



*Fourth Sunday of Advent
19th / 20th December 2020*

Parish Clergy
Fr Martin Cruickshank

Parish Office
Gemma Whitehead—Monday
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9.00 am – 2.00 pm
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- Mass Times**
- SATURDAY VIGIL: 6.00 pm
 - SUNDAY: 9.30 am
 - WEEKDAYS: This Week
 - Tuesday 9.30am
 - Wednesday 9.30
 - THURSDAY (CHRISTMAS EVE)
 - 6.00pm Children's/Family Mass—Grounds of Xavier High School
 - 9.00pm Sacred Heart Church
 - FRIDAY (CHRISTMAS DAY)
 - 8.00am Sacred Heart Church
 - 9.30am Sacred Heart Church



As we look forward to Christmas, quickly approaching, today's readings speak of God's plans: for the House of David ... for Mary ... and for us.

In the **First Reading**, David resolves to build a house for God, but God, who has journeyed with his people through all their ups and downs, has different plans. Speaking through the prophet Nathan, God promises to build a house for the people of Israel, establishing David as head of the dynasty and providing security to his people for generations to come. Jesus himself will eventually spring from this House of David, which will continue to the end of time.

We hear Jesus's name spoken at the beginning of the Gospel, where Luke describes how the angel comes to Mary with good news. Gabriel tells of God's plan: through Mary, a virgin, the son of God will be born; a successor to the House of David, whose reign will never end. Mary shows her faith and trust in God by responding with an unconditional yes.

The Psalmist begins by expressing his joy in God's everlasting love and support, then speaks of God's faithful and enduring love. He echoes the promise God makes to David (**First Reading**).

St Paul gives praise to God, whose plan, hidden for so long, has now been revealed in Jesus. Through Jesus's birth, death and resurrection, we are offered salvation. Paul urges us to share this news with as many as possible. (**Second Reading**)

Perhaps I can pray this week, especially in these unusual times, to be always aware of God's faithful presence and love. I ask for the graces of humility, trust, and openness to God that we see Mary herself express.

Parish Community



We pray for those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith especially:

RECENTLY DECEASED: Dr Josef Hruz, Corrie Van Lint, Rita Clear, Jean Parker, Margaret Liston.

ANNIVERSARIES: Fr Kevin Flanagan, Sr Therma (MACE), Peter Gibbs, Keith Groth, Joan Krautz, Oswald Stenson, Geoff O'Brien, Annette Power, Linus Drew, George Pugh, Norm Robinson, Stan Deveney, Frederick Mackay, Michael Dunn, Gavin SurrIDGE, Griff Rosser, Tom O'Rourke, Lyn Maloney, Eric Low, Frederick Lindsay, John Nenzl, Jack Galvin, Benjamin Orman, Kevin Krautz, Fr Michael Buckdale, Kathleen Frauenfelder, Jill Fox Barbara Kidd, Jane Hill, Francis Henry, Johanna Henry.

Gather our loved ones into your arms. Quiet our doubt and anger and send us your healing grace. Through Christ our Lord.

Prayer for the Sick

We pray for all those who are sick. May they draw strength and healing from God's presence with them and from our prayers and thoughts for them. May they have peace in their hearts and know they are greatly loved by all. We offer our prayers believing that God's presence and power can do more than we can ever know. Amen

ADVENT

This weekend we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Advent is the time in the church when we wait and prepare for the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day. The word Advent comes from two Latin words that mean "Coming Towards". We use this time to prepare ourselves in a special way to welcome Jesus. In our families, we prepare for Christmas by buying gifts, sending cards, decorating the tree and organising family celebrations. In the church we also prepare for Christmas.

The Advent wreath is a ring of evergreens with four candles, one for each week of Advent. Every part of the wreath reminds us of an important truth about God. The circle shape stands for the unending love of God, with no beginning and no end. The green leaves represent life and growth and hope. The candles represent Jesus, the light of the world.

The first candle is the Prophets' candle. The prophets prepared the people in the early days for the coming of the Messiah.

The second candle is called the Bethlehem candle, which reminds us that Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem.

The third candle is the Shepherds' candle and reminds us of the visit of the shepherds.

And the last candle to be lit is called the Angels' candle. An angel announced to Mary that she was pregnant, and then angels announced His birth to the shepherds in the fields.



Prayer for Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle The Candle of Love

God of Love, As we light this fourth candle on our Advent wreath, fill us with Your everlasting love.

We ask for guidance Lord as we open our lives to others, share their laughter and tears, and grow day by day in love.

Teach us to love sincerely and help us to share your love with others. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice that announces the coming of our Saviour.

We ask this prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen



This weekend we welcome into the community of the Christian church through the sacrament of Baptism:

Autumn Maree Reeks
daughter of Daniel & Jessica

Thought for the Week (Pope Francis):

"Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God's own power".

Parish News

CHRISTMAS MASSTIMES

CHRISTMAS EVE—Thursday 24 December

Due to the changes to state guidelines for social gatherings the **6.00pm Children's/Family Mass** will be celebrated in the grounds of Xavier High School.

Long range weather forecast suggests a maximum temperature of 32C. Therefore, celebration will probably take place in 300 quad where there is some shade. If cooler and there is cloud cover the other possibility is the oval behind the Art Centre.

BYO chair or blanket, water, mask if possible.

Access to the grounds of Xavier available at all entrances following COVID-19 protocols.

A specific QR Code (below) has been established for attendance at the 6.00pm Outdoor Mass. Information required: **Name, Mobile number/email, Number of people in group/household then submit.**

Usual manual means will also be available for recording required information.

Personal information is collected and retained securely, and will only be used for the purpose of contact tracing for Covid-19 purposes if required.



FOR ALL OTHER CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve—9.00pm; Christmas Day—8.00am & 9.30am

Use the QR Code below. Diocese of Wagga Wagga Parish Attendance Register.

Details required: **Name, Mobile number/email; choose parish (North Albury); number in group/household then submit.**

QR Codes can be accessed on our website under latest bulletin 4th Sunday Advent.



UPDATED COVID-19 DIOCESAN PROTOCOLS

If you are feeling unwell, have a cough or cold, sore throat or flu like symptoms please do not attend our physical gatherings as this puts others as well as yourself at risk.

After having your name registered or ticked off please use the hand sanitiser located at the four entrance points of the church at the beginning of our liturgical celebration and as you leave the church building.

Communion will begin with those on the car park side and then move to those seated on the Swan Street side. Please allow space between each recipient.

CHRISTMAS MASSES—Musicians, Choir Members and Readers Needed

If you wish to participate in the Christmas choir which will sing at the 9.00pm mass on Christmas Eve please contact Val Hayes: best4mann@yahoo.com.au or ph: 6025 5904. Choir practice will take place on Wednesday 23 December at 7.30pm in the church. All welcome.

Readers & Commentator (prayers of faithful) required for all Christmas masses in the church. **Christmas Eve 9.00pm Christmas Day 8.00am, 9.30am.** Please add your name to the list located at the Swan Street entrance.

We are still looking for children, teenagers and families to be involved in the liturgy for 6.00pm Christmas Eve mass in the grounds of Xavier High School.

If you wish to participate in any way contact Margie Brown at: brownm3@ww.catholic.edu.au or Jane Murtagh at: rmur5035@bigpond.net.au.

Christmas Crib

Thanks to Marie & John Van Lint for the meticulous repair work on the figures which were re-discovered in the loft and now reside on the sanctuary. The vibrancy of the colours and the diverse hues are a reminder of the nature of our own Christmas journey.

Year 12 HSC Results

Students who have completed Year 12 in NSW received their ATAR score last Friday. We wish these young women and men especially those who attended Xavier High School every blessing. Regardless, of the score achieved may they find a pathway forward that will enrich both their lives and lives of others.

Fr Kevin Flanagan—Anniversary of his death

The third anniversary of the death of Fr Kevin Flanagan, parish priest of Sacred Heart for over 40 years occurs on Monday 21 December. At both masses this weekend we will remember and give thanks for Kevin's gift of shared faith, friendship and pastoral leadership.

CHANGES TO STATE COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

As of Monday 7th December:

- 4 sq metre rule now the **2 sq metre rule** across the board outdoors and indoors. In other words we can have twice as many people in our churches.
- Uncontrolled outdoor events can have 3,000 in attendance complying with **2 sq metre rule**. That means that our outdoor masses can have up to 3,000 people with BYO chairs.
- Singing—up to 50 in a choir indoors—and are to practice social distancing. No maximum cap on outdoor choir and congregational singing permitted—wearing masks while singing is optional.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading from Second Book of 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; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever." The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm 88:2-5, 27, 29

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**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 16: 25-27

Glory be 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. h alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.
The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, 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. The Gospel of the Lord