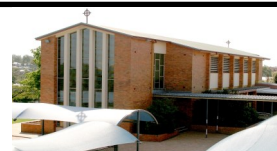


St Thomas the Apostle Parish Camp Hill



No. 49

Fourth Sunday of Advent

20 December 2020

Gospel 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.



Advent Candles. Did you know...

*The fourth candle of Advent is the Candle of **LOVE**.*

Its light reminds us of the love that God has for us, and that love has no bounds. As we get closer to Christmas, and get caught up in the business of plans, preparation and parties, we pause and remember the great gift of love God gave the world when Jesus was born.

Message from St Vincent de Paul



To the parish community,

We can't thank you enough for your monetary & voucher donations, and the food contributions made before the Christmas Appeal. Our parish secretary is ever a great facilitator behind any of our collections. Thanks heaps Lisa.

The Craft for Causes Committee have been amazing this year in providing food and money to us even without their stall.

A special thank you to our St Thomas Parish School staff, parents and pupils for wonderful donations of a very large number of vouchers for those in need in our local area. The graduating year 6's and their teachers did a terrific job in co-ordinating, collecting these vouchers.

Please note that Monday 21 December is the final day of our Christmas Appeal.

Wishing you all the blessings of a happy and holy Christmas from St Thomas's St Vincent de Paul Conference.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

1st 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.*

2nd Reading: Romans 16:25-27 *The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.*

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38 *You will conceive and bear a son.*

Parish News & Notices

St Thomas' Prayer Wall

When Covid-19 hit earlier this year we created a Prayer Wall for our parish community to share prayers virtually, while we were apart.

We are now able to gather again however we invite you to continue to share prayers on our Prayer Wall as we enter this joyful time of celebration at Christmas - the perfect time to give thanks for what we have and pray for those less fortunate.

Please feel free to visit the wall and leave a prayer:

<https://padlet.com/stthomas/prayerwall>



Please note:

The Parish Office will be closed from Thursday 24th December and will reopen on Thursday 2nd January. Thank you.

Reminder:

There will be no 9am Mass on
Christmas Eve - Thursday 24th December or
Christmas Day - Friday 25th December.

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Office hours

8:30 am - 1:30pm: M/T/Th/F

PARISH TEAM:

Parish Priest - Fr Christopher Obi
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Children's Ministry Coordinator
Sr Analissa Balderama at
cmc.stthomas@bne.catholic.net.au

Parish Secretary
Ms Lisa Moroney
stthomas@bne.catholic.net.au



PLEASE NOTE - carols will be sung 20 minutes before the start of each of our Christmas Eve Masses. Please arrive early if you wish to sit indoors - particularly for the 5.30pm Family Mass. Please let the Parish Office know if you have any specific seating requirements.

We can't wait to welcome you to Christmas Mass!



Christmas special
GRAB YOUR free PAPER

Only available in parishes of the Archdiocese of Brisbane

*Peace is not the absence of trouble
but the presence of Christ.*

~ Sheila Walsh ~

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve

5.30pm - Christmas Family Mass (FULL)

7.30pm - Christmas Vigil Mass

11.30pm - Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

8.30am - Morning Mass



RESERVATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL

Please book via this link bit.ly/Christmas-Mass (or contact Parish Office):

We look forward to seeing you there!

We remember in our prayers

The sick: Joan Scott, Humberto Villalta, Nes Mustafa, Joan Burlew, Betty Smith, Jolanda Villalta, Dan Bishop, Shirley Murphy, Olive Kiely, Sue Douglas, Tom Grant, Lauren Balcombe, Fr Ted Houlihan, Lola Radford, Sonia Mendez, Fr Ron Mollison, Cletus Obi, Mark, Marjorie Cusack, Joe Sherlock, Sue Lamb, Peter Owen, Jacob Mu

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Benjamin Longland, Francis Cosgrove, Arthur Gorski, Leslie Dossetto, Allan Rogers, Margaret Catchpole, Olive Dean, John Milford, Kathleen Jessop, Madge Sapsford, William Peake, Daniel Barry, Marjorie Croft, Fred White, Margaret White, Barry Harding, Susan Ballinger, Jack Ballinger, Theresa Hourigan, Nancy Dowling, Patrick Radford, John McKenna, Ken Murray, Ruby Johnston, Mary McNamara, Margaret Goakes, Patricia O'Leary

