



Regina Coeli Parish

Beverly Hills - In the Archdiocese of Sydney



Weekly Newsletter

**Fourth Sunday of Advent
24 December 2023**

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

What's new about Christmas, unlike anything else which has ever happened either before or after? What's really new about Christmas? A virgin conceived and gave birth to a son. But how did the virgin conceive? Through the Holy Spirit. In other words, what's new about Christmas is that there has been a new marriage between God and humanity, a new marriage between heaven and earth. And the child of this marriage was to be called *Emmanuel*, which means 'God is with us.' What's new about Christmas is that God is with us, not just sentimentally or as a form of wishful thinking, but truly and substantially, like a newborn child who can be held in our own arms!

There are endless practical implications which arise from the radical newness of Christmas: where there is great darkness there can be radiant light which is even greater, where there is deep suffering there can be consolation which is even more profound, etc. Pope Francis pointed out in a recent Wednesday audience that the tradition of setting up Nativity scenes, which was inspired by St Francis of Assisi, started out not for the purpose of displaying beautiful art works but for that of recreating the harsh circumstances under which the Saviour was born: poor, dirty, smelly, uncomfortable, unaccommodated and most definitely seemingly unbecoming of the King of kings, Lord of lords! And yet where He was there was the most exquisite beauty which outweighed all of the tragedies of the entire universe!

The following is a reflection from Elly, the Family Educator at Regina Coeli, who touches upon a similar theme:

A big thank you to all of you for your huge support and prayers while I've been away in Italy, caring for my grandmother with Dementia.

A couple of days ago I witnessed a great miracle! A priest came to visit my grandma to do the anointing of the sick and to bring her Communion. I was very nervous about the visit because she normally does not appreciate people going to her house. She always feels that her house is never tidy enough for visitors. The upside of Dementia is that she's less aware of things so surprisingly she was not embarrassed when the priest asked to come in.

The priest gave her words of encouragement and prayed for the Holy Spirit to bring her joy and peace in the midst of suffering. He invited her to say a couple of prayers together and to say sorry for all her sins so that she would be able to listen better to Jesus by praying the prayer we normally say at the beginning of Mass: "I confess...". He then prayed and gave her the precious body of Jesus.

I wish I could explain the transformation I witnessed during this visit. One minute before the priest came she was complaining non-stop about how miserable her condition was. Then, suddenly, as she received the Holy Spirit (through repentance) and Jesus (in the Eucharist), God was shining through her. She was smiling like I haven't seen her smile in years. She had a lot more clarity than usual and was able to have a normal conversation with the priest, to listen and respond coherently. After the priest left, she ate with appetite and could not stop saying how kind the priest was and how grateful she was for the visit. We all thought that her brain was no longer connected, but on Wednesday I was filled with hope.

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The Week Ahead

Sun 24 December 4th Sunday Advent	8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass
Followed by Christmas Eve	6.00pm Christmas Vigil 12.00am Christmas Midnight
Mon 25 December Christmas Day	8.30am Christmas Day Mass 10.00am Christmas Day Mass
Tue 26 December St Stephen	9.15am Mass
Wed 27 December St John	7.00am Mass
Thu 28 December Holy Innocents	9.15am Mass
Fri 29 December Octave of Christmas	9.15am Mass
Sat 30 December Octave of Christmas	9:00am Mass 9:30- Adoration 9:55am & Reconciliation 4:15- Reconciliation 4:45pm 5.00pm Mass
Sun 31 December Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph	8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass

Recently Deceased

Ann McDowell, Arthur Webster, Maria Passeggio, Sr Marie Weeks OP, Val Green, Rula Hanna, Terence Wall, Pierre Cardoz, Anton Mandich, Pat Mortimer, Patricia Johnson, Geoffrey Connolly, Derek de Voss, Peter Phillips

In Loving Memory

Cono Reale, Valerie Zacka, Dorothy Browne, Peter Pezzutti, Max Chipman, Diane Nickel, Pietro & Grazia Banno, Nunzio & Veneranda Vicino, Francesco Vicino, Santa Belsito, Eddie Da Silva, Jose Gomes, June Coyle, Kathleen Coleman, Donato Tozzi, Donato Carnevale, Peter Peters, Frank Capra, Bob Henderson.

Please remember those who are in ill

health especially: Lucita Lucerna, Betty Meaney, Monica Costa, Ronnie Gaudry, Steve Ghan-tons, Vincent Roberts, Lucy Blundell, Ryan Henderson, Dennis McNerney, Mary Patricia Hanrahan, Mitchell Morris, Brian Moore, Josephina Algozzino Damiano Serravalle, Mary Daniels, Geoff McDow-

Rosary Statue
Mr & Mrs M. Shenoda
8a Coo loongatta Rd
Ph: 0478105554



Parish Secretary

9554 8155
Tues 11am-4pm
&
Fri 11am-4pm

Sacramental Coordinator/ PSSO

Mrs Elizabeth Gooley
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Tuesday & Friday from
10.30am - 4.00pm

School Principal

Mr Chris Egan
Asst. Principal
Mr Peter Busch

REC
Ms Lisa Scott

Christmas 2023

SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER:

CHRISTMAS VIGIL AT 6PM
(starting with carols at 5:30pm)

MIDNIGHT MASS AT MIDNIGHT
(starting with carols at 11:30pm)

MONDAY 25TH DECEMBER:

CHRISTMAS DAY MASS AT 8.30AM
CHRISTMAS DAY MASS AT 10AM

ADVENT RECONCILIATION:

THURSDAY 21 DECEMBER 6-8PM



Last Monday a group from Regina Coeli went on a bus trip (courtesy of the Chancery) to St Mary's Cathedral for their Christmas lights and more. What we booked was a 50 seater but there were at least 60 of us who got on the bus. A miracle of the multiplication of bus seats?

The piazza of St Mary's Cathedral was packed with crowds, even though this was only a

Monday night. There were stalls selling food, drinks and ice cream. A stage had been set up so that various choirs from various communities could perform each evening. The Cathedral itself was fully open to public, including the crypt downstairs where pilgrims could visit the newly installed tomb of Cardinal George Pell. The Christmas lights and the almost life-sized Nativity set were beautiful!

We arrived back at Regina Coeli about ten minutes later than the estimated return time of 10pm. But everyone seemed happy about the fact that they took a chance with (most probably) the first ever parish bus trip to the Christmas lights at St Mary's Cathedral. Some enjoyed ice cream, others pizza at some stage during the course of our excursion. They all looked as though they were ready for a peaceful night of sleep and rest. There is something about travelling as a group. Even a simple bus trip can be imbued with extra joy and excitement. Had we had a PA system which was easier to operate on the bus, we might have prayed and sung together nonstop!

Last Weekend 17 December 2023

2nd Collection \$1650.50

1st Collection \$1148.10

Cashless Giving \$505

Attendance

5PM ~108

8.30AM ~130

10AM ~150

Total ~388

I know that her pain has not gone away and is just as strong as it was last week, but I had the proof that God's love is bigger than any pain we're experiencing and that when we open our heart to receive it, we're able to endure any suffering, because we're not alone, and we're still able to smile because joy is the result of the grace that comes from God, not from us, so regardless of our condition, we can still experience joy by the grace of God.

Through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I pray that we may all be inspired to open the door of our heart wider to Jesus who longs to dwell in us. We are unable to fix, heal and clean our heart on our own. We all need His intervention and His graces. Let us be bold and say "Yes" to what He has already prepared for us, following the example of Mary's "Yes".

- Elly Razzoli -

Christmas Wishing Well Appeal

The Vinnies conference at Regina Coeli has raised over two weekends **a total of \$3930** which will go toward purchasing Christmas gifts for the needy in our area.

Anne Kensey, who led the appeal, thought that she would be lucky to raise \$2000 due to the fact that so many are doing it tough nowadays. She says, 'Thank you. You have been so generous!'



First Friday Monthly Rosary

The Holy Rosary will be recited in Our Lady's Chapel at Regina Coeli on **Friday 5th January at 10.00am.**
All welcome.



From Archbishop Anthony Fisher OPs (18 December 2023) Note to clergy re Fiducia Supplicans

Earlier this week the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, with the approval of Pope Francis, published a declaration Fiducia Supplicans which has occasioned considerable commentary and controversy. Despite some misleading media reports, the Declaration has restated settled Church teaching on marriage and sexuality [e.g. §4], and in no way sanctions "irregular unions" such as remarriage after divorce, polygamy or same-sex relationships.

Rather than endorsing "same-sex blessings" by Catholic clergy, Fiducia supplicans specifies that no liturgical blessing can be given to such irregular bonds [§§4-6, 11 & 38-39]. Impromptu pastoral blessings are another matter: as ministers of God's grace, we welcome people's requests to pray with and for them. We will not normally know if they are in a state of grace and we do not normally inquire into their life circumstances: it is enough that they seem to be motivated by genuine humility of heart, openness to God's will and mercy, and by a desire for God's help to live a better life [§§20 & 21, 32]. Our response must be pastorally sensitive to them, while also avoiding causing serious scandal and confusion amongst the faithful [§30]. This requires both appreciation of Catholic teaching and "prudent and fatherly discernment of ordained ministers" in application [§41].

In praying for those whom we know or suspect may be living in irregular situations, it is proper that we pray that they "may mature and grow in fidelity to the Gospel", "be freed from their imperfections and frailties", and in their character and deeds grow ever closer to God and His plan for them [§§31, 33].

As Advent draws to a close, we are reminded that God so loved the world—every person in the world—that He gave His only Son. While some (such as Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna) received Him wholeheartedly into the crib of their hearts, others rejected Him (e.g. Herod, the innkeeper), and others struggled with their sin, sometimes responding to God's plan in their lives, sometimes not (e.g. Zechariah, the shepherds). We pastors must help all our people, including those in irregular unions, to hear the Gospel call to repent and believe the good news, welcoming them with arms wide open into the Christmas mystery, and prompting them to progress towards that perfection to which God is calling us all.

With my Christmas blessings on you all!

First Reading 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

The kingdom of David will be established for ever in the sight of the Lord.

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. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 88:2-5, 27, 29. R. see v.2

(R.) 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;
or him my covenant shall endure. (R.)

Second Reading Rom 16:25-27

The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.

Glory 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. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation Lk 1:38

Alleluia, alleluia!

*I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done.*

Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 1:26-38

You will conceive and bear a son.

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.

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**Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA**

The world in which we live and the events of which we are a part are the stage upon which the drama of salvation is enacted. God works through real flesh and blood people, those like David, who occupy the seats of power and influence as well as those like Mary and us, who are unseen and unknown. All can be agents of salvation. God's future is in our hands. Human history is really the history of salvation. Each turn of God's revealing causes us to wonder at what might come next. In this tension, mystery is revealed. What was hidden is now made known. Jesus establishes a people of covenant promise. Still, the mystery is unknown, for it continues to come to us from the future, revealing more and more of itself in the junctures of history.

The waiting of Advent is over. In the face of the impossible, God works the possible. During Advent, we have been waiting for the realisation of the promise made to David. We have been waiting for Mary's yes. With this yes, hope is enlivened, and history is changed. There is an unimaginable future for all people, a future that comes from God. Salvation is created among us, and the fate of history is altered by a godly presence. This salvation resides in the hearts of those who believe in the gift, and who stay awake eagerly to know its coming. With David we await it, with the nations we long for it, with Mary we behold it.