



St Mary's Bungendore
St Joseph's Gundaroo
St Peter & Paul's Hoskinstown
St Joseph's Tarago

<http://cg.org.au/bungendore/Home.aspx>

Fr. Tony Percy 0431 225 574 (Administrator)



FOURTH Sunday of ADVENT

24th December, 2023

BUNGENDORE PARISH TEAM

Fr. Tony Percy is our Administrator.

Baptisms: Baptisms will be on 1st & 3rd Sunday during Mass.
Please email or ring the parish office to arrange a baptism.

Weddings: Please contact Parish office; at least six months notice required.

Phone: 6238 1247

Email: bungendore@cg.org.au

Website: <http://cg.org.au/bungendore/Home.aspx>

Secretary- Julie-Ann

Office Open: - Wednesday - 10:30am - 5:00pm
Thursday—9:00am—3:30pm

BUNGENDORE, BRAIDWOOD and REGION MASS TIMES

Bungendore : Sunday 8.30am; **Weekday Mass:** Wednesday 9am **Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

Braidwood: Saturday 6.00pm **Weekday Mass:** Tuesday 10.00am **Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

Hoskinstown: Four times a year—1st Sunday Feb, May, Aug 10:30am (Nov cancelled)

Gundaroo: 2nd & 4th Sunday 10:30am

Tarago: TBA

Krawarree: 5th Sunday 11.00am

Dear Parishioners,

The Blessed Virgin Mary is front and centre stage in the last Sunday of Advent:

'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary, 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her (Luke 1).

Mary and Joseph show '*creative courage*' and *acute acceptance* in and around the birth of Baby Jesus:

Often in life, things happen whose meaning we do not understand. Our first reaction is frequently one of disappointment and rebellion.

Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history.

Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow (Pope Francis, Letter on St. Joseph, 2020).

We do exercise our freedom in decision making in life. Being pro-active is a good thing.

But, we also exercise our freedom in *accepting* what comes our way.

Mary and Joseph be close to us this Christmas, as we renew our love for the Child Jesus.

A blessed Christmas to you all,

Father Tony



The Parish of St Mary's, Bungendore acknowledges the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for many thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Entrance Antiphon

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

2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

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

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

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

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) *For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.*

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

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

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

Second reading

Romans 16:25-27

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

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

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

Communion Antiphon

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

BUNGENDORE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Helen Jewell
David Bishop
Jenny Amey
Chris Murdock
Tess Montesin
Julie-Ann Snudden

BUNGENDORE PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Greg Darmody (Chairperson)
Michele Murdock
Richard Konarski
Ian Cusack
Ed Cory
Stephen Dunkerley

Reflection

We have reached the final Sunday in the season of Advent – a time of preparing ourselves to recognise and celebrate Christ's presence in the world, both historically and in an ongoing, timeless way. This week's gospel account of the Annunciation is an ideal culmination to this season as we recall Mary's emphatic 'Yes' to all that was being asked of her. At the end of the Advent season of reflection and preparation to recognise Christ's presence in the world and in our lives, what better response could there be than to simply say, 'Yes'?

In a world that is driven by selfishness and the drive to push one's self ahead of others, Mary's selfless act stands as a challenge to our modern society. Even in her own time, Mary's decision must have been an enormously difficult one – one that had the potential to bring great shame on herself and Joseph. Yet, her decision is made swiftly and in faith. She trusts God absolutely and gives her life over into God's hands. That is perhaps the supreme act of faith; to say 'Yes' to God so completely that you are prepared to hand over direction and control of your own life.

Few of us tend to be visited by angels who lay out God's plan for us as clearly as Gabriel did for Mary. For most of us, it is a challenge to discern God's desire for us; to realise what it is that we are called to do and then give ourselves fully to that call. In the hustle and bustle of life, it is difficult to hear anything that God may be trying to ask of us. Perhaps the example of Mary's 'Yes' is a reminder to be still enough to hear the question in the first place!

Scriptural context

Throughout the gospel of Luke, great importance is placed on the people in society who were regarded as the 'lesser ones'. The mission of Jesus, as described in Luke's gospel, is directed towards those who were unimportant in the eyes of society. In first century society, women were regarded as much less in status than men. So it is significant that the first revelation of Jesus is made to a woman, Mary. The angel Gabriel announces that Mary has won God's favour. For a woman to win God's favour would have been unimaginable to many Jews at the time, yet, through this woman God was revealed in human form.

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.

Different View – Virgin births

Some critics of Christian tradition argue that the account of the virgin conception and birth of Jesus is merely a literary device used to give status to Jesus' birth. At the time, it was not an uncommon device to accord a significant figure a heroic or even virginal birth. In Greek, Egyptian and even Roman legend, several characters are credited with virgin births. Some authors point to the fact that it is only the gospels of Matthew and Luke and none of the earlier writings that portray Mary as a virgin. The argument suggests that assigning Jesus a virgin birth was an attempt to place Jesus alongside other historical and legendary figures as a person of great status.