

**REGULAR WEEKEND MASS LOCATIONS**

**St. Mary's Church, Woodend**  
 1B Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305.  
**Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Leichhardt**  
 22 Old Toowoomba Road, Leichhardt 4305.  
**St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich**  
 42 Pine Mountain Road, North Ipswich 4305.  
**St. Brigid's Church Hall, Rosewood**  
 Railway Street, Rosewood 4340.  
**Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, E/Heights**  
 33A Robertson Road, Eastern Heights 4305.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Parish Office Hours**  
 Monday to Friday 9:00am - 1:00pm  
 1C Elizabeth Street, Woodend 4305 | 07 3362 8765  
[ipswich@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:ipswich@bne.catholic.net.au) | [ipswichcatholic.au](http://ipswichcatholic.au)  
**Parish Priest:** Fr. Stephen Bliss OFM  
**Assistant Priest:** Fr. Minje Kim  
**Operations Manager:** Benjamin Leschke

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Year B**

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Dear Parishioners,**

'Prepare the way of the Lord' – This admonition is found in the reading from Isaiah and in the Gospel passage. Isaiah describes a long line of exiles returning to Jerusalem after many hard years in Babylon. God leads them back home. In preparation for God's and the people's entry, the way is made clear: "Every valley shall be lifted up...The rugged land shall be a plain" (Isaiah 40:4). The road is repaired, just as we might do if someone important were coming to town. The Gospel writer reinterprets this passage. Instead of repairing an actual roadway, the words of John the Baptist prepare for the entrance of Jesus into his public ministry. Despite their differences, both passages speak of the "way of the Lord," which is the way of salvation.



The people are told they will get a new start. In the first reading it will be after exile; in the Gospel it is the new ministry of Jesus. Even St. Peter refers to this newness. He calls it "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13). He goes on to explain what this means. It will be existence "in which righteousness dwells." Saint Peter further states that this will come to pass on "the day of the Lord," the day when God's promises will be fulfilled and "all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9-10).

The events described in all three readings unfold because of God's merciful love of all. It is for such a day that we are called to prepare. Are we willing to exert the effort? Are we willing to listen to God's words?

Let's prepare ourselves to see and feel God's love and peace .... Can you say God is near to you without hesitation?

**Stephen ofm**

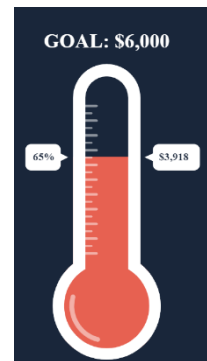
**MEMORIAL GARDENS - \$3,918 RAISED SO FAR**

**WE HAVE HIT 65% OF OUR GOAL**

**Thank you to all those that contributed this week!**



Two new gardens have been dedicated to 'Deceased Parishioners', and 'Sick Parishioners'. We have ordered the plaques. When they arrive, Fr. Stephen will bless them – date to be announced. Several other gardens planned; 'Stillborn Children', 'Miscarriages', 'Nursing Homes', 'Parish Pets'. Each garden costs approx. \$1,750. If you would like to donate toward this project, please place an envelope labelled 'gardens' on the collection plate or online using the link below. Thank you to those who have given generously already!



[www.bit.ly/ipswichfundraise](http://www.bit.ly/ipswichfundraise)

**PARISH CALENDAR**

THIS WEEKEND		NEXT WEEK	
<b>Fri 08</b>	9:00am Mass, Miraculous Medal, Eastern Heights 7:00pm Evening Prayer, St. Mary's Church, Woodend	<b>Mon 11</b>	7:00am Mass, St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich
<b>Sat 09</b>	12.30pm – Baptisms at St Mary's Church, Woodend 4:30pm Mass, Immaculate Heart Church, Leichhardt 4:30pm Reconciliation at St. Mary's Church, Woodend 5:30pm Mass, St. Mary's Church, Woodend 6:00pm Mass, Miraculous Medal Church, Eastern Heights	<b>Tues 12</b>	9:00am Mass, Immaculate Heart Church, Leichhardt 3:30pm Nativity Rehearsal, St. Mary's Church, Woodend
<b>Sun 10</b>	7:30am Mass, St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich 8:00am Mass, St. Brigid's Parish Hall, Rosewood 9:00am Mass (Children's Liturgy), St. Mary's Church, Woodend 10:30am Baptisms at St Mary's Church, Woodend 5:30pm Mass at St. Mary's Church, Woodend	<b>Wed 13</b>	8:30am Rosary, 9:00am Mass, 9:30am Adoration, St Mary's NO MASS, St Brigid's, Rosewood 5:00pm Prayer Group at Parish Office, Woodend
		<b>Thur 14</b>	9:00am Mass at St Mary's Church, Woodend 6.00pm Mass at St Boniface's Church, Marburg
		<b>Fri 15</b>	9:00am Mass at Miraculous Medal Church, Eastern Heights



**SUBSCRIBE - [ipswich.flocknote.com/digitalnews](http://ipswich.flocknote.com/digitalnews)**

Add [mail@flocknote.com](mailto:mail@flocknote.com) to your safe sender list.

Help Guide - <https://bit.ly/3N6QtGp>

## PARISH PRAYERS



**Recently Deceased:** Margaret Morgan.

**Anniversaries:** Brian Casey, James & Michael Mulkerin and family members, Shirley Brown, Gerty Mason, John & Jane Keenan, John & Alma Ryan and family members, Andrew Underwood, Peter Hogan, Petra Caramba, Fr John Dobson, Faye Ryan, and those in our Book of Life.

## OPERATIONS UPDATE

**CHRISTMAS PLANNING** - The Parish Office will be closed, and our phones will be off from 10am, following Mass on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December, until the rest of the day. Our priests and staff will be taking time for planning and formation in the leadup to a busy Christmas. Please plan accordingly.

**CHRISTMAS BREAK** - The Parish Office will close Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 12pm and re-open on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January at 9am. Like previous years, Mass boxes will contain all materials for churches for each weekend until Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January.



**This Year's Giving Tree** – Choose between:

1. Parish Youth & Family Ministry
2. St. Vincent de Paul
3. Ipswich Hospice

**Envelopes are available in churches from this weekend.**

We also have a QR Code for those who want to give electronically.

When the link is clicked, it will open to a donation form. Please write who you are donating to in the "Reason for your Donation" field.

Each year we raise around \$6,000 and the money is always put to good use. Thank you for your gifts this Christmas!



## SACRAMENTS | FORMATION | LITURGY

### COMMUNION FROM THE CUP

Two parishioners asked about intinction, which is the practice of dipping the consecrated host into the Precious Blood and then receiving the indicted host.

Intinction is not a practice in the Australian church, and not something we will be implementing. No provision is made for people to serve themselves communion. Receiving communion is not an individual, private affair. The tradition has always been to receive, not to take, communion.

During COVID, priests who concelebrated Masses occasionally practiced intinction; this was done in extreme circumstances, by the ordinary minister 'the priest', with the chalice on the corporal cloth, and under the direction of the bishops.



### MASS READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

#### Third Sunday of Advent – Yr B

1st Reading	Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11
Psalm	Lk 1:46-50. 53-54. R. Is 61:10
2nd Reading	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Gospel	John 1:6-8. 19-28

## ADVENT – GOD IS NEAR



The second candle reminds us of God's preparation for the coming of the Christ-Child, to be born in Bethlehem of Judah. The Lord was busy preparing for the birth of the Messiah in an insignificant part of Judah, Bethlehem.

### ADVENT CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	Placement of Crib & Giving Tree
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	Christmas Tree Assembled
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	Blessing of Crib & Christmas Tree

### THE ADVENT WREATH

A traditional part of the Advent season is the Advent Wreath or circle of evergreens. The circle is a symbol of eternity and a reminder that God has no beginning or end and the inclusion of the evergreens symbolises eternal life. Fastened to the wreath are four candles, three purple, and one pink, representing the four weeks of Advent. The gradual lighting of all the candles each week represents the increasing light of Christ as his coming draws near and provides a focus for our reflections each week.

There is a fifth, and final, candle to be lit. Known as "Christ's candle", this white candle is placed in the middle of the Advent Wreath and lit on Christmas Day to represent the pure light of Jesus, who comes on Christmas day as a baby in a manger.



## CONNECT YOUTH

### Friday Night Youth Returns Next Year Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

Primary School Youth | High School Youth

**Young Adults - YA Festival** is back! Gather yourself amongst many amazing young adults from our archdiocese. We as young people are dedicated to gathering, raising up and sending out a new generation of Catholics who are on fire for Jesus and filled with the Holy Spirit. Come along for some awesome preaching and worship, faith formation, social activities and so much more! This is an 18+ Event, organised by the Ignite Youth. 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> December; camping, worship, and peace!

Tickets are \$85 each (optional extra of \$65 for meals) – Bookings: <https://app.tickets.org.au/iy/yafestival23>

**Advent Begins** - As we enter our new Liturgical Year and begin the Season of Advent, we rejoice in hope, peace, joy, and love. As Catholics, we celebrate the lead up to the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ and wait in anticipation for our Lord to come. Throughout our faith, Advent is celebrated through deep prayer, reconciliation, attendance at mass and more. During the 2023 Advent Season, members of our youth will share reflections on the weekly themes of advent and identify how these themes are present in the lives of young people today.

**Stewart England**

#### Youth Advent Reflection – Peace



Peace is like a quiet, calm day without any storms. Imagine a place with no fighting, where people understand each other and feel happy. That's what peace is about – a world where we're friends, and everything goes smoothly. Peace is reflected in the smiles of people who understand and respect each other. Peace is often deeply rooted in the teachings of the Catholic faith. It goes beyond the absence of conflict and extends to a spiritual harmony and connection with God. Peace can be shown through understanding in relationships, resolving conflicts and with empathy, and promoting a positive atmosphere. Peace feels like catching a break from life. I feel peace through hanging out with friends or having a quiet moment. During Advent, peace is found through spiritual reflection on the message of hope and the anticipation of Jesus' birth. It encourages moments of calm, and gratitude reminding us of the promise of peace.

**Hannah Currey**

#### Christmas Nativity Rehearsals – URGENT: MORE CHILDREN NEEDED

This year the children of our parish community will be telling the Nativity Story at two Christmas Eve Masses; 4:30pm St. Joseph's and 6:00pm St. Mary's.

The rehearsal for St. Joseph's is at 8:30am, Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Rehearsals for St. Mary's continue every Tuesday through to 19<sup>th</sup> December from 3:30pm in St Mary's Church. We are in need of people to be shepherds and wisemen/wise people. If you haven't been to a practice yet, you are still more than welcome to join us.



#### A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Today there is need for people to be witnesses to the mercy and tenderness of God, who spurs the resigned, enlivens the disheartened, ignites the fire of hope...So many situations require our comforting witness. To be joyful, comforting people...We are all called to comfort our brothers and sister.

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 7, 2014



**NO Mass at St Brigid's Church, Rosewood on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Mass at St Boniface Church, Marburg**

Thursday, 14 December, 6pm. All welcome!



**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA):** Please continue to pray for all those who are in their faith journey, searching for God. May they find the peace of Christ in their hearts.

## NEWS & UPDATES

**Midnight Mass** - Choir rehearsal on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Dec at 6pm – 7.30pm in St. Mary's Church. All singers welcome.

**Christmas Decorations** – Can you assist in helping decorate our churches for Christmas? Each year a lot of work goes into making our churches beautiful for Christmas. We have several volunteers already; however, we need more people to help lighten the load! Please chat to your weekend Mass coordinators if you can assist in any way!

**2024 Franciscan Calendars** - RRP \$6.00 each or you can buy 2 for \$10. All funds raised through the sale of these calendars supports the work of the Franciscans. We have another 100 on the way in case they have sold out at churches.

**Your Catholic news free until this Christmas when you subscribe for 2024**



**SUBSCRIBE TO GO INTO A WEEKLY PRIZE DRAW**

[www.catholicleader.com.au/subscribe](http://www.catholicleader.com.au/subscribe)

**Advent Reflections \$6 each** - This year's Advent resource invites us to explore more deeply what it means to allow God to come to birth in us. Pick up your copy from the Welcome Desk!

**Weekend Retreat** - Reflect upon the God who constantly chooses to come to us in loving relationship. Hosted by Grace Harwood. Fri 15 Dec 2023 at 6pm – Sun 17 Dec at 3pm OR Fri 12 Jan at 6pm – Sun 14 Jan at 3pm. Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre, Ormiston. Cost: \$400. [grace@dragonflyministries.net.au](mailto:grace@dragonflyministries.net.au) or 0409 524 283

**Free Advent & Christmas Resources for Kids** - Evangelisation Brisbane has created a fun and engaging Christmas Activity Book for 2023, which would make a wonderful gift for kids and parents! *Christmas Isn't Just One Day* is filled with stories, puzzles, crafts, colouring-in, recipes and prayers to help families celebrate the scripture stories and feasts of the whole Christmas season - because Christmas isn't just one day for Catholics! The Christmas Activity Book is available to purchase for just \$2.50 per copy at

<https://tinyurl.com/ebchristmasbooklet2023>

## 2<sup>ND</sup> RITE OF RECONCILIATION Monday, 18th December, 7pm, St Mary's Church.

You are all invited to come along to celebrate this special Sacrament while preparing for the coming of our Lord.



## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

### 23<sup>RD</sup> & 24<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER WEEKEND MASSES

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

#### Saturday Vigil Mass

4:30pm - Immaculate Heart Church, Leichhardt  
4:30pm Reconciliation - St. Mary's Church, Woodend  
5:30pm - St. Mary's Church, Woodend  
6:00pm - Miraculous Medal Church, Eastern Heights

#### Sunday Mass

7:30am - St. Joseph's Church, North Ipswich  
8:00am - St. Brigid's Parish Hall, Rosewood  
9:00am - St. Mary's Church, Woodend

**THE ADVENT THEME FOR THIS YEAR  
GOD IS NEAR**

### CHRISTMAS MASSES & LITURGIES

SAVE THE DATE

#### Advent Liturgies (all of Parish)

Friday 8th December 7pm – Parish Evening Prayer  
Monday 18th December 7pm – Second Rite of Reconciliation

#### Christmas Vigil (Eve) – Sunday 24th December

4:30pm – Immaculate Heart, Leichhardt  
4:30pm – St. Joseph's, North Ipswich  
6:00pm – St. Mary's, Woodend  
6:00pm – St. Brigid's, Rosewood  
Midnight Mass – St. Mary's, Woodend

#### Christmas Day – Monday 25th December

7:30am – Miraculous Medal, Eastern Heights  
9:00am – St. Mary's, Woodend  
No evening Mass Christmas Day

