

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.*

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / A

4 DECEMBER 2022

## CHANGE OF HEART

By the time Isaiah wrote, Israel had had some centuries of experience of kings, both good and bad. In that time there had been plenty of opportunities to learn what were the qualities that marked an ideal king – the presence of the spirit of the Lord, wisdom, insight, integrity, fairness, faithfulness, and concern for the poor. The longed for messiah would establish true quality of life, where even natural enemies would be able to live in peace.

One of the vexing problems Paul addressed among the Christians of Rome was how to overcome division and encourage tolerance, understanding and peace. His solution was to use the example of Jesus' tolerance and love as the basis and springboard for our way. In this way, even Jewish and Gentile Christians who were divided on the issue of food laws, would be able to live in peace with one another as they waited for the Lord's coming.

As John the Baptist began his ministry the time of the messiah, longed for by Isaiah, was finally dawning. The hope that had sustained generations was now being realised. John looked upon the evils of his day and saw that while the messiah was soon to return the people were not yet prepared to greet him. They mistakenly relied on belonging to the people of Israel by virtue of their birth. John saw that such children of God were as plentiful and as worthless as the stones that made farming so difficult. Then, as now, what was called for was a change of heart and an openness to the invitation to prepare for the Lord's coming among us.

Christopher Monaghan CP

## FIRST READING

Isa 11:1-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*He judges the poor with justice.*

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, a scion thrusts from his roots: on him the spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. (The fear of the Lord is his breath.) He does not judge by appearances, he gives no verdict on hearsay, but judges the wretched with integrity, and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land.

His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless; his sentences bring death to the wicked. Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them. The cow and the bear make friends, their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like the ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole; into the viper's lair the young child puts his hand. They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain, for the country is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse shall stand as signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

## RESP PS

Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17. R. cf. v. 7

**R. Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.**

1. O God, give your judgement to the king, / to a king's son your justice, / that he may judge your people in justice / and your poor in right judgement. **R.**

2. In his days justice shall flourish / and peace till the moon fails. / He shall rule from sea to sea, / from the Great River to earth's bounds. **R.**

3. For he shall save the poor when they cry / and the needy who are helpless. / He will have



pity on the weak / and save the lives of the poor. **R.**

4. May his name be blessed for ever / and endure like the sun. / Every tribe shall be blessed in him, / all nations bless his name. **R.**

## SECOND READING

Rom 15:4-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*Christ, the hope of all people.*

Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. And may he who helps us when we refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you to treat each other in the same friendly way as Christ treated you. The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for his mercy, as scripture says in one place: For this I shall praise you among the pagans and sing your name.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 3:4, 6

**Alleluia, alleluia! / Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. / Alleluia!**



**ST ANDREW & ST AGNES  
TWINNED CATHOLIC PARISHES**  
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Vigil Saturday 5 pm  
Sunday 9 am  
RECONCILIATION:  
Sat 4.30 - 4.45pm  
Also available by appointment  
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Masses Tues, Wed, Fri: 7 am Thurs: 9 am  
Vigil Saturday 5:30 pm  
Sunday 10 am  
RECONCILIATION:  
Sat. 5pm - 5.15pm  
Also available by appointment  
Principal: Rose André  
School: 9311 2995



Our Parishes acknowledge and honour the Bidjigal and Gadagal People of the Eora Nation as traditional custodians of this land, that we stand on.



**Go Make Disciples, The Mission Plan for the Archdiocese of Sydney**

**2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**



**Please pray for the Faithful Departed:**

**Recently Deceased:** Colin Fisher (Archbishop Fishers Father) Fiona Crean, Alfreed Sproson, and all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, the people of Ukraine and Russia, and all who have died from the Covid-19 Virus.

**Deceased:** Agnes Brisbane

**Anniversary:** Joseph Strawbridge, Bryan McDonald, Mary Hemelda Kandur, Candice Baseer, Valerie Micallef, and Frances Lawes.

**The Sick:** Heracleo & Mamerta Dela Torre, Sylvester and Jacintha Mory, Santa Viselli, Horrie Mifsud, Billy Stitt, Roy Burton, Maria Reilly, Maria, Ellie Carter and Ernie Ross. Pray for the sick, the dying, the poor and homeless in our parishes, all the souls in Purgatory, and those suffering from Covid.



Please see Parish websites for further notices.

**Where will Fr. John be celebrating Masses next weekend?**

Saturday - 10 December—5.00pm St Andrew's (Livestreamed)  
Sunday - 11 December 10.00am St Agnes'

**Please see Christmas Roster at the back of the church to volunteer**

**Funeral for the late Fiona Marie Crean—St Agnes' - Tuesday, 13 December. 10:00am**

**Greetings to all parishioners and visitors of St Andrew & St Agnes Twinned Catholic Parishes, Malabar — Matraville.** The Season of Advent goes very quickly and can be gone quicker than we think. All those preparations for our Christmas festivities and maybe a holiday during these long Summer Holidays. Can I suggest to not to let the silly season rob us of the 'Reason for the Season'. To celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ at Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago. As Christians, this is the beginning of our salvation, the long wait has come to an end and all would be fulfilled by the child born to us, Christ the Lord. As the people of the Old Testament awaited the coming of the Messiah at Bethlehem, we the people of New Testament wait for the Second and final coming of Our Lord and Saviour. We wait and hope for his coming and the first half of Advent each year centers around this reality. May we use the 'STAY AWAKE!', Prepare for the Coming of Christ' Advent Companion 2022, in preparing ourselves. I have obtained a few more copies.

In concern with Christmas, please note our Christmas Mass Times, are the same as last year. Please encourage someone who has not been to Mass for some time to come home at our Christmas Masses this year!  
Also note our Reconciliation Times at St Andrew's and St Agnes' are all listed below.

**Piety Stall—Calendars \$9, SVDP Christmas Cards \$6, Colouring Books (St Andrew's only) \$3.50**

**OUR CHRISTMAS TREE**

We would be very grateful for donations of non-perishable food items and brand-new children's toys for our annual St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal. Please place them under the tree. (See notices near the doors of the church for suggestions. The appeal is next weekend, and donations are 100% tax deductible. Envelopes are available, and donations can be made using the SVDP tap machine (St Andrew's) or online via the QR Code we will have next week. **Let's share with those less fortunate.**



**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

**St Andrews' Malabar**

Christmas Eve (Sat 5pm (children) & 7pm  
Christmas Day (Sun) 9am

**St Agnes Matraville**

Christmas Eve 6.30pm (children) & Midnight  
Christmas Day 10am

**CHRISTMAS RECONCILIATION TIMES**

**St Andrew's Malabar**

Sat 10 Dec. 4pm—4.45pm

**St Agnes' Matraville**

Tue 20 Dec. 5pm—5.45pm

Christmas at St Mary's Cathedral, 8 December 2022. You are all invited to this Festive evening at St Mary's. If interested in attending, 4pm-10.30. Please see poster in church and on websites.



We welcome Leo Marko Cavlovic, Lucella Luna and Fiorella Marina Pavan, Reggie Michael Ryman, Grayson Allan-Nathan and Mabel Davey Mazoudier, into our Parish Community, who will receive the sacrament of Baptism this weekend at St Andrew's.

**A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney:** Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguarding.enquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.