



**St Francis of Assisi Paddington & St Joseph Edgecliff Parish Newsletter.**

**24th December 2023 – Fourth Sunday of Advent—Year B**

*In the care of the Franciscans since 1879*

**St Francis of Assisi Church** 463 Oxford St Paddington **St Joseph Church** 12 Albert St Edgecliff

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**Entrance Antiphon**

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,  
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

**First Reading**

A reading from the second book of Samuel

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**

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.

**ALL: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

'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.'

**ALL: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

He will say to me: 'You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me.'

I will keep my love for him always;  
for him my covenant shall endure.

**ALL: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

**Second Reading**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

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**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
I am the servant of the Lord:  
may his will for me be done.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

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.

The Creed is said.

## Prayers of the Faithful

**PRIEST:** 'Do not be afraid.'

As we prepare for the Day of the Lord, we turn again to our God whose love we acknowledge and who is faithful to the promises.

**Reader:** For the gift of knowing God's will. (pause)

Like David, may we be open to God's will for us .

May we not seek to impose our human desires on God but be aware that God has plans for the church and the world that are beyond our imaginings.

Lord, hear us.

**ALL: Lord Hear us.**

**Reader:** For the grace to be ready for Christmas. (pause)

In these days before Christmas, may we enter more deeply into the hidden mysteries of God, praying for the gift of wisdom to live according to the gospel.

Lord, hear us.

**ALL: Lord Hear us.**

**Reader:** For a spirit of wonder. (pause)

Mary was troubled and confused by the message of the angel. Like her, may we be open to God's purposes and may we be ready to accept God's will in a spirit of obedience and wonder. Lord, hear us.

**ALL: Lord Hear us.**

**Reader:** For joy in celebrating God's good news. (pause)

May we be filled with joy in this time of Advent and moved by God's generosity.

May we live lives that so reflect gospel teaching that others may come to share our faith and joy.

Lord, hear us.

**ALL: Lord Hear us.**

**PRIEST:** God of the promises, lift up our hearts as we prepare for the birth of the Messiah.

We commend our needs to you and the needs of all the world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**ALL: Amen**



### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Let us pray.

Loving God, we thank you for your gift of love - shown to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by loving others as Christ loves us. We

ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord.

**All: Amen**

The Friars thank you for the thoughtful cards and gifts and they have received.

## CHRISTMAS FAMILY MASS and Nativity Play St Francis of Assisi Church Paddington

Children are invited to wear angel wings, or shepherds head-dress to the family mass on Christmas eve and will be encouraged to sing on the night.

### Franciscan Calendar 2024. \$10

The 2024 Calendar observes the 800yr anniversary of the Stigmata of St Francis with the story and images of Mount la Verna, where it is said to have occurred. A handy gift which includes the dates of the religious feasts and holidays for the year. Available in church.

### 8 December 2023 to 2 February 2024

If you would like to find out more about the 800 year anniversary of the first nativity scene by St Francis at Greccio. <https://ofm.org/en/plenary-indulgence-on-the-occasion-of-the-800th-anniversary-of-the-nativity-scene-at-greccio.html>

### Parish Office Open/Close Dates

The office will be closed over the holidays from midday 21/12/2023. **We reopen Monday 22/01/2024.** During this period Father Anthoni will be monitoring the phone messages and emails. We ask that you contact us when we reopen for non-urgent requests.



## Christmas Weekend Mass Times



### ST JOSEPH

#### EDGECLIFF

**24 December**

9:00AM. (4th Sun of Advent

**\*No 10:30 am mass**

#### Christmas Vigil

5:00PM *Family Mass*

6:30PM (Carols -6.15pm)

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

9:00AM

10:30AM

### ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

#### PADDINGTON

**24 December**

8:30 AM (4th Sunday of Advent)

**\*No 10AM mass**

#### Christmas Vigil

5:30 PM *Family Mass*

9:00PM (No midnight Mass)

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

8:30 AM and 10:00 AM

### 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.