

Alleluia, alleluia!

In the past God spoke to our ancestors
through the prophets;
now he speaks to us through his Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 2: 16-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the crib . . . When the eighth day came, they gave him the name of Jesus.

The shepherds hurried away to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

When the eighth day came and the child was to be circumcised, they gave him the name Jesus, the name the angel had given him before his conception.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.



A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD / A

1 JANUARY 2023

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

The Octave of Christmas concludes by honouring Mary as the Mother of God continuing the long and rich tradition that goes back to the Council of Ephesus in 431. The formula that Levites and priests were instructed to use when blessing the people of Israel has a special resonance when applied to Mary. She could surely say that she had been blessed in the gift of Jesus, that God's face had shone upon her, and that God had been gracious to her in ways that she could never have anticipated or imagined. Her positive response to the words of the angel Gabriel opened a pathway for all humanity.

In the letter to the Galatians, we get a glimpse into Paul's wonder at the mysterious ways of God knowing that our ability to cry out in the Spirit 'Abba, Father' would not have come about if Jesus had not been born of Mary. He describes this birth as taking place in the fullness of God's time. Jesus was born as a member of the people of Israel, but this is only a part of his identity and role in God's saving plan that extends to all creation.

The first witnesses to the birth of Jesus in Luke's Gospel were the shepherds who were informed that a Saviour had been born in Bethlehem, the city of David whose own career as king started humbly as a shepherd. In a similar way, Jesus' humble beginnings in a manger will lead to blessings for all of us. Like Mary, we are called to treasure all this in our hearts.

FIRST READING

Num 6: 22-27

A reading from the book of Numbers.

They will call down my name on the children of Israel and I will bless them.

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, 'Say this to Aaron and his sons: "This is how you are to bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord uncover his face and bring you peace."

This is how they are to call down my name on the sons of Israel, and I will bless them.'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 66: 2-3, 5, 6, 8. R. v. 2

R. May God bless us in his mercy.

1. God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. **R.**

2. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. **R.**

3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. **R.**

SECOND READING

Gal 4: 4-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Galatians.

When the appointed time came, God sent his son, born of a woman.

When the appointed time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, to redeem the subjects of the Law and to enable us to be adopted as sons. The proof that you are sons is that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that cries, 'Abba, Father', and it is this that makes you a son, you are not a slave anymore; and if God has made you son, then he has made you heir.

■ The word of the Lord.





**ST ANDREW & ST AGNES
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Vigil Saturday 5 pm
Sunday 9 am
RECONCILIATION:
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Also available by appointment
Principal: Rose André
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Our Parishes acknowledge and honour the Bidjigal and Gadagal People of the Eora Nation as traditional custodians of this land, that we stand on.



The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

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



Please pray for the Faithful Departed:

Recently Deceased: Malcolm MacDonald, Kate Palos, Vernon Brisley, Joan O'Grady, Carmen Galleguillos, Eudoro Morsillo, Jenny Frost 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: Oscar Bartolo Pat & Kath McAlleer, Maureen O'Brien, Anna-Maria Chovan, John Donovan, Ethel Donohue, Robert Franke, Mary Cauchi, Ilia Saelman, Annette Maramara, Donovan, Hinks, Cussen, & Newman Families, Robert & Helena Dwyer, Dolores Blackmore, and Amanda Fernades.

The Sick: Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, John Sarniak Thomson, Pam O'Grady, Heracleo & Mamerta Dela Torre, Sylvester and Jacintha Mory, Santa Viselli, Horrie Mifsud, Billy Stitt, Roy Burton, Maria Reilly, 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 Mass next weekend?

Saturday - 7 January — 5.00pm St Andrew's (Livestreamed)
Sunday - 8 January, - 10.00am St Agnes'



Greetings to all parishioners and visitors of St Andrew & St Agnes Twinned Catholic Parishes, Malabar — Matraville.
Happy New Year to everyone!

Hoping all your Christmas celebrations went well. The splendor of Christmas has not concluded, so don't take down those decorations. We now are in the Season of Christmas which will conclude with the Baptism of the Lord which will occur on 9 January 2023. Today we conclude the Octave of Christmas, eight days of celebrating Christmas Day. On the eighth day the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God. As this feast falls on a Sunday and our New Year, we as a community will be able to ask Mary to send the Lord's blessings on our new endeavors. Also, our reflection on Mary as the Holy Mother of God—a model of holiness and Christian life — Is particularly appropriate for us as we begin a new year.

1 January is denoted as the World Day for Peace. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, we pray to him on this first day of 2023, that those at War particularly Russia against Ukraine would conclude and God's peace will reign in their hearts. In families at this time may love & mercy overcome hatred and peace reign there too. May this time be grace filled, as Mary in our Gospel today, ponders these things in her heart today and throughout the coming year 2023.

Many thanks to all those who assisted in making our Christmas 2022 celebrations so beautiful in both our parishes of St Andrew and St Agnes. I would particularly wish to thank Mrs Kate Ng for her artistry of the Bethlehem scene in our recently restored St Agnes' Nativity (try during the Christmas season to go and pray before the nativity at both our parishes). The St Andrew's nativity has been restored as well, the figures had been chipped and the Christmas angel is a recent addition. Also, to those who gave me gifts I am very grateful for your generosity, it is much appreciated.

During the next couple of weeks, you may hear an Irish accent, I am having a dear priest friend of mine that I have known since 1990, Father Greg McGivern. Fr Greg harks from Ireland and has for many years ministered in Californian dioceses in the USA. I am sure you will make him welcome.

God bless you all in this Season of the Word made flesh.

Fr John

We would like to thank Joseph Medcalf Funerals for their kind sponsorship to our Parish- es over the last 12 months. If you are wishing to use Joseph Medcalf Funerals who is Australian owned and family operated. They can be contacted on 9696 2644 (Operating 24 hours).

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.