

4th Sunday of the month 9.30am
Barbara Dolahenty 0408 248 018

The above groups are all subject to Covid-19 restrictions, please enquire before attending.



SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Sat 5.00pm, Sun. 8.00am & 10.00am
Registration through the parish website is required

RECONCILIATION

9.00am Saturday and during Holy Hour

YOUTH MASS

3rd Sunday of the month, will resume once restrictions have eased.

AGED CARE MASSES (Subject to change)

GLAICA: **1st Tues 10.30am**
Estia Forster: **3rd Tues 10.00am**



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Holy Name Catholic School K-6
41 Lake Street, Forster
Ph: 02 6554 6504
E: admin@forster.catholic.edu.au
W: www.forster.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Brooke Stephens

St Clare's High School 7-12
Davis Street, Taree
P: 02 6552 3300
E: Admin@tareesc.catholic.edu.au
W: www.tareesc.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Peter Nicholls

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