



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

Fourth Sunday of Advent &
Nativity of the Lord - Year B

Bulletin

24th Dec 2023

Entrance Antiphon : Cf Isaiah 45:8

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: 2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

The kingdom of David will be established for ever in the sight of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 88:2-5. 27. 29.
R. see v.2

(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. 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. (R.)
2. '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.' (R.)
3. 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. (R.)

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.

Gospel Acclamation Luke 1:38

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

Gospel : Luke 1:26-38

You will conceive and bear a son.

Communion Antiphon: Isaiah 7:14

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

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.



REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

We have reached the final Sunday in the season of Advent – a time of preparing ourselves to recognise and celebrate Christ's presence in the world, both historically and in an ongoing, timeless way. This week's gospel account of the Annunciation is an ideal culmination to this season as we recall Mary's emphatic 'Yes' to all that was being asked of her. At the end of the Advent season of reflection and preparation to recognise Christ's presence in the world and in our lives, what better response could there be than to simply say, 'Yes'?

In a world that is driven by selfishness and the drive to push one's self ahead of others, Mary's selfless act stands as a challenge to our modern society. Even in her own time, Mary's decision must have been an enormously difficult one – one that had the potential to bring great shame on herself and Joseph. Yet, her decision is made swiftly and in faith. She trusts God absolutely and gives her life over into God's hands. That is perhaps the supreme act of faith; to say 'Yes' to God so completely that you are prepared to hand over direction and control of your own life.

Few of us tend to be visited by angels who lay out God's plan for us as clearly as Gabriel did for Mary. For most of us, it is a challenge to discern God's desire for us; to realise what it is that we are called to do and then give ourselves fully to that call. In the hustle and bustle of life, it is difficult to hear anything that God may be trying to ask of us. Perhaps the example of Mary's 'Yes' is a reminder to be still enough to hear the question in the first place!

Scriptural context

Throughout the gospel of Luke, great importance is placed on the people in society who were regarded as the 'lesser ones'. The mission of Jesus, as described in Luke's gospel, is directed towards those who were unimportant in the eyes of society. In first century society, women were regarded as much less in status than men. So it is significant that the first revelation of Jesus is made to a woman, Mary. The angel Gabriel announces that Mary has won God's favour. For a woman to win God's favour would have been unimaginable to many Jews at the time, yet, through this woman God was revealed in human form.

HOMILY by Fr Geoffrey Plant

Here is the link to Sunday's homily, Third Sunday of Advent, Year B. To watch the homily on YouTube, [click here](#). Next week's Feast of Holy Family [click here](#).

To access the text of the homily in PDF format, [click here](#). Next week [click here](#).

MASS TIMES		
	St Raphael Church	Mater Dei Church
Tues		No 9:15am Mass 26th Dec
Wed		No 9:15am Mass 27th Dec
Thurs	9:15am Mass	No 9:15am Mass 28th Dec
Friday	7:30pm Adoration	9:15am Mass
Sat	4:30pm Reconciliation 5:00pm Vigil Mass	No Vigil Mass during School Holidays
Sunday	8:00am Mass	10:00am Mass

23/24th Dec (4th Sun)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	5:00pm	8:00am	6:15pm	10:00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Norman	No Mass	Volunteer
EMOHC	Gail D.	Rosie Gould		
Readers	Pavia Family	Lappen Family		Lucy Mitry Phil M

24th /25th Dec (Sun/Mon)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	4:30pm	8:00am	8:00pm	10:00am
Acolytes	Greg Driver	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteer
EMOHC	Volunteer	Volunteer		
Readers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Joan Hansen Ray Low	Jolly Jose

Recently Deceased: Filomena Bonica

Pray for good health of: Yvonne Amy, Gisselle Clark (Osuro), Joan Rounds, Graeme Dorahy, Anne Lo, Sunga Family, Adele Shehata, Anna Liza Torres Zapata.

Pray for the deceased: Rafael Monserrat, George, Joan & John Beater; Mary & Patrick Derrig, Souls of all the departed Legionaries and their Families. Meri Beljo, Mary Toohey, Antonius Widjaja, Fr Isidore, Jeffrey Bishop, Fr Kennedy, Fr Kerr, all priests, Holy Souls in purgatory.

ROSARY	
St Raphael's Church	Mater Dei Church
Mondays 7:30 pm Rosary & Adoration will resume on 15 January 2024.	Sunday 9:30am before the 10am mass
Fri night 7.30pm Adoration will resume on 2nd Feb 2024	Will Resume in Feb 2024

Mater Dei Home Rosary

Rosary will resume on the 6th Feb 2024 Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Jesus is better than Santa

Santa lives at the North Pole.	JESUS is everywhere.
Santa comes but once a year	JESUS is an ever present help.
Santa lets you sit on his lap	JESUS lets you rest in His arms.
Santa rides in a sleigh	JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.
Santa may make you chuckle but	JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.
Santa fills your stockings with goodies	JESUS supplies all your needs.
You have to stand in line to see Santa	JESUS is as close as the mention of His name.
While Santa puts gifts under your tree	JESUS became our gift and died on the tree.
Santa says "You better not cry"	JESUS says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you.

It's obvious there is really no comparison. We need to remember WHO Christmas is all about. We need to put Christ back in Christmas. Jesus is still the reason for the season.



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMINGS 2023

SUNDAY, 24TH DEC (CHRISTMAS EVE)

ST. RAPHAEL'S

4:00 PM Carols followed by
4:30 PM Mass

MATER DEI

7:30 PM Carols followed by
8:00 PM Mass

MONDAY, 25TH DEC (CHRISTMAS DAY)

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

NEW YEAR DAY MON 1ST JANUARY

St Raphael 6:30am
Mater Dei 9:15am

Christmas Reconciliation

St Raphael:
Sat 4:30pm.

Mater Dei: Half an hour before Christmas mass. (Let the priest know you are available)

Vinnies Christmas Appeal— Thank you

The Mater Dei / St Raphael's Vinnies Christmas appeal was again a wonderful success. Generous Hampers from both parishes and a combined total of \$2525.00 was also donated. Thank you to everyone.



There will be no weekday 9:15am mass on Tuesday 26th, Wed 27th and Thurs 28th Dec 2024.

Congratulations

to Fr Thomas on his 39th Anniversary of Ordination on 18th Dec 2023 We thank Fr Thomas for his faithful service to the people of God

NEW SCREEN at Mater Dei Church

We have installed a new 86inch digital screen at Mater Dei Church and removed the old projector and screen. Thank you to all who have been donating towards the cost of the installation.

Note that the Parish office will be closed from Sat 23rd December and will reopen on Tuesday 2nd Jan 2023.

There will be no bulletin issued for weekend of 30/31 January 2024.

For urgent matters please call Michael Fernandes 0437 517 758

ST MICHAEL'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

Will resume on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 6:30pm.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

TYPE	St Raphael's	Mater Dei
First	437.55	136.75
Second: loose	261.30	223.10
Envelopes	667.00	470.00

PARISH DIRECTORY

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Thomas Alukka

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MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH

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ST. RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

Parish Secretary: Juliana Widjaja

Office hours: Tues & Wed 9:30am - 2:30pm

Phone: 02 9546 2605

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Parish Ministry Coordinator & Safeguarding Officer Michael Fernandes

Office hours: Tues, Wed & Fri 10am - 2:30pm

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