



ST. AGATHA'S PARISH

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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 8.30am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm, Friday: 8.30am-12.00pm

Third Sunday of Advent *12/13 December 2020*

Gospel Message by Richard Leonard (St. John 1:6-8, 19-28)

Today is traditionally called *Gaudete* Sunday. Over the first millennium of Christianity Advent was like a late Lent. Both were five weeks long, both were marked by fasting and penance and both gave the faithful a day off half way through. In Lent *Laudete* Sunday is still, roughly, half way through the five-week season. Advent, however, was shortened to four weeks in the tenth century, and Pope St Gregory the Great eased the fasting and penitential aspects of this season in the twelfth century, but the not-so-half-way *Gaudete* Sunday has remained. It is, literally, the 'rejoicing' Sunday when we look more directly at Jesus' coming at Christmas.

To enable us to look at Jesus we start with the man who heralded his mission in the world, John the Baptist. In today's Gospel John the Baptist is the model of humility, opening the way for the Kingdom of Jesus to break in upon the world. We should never underestimate talent spotters, for as this story demonstrates, they all have John the Baptist as their patron saint.

Fleming was a poor Scottish farmer in the nineteenth century. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse cottage. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. 'I want to repay you,' said the nobleman. 'You saved my son's life.' 'No, I can't accept payment for what I did,' the Scottish farmer replied, waving away the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family home. 'Is that your son?' the nobleman asked. 'Yes,' the farmer replied proudly. 'I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow up to be a man you can be proud of.' And that is what he did.

In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St Mary's Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin. Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin.

The nobleman's name? Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill. (continued on page 3...)

Important Update

Increased numbers for all Christmas Masses.

We have been advised that we can increase attendance numbers at all of our Christmas Masses. Bookings for the 6pm Vigil Mass on 24th December will reopen on Monday 14th December. It is very important that everyone books for contact tracing purposes.

Children - Praying, Playing and Growing...

Jane Cameron will lead a special Children's liturgy centred around the season of Advent during the 9am Masses on Sunday the 13th & 20th of December. Jane will be assisted by Ewan McPherson, Julie Kordic and Kate Wick, teaching the children about the true meaning of Christmas through storytelling, discussion and play. All children are most welcome. Parents can attend if your child is a little reluctant.



Pope proclaims year dedicated to St. Joseph in apostolic letter 'Patris Corde'

Pope Francis has declared a special Year of St Joseph to mark the 150th anniversary of Bl Pius IX's proclamation of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

The Year of St Joseph will run from Tuesday, 8 December 2020, to Wednesday, 8 December 2021.

Pope Francis has also decreed a plenary indulgence for the Year of St Joseph, available to the faithful under the usual conditions, for various acts of devotion detailed in a [report from Vatican News](#).

In an Apostolic Letter, *Patris corde – With a father's heart* – Pope Francis describes the guardian of Our Lord as beloved, tender and loving, obedient, accepting father; one, who is both courageous and industrious, content to live and work "in the shadows" while he protected and provided for our Lord and Our Lady.

"His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust," Pope Francis wrote in the Letter. "Our world today needs fathers," he said. "It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs," and "rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction."

Vatican News explains that Pope Francis wrote the letter "against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic" and seeks to articulate some of the manifold ways in which the global emergency has laid bare to us out interdependence and our common humanity.

"Each of us," Pope Francis wrote, "can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

"A word of recognition and of gratitude," Pope Francis wrote, "is due to them all."

The Letter concludes with a prayer to St Joseph, reproduced here below in its official English translation:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

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Time for personal renewal

Advent season is a call for repentance and forgiveness of sins and it is a time for renewal of heart and mind. It is a special time for the sacrament of reconciliation. Fr Biju is available at any time for the sacrament of reconciliation, and also for the dates and times listed below. Don't be worried about what words to say. Sometimes we may not have anything to say; still let us move to the confessional to get the absolution and blessing during this advent season and prepare for Christmas.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: (Fr Biju will be in the confessional during these times)

12 Saturday	4.30pm- 5.00pm	20 Sunday	6.30am- 7.00am
13 Sunday	6.30am- 7.00am	20 Sunday	8.30am-9.00am
13 Sunday	8.30 am-9.00am	20 Sunday	5.00pm-5.30pm
13 Sunday	5.00pm- 5.30am	21 Monday	9.30am-10.00am
18 Friday	9.30am- 10.00am	20Tuesday	9.30m-10.00am
19 Saturday	4.30pm- 5.00pm		

DATE CLAIMER

St Agatha's Feast Day Mass and Celebrations on Sunday 7 February 2021.
Mass at 9.00am followed by Family Fun Day at Presentation Centre (St Agatha's School)

In our prayers we remember

Those who have died recently:

Those whose anniversaries occur about now:

Florence Hinson, James Power

And those who are unwell:

Andrea Frendo, Delphine Schulz, Nayland Pinkey, Mavis O'Brien, Anne Quinlan, Shelley Winter, Margot Gooding, Duncan Pegg, Charlie Richards, Noreen Martin, Kateri Byrnes, Patrick (Paddy) Ryan, Nick Newton, Lauren Carney, Patricia Beveridge, Janice Lewis, Michael Blanchard, Colleen Smythe, Peter Armstrong

Flynn Crowley, Lyndell Sawyer, Ray Pavey, Michael Cashman, Donald Morrisson, Joseph Tam, Bryan Weaver, Alexander Clark, Rosemary Douglas, Danielle Johnson, Gordon Hodge, Maureen Long, James Elliott, Camille Butler-Storms, Mary Ann Marcelo, Isabel Leddick, Carmel Elms, Helen Orosz, Lisa Bowes, Sophia Horrocks, Mario Di Filippo, Norma Fiore, Joan Healy, Dell McHugh, Ken Kipping, Paul White, Edward Clark, Regina Hwan, Deanne Du Bour, Melissa Waka, Agnes Tam, Kerri Smith, El Purwo, Patrick Gallagher, Hellen Passente.

Reminder to let us know when names are no longer required to be shown on the sick list.

The Shepherd's Candle

The third Sunday of Advent symbolizes Joy, with the **Shepherd's Candle** reminding us of the joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus. As we light this third candle (the pink candle), may its light remind us to be people of joy, as we await the coming of our Saviour in glory.

Prayer For The Advent Wreath

Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people.

He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us.
He is the Saviour of us all.

O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light the third candle of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name. **Amen.**



As you enter the church would you please come forward to sit closer to the altar, therefore those who arrive later can sit behind the church, keeping the social distance.

PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR CLOSURE

The Parish Office will be closed from
12pm Wednesday 23 December and will re-open
8.30am Monday 4 January 2021.

Christmas Raffle

Be in the running to win one of our amazing Christmas raffle prizes. Tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00. Many thanks to parishioners who have donated items for the raffles. Raffle will be drawn on Sunday 20 December at the 9am Mass.

St Agatha's Giving Tree - 2020

At Christmas time, you are encouraged to take a tag and return the gift and leave it at the base of the tree. Gifts to be in by **Sunday 20 December**, as members of St Vincent de Paul will be collecting the gifts and distributing them for Christmas. You may also leave the gift at the Parish Office.

St Agatha's SVDP Christmas Appeal

The SVDP Christmas Appeal will be conducted over the weekends up to and including 19/20 December. All donations will be gratefully appreciated. Appeal envelopes are available at the back of the Church. If making a donation by cheque, make payable to "St Agatha's Clayfield SVDP Conference".

Continued from page 1...

John the Baptist, the embodiment of the old covenant, recognises who Jesus is for the world and encourages his foes and friends alike to welcome in the Christ, the new and everlasting Covenant. Just like Farmer Fleming or Lord Randolph Churchill, he could not have known the implications of what he was doing. John the Baptist simply saw Jesus and knew that Love had taken human form. Through his talent spotting and in his promotion of Jesus he enabled the first generation of Christians to see and believe that the promises made to their ancestors had been fulfilled.

No wonder we have him as our focus on *Gaudete* Sunday. And so may we all rejoice today, not only because salvation is always close at hand in Christ the Lord, but because we are also called to spot his love in every act of goodness we see, encourage and promote it as best we can and then watch nature and grace do the rest.

Christmas Novena begins on 17 December. At this point, the advent focus shifts to the Christmas story and Virgin Mary. These days serve to prepare more directly for the Lord's birth.

Holy Communion for the sick

Holy Communion can be taken to the sick and homebound people. If you know anybody that would like to receive Communion, please contact the parish office.

Hour of Prayer:

Every Friday at St Agatha's Church immediately after the Holy Mass at 9 am. Exposition of Holy Eucharist, Rosary, Silent Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Celebrating the Holy Rosary together:

Every Tuesday, we will be reciting the Rosary in the Blessed Virgin Mary's Chapel at 9.30am, all are most welcome to join.

Readings - Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year B) - 20 December 2020

1st Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16; 2nd Reading: Romans 16:25-27; Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Weekend roster for Ministers of the Word December 2020

READERS

DATE	5.00pm	7.00am	9.00am	5.30pm
12/13 Dec	Alison Hall	Kirsty Stevens	Jane Arkinstall	
	Edward Foley	Chris Maher	Erin Bledsoe	
19/20 Dec	Cate Barrett	Andrew Douglas	Dan Butler	Max Van Balen
	Ann Goves		Hannah Dalisay	

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

DATE	5.00pm	7.00am	9.00am	5.30pm
12/13 Dec	Edward Foley	Georgia Allan	Joseph Tan	Joel Perkins
19/20 Dec	Jenny Close	Manus Maher	Andrea Whata	Jo Hayes

If you have any queries regarding volunteering in the church please contact the office.

The Parish secretary makes the rosters for all the ministries.

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 5.00pm
Sunday 7.00am, 9.00am,
5.30pm

The "Trybooking" link is:

[https://
www.trybooking.com/
BKFQD](https://www.trybooking.com/BKFQD).

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday 9.00am
Tuesday 9.00am
Rosary 9.30am
Wednesday 9.00am
Friday 9.00am,
Adoration 9.30am
Please sign-in when you enter.

THANK YOU...

Thank you so much for your generous contributions to the church.

The offerings last weekend 21/22 November:

1st Collection \$509.00

2nd Collection \$443.00

Loose \$654.25

If you are not part of the Planned Giving Program and would like to contribute via online internet banking, details are as follows:

Account name: St Agatha's Parish.

BSB number: 064 786

Account number: 0061 36002

Christmas Celebrations



Amid Covid 19 we are planning to have our Christmas Masses in our Church as below:

6pm Vigil Mass (carols start at 5.30pm)
12am Midnight Mass (carols start at 11.30pm)
7 am Holy Mass
9 am Holy Mass

This year we may celebrate Christmas in a simple way.

See update on the front page of this newsletter regarding increased numbers. **Bookings are essential.** The booking link is the same as the weekend Masses. The Christmas Masses are specifically marked. <https://www.trybooking.com/BKFQD>.

There will be no Holy Mass on 28th, 29th and 30th of December... On Thursday 31st we will celebrate the year's end Holy Mass of thanksgiving and on 1st January, we will begin the year with the celebration of Holy Mass at 9am.

Choir Practice for Christmas

Choir practice for our Christmas Masses has begun. New members are always welcome. If you would like to be a part of the choir, please contact Robyn Cuming on 0414 861 988.

Encourage practice of social distancing of 1.5m

Encourage wearing a mask when distancing is not possible

Encourage maintaining good hand hygiene practices

Require people to stay home if sick and get tested

Collect contact details for contact tracing

Parish Administration

Parish Administrator: Fr. Biju Thomas
(thomasb@bne.catholic.net.au)

Parish Secretary: Mrs Rosemary Greer

Family and Sacramental Ministry:
Mrs Jane Cameron

Finance Council Chair: Jodi Sutton

Community and Mission Council

Chair: Mrs Mary-Caroline van Paassen

Local Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Representative:
Georgia Allan (0456 441 717)

St. Agatha's Catholic Primary School

6 Hunter Lane Clayfield Qld 4011.
Phone: 3326 9222

School Principal: Ms Anne-Marie Maw

APRE: Mr Jake Knowles

Outside School Hours Care

Coordinator: Roxanne Grogan