

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 | ipswichcatholic.com
Parish Priest: Fr. Stephen Bliss OFM
Assistant Priests: Fr. Johny Edapulavan CMI
Fr. Jose Panampuzha CMI
Seminarian: Michael Tran

4th Sunday of Advent

Year A

18th December 2022

Dear Parishioners,

The Incarnation means God is one of us. God is made of our flesh and blood; God laughs, sings, and loves people. Though we believe Jesus is God, he is still one of us. We can choose him to be on our team, trusting he will play to win.

When identifying ourselves, we normally tell others what we do. Societies like the one to which Jesus belonged usually identified themselves by tracing ancestry. As Isaiah tells us today, Jesus belonged to the house of David. Paul says that he was of David "according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3). The Gospel identifies Joseph as a "son of David" (Matthew 1:20). Since Jesus was considered Joseph's legal son, he also was a "son of David." Joseph is told that the child will be called Emmanuel, which means "God is with us" (Matthew 1:23). Thus, Incarnation means God is with us in a unique way in this man who is one of us. The Incarnation also gives extraordinary dignity to material creation, of which we are all a part and of which he is a part as well, for he is one of us. In other words, Emmanuel (God with us) is a Child of earth. Like Joseph, we cannot fully comprehend what has happened. We can only stand with him in awe as this wondrous mystery unfolds before us. As we await Christmas, we wait for him to appear. When he comes, we will be amazed to see that he is really one of us. Enjoy the last days of Advent!



Stephen ofm



A Word from Pope Francis:

Joseph trusts God totally.... This unshakable trust in God that enabled him to accept a humanly difficult...situation. Joseph understands, in faith, that the child born in Mary's womb is not his child, but the Son of God, and he, Joseph, will be [the] guardians.
Angelus, Rome, December 22, 2019



FAREWELL TO FR JOHNY: If you would like to contribute to the farewell gift to Father Johny, please feel free to pop an envelope on the collection plate marked "Fr Johny". He will leave the Parish to take up his new appointment at Rochedale on 5th January 2023.

A **HUGE THANK-YOU** to all of you who contributed to Michael's pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. He is presently in Rome and this week had the opportunity to meet with Pope Francis. A wonderful opportunity for him and he is very grateful for the help many gave him. **THANK-YOU!**



Ever-living and ever-present God,
We pray for all those affected by the tragedy at Wieambilla - Welcome these officers into your embrace as they serve and protect from your heavenly realm. Bring strength and healing to their families whose hearts are torn with questioning and anger. Bring courage and hope to members of their departments who continue to dedicate themselves to protect us from danger and violence. Bring compassion to the perpetrators and families engulfed in pain. Strengthen the family of the neighbour who reached out to show care Bless the community of Wieambilla and the many thousands affected. Help us to make sense of all the questions we carry in our hearts and may your Holy Spirit empower us and strengthen us today and always. AMEN



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PARISH CALENDAR

Fri 16	6.00pm Parish Birthday BBQ
Sat 17	4:30pm Mass at Immaculate Heart Church 4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church 6:00pm Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sun 18	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 3.00pm Wedding at St. Mary's Church – Max & Natalie 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church
Mon 19	7:00am Mass at St. Joseph's Church 7.00pm Parish Reconciliation Service, St Mary's Church
Tues 20	9:00am Immaculate Heart Church 6.30pm Choir Practice, St Mary's Church
Wed 21	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's 9:30am Mass, St. Brigid's Church Hall 2.00pm Funeral Prayers at St. Mary's Church – Brian Casey
Thur 22	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church
Fri 23	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sat 24	CHRISTMAS EVE - AS LISTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER
Sun 25	CHRISTMAS DAY – AS LISTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER
Mon 26	NO MASS at St. Joseph's Church
Tues 27	NO MASS at Immaculate Heart Church 6.30pm Choir Practice, St Mary's Church
Wed 28	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's NO MASS , St. Brigid's Church Hall
Thur 29	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church
Fri 30	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sat 31	4:30pm Mass at Immaculate Heart Church 4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church 6:00pm Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sun 01	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 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church
Mon 02	NO MASS at St Joseph's Church
Tues 03	9:00am Immaculate Heart Church
Wed 04	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's NO MASS at St. Brigid's Church Hall
Thur 05	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church
Fri 06	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sat 07	4:30pm Mass at Immaculate Heart Church 4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church 6:00pm Mass at Miraculous Medal Church
Sun 08	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 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church
Mon 09	NO MASS at St. Joseph's Church
Tues 10	9:00am Immaculate Heart Church
Wed 11	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration St Mary's NO MASS , St. Brigid's Church Hall
Thur 12	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church NO MASS at St Boniface Marburg
Fri 13	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church



Christmas Masses & Liturgies

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 & Carols from 5pm)
5:30pm – St. Mary's, Woodend
(with Nativity during Mass)
6:30pm – St. Brigid's, Rosewood
8:00pm – Miraculous Medal, Eastern Hts

Midnight Mass – St. Mary's, Woodend

Christmas Day –

Sunday 25th December

7:30am – St. Joseph's, North Ipswich
9:00am – St. Mary's, Woodend

No evening Mass Christmas Day

Parish Office Hours

Please note that the Parish Office will close Friday 23rd December at 12noon and re-open on Wednesday 11th January 2023

PASTORAL & OPERATIONAL UPDATE

We think of Advent as a time of us waiting for the birth of Christ, yet in some ways it is just as much a time of Christ waiting for us – waiting for us to notice him, to take time to acknowledge him and to more than anything, waiting for us to allow his light to shine through us.

Today's readings are designed to remind us that encountering Emmanuel, God with us, is both very demanding and immensely surprising. Like his father Abraham, Joseph ventured into the risky unknown, trusting that, no matter what it would cost him, God and the divine promises were bigger and better than his wildest imaginings. Acting from the risky obedience of faith, Joseph adopted God's plan. Staking his life on God's promise, he anticipated the mercy his adopted son would offer; he took Mary into his home and accepted the fact that his life would never be what he expected.

Advent calls us, like Joseph, to be ready for unexpected, often un hoped-for, change. God offers, as Paul says, more than we could ever ask or imagine. Perhaps the lesson of Advent is that it's not so much we who are waiting, but God who comes to our door and appears in dreams, asking, "Will you, like Joseph, adopt my plan? Will you make room for Emmanuel in ways you've never imagined?"

I love this time of the year and the chance to reflect on the coming of Christ and what it means for my life. I need this reminder every year in order to keep my life focused on what is really important. I hope that your own reflections are helping you prepare for a closer walk with Jesus.



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 29th, 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 9th January. A special thank you to the

both of them, for the outstanding work they are doing for the Parish. We wish their family a blessed Christmas.



The SVDP St Mary's Conference Ipswich once again sincerely thanks the partners & staff at RW Ramsey & Co - Accountants for their extremely generous donations of Christmas gifts that will be distributed to poorer families within the regions of our Ipswich and Boonah Conferences; geographic areas in which the Firm also maintains permanent offices.

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!

CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

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



Our **Children's Liturgy of the Word** at the 9am Sunday morning Mass will finish with the **last session on Sunday 18th December**, and will resume on Sunday

29th January. To all the families who have attended this year we thank you for supporting your children's faith journey. To all our catechists, we also thank you for contributing to this important ministry!

SOME IMPORTANT NEWS

MASS READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY



The Nativity of the Lord

1st Reading	Is 9:1-6
Psalm	Psalm 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13.
2nd Reading	Ti 2:11-14
Gospel	Lk 2:10-11

PRAYING FOR OTHERS



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

Recently Deceased: Brian Casey, Alexandra (Sandy) Willcox, Therese Suters, Leonisa Baldonado, Cecily Edwards, Colin Wilson

Anniversaries: Margaret Ryan, Dorothy Aitken, , 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' traditional birthplace.



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 still welcome to 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.

UNDERSTANDING ADVENT



On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Saviour. This final candle, the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

During this final week of Advent let's rejoice in the endless love that God has for us, which is made apparent in the birth of his Son. We reflect on the good news of God's love brought to us from the angel Gabriel.

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS



2nd RITE OF RECONCILIATION

During Advent our Parish will celebrate the 2nd Rite of Reconciliation

7.00pm on Monday 19th 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 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.

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 Tuesday 20th December at 6.30pm - 8pm in St Mary's Church

