

COMPACT

St John the Apostle Parish

A Missionary of the Sacred Heart Parish



Fourth Sunday of Advent
22 December 2019

Year A
#4.20

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

A Christmas Blessing

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

Merry Christmas

St John the Apostle Feast Day
Friday 27 December – Mass 9:30am

Parish Administration:

Pastor Fr. Gerard McCormick msc
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Assistant Pastor
Fr. Kimi Vunivesilevu msc
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Assistant Pastor
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Parish Office:

25 Blackham Street HOLT ACT
Office Hours: 9.00am - 3.00pm
Mon-Fri
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MASS TIMES

Vigil Saturday 6:00pm
Sunday 8:30am, 10:00am, 6:00pm
Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9:30am
Liturgy of the Word with Communion:
Tues 9:30am

Baptisms:

1st & 3rd Sun during 10:00am Mass

Reconciliation: Sat 5:00pm – 5:30pm



Hearing Loop: in the central body of the church.

ST JOHN THE APOSTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal: Matthew Garton
Pawsey Circuit Florey
Phone: 6258 3592
Email: office.sjaps@cg.catholic.edu.au
www.sjaps.act.edu.au

SMOKE FREE ZONE

There is a 4-metre smoke free zone from the entrance and exits of the church buildings. Thank you



SMOKE-FREE
ZONE

Prayer for Rain

Fr Tony Percy VG, has written a short pray for rain. Please remember those whose livelihoods are impacted by the current weather condition. Bookmarks of the prayer are available in the church foyer.

Archbishop's Christmas Appeal

There will be a leaving collection at all Christmas Masses for the above appeal. Money collected will support Diocesan projects locally, within Wilcannia Forbes Diocese and globally, within the Dioceses of Otukpo, Nigeria. Other projects the collection supports are: the poor within the La Salette Matha Province in India; Bush Fire affected Dioceses in Northern NSW towards their recovery endeavours.

FR. GERARD – 2020: At the end of next year Fr. Gerard will have completed his 3rd three-year term as parish priest. In 2020 Gerard will be absent from the parish on sabbatical. His last Sunday here will be 19 January 2020 and a farewell pot luck lunch will be held on that day. There will be a leaving collection for Gerard after all masses on 11/12 January.

Parish Office Hours over the Christmas break

The parish office will be closed from
Wednesday 25 December 2019
and will re-open on
Monday 6 January 2020

Tribunal of the Catholic Church

Marriage breakdown is usually a traumatic experience for all those concerned with many divorcees unsure of the validity of this marriage within the Catholic Church. The Church reaches out in support of those whose marriage has broken down, while upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage. If you are divorced or in the process of finalising your divorce and would like information about the annulment process, please contact the Tribunal on 6239 9813 or by email tribunal@cg.org.au. All enquiries remain confidential to the Tribunal.

Heart Spirituality

The protection of St. Joseph

On earth Saint Joseph watched over and protected Jesus and Mary. That is why the Church has made him the Protector of the great Christian family. We too should have full confidence in him;

he is willing and able to protect us.

He surrounds us with the ineffable tenderness of a real father.

He knows we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and destined for the happiness of heaven. How then could he forget us? To believe he could do so would be to do him a serious wrong.

He distributes the treasures of the Heart of Jesus and wishes to enrich us with them.

So let us go to him with confidence and ask him for all the help we need.

He will give it to us.

Jules Chevalier msc
(Méditations p.723f, Issoudun 1891)

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved.....forever!

Stewardship

St Joseph – A life of service

We never hear St. Joseph speak, but the Scriptures tell us he was always listening, attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit for his family. Joseph protected the family, guarded them, tended to their safety, their comfort, and their well-being at the expense of his own plans and preferences. Though we do not hear any words from St. Joseph his actions clearly show that he offered himself, his whole life, as a gift to his family through his strong guidance, protection and service.

Let us imitate St. Joseph then as good stewards, giving our very lives to those around us in love and gratitude to God who has given us everything we have, especially His own Son, Jesus Christ. We will no doubt find that the more we give ourselves away, the more our generous Father will fill us with His grace and peace — these are truly the best Christmas gifts we could receive.

[Stewardship Reflections from TheCatholicSteward.com](http://TheCatholicSteward.com)

“Be on earth the Heart of God”

Reflection

God is with Us

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.'

Resource used: *Homily*, by Richard Leonard SJ at [LiturgyHelp](#)

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

RESPONSE TO THE PSALM:

Let the Lord enter;
He is king of glory

Recently Deceased:

Anniversary:

*Edward Clifford, John MacKay, Marie Cody,
Robert Carew, William Roots, Christopher Fitzsimon,
Kathleen Edmunds, Anne Hudson, Michael Devlin,
John Dickinson, Patrick Laverty, Paul MacKenzie,
Louise Ball, Geoffrey Walsh, Elana Powell,
Jarrod Smith, Dora Roberts, Luis Soria,
Cora Newman, Ellen Ottewill, Yvonne Williamson,
Ted Murphy, Michael Costelloe, Walter Hawkins,
Robert Wise, Margaret McCallion, Hannah Meham,
Joseph Davis, Clarice O'Callaghan, Kevin McMahon*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

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

Readings – 29 December 2019

First Reading Sir 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalm Ps 127:1-5
Second Reading Col 3:12-21
Gospel Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Sunday Readings with Commentary-

Available on the table in the church foyer for all parishioners who would like to pray with the readings in preparation for mass. These are not the readings that are produced for the Lectors on the reading ministry

PRAYER LIFE

Charismatic Prayer: Maida: 0423 658 326	Thursday 7:30pm Rosary 7:00pm
Meditation	Friday 7.30-8.15 pm
Rosary	Monday – Friday 9:05am
Adult Choir	Wednesday 7:30pm

29 Dec Reading Roster

6:00pm	Therese Kercher, Joe Catanzariti
8:30am	Judith Deklin, Elizabeth McDonald
10:00am	Libby Kain, Judy Lane
6:00pm	Marian Crowley, Meg Millband

Becoming Catholic

Rite of Christian Initiation of an Adult [RCIA]
please contact the parish office for more information.

29 Dec Ministers of Communion

6:00pm	Joy McInerney, Chitra Jayawardena, Janet Almond, Marie McKie, Maria Catanzariti
8:30am	Fay Stephenson, Carmel Screen, Clyde Sloan, Darren Maharaj, VACANT
10:00am	Nunga Umaru, Barbara Witzens, Colin Fox, Bonnie & Rose Benedictos
6:00pm	Margaret Curry, Marian Crowley, Gerard Teng, James & Toni Cox

SOCIAL LIFE

Coffee Club	Fourth Sunday after 10:00am Mass
Over 45's	Last Wednesday of the Month 9:30am Mass and morning tea
Pins & Needles	3 rd Monday 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 Lucky Shot Espresso Bar Kippax
Youth Group	AGAPE - First & Third Sunday after 6:00pm Mass Parish Centre
Men's Group	3 rd Friday of the Month 6:00pm Parish Centre

29 Dec Hospitality Roster

6:00pm	Chitra Jayawardena, Judy Netting, Marie McKie
8:30am	Agnes Pham, Rob Breen
10:00am	Judy Kenny
6:00pm	VACANT

School of Religion (Parish Centre)	Sunday 9.15am during school term
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Weekly Rosters

Altar Society:	23 Dec	Margaret Stanford
Grounds	28 Dec	David Pigram, Mike Lavis, Matthew Garton
Counting:	29 Dec	Group 9

Church Cleaning:	23 Dec	Joseph Lê Văn Hải Sam Van Nguyen
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LIBRARY NEWS: During this final week of Advent why not take home one of our meditation books relating to Christmas and the Advent season? We need to slow down a little and prepare for the coming of our Saviour. This may help us to do so.

On a lighter note

Knock, knock! Who's there?
Dexter. Dexter, who?
Dexter halls with boughs of holly.