

Sunday 27th November 2022

Parish Priest: Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priests:** Fr. Tao Pham & Fr. Martin Tanti

Parish Pastoral Associates: Sandy Starbuck & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

The Partnered Parishes of:

St. Mary's

204 Grimshaw St.,
Greensborough, 3088

Parish: 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

Email: Greensborough@cam.org.au

Website: www.cam1.org.au/greensborough

Secretaries: Francesca Olofsson & Sharon Prosser

Mass Times

Tuesday to Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday: Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 5.45pm-6.15pm before evening Mass

Parish School Principal

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**
principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

Sacred Heart & St Peter's

25 Gipson Street,
Diamond Creek 3089

Parish: 9401 6361

Email: DiamondCreek@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

Secretary: Pat Guatta

Mass Times

Wednesday & Friday: Mass 9.15am

St Peter's: 1st & 3rd Saturday 7.15pm

Sunday: Mass 9.00am

Reconciliation Times

Friday: 9.45am to 10.15am

Parish School Principal

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**
principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au

St. Thomas the Apostle

251 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough Nth 3088

Parish: 9434 7373

Email: greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Secretary: Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Sunday: Mass 10.30am

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.30am to 10.00am

Parish School Principal

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**
principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au

THE CELEBRATION OF MASS IN OUR PARISHES

94th Festival of Family Carols Will take place at St Mary's on Sunday, 4th December at 7:30 pm

Communal Penitential Service Will take place at St Thomas' on Wednesday, 14th December at 7:30 pm with supper to follow.



We place the needs of our world before Jesus as we prepare for his coming.

First Sunday of Advent Year A, 27 November 2022.

<https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/article/scripture-reflection--let-us-walk-in-the-light-of-the-lord>

Sacred Heart, St Mary's & St Thomas the Apostle are all members of the Diamond Valley Deanery.



www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

www.cam.org.au



Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"

PARISH OFFICE HOURS—Tuesdays 9am-5pm, Thursdays and Fridays 10am-4pm. Please send any bulletin contributions to greensborough@cam.org.au by 2pm Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend combined bulletin. Thank you



Due to continuing CAM training of the office staff, the office will be unattended some weekdays during November and possibly early December from 10.00am to 1pm. We shall do our best to let you know in advance if we know the dates and times. A note shall also be placed on the office doors to let you know. In the meantime we thank you for your patience. Please call and leave a message or email on those days and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Thank you.

SILENCE IN LITURGY God addresses us through the scriptures. But silence is what helps us discover the meaning and power of these words, letting them 'sink in' and be absorbed into our minds and hearts. In addition to the short periods of silence observed by the Reader after the first and second readings, we will again have a period of silent reflection following the Homily. **The first collection** will be taken up after this period of reflection.

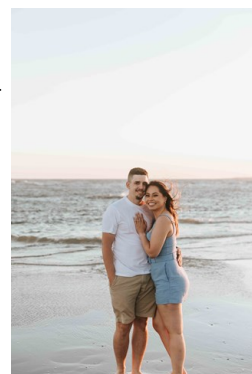
LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS: As we are unable to have a Parish Fete this year we are planning a number of stalls in the Gathe space after weekend Masses.

26th/27th November Variety stalls lots of bargains & sale of plants.

WEDDING CEREMONY INVITATION Kristel Roxas and Andrew Duncanson warmly invite you to their wedding ceremony on Saturday the 3rd of December 2022 at 10am at St Mary's Church. St Mary's has been Kristel's second home for as long as she can remember. She has been blessed to have celebrated all of her sacraments at St Mary's, and cannot wait to tick another one off the list. Andrew, since his first time attending mass at St Mary's, has felt welcomed and at peace, which is one of the reasons why he became Catholic in 2016.

Choosing to have our wedding at St Mary's was the easiest decision we made, besides saying yes! We have met so many wonderful people who have supported us throughout the years, and we are excited to invite the parishioners of St Mary's to attend our wedding ceremony.

If you plan on attending please come 30 minutes before the start of the ceremony (9.30am) We also hope to share some tea/coffee and refreshments after the ceremony with you and our other guests. If you would like to volunteer to assist with setting up and clean up on the day, please reach out to Kristel on 0409 231 648.



COLUMBAN CALENDAR 2023 The 2023 edition of the Columban Art Calendar is now available for purchase in the Sacristy or from the Parish Office. Calendars are \$10.00.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: First Friday of month, after 9.15am Mass to 3pm. Spend whatever time you can.

All Welcome.

ST MARY'S PRAYER SHAWL GROUP: Meets in the Gathering Space 10am - 12pm on Mondays. Enquires: Maureen Leahy—0407 687 517; Anne Fleming— 0409 234 326 .

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS CRIB



The formation of the first Christmas crib is attributed to St Francis of Assisi. In 1223, just three years before his death, Francis went to visit the friars living in the remote mountain village of Greccio in central Italy. St Bonaventure, a leading medieval theologian and Franciscan, tells us that in order to inspire the people of Greccio to celebrate the birth of the Saviour with all solemnity and devotion, Francis brought together all the elements of the stable in Bethlehem into what would become the very first Christmas crib.

Francis used real people, straw in a manger, an ox and a donkey, to bring the Christmas story to life for the people of Greccio. People came from far and wide to see this spectacle. The night was aglow with candlelight and the people were united in prayer as hymns were sung in praise of the God who is with us. St. Francis' idea of recreating the Nativity scene spread quickly all over the Christian world, and soon there were Christmas cribs in churches and homes and also in public places.

The crib remains a beacon of peace, hope and reconciliation and offers an opportunity for us to reflect upon the deeper message it represents. Our own Nativity scenes which rest under our Christmas trees are a visible reminder of that night when our Saviour was born. May we too embrace Him with all of our love as did St. Francis.

ADVENT

The season of Advent begins today, a period of waiting for the birth of Christ. It is the season of new beginnings: the start of the new liturgical year, Year A, the year of Matthew; the birth of Jesus; the beginning of summer. It is also a time for reflection about the coming of Jesus into our lives through grace and the sacraments, and a time to keep in mind that He will come again.

The overall theme for Advent this year is **Trust**. This concept has been strained for many people in recent years when the life we thought would be there for us was upended and changed, suddenly, without time for preparation. To have trust, there has to be a high degree of certainty, reliability, confidence, relationship. While recent world events may weaken our trust in our safety and security, our trust in God should not be diminished. Through our faith, we believe that God always loves us and will always care for us. Our God reaches out to us to offer us grace, mercy and salvation. We are invited into a deep relationship, one of complete trust, that enables us to look forward with hope, peace and joy, within a community of faith.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

The focus for **the first week of Advent** is: *Trust and keep awake.*

The Gospel describes a cataclysmic event, a great flood that comes without warning. Noah placed his trust in God as he built and filled the ark. Everything was swept away and life had to be rebuilt. Jesus then alerted his disciples that second coming of the Son of Man would be similar. Some will be saved and others lost. Life can be very unpredictable and there is no set date for Jesus to return. What will He find when He comes? Will we be ready to be accountable for our lives? If we place our trust in Him and live our lives according to His teachings, we will be able to say with confidence, “Here I am, Lord”.

JOIN US ON A JOURNEY THIS ADVENT

Join us for our last week with Dr Susie on a contemplative journey on Zoom in preparation this Advent.

Week 4- 1st December at 7.20pm we will be reflecting on:

Is there room at your inn for the birth of Christ?

All are welcome to participate.

Zoom Link : <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88546074539?pwd=TTVQR1R6ZINQN01iVWZob3B4eXE1UT09>

Meeting ID: 885 4607 4539 Passcode: 049160



MATTHEW, HIS GOSPEL & HIS JESUS

Advent begins Year A and the Gospel of Matthew, to prepare, meet Matthew, his Gospel & his Jesus.

3 Wednesday evenings on zoom. Commencing Wednesday 30th November and the 7th of December. 7.30pm-9.30pm.

Book at : <https://app.tickets.org.au/CSOE/Matthew> Booking fee \$10.00. Overseas participants use code OVASEA.

For further information contact Sandra Bishop: sandrabisshop@optusnet.com.au

This course is offered by the Catholic School of Evangelisation.

ADVENT CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE 2022

Blessing of the Christmas Crib

At Masses at **St Thomas** this weekend **26th/27th November**, our Christmas crib will be blessed. All parishioners, and particularly families with children, are invited to bring an item from their own cribs or Christmas tree to be blessed at the same time.

The blessing and same invitation for **St Mary's** will take place at all Masses on **10th/11th December**.



94th Festival of Family Carols

Will take place at **St Mary's** on **Sunday, 4th December** at 7:30 pm

Communal Penitential Service

Will take place at **St Thomas'** on **Wednesday, 14th December** at 7:30 pm with supper to follow.

Individual Reconciliation

Sacred Heart	Friday	2/9/16/23 December	9:45-10:15 am
St Mary's	Saturday	3/10/17 December	5:45-6:15 pm
St Thomas	Saturday	3/10/17/24 December	9:30-10:00 am



Masses for Christmas

Sacred Heart	Christmas Eve	6:00 pm, 9:00 pm
	Christmas Day	9:00 am
St Mary's	Christmas Eve	6:30 pm and 9:30 pm (Please note change of Time)
	Christmas Day	8:00 am and 10:00 am (no 5:00 pm Mass)
St Thomas	Christmas Eve	6:00 pm
	Christmas Day	10:30 am



POPE FRANCIS' CATECHESIS ON THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Commencing next week, an opportunity is offered to all parishioners to read and ponder Pope Francis' catechesis on the Mass. These talks will be offered during the early weeks of Advent and focus on the Liturgy of the Word. Earlier, the catechesis was delivered to pilgrims in Peter's Square and is an easy read. At Fr Steven's suggestion a few questions have been prepared which may be useful as a reflection guide.

Week 1: Readings & Responsorial Psalm

Week 2: Gospel

Week 3: Homily and Prayers of Intercession

If you would like to enrich your understanding of the Mass and celebrate Christmas meaningfully,

please email :Margaret.Safsford@cam.org.au or sign up with your email address on the sheets in the Gathering Space.

Alternatively, printed copies will be available too. Once again please let us know if you would like a printed copy by leaving your name.

Those who are engaged in the ministry of Reader will have the documents emailed weekly commencing early next week. Further, a meeting for all readers from St Peter's and Sacred Heart will be held on Thursday, 15 December at 7.30 pm in Sacred Heart Church where the implications of Pope Francis' talks will be shared and skills practised. New members of the Readers ministry are welcome at this meeting. If you prefer, contact me.

Margaret Safsford rsc
Pastoral Associate

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS continued

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF SANDY STARBUCK, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Greetings to all Parishioners of St Mary's Greensborough, Sacred Heart Diamond Creek, St Peter's Hurstbridge and St Thomas the Apostle! I write this feeling quite excited (and a little bit nervous!) to introduce myself to you before joining you in person later this month. My background as a Catholic was one with foundations beginning as a child where both my parents were converted to the Catholic faith when their third child was born. I was born in southern California and attended a Catholic School, having received Holy Communion there. We moved to a small town in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri when I was 7 and after graduating from high school, I moved to the nearest city for work and attended business college where I studied medical administration.

I arrived in Melbourne 42 years ago as a young bride and we settled in Rosanna where my husband grew up and where we lived for 15 years, attending St Martin of Tours Parish where my children received the Sacraments.

We moved to Doreen in the early 90's and along with our family business I worked in medical administration until my journey came upon a new intersection on my road of faith as I found myself receiving communion at home recovering from surgery. I was asked to be the Pastoral Worker for the Epping Parish. During the years there I undertook study for a Bachelor of Theology and after 8 years I graduated in 2021.

During my final few years at uni an opportunity arose at the Parish of Christ the Light in Mernda, Doreen, Whittlesea, Kinglake for Pastoral Associate. Approaching 5 years there I had been feeling that God was calling me to make a change – I was uncertain as to what this change was to be until I became aware of this position at St. Mary's, Greensborough.

I reflected, prayed, sought advice of trusted friends/colleagues, went on retreat before (and after) applying for this position. I will quote a friend to sum up what came upon my heart during this discernment – “When the heart, soul and call come together as one – it is right and true.”

So here I am – very humbled by the trust and faith shown by Fr Steven and those who made up the interview panel in appointing me. I pray to our Lord, that you find my door always open, my ears always listening and my heart always grateful to be of service to the people of St Mary's Parish.

See you soon!

Sandy.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2022 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

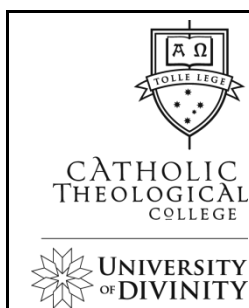
This year's Christmas Appeal will be officially launched at St. Mary's and St. Thomas' Parishes on the weekend of **3rd/4th December**. With the current cost-of-living crisis, the assistance we provide for people in Greensborough and Watsonia experiencing hardship this Christmas will be needed more than ever. If possible we ask Parishioners to please consider donating whatever is affordable to help continue our local Conference's work of helping those who really struggle to pay for the basics of normal living. In the next few months, we also know there will be requests for assistance from families as they prepare for school in 2023. To donate please see below -

1. Appeal envelopes will be provided at the end of the pews and in the Gathering Spaces of both Churches - they can then be placed in the 2nd Collection or in the 'after Mass' Collection bag.
2. Credit card donations can be arranged by calling **13 18 12** and stating you are donating to the **Greensborough** Conference **Christmas Appeal**
3. Donations can be made online via vinnies.org.au – please make sure you include **Greensborough** in the 'Comments/Conference Name' section

With our continued gratitude for your ongoing support and incredible generosity!

Maureen Lonsdale, Greensborough Conference President

St. Vincent De Paul Society



Online Information Session

Join us and learn about your study options at
Catholic Theological College

Monday 5 December at 7.30pm (AEDT)

Online options available

Register via our website: ctc.edu.au/open-days

For more information contact: jenny.delahunt@ctc.edu.au

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



Baptisms: we pray for Dulcie, Mila, Hunter and Lacey who will be welcomed into the Sacred Heart community in November.

Advent Reflections booklets are available for private reflection, or you are welcome to join the group who meet after 9.15am Mass Wednesday mornings throughout Advent. Please contact Moya Roadley.

Annual Anointing Mass: Friday 9th December 9.15am Mass followed by morning tea in the Church.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27th has been set aside as a **REMEMBRANCE MASS** FOR ALL WHO HAVE DIED THIS YEAR. You are invited to come and remember them, you will also have the opportunity to remember those you have loved and lost. Frank on behalf of the funeral ministry.

Passionist Family Group: November 22nd is the 37th anniversary of our Passionist Family Group.

Over the 37 years we have had up to six groups at Sacred Heart, and although we currently have only one group, this group is very active, as we support and care for each other. We gather together each month for a meal or other activity. Our next activity is a weekend away at St Leonard's on the 25th, 26th & 27th November. If you would like to know more about the Passionist Family Group please contact Claire or Frank on 0438058619

Celebration of St Peter's 50th Anniversary: Invitation to all to 5pm Mass next Saturday 3rd December at Hurstbridge. Pizza, refreshments and a celebration cake provided after Mass. Please contact past and present parishioners. **All welcome.**

Senior Moments: Wednesday 7th December Christmas Lunch 12pm in the Parish Centre.

Thank you to everyone for your patience while I participate in Online Training Courses for the new Archdiocese computer program.
Pat

Parish Pastoral Council: Suggestion box in church. Email: ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com

Rosters

Saturday 3rd December 5pm St Peter's

Reader: E. Gittins **Commentator:** P. Keenan **Eucharistic Ministers:** Volunteers

Sunday 4th December 9am Sacred Heart

Reader: T. Jenkins **Commentator:** J. Hoyne **Eucharistic Ministers:** R. Padget, T. Sirianni

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Lina Molinaro, Catherine Leonard, Peter Mejak, Joan Moran, Margaret Holland, Bridie Burke, Mary Rafferty, Thomas Keenan, Mervyn Bourke, Jacob Draper, Vi Hurley, Kevin Hurley

We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of November that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Ros Thomas, Geraldine Nihill, Bev Camilleri, Kevin Doherty, Vincent Atkinson, James Burke, Lena Finlayson, Grace Jones, Lena Anderson, Haydn Chapman, John Prendergast.

MERCY CONNECT MELBOURNE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ASSISTING REFUGEE STUDENTS.

MERCY CONNECT MELBOURNE is currently recruiting volunteers to support Refugee Students and Asylum Seekers in Primary and Secondary schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese. The volunteer commitment is approximately half a day per week for 4 school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred but not limited to. Please contact Sr. Mary Lewis RSM for an application form and further information. A Training Day for new volunteers with emphasis on Child Safeguarding will take place prior to commencement in 2023. Email: somml@bigpond.com (preferred for contact)

Tel: 9326 1895



FRG MINISTRY: CHRISTMAS WITH OR WITHOUT JESUS ... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? ONLINE ADVENT RETREAT

Join Fr Rob Galea, Alyssa Agius and Roseanne Rofael as they prepare our hearts and open our minds on the importance of Jesus birth.

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE. ALL SESSIONS WILL BE RECORDED AND AVAILABLE FOR LATER VIEWING FOR THOSE REGISTERED. <https://www.encountercourses.com/adventretreat>

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS

Baptisms: We pray for Esme and Isla who will be baptised later this month.

Square Tap Machine: Now that our property has been connected to the NBN we are now able to process donations on the Square Tap Machine more efficiently.

Parish Pastoral Council: Email: stthomasppc@gmail.com

The new sets of thanksgiving envelopes commencing 6th November are now ready for collection.

Could parishioners please have a look and see if there is anyone that lives close to you and you could assist by dropping them in their letterbox.

COLUMBAN CALENDAR: The calendar's are now available at St Thomas, \$10.00 each, cash or by the Square tap machine. Pay to Church.

BLESSING OF OUR CHRISTMAS CRIBS

At Masses on the weekend of Saturday 26th November and Sunday 27th November, our Christmas Crib (or manger) will be blessed.

All parishioners are invited to bring an item from their own cribs at home, or a special decoration from their Christmas trees, to Masses on that weekend so that they can be blessed at the same time.

The children from the school and their families are being invited and this provides us with an opportunity to participate in a very holy and meaningful parish event.



RESPONSES TO EUCHARIST CHURCH COURSE

As a convert to Catholicism it is helpful to think about how everything Jesus said and did points to the Eucharist.

I enjoyed the Bible, the Fathers, Saints, Popes, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the miracles. **Michael**

the "Eucharist Course" ran for three consecutive Wednesday nights at St Thomas' Church in North Greensborough. Each session ran for two hours. The course was excellent!

I think I could best describe it as "PURE GIFT". My love and appreciation for the Eucharist has been deeply enhanced as a result of attending the Eucharist Course. **Maureen**

Rosters for Weekend 3rd & 4th December

Saturday 6.00pm

Reader: E. Sacchetta

Commentator: T. Holland

Eucharistic Ministers: J. Bohan, T. Holland

Set Up: C. Leahy

Sunday 10.30am

Reader: M. Kenny

Commentator: B. Iacobucci

Eucharistic Ministers: M. Tipping, C. O'Brien, B. Riordan

Set Up: J. Kerr

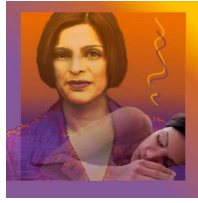
St Thomas prayers are asked for the following Parishioners:

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Miran Kasalo, John Iacobucci, Andelko Korculanin, Robert Kasic

We pray for those who have died including George Fantauzzo and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of November that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Nick Piccolo, Maura Coyle, Lena Brullo, Ray Tipping, Lawrence Meilak, Theresa Meilak, Marcel Bishara, Frank Mercieca, Thomas Iacobucci, Fr Kelvin Kenny, Christopher Kenny, Joan Campbell, Serge Teychency, Joan Chadzynska, Rocco Di Pierro, Haydn Chapman, Francis Mc Mennemin, Carmel McCrorie, Michael Munforte



Lectionary Art and Reflection by Jenny Close

Matthew's gospel, in this first week of Advent, reminds us to stay alert. The advice is timely since in Advent we are in waiting mode. We await the coming of the kingdom in the person of Jesus and in the fullness of time.

First Sunday of Advent, Year A

27 November 2022

First Reading Is 2:1-5

The Lord will gather all nations in eternal peace in the kingdom of God.

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz,
concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In the days to come
the mountain of the Temple of the Lord
shall tower above the mountains
and be lifted higher than the hills.
All the nations will stream to it,
peoples without number will come to it;
and they will say:

'Come, let us go up to the mountain of
the Lord,
to the Temple of the God of Jacob
that he may teach us his ways
so that we may walk in his paths;
since the Law will go out from Zion,
and the oracle of the Lord from
Jerusalem.'

He will wield authority over the nations
and adjudicate between many peoples;
these will hammer their swords into
ploughshares,
their spears into sickles.
Nation will not lift sword against nation,
there will be no more training for war.
O House of Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 121:1-2. 4-5. 6-9. R. see v.1.

*(R.) Let us go rejoicing to the house
of the Lord.*

1. I rejoiced when I heard them say:
'Let us go to God's house.'
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem. *(R.)*
2. It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.
For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of
judgement
of the house of David. *(R.)*
3. For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
'Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!' *(R.)*
4. For love of my brethren and friends
I say: 'Peace upon you!'
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good. *(R.)*

Second Reading Rom 13:11-14

The time has come, our salvation is near.

You know 'the time' has come: you must
wake up now: our salvation is even nearer
than it was when we were converted. The
night is almost over, it will be daylight soon
- let us give up all the things we prefer
to do under the cover of the dark; let us
arm ourselves and appear in the light.
Let us live decently as people do in the
daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity
or licentiousness, and no wrangling or
jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus
Christ.

Gospel Acclamation Ps 84:8

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.*

Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 24:37-44

Stay awake, you must be ready.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in
Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of
Man comes. For in those days before the
Flood people were eating, drinking, taking
wives, taking husbands, right up to the day
Noah went into the ark, and they suspected
nothing till the Flood came and swept all
away. It will be like this when the Son of
Man comes. Then of two men in the fields
one is taken, one left; of two women at the
millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know
the day when your master is coming.
You may be quite sure of this that if the
householder had known at what time of
the night the burglar would come, he would
have stayed awake and would not have
allowed anyone to break through the wall
of his house. Therefore, you too must stand
ready because the Son of Man is coming at
an hour you do not expect.'



Reflection by Greg Sunter

The first Sunday of Advent sees the
commencement of the new liturgical year.
This new liturgical cycle is referred to as
Year A and features the gospel of
Matthew. (Year B features the gospel of
Mark and Year C, that we have just
completed, features the gospel of Luke.)
Advent comes from the Latin word
Adventus which literally means 'coming'; it
is also reflected in the Greek word
Parousia, which is used to describe the
second coming of Jesus. So Advent is a
time of preparation and anticipation of the
coming of Christ into the world that is
celebrated in the Nativity at Christmas.
The gospel passage chosen for today's
reading richly expresses that anticipation
and need for preparation.

It may seem a little confusing that we
begin our year-long exploration of the
gospel of Matthew by taking a reading
from chapter 24. However, the need for
readiness and alertness that Jesus
speaks about in relation to the coming of
the Kingdom is equally suitable for a
modern audience when preparing to
celebrate once again the coming of Jesus
into the world. Jesus is the best
expression of the Kingdom that we have
yet experienced and so rather than seeing
the choice of this passage as a confusion,
we should recognise the alignment that
exists between the anticipation of the
Kingdom and the anticipation of the
Nativity.

The two great feasts of Christianity - the
Nativity and Easter - are each preceded
by a period of preparation: Advent and
Lent. The emphasis of these seasons is
on the mental and spiritual preparation to
fully enter into one of the great mysteries
of faith. In the Nativity, we celebrate God
become human; God present in the world
in a physical way. Advent is a time to
remember the many and varied ways that
God continues to be present in the world.

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the **Lectionary for the Mass** ©1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from **The Psalms, A New Translation**, ©1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the **Jerusalem Bible**, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.
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