



**St John
Vianney**
Parish Morisset



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C 08 DECEMBER 2024

John the Baptist takes center stage in the Second Week of Advent.

In a chaotic world filled with personal, political and often environmental turmoil, it is easy to long for someone coming from the outside to help us, to “fix” things.

But today we are reminded that something is also required of us. Preparing for Christ was and is a serious task, involving our own need for hope and repentance.

We can look to Jesus for solace and assistance, but we are called to “make straight his paths” and to “produce good fruit as evidence of (our) repentance.”

Advent is a time for us to make every living day, a prayer of praise and thanksgiving



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal People who, long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities. We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM: Uta France
John France

PRIEST SUPERVISOR: Fr Joseph Figuardo

SACRAMENTAL PRIESTS: Fr Greg Barker VG
Fr Darryl Mackie
Fr Raphael Madukwe
Fr John Purnell

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Juliet Hutchins
Mal Melvey
Pam Melvey
Kerry Lendon
Rod Hay

PARISH SECRETARY: Rosanna Suckling

PARISH OFFICE: 60 Yambo Street, Morisset 2264, PO Box 87, Ph: 02 4973 6859

Office Hours: 9.00 am to 2.00pm—Monday to Friday (except public holidays)

(We ask that you make an appointment when coming in to the office)

Morisset Parish Office email: morparish@mn.catholic.org.au

Morisset Parish Web site: www.vianneymorisset.org

Morisset Parish Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>

Morisset Parish Instagram : https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish_morisset/

(Please submit all Bulletin Notice requests to the parish office by 2pm Wednesdays)

UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Saturday | 7th December 5pm Mass—Cooranbong |
| Sunday | 8th December 9.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Friday | 13th December 10.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 14th December 5pm Family Mass—Morisset |
| Sunday | 15th December 2024 9.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Friday | 20th December 10.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 21st December 5pm Mass—Cooranbong |
| Sunday | 22nd December 9.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Tuesday | 24th December 7pm Mass—Showground |
| Wednesday | 25th December 9.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 28th December 5pm Mass—Cooranbong |
| Sunday | 19th December 9.30am Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 4th January 5pm Family Mass—Morisset |
| Sunday | 5th January 9.30am Mass—Morisset |

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Farewell

As you know Fr Greg Barker V.G. has been appointed Parish Priest of Inner Newcastle, Mayfield, and Stockton, effective from 1 January 2025.

Fr Greg will preside at our 9.30am Sunday Mass on 15th December. To help say farewell to Fr Greg a 'Cuppa' will be held in the Callinan Centre after Mass.

Christmas Mass Times.

Christmas Eve 7pm and Christmas Day 9.30am are the scheduled Mass times for 2024.

As in the past Christmas Eve will be held at the Morisset Showground to allow for the expected larger than normal crowd, and availability of parking.

A meeting to finalise Christmas Eve will be held in the Callinan Centre this Wednesday 11th December.

If you can help with the Christmas Mass Set Up, Ministries, or Pack Up. Please complete a 'sign up' sheet online at: <https://forms.office.com/r/Cer8Rr35Lt>

Or the hard copy ones at the back of the church and place in the box provided.

Vinnies Christmas Appeal

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Christmas Appeal last weekend if you would still like to contribute members of the Morisset Conference of St Vincent de Paul Society will be at Masses to accept donations to their Vinnies Christmas Appeal by way of cash, and non perishable food can be placed in the hamper basket in the church, up until the weekend of the 21st / 22nd December. With gratitude and blessings to all.

GOSPEL

Luke 21:25-28. 34-36

Your redemption is near at hand.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

Second Sunday of Advent Year C - 8th December 2024 Reflection

On this second Sunday of Advent there is certainly a sense of expectancy in the air. But just what is it that we are expecting? The children certainly are anticipating a visit from Santa; the adults, festive gatherings of family and friends with plenty of food and drink; the shopkeepers, a bonanza of spending. Then there are those who have lost a loved one or are estranged from family or homeless; they are expecting only sadness and loneliness.

However, as followers of Christ, we need to open our minds and hearts beyond all of this, to ponder what the season of Advent is really about. We are waiting, in hopeful anticipation, of the celebration, once again, of the birth the child in Bethlehem. This was the beginning of the fulfilment of all the promises of old, of a Messiah, who would ensure the salvation of his people. The circumstances of his birth were certainly an indication that this

Messiah was to be rather different from the Jewish expectations of a warrior king.

As we wait, Luke's Gospel is significant for us in that it speaks of one, John the Baptist, who, from the very beginning, had a very important role to play. When Mary, pregnant with the child Jesus, went to visit her cousin Elizabeth "the child in her womb leapt for joy." This was the child of Elizabeth's old age, a miraculous child, promised by God to Zechariah. At the child's presentation in the temple on the eighth day after his birth, Zechariah proclaims "you, my child, shall be called prophet of the Most High, for you shall go before the Lord to prepare the way for him and to enable his people to know of their salvation when he comes to forgive their sins."

Like John the Baptist, we have a role to fulfil in preparing the way of the Lord. How can we do this in our secular society, where Christmas is so commercialised?

Firstly, as individuals, we can each look into our hearts and minds to examine those things that are hindering our closer relationship with God. Are we too proud of our own achievements, failing to acknowledge God's gifts to us? Are we too caught up in our acquisitions or worries to allow God His rightful place our lives? Do we fail to forgive hurts done to us?

We can look at the way we live our lives. Would people, seeing us, see people who are living as Christ asks us to: loving God, loving our neighbour, helping those who are in need? Perhaps there are changes we need to make? One thing we can do is that we can talk with our children and grandchildren, sharing with them the true meaning of Christmas.

Every time we pray the prayer Christ taught us, we say: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." With the birth of Christ, the process of the establishment of the Kingdom on Earth began and was fulfilled in his teaching, his suffering and death on the Cross and then his glorious resurrection.

We have reason to celebrate! However, the continuation of the Kingdom of peace, love and goodwill is now up to us, so let us do our best, in this Advent season, to properly prepare the way of the Lord and also await His second coming. Pam Melvey

Christmas Reconciliation

In preparation for Christmas a special Reconciliation Liturgy together with Reconciliation, will be held in the Morisset Church Wednesday 18th December 7pm. Fr Darryl Mackie and Fr John Purnell will lead us in the Liturgy.

Closure of Catholic Care Refugee Hub Sad News

The difficult decision has been made to close the Catholic Care Refugee Hub as of 13 December 2024. You may be aware, Catholic Care receives no funding for this service and a recent government funding application was unsuccessful, meaning we have had to consider the sustainability of this service for the long term.

We are very grateful to our staff, every one of our volunteers and donors who have supported us across many years and want to assure you that we have made every effort to consider all options for the continuation of the Refugee Hub.

It is our priority to continue to support our current clients to ensure all are connected with other suitable local support services.

Pope Francis' prayer intention for December 2024

That the Jubilee Year of 2025 will strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

Points to Ponder

Traditions have always been an important dimension of celebrating faith. Each age is a time of special grace, including our age of high technology.

Did You Know?

Why is Advent important?

Advent means arrival in Latin. Therefore, it is seen as a time of expectant hope, waiting and preparation, for the arrival of Jesus Christ, the longed-for Messiah and King, at Christmas for Christians around the world. For some it is a time of 'getting right' with people, family and friends, and healing brokenness to get the heart ready for hope, peace, love, and joy.

How many days does Advent go for?

As Advent is reliant on the day of the week that Christmas Day (25 December) lands on each year, it will depend on that. So, it can be 24 days (as it is this year) to 28 days (as it was last year).

Why is the colour purple significant during Advent?

Colours have always played an important part in the liturgical life of the church. Whilst for most of the world the customary Christmas colours are red and green, purple is used by the Church. It can represent repentance and penance, but for Advent it can also represent joyful hope.

as Gaudete (rejoice in Latin) Sunday, it represents joy, calling us to rejoice, as the time to celebrate the birth of Jesus is coming soon.

Why are Christmas Carols such a big thing at Christmas?

Who doesn't love to sing! Carols were originally sung to celebrate the four seasons. Christianity repurposed them for Christmas to help bring people into reflective times of devotion (for me it's O Holy Night) and times of celebration (think Hark, the Herald Angels), in the lead up to Christmas. It remains to this day a wonderful, generational gathering, to sing joy into the world.

With A Light Heart

A man walked into a chemist and noticed a customer leaning against a wall. He asked the chemist what the man was doing.

The chemist replied, "Well, he came in here this morning to get something for his persistent cough. I had run out of syrup, so I gave him an entire bottle of laxatives."

The customer was perplexed and said, "You can't treat a cough with laxatives!"

"Want a bet? Look at him now. He's afraid to cough."

Message from Bishop Michael Kennedy.

New priests coming to the Diocese in 2025

Throughout this year the Vicars General and I have been in communication and negotiations with the Oceania Province of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and with the Archdiocese of Capiz in the Philippines, both of whom have agreed to send us two priests each on loan. Their arrival dates will depend on visa applications. The first of the Spiritans, Fr Paul Macharia Kamau, has already been in Australia for 12 months so will join us in January. Fr Paul is from Kenya and is currently Associate Pastor at St Francis Xavier Parish Goodna in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

2025 Clergy Appointments

There are several appointments for 2025 which I have just recently made or of which you have not yet been informed.

Fr Solomon Okovido: Assistant Priest in the parishes of Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. The appointment will take effect in February after he returns from a visit to family and friends in his home country of Nigeria.

Fr Joyce Sebastian: Parish Priest of Myall Coast in addition to his appointment as Parish Priest of Raymond Terrace.

Fr Peter Thoai: Assistant Priest in the parishes of Raymond Terrace and Myall Coast.

Fr Paul Macharia Kamau CSSp: Assistant Priest in the parishes of Boolaroo, Booragul, Toronto, and Morisset.

Fr Priyantha Fernando: I am appointing Fr Priyantha to the new position of Priest Chaplain to St Bede's, St Aloysius, and Our Lady of Lourdes, all in the Chisolm region. He will continue to reside at East Maitland and assist in the parish on weekends.

I wish them all well in their new appointments and thank them for their cooperation.

Lebanon Crisis Appeal

The escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah has pushed Lebanon into severe turmoil, with tragic consequences that have spread from Southern Lebanon to the entire nation. The situation is dire: over 3,000 lives have been lost, more than 13,000 people injured, and critical infrastructure has been destroyed.

In response to a heartfelt plea for assistance by Bishop Tarabay and Bishop Rabbat, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in partnership with Catholic Religious Australia, Caritas Australia and Caritas Lebanon, has launched the Lebanon Appeal.

This appeal aims to provide essential humanitarian aid to our brothers and sisters suffering in Lebanon, especially those who are displaced and without homes or shelter.

Donate today: www.caritas.org.au/lebanondonate

Baptism Preparation Program

Baptism is a happy event and a time to ponder God's loving gifts in our lives. For those seeking baptism for their children our baptism preparation programs will usually run in the evenings on the second Tuesday of the Month starting at 7pm, bookings are essential. Our next Program will be held on **Tuesday 10th December 2024**. Bookings can be made online at the link at: <https://forms.office.com/r/wZtatkt01V>



Westlakes

Christmas Masses

2024

| | | |
|-------------|---------|--------------------------|
| 24 December | 6.00 pm | St Mary's Warners Bay |
| 24 December | 6.00 pm | St Joseph's Toronto |
| 24 December | 7.00 pm | Showground Morisset |
| 25 December | 9.00 am | St Mary's Warners Bay |
| 25 December | 9.00 am | St Michael's Booragul |
| 25 December | 9.00 am | St Joseph's Toronto |
| 25 December | 9.30 am | St John Vianney Morisset |

SUPPORTING THE CLERGY / 1st Collection

If you would like to make contributions to support the Clergy / 1st Collection please do so at Mass in the BLUE bucket or electronically using the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page, Diocese App, Electronic Funds Transfer Only Bank Account Name: Morisset Parish Presbytery BSB: 066739 No: 100004062 Ref: 1st Collection & SURNAME or contact the parish office to set up a direct debit.

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH / 2nd Collection

If you would like to make contributions to support our Parish please do so at Mass via the RED bucket or our Parish Electronic Funds Transfer Only Account the details are: Account Name: Morisset Parish Church BSB:066739 Account Number: 100004064 please use one of the following Payment References PG + your giver number or PG + SURNAME or SURNAME you can also use the Online Payments or Planned Giving button on the Parish Website Home page or the Diocese App. If you are considering taking up **planned giving** you may like to know that **a percentage of the contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to know more or set up planned giving please contact the Parish Office.

| WEEKEND ROSTERS | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| | | <u>THIS WEEK</u> | <u>NEXT WEEK</u> |
| <u>PRESIDERS</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | Mass Mass | Mass Mass |
| <u>PROCLAIMERS:</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | H White D Whitten | R Hay M Shamley |
| <u>PSALMIST:</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | J Vipan K Lendon | H White J Vipan |
| <u>GIFTS</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | P Melvey B Cox M Melvey P Melvey | B Cox L Hutchinson G Hutchinson |
| <u>SERVERS</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | M Melvey C Lawandos | J Lawandos V Paulo |
| <u>AV</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | D Peterson J France | E Lawandos M Foo |
| <u>WELCOMERS</u> | 5PM 9.30AM | P Melvey A Dussin | P Melvey H White |
| <u>CHURCH CLEANING</u> | COOR MOR | Cameron Family R Hay C Hay | XXXX A Walker G Walker |

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.

Our Parish supports The Diocese in its zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Every one of us must each day commit ourselves individually and collectively to safeguard each child and every vulnerable person to whom we interact with.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable person please contact the Office of Safeguarding Phone: 02 4979 1390

Email: childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au,

or visit their website for further information:

www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMINITIES

SAINT AMBROSE (M) - 7TH DEC
 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (S) - 9TH DEC
 SAINT LUCY (M) - 13TH DEC
 SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS (M) - 14TH DEC
 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD DAY (S) - 25TH DEC
 SAINT STEPHEN (F) - 26TH DEC
 SAINT JOHN (F) - 27TH DEC
 THE HOLY INNOCENTS (F) - 28TH DEC
 THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH (F) - 29TH DEC
 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD—5TH JAN

Please pray for all those who are sick: in hospital or at home, especially those living with a life threatening disease:

Jackie Purnell, Nancy Overton, Ross Dickson, Betty Smith, Frank Simons, Anna Dussin, Koby Smith, Annette Boyd, Mary Monaghan, Clare Wallington, Donna Hazzard, Pam Mullaly, Tintumol Thomas, Peter Martyn, Bernadette Martin, Bruce Gillett.

Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.

Remembrance: Macayla Godlieb



Prayer Requests for the Bulletin

If you would like the parish to pray for a family member who is sick, recently deceased or you would like remembered please call or email the parish office or complete a prayer card for each person and place in the mail box near the parish office door. Cards are available at the back of the church and at the Parish Office.

All prayer requests require permission from a family member or the person. Due to Australian privacy laws.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
 I believe that You
 are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
 I love You above all things,
 and I desire to receive You into my soul.
 Since I cannot at this moment
 receive You sacramentally,
 come at least spiritually into my heart.
 I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.
 Never permit me to be separated from You.
 Amen.



Live stream Mass every Sunday at 9.30am at www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream



We are committed to the
**NATIONAL CATHOLIC
 SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS**



SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe Year B

Sunday 24 Nov 2024

The Introductory Rites

Acknowledgement of Country

We Acknowledge the Awabakal and Darkinjung nations as the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land our parish encompasses for thousands of years, and honour and pay respect to, Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Gathering

The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.

Sign of the Cross

Leader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All:

Amen.

Greeting

Leader:

Blessed be Jesus Christ who will come again in glory.

All:

Blessed be God forever.

Introductory Remarks

Leader (in these or similar words):

Friends in Christ, although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day, we gather in God's name for when two or more come together God is always with us. In union with the whole Church, we await the coming of the Lord.

Opening Rite

LITANY OF PRAISE

Leader:

Before listening to the Word of God let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ who has raised us to new life.

A brief period of silence follows.

Leader:

Lord Jesus, you call us to repent: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us wisdom and love: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the way to the Father: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader:

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All:

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Leader:

Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

Almighty God, a voice cries out to make the paths straight and the mountains low. In this Advent let nothing stop us from preparing the way of the Lord. We ask this through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Baruch 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch

Jerusalem – God will show you splendour.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven,

since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights

and turn your eyes to the east:

see your sons reassembled from west and east

at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.

Though they left you on foot,

with enemies for an escort,

now God brings them back to you

like royal princes carried back in glory.

For God has decreed the flattening

of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills,

the filling of the valleys to make the ground level

so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.

And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade

for Israel at the command of God;

for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory

with his mercy and integrity for escort.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 125. R. v.3

(R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, it seemed like a dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, on our lips there were songs. (R.)

2. The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels the Lord worked for them!'

What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad. (R.)

3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land.

Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. (R.)

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing:
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves. (R.)

Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-6. 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

Show yourselves sinless and without blame in the day of Christ.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to **Luke**

All:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 3:1-6

All people shall see the salvation of God.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

Reflection on the Word

A short period of reflection may be observed.

Q. In what ways can holding on to our faults and failings get in the way of allowing God into our lives?

Q. Why is it so hard to forgive ourselves when we are assured God's forgiveness is there for the asking?

Q. What image captures for you the idea of 'preparing a way'?

Q. How has reflection on this week's gospel enhanced your understanding of Advent?

Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church
let us profess our faith.

All:

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin
Mary, all bow.*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Dear friends, let us bring our prayers before the Lord,
who is our hope and our salvation.

Reader: That the Holy Church will be a sign for all the world of
Christ's presence in our midst.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That through Christ's coming, priests and bishops will
be renewed in their dedication of service to the people
of God.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the poor and marginalised may discover God's
great deeds and be filled with the joy of his love.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That like John the Baptist, our parish community may
share the Salvation of God with all people in our lives.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all those who are sick will find relief from their
suffering.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those who have died will share in the eternal
salvation of God.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord God, your promise of salvation is close at hand.
Hear our prayers, and help us to be like John the
Baptist, by eagerly embracing your will for our world in
Jesus Christ. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader:

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

All:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

The Concluding Rite Blessing

Leader:

We believe that the Son of God once came to us
and we look for him to come again.
May his coming bring us the light of his holiness
and free us with his blessing.

All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.

All:

Amen.

Dismissal

Leader:

Let us go in the peace.

All:

Thanks be to God.

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10 Questions about Advent

In our latest edition of 10 Questions, Fiona Duque explores Advent and why it is such an important time of year.

What is Advent?

For most Christian churches, the Advent season begins on the Sunday four weeks before Christmas Day. As the day of the week that we celebrate Christmas changes, Advent may therefore start at the end of November or at the beginning of December. This year it starts on the first of December.

Fun fact: This is also the date for the Catholic Church's New 'Liturgical' Year.

Why is Advent important?

Advent means arrival in Latin. Therefore, it is seen as a time of expectant hope, waiting and preparation, for the arrival of Jesus

Christ, the longed-for Messiah and King, at Christmas for Christians around the world. For some it is a time of 'getting right' with people, family and friends, and healing brokenness to get the heart ready for hope, peace, love, and joy.

How many days does Advent go for?

As Advent is reliant on the day of the week that Christmas Day (25 December) lands on each year, it will depend on that. So, it can be 24 days (as it is this year) to 28 days (as it was last year).

Why is the colour purple significant during Advent?

Colours have always played an important part in the liturgical life of the church. Whilst for most of the world the customary Christmas colours are red and green, purple is used by the Church. It can represent repentance and penance, but for Advent it can also represent joyful hope.

What is the significance of the Advent wreath?

Advent Wreaths are a popular devotion. They have four candles within a circle of greenery and have become a symbol of Christmas preparations in many places, including our homes, workplaces and shopping centres. However, its main purpose is to light a candle each Sunday to recall the various stages of salvation history prior to Christ's coming.

Why does one Advent candle have a different colour?

Whilst three of the four candles are purple, in keeping with the Advent season, the third Sunday's candle is rose/pink coloured. Sometimes known as Gaudete (rejoice in Latin) Sunday, it represents joy, calling us to rejoice, as the time to celebrate the birth of Jesus is coming soon.

Why are Christmas Carols such a big thing at Christmas?

Who doesn't love to sing! Carols were originally sung to celebrate the four seasons. Christianity repurposed them for Christmas to help bring people into reflective times of devotion (for me it's O Holy Night) and times of celebration (think Hark, the Herald Angels), in the lead up to Christmas. It remains to this day a wonderful, generational gathering, to sing joy into the world.

Why are Nativity Scenes a popular custom during Advent?

Nativity scenes show Jesus' humble birth. It resonates with people, especially children. It is a reminder of God's love for humanity where He chose to become a part of our history. It reflects the Gospel messages of birth, life, death and resurrection that Jesus' birth brings. It also universally reflects love, peace, and humility. These values make its popularity extend beyond the Christian community, making it a global symbol of the season.

What's all the fuss about Santa Clause, or should I say St Nicholas?

Grounded in tradition and culture, you won't, however, normally see Santa at Mass. Santa Clause isn't a world-wide tradition, nor does every country call the character Santa Clause. Legend has it that the original Santa was a monk (or bishop) of Myra, now situated in modern day Türkiye, called Saint (Santa) Nicholas (Clause), and was generous person. St. Nicholas was canonized in 1446, and known as the patron saint for children and sailors.

I am not Catholic; how can I get involved with Advent?

You don't have to be Catholic to get involved. Chances are you already have been getting involved. You just didn't realise. You could set up an Advent wreath in your home, invest in a nativity scene, use an Advent calendar to count down the days (I recommend the ones with chocolate) or go do some carolling. Maybe head to Church and see it decked out in its purple finery. Reflect on how you can bring love, peace and humility to those you meet, especially at this time where many find themselves in difficult times.



LITURGY MATTERS: It's beginning to look a lot like Advent!

This time last year I wrote an article that focussed on 'The Holy Family: Refugees and Immigrants'. This year, we continue to see a broken world in desperate need of healing. This Advent I again encourage everyone to try to recognise Jesus in all the faces of those that you meet and see on media screens, including the stranger, the refugee, the immigrant. As Pope Francis affirmed in 2023 "every human being, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, of any people or religion, every human being is sacred, is precious in the eyes of God, and has the right to live in peace." [CNA Nov 23].

Fiona Duque PUBLISHED December 03, 2024

The daily news is a barrage of hate, destruction, unforgiveness, retribution, misuse and abuse of power awash with the impact that those actions have on the powerless, the least of God's people. For many of us who live with relative peace in our lives, it can be hard to appreciate the suffering that others in the world experience. There is much that we can do from our place of privilege. Christmas is a time to show our love for our family, friends and to those who are thirsting to hear about the ultimate gift and birth of our saviour, Jesus Christ. However, before we celebrate Christmas Time (the liturgical season after Advent) we need to ground ourselves in the season of Advent.

As we read in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, we find the heart of what this Advent time should be:

Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight (n. 39)

So, as we journey through this Advent season, and we begin to gather gifts for our families and friends, let us start making purchases that bring a difference in more than one person's life. Give a gift that gives twice so that at this time of hope, peace, joy and love we can give others the gift of expectant delight.

In your time of preparation please consider shopping ethically and charitably. The following 10 websites offer a different way of shopping or donating that will make a difference.

That Catholic Shop - The proceeds of every purchase at That Catholic Shop help Christians who are suffering, oppressed or persecuted. That Catholic Shop - Home

For Dignity - Provide hope, dignity and freedom to women affected by exploitation. Ethical & Sustainable Gifts in Australia | Women Gifts Online – For Dignity

Catholic Mission - By purchasing a Life-Giving Gift this Christmas, you are making a lasting impact for children, families and communities in most need. All (catholicmission.org.au)

St Columban's Missionary Society - Provides comfort to the lonely, hope to the despairing, and assistance to those facing challenging circumstances. Shop Catholic Products & Gifts Online | St Columbans

UNHCR The UN Refugee for Australia - Advocate and fundraise for refugee protection, emergency aid, and long-term support

and solutions, helping the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reach millions of vulnerable people each year. Refugee Charity Christmas Gifts | Australia for UNHCR - UNHCR (unrefugees.org.au)

Caritas Australia Mission - The Catholic Church's international aid and development agency in Australia. They are committed to working alongside the most vulnerable and addressing the imbalance of power by including the people affected in the decisions impacting their lives. Creating a Resilient Future | Caritas Australia

The Fair Trader - The Fair Trade Association of Australia endorses businesses in Australia that follow the 10 Principles of Fair Trade. They stock products made by organisations with transparent and deeply held ethical values with goals of poverty alleviation and empowerment. Best Seller Fair Trade Gift Guide 2024 | Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand.

Uplift Fair Trade - Uplifting disadvantaged artisans through trade, creating dignity and hope. Focusing on giving sustainable livelihoods to people with a disability, women's empowerment groups, women living in slums, people who have come out of trafficking. Fair Trade Ethical Christmas Gifts and Products | Uplift Fair Trade

The Leprosy Mission Shop Australia - strives to eliminate the stigma and discrimination that is associated with leprosy. Shop - The Leprosy Mission Australia – The Leprosy Mission Shop Refugee Hub: CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle - Support people from refugee, asylum-seeker, and vulnerable migrant backgrounds to settle into life in Australia. They welcome people from all social, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Refugee Hub - CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning

CatholicCare Hunter-Manning's Christmas Hamper appeal - Donate to this year's hamper appeal and help CatholicCare spread some Christmas cheer within our communities.