

# St Peter's Catholic Parish

13th December, 2020 – Third Sunday of Advent

*Our mission as the Christian community of St Peter's Parish, enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit, is to be salt and light through the loving way of our words, actions and respect for the dignity of all, so that other may experience the love of Christ.*

We sincerely acknowledge the traditional owners of this land the Yuin people.

## Witness to the Light

St John's Gospel never calls John, 'the Baptist'. No, he is John the Witness: 'a witness to speak for the Light'. We discover in this Gospel that this light is embodied in Jesus Christ, most graphically portrayed in the Transfiguration when Christ's body is radiant, translucent, with Divine Light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the One who came to liberate human beings from the many dark captivities which imprison them, the One who vanquished the inky blackness of the tomb.

We can become partakers in the life of this Divine Light. At baptism, this is symbolized by the lighting of a small candle from the great Easter candle which is sung into the church on the Easter Vigil as 'Christ our Light', the Conqueror of Death.

As a baptized people our allegiance to 'The Light' is not to be a private matter between 'me and God'. No, like John, we must bear witness to 'The Light' by being instruments of His power to dispel the darkness which can enshroud people's lives.

We could pause for a moment to commit ourselves to fulfil the promise of our baptismal candle so that we might more authentically celebrate the birth of the Divine Light come into human history.

**REFLECTION** by Fr Michael Tate

## Churches, Mass Celebrations and Prayer ....

### Churches

Our Lady Star of the Sea, Eden  
St Joseph's, Merimbula  
St Peter's, Pambula  
St Joseph's, Wyndham

### Reconciliation (Confession)

Saturday, 9:30am-10am, Merimbula  
Saturday, before Vigil Mass, Eden

### Adoration

1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month at 8:30am, Merimbula  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at 3pm, Eden

### Weddings

By appointment only – at least 6 months notice in advance.

### Mass Times

Saturday, 6pm, Eden  
Sunday, 8am, Merimbula  
Sunday, 10am, Merimbula  
Tuesday 5pm, Merimbula  
Wednesday, 9:30am, Merimbula  
Thursday, 9:30am Eden  
Friday, 9:30am Merimbula

### Sacrament of Baptism

Welcoming Mass – 4<sup>th</sup> Sat/Sun of the month prior to Baptism. During Mass on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday/Sunday of the month. Please ring office for all Baptism preparation enquiries

### Divine Mercy Chaplet & Rosary

Tuesdays at 4:30pm, St Joseph's Merimbula

## Contact Details

### Parish Priest

Fr Paletasala (Pale) Leota

### Parish Secretary

Mrs Patricia Field

### Parish Council Chair

Mrs Bernadette Wood

### Liturgy Coordinator

Ms Sue Heffeman

### Finance Chair

Mr Neil Ffrench

### Lumen Christi Catholic College

Mr Shane Giles (02)64958888

### Parish Office

Hours - 10am to 1pm  
Wednesday to Thursday,  
Phone – 0435 036 236  
Email - pambula@cg.org.au  
Web -  
www.cg.org.au/pambula  
Address - 79 Main Street, PO BOX 249, Merimbula, NSW, 2548



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



*"Enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit"*

## Feasts of the Week ...

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Dec St John of the Cross

The Christmas novena begins on 17 December. At this point, the Advent focus shifts to the Christmas story and the Virgin Mary. These days serve to prepare more directly for the Lord's birth. *GNLYC 42*



## Readings of the Week ...

Monday	Num 24:2-7,15-17; Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday	Zeph 2:1-2,9-13; Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday	Is 45:6-8,18,21-25; Lk 7:19-23
Thursday	Gen 49:2,8-10; Mt 1:1-17
Friday	Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-24
Saturday	Judges 13:2-7; 24-25; Lk 1:5-25



## Parish News and Events ... Please ring 0435036236 for any parish enquiries

**NEW PARISH PHONE NUMBER** The parish office is back online both with the internet and the phone. We do however have a new phone number 0435 036 236 the old number is no longer connected. To all of our parishioners who have been trying to contact the office via the old landline we apologize and thank you for your patience.

### Reception of OSCAR RAY CARR to be Baptized into our Parish.

We warmly welcome Oscar Carr into our Parish and will support him in prayer, praying to God for the gift of a strong faith for him and his family.

### SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION – This Thursday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 7pm Merimbula

**ADVENT PREPARATIONS:** The parish has purchased the Wollongong Diocese's Advent program "ADORE" which has daily reflections. The cost per book is \$5.00 If you would like to purchase a book to use in your own home are now available from the parish office.

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU REGISTER FOR CHRISTMAS MASS

**Christmas Eve - December 24<sup>th</sup>**

5pm	<i>Lumen Christi Catholic College</i>	Pambula Beach Road
7pm	<i>Our Lady Star of the Sea,</i>	Eden
9pm	<i>St Joseph's</i>	Merimbula

**Christmas Day – December 25<sup>th</sup>** 8am & 10am Merimbula

**N.B.** We have added an extra Mass on Christmas Day at 8am, Merimbula to accommodate everyone due to large number of visitors around the area. Please be advised to consider attending either the 9pm or 8am Mass

### Book-in for Mass

Please remember that as per restrictions we are still expected **to book and check in for mass**, maintain a spacial-distance of 2 square metres, receive Holy Communion in the hand only, refrain from physical contact when offering the Sign of Peace, and to sanitise when entering and exiting the premises. Please email or ring the parish office between 10am - 1pm Wed - Fri. Ph: 0435036236 -

[https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2020/10/201008\\_UpdatedArchProtocols\\_PercyA.pdf](https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2020/10/201008_UpdatedArchProtocols_PercyA.pdf)

**REMINDER:** The maximum number of people at a religious service (*not including weddings and funerals*) must not exceed 300 (120) people in or outside (30) subject to the 2 square meter rule.

**PLEASE KEEP FOLLOWING ALL OF THE COVID-19 PROTOCOLS IN THE CHURCH**

**Columban Calendars 2021** are now available in the Parish Office at \$10 each.

**The Catholic Daily Voice** is available for you to subscribe to and receive via email by clicking on the attached link: <https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/> and follow instructions online to subscribe.

**O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, All Praise and All Thanksgivng be every moment thine.**

Planned Giving Collections; First: \$643.75; Second: Envelopes \$ 655.50, Loose \$185.15  
Thank you for your generosity and God bless you all

*"Enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit"*

## Let Us Pray for and support those who are sick

John Reynolds, Bill Petrie, Ysmael Valencia, Danielle Sou, Max Andrew, David Went, Ros Beveridge, Roy Bugden, Eric Mangion, Maureen Partridge, Marie Hart, Anselmo Guiffre, Beata Denkiewicz, Peter Hamer.

## For the Faithful departed or whose anniversaries occur including,

Louis Pintin, Joy Bugden, Olga Novinc, Kieth Balantyne, Kim Geraghty, Dawn Lucas, James Barry, Greg Morrison, Claire Thomas, Glyneth Middlemiss, Brian Middlemiss, Errol Cole, Mary D'Arcy.

*May the Souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*



Only in **silence** can the word of God find a home in us, as it did in Mary, the woman of the word and, inseparably, woman in silence. *Verbum Domini* (2010) 66

The Sacraments are a privileged way in which nature is taken up by God to become a means of mediating supernatural life. Through our worship of God, we are invited to embrace the world on a different plane. Water, oil, fire and colours are taken up in all their symbolic power and incorporated in our act of praise. *Laudato Si* (2015) 235

## The Divine Mercy of Jesus - 3 O'clock Prayer "The Hour of Great Mercy"

*Jesus said: Call upon My mercy on behalf of sinners; I desire their salvation. When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of some sinner, I will give that person the grace of conversion. This is the prayer; "O Blood and Water which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a Fount of Mercy for us, I trust in you."*

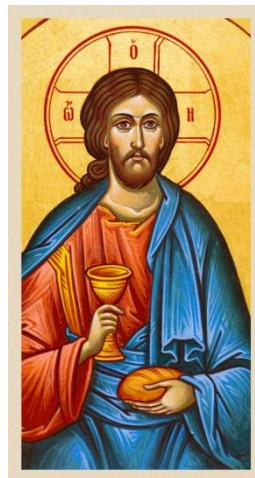
*The Divine Mercy Chaplet is prayed before Mass on Sunday and Adoration and Benediction on every First Friday at 8.30am Merimbula Church.*

## Act of Spiritual Communion Prayer

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

## Prayer for Australia

Lord you place deep in our hearts the love of Mary Help of Christians. Through her prayers grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens. Under her protection may Australia be granted harmony, justice and peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.



## 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 Third Sunday of Advent** (or “*Gaudete Sunday*” - Latin for “rejoice”) sees us lighting the rose candle on our Advent wreath, representing our rejoicing. We rejoice because the celebration of the coming of the Christ-child is very near, and the message in today's Gospel is clear - John the Baptist tells us to prepare the way of the Lord.

In our preparing, we need to be that voice in the wilderness where by our life and example - from the way we live, what we say and how we act - we come to proclaim the importance of the presence of Christ in our lives, and our belief in the kingdom that Christ has come to begin among us. Today's readings invite us to rejoice, and we can do exactly that because we are a voice bringing the joy of Christ to others this Christmas.

Every 25th of December we are reminded of Christ's timely coming into our world. Just as John the Baptist in today's Gospel lived his life as a testimony pointing to Christ, we are called to do the same by the way we live our lives - not just on Christmas Day, but every day of the year.

**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.

O God, we remember the promise of your Son. As light from this candle, may the blessings of Christ come upon us brightening our way and guiding us by His truth. May Christ our Saviour bring light into darkness of our world and to us as we await for His coming.

### **Pope Francis has announced the 'Year of St. Joseph.'**

The Holy Father's decision marked the second surprise to faithful on this Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, following first his 7am visit to central Rome's Spanish Steps to entrust the city and world to the Blessed Virgin.

Within a few hours, the Holy See Press Office would publish the Apostolic Letter “*Patris corde – With the heart of a Father,*” which commemorates the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the universal Church.

For the occasion, a special “Year of St. Joseph” will be held from today through Dec. 8, 2021. See attached for the full Vatican-provided English text.

### **The prayer to St. Joseph that Francis has said for more than 40 years**

*By Kathleen N. Hattrup*

“It expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph,” the Holy Father reflects. In a footnote in his new apostolic letter on St. Joseph, Pope Francis notes that for more than 40 years, he has said a special prayer to St. Joseph after morning prayer. He explains that it is taken from a 19th-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. “It expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph,” the Holy Father reflects. Here is the prayer, as he shares it in the letter:

*Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty.*

*Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome.*

*My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power.*

*Amen.*



**Collect**

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**Prayer Over the Offering**

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work. Through Christ our Lord.

**Prayer After Communion**

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts. Through Christ our Lord.

**First Reading: Is 61:1-2. 10-11**

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

**I exult for joy in the Lord.**

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.'

**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 First Thes 5:16-24**

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

**May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

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.

**Gospel Acclamation: Is 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: Jn 1:6-8. 19-28**

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*  
**There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.**

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 baptizing if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptize 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 baptizing.

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.” Today we light the rose candle, and the priest may wear rose vestments, to express our joy in the coming of Jesus, our saviour. The readings for the third Sunday of Advent remind us that the past, present and future coming of Jesus is the reason for our rejoicing. The first reading tells us that we should rejoice because the promised messiah is coming as our Savior and liberator, saving us by liberating us from our bondages. Today’s gospel tells us that John the Baptist came as a witness to testify to the light, i.e., Jesus. The coming of Jesus the light into the world is cause for rejoicing as he removes darkness from the world. We should be glad and rejoice also because, like John the Baptist, we, too, are chosen to bear witness to Christ Jesus, the light of the world.

**Advent**, which begins the Church's liturgical year, begins on this Sunday, November 29th. Advent encompasses the four Sundays and weekdays leading up to the celebration of Christmas. The Advent season is a time of preparation for our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas.

In our Churches, we celebrate Advent by putting up an Advent Wreath and lighting candles each week. Our Advent Wreath is located at the front next to the sanctuary and we are encouraged to look at it and contemplate the meaning of Advent.

The use of the wreath and candles during Advent are a longstanding Catholic tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

Even the individual evergreens that make up the wreath have their own meanings that can be adapted to our faith. The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering. The pine, holly, and yew signify immortality and the cedar signifies strength and healing. The pine cones that decorate the wreath symbolize life and resurrection. The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God's promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the color violet is a liturgical color that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice.

**The first candle**, which is purple, symbolizes **hope**. It is sometimes called the “Prophecy Candle” in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

**The second candle**, also purple, represents **faith**. It is called the “Bethlehem Candle” as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

**The third candle** is **pink** and symbolizes **joy**. It is called the “Shepard's Candle,” and is pink because rose is a liturgical color for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

On the **fourth week** of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the “Angel's Candle,” symbolizes **peace**. It reminds us of the message of the angels: “Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.”

The **white candle** is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the “**Christ Candle**” and represents the life of Christ. The color white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Savior.

Celebrating Advent is an excellent way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas. Welcome to Advent and may this holy season prepare us to celebrate PEACE and JOY of Christ.



*Guest presenter Eileen Glass joins Archdiocesan clergy at their annual retreat at St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong.*

### **Time out for Archdiocesan clergy**

*By Don Smith 9 December 2020*

Who was Lazarus and why was Martha head of the household and not him? This was just one of the puzzles put to Archdiocesan clergy during their annual gathering at the St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong in the picturesque rural surrounds of the Harden-Boorowa district. About 40 priests and deacons attended the get together from 23 to 27 November. "It was a really good few days," said Fr Simon Falk.

Fr Simon is the South Belconnen parish priest and the part-time Director of Clergy Life and Ministry responsible for coordinating the welfare and educational needs of the Archdiocese's clergy. He noted many clergy had not seen each other for a year due to COVID-19 and the retreat allowed them to take time out from a difficult year to reflect and engage.

This year's guest presenter to the retreat was Eileen Glass of L'Arche International, the French-based organisation that works with people with intellectual disabilities. Based now in Canberra and long known locally within the Archdiocese, Eileen delivered two presentations a day, each followed by a period of reflection, discussion, and prayer. Topics during the week included the baptism of Jesus and the relationship with his father, the Transfiguration experience, and the 'call' of Moses in the Old Testament. But as Fr Simon relates, Eileen's most intriguing talk was on Jesus' famous visit to Martha and Mary and the later raising from the dead of their brother, Lazarus.

READ ALSO: Always was, always will be – NAIDOC Week

"There was an interesting quirk in it all, which Eileen pointed out so well," he said. "Why was it 'Martha's home' where the visit took place?" "Why wasn't Lazarus the householder, when males were traditionally the householder in Jewish culture? What does that say to us about what kind of figure he was? Did he have an illness or a disability?" "And how does that speak to us in the context of the ministry we have for people we might encounter who have an illness or disability? Where is God's presence in that?"

The retreat's last session was an open forum that provided an opportunity for all to reflect on those questions, including on where they were at in their personal lives and on what they had gained from the retreat.

"From the newly ordained to the retired and for some of our wisest men, many told how they had found the Galong experience an enriching and engaging one," said Fr Simon.