



# Regina Coeli Parish

Beverly Hills - In the Archdiocese of Sydney



## Weekly Newsletter

### Liturgy Times

#### SUNDAY:

8:30am, 10:00am.

Children's Liturgy during school term

**TUESDAY:** 8:30am Adoration, 9.15am Mass

**WEDNESDAY:** 7:00am

**THURSDAY:** 9:15am

**FRIDAY:** 8:30am Adoration, 9.15am Mass

**SATURDAY:** 9:00am

(Adoration and Reconciliation after Mass)

5:00pm (Vigil Mass)

#### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 9:30-10:00am; 4:25-4:50pm



#### Pastoral Team:

Fr Peter Kwak PP

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### Feast of the Holy Family

**27 December 2020**

What an unusual Christmas! Just as the Church in Sydney was preparing to return to “normal” in time for Christmas, there was a heightened sense of alarm as stricter restrictions were brought back and everyone was strongly encouraged by the state government to have a very masked Christmas. Under the 2 square metre per person rule, we could have up to 260 people in the church of Regina Coeli. Therefore I thought that everyone would be able to find a seat without the need to introduce a booking system for Mass. When that number was suddenly halved by the very quick return of the 4 square metre per person rule, with only a few more days to go until Christmas, I started to get slightly worried.

But here is the amazing thing. And this has happened all throughout the corona-crisis. It is almost as though Catholics have a “supernatural” sense of whether or not there would be enough seats for them at Mass under the latest restrictions and they decide to come or not accordingly such that we usually end up with just right numbers of people. And, to my relief, Christmas 2020 was no exception. I marvelled at how the numbers were so evenly spread out across all of the masses, including the newly introduced 8pm Christmas Vigil. Who needs a computerised booking system when Catholics can rely on their interconnected 6th sense? It all worked out in the end! Nevertheless, I must admit that there was still some sadness in realising that Christmas Mass attendance was only averaging around 130 per mass, the fact of which, under normal circumstances, would have been rather underwhelming.

Congregational singing might have been prohibited but that did not stop the nativity story from being re-enacted by parish children at the 6pm Christmas Vigil (a.k.a. “family mass”). This year’s nativity play was an upgraded version of last year’s, with more children involved as well as more experienced second-time actors. I think that being able to watch the children doing their part at Christmas contributed greatly to the semblance of normality which I was privileged to witness in spite of all the unusual circumstances. I was very grateful to the families who took the initiative and made it happen again even in the notorious year of 2020. At the end of the mass I said something to the effect of: ‘It might be possible to imagine a Christmas with restrictions, but it would seem impossible to imagine a Christmas without children!’

There are so many parishioners to thank. Our volunteer system is not the most stable right now, with holes here and there, after never having quite recovered from the culture change precipitated by 2020. But there are still a good number of volunteers who have been as dependable as rock, going above and beyond their normal duties to help to look after the parish at times. Thanks to them, parish life somehow goes on, even during a period as precarious as 2020. I don’t have to think too hard to know that I could never thank them enough. At times like this, I realise how profoundly true the words of Jesus were when he said, ‘Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.’ (Matthew 5:13) Thank you all, I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year!

- Fr Peter -



## The Week Ahead

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Sun 27 Dec</b><br>Feast of Holy Family | 8.30am<br>10.00am                                       | <b>No need to book for Mass</b>  |
| <b>Mon 28 Dec</b><br>Holy Innocents       |   | No Mass  |
| <b>Tue 29 Dec</b>                         | 9.15am<br><b>11am</b>                                   | Mass<br><b>Funeral Mass: Doris Beagley</b>                             |
| <b>Wed 30 Dec</b>                         | 7am   | Mass   |
| <b>Thu 31 Dec</b>                         | 9.15pm  | Mass   |
| <b>Fri 1 Jan</b><br>New Years Day         | 9.15am  | Mass   |
| <b>Sat 2 Jan</b>                          | 9.00am<br>9:25-<br>9:55am<br><br>4:15-<br>4:45pm<br>5pm | Mass<br>Adoration & Reconciliation<br><br>Reconciliation<br>Vigil Mass |
| <b>Sun 3 Jan</b><br>Feast of Epiphany     | 8.30am<br>10.00am                                       | Mass<br>Mass   |

### Recently Deceased

Doris Beagley, George Cooley, Nitta McGree, Robert Henderson, Paul Kensey, John Bonner

### Please remember those who are in ill

**health especially:** Carmen Bajada, Anne Kensey, Peter Peters, Monica Costa, Quang Vo, Matt Nugent, Ann Mc Dowell, Christopher McDowell, Damiano Serravalle, Michelle Makin, George Dagher, Mrs Saba, Josephina Algozzina, Pat Mortimer, Mrs Donald Burch, Mary Daniels, Geoff McDowell, Elena Mura, Mr TD (Terry) Wall, Kim Delaney, Lauren Sotano, Sam Hy, Georgia Brown, Luke Compton, Paul Camelotti.

### Rosary Statue

**Mrs T Pezzutti**  
**200A Moorefields Road**  
**Ph: 0403 060 376**



#### Parish Secretary

Mrs Margaret  
Doherty-Brady  
9554 8155  
Tues 8:30am-  
1:30pm Wed & Fri  
10.30am—3.30pm

#### Sacramental Coordinator/ PSSO

Mrs Elizabeth Gooley  
9554 8155  
reginasacramental@gmail.com  
Tuesday **and** Thursday from  
11.30am - 3.30pm

#### School Principal

Mr Chris Egan  
Asst. Principal  
Mr Peter Busch

#### REC

Mrs Elizabeth  
Webster

## THE HOLY FAMILY PRAYER

JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH,  
IN YOU WE CONTEMPLATE  
THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUE LOVE;  
TO YOU WE TURN WITH TRUST.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,  
GRANT THAT OUR FAMILIES TOO  
MAY BE PLACES OF COMMUNION AND PRAYER,  
AUTHENTIC SCHOOLS OF THE GOSPEL  
AND SMALL DOMESTIC CHURCHES.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,  
MAY FAMILIES NEVER AGAIN EXPERIENCE  
VIOLENCE, REJECTION AND DIVISION;  
MAY ALL WHO HAVE BEEN HURT OR SCANDALIZED  
FIND READY COMFORT AND HEALING.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,  
MAKE US ONCE MORE MINDFUL  
OF THE SACREDNESS AND INVIOABILITY OF THE FAMILY,  
AND ITS BEAUTY IN GOD'S PLAN.

BY POPE FRANCIS

## YEAR OF ST JOSEPH

*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.*



## Pope Francis's General Audience on Christmas

*Christmas has become a universal feast, and even those who do not believe perceive the appeal of this occasion. The Christian, however, knows that Christmas is a decisive event, an eternal fire that God has kindled in the world, and must not be confused with ephemeral things...No: Christmas must not be reduced to a merely sentimental or consumerist feast, full of gifts and good wishes but poor in Christian faith, and also poor in humanity. Therefore, it is necessary to curb a certain worldly mentality, incapable of grasping the incandescent core of our faith, which is this: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (Jn 1:14). And this is the kernel of Christmas; rather, it is the truth of Christmas, there is no other.*



*The other day, while I was speaking with some scientists, we spoke about artificial intelligence and robots... there are robots programmed for everyone and everything, and this continues to advance. And I said to them, "But what will robots never be able to do?" They thought about it, they made suggestions, but in the end they were all in agreement about one thing: tenderness. Robots will never be capable of this. And this is what God brings us, today: a wonderful way in which God wanted to come into the world, and this revives tenderness in us, the human tenderness close to that of God. And today we are in great need of tenderness, we are in great need of a human touch, in the face of so much misery! If the pandemic has forced us to be more distant, Jesus, in the crib, shows us the way of tenderness to be close to each other, to be human. Let us follow this path. Merry Christmas!*



One of the highlights of Christmas 2020 was probably the opportunity for parishioners to be presented with the gifts which were sponsored by the parish. Rita and Joan, who are both members of the parish pastoral council, had the brilliant idea of preparing Christmas gifts for parishioners, especially given the fact that parish Christmas party, sadly, did not happen this year.

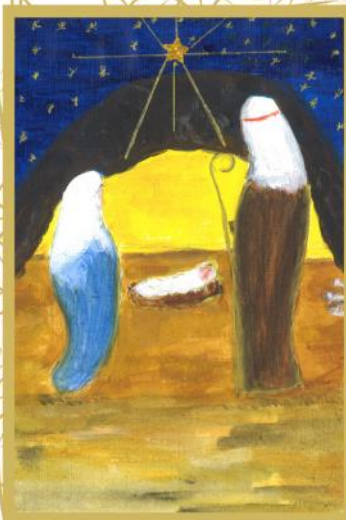
Each gift pack was comprised of a candle, a candle plate and a prayer card. On one side of the prayer card was a Christmas prayer written by Pope St John XXIII. On the other side was the widely known grace-before-meals. The hope was that the gifts might encourage the families in our parish to develop a culture of praying together, well beyond the season of Christmas!

I wish to thank Rita and Joan for getting the gifts organised, in particular for putting them together and wrapping them which would have been a mountainous task. I am told that certain family members of theirs have helped out. So, on behalf of the parish, I sincerely thank them all and trust that their hours of loving sacrifice have been appreciated by those who felt touched by the surprise gifts.



### CHRISTMAS PRAYER BY POPE ST JOHN XXIII

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into the hearts of men and women this peace for which they sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give to them. Help them to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Reveal to them also your beauty, holiness and purity. Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness. Join them all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace. Amen.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!



At least one family tells me they did it!

## First Reading Gen 15:1-6. 21:1-3

*Your own son shall be your heir.*

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great'.

'My Lord', Abram replied, 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless...' Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.' And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be one of your own flesh and blood.' Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants,' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 104:1-6. 8-9. R.vv.7-8**

**(R.) The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.**

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.  
O sing to him, sing his praise;  
tell all his wonderful works! (R.)
2. Be proud of his holy name,  
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.  
Consider the Lord and his strength;  
constantly seek his face. (R.)
3. Remember the wonders he has done,  
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.  
O children of Abraham, his servant,  
O sons of the Jacob he chose. (R.)
4. He remembers his covenant for ever,  
his promise for a thousand generations,  
the covenant he made with Abraham,  
the oath he swore to Isaac. (R.)

## Second Reading Heb 11:8. 11-12. 17-19

*The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.*

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

## Gospel Acclamation Heb 1:1-2

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets;  
now he speaks to us through his Son.  
Alleluia!**

## Gospel Lk 2:22-40

**(or Shorter form Lk 2:22. 39-40)**

*The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.*

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master,  
you can let your servant go in peace,  
just as you promised;  
because my eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,  
a light to enlighten the pagans  
and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.



## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

The readings focus our attention on true family values. God promises an heir to a couple that cannot produce a child, and when the promise is fulfilled and the child is born, God asks for the life of that child. The hopes that were kindled by the promise and that blazed brilliantly with the child's birth now lie like ashes on a heap. Is God reneging on the promise of a descendant? Is God playing with people's dreams and aspirations? Or might God be preparing them for yet another marvel?

The couple had placed their trust in God's initial promise of new life, and it was fulfilled. Now Abraham, as the representative of the entire family, is asked to hope against hope, to relinquish the child in whom all of the hopes of the future rests. Trust does not really depend upon the promises made, but upon the one making the promises. God is a God of surprises, of the paradoxical, of the preposterous. This is a God who opens closed wombs, rescinds death sentences, takes an obscure child and makes him the light to the nations. Trust in such a God requires that we sacrifice our own presuppositions. Then, expecting nothing from God, we can be open to everything. In the face of such mystery, the human heart can only sing with gratitude. We live in the presence of God, and this sustains us through whatever seems impossible. Thanksgiving opens us to receive God's promise and God's gifts.

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