

Catholic Parish of Lindfield-Killara

Diocese of Broken Bay

SOLEMNITY OF THE BIRTH OF THE LORD CHRISTMAS DAY

25 – 12 – 19

Why is Christmas usually regarded as the principal Christian feast, whereas in fact that honour of course belongs to Easter?

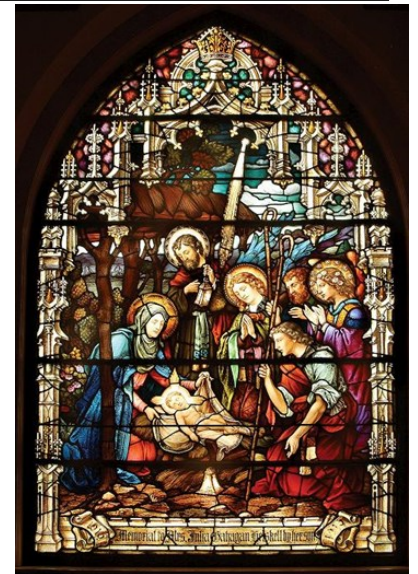
Perhaps it's because we have 'tinsellised' Christmas and made it 'nice': a feast that seems to say nothing about suffering and death, a feast that we in fact can't bear to be associated with suffering and death.

But in fact Christmas is *all* about what it is to be human: 'The Word became flesh':

the mystery of the Incarnation, the becoming-flesh, of God says that God is to be found in all the struggles of human life: *the searching, the failing, the sinfulness, the suffering, the sickness, the dying:*

not to take those things away, but to be present within them, and ultimately, as Easter proclaims, to transform them into life.

Christmas isn't a 'nice' feast, but we make it so. But it *is* a joyful feast: the joyful feast that God became all that we are.



And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Fr Colin



WELCOME

A very warm welcome to anyone visiting our parish this Christmas. It is good to have you with us. If you have any questions or would like to know more about our community please visit our parish website at www.lindfieldkillara.org.au for information on parish programmes and ministries.

We wish you a holy and happy Christmas. Please visit us again.

NOTICE OF CHANGED MASS PROGRAMME IN CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR PERIOD

Our weekday Mass programme will be a little different in the week between Christmas and New Year, and also in the first two weeks of the New Year. Please watch the bulletin each week for details.

For this coming week or so:

Thurs 26th Dec	No Mass
Fri 27th Dec	10:00am at Lindfield
Sat 28th Dec	10:00am at Lindfield
Mon 30th Dec	No Mass
Tues 31st Dec	8.30am at Killara
Wed. 1st Jan	10:00am at Lindfield
Thurs. 2nd Jan.	9:15am at Lindfield
Fri. 3rd Jan.	9:15am at Lindfield
Sat. 4th Jan.	9:15am at Lindfield

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

are available on the seats in both our churches.

The contributions via the Christmas Offering supplements the funds raised via the First Collection for the support



and upkeep of the priests of our parish and diocese. The fund it goes to depends very much on these special contributions at Christmas and Easter, without which it struggles to meet its commitments.

This diocesan fund not only provides the living allowance and household costs for the priests of the parish, but also provides funds for health care for priests and maintains priests in their retirement. Please support the Christmas Offerings. The envelopes can be placed on either plate at Masses over the next few weeks.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS OVER THE CHRISTMAS—NEW YEAR PERIOD AND JANUARY

Please note that the Parish Office is CLOSED. It will be open on Thursday 2 January, and then on Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th.

Hours for the rest January will also be different. Please refer to the bulletin each week.

A Christmas Reflection

Our beloved Beryl Cates wrote reflections for our bulletin until her death in August this year. As this is the first Christmas since Beryl's death we re-print here one of her past Christmas reflections for the bulletin. She wrote this one in 2004.
Fr Colin

How often do you hear someone say with a sigh: "I haven't the Christmas feeling". Said with something like nostalgia, a scarcely discernible sense of wanting, even yearning, before a shrug and an adoption of jollity. "Oh well, Christmas is for children anyway". Christmas isn't only for children. The symbols are. Children respond to them with infectious excitement, and that affects us. It brings smiles to our faces. We are happy in their happiness and love.

Through the years those symbols seem to have taken on a life of their own. To many they *are* Christmas. But at an existential level, for the mature and the maturing, there has to come a time when they don't satisfy any more. When the human heart wants more. It wants that indefinable something to which the symbols point, but we've never followed to where they are pointing.

Matthew and Luke used metaphor and imagery to give us the nativity story. They are different, each with its own imagery and some discontinuity between the two. Unconcernedly we've taken from both, blended them, and through the years added extras of our own. Matthew says simply, "*wise men...from the east*", so we've given them names, and because three gifts were mentioned, we've counted them as three. We've elevated them to royal status and made one dark skinned to show our inclusiveness. We've put lambs in the visiting shepherds arms, surely for symbolic reasons, for what harassed Joseph would do with paaing lambs when already he, his betrothed and new born baby are homeless no one knows. We've tidied up the young girl Mary's exhausted, travel begrimed and post-birth appearance, added a few years to her age and taken away her Jewishness.

There is nothing in Scripture to indicate the birth was at mid-night except a rather ambiguous text in Wisdom 18:14-15. Or, that it was wintertime and there's an argument against that. If it were snowing it is said, the shepherds would not be out in the fields watching their sheep, but have their flocks under cover. But we like that pristine white snow we have everywhere on and around our mangers, though we're never quite sure why. Perhaps it's our way of expressing acknowledgement of the purity of heart of the three in that dirty animal shelter, a purity that always eludes us. The early Church Fathers alerted us

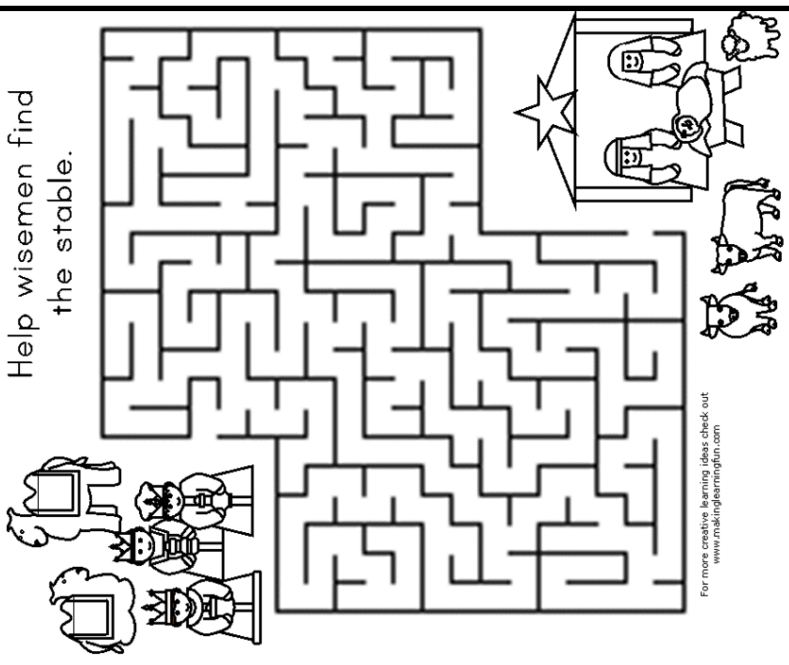
to the deep meaning in the gifts of the "*wise men*"... Gold for royalty, frankincense for divinity and myrrh for suffering and death. Sobering thoughts for the new mother lost in the love of her baby. That effulgent light shining through the sheep fields tells of the closeness and reality of the invisible light of the Transcendent in whose peace and power we draw every breath. Never are we hermetically closed off from it. That light can and does break into our human lives, and through the shepherds and their awakening, it can happen in the very ordinariness of everyday life and work.

There is in all human beings a spiritual dimension, and the symbols of Christmas stir that dimension as few other things can. And, moved, it realises something like an emptiness, and it pleads for affirmation, a living relationship with the Divine who alone can truly satisfy it, complete the whole self's being. For it is not really a void there—that is a human sensing—the Divine is always there, waiting for the conscious self to acknowledge it.

Perhaps we've cleaned up too well the grubby, tired Mary and the vermin and rat ridden stable. Through our urge for tidiness and need to put our loved Mary into something cleaner and more comfortable, we've lost a real Christmas message from that cold stable, its two occupants and new born child. That there is no situation so ugly, so destitute and devoid of comfort, that God is not in the midst of it. For here, in what we would think in our human fashion is the most inappropriate of all places, there happened the greatest and most joyous spiritual event of all time. Here was born a child who changed and still is changing lives through all times and places. That within the unwantedness or shabbiness of any human life, God, can and will lift the human heart into a truer, higher, and more peaceful and meaningful existence...surely not despite it, but because of it.

No matter how closed it is in darkness and coldness, God can, and will bring to any soul an in-filling of light, the beginning of its fulfilment, its finding that indefinable but real something for which every human heart longs. That star, about which the evangelist wrote is not out and away from us, it is always within us, beckoning us to where we can find that *Someone*, in the stable of our hearts.

FOR THE KIDS



He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.

St Augustine

The idea that there's a force of love and logic behind the universe is overwhelming to start with, if you believe it. Actually, maybe even far-fetched to start with, but the idea that that same love and logic would choose to describe itself as a baby born in straw and poverty is genius, and brings me to my knees, literally. To me, as a poet, I am just in awe of that. It makes some sort of poetic sense. It's the thing that makes me a believer, though it didn't dawn on me for many years. *Bono*

THE PRAYERS AND RESPONSES OF MASS

GLORIA:

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION:

PSALM 97:1-6

Sing a new song to the Lord
for God has worked wonders.
The Lord's right hand and holy arm
have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
The Lord has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord.

At Masses at which the Psalm is sung the response is: All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God

Please note:

- There is no 6pm Vigil Mass at Lindfield on Saturday 4th January (though Mass is as normal this coming Saturday 28th).
- The Funeral Mass for Jeanette McInerney will be celebrated in Lourdes Chapel on Monday 6th January at 10:30am

Saturday		28 December	4 January
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Colin Blayney	No Mass
Killara	5:30pm	Fr Geoff Bugden	Fr Geoff Bugden
Sunday		29 December	5 January
Lindfield	8:15am	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Geoff Bugden
Killara	9:15am	Fr Geoff Bugden	Fr David Strong SJ
Lindfield	10:15am	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Geoff Bugden
Lindfield	12:00pm	Fr Edward Chau	Visitor
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Geoff Bugden	Fr Colin Blayney

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow at the following words in bold)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,

and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father &
the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the
prophets.

I believe in one, holy,
catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism
for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward
to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of everlasting life. Grant that life to:

Recently deceased: Jeanette McInerney, Tom Howley, Geoffrey Ranson, Colin Randazzo, Helen McQuoin, Joan Cassidy, Edward (Ted) Hinds, Andrew Harvey, Michael K C Wong, Delia Rodriguez.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Anthony Ellison, Ron Burke, Nena Umali, Wolfgang Liers, Daniella Schulze, Cyril Ferriere, Alex Noble, William Wise, Lise Therese Ferriere, Ian Coffey, Maureen Hobbs, Russell Adams.

FOR ALL PARISH CONTACT INFORMATION

please visit our website: www.lindfieldkillara.org.au

WEEKDAY MASS IN THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

We've taken four weeks to prepare for Christmas – now let's not forget to celebrate it. For the commercial world Christmas ended on Christmas Day. For us as a Church *it only began then* and the *Season* of Christmas continues for another fortnight.

Please come along and celebrate this season of new birth at weekday Mass.

Lindfield Killara Catholic Parish

YOUTH @ LINDFIELD KILLARA

From Year 3 to Young Adult

Children who join a faith community grow up happier, healthier and less anxious. Find out why our youth are smiling!

Opportunities include:

- Service to others; social justice
- Leadership & initiative
- Personal growth & faith development
- Friendship in a safe environment outside of school

Want to know more? Contact us or click on the "youth" tab on our webpage:
www.lindfieldkillara.org.au



WEBSITE: www.lindfieldkillara.org.au



[youth.fusion](https://www.instagram.com/youth.fusion)



youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Our end-of-year Healing Mass and Christmas Luncheon



A great crowd gathered for our final Healing Mass for the year followed by pre-Christmas luncheon in St Joseph's Hall at Killara. Many thanks to our wonderful team of volunteers who prepare morning tea every month and, on this occasion, a wonderful Christmas feast.



Happy birthday! Pictured here are some regular faces at our Healing Masses. On the right: Noreen O'Sullivan who turns 99 today, Christmas Day! Happy birthday Noreen! Centre: Morna Sutherland, whose friendship with Noreen dates back to when they lived in the same country town. Left: Patrick O'Sullivan, Noreen's son, who is also a parishioner.