



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 19 DECEMBER 2021,

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

Dear Brothers and Sisters.

I write this letter on Friday morning each week. Most weeks I feel rather happy on a Friday morning, people seem to think that I like the admin/office side of Priesthood. I don't, it is, however a necessity in life, so generally I am happy when Friday rolls around each week. This particular morning I am feeling desperately sad given the events in Devonport, Tasmania yesterday. The fact that five (at the time of writing) children could have died and so many more be injured at a fun day for the end of the school year is unconscionable. It is indeed very sad. It is indeed very tragic. I ask each and every one of you to please pray for the lost innocents who have died. Pray for their families, pray for those who are injured, pray for those first responders who had to attend what must have been a horrific scene, pray for the children who witnessed their friends fall from the sky and die. There are indeed at times like this questions to be asked, it is only natural. Disappointingly, however, there are no real answers. God does not cause these things. They just happen! All we can do is hold all those affected in our prayers. I extol each and all of you who see this to do that. Please remember in your prayers the families so awfully affected.

During the last week, the Fr. Anthony Stace memorial scholarship has been awarded. The winner from Great Lakes College is Leetika Carr. Unusually, there were two winners from Holy Name School, they were Marla Coultlen-Donnelly and Nash Syron. Please see the photos inside. We send our congratulations to these worthy recipients. Let us hold them in our prayers. In the New Year we will need to fund raise so as to be able to continue this good work in memory of Fr. Tony. Could I ask anybody who would be interested to take part in the fundraising to enable the longevity of this worthy cause to contact the office?

Donations have started to come in for the replacement of the carpets in the Church. I hope and pray that those who are willing will be able to give as generously as possible to help beautify the Holy Name Church and to ameliorate the WHS issues that the present carpets present.

Last Weekend and this weekend Vinnies are holding their Christmas appeal. I ask that you be as generous as you can. Please take a gift tag from the giving tree and provide a gift for a needy child. Each child deserves a gift on Christmas Day.

On Thursday night of this week the Parish held a Christmas Party. There were about 45 people. It was a lovely night that built community within the parish. As I have said previously these occasions are important. I hope that as we hold more of these events each year, more and more people will come to show how important their parish and their community is to them. Please see photos inside.

As you will be aware there is a Religious Discrimination Bill before the Federal Parliament. Could each of you please read the bill and contact our local Federal Member and NSW Senators to pass on your thoughts and desires about this important issue. Please see inside for details on how to respond.

Various Covid 19 restrictions have eased this week. Please note, that masks are no longer required in the Church, however, you may indeed wear one if you feel the need. We must still sign in using the QR code. There are no density limits for places of worship. Signing by the congregation can resume. I will determine over the next few days how often the Church will be cleaned.

With Love.

Fr. Peter.

Parish Timetable

WEEKDAY MASS

20 DEC—25 DEC

MON 9.30am

TUE: 4.30pm

WED: 9.30am

THU: 4.30pm

FRI: 9.30am

SAT: 9.30am

Mon 20 DEC	9am Counters— Team 6 12pm Community Kitchen
Tue 21 DEC	9.30am Christian Meditation 12pm Community Kitchen 3.30pm Holy Hour, followed by Benediction
Wed 22 DEC	12pm Community Kitchen
Thu 23 DEC	12pm Community Kitchen

Parish Notices

- A Mass will be held on Mon 20th Dec at 9.30am
- **Holy Hour** will no longer be held on Thursday afternoons.
- **Break Open the Word** readers resource is available from the parish office for \$24
- **The Novena group** will resume on the 12th Jan 2022



Christmas Mass Times

Please register for all Masses through our parish website or contact the office.

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.

THE LATEST NEWS FROM OUR SAFEGUARDING PROMOTERS

The *Promoters of Safeguarding* continue to endorse a culture of safeguarding within the Parish. To this end, your attention is drawn to the role of our parish **CatholicCare Community Kitchen** which, by providing a free hot meal and companionship, enhances the commitment of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle to promoting the safety, welfare and wellbeing of vulnerable children and adults.

Reasons people may need to access this service include:

- financial hardship
- homelessness
- mental illness
- physical or intellectual disability
- social isolation.

Opening in July 2020, our Forster Community Kitchen, currently operates in a partnership between CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning, the Forster Tuncurry Catholic Parish and Holy Name Primary School, with produce from the students' vegetable garden providing food for the Community Kitchen, thus reflecting the school motto: 'Concern for Others'.

In our Forster Kitchen, meals are available every Monday to Thursday at the Parish Hall in Lake Street from 12 noon to 1 pm. Individuals, couples and families are welcomed with food and a space where they can feel safe and enjoy the company of others. All members of the community, regardless of age, gender, disability, relationship, ethnicity or religion, are welcome. If parishioners know of someone who would benefit from these services, please pass on this information.

Would you like to become a volunteer and help make a difference in the lives of others?

There are many ways through which you can become involved including:

- preparation of the daily meal
- greeting our guests with a smile, serving meals, cleaning
- collecting food donations from local businesses
- making up fruit and vegetable packs for our diners
- cash donations towards purchasing meat, dairy products to enhance the menus
- donating fresh fruit, vegetables, meat (or other protein), bread, eggs, dairy products (milk, cheese, butter, margarine), non-perishables (pasta, rice, soup mixes, flour, sugar).

Additional helpers are always welcome. To comply with Diocesan Safeguarding and government regulations, volunteers need to hold a current:

- Working With Children Check - If you're applying as a volunteer, there is NO FEE www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check
- National Police Check (NPC) – this MUST be completed for you by Diocesan staff

Enquires can be made through the Coordinator, Michelle, on 02 6539 5900 or email mrobinson@catholiccare.org.au.

Finance Update for November 2021

The results for November were very positive due to the sale of 4 Columbarium niches. Also pleasing was the fact that both our cash collections and Planned Giving were on budget at \$2,071 and \$6,043 respectively. We also managed to keep our expenses for the month at \$7,806 which was \$1,092 below budget. With this good result for the month our deficit Year to date is now \$15,821 compared to our budget deficit of \$21,571. We also received donations of slightly over \$10,500 into our property development fund during November. The balance of the fund is now \$20,805 as we seek to accumulate enough donations to provide for much needed replacement carpets for the church.

Saints and Feasts



21/12/21 ST PETER CANISIUS was born in Holland in 1521. He studied canon law, but later came to the conclusion that a legal career and marriage, as arranged by his father, were not to his liking. He joined the Jesuits and spent his time in prayer, study, teaching and care of the sick. St Peter was a prominent preacher and he attended the Council of Trent, then later taught at the first Jesuit school at Messina. He was later called to Rome to work with St Ignatius; the founder of the Jesuit order. After posts as rector and vice-chancellor of the University of Ingolstadt, he was sent to Vienna, which was in need of reform. In 1555, his famous Catechism was published and eventually translated into 15 languages during his lifetime. Considered one of the most influential theologians and writers of his time, he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1925.

26/12/21 ST STEPHEN traditionally regarded as the first martyr of Christianity, was, according to the Acts of the Apostles, a deacon in the early church at Jerusalem who aroused the enmity of members of various synagogues by his teachings. Accused of blasphemy, at his trial he made a long speech fiercely denouncing the Jewish authorities who were sitting in judgement on him and was stoned to death.



Images taken from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary:
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord:
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary...

V. And the word was made flesh:
R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord.

R. Amen.



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.



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Recently deceased: Elaine Higgins, Christine Jackson, Jocelyn Kearney & the children who died in the recent tragic incident in Devonport.

Anniversaries: Christine Anne Stimpson & Gavin Surridge

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:

Connie Cachia, Joe Barnett, Monica Hunt, Max Dunn



UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Fourth Sunday of Advent Year C

Father: Dear friends, like the Virgin Mary, let us open our hearts to the Lord in prayer.

1. Reader: That the Holy Church may be obedient to the Father and trust in God's promise of salvation. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

2. Reader: That like the Virgin Mary we may have the grace of certain trust in the Lord. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

3. Reader: That conflict and war will be silenced and people of all nations may live securely in God. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

4. Reader: That our parish community will honour Mary as the most blessed Mother of Christ. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

5. Reader: That Fr. Greg Barker will be sustained by our prayers as he fulfils the role of Diocesan Administrator. In Trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

6. Reader: That the sick who call upon your name may be given life and healing, especially all those in our parish bulletin. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

7. Reader: That those Children, families and first responders affected by the tragedy in Devonport this week will be held securely in the tender embrace of our loving God. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

8. Reader: That those who have died may share in the eternal life fulfilled by Christ Jesus. We remember especially Elaine Higgins, Christine Jackson, Jocelyn Kearney & the children who died in the recent tragic incident in Devonport as well as Christine Anne Stimpson & Gavin Surridge whose anniversaries occur at this time. In trust we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Father: Lord God, your faithful handmaid and Mother of your Son is ever blessed in our midst. Hear our prayers, and help us, like Mary, to serve you with mercy, peace and justice. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Sunday 19 Dec 2021
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Year C

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Is 45:8

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

First Reading

Mi 5:1-4

A reading from the prophet Micah
The Lord says this: You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel; his origin goes back to the distant past, to the days of old. The Lord is therefore going to abandon them till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth. Then the remnant of his brothers will come back to the sons of Israel. He will stand and feed his flock with the power of the Lord, with the majesty of the name of his God. They will live secure, for from then on he will extend his power to the ends of the land. He himself will be peace.
The Word of the Lord

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.

1. O Shepherd of Israel, hear us, shine forth from your cherubim throne. O Lord, rouse up your might, O Lord, come to our help. (R.)

2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. (R.)

3. May your hand be on the man you have chosen, the man you have given your strength. And we shall never forsake you again: give us life that we may call upon your name. (R.)

Second Reading

Heb 10:5-10

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world: You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation, prepared a body for me. You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin; then I said, just as I was commanded in the scroll of the book, 'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.' Notice that he says first: You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them; and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 1:39-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed

that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Communion Antiphon

Is 7:14

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.



Readings for Next Week 26 Dec

First Reading

Sir 3:2-6. 12-14 Kindness and respect for parents is urged.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 127:1-5. R. see v.1 (R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

Second Reading

1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24 We are children of God.

Gospel Acclamation

Col 3:15. 16 Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you. Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 2:41-52 Jesus is found in the Temple.

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

Today's Scripture readings bring us at last to the threshold of Jesus' birth.

The **First Reading**, from the prophet Micah, 5:1-4, is famous for designating Bethlehem as the place of the Messiah's birth. The early Christians found it rich with pointers to what they believed God had done in Christ: salvation coming from what is 'least' in human terms; the sense of the 'ruler' to be born 'out of her' who, in contrast to most of the rulers of the time, will be a 'shepherd' who will feed his flock (a theme picked up in the Responsorial Psalm). Finally, there is the pledge that his rule will be synonymous with 'peace', something that the angels will echo when they announce the birth of a Saviour to the shepherds of Bethlehem (Luke 2:14).

The **Second Reading**, from Hebrews 10:5-10, stresses the superiority and effectiveness of what Christ has achieved, in comparison with the sacrificial ritual of the old covenant. To bring this out the writer appeals to a passage from one of the psalms (Ps 40 [39]:7-9). This makes the point that what God wants from worshippers is not so much material sacrifices – holocausts of animals and the like – as an inward commitment to do God's will. The text of Hebrews exploits a curious variant featured, it would seem, in the author's copy of the Greek version of the psalm. Instead of reading 'ears you have opened for me', as in the Hebrew original, it reads: 'a body you have prepared for me'. This makes the psalm all the more applicable to Christ in that it perfectly describes the obedience with which he offered up his body to death on Calvary.

Along with this, the Advent setting invites us to hear in the phrase, 'You ... prepared a body for me', a reference to the Incarnation, about to become manifest in the birth of the Lord. The human life of Jesus, from its very first moment to its end on Calvary, will be a continual act of bodily obedience offered for the salvation of the world.

The **Gospel**, Luke 1:39-45, at last brings us to the major players in the story of Jesus' birth. Presuming our knowledge of the Annunciation to Mary, it describes the meeting between Mary and her cousin, Elizabeth. In this 'Visitation' story, the two women share their remarkable experience. As their two stories come together, faith overflows in new insight, knowledge and celebration.

Mary has surrendered in faith and obedience to the extraordinary role that Gabriel has announced to her. In faith, too, she has obeyed the angel's additional command to go and seek out the 'sign' to be seen in the pregnancy, at an advanced age, of her cousin Elizabeth. Biblical faith does not presuppose signs already given: it acts, goes on its journey, and then discovers signs that confirm what has been believed. This is how Elizabeth's pregnancy functions for Mary. This lesser wonder brought about by God's power (the conception of a child to parents of advanced years) confirms her faith in the far greater marvel: that with God's Spirit replacing the role of male parent she is to become the mother of her people's Messiah.

The account makes much of Mary's greeting, which in the language of the time, would have been 'Peace' (Shalom). Mary brings the 'peace' that is to characterise the messianic age. As soon as she utters this messianic greeting, Elizabeth experiences the infant John within her womb leaping with 'messianic' joy. The Baptist is already exercising his role of pointing to the presence of the Messiah. Hence Elizabeth confirms what Mary has hitherto simply believed: that she is indeed pregnant with the infant Messiah whose role and destiny Gabriel had announced. She now has the 'sign' that she was sent to find.

It is important to note Elizabeth's insistence that Mary is 'blessed', not simply because she is 'the mother of my Lord', but because of her faith: 'Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.' What Mary had to believe far outstripped the faith required of Zechariah. Her faith was the essential channel through which salvation would flow into the world. It is people of faith who open up the world to God's power. All the scriptural promises heard through Advent come to their point of focus in the faith of Mary, the beginning and the model of all subsequent Christian believing.

This presentation of Mary as a paramount example of faith goes along with the decision of the Second Vatican Council not to devote a separate schema to her but rather to place her within the great Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (§§52-69), signifying her role as the Mother of the Church's faith.

POPE FRANCIS
ANGELUS
Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 12 December 2021

Dear brothers and sisters, buongiorno!

The Gospel in today's Liturgy, the Third Sunday of Advent, presents us with various groups of people – the crowd, the publicans and soldiers – who, touched by John the Baptist's preaching, ask him: "What then should we do?" (Lk 3:10). What should we do? This is the question they asked. Let's reflect a little on this question.

It does not stem from a sense of duty. Rather, the heart is touched by the Lord. It is the enthusiasm for His coming that leads them to ask: what should we do? Then John says: "The Lord is near. What should we do?" Let's give an example: let's think of a dear one who is coming to visit us. We joyfully and even impatiently await the person. To welcome the person, we will do what needs to be done: we will clean the house, we will prepare the best dinner possible, perhaps a gift... In short, there are things we will do. It is the same with the Lord. The joy of His coming makes us ask: what should we do? But God elevates this question to a higher level: what should I do with my life? What am I called to? What will I become?

By suggesting this question, the Gospel reminds us of something important: life has a task for us. Life is not meaningless; it is not left up to chance. No! It is a gift the Lord grants us, saying to us: discover who you are, and work hard to make the dream that is your life come true! Each of us – let's not forget this – has a mission to accomplish. So, let's not be afraid to ask the Lord: what should I do? Let us ask him this question repeatedly. It also recurs in the Bible: in the Acts of the Apostles, several people, hearing Peter who proclaimed Jesus' resurrection, "were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' " (2:37). Let us ask ourselves as well: what would be good for me to do for myself and for my brothers and sisters? How can I contribute to this? How can I contribute to the good of the Church, to the good of society? The Advent Season is meant for this: to stop and ask ourselves how to prepare for Christmas. We are so busy with all the preparations, with gifts and things that pass. But let us ask ourselves what we should do for Jesus and for others! What should we do?

After the question, "what should we do?", the Gospel lists John the Baptist's responses that are different for each group. In fact, John recommends that those who have two tunics should share with those who have none; to the publicans who collect taxes, he says: "Collect no more than the amount prescribed" (Lk 3:13); to the soldiers: "Do not mistreat or extort money from anyone (cf. v. 14). He directs a specific word to each person that responds to their actual situation in life. This offers us a precious teaching: faith is incarnated in concrete life. It is not an abstract theory. Faith is not an abstract theory, a generalized theory – no! Faith touches us personally and transforms each of our lives. Let us think about the concreteness of our faith. Is my faith abstract, something abstract or concrete? Does it lead me toward serving others, helping out?

And so, in conclusion, let us ask ourselves: what should we do concretely in these days as we draw near to Christmas? How can I do my part? Let's choose something concrete, even if it is small, that is adapted to our situation in life, and let's continue doing it to prepare us for this Christmas. For example: I can call a person who is alone, visit that elderly person or that person who is ill, do something to serve a poor person, someone in need. Even still: maybe I need to ask forgiveness, grant forgiveness, clarify a situation, pay a debt. Perhaps I have neglected prayer and after so much time has elapsed, it's time to ask the Lord for forgiveness. Brothers and sisters, let's find something concrete and do it! May the Madonna help us, in whose womb God took on flesh.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters,

I want to assure you of my prayers for dear Ukraine, for all its Churches and religious communities, and for all its people so that the tensions it is experiencing might be resolved through a serious international dialogue and not with weapons. A statistic I read recently saddens me greatly: more weapons were produced this year than last year. Weapons are not the right path. May the Lord's Birth bring peace to Ukraine.

I also pray for the victims of the tornado that hit Kentucky and other areas of the United States of America.

And now, allow me to change to Spanish so I can warmly greet the communities of the entire Latin American continent and the Philippines – how many flags from Latin American countries – who have gathered here in Saint Peter's Square to recite the Rosary in honour of the Virgin of Guadalupe and to consecrate themselves to her, congratulations! I congratulate you who, by doing this, have united yourselves to those who from Alaska to Patagonia are celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the true God by whom we live, every 12 December. May the Virgin of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego teach us how to always walk together from the peripheries toward the centre in communion with the Successor of the Apostles, who are the Bishops, so as to bear good news to everyone. This experience must be repeated over and over again. In this way, God, who is communion, will move us toward conversion and the renewal of the Church and of society, that we need so much in the Americas – the situation in many Latin American countries is very sad – as well as throughout the world. I am happy that through acts of faith, and public witness such as what you are doing today, we begin preparations for the Jubilee of Guadalupe in 2031, and the Jubilee of the Redemption in 2033, we always have to keep looking forward, right? Everyone together – Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!

I also extend best wishes to Caritas Internationalis celebrating its 70th anniversary. It's a little girl, eh! It needs to grow up and get stronger! Throughout the world, Caritas is the Church's loving hand outstretched to the poor and most vulnerable, in whom Christ is present. I invite you to carry your service forward with humility and creativity so as to reach the most marginalised and to foster integral development as the antidote to a "throw-away" culture and indifference. In particular, I encourage your international "Together We Campaign", founded on the strength of the community in promoting the care of creation and the poor. The wounds inflicted on our common home have devastating effects on the least. But communities can contribute toward a necessary ecological conversion. For this reason, I invite you to adhere to Caritas Internationalis' campaign. And to you, dear friends of Caritas Internationalis, continue your work in streamlining the organisation so that the money doesn't go to the organisation but to the poor. Streamline the organisation well.

And I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims; especially you, boys and girls who have come with your Baby Jesus figurines to receive the blessing. At the end, I will bless all the Baby Jesus figures. I thank the Roman Oratory Centre, and I ask you to bring my Christmas greetings to your grandparents and all your dear ones.

I greet the faithful of Leiria (Portugal) and those from Saint Aloysius Gonzaga parish in Rome. I greet the children from Civitavecchia who are preparing themselves for First Communion, and the children from Our Lady Star of Evangelization in Rome who are preparing for Confirmation. I greet the Adult Scouts from Rimini and from San Marino-Montefeltro and the group of workers from the school in Sondrio, as well as the people from the villages of Ardea whom I encourage to be dedicated to dialogue for the care of their territory. I also greet the group from Senigallia (Marche).

And I wish all of you a good Sunday. Once again, we salute the Madonna of Guadalupe. Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe! Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch and arrivederci.

Fr Tony Stace Awards

Left: Fr Peter with the Fr Tony Stace Award winners, Marla Coulton-Donnelly and Nash Syron from Holy Name School.

Below: Leetika Carr from GLC Forster.



Parish Christmas Party 2021



More photos can be found on the parish website and facebook page: <https://forstertuncurrycatholic.org.au/>

Religious Discrimination Survey

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights has organised an online survey, which contains ten questions to gauge public views on the Government's religious discrimination legislation. **You can find the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ReligiousDiscrimination>**

You can find more information on the inquiry being run by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights here: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Human_Rights/ReligiousDiscrimination

Archbishop Comensoli's statement supporting the legislation is at this link: <https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/catholic-bishops-welcome-religious-discrimination-bill/>

The survey will close at 5pm (AEDT) next Tuesday, 21 December 2021.

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.

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, universi-

ties, 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>

Young Adult Ministry Christmas Picnic

Please join us for MN Catholic Youth's end of year Christmas picnic! We will be meeting on the grassed area at Bar Beach from 5pm on Sunday, December 19.

Bring a picnic blanket and a plate to share. You may also wish to dress in Christmas attire (optional).

There will be a Secret Santa with a twist on the day so, if you are able, we ask if you could please bring a wrapped gift (no more than \$10-\$15).

Please call 0409 077 373 if you have any enquiries.

Time: 5:00PM

Date: Sunday, 19 December 2021

Location: Grassed area, Bar Beach

A video tribute in honour of Bishop Bill's life can be viewed at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuvDIZpOTYs





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 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

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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