

St John the Apostle Parish

A Missionary of the Sacred Heart Parish

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Year A

18 December 2016

#4.17

“To be on earth the Heart of God”

Parish Administration:

Pastor Gerard McCormick msc

Email: gerard@stjohnkippax.org.au

Associate Pastor Paul Browne msc

Email: paul@stjohnkippax.org.au

Parish Manager/Pastoral Associate
Marian England

Email: marian@stjohnkippax.org.au

Parish Secretary Sharon Greaves

Email: kippax@cg.org.au

Parish Office:

25 Blackham Street HOLT ACT

Office Hours: 9.00am - 3.00pm Mon-Fri

Telephone: 6254 3236

Fax: 6254 4819

Web www.stjohnkippax.org.au

MASS TIMES

Vigil Saturday 6:00pm

Sunday 8:30am, 10:00am, 6:00pm

Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9:30am

LITURGIES

Liturgy of the Word with Communion: Tues 9:30am

Baptisms: 1st & 3rd Sun 11:30 am

Reconciliation: Sat 11:00 – 11:30 am or by
appointment with the priests

ST JOHN THE APOSTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal: Matthew Egan-Richards

Pawsey Circuit Florey

Phone: 6258 3592

Email: office.sjaps@cg.catholic.edu.au

www.sjaps.act.edu.au

From the Pastor's Desk.....

In the Church's documents Advent is described as "a period for devout and joyful expectation". With only a few days to go before Christmas, this 'expectation' is heightened as we prepare to celebrate the birthday of the Lord. But what is our expectation, what do we hope for, what does the birth of this child mean for us and our world?

Our Christian faith informs us that all the hopes and dreams of humanity are discovered in the gift of Jesus, of whose birth we celebrate at Christmas. The beautiful custom of exchanging gifts during Christmas is but a pale reflection of the priceless gift that is Jesus: God's gift of himself. Jesus is our Emmanuel: "God-is-with-us". God, who existed before time began, is born in time; born to save us from our sins so that we in turn will be born anew in Christ.

In today's gospel we have two expectant parents: Mary and Joseph. What was their expectation as they prepared for the birth of their son? We can only speculate. But surely Mary and Joseph were well aware that this was no ordinary child. Like Mary and Joseph, we too have our part to play in bringing Christ into our world.

***Peace & blessings,
Gerard***



The children are encouraged to come to the 6:00pm Children's Christmas Eve mass dressed as shepherds or angels.

Joseph

In the Gospel of Matthew the annunciation of Jesus' conception is given to Joseph rather than to Mary: Before they came together, Mary was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

Joseph, her husband, being an upright man and unwilling to shame her, had decided to divorce her quietly, when an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, that the child in her had been conceived through the Holy Spirit.

This text is partly symbolic: The Joseph of the Christmas story is clearly reminiscent of the Joseph of the Exodus story, he too has a dream, he too goes to Egypt, and he too saves the family. Likewise King Herod is clearly the counterpart of the Egyptian Pharaoh; both feel threatened and both kill the Hebrew male children only to have God protect the life of the one who is to save the people.

But, after that, the Joseph of the Christmas story writes his own history: He is presented to us as an "upright" man, a designation that scholars say implies that he has conformed himself to the Law of God, the supreme Jewish standard of holiness. In every way he is blameless, a paradigm of goodness, which he demonstrates in the Christmas story by refusing to expose Mary to shame, even as he decides to divorce her quietly.

Then, after receiving revelation in a dream, he agrees to take her home as his wife and to name the child as his own. Joseph spares Mary embarrassment, he names the child as his own, and he provides an accepted physical, social, and religious place for the child to be born and raised. But he does something else that is not so evident: He shows how a person can be a pious believer, deeply faithful to everything within his religious tradition, and yet at the same time be open to a mystery beyond both his human and religious understanding.

Joseph teaches us how to live in loving fidelity to all that we cling to humanly and religiously, even as we are open to a mystery of God that takes us beyond all the categories of our religious practice and imagination.

Resources used: *Joseph & Christmas*, by Ronald Rolheiser OMI

ST JOHN THE APOSTLE WOMEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

The next breakfast is:



TUES 20 December - 7:30 am

Little Chef Café
Nettlefold Street Belconnen

THE EPIPHANY BLESSING

Marking Homes with Blessed Chalk for the New Year

Many parishes in the Church of England have adopted the ancient custom of marking the door of their home with chalk that has been blessed. This ancient rite is a beautiful way of incorporating the liturgical feast of the Epiphany as a domestic ritual into the prayer life of the family. It is a good opportunity for parents and children to ask for God's blessing on their home at the start of the New Year.

Next year for the first time we will offer you the opportunity to participate in this ritual. Chalk will be blessed at all the masses on the Feast of the Epiphany – 8 January 2017. You will then be invited to take some home to mark the lintel of your front door as follows:

20 C+M+B 17

The letters C, M and B stand for the traditional names for the Three Wise Men who come seeking Jesus: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. The letters also represent the words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* (*May Christ Bless this Abode.*) The blessing prayer that will be prayed whilst marking the lintel will be available with the chalk.

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve

Saturday 24 December

6:00pm Children's Mass

9:00pm (Carols start at 8.30pm)

Midnight (Carols start at 11:30pm)

Christmas Day

Sunday 25 December

(one mass only)

9:00am

No evening mass

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

PRACTICE FOR THE NATIVITY

Thursday 22 December 4:00pm

Saturday 24 December 9:00am

Parish Church

ADVENT

What's in a Name

It appears from the passage that Mary's child is to be called both Jesus and Emmanuel.

Emmanuel is not intended as a different name for Jesus but rather one of the many titles that will be applied to him. The title means God-is-with-us. That one word, Emmanuel, sums up the essence of Jewish and Christian belief.

The Jewish people's faith in God was built on the basis that God travelled with them and through their lives. Christians believe that God took on an even closer sense of being with us through God's incarnation in the life of Jesus.

Taken from: *Reflection*, by Greg Sunter at LiturgyHelp

Sunday 18th Come Emmanuel The Virgin will bear a Son and call his name Emmanuel, which means "God with us." Isaiah 7:10-14
Monday 19th Filled with the Spirit John will be filled with the Holy Spirit and go before the Lord to prepare his way. Luke 1:5-25
Tuesday 20th Call His Name Jesus Mary will conceive and bear a son and shall name him Jesus Luke 1:26-38
Wednesday 21st Rejoice and Sing! Sing aloud! The Lord God is among us, the Mighty One who saves us! Zephaniah 3:14-18
Thursday 22nd Holy is His Name He who is mighty has done great things for me and holy is his name. Luke 1:46-56
Friday 23rd He is Coming! He whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. Malachai 3:1-4
Saturday 24th Light in the Darkness God gives light to those who sit in darkness and guides them in the way of peace. Luke 1:67-69

Let us pray for those who are sick.
We remember them in our Masses.

Recently Deceased: Michael McGurgan

Anniversary: Amy Carney, Edward Clifford, John MacKay, Robert Carew, William Roots, Anne Hudson, Michael Devlin, Christopher Fitzsimon, Kathleen Edmund, Douglas Swaris, Patrick Laverty, Paul MacKenzie, Louise Ball, Geoffrey Walsh, Elana Powell, Jarrod Smith, Dora Roberts, Luis Soria, Cora Newman, Yvonne Williamson, Ted Murphy, Michael Costelloe, Walter Hawkins, Robert Wise.

Fran Boyd and family would like to thank all those who have been praying for their sister Anne Filmer. Anne died on Monday 12th December, her funeral is on Monday 19th December at 11:00am in her home town of Ungarie NSW. God Bless you all!

THE MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIESTS
invites you and your friends to
THE 10th ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE PRAYER VIGIL

Where: St John the Apostle Church
Date: Saturday 31st December 2016
Time: 8.30pm

FIRST Cenacle 8.45pm (Joyful Mysteries)
SECOND Cenacle 9.45pm (Luminous Mysteries)
THIRD Cenacle 10.45pm (Glorious Mysteries)
Exposition from 8.30pm until midnight
Supper available after midnight
All inquiries:-Judy & Joe Mewburn Ph: 6254 6202

On A Lighter Note: Christmas riddle:

Alice, Bonnie, Carol and Dorothy gathered together to exchange Christmas presents. They came wearing Red, Blue, Yellow, and Green dresses, but not necessarily in that order. Each of them brought a gift. These gifts were also wrapped on a wrapper coloured Red, Blue, Yellow, or Green. But each brought a gift wrapped in a wrapper whose colour is different from the colour of the dress they are wearing. After the gift exchange, each received a gift wrapped in a wrapper whose colour is different from the colour of the dress they are wearing. "You are wearing a nice Red dress", said Bonnie, who gave a Blue gift, to Alice, who received gift from somebody else. Carol received a Yellow gift. Dorothy is not wearing Yellow. Name the dress each of them is wearing, the colour of the wrapper of the gift each brought, and the colour of the wrapper of the gift each receive.

COMPACT: We encourage you to take your copy of COMPACT home. Have you thought....this could be a form of Evangelisation.....sharing the Word of God with a loved one or a neighbour!

ROSTERS Christmas

25 December Ministers of Communion

6:00pm	Erin Pitt, Margaret Stanford, Judith Deklin, Ted & Clare Kell, Chitra & Anthony Jayawardena,
9:00pm	Margaret Curry, Debbie Milne, Sharon Loiterton Toni & James Cox, Henri Clementine
Midnight	Andrew Luck, Maresa Laird, Judy Netting Maria & Joe Catanzariti,
9:00am	Janet Almond, Anthony Noakes, Jenny Howarth, Marie Flint, Judy Mewburn

25 December Reading Roster

6:00pm	Children's Mass
9:00pm	Andrew Luck, Elizabeth McDonald
Midnight	Brian Mahoney, Carmel Screen
9:00am	Robin Williams, Joe Ots

25 December Acolyte Roster

6:00pm	Maria Scarr, Henri Clementine
9:00pm	Maryanne Ferguson, Arie de Bear
Midnight	Peter Polkinghorne, Sabina Van Rooy
9:00am	Maresa Laird, Sigrid Kropp

Other Rosters

19 Dec	Altar Society: Mary Cruickshank
19 Dec	Church Cleaning: John & Jenny Maher
24 Dec	Grounds: VACANT

Answer to riddle:

Alice wore red, brought yellow, received green
Bonnie wore yellow, brought blue, received red
Carol wore blue, brought green, received yellow
Dorothy wore green, brought red, received blue

PARISH ACTIVITIES

PRAYER LIFE

Charismatic Prayer:	Thursday 7:30pm
Maida: 0423 658 326	Rosary 7:00pm
Meditation [Library]	Friday 7.30-8.15 pm
Morning Prayer:	Mon, Tues, Fri 9:10am
Stations of the Cross	First Fri Monthly 5:30pm
Children's Mass	Second Sunday monthly 10am

SOCIAL LIFE

Coffee Club	Second & Fourth Sunday after 10:00am Mass
Over 45's	Last Wednesday of the Month 9:30am Mass and morning tea
Pins & Needles	3 rd Thursday of the Month 7:15pm Parish Library
Book club	3 rd Sunday of the Month 3:00pm Parish Library
Women's Breakfast	4 th Tuesday of the Month 7:30am Little Chef Café Belconnen

RESPONSE TO THE PSALM:

Let the Lord enter;
he is king of glory.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

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



GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL Mt 1:18-24

Today's first reading is from the prophet Isaiah and contains the prophecy that is quoted in the gospel passage. The book of Isaiah was written at a time when the people of Israel were under threat and had once again fallen away from their covenant with God. Isaiah's prophecy is one of the 'Messiah' prophecies but despite the future-focus is a promise to the people of the time that God-is-with-us. The promise is that God-is-with-us now, despite the conditions we find ourselves in, and God-will-be-with-us in the future when God's Messiah is born of a young woman.

Emmanuel; God-is-with-us – that's what we celebrate through Christmas and that's what we've been preparing for during Advent. We celebrate God-with-us in a particular time and place through our celebration of the birth of Jesus. But we remember it every year because we also use the Christmas celebration to remind ourselves that God continues to be with us. That is what is so remarkable about the Christmas season: that God-is-with-us **now**, not just in a stable in Palestine so many years ago, but now! Advent is the time to remind ourselves of this incredible truth and prepare ourselves to acknowledge it once again.

Resources used: Greg Sunter at LiturgyHelp

LIBRARY NEWS: "Starlight: beholding the Christmas miracle all year long", "The First Christmas; what really happened?" and "Biblical meditations for the Advent and Christmas season" are three of the books currently on display.

School of Religion: – 9.15am-10.00am
Sundays Parish Centre (School Term Only)
For children not attending a Catholic School



Hearing Loop: - We have a hearing loop in the body of the church. Adjust your hearing aids according to audiologist's advice.