

**22 December 2024**  
**Fourth Sunday**  
**Of Advent in Year C**



**Entrance Antiphon**

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** Micah 5:1-4

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps  
79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19. R. v.4  
(R.) Lord, make us turn to  
you; let us see your face  
and we shall be saved.

**Second Reading** from the  
letter to the Hebrews  
10:5-10

**Gospel Acclamation**

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

**Holy Gospel according to**  
Luke 1:39-45

**Communion Antiphon**

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

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.*

**Fourth Sunday Of Advent**

Pope Francis draws our attention to the way that Elizabeth greets Mary with joyful astonishment! He sees this an exemplar of how we should live our faith in this coming festive season. We need to be astonished again!

‘To celebrate Christmas in a fruitful manner,’ the Pope says, ‘we are called to pause in “places” of astonishment.’ He offers three examples of what this means.

Firstly, he draws attention to astonished recognition of other people. At a time of year when many of us will reunite with friends and family, we are called to see how ‘every face is marked with a semblance to the Son of God.’

The second place of astonishment to which the Pope suggests we turn is ‘history’. We need to look beyond markets and finances and see with faith the work of the Lord who exalts the lowly and uplifts the poor. ‘The God of Christmas’, the Pope quips, ‘shuffles the cards’ of history. Economics does not rule human destiny, God does.

Thirdly, we should find astonishment in ‘the Church’. The Pope longs for us to embrace an understanding of the Church ‘that is able to recognise the many signs of faithful love that God continuously sends her.’ He hopes that ‘Mother Church ... always has her doors open wide, & her arms open to welcome everyone.

**Readings For Christmas Masses**

<b>24 December</b>	<b>25 December</b>	<b>29 December</b>
<b>Nativity of the Lord:</b> <b>7pm Vigil &amp;</b> <b>Midnight Mass</b>	<b>Nativity of the Lord:</b> <b>9.30am Mass</b>	<b>The Holy Family of</b> <b>Jesus, Mary, Joseph:</b>
<b>First:</b> Isaiah 62:1-5	<b>First:</b> Isaiah 52:7-10	<b>First:</b> Sir 3:2-6.12-14
<b>Resp Ps:</b> Ps 88:4-5.	<b>Resp Ps:</b> Ps 97:1-6.	<b>Resp Ps:</b> 127:1-5.
16-17. 27. 29 R.v.2	R. v.3	R.v.1
<b>Second:</b> Acts 13:16-17. 22-25	<b>Second:</b> Hebrews 1:1-6	<b>Second:</b> Col 3:12-21
<b>Gospel:</b> Matt 1:1-25	<b>Gospel:</b> John 1:1-18	<b>Gospel:</b> Lk 2:41-52

# Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri and Sat: Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30—10.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am and 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am		Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass & Devotion: First Friday from 7.30pm
Samoa Mass: First Sunday at 12 noon	Healing Mass: First Sat at 9am	Reconciliation: Sat 11am

## Prayer intentions

***For the sick and homebound:*** Reg Bucknell, Mary Ponnapalam, Peter Presdee, Matthew Johnson, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda and John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie and Barry Atkins, Carol and Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys, Pat Stewart. Catherine, Elizabeth & Monika,  
*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain and affliction.*

***For our recently dearly departed:***

***Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:***

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



## Contact us

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday  
 9.30am-12.30pm  
 Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176  
 Email: [varroville@dow.org.au](mailto:varroville@dow.org.au)  
 Website: [varroville.dow.org.au](http://varroville.dow.org.au)

Parish Priest:  
 Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Parish Associate:  
 Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

**Please Note:** The Parish office will be closed from 24 December 2024 and will re-open on Tuesday 7 January 2025. If you need to contact Fr Shane during this time please call 0434 705 176.

# Parish and Community Notices

## Christmas Mass Times

- ◆ Christmas Play and Carols: 6pm on Christmas Eve inside the church.
- ◆ Vigil Mass at 7pm on Christmas Eve
- ◆ Samoan Mass at 9pm
- ◆ Christmas Midnight Mass
- ◆ Christmas Morning Mass at 9.30am

We will have a lot of visitors this week at the Christmas Masses. They may not be aware of the disruptions we are experiencing with our building works. We have had a few weeks to get used to it. Please help anyone who may seem confused about where to park and enter the church, especially if you attend the evening masses when it is dark. If you see any problems or need assistance yourself, please alert one of the welcomers.

**Share Hope This Christmas - Invite Others to Christmas Mass** All of us know friends and family who are disconnected from faith. Recent research shows that 37% of people would attend church if invited by close friends and family and 30% are yet to make up their minds (or don't have close friends or family who attend Church) [NCLS, Australian Openness to Invitation, 2020].

That means in practice that if we are courageous enough to invite, there's a good chance you will encounter someone who will say yes or at least be open to considering your invitation. We often think that we need to have all the answers, be a master in apologetics or arguing the faith, or be one of "those types" of Christians. In reality, all that's needed is presence, relationship, willingness to listen, and the courage to say, "hey, this is a bit out there, but I was wondering if you'd like to come to Church with me this Christmas?" Have a look at the helpful tips for inviting others to Church this Christmas and share hope this Christmas.

**The Journey Weekly Podcast** On The Journey This Week: Fr Mike Delaney says Mary's visitation to Elizabeth invites us to consider our own life journeys, encouraging us to experience God's love this Christmas. Mother Hilda's story on how small acts of kindness and prayer can console and connect us with God. Plus, Fr Tony Percy, and two The Light Advent Series reflections.

The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

**Get Connected with what is on around the Diocese** Every week, there are many great opportunities to be part of special events, courses, free resources and to nurture and encourage you and your family in your faith. Stay informed by subscribing at [dow.sh/stayingconnected](http://dow.sh/stayingconnected) or visit [dow.sh/weeklybulletin](http://dow.sh/weeklybulletin) to see a full list of notices sent to Parishes weekly.

## Holy Gospel according to Luke 1: 39-45

### *Mary visits Elizabeth.*

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'



The Gospel of the Lord.

## REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

In this last week of Advent, the Gospel turns its focus to two pregnant women, Mary and her cousin Elizabeth. As any parent knows, pregnancy is a time of heightened longing, waiting and expectancy; as such, these two women provide a great symbol of Advent's theme. Elizabeth feels in her womb the first stirrings of her child and filled with the Spirit gives praise for the child in Mary's womb. While recognising the blessedness of Mary's child, Mary herself is called blessed for her faith, rather than her maternity. Mary believes. In this is her greatness and her importance in the Christian tradition – as woman, mother and believer.

This visitation of Mary to Elizabeth prefigures the great visitation that is the joyful message of Luke's Gospel, God's visitation to all people. As the Gospel unfolds, Jesus will be the symbol and presence of God's gracious visit to us. Luke will show us Jesus visiting the homes of various people such as Peter whose mother-in-law is ill (Lk 4:38-39), Simon the Pharisee (Lk 7:36-50), and Zacheus (Lk 19:1-10). Jesus will also be the host inviting all to gather at his table (Lk 9:10-17; 22:14-27). Even before Jesus' ministry begins, God's active coming to people is given flesh in a young woman's journey to her cousin.

May this Christmas be a time when you experience the joy of family visitations, and you become for others the symbol of God's loving hospitality. May God's Spirit be a cause of joy and blessing in the depths of your life.