



# Parishes of Mater Dei Blakehurst & St Raphael's South Hurstville

The Nativity of the Lord  
(Christmas Day)

Bulletin

25th Dec 2022

**Entrance Antiphon:** Cf. Is 9:5

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

**First Reading:** Is 52:7-10

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 97:1-6.

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)
2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R.)
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)

**Second Reading:** Heb 1:1-6

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel:** Jn 1:1-18

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.

**Communion Antiphon:** Cf. Ps 97:3

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

The joyous time of Christmas Season is once again upon us. Christmas trees and carols is a time to take stock; a time to reflect on the events of the past year and to make resolutions for the new year ahead.

Baby Jesus in the manger reminds us - that in Jesus, we are given a home – a place where we experience forgiveness, mercy, and love. This is what we celebrate on Christmas - God, our welcoming Father, giving us a place in His heart.

May we all find solace and love in humanity, charity and divinity this Christmas. Let us also keep in prayers, our people and animals who have been impacted by the recent floods. We ask for His 'Shower of blessings'

I wish each one of you a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with the benevolence of Our Lord. May EMMANUEL God-with-us enlighten us all through our journey of faith!

God Bless.

Fr Thomas Alukka

Parish Priest



## REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

If you were to give just a cursory glance at a collection of 'religious' Christmas cards, or even the local nativity scene, you would undoubtedly see a varied assortment of shepherds, wise men, livestock and angels gathered around the holy family in a timber structure of some sort. Even the most casual reading of Luke's account of the birth of Christ would reveal that most of the nativity figurines are missing! Our retelling of the birth of Christ tends to be an amalgamation of the Luke and Matthew versions with a bit of creative tradition thrown in for good measure.

The Luke account of the nativity carries a very specific theology that runs throughout the rest of that gospel. It is a theology that places the outcast and downtrodden at the centre of Jesus' mission. In this account, Jesus is born outside the town because there is no room for Joseph and Mary within the safety of the inn. Like those he will minister to later in life, Jesus is born 'on the edge' – even outside the boundaries. Rather than the impressive 'Wise Men' of the Matthew infancy account, the witnesses to Jesus' birth in the Luke account are lowly shepherds. Unlike the somewhat romantic notion we may have of shepherds, in Jesus' time they were regarded as little better than thieves and cut-throats. All they could be trusted to do was tend sheep outside of townships and away from 'civilised' society. They held one of the lowest positions in Jewish society. The gospel writer's choice of these witnesses to the birth of Jesus is a very deliberate one that clearly announces the purpose and direction of Jesus' mission.

### Scriptural context – Matthew v Luke

Ask a child (or even most adults) to describe the scene at the birth of Jesus and you will hear a confused combination of the two scriptural accounts with several non-scriptural additions. It is a shame that the two versions have merged into one as each is deserving of its own integrity. The Matthew account emphasises Jesus as the fulfilment of prophecy and has Wise Men as the witnesses to his birth in a house. It is from Luke that we have the much humbler birth in a manger witnessed by the lowly shepherds. Each has something different and distinct to say about Jesus and his mission.

"God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If he gives us the gift of Christmas it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it." Pope Francis

MASS TIMES		
	St Raphael Church	Mater Dei Church
Tuesday		No Mass on 27th Dec
Wednesday		No Mass on 28th Dec
Thursday	No mass until school reopens	
Friday	Adoration will recommence on 27th Jan 23	No Mass on 30th Dec
Saturday	See Christmas Mass times.	See Christmas Mass times. <b>No Vigil Mass in January 2023.</b>
Sunday	See Christmas Mass times	See Christmas Mass times

**Pray for good health of :** Anne Lo, Sunga Family, Adele Shehata, Anna Liza Torres Zapata, Yin Kwan Tsang.

**Pray for the deceased:** Joseph Flores Manlucu, Jeffrey Bishop, Jeanette McGloin, Shirley McGrath, Antonius Widjaja, Gavin, Rosie and Serena Entwistle, Coral Howse, Souls in purgatory.

24th /25th Dec (Christmas)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	4.30pm	8.00am	6.15pm V	10.00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteer
Readers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers
31st/1st Jan (1st Sunday)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	5.00pm	8.00am		10.00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Max, Gary	No Vigil Mass until 4th Feb 23	Paul Watson
Readers	Volunteers	Volunteers		Gail Abbott Luisa Galea

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMINGS 2022

**SATURDAY, 24TH DECEMBER**

**St. RAPHAEL'S**  
**4:00 PM Carols followed by**  
**4:30 PM Mass**  
**MATER DEI**  
**6:15 PM Mass**  
**11:30 PM Carols followed by**  
**Midnight mass**

**SUNDAY, 25TH DECEMBER**

**St. Raphael's 8:00 AM**  
**Mater Dei 10:00 AM**  
**Croatian Mass 11:00 AM**  
**at St Raphael's**

**NEW YEAR MASS TIMINGS 2022**

**SUNDAY, 1ST JANUARY**

**St Raphael's 8:00 AM**  
**Mater Dei 10:00 AM**

### Christmas Reconciliation

Weekdays before and after  
 9:15am Mass.  
**24th Dec 3:30pm at St Raphael's**  
**25th Dec 9:30am at Mater Dei Church.**

The Mater Dei /St Raphael parishes bulletin will not be published next weekend.

St Raphael Church Friday evening Adoration will recommence on 27th January 2023

St Raphael Monday evening rosary will continue every Monday except 26th December 2022

### Parish Office Closed

The Mater Dei / St Raphael Parish Office will be closed from 2nd to 6th January 2023

### Weekday 9:15am Mass:

There won't be 9:15am masses at MD and SR this coming week. However, there will be 9:15am mass at Mater Dei on Tue, Wed, **Thurs** and Friday and no mass at SR from 3rd Jan until the school reopens.

### 2022 Christmas Message—Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP

Friends, I would like to share with you my 2022 Christmas Message. May God bless you and your loved ones with Christmas peace and hope.

<https://www.facebook.com/anthonyfisherop/videos/814302149871173/>



### Safeguarding Children

The Safeguarding and Child Protection documents can be found on our website at <https://www.materdei-straphael.org.au/safeguarding/> and the Safeguarding policy is displayed in both the churches entry / foyer.

### A Sign of the Times

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

a FUNNY



### The Catholic Weekly PULPIT POINTS 25th Dec 2022

- Prue Car: MP. Believer in bigger things
- Lambs among Wolves: Aussie Catholics take their faith to the streets
- Darkness at Christmas
- Anna Walsh: Start a spiritual reading book club

### COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

TYPE	St Raphael's	Mater Dei
First	283.45	145.65
Second: loose	324.95	223.00
Envelopes	385.00	375.00



Christmas Offering Envelopes are on the pews for your kind consideration. Thank you.

### PARISH DIRECTORY

**PARISH PRIEST:** Fr Thomas Alukka  
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**ST. RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
 84 George Street, South Hurstville

**Website:** <https://www.materdei-straphael.org.au/>

**Parish Secretary:** Juliana Widjaja  
 Office hours: Tues & Wed 9:30am - 2:30pm  
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**Parish Ministry Coordinator & Safeguarding Officer** Michael Fernandes

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