



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve

6pm: Vigil Mass Sacred Heart, Moruya
(36 Queen Street)

Special Children's Mass. Children are invited to come dressed in Nativity costumes (Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, Wisemen)

Christmas Day

8am: Tuross (36 Craddock Road)
10am: Moruya, Sacred Heart



ANNIVERSARY: It was the anniversary of Catherine Hulse's passing on 11 December 2021. Please keep her in your prayers.

2ND RITE OF RECONCILIATION: In preparation for Christmas, 2nd Rite of Reconciliation will be on Thursday, 21 December at 5pm.

ARCHBISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL: At Christmas Masses there will be a 3rd leaving collection. Your generous support is needed for life saving assistance for refugees fleeing violence; including evacuation, food and shelter as well as student assistance in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, Africa and the Solomon Islands.

2023 RED DOOR CHRISTMAS LUNCH: This year the **Red Door Christmas Lunch** will be held on Saturday, 23 December from 12pm. To enable this combined churches initiative to be a success, the organisers are calling for volunteers to assist them in providing a bountiful Christmas banquet for the lonely and the homeless in our community. If you are available to assist in any capacity, please provide your contact details on the sheet in the Church foyer. **Bookings are essential: Please call Ilonka 0428 213 787 or Sharron 0467 586 912.**

EVANGELISATION PROGRAM: Next Tuesday, 19 December Jan Morris will be hosting The Chosen at 12 Shorthorn Close, Moruya. All welcome.

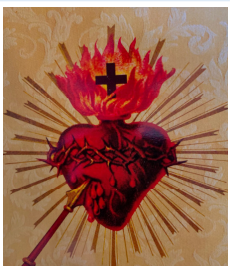


YEAR 6 GRADUATION 2023: 34 students from St Mary's Graduated at the Mass on Tue, 12 Dec. **Congratulations!**

SACRED HEART PARISH MORUYA



36 Queen Street (PO Box 23) Moruya NSW 2537
Phone: 4474 2024 Email: moruya@cg.org.au
Web: <http://cg.org.au/Moruya>
Priest: Fr George Azhakath
Secretary: Mrs Vickie Moore
Parish Office hours: Wed and Fri 9:00am—2:00pm



Mass Times:
Moruya: Sat: Vigil 5:00pm Sun: 10:00am
Tue: 5:00pm, Wed, Thu & Fri: 9:15am/1st Saturday of the month 9:15am
Tuross: Sun: 8:00am **Bodalla:** 4th Sunday of the month 3:00pm/2nd Thursday of the month 9:00am
Reconciliation: Every Saturday @ Moruya 4:15pm-4:45pm before Vigil Mass
1st Saturday of the month @ Moruya 8:15am-9:00am
Devotions: Daily Rosary and Saturdays 9:30am **Adoration:** All Fridays after Mass
Schools: St Mary's Moruya: 4474 2817 Carroll College Broulee: 4471 5600
Caring Groups: Tuross Head: 0497 315 534 Moruya: 0431 354 993

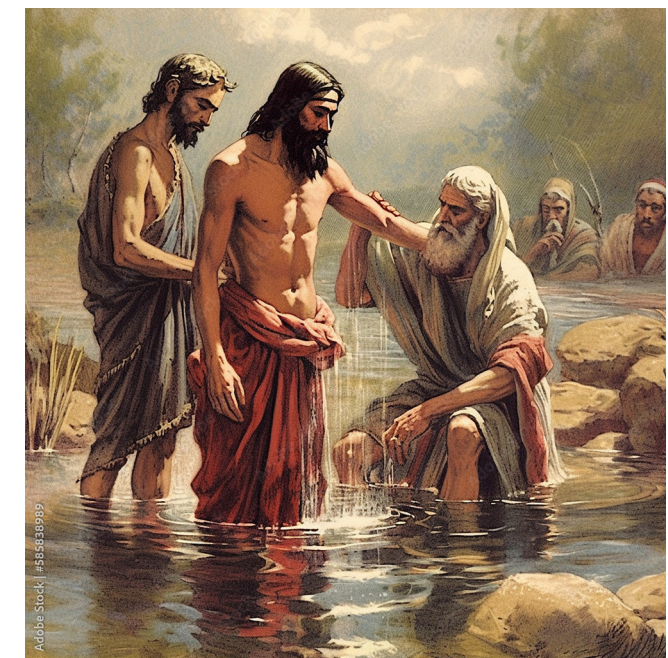
3rd Sunday of Advent - YEAR A - 16 & 17 December 2023

Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday

“Gaudete in domino semper” “Rejoice in the Lord always”
“The Lord is near”

Today is **“Gaudete Sunday”** because today's Mass (in its pre-Vatican II Latin form) began with the opening antiphon: **“Gaudete in Domino semper” “Rejoice in the Lord always”**. In the past, when Advent was a penitential season, the celebrant of the liturgy used to wear vestments with the penitential colour of purple or violet. In order to remind the people that they were preparing for the very joyful occasion of the birth of Jesus, the celebrant wore “rose” vestments on the third Sunday. (By the way, we have a similar break—*Laetare Sunday*—during the Lenten season).

Today we light the rose candle and the priest wears rose vestments to express our joy in the coming of Jesus, our Saviour. The common theme running through **today's readings** is one of joy, encouragement and the need for preparation required from those of us who are awaiting the re-birth of Jesus in our hearts and our lives.



Blessing of the Advent Wreath

Priest: Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the Saviour of the world. We ask you to bless this advent wreath which we honour as a remembrance of your first coming at Bethlehem and your final coming in glory. Strengthen our hearts with the example of your love that we may receive you with joy and gladness on the day of our redemption when you will come to reign as King for ever.

Prayer for the lighting of the candle

All: O God, we remember the promise of your Son. As light from this candle, may the blessings of Christ come upon brightening our way and guiding us by his truth. May Christ our Saviour bring light into the darkness of our world and to us as we wait for His coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen
(one candle is lit and then the following prayer is said)

All: O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ desire of every nation, Saviour of all people, come and dwell among us.
Priest: During this Advent season may almighty God let the light of his Son shine upon us. May he fill our hearts with joy at his coming and lead us to life everlasting. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

‘I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.’

The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm Lk 1:46-50. 53-54. R. Is 61:10

(R.) My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **(R.)**
2. The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. **(R.)**
3. He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. **(R.)**

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit,

soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation Isaiah 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 John 1:6-8. 19-28

P: The Lord be with you

All: And with your spirit

P: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

All: Glory to you O Lord

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, ‘I am not the Christ.’ ‘Well then,’ they asked, ‘are you Elijah?’ ‘I am not,’ he said. ‘Are you the Prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ So they said to him, ‘Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?’ So John said, ‘I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.’

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, ‘Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?’ John replied, ‘I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.’ This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Entrance Antiphon: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

Communion Antiphon: Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

Prayer after Communion: Lord, we thank you for coming into our hearts in Communion. We believe you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. You are our life and our hope. Draw us more deeply to yourself and transform our hearts through your abiding love. May we come to know Sunday as a special day of faith, the day of our Risen Lord. May our celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday consecrate this day to you. O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, All Praise and All Thanksgiving be every moment thine.

THE WORD AND LIFE this week ...

1) We need to bear witness to Christ the light: By Baptism we become members of the family of Christ, the true Light of the World. Jesus said “*You are the light of the world*”. Hence, our mission as brothers and sisters of Christ and members of his Church is to reflect Christ’s light to others just as the moon reflects the light of the sun. It is especially important during the advent season that we reflect Christ’s unconditional love and forgiveness. There are so many people who live in darkness and poverty, and who lack real freedom. There are others who are deafened and blinded by the cheap attractions of the world. Also, many feel lonely, unwanted, rejected and marginalised. All these people are waiting for us to reflect the light of Christ and to turn their lives into experiences of joy, wholeness and integrity. The joy of Jesus, the joy of Christmas, can only be ours to the extent that we work with Jesus to bring joy into the lives of others. Let us remember that Christmas is not complete unless we show generosity to those who have nothing to give us in return.

2) What should we do in preparation for Christmas? The Jews asked the same question of John. His answer was “Repent and reform your lives, and prayerfully wait for the Messiah”. This means that we have to pray from the heart and pray more often. Our Blessed Mother, in her many apparitions, has urgently reminded us of the need for more fervent and more frequent prayer. Let us remember that the Holy Mass is the most powerful of prayers. We must be a Eucharistic people, receiving the living presence of Jesus in our hearts so that we may be transformed into His image and likeness. We encounter Jesus in all the sacraments. Regular monthly Confession makes us strong and enables us to receive more grace in the Eucharist. Let us also listen daily to God speaking to us through the Bible. Perhaps, we may want to pray the rosary daily and fast once a week all year round, not just during Advent and Lent. After all, we sin all year round, so let us also all pray year round. Let us also find some spare time to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us forgive those who have offended us and pray for those whom we have offended. Finally, let us share our love with others in selfless and humble service “*doing small things but with great love*” (Mother Teresa). As we prepare to celebrate Christ and the coming of God into our lives we need also to remind ourselves that we have been called to be the means to bring Jesus into other people’s lives.

NOTICES FROM THE PARISH

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: We continue to pray and extend our support to those at Banksia Village, IRT Moruya, the sick members of our Parish and those in need of our prayers: Kathleen Ebbelaar, Gerry Ebbelaar, Dianne Ebbelaar, Kylie Leplaw, Andy McCosker, Bala Stankovich, Clare Broekhuysse, Pat Morris, Julie and John Kay, Lee Maat, Kirk Dowling, Rosemary Patyus, Kay Morton, Rod McDonald, Hans Brosch, Father Giles Setter OFM, Annette and John Nader, Robyn Barkley, Mark Wales, Therese Masserot, Jenny Hopkins, Tammy Whiteman, Clair Holmes, Patricia Murphy, Barbara Kirk, Miriam Turnbull, Natasha Morton, Janice Setter, Pauline de Grave and Brian Fee.

CONDOLENCES: To the family of Gai Bannon who passed away on 14 December. May she rest in peace.

BIRTHDAYS: Very Happy Birthday to Chris Heffernan who turned 80 on 13 December. Michel Nader and John Munce will be celebrating just before Christmas on 22 December.