



St Kevin's Catholic Parish



Parish Office Hours: Tue to Fri: 9am-4pm
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Finance Administrator: Mrs Frances Johnson
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Christmas Thoughts From the Desk of the PP...

Christ Mass Day –

Have a joyful and blessed Christmas Day and Christmas Season.

Christ – Messiah – the one Anointed: Emmanuel (God-is-with-us). At the very moment in which we celebrate the birth of Jesus the Christ, we are called to **Mass** – the Latin “missa” – meaning sent out. At Christmas we are called to rejoice in this marvellous moment of the incarnation – the coming into flesh – of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ – fully human and fully divine – living with us. And ... in the moment of rejoicing we are reminded that Jesus' birth is just the beginning of the journey to his growing, ministry, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the start of the Church, and knowing the truth that God is always near, that the kingdom of God is coming into existence as we speak.

We rejoice that the child Jesus (Jeshua, God saves) is born among us – most certainly we rejoice and celebrate – but at the same time we prepare ourselves to be a part of the bigger story of redemption and salvation.

Please enjoy this day and this season. Amidst world successes, conflict and natural disaster, or personal successes or difficulties: rejoice because The Father loves us and there is nothing we can do about it.

Thank you:

I cannot begin to individually thank everyone who helped. At one stage or another during the year most people who are present for Mass are active at some time during the year in activities of the parish.

So: to all Staff; to all leaders of groups in the parish; to all ministers assisting me; to all parishioners: THANK YOU. Without you, there would be no presence of the Body of Christ which is the Church.

January:

The office will be open most of the time for January. I will take a few days off during the first full week of the month. Hopefully a quiet month.

God Bless, Fr Charles

And Some From the Desk of our Lay Ecclesial Leader...

The baby Jesus - God made human - brings a message of tenderness. Our world needs tenderness. We need tenderness.

The invitation at Christmas is to let our hearts be infused with tenderness for ourselves, for the people in our life, and for our community.

Let us look at one another with God's eyes - recognising that in essence we are all brothers and sisters. This is often difficult to do; but tenderness - soft, gentle and kind - can help us see past one another's vulnerabilities and wounds and glimpse the inner child. There we will find the presence of God.

I wish you a tender Christmas.

Tiziana D'Costa

LITURGY ROSTER

Christmas Eve/Day - 24/25th December 2024

1st Read: Isaiah 52: 7-10 2nd Read: Hebrews 1: 1-6 Gos: John 1: 1-18

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
6.00pm	Tiziana D'Costa	Fiona Watson	Lyn Murphy Lynne O'Brien Anne Maguire
9.00pm	Tasha Vercauteren	Margaret Turner	Bredenia Raquel Carmel Shiel
9.00am	Pauline Erickson	Carmel Shiel	TBA

Feast of the Holy Family - 28/29th December 2024

1st Read: Samuel 1: 2-22, 24-28 2nd Read: 1 John 3: 1-2, 21-24 Gospel: Luke 2: 41-52

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
5.30pm	Tasha Vercauteran	Margaret Turner	Anne Maguire Lynne O'Brien Maryanne McNamara
8.30am	Frank Ozzimo	Miriam Ayoub	Penny Teo Adrian Teo Pat Rowland
10.00am	Vianney Shiel	Carmel Shiel	Lyn Murphy Carmel Purdey

Feast of the Epiphany - 4/5th January 2025

1st Read: Isaiah 60: 1-6 2nd Read: Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6 Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
5.30pm	Margaret Turner	Kathy Pearce	Maryanne McNamara Lynne O'Brien
8.30am	Pauline Erickson	Paul Polidano	Adrian Teo Pat Rowland
10.00am	Carmel Purdey	Carmel Shiel	Tony Whelan Geraldine Williams

Feast of the Baptism of Jesus - 11/12th January 2025

1st Read: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11 2nd Read: Titus 2: 11-14; 3: 4-7 Gospel: Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
5.30pm	Rachel Marini	Daniel Marini	Anne Maguire Lawrence Ceconello
8.30am	Pauline Erickson	Paul Polidano	Penny Teo Pat Rowland
10.00am	Miriam Ayoub	Bernard Butler	Raffaella Dinelli Carmel Purdey

We pray for Better Health:

Alexandra Franke, Aisha Yahiat, Jane O'Brien, Bernard Mohar, Angelina Amalfi, Alexander, Felipe, Anne, Izabella Fantin, Lucy Bisetto, Guadalupe Cameron, Elysia Pozzebon, Shiela O'Donoghue, Wang Wei Qiao, Nady Botrous, Michelle, Tony Costa, Melissa Wirata, Michael Angelo Yambao, Rosanna Campagna, Gabriella Cunico, Alexandra Bateman, Alan Benn and Federico Aspromonte.

Anniversaries:

John Rowland (3rd),
Nina Luca,
Dorothy Childers and
Albert Oates

New Year's Eve/Day Masses

will be celebrated as follows:

Tuesday 31st December - 5.00pm
at St Gregory the Great Church

Wednesday 1st January - 9.00am
at St Kevin's Church

10.30am at St Gregory the Great Church

Fr Charles' Prayer Intention for Christmas:

For all children, that they
will be loved and nurtured
with Christ.



*Thank
You*

for the cards, gifts and best
wishes expressed to me
over this Christmas Season.

You are very special people.

Fr Charles

A Christmas Reflection from our Lay Ecclesial Leader

I'm incredibly privileged to lead this wonderful community of faith with Fr Charles.

Our parish is committed to be inclusive and welcoming. We recognise that each one of us has unique gifts and talents. People come to faith in different ways; they express their love of Jesus Christ in different ways too. This is why, in addition to thoughtful and inspiring liturgies, our vibrant parish offers several ministries. There is something for everyone.

I thank sincerely all our parishioners, the principals, staff and community at St Kevin's and St Charles Borromeo schools for their enthusiasm and efforts this year. A special mention to our parishioners who go above and beyond and give of themselves tirelessly. Thank you! It would not be the same without you. Together we are building a thriving parish. Called by God and trusting in Jesus, we aspire to care for and connect with one another and the wider world and to be hospitable and generous so that all may live life to the full.

I am grateful for the wonderful efforts that saw us offer the following ministries: playgroup, youth group, men's group, knitting group, social justice action group, meditation, bookish morning tea, Alpha, lectors and special ministers' group, liturgy group, music, aged care group, communion to the sick, bereavement group, sacramental group, St Vincent's De Paul group and more. Thank you also for the beautiful Lent and Advent Reflection programs. My sincere thanks to the members of the Parish Council and the Finance Committee for their leadership and good counsel. And to the members of the Fr Charles Support Group for their enthusiasm and efforts in looking at ways in which the Templestowe and Doncaster parishes can collaborate and grow together.

I encourage you to reach out and become involved in something that interests you. You will be welcomed into a friendly and caring community. It is fulfilling and worthwhile to set aside time for faith in our daily life, to attend to our spiritual needs and to use your gifts to help others. For more details, please see the parish newsletter (also available on our website) or contact the parish office: templestowe@cam.org.au; phone: 03 9850 5983.

I'm grateful to the staff and volunteers of St Gregory the Great Parish for their wonderful support and friendship in everything we do together.

To Fr Charles, thank you so much for your caring leadership and your tireless dedication to our parish.

To Charlotte and Emma - many, many thanks for the wonderful youthful energy and dedication you bring to the youth group and music ministries.

To Ana, David, Frances and Nadia in the parish office. You are awesome. It's such a pleasure to work with you. Thank you for all you do.

With every blessing for the Christmas Season,
Tiziana D'Costa
Lay Ecclesial Leader



Thank you!

Great liturgies don't just happen

they come about because people dedicate themselves to helping us celebrate wholeheartedly. Let us join as a community in thanking the Lord, for the thoughtful and skillful work of many of our fellow parishioners.

Fr Charles



Gospel Focus - A Great Census?

The decree of a census for the whole Roman world appears to be an unlikely event. A census of people in local regions was not unusual but a census that required people to return to their place of birth carries no historical validity. The gospel writer correctly places Mary and Joseph in their home town of Nazareth but prophecy indicated the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. The author needed an excuse for Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem. We must remember that the gospels are not to be read as historical accounts but rather as faith accounts of the life of Jesus.

Christmas Hampers

Many thanks – once again – very well done.



Ana, Frances, Tiziana, David, Nadia and Fr Charles wish you all peace and joy this Christmas season.

May you bask in the wonder of God's care for each one of us.

Christ Is Born



Joyful and triumphant: the stories of four beloved Christmas carols

At this time of year, Christmas carols float through the air and through our lives, blending sacred themes with rich melodies and connecting us to centuries of tradition. Originally sung in churches, homes and even taverns, they have become a beloved part of our Christmas celebrations.

Today, whether they're performed by choirs or hummed under our breath as we hang fairy lights and wrap our gifts, Christmas carols continue to draw our focus back to the mystery and joy of the incarnation. So as we celebrate the magic of the Christmas feast, we take a moment to share the inspiring stories behind four of our most cherished carols.

'O Come, All Ye Faithful'

Known in its original Latin as *Adeste Fideles*, 'O Come, All Ye Faithful' is a timeless call to worship and adoration of the Christ child. The carol's melody, rich in crescendos and lyrical reverence, lends itself to grand choral performances as well as intimate gatherings. Its ability to evoke both the majesty and humility of the Nativity continues to make it one of the most treasured carols around the world.

'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing'

Few carols are as triumphantly joyful as *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*, a hymn that has been a Christmas staple for nearly three centuries. The hymn was penned in 1739 by Charles Wesley, a prolific and popular hymn writer and the brother of John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement. Its first line originally read, 'Hark, how all the welkin rings.' The archaic word *welkin*, meaning 'the heavens', was later changed to 'herald angels' by Wesley's colleague George Whitefield—despite Wesley's objections—giving the hymn a clearer connection to the Nativity story described in Luke's Gospel

'The Little Drummer Boy'

A relatively modern addition to the Christmas repertoire, 'The Little Drummer Boy' tells the simple but profound story of a boy who, having no tangible gift for the infant Jesus, instead offers his talent—playing his drum. Written in 1941 by American composer Katherine Kennicott Davis, the song was initially called 'Carol of the Drum'. Davis—who said the idea for the carol came to her in the middle of the night—is thought to have drawn inspiration from Czech folk music, giving the carol its iconic, rhythmic 'pa rum pum pum pum' refrain that mimics the sound of a drum.

The carol gained widespread recognition in 1951 when it was recorded by the Trapp Family Singers—whose story was later made famous in the movie *The Sound of Music*. A later arrangement by musician Jack Halloran was popularised by a wide array of artists, including Frank Sinatra, Bob Seger, Boney M, Joan Jett and Justin Bieber. Bing Crosby and David Bowie's famous duet of the song, recorded for a 1983 television special, went on to reach number 3 in the UK charts.

The message of 'The Little Drummer Boy' is universal and relatable: no matter how little we have, we can offer our talents and love to God, so that even the smallest acts of kindness or creativity can carry deep spiritual significance.

'What Child Is This?'

'What Child Is This?' is a carol that invites reflection on the mystery of the Nativity, pairing poignant lyrics with the haunting melody of 'Greensleeves'.

The lyrics were composed by William Chatterton Dix (1837–98), an English insurance manager who wrote hymns and sacred poetry in his spare time. Born in Bristol, he was named after the poet Thomas Chatterton, whose tragic life and creative legacy had inspired his parents. Dix lived a comfortable life as the manager of a maritime insurance company in Glasgow until his life took a dramatic turn.

Struck down by a severe illness at the age of 29, Dix endured a deep personal and spiritual crisis during the months and years of his slow recovery. During this time, he experienced a profound renewal of his Christian faith, inspiring much of his religious writing. Along with another popular Christmas hymn, 'As With Gladness Men of Old', the text for 'What Child Is This?' was written during this period, starting out as a poem, 'The Manger Throne', from which three stanzas were adapted to create the carol. Set to the Elizabethan tune *Greensleeves*, which has long been associated with love ballads, Dix's lyrics gave the melody a sacred purpose.

The carol's poignancy is rooted in the hard-won faith of its composer, forged in suffering and transformed by hope.

What makes 'What Child Is This?' particularly compelling is the way it juxtaposes the peaceful image of the infant Jesus with a foreshadowing of his suffering and redemptive mission. Lines such as 'nails, spear shall pierce him through' remind us of the intimate association of cradle and cross.