



# Regina Coeli Parish

Beverly Hills - In the Archdiocese of Sydney



## Weekly Newsletter

### Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph 31 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

Last weekend, the 4th Sunday of Advent was immediately followed by Christmas only several hours later. The same scenario had been played out 6 years ago. It was hard for me then. But now I was 6 years older! Of course, I could not complain, given that, not just me, but all the priests around the world faced the same challenge of working their way through what felt like two consecutive weekends with no break between them! Needless to say, I was filled with immense gratitude when all of the ceremonies had concluded well, thanks to all those who helped!

The turnout at Christmas was quite good but perhaps not great. Maybe the weather had something to do with it (or we are yet to recover from the normalisation of non-attendance after Christmas was almost completely cancelled in 2020-1). What was amazing, however, was that it only rained *between* the ceremonies. As though commanded by a higher power, the rain would always stop in time for the Christmas masses, whilst leaving intact the benefit of cooled temperatures. In particular, the still calm which followed a torrential rain set the perfect atmosphere for the midnight Mass. Contrary to appearance, the weather was actually fantastic!

Our Sunday 10am choir worked hard to provide beautiful music at the Christmas Vigil and then at the 10am Mass on Christmas Day. The 8:30am choir had to improvise and bring in guest singers in order to maintain quality singing, in the absence of a few key members who had travelled interstate. The fresh flowers on the sanctuary had been donated by Adriani who wished to do something beautiful for Our Lady. The new altar frontals, which complemented the long Christmas curtains (made by Judy last year), were generously produced by Hala, who also made, as she did last year, hundreds of Christmas gifts for children!

The Nativity play by the children at the Christmas Vigil was a great hit, once again reminding us that the presence of children at Christmas makes us feel that, yes, *Emmanuel* - God is with us! This had been the 6th year when Rosetta and Tina co-directed the Nativity play. As always, Raewyn set up, in front of the altar of Our Lady, the Nativity scene toward which the three wise men had been clandestinely moving. The baby Jesus completed the Nativity scene by being placed on the manger, symbolically signalling the start of the season of Christmas, which I hope we can all enjoy with gratitude and grace!

- Fr Peter -

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Fr Peter Kwak PP

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## The Week Ahead

<b>Sun 31 December</b> <b>Holy Family</b>	8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass
<b>Mon 1 January</b> <b>Mother of God</b>	<b>9.15am Mass (New Year's Day)</b>
<b>Tue 2 January</b> <b>Sts Basil &amp; Gregory</b>	9.15am Mass
<b>Wed 3 January</b>	7.00am Mass
<b>Thu 4 January</b>	9.15am Mass
<b>Fri 5 January</b>	9.15am Mass
<b>Sat 6 January</b>	9.00am Mass 9.30- Adoration 9.55am & Reconciliation  4.15- Reconciliation 4.45pm 5.00pm Mass
<b>Sun 7 January</b> <b>The Epiphany of the Lord</b>	8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass



### Pope Francis at Christmas 2023:

*Worship is the way to embrace the Incarnation. For it is in silence that Jesus, the Word of the Father, becomes flesh in our lives. Let us do as they did, in Bethlehem, a town whose name means "House of Bread." Let us stand before him who is the Bread of Life. Let us rediscover worship, for to worship is not to waste time, but to make our time a dwelling place for God. It is to let the seed of the Incarnation bloom within us; it is to cooperate in the work of the Lord, who, like leaven, changes the world. To worship is to intercede, to make reparation, to allow God to realign history. As a great teller of epic tales once wrote to his son, "I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament ... There you will find romance, glory, honor, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth" (J.R.R. Tolkien, Letter 43, March 1941).*

### Recently Deceased

Lucita Lucerna, Tony Deng, Ann McDowell, Arthur Webster, Sr Marie Weeks OP, Val Green, Rula Hanna, Terence Wall, Anton Mandich, Pat Mortimer, Patricia Johnson, Geoffrey Connolly

### In Loving Memory

Ken & Mary McKinnon, Sam Xerri, Cono Reale, Peter Pezzutti, Pietro & Grazia Banno, 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:** Betty Meaney, Monica Costa, Ronnie Gaudry, Steve Ghantons, Vincent Roberts, Lucy Blundell, Ryan Henderson, Dennis McNerney, Mary Patricia Hanrahan, Mitchell Morris, Brian Moore, Josephina Algozzino Damiano Serravalle, Mary Daniels, Geoff McDowell.



MASS TO MARK  
THE ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE DEATH OF

**Eileen  
O'CONNOR**  
SERVANT OF GOD

WED | 10 JAN | 10AM

PRINCIPAL CELEBRANT:  
BISHOP EMERITUS  
TERRY BRADY

ST BRIGID'S CHURCH  
CNR BROOK AND  
WALTHAM STREETS,  
COOGEE

### Rosary Statue

**Mrs. J. Vincent**

**14 Warrawee Place**

**Ph: 02 9150 4996**



#### Parish Secretary

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

#### Sacramental Coordinator/ PSSO

Mrs Elizabeth Gooley  
9554 8155  
reginasacramental@gmail.com  
Tuesday & Friday from  
10.30am - 4.00pm

#### School Principal

Mr Chris Egan  
Asst. Principal  
Mr Peter Busch

#### REC

Ms Lisa Scott

### Last Weekend 24 December 2023

**2nd Collection \$1846.70**

1st Collection \$807.95

### Attendance

5PM	103
8.30AM	86
10AM	~140
<b>Total</b>	<b>~329</b>

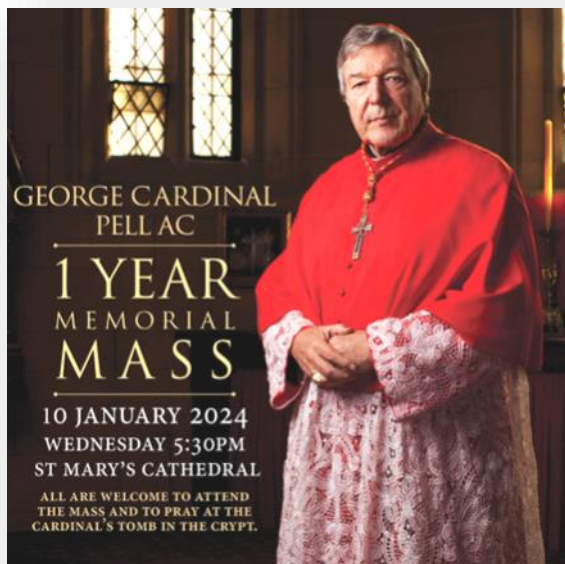
### Christmas 2023

**2nd Collection \$2430.10**

1st Collection \$2915.90

Cashless Giving \$950





## An Evening with Christopher West – Male and Female He Created Them

Following Dr Christopher West's Made for More presentation earlier this year, he returns to Sydney to dive deeper with families to rediscover authentic masculinity and femininity. This not-to-be-missed one-night presentation will provide a hopeful and redemptive understanding of our creation's original and glorious meaning as male and female.

**DATE:** Saturday, 20 January 2024

**VENUE:** All Saints Liverpool Catholic Parish, 48 George Street, Liverpool

**TIME:** 7:00pm - 9:30pm. (Doors open at 6:30pm)

**PRICE:** \$20 general admission. \$15 concession/student

For more information on the evening and to purchase tickets, visit:

<https://sydneycatholic.org/summer-series/>.

## 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.



## Excerpts from the Words of Remembrance for Arthur Webster (by Judy Webster, wife)

*Arthur was born in Lismore...the eldest of four boys to Bob and Jean Webster. His father and mother had dairy cows, so life revolved around twice a day milking and generally running a small farm. Their home was set amidst rolling green hills and big skies in the Northern Rivers district of NSW.*

*Arthur often told stories of how he...tried to avoid waking up early to milk the cows, by pretending to be asleep when his father called them in the mornings. Another of Arthur's great stories told how he went to the little local school. Walking barefoot and later riding his horse, Billy Boy through neighbouring paddocks. One of my favourites was his story of coming home from school in the rain.....to keep his head dry, he took his pants off and put them on his head!!!*

*In 1961 he travelled by train to Sydney to begin training as a Telecommunications Technician with the then PMG Dept, now known as Telstra. During this time he forged many great friendships which endure to this day...He advanced in Telstra, remaining there for 38 years until his early retirement at the age of 55.*



*Arthur met me on 14 April 1977. His brother Bruce arranged for Arthur to meet me on arrival in Sydney, as I had a stopover on my way to New Zealand. Well, he must have been impressed because he called me in every stop on my two week coach tour there. But there's more. At the end of my tour, he flew to New Zealand to be with me for another two weeks, while I visited friends in Auckland and a life time romance was born! We married in Brisbane in 1981 and I then moved to his home in Beverly Hills.*

*Life soon changed when we welcomed our beautiful firstborn, Bridget, in August 1982 and then we were further blessed with the arrival of an equally beautiful Majella in February 1984. He was a wonderful father. Very hands on and caring for their every need. He was involved in every aspect of their care and nothing was ever too much trouble for him. Arthur loved his three girls and we were the focus of his life.*

*In the first year of our married life, Arthur decided to be confirmed in the Catholic Faith, a commitment from which he never wavered. He embraced his faith more fully, when in 1992 he became an Acolyte at Beverly Hills Parish. Among his duties were assisting the Priest at Mass and distributing Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. He remained an Acolyte for 23 years, only stepping down when we moved to The Ponds in 2015.*

*Some advantages of his country upbringing, were to learn practical skills which enabled him to turn his hand to so many things, including building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, cooking and washing up!!! In his retirement, he filled his days helping others. During his last years at work doing 12 hour shifts, he began his small lawn mowing and handyman service, mainly helping the elderly parishioners and neighbours.*

*If someone was in need Arthur was always available to help out. In his retirement we enjoyed travelling overseas and locally visiting family and friends interstate. His constant wish in recent years was to go travelling North again. Arthur was a loyal and trusted friend to many. He was a loving son. A loving brother to Kyle, Bruce and Peter and favourite uncle to their children. He was the most wonderful father and Grandfather.*

*I was so blessed to have the most loving husband ever and I will miss the love of my life for the rest of my days.*

## 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.

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## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

In an era when so much talk is devoted to the discussion of family values, the readings for this feast offer significant challenge. Those who believe in Christ, while still adhering to certain cultural codes of conduct, are asked to consider new and ever more balanced ways of relating. In view of their lives as Christians, parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters must all be embraced as equal members of the household of God.

While it is important that children of all ages honour their parents, the caring relationship of adult children for aging parents is vital in a time of mobility, nursing homes, and the lack of extended families. From God's perspective, loving care of aged members is non-negotiable. It is a family virtue that is to be kept sacred.

Wisdom comes with time and experience. Such wisdom is a source of blessing, for it provides insight and a perspective that allows the community to know the mystery and the presence of God. When the wisdom of the elderly is respected, the young are enriched by the stories of the past. Wisdom figures can point the community to places where God is working and where the divine can be found. It is their respect for tradition that allows the elderly to speak the prophetic words that can change the course of the future and inspire noble deeds of courage in the face of great pain. In reverencing the elderly and their wisdom, the community of believers receive Christ.

## Reflection based on the optional readings.

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.