



4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
YEAR A

18 December 2022

LITURGY AND BULLETIN



### OPENING PRAYER

Lord,  
fill our hearts with your love,  
and as you revealed the coming of your Son,  
so lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his  
resurrection.  
Amen.

### FIRST READING: A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David:  
are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men  
without trying the patience of my God, too?  
The Lord himself, therefore,  
will give you a sign.  
It is this: the maiden is with child  
and will soon give birth to a son  
whom she will call Immanuel,  
a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

**Response: Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.**

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.  
It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?  
Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure heart,  
who desires not worthless things. (R.)
3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

## **SECOND READING:** A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures. This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son;  
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.

Alleluia!

## **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 1:18-24**

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,  
a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.



## **Reflection on the Gospel of Matthew 1:18-24 by Richard Leonard**

Today's Gospel announces that 'God is with us'. In this final week of Advent the following story reminds us that God comes to us in unpredictable ways often with unsettling messages.

'I hurried into the shop to grab some last minute Christmas gifts. I looked at all the people and grumbled to myself. I would be in here forever. I hurried to the toy department and wondered if the grandkids would even play with my gifts.

'My eye caught a little boy holding a doll. He kept touching her hair and he held her so gently. I watched him turn and ask, "Aunty Jane, are you sure I don't have enough money?" Gently, the woman replied, "Emily doesn't need a doll David." The woman went to another aisle. The boy continued to hold the doll. David looked so sad that I couldn't resist asking who the doll was for. "My sister wanted it so badly for Christmas." I told him that maybe Santa was going to bring it. He said "No, Santa can't go where my sister is...I have to give the doll to Mummy to take to her." I asked him where his sister was. He looked at me with the tear-filled eyes, "She has gone to be with Jesus. Daddy says that Mummy is going to have to go to be with both of them soon too." My heart nearly stopped beating.

'David went on, "I told Daddy to make sure Mummy goes nowhere until I got back from the store. I want Mum to take this doll to Emily."

'While he wasn't looking I reached into my purse and pulled out some cash. "David how about we count that money again?" He grew excited, "I asked Jesus to give me enough money. I just know I have enough." I slipped my money in with his and we began to count it. He looked up from the count and exclaimed, "Jesus has given me enough money for Emily's doll."

'In a few minutes his aunty came back and I wheeled my cart away. I could not keep from thinking about the little boy as I finished my shopping in a totally different spirit than when I had started. 'On the way home I remembered a story in the newspaper several days earlier about a drunk driver hitting a car and killing a little girl and that the mother was left on life support. Two days before Christmas I read in the paper where the family had turned the machine off. The day before Christmas there was a funeral notice saying that a Requiem Mass would be celebrated on St Stephen's Day for Julia Norris and her daughter Emily. Michael was their husband and father, and their son and brother was David.

'As I gathered with my family in front of an overblown meal which none of us could finish, holding expensive gifts we didn't need and drinking more alcohol than was necessary, I thought "we've lost the plot with Christmas". God-with-us arrives as a simple child in need of love; and in the honour of that day we spend money, eat too much and get drunk.

'I left the table went to my desk and wrote a card for each member of my family. I told them what I'd never been able to say: "I want you to know I love you."

'When they read those cards, my family thought I was losing it, but through David and that doll, God visited me in the last week of Advent and Christmas will never be the same again.'

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

For all whose mission is to proclaim the Good News, that their words and lives will show everyone Emmanuel, God-with-us for ever. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For the human family, that this week's United Nations Day of Human Solidarity will add to the appeal of Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who have made their home among a new people, that today's International Migrants Day will encourage mutual hospitality and cultural exchange. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For women surprised by an unplanned pregnancy, that with their partner's full support they will come to welcome the new life they bear. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who volunteer their time to serve the poor and lonely at Christmas, that their generosity will create goodwill that makes a lasting difference. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who are preparing for Christmas celebrations and summer holidays, that they will take time to reflect prayerfully on the mystery of the Word-made-flesh. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who suffer in mind, body or spirit, especially Ann McDougall, Ross Lawless, Val Biggers, Paul Fa'Oa, Rongo Tee Peeti, Helen Montgomery, Judy Nielson, Tony Riley, and all who need our prayers; that they will be cared for by loving family, friends and community. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

For the recently deceased Gordon Shorrock, Darcy Stewart. . . and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time, that they will enjoy the grace and peace of God for ever. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord,  
as Christmas draws near make us grow in faith and love  
to celebrate the coming of Christ our Saviour.  
Amen.

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**PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays: 9am – 3pm; Fridays: 9am – 12pm**

**Next weekend Mass time: Saturday 6pm in the church.**

**Communal Rite of Reconciliation on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 6.45pm**

**Weekday Mass: Tuesday at 10am last weekday Mass until February 2023.**

**Meditation: Thursdays at 10.30am in the Presbytery.**

**Social Justice Group: now Wednesdays. Next is 1 February 2023 at 9.30am, at the Presbytery**

**Christmas Mass: 5.30pm on 24<sup>th</sup> December**

**Araluen: First Friday Stations of the Cross at 3.00pm. All welcome.**

**Dear Parishioners,**

**Communal Rite of Reconciliation on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December commencing at 5.45pm.**

**For the December markets** the committee has decided to have a Christmas food hamper for the raffle. We ask for your kind contributions to this hamper. Non-perishable items only please. Make them as Christmassy as you like 😊

**Markets in Ryrie Park: 9am - 1pm Saturday 17 December.** This is a great place to find that last minute Christmas gift. Produce; Crafts; Plants; Antiques & Collectibles; Trash & Treasure; Monthly Raffle – this month the raffle prize is a hamper of goodies. Donations of cooking etc gratefully accepted at the Parish table. Enquiries to Cathy Ffrench on 0418 262 011  
Email: [braidwoodmarkets@yahoo.com](mailto:braidwoodmarkets@yahoo.com)

**Readings for Mass: 1<sup>st</sup>: Isaiah 7:10-14. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Romans 1:1-7. Gospel: Matt. 1:18-24.**

**Readings for next week: 1<sup>st</sup>: Isaiah 9:1-7. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Titus 2:11-14. Gospel: Luke 2:1-14.**

### Ministry Rosters for our Masses

Date	Acolyte	Welcomer	Readers
17 Dec	Felix	Cathy F	Wendy M-B/Ann
24 Dec		Helen P	Michael/Wendy H
31 Dec	Felix	Geraldine	Bobbie/Tommy
7 Jan		Cathy F	Wendy H/Germaine

Ministries of service:	23 Dec	30 Dec	6 Jan	13 Jan
Altar Decorating:	<b>All please</b>	Joy	Margaret	Helen P
Cleaning:	Bronnie & Felix		Sarah & Helen P	

Counters: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Pauline & Bobbie. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Sunday: Wendy H  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: volunteer please 4<sup>th</sup>: Phil Owen

Please advise if you are unable to fulfil your **Christmas roster**, so alternative arrangements may be made.



Year 5 students from St Bede's Primary School received their candles from the outgoing Year 6 at their End of Year School Mass on Tuesday. Year 5 were commissioned to be the "Light of Christ" at the school next year.

**News from the pews:** If you have any news or photos to share, please email me. Sharing our news (happy and sometimes sad) is part of "Walking Together" as a parish and community.

Brother Brian will be taking his annual vacation from 2 January; a well-deserved rest.

There won't be any weekday Masses from Christmas until school resumes in February 2023 (a bit of a break for Father Mick)

Take care of each other,

Helen Hart

