

**REGULAR WEEKEND MASS LOCATIONS**

**St. Mary's Church, Woodend**  
1B Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305.  
**Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Leichhardt**  
22 Old Toowoomba Road, Leichhardt 4305.  
**St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich**  
42 Pine Mountain Road, North Ipswich 4305.  
**St. Brigid's Church Hall, Rosewood**  
Railway Street, Rosewood 4340.  
**Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, E/Heights**  
33A Robertson Road, Eastern Heights 4305.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Parish Office Hours**  
Monday to Friday 8:30am - 3:30pm  
1C Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305 | 07 3281 2133  
[ipswich@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:ipswich@bne.catholic.net.au) | [ipswichcatholic.com](http://ipswichcatholic.com)  
**Parish Priest:** Fr. Stephen Bliss OFM  
**Assistant Priests:** Fr. Johny Edapulavan CMI  
Fr. Jose Panampuzha CMI  
**Seminarian:** Michael Tran

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

**Year A**

**11th December 2022**

**Dear Parishioners,**

As our Nativity scenes are appearing in each of our Churches, I share some words of Pope Francis.

“Stopping to gaze at and perhaps pray before a Nativity scene is one of the best ways to remember the real meaning of Christmas” Pope Francis said.

“In its genuine poverty,” the Pope said, “the creche helps us to rediscover the true richness of Christmas and to purify ourselves of so many aspects that pollute the Christmas landscape.”

“Simple and familiar, the Nativity scene recalls a Christmas that is different from the consumerist and commercial Christmas. It is something else. It reminds us how good it is for us to cherish moments of silence and prayer in our days, often overwhelmed by frenzy,”

He encourages everyone to find some quiet time to spend before a creche at Christmas.

“Silence encourages contemplation of the child Jesus,” the Pope said, and “helps us to become intimate with God, with the fragile simplicity of a tiny newborn baby, with the meekness of his being laid down, with the tender affection of the swaddling clothes that envelop him.”

“If we really want to celebrate Christmas,” he said, “let us rediscover through the crib the surprise and amazement of littleness, the littleness of God, who makes himself small, who is not born in the splendour of appearances, but in the poverty of a stable.”

Let's prepare to open ourselves to the great joy of Christmas 2022.



*Stephen ofm*

**Parish Birthday BBQ** – On Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December from 6pm to 8pm we will have a BBQ to celebrate 2022, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday of our Parish. Please come along and bring your family, and a friend, to grab a sausage and catch-up with others.

The church will be open for prayer and adoration if you would like to pop in, and there will be plenty of activity outside in the carpark where we will gather for a sausage sizzle!

We may even have a cake! But you will need to come along and see for yourself. A special thank you to Tone Clark and the Samoan Choir who have been kind enough to host the BBQ, so come along and have some fun!

What a great way to wind down and the sausages are on us! For catering purposes, please register via

[bit.ly/2022parishbirthday](https://bit.ly/2022parishbirthday) **ALL ARE WELCOME**



**PARISH CALENDAR**

**THIS WEEKEND**

<b>Fri 09</b>	No Youth – Christmas Break
	4:30pm Mass at Immaculate Heart Church
<b>Sat 10</b>	4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church 6:00pm Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
<b>Sun 11</b>	7.30am Mass at St. Joseph's, Church (cuppa after) 8:00am Mass at St. Brigid's Church Hall (m/tea after) 9.00am Mass at St. Mary's Church Incl Children's Liturgy of the Word (during Mass) 10.30am Baptisms, St. Mary's Church 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church

**NEXT WEEK**

<b>Mon 12</b>	7:00am Mass at St. Joseph's Church
<b>Tues 13</b>	9:00am Immaculate Heart Church 6.30pm Choir Practice, St Mary's Church
<b>Wed 14</b>	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's 9:30am Mass, St. Brigid's Church Hall 6:30pm RCIA Christian Morality & Living, Parish Office
<b>Thur 15</b>	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church 10.30am Funeral Mass at Nth Ips – Cecily Edwards
<b>Fri 16</b>	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church 6.00pm Parish Birthday BBQ



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## PASTORAL & OPERATIONAL UPDATE

### PARISH SITREP

Situation Report

Many of our buildings are old, and part of them are failing! We have a planned maintenance schedule, but due to the number of properties, it can get a little hectic at times. If you would like to contribute to the cost of any of these projects, please place an envelope on the collection plate marked 'Repairs'. Thank you to those who have already given!

### Operations Manager Update

Don't forget 'Engage 2023' launches Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023! Stay tuned for how you can be involved!!



**Lawns & Gardens** – Dan and Sarah are busy preparing our church lawns in time for Christmas.

Over the Christmas period they will be taking a much needed break.

They will be back on deck the week of the 9<sup>th</sup> January. A special thank you to the both of them, for the outstanding work they are doing for the Parish. I wish their family a blessed Christmas.



### Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

On Thursday evening this week, we celebrated this important solemnity with an 'abridged' Evening Prayer and Rosary. Our liturgy reflected on the Immaculate Conception, and also connected with our Advent Journey, noting the 'YES' Mary gave when presented with the impossible mission of being the mother of our saviour.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX solemnly proclaimed: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin."

It took a long time for this doctrine to develop. While many Fathers and Doctors of the Church considered Mary the greatest and holiest of the saints, they often had difficulty in seeing Mary as sinless—either at her conception or throughout her life. This is one of the Church teachings that arose more from the piety of the faithful than from the insights of brilliant theologians. Even such champions of Mary as Bernard of Clairvaux and Thomas Aquinas could not see theological justification for this teaching.



Two Franciscans, William of Ware and Blessed John Duns Scotus, helped develop the theology. They pointed out that Mary's Immaculate Conception enhances Jesus' redemptive work. Other members of the human race are cleansed from original sin after birth. In Mary, Jesus' work was so powerful as to prevent original sin at the outset.

In Luke 1:28 the angel Gabriel, speaking on God's behalf, addresses Mary as "full of grace" or "highly favored". In that context, this phrase means that Mary is receiving all the special divine help necessary for the task ahead. However, the Church grows in understanding with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit led the Church, especially non-theologians, to the insight that Mary had to be the most perfect work of God next to the Incarnation. Or rather, Mary's intimate association with the Incarnation called for the special involvement of God in Mary's whole life.

The logic of piety helped God's people to believe that Mary was full of grace and free of sin from the first moment of her existence. Moreover, this great privilege of Mary is the highlight of all that God has done in Jesus. Rightly understood, the incomparable holiness of Mary shows forth the incomparable goodness of God.

### O Holy Mary

*"O holy Dwelling Place of God, O holy Temple of the Word. O holy Mary, holy Mother of God.*

*O radiant star of heaven, illuminating the night; reflection of the Son, our source of life and light.*

*From heav'n the angel Gabriel announced the ancient plan and humbly you accepted to bear the God made man.*

*With joy beyond all measure you cared for God's own Son and pondered in your heart the new age now begun.*

*O holy Dwelling Place of God, O holy Temple of the Word. O holy Mary, holy Mother of God."*



## SOME IMPORTANT NEWS

### MASS READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY



#### 4th Sunday of Advent

<b>1st Reading</b>	Isaiah 17:10-14
<b>Psalm</b>	Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6.
<b>2nd Reading</b>	Romans 1:1-7
<b>Gospel</b>	Matthew 1:18-24

### PRAYING FOR OTHERS



Please pray for those in our parish who are unwell or in need. We also pray for the following ...

**Recently Deceased:** Cecily Edwards, Colin Wilson

**Anniversaries:** Margaret Ryan, Dorothy Aitken, Peter Hogan, Leonardo & Venera Romeo, Fr John Dobson, Fay Ryan, and those in our Book of Life.



**2023 Franciscan Calendars** are now available from the welcome desk. The recommended sale price is \$6.00 each or 2 for \$10.

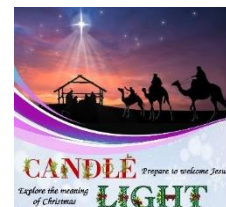
All funds raised through the sale of these calendars support the work of the Franciscans – so if you wish to make a donation when purchasing your calendar/s, be assured it will assist someone, somewhere in the world.

Did you know that St. Francis is credited with creating the first live nativity scene in 1223 to cultivate the worship of Christ. He had been inspired by his visit to the Holy Land, where he'd been shown Jesus's traditional birthplace.



### Explore the Meaning of Christmas

- St. Paul Convent, 28 Fedrick St. Boronia Heights, 4124.
- Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 7pm
- Free entry
- Register – 3800 6338



### A Weekend for Women

- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 6pm to Sunday 11 December 3pm
- Friday 20 January 6pm to Sunday 22 January 3pm
- Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre, Ormiston
- \$380 (\$350 concession) includes food and accommodation

[grace@dragonflyministries.net.au](mailto:grace@dragonflyministries.net.au)

### COMMUNION TO THE SICK

We are in the process of contacting each of the Nursing Homes within our Parish to arrange regular visits. We hope to have this 'formalised' in the next couple of weeks. If you are sick or housebound, we can arrange to have communion brought to you – we can only do this if we know of your need and desire! Please let one of the priests know of this or phone the Parish Office. We are in the process of setting up 'formalised' Communion Rounds. We have recommenced 'commissioning' those who take Communion to the Sick. You are welcome to still place a pyx on the Altar (WITH A HOST IN IT), and you will be called forward by the Presider after the final Prayer. You might recall we used to do this prior to COVID.



**Parish Office Hours** – Please note that the Parish Office will close Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 12pm and re-open on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January.

**Meals On Wheels:** Huge thanks to all who called up this week to help fill the spots. BUT we still need one Driver on this coming Thursday, 15 December. Please call the parish office with your offer to help as soon as possible. Thank you.

**Christmas Shopping at Vinnies** - Consider coming to your local Vinnies store (West Ipswich and Rosewood) for all your Christmas trees, decorations, cards, tableware, etc. The variety, the quality and the low, low prices will astound you.



Our **Children's Liturgy of the Word** at the 9am Sunday morning Mass will finish with the **last session on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December**, and will resume on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January. To all the families who have attended this year we thank you for supporting your children's faith journey. To all out catechists, we also thank you for contributing to this important ministry! We wish you all a very merry Christmas and look forward to welcoming you in the 2023.

**This Year's Giving Tree** – Parishioners have 4 selections for this year's Giving Tree:



1. Parish Formation (to help with Engage 2023)
  2. St. Vincent de Paul
  3. Hospice
  4. Ukraine Appeal – Australian Catholic Bishops Conference\*
- \* The bishops have asked parishes to include Ukraine in their Advent appeals.

### Envelopes are available in churches

We also have a QR Code for those who want to give electronically. When the link is clicked, it will open to a donation form. Please note where you would like the money to go to in the "Reason for your Donation" field. For example, Parish Formation. Thank you for your gifts this Christmas!



Our Parish is also proud to continue the support of Rosies all year round by providing accommodation in the old Leichhardt Presbytery. If you wish to support Rosies, please visit their website - <https://rosies.org.au/charity/ipswich/>

## UNDERSTANDING ADVENT



The third candle reminds us that the Shepherds were the first to receive the glorious news of the birth of Christ. Just as they received this news, when they had witnessed it for themselves, they too became messengers for Christ. This candle is called the "Shepherd's Candle."

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground, the angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around. "Fear not," said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind; "Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind."**

**"To you, in David's town this day, is born of David's line, the Saviour who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign: the heavenly Babe you there shall find to human view displayed, all meanly wrapped in swathing bands, and in a manger laid."**

## PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

**GAUDETE SUNDAY:** One of the candles surrounding the Christ Candle in the Advent wreath is rose-coloured for *Gaudete* Sunday, the third week in Advent, so called from the first word of the Entrance Song at Mass (*Gaudete*, i.e. Rejoice). Advent originated as a fast of forty days in preparation for Christmas, commencing on the day after the feast of St Martin (12 November), whence it was often called "St Martin's Lent" – a name by which it was known as early as the 5th century. **Gaudete Sunday**, therefore, makes a break, about midway through a season which was otherwise of a penitential character, and signifies the nearness of the Lord's coming. The spirit of the Liturgy all through Advent is one of expectation and preparation for the Christmas feast as well as for the second coming of Christ. *Gaudete* Sunday symbolises that joy and gladness in the Promised Redemption which should never be absent from the heart of the faithful.



### 2<sup>nd</sup> RITE OF RECONCILIATION

During Advent our Parish will celebrate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rite of Reconciliation  
**7pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December in St. Mary's Church.**

This is a great opportunity to come together as a parish community and experience the mercy of Jesus as we wait in anticipation.

**"The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel." (EG, 114)**

**Christmas Nativity Play** will commence at 5:00pm at St. Joseph's before the 5:30pm Christmas Vigil.

At the 5:30pm St. Mary's Christmas Vigil Mass, the Nativity will be enacted during the Gospel. Families are invited to attend - children are invited to dress up as an angel, shepherd, Mary, Joseph, or even an ox!



**We need more Singers for Midnight Mass:** If you would like to join us, please come along to Choir practise which is on Tuesdays, 13th and 20th December at 6.30pm-8pm in St Mary's Church.

### REHEARSAL FOR CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY



All children are invited to participate in this year's Christmas Nativity at the 5.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass (Christmas Eve) at St. Mary's Church

Rehearsals will begin straight after the 9.00am Mass this Sunday (11<sup>th</sup> Dec) and then again at 5.30pm on Friday (16<sup>th</sup> Dec) in St Mary's Church.

### CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b>	Placement of Advent Wreath & Candles ✓
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	Placement of Crib & Giving Tree ✓
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	Christmas Tree Assembled ✓
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	Blessing of Crib & Christmas Tree

**Banners** - This year we are using banners again to remind each other that we are preparing as a community of believers. Take a few moments to look up and reflect on this important season.

### Christmas Masses & Liturgies

#### Advent Liturgies (all of Parish)

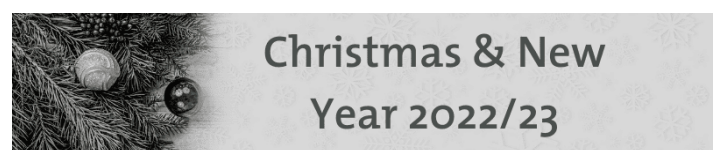
Second Rite of Reconciliation - Monday, 19th December 7.00pm in St. Mary's Church

#### Christmas Vigil (Eve) – Saturday 24th December (Carols begin 30 minutes before all Vigil Masses)

- 4:30pm – Immaculate Heart, Leichhardt
- 5:30pm – St. Joseph's, North Ipswich (with Nativity)
- 5:30pm – St. Mary's, Woodend (with Nativity)
- 6:30pm – St. Brigid's, Rosewood
- 8:00pm – Miraculous Medal, Eastern Heights
- Midnight Mass – St. Mary's, Woodend

#### Christmas Day – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December

- 7:30am – St. Joseph's, North Ipswich
- 9:00am – St. Mary's, Woodend
- No evening Mass Christmas Day



Next weekend's newsletter will include dates and times of Masses over the Christmas / New Year period.

Please ensure you make note of these.