



# Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

**St Benedict's Inner Newcastle Parish:** Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West; St Joseph's Church, The Junction; St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill; St Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow. **Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West. **Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

## SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2023 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B & THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

### Our Clergy

Fr John Lovell  
Fr Paul Chackanikunnel  
Fr Raphael Madukwe  
Deacon Kevin Gadd

### Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

25 Farquhar Street, The Junction  
PO Box 6, The Junction 2291  
P: (02) 4979 1101 F: (02) 4962 4644  
E: [newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au)  
W: [www.newcastlecatholic.org.au](http://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au)  
W: [www.sacredhearthatilton.org.au](http://www.sacredhearthatilton.org.au)

### Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)  
*Monday, Tuesday, Friday*

Anne Warren (*Business Manager*)  
*Tuesday and Thursday*

Thelma Dickson (*Administration*)  
*Monday-Friday*

Elul Teclé (*Administration*)

Dr Anne Millard (*Music, Liturgy, Sacraments*)

### Other Contacts

**Bereavement Team:** P: (02) 4979 1252  
**Mercy Pastoral Team:** Sr Patricia Whitten rsm  
0448463679

**St Joseph's Pastoral Team:** Contact the Parish Office



### THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

2000 years ago God came among us as tiny baby born to a poor Middle-Eastern couple who washed Him and wrapped Him in a cloth. We have since wrapped this miraculous gift of God's self-giving in many layers of our own cultural traditions - trees, lights, tinsel, lavish gifts, sumptuous food and drink. Without these, I wonder how well we would value the gift Himself, for many in our world will not be able to celebrate this great event with any of these. Let's pray a spirit of peace and joy will enter every heart and soul, and we'll be inspired to reach out to everyone in need.

**Parish Bulletin:** Prayer requests and items for the Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.

### Promoters of Safeguarding

Fr John Lovell p: (02) 4979 1106  
Gail Lovell P: (02) 4979 1256  
Anne Millard P: (02) 4979 1252

*Sacred Heart Cathedral sits on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.*

*We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and their continuing relationship with the land, pay respect to their Elders past, present and future, and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.*

## THE PARISH DIARY...(for the week ahead)

*Octave of The Nativity of the Lord, Year B*

### **Christmas Eve – 24 December**

- 5.30pm @ The Cathedral
- 5.30pm @ The Junction
- 5.30pm @ Mayfield West
- 7.30pm @ The Cathedral

Monday—25th December

*Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord*

Midnight Mass @ The Cathedral

*Live streamed via the Diocesan website:*

[www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/)

- 7.30am Mass @ St Mary's
- 8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill
- 9:00am Mass @ Stockton
- 9.30am Mass @ The Cathedral
- Live streamed via the Diocesan website:*
- [www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/)
- 11:00am Mass @ The Junction (Italian Mass)
- 11.30am Mass @ The Cathedral (Polish Mass)
- 5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral
- 5:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West (Vietnamese)

Tuesday—26th December

*Feast of St Stephen, First Martyr*

- 8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral
- 9:00am Mass @ Stockton
- 11:30am Mass @ The Cathedral (Polish Mass)

Wednesday—27th December

*Feast of St John, The Apostle*

- 8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral
- 9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

Thursday—28th December

*Feast of St The Holy Innocents*

- 8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral
- 9:00am Mass @ Stockton
- 6:00pm NO Choir Practice @ The Cathedral

Friday—29th December

*5th Day in the Octave of The Nativity of the Lord*

- 10:15am Mass @ The Junction
- 11am Exposition, Adoration, and Reconciliation @ The Cathedral (until 12pm)
- 12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Saturday—30th December

*6th Day in the Octave of The Nativity of the Lord*

- 9:15am Mass @ The Cathedral (The Novena cancelled this week, but Mass will be said)
- 5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West
- 5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral
- 5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

Sunday—31st December

*Feast of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*

- 7:30am Mass @ St Mary's
- 8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill
- 9:00am Mass @ Stockton
- 9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral
- Live streamed via the Diocesan website:*
- [www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/livestream/)
- 11:00am Italian Mass @ The Junction
- 11:30am Polish Mass @ The Cathedral
- 5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral
- 6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West (Vietnamese Mass)

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Pamela Errington, Ivan Pranic

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Joan Hurtz, Ron Hazelman, Sylvia Fitzpatrick, Len Griffiths, Ronnie Griffiths, Bruce Cathcart, Phillipa Whalley (Martin), Mary Ethel Sattler, Kelvin O'Neill, Jack Bleakley, Eliza O'Dea, Sylvia Fitzpatrick



**SICK:** Joshua Zalanardo, Cooper James, Jim Eves, Rosa Silivinec, Neil McGoldrick, Sr Rosemary Jackson rsj, Gerard Pearce, Harry Melville, Doreen Mason, Elaine Johnson, Stewart McKinnon, Mark Caesar, Peter Kefecek, Carlo Rossi, Neil Thomas, Kathryn Gray, Emilie Tseronis

*Names may be placed here by contacting the Parish Office. Please refer to the Policy Document on the Parish website—visit [www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads](http://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads).*

## NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**

Gen 15:1-6, 21: 1-3

Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Luke 2:22-40



## BEQUESTS

To help our Catholic Pastoral Region of Parishes continue its important mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus, you might consider including us in your Will. You would just need to specify which parish or parishes you would like to help with your bequest.

## SAFEGUARDING

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: P 4979 1390, E [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or [www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)

## FROM THE MODERATOR

Dear friends in Christ,

As we approach the end of another year, we look back with gratitude for the many blessings we have received (e.g. babies born, couples marrying, new people being received into the Church, successes in exams, sports and so forth). We



were also blessed to be given a new Bishop, the Most Reverend Michael Kennedy, who was installed as the new prelate of our diocese on St Patrick's Day this year. During this time, we may also be reflecting on the various things that have not gone so well; for instance: some of us will have suffered the loss of a loved one, experienced a serious illness or accident, been adversely affected by rising interest rates or the chronic shortage of housing across our nation, or are struggling to make sense of the terrible conflicts occurring in the Ukraine and the Holy Land.

Through all this we are kept strong by our faith as we celebrate the wonderful miracle of the birth of Jesus, the Son of God. In a world of constant change and uncertainty, He is the one constant who keeps us united in hope and in love. So, let's celebrate this great feast of Christmas with joy and thanksgiving, while also sparing a thought and a prayer for those less fortunate than ourselves, who for whatever reason are not able to share in our spirit of joy at this time.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank our Parish Office staff, and so many teams and volunteers in our pastoral region who have contributed their time and talents to support our parish administration, liturgies and outreach programs in various ways over the past year. In particular, I am thinking of our MCs, sacristans, musicians and singers, lectors, servers, hospital and home visitation teams, those who take up and count our Mass collections, those who greatly assisted us in preparation for our recent safeguarding audit, members of our Finance & Pastoral Councils, our Catholic Schools' staff, those who were commissioned as members of our new Bereavement Team in late October, our supply priests and countless others.

Finally, on behalf of Fr Paul, Fr Raphael, Fr Bob, Dcn Kevin, Anton, and myself, may I wish you and all your families a very blessed and happy Christmas, and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Love,  
Fr John

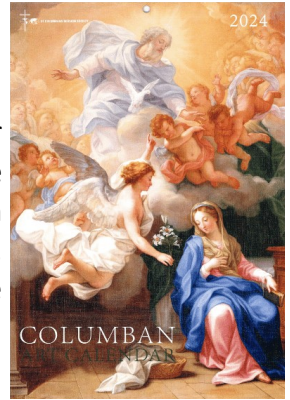
## OFFICE CLOSURE

The office will close on Friday, December 22nd and reopen on January 2nd. We wish everyone a very happy and holy Christmas season. Thank you for your support over the past year. It's been an honour to work with our beloved parishioners.



## COLUMBAN ART CALENDAR

This iconic Catholic Calendar, well-known for its traditional religious paintings and liturgical information is a major fundraiser for Columban Missionaries. The calendars are available through St Vincent de Paul for \$10 each. They can be purchased from the office



## BOOK CLUB

**Sunday, 4th February @ 6:15pm:** Bookclub meets to discuss *That Bligh Girl* by Sue Williams (postponed from December). If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email [newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au)



## THE CHUCKLE

What did the wise men say after they offered up their gifts of gold and frankincense?

Wait, there's myrrh.



## HISTORICAL context

### The Nativity scene

St Francis of Assisi is credited with setting up the first nativity scene and thus establishing a tradition that is carried on today in homes, churches and public spaces in Christian communities everywhere. In 1223, in the town of Greccio he created a life size tableau of the nativity scene to heighten the awareness of the celebration of the birth of Christ. It included statues of the holy family and a live ox and donkey. The inclusion of the livestock has no scriptural support and it is to Francis that we owe the array of sheep, oxen and donkeys that have become standard inclusions in our nativity scenes.

## ADVENT REFLECTION

by Richard Leonard

Jesus and Satan have an argument as to who is the better computer programmer.

Eventually they agree to hold a contest with God as the judge. They set themselves before their computers and begin. They type furiously for several hours; lines of code streaming up the screen. Seconds before the end of the competition, a bolt of lightning strikes and takes out the electricity. Moments later, the power is restored, and God announces that the contest is over. He asks Satan to show what he has come up with. Satan is visibly upset, and cries, 'I have nothing! I lost it all when the power went out.' 'Very well, then,' says God, 'let us see if Jesus fared any better.' Jesus enters a command, and the screen comes to life in vivid display, the voices of an angelic choir pour forth from the speakers. Satan is astonished. He stutters, 'But how? I lost everything, how can Jesus' program be intact?' God chuckles and says, 'Ah – because Jesus saves.'

On this final Sunday of Advent the Church moves our gaze to the Annunciation. The whole scene hinges around one word: 'Yes.' Mary's fiat sets in motion the entire Christian drama. In his film *Jesus of Nazareth* Franco Zeffirelli pictures the Annunciation this way: Mary is asleep at night when a gust of wind opens a high window. Afraid at all the commotion Mary gets up and starts to pray. As she prays, we see her face change and her body bend over. With tears in her eyes, Mary looks up through the window to the moonlit sky and simply says, 'Yes'. The swirling wind dies down at once.

In recent years successive popes have reminded us that the best devotion to Mary is one that leads us to do what she did: say 'yes' to Jesus. Mary is not a stop on our journey of faith; she is a guidepost that always sends us on to Christ. Mary does not save us, for we believe she needed to be saved by Christ as well. That's why she could say yes in the first place. Mary recognised the gift and the giver and became the bearer of God for the world.

In this final week of Advent let's keep reminding ourselves of this simple but life-changing fact: Jesus saves us. Jesus saves us from death. Jesus saves us from living lives devoid of purpose and meaning and Jesus saves us from ourselves.

We don't save ourselves. We cannot earn salvation by good works or prayers or penance. And, as difficult as it is to hear, we cannot save anyone else. That includes our children, spouse, grandchildren, parents or friends.

Our prayers, good works and faith are the responses we make to the salvation of Christ we claim here and now. And how we live is the way by which those we love will find the gift of God's salvation for themselves.

In the midst of this frantic final week before Christmas when so many other things can distract us from what this grace-filled feast is really all about, let's take a moment to join Mary in accepting into our lives and hearts the greatest of all gifts – our undeserved salvation, Jesus Christ the Lord.

© Richard Leonard SJ

**Richard Leonard SJ** is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

## LIVE-STREAMING NOTICE – 9.30AM AND MIDNIGHT MASS FROM SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL

The 9.30am Mass from Sacred Heart Cathedral is live-streamed (and recorded) each week. The camera is located under the choir loft and faces towards the sanctuary, though it can be directed to various parts of the Cathedral if needed.

Parishioners should be aware that they may be filmed during the celebration of the 9.30am Mass. This filming will mostly capture their image from behind. We cannot guarantee, however, that their faces will not be featured on the live-stream or recording, particularly the case during the Communion Procession. The live-stream will make use of multiple camera angles to minimise the identification of individuals as much as possible, but this will not eliminate the possibility of being filmed.

Parishioners with concerns about being filmed or recorded should speak with the Cathedral Rector, Father John Lovell in the first instance.

## CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AT TIGHES HILL

This is non-denominational and everyone is very welcome. Please come.

WHEN: Monday afternoon 3.30 for 3.45 start

WHERE: Mercy Offices, 20 Union Street

(Next door to Mercy Services)

Off street parking available

The Meditation session begins with short guided relaxation exercises then we have a reading from Fr. John Main which leads into 20 minutes of silent meditation

# Jesus Christ the Good News

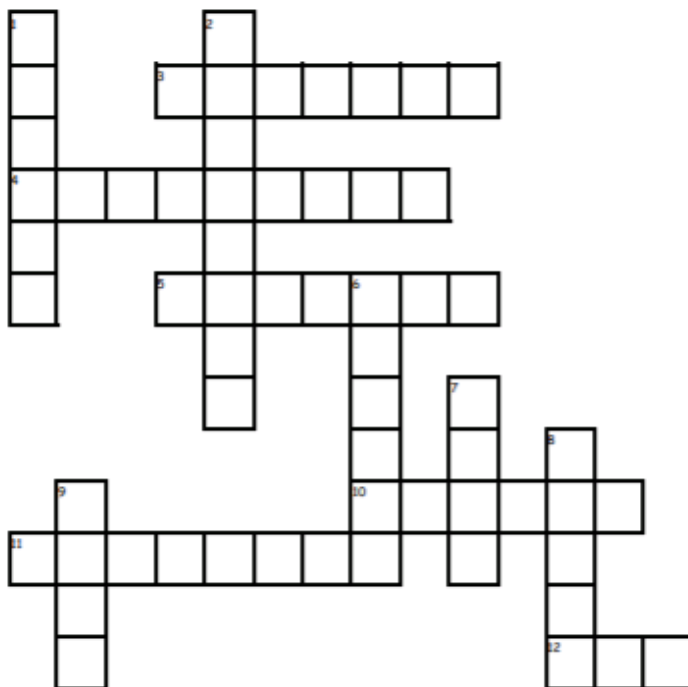
I W E T M O C H I T A R T J I H E  
 Q Z V I F C P E S I A R P M N G M  
 B X B L M L B M M J A E O F A K C  
 L A E J O S E P H Z Y N W S F O T  
 M F T P P X S S B L H X S Q R M E  
 S A I M Z V P R O P H E T S A E R  
 B C R N C X U V R B M E S W I J C  
 U Z W K F W Y Z X N D S C O D Z E  
 S I Q D Q R C E D D H E V Q N S S  
 C T K Q A W T O K D A A C K G S E  
 H U R M A F W M X Y L P U L A P J  
 X F P O P U U U R P G G Q G B X P  
 O I K R N N A Z A R E T H W R R W  
 B V Q O H G W U T H W R C W I W C  
 H Y H X T T P G W J R T F I E U K  
 W C R K X P Z Y H K I M W L L R W

Try to find these words:

- afraid
- Gabriel
- Joseph
- Mary
- message
- Nazareth
- praise
- prophets
- secret
- son
- strong
- write

## CROSSWORD

### His name will be Jesus



#### Across

- 3: the angel sent by God to deliver a message
- 4: Mary's cousin who was also going to have a son
- 5: Mary said, 'I am the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_! Let it happen as you have said.'
- 10: the angel told Mary that Jesus would forever rule the people of which land?
- 11: unable to understand, mixed up
- 12: the opposite of daughter

#### Down

- 1: Mary was engaged to this man
- 2: the town where Mary lived
- 6: scared, frightened
- 7: the angel had a message for this person
- 8: Mary was told to give her child this name
- 9: the angel said, 'your child will be called the \_\_\_\_\_ Son of God'

## CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

A pentecostal friend of mine tells the story of leaving church one Christmas morning as the preacher was standing at the door, greeting everyone and shaking hands. He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. The pastor said to him, 'You need to join the Army of the Lord!' To which my friend replied, 'I'm already in the Army of the Lord, pastor.' The pastor looked amazed and said, 'How come I don't see you here at church then, except at Christmas and Easter?' My friend whispered back, 'Because I'm in the secret service.'

If you are like my friend and find yourself in the 'secret service', you're in good company at Christmas time. The first hearers of the Christmas story were not much into church-going either. Shepherds in first century Palestine had to watch their flocks around the clock for fear of thieves and wolves. This didn't leave much time for temple attendance. They prayed where they were, as they were. These shepherds, however, were in the right place at the right time to hear the first Christmas message. Maybe they had the right disposition too.

Sometimes, publicly religious people can sound as though they know the mind of God better than God does! It's a trap we need to avoid, and Christmas helps us do it. No one predicted the way God would send us a saviour. No one knew the day or the hour of God's coming. No one foresaw that God would be born a homeless person. No one envisaged that the first witnesses to the birth would be illiterate shepherds from nearby fields. While some waited for a mercenary to overthrow the Romans, others held their breath for the procession of a heavenly king. The love of God, however, took flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone and came to us as a poor, defenceless baby.

That's our God, not bound by our precepts or expectations, but honouring the promises made to our ancestors, in the most surprising of ways. And Christmas provides us with the most tender images of our God, One who needs to be nurtured, suckled and held tight.

It's not a bad metaphor for our Christian faith either. If Christmas means anything to us, then it's not just an annual religious outing or something to fill in time on a public holiday. It's a moveable feast which we celebrate every time we do something just, loving or peaceful. That's why we gather here for the Eucharist each week: to be nurtured, fed, suckled and held in God's embrace, if only for a while, so that we find the courage and strength to go out from here, confront

the wolves and thieves of our own day, and be in the right place at the right time for God to find us.

As a result of that first Christmas, Christ wants to nurture a people who by their lives will change the world for the better, for all people everywhere. So this Christmas cash in your secret service card and, 'Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere. Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.'

© Richard Leonard SJ

## USED STAMPS FOR MARY MACKILLOP TODAY (MMT)

"*Mary MacKillop Today*" is helping the poorest of the poor with used stamps. Please leave any used stamps in the box provided at the entrance to St Joseph's Church The Junction, or drop them off at the office. Money raised through their sales provides access to learning opportunities for the poorest communities in Australia and internationally.

## OUR BELOVED DEAD

We remember those in our Sacred Heart Columbarium whose anniversaries occur in December.

Mario Cannavale	Kevin Fuge
Aileen Joyce Carey	Louis William Harris
Kathleen Mary Cashman	Margaret Ireland
Joan Cunningham	Anthony (Tony) Losurdo
Bertha Docherty	Helen O'Sullivan
Paul Ferry	James Savage
Maria Franceschi	Patrick Scott
	Margaret Tuxworth

*Eternal rest grant unto them and may perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace, Amen.*

## FOOD BASKETS FOR THE NEEDY

If you would like to donate, any of the following types of non-perishable items would be most gratefully received: UHT milk, cereal, jam, vegemite, peanut butter, tinned veggies, fruit, soup, fish, meat, dried pasta, rice, pasta sauces, teabags, coffee, biscuits, crackers, custard, jelly, toothpaste, soap, toothbrushes, shampoo, conditioner (even the travel sized ones from hotels), deodorant.

**Thank you!**



## ENROLMENTS FOR 2023 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

A child's catholic faith journey began with the Sacrament of Baptism and continues by the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation, Confirmation and First Eucharist.

The preparations for these sacraments in the Inner Newcastle Parish run between February and June of every year and is designed for children going into Year, 4, 5 or 6 in 2024. Preparations are completed as a family with online activities and volunteer work within the community.

Enrolments are now open for the 2024 program. If you are interested in being apart of the program this year please visit the parish website and complete the online enrolment form.

<https://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/sacramental-enrolment-form/>

For more information please contact the office on 49791101 or newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

## CHRISTMAS MUSIC

### A reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are dynamically related in the baby in the manger. This is the song of the angels, and it is our privilege to join in that song at this Christmas Mass.

*Every* baby is a promise of a new future which fills one with hope.

But *this* baby is unique. *This* Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. *This* baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. *This* baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant.

And *this* baby fulfils all the yearning of the human heart. We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. *This* baby enables both because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints: He is in-finite love reaching out to us.

Can we grasp all this? Probably not. So, like the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, we just follow some deep intuition which says: 'I must kneel in adoration, it is good to be here.' We could pause for a moment to pray for the resolve to do our bit to echo the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by *all* peoples.'



## CLERGY NEWS

Bishop Michael Kennedy announced the following moves, effective 31 January 2024.

Fr Raphael Madukwe appointed as Assistant Priest in the parishes of Booragul, Boolaroo-Warners Bay, St Joseph's Toronto, as well as St John Vianney Morisset, Fr Anil Kuchipudi and Fr Anthony Coloma are appointed as Assistant Priests for the Newcastle Inner City Pastoral Region. Fr Anthony will continue his school chaplaincy roles.

Mr Anton Perera will continue his discernment/formation for ordination at Taree under the direction of Fr Kevin Corrigan.

## VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Appeal launched last weekend. With more and more vulnerable people experiencing poverty and on the brink of homelessness this Christmas, we urgently need your help.

Your donation can help provide the emergency assistance families, and many others, desperately need to survive, and the long-term support they need to build better futures. Please



## OUR CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### St Joseph's Primary School

Karen McGinlay (*Principal*)

Union Street, The Junction NSW 2291

P:(02) 4961 2827

W:[www.merewether.catholic.edu.au](http://www.merewether.catholic.edu.au)

### Holy Family Primary School

Ann Jackson (*Principal*)

Pell Street, Merewether NSW 2291

P:(02) 4963 3009

W:[www.merewetherbeach.catholic.edu.au](http://www.merewetherbeach.catholic.edu.au)

### St Columban's Primary School

Danielle Reed (*Principal*)

Church Street, Mayfield NSW 2304

P:(02) 4968 3315

W:[www.mayfieldsc.catholic.edu.au](http://www.mayfieldsc.catholic.edu.au)

### St Peter's Primary School

Mark Konik (*Acting Principal*)

Dunbar St, Stockton NSW 2295

P:(02) 4920 1736

W:[www.stockton.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stockton.catholic.edu.au)

## SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

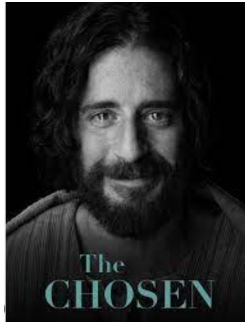
Ask a child (or even most adults) to describe the scene at the birth of Jesus and you will hear a confused combination of the two scriptural accounts with several non-scriptural additions. It is a shame that the two versions have merged into one as each is deserving of its own integrity. The Matthew account emphasises Jesus as the fulfilment of prophecy and has Wise Men as the witnesses to his birth in a house. It is from Luke that we have the much humbler birth in a manger witnessed by the lowly shepherds. Each has something different and distinct to say about Jesus and his mission.

## VIEW, CHEW, CHAT, AND LECTIO

View, Chew, and Chat is in hiatus for the month of January. We begin the series *The Chosen* in February. To participate, please email the parish office.

## THE CHOSEN

The Chosen is a series that brings to life an interpretation of what life might have been like for Jesus starting his ministry. The series has been creatively produced and includes the backstories for each of the disciples that were individually chosen by Jesus. We are first invited into each of their lives, into their struggles and baggage. But once introduced to Jesus and the invitation to spend time with him, we are invited to witness the transformation of each of his first



**“every day somewhere in the world, the nativity scene is alive.”**

“Now God says to us what God has already said to the earth as a whole through God’s grace-filled birth: ‘I am there. I am with you. I am your life. I am your time. I am the gloom of your daily routine... I am your joy.

Do not be afraid to be happy; ever since I wept, joy is the standard of living that is really more suitable than the anxiety and grief of those who think they have no hope... I am present in all your needs.

I have suffered from them and they are now transformed but not obliterated from my heart. This reality—incomprehensible wonder of my almighty love—I have sheltered safely and completely in the cold stable of your world. I am there.

Even if you do not see me now, I am there. It is Christmas. Light the candles. They have more right to exist than all the darkness.”

(Karl Rahner SJ, *The Great Church Year*, Crossroad Publishing 1993.

## TAIZE SERVICE

Sunday 7th January Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church Tighes Hill 5.00pm – 6pm *followed by a shared supper.*



# Have you thought?

## What about Joseph?

*Luke’s account of the Annunciation (and indeed much of the infancy narrative) focuses its attention on Mary. But what of Joseph? How does he react to the news that his betrothed wife is pregnant? By Jewish Law and tradition, Mary could well have been stoned to death if Joseph had denounced her. Even if Joseph allowed people to think that he was the father of her child, this would have caused an enormous scandal – a breach of the sanctity of the betrothal vow. However, foreshadowing the compassion of Jesus himself, Joseph acts purely out of compassion and continues with his marriage to Mary.*