



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

Third Sunday of Advent –  
Year B

Bulletin

17th Dec 2023

**Entrance Antiphon :** *Philippians 4:4-5*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11*

I exult for joy in the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm:** *Lk 1:46-50. 53-54.*

(R.) My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed. (R.)
2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name! His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. (R.)
3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. (R.)

**Second Reading:** *1 Thessalonians 5:16-24*

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Gospel Acclamation** *Luke 3:4. 6*

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel :** *John 1:6-8. 19-28*

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

**Communion Antiphon:** *Cf Isaiah 35:4*

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

## REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

This week's gospel should sound very familiar. It is the gospel of John version of the passage used in last week's liturgy, which came from the gospel of Mark. Again it recalls the ministry of John the Baptist but it is given the particular slant of the gospel of John. Aside from the greater focus on the conversational interaction, it presents John as a 'witness'. This is perhaps more typical of the John gospel emphasis on personal encounter with Jesus. Rather than acting as something of a herald, as in last week's account, here John the Baptist is witnessing 'to speak for the light'. He makes a very clear distinction between himself and the Christ, his mission is simply to point towards the light; the Christ.

Our common understanding of the word 'witness' tends to be related to legal situations: providing a witness statement or acting as a witness to a fact in court. The use of witness in this gospel carries a different connotation: to provide witness through action and lifestyle that draws others to wonder about and perhaps come to accept the motivating belief. It is this understanding of witness that all Christians are called to provide. We are called to witness to our beliefs in the way that we live our lives, engage with others and hold to certain truths. Of course, there are some Christians who believe that their witness needs to be more obvious and more clearly stated. They feel that providing witness, or testimony, to their faith through spoken proclamation has a greater potential to change lives. Whether we choose to witness through our words or through our actions it is essential that both words and actions have integrity; that there is no clash between what we proclaim and the way we live.

### Have you thought? A time to Rejoice!

This Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* is the Latin word for Rejoice! Advent was originally celebrated as a five week season and with the same fasting and penitential nature as the season of Lent. The third Sunday, Gaudete, was like a break for rejoicing in the midst of the fasting. When Advent was reduced to four weeks and the nature of the season altered, Gaudete Sunday was retained. The colour of this Sunday is rose – a celebratory colour – and it is reflected in the vestments worn by the priest and in the colour of the third candle used in Advent wreaths.

### Living the Gospel – A Witness? Me?

It came as something of a surprise to me to think that other people might observe the way I treated others and draw conclusions about my motivation. It was when I started to work with young people that the truth of this was revealed. I realised that my actions could speak so much louder than anything I might say. I hoped that the young people I was working with might stop some time and think to themselves, 'I wonder why he treats us all that way? I wonder how it fits with that religion stuff he talks about?' Well, I can hope can't I?

## 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](#).

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

**UNITED IN FAITH, GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT NOURISHED BY THE EUCHARIST,  
COMMITTED TO PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL WE STRIVE TO LIVE AS GOD ASKS  
"to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8)**

MASS TIMES		
	St Raphael Church	Mater Dei Church
Tues		9:15am Mass
Wed		8:45am Rosary, Novena 9:15am Mass
Thurs	9:15am Mass	St Michael's Charismatic prayer group (see program)
Friday	7:30pm Adoration	9:15am Mass
Sat	4:30pm Reconciliation 5:00pm Vigil Mass	Mass only on 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Next mass is on 16th Dec.
Sunday	8:00am Mass	10:00am Mass

**ST MICHAEL'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP**  
**Every Thursday night MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**6:30 pm Rosary, 7:00 pm Praise and Worship and Reconciliation, 7:30 pm Talk or Mass or Adoration**



**Will resume on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 6:30pm.**  
**In the meanwhile, may the joy of Jesus' love, the comfort of his presence and the strength of His faith be with you and your family this Christmas and throughout 2024!**

16th/17th Dec (3rd Sun)	St. Raphael's		Mater Dei	
	5:00pm	8:00am	6:15pm	10:00am
<b>Acolytes</b>	Greg Driver	Earl Lappen	No Mass	Volunteer
<b>EMOHC</b>	Susi	Henrietta		
<b>Readers</b>	Karen Volunteer	Rounds Family		Jolly Jose Wendy E

**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**

Vinnies would appreciate donations of non-perishable food items to be made up into hampers for distribution to families in our community who are struggling at the moment. Suggestions are tinned ham and salmon, fruit juice, biscuits, nuts, cereal, pasta, long life custard, Xmas mince tarts, etc. All donations can be left at the churches by Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, for distribution on the Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December.

Thank you for your generous donations.

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

**NEW SCREEN at Mater Dei Church**

We are replacing the old projector and screen at Mater Dei Church with a digital 86 inch screen. The existing projector has reached its use by date and the screen is hard to read. This installation is planned to finish before Christmas. The total cost is \$6000.00. We are looking for donations to cover the cost of this important asset to the church. Please contact the parish office if you would like to donate any amount towards it. Thank you in advance.

**Death Anniversary:** Marie Stapleton

**Pray for good health of:** Yvonne Amy, Gisselle Clark (Oscurio), 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.

Historical marker to be installed on the nature strip outside St Raphael's church to honour John Radecki in recognition of his renowned work as a stained-glass artist.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMINGS 2023**

**SATURDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER**  
 St Raphael 5:00pm Mass  
 Mater Dei -- No Mass

**SUNDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> DEC (CHRISTMAS EVE)**

**ST. RAPHAEL'S**  
 8:00am Mass  
 11:00am Croatian Mass  
 4:00 PM Carols followed by  
 4:30 PM Mass

**MATER DEI**  
 10:00am Mass  
 7:30 PM Carols followed by  
 8:00 PM Mass

**MONDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> 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 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY**  
 St Raphael 6:30am  
 Mater Dei 9:15am

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 26 Jan 2024	Will Resume in Feb 2024



**GEORGES RIVER COUNCIL**  
**John Radecki**  
 1865 - 1955

A Polish immigrant and former coal miner who became the first stained glass artist to be trained in NSW. His work can be found across NSW including at the Mitchell Library and here at St Raphael's Church.

**Mater Dei Home Rosary**

19-12-2023 Marguerite and Denis Derrig  
 32 Waratah Street Blakehurst 7-00 PM  
 Rosary & Christmas party. Everyone is welcome.

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

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND		
TYPE	St Raphael's	Mater Dei
First	436.40	200.85
Second: loose	214.85	299.70
Envelopes	223.00	290.00

**Quotes and Insightful Quips - Some Thought-Provoking - About Babies**

- If your baby is "beautiful and perfect, never cries or fusses, sleeps on schedule and burps on demand, an angel all the time," you're the grandma.
- Babies need social interactions with loving adults who talk with them, listen to their babblings, name objects for them, and give them opportunities to explore their worlds.
- Child rearing myth #1: Labor ends when the baby is born.
- Every baby needs a lap.
- It kills you to see them grow up. But I guess it would kill you quicker if they didn't.
- Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children and no theories.
- Babies are always more trouble than you thought - and more wonderful.

**PARISH DIRECTORY**

**PARISH PRIEST:** Fr Thomas Alukka  
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**MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH**

1008 King Georges Road, Blakehurst 2221, NSW

**ST. RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH**

84 George Street, South Hurstville

**Parish Secretary:** Juliana Widjaja  
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