

Catholic Parish of Lindfield-Killara

Diocese of Broken Bay

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, Killara
Holy Family Parish Church, Lindfield

MASS TIMES:	LINDFIELD:	KILLARA:
Saturday	6:00pm	Saturday Vigil: 5:30pm
Sunday:	8:15am	Sunday: 9:15am
	10:15am	
	12:00 (Chinese Community Mass)	
	6:00pm (for both our communities) (5:30pm on 2 nd Sun. of month)	
Weekdays:		
Monday	9:15am	8:15am
Tuesday	Christmas – see page 2	
Wednesday	10:00am	~
Thursday	10:00am	~
Friday	~	9:15am
Saturday	9:15am	~

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 5:00 – 5:30pm (Lindfield)
For 15 minutes after the 5:30pm Mass (Killara)

* NO 9:15 Mass at Lindfield nor 7:30am Mass at Killara on the 2nd Friday of each month

* Healing Mass on the 2nd Friday of each month at 10am at Killara

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT 23 – 12 – 18

This week: Micah 5:1-4; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-44

*Next week: 1 Sam 1:20-22, 24-28 or Sirach 3:2-6; 12-14; 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24
or Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:41-52*

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH CANDLE OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Celebrant: Lord Jesus Christ, you are our Saviour, the true light who has come into our world. We ask you to send your blessings on this community who gather around this wreath. Strengthen our hearts with the example of your love that we may receive you with joy and gladness on the day of redemption, when you will come to reign as Universal King for ever and ever.

The fourth candle is lit.

Celebrant: Come, Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love.
All: Teach us to walk in the path of wisdom.

Celebrant: Come, flower of Jesse, sign of God's love for all people.
All: Save us without delay.

Celebrant: Come, Radiant Dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice.
All: Shine on those who walk in the valley of darkness.

Celebrant: Come, Emmanuel, God's presence among us.
All: Save us, Lord our God.

Celebrant: As we conclude this Advent season may almighty God let the light of His Son shine upon us. May God fill our hearts with joy at the coming of Jesus and lead us to life everlasting.
All: Amen.

Please join in singing one more verse of the Entrance Hymn.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Our parish, with its two churches of Immaculate Heart of Mary at Killara and Holy Family at Lindfield warmly invites you to join us for our celebrations of the Lord's birth at Christmas. Our celebrations are as follows:

CHRISTMAS EVE EVENING :

Lindfield: 6:00pm Christmas Vigil Mass

Killara: 5:30pm Christmas Vigil Mass

These are the Children's Masses.

(please note that once again the Children's Mass at Lindfield will be celebrated **in the church**, not in the hall).



A CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THOSE IN NEED:

We invite the children at both Children's Masses to bring an envelope containing a donation towards the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. We will invite the children to come forward at the time of the Presentation of the Gifts to put their envelopes in the boxes under the Christmas Tree.

Lindfield: 10:30pm Mass
(an earlier 'Midnight Mass')
preceded by Carols at 10pm.

CHRISTMAS MORNING :

Lindfield 8:00am Mass (not 8:15am)

Killara 9:30am Mass (not 9:15am)

Lindfield 10:15am Mass

NO Chinese Mass & NO evening Mass on Christmas Day.



WELCOME

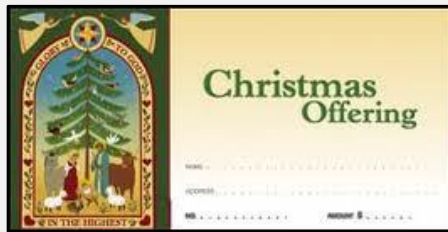
A very warm welcome to anyone visiting our parish this Christmas. It is good to have you with us. If you have any questions or would like to know more about our community please visit our parish website at www.lindfieldkillara.org.au for information on our parish life.

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

PARISH OFFICE HOURS OVER THE CHRISTMAS – NEW YEAR PERIOD

- Christmas-New Year office closure: please note that the Parish Office is closed until Wednesday 2nd January.
- after that, from 2nd January onwards until after Australia Day, the Parish Office will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays only.

CHRISTMAS ON THE PARISH WEBSITE All the times for Christmas in the parish can be found by clicking the 'Christmas' hotlink box on the homepage of our parish website.



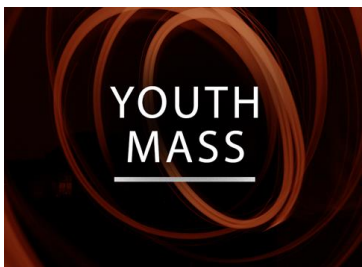
CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

are available near the doors of both our churches.

The contributions via the Christmas Offering supplements the funds raised via the First Collection for the support and upkeep of priests. 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.



ABOUT OUR MONTHLY YOUTH AND FAMILY MASS IN 2019

The monthly Youth and Family Mass will resume in February.

Please note however that in 2019 the monthly Youth and Family Mass at Lindfield church (followed by parish potluck dinner) **will be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month** (beginning in February) rather than the second Sunday of the month.



Because of this the monthly Children's Mass at Killara will move from the first Sunday to **the second Sunday of the month** in 2019 so that we continue to have a special children's celebration twice per month.



Ring out your joy to the Lord !

Thanks to some of our bellringers the bells at Lindfield will ring out as follows over the Christmas celebrations:

- ❖ for 30 minutes before and 15 minutes after the Children's Vigil Mass
- ❖ for 20 minutes before the 10:30pm early "Midnight" Mass.

HOME PRAYER SERVICE

FOR

CHRISTMAS DAY

This is a short liturgy that you might like to celebrate with family or friends or by yourself on Christmas Day, perhaps before sharing the Christmas meal or before opening gifts, or at some other suitable time:

Setting

- On a table place a white cloth, a lighted candle, a flower and the Bible open at Luke 2:15-20.
- Have a Christmas crib on the table or close by where all can see it.
- Select a Christmas carol which everyone knows to sing at the beginning of the prayer.

Together: Sing Christmas carol.

Leader:

Today we rejoice at the birth of Jesus. For four weeks we have been preparing to celebrate this event. It is time to rejoice and be glad, for Jesus is our friend and saviour. Jesus is God-with-us, the good news for the whole world.

Let's now listen to our reading which describes how the shepherds welcomed and announced the good news.

Reader: Luke 2:15-20.

Response

- Share anything that was meaningful to you in the reading.
- or discuss how you can give Jesus a special place in your celebrations today.
- or a time for silent prayer and reflection

Final Prayer

Together: Rejoice and be glad for Jesus our Saviour is born.

Reader 1: Jesus comes to bring us peace and joy.

Together: Rejoice and be glad for Jesus our Saviour is born.

Reader 2: Jesus comes to show us God's love and mercy.

Together: Rejoice and be glad for Jesus our Saviour is born.

Reader 3: Jesus comes to live with us and make us one with him.

Together: Rejoice and be glad for Jesus our Saviour is born. Amen.



Thank you to everyone for another wonderful year as a parish community. We hope that you have a very happy and holy Christmas and a blessed new year. We look forward to working together with you next year in building our community as an instrument of the Good News of Jesus.

Fr Colin and Fr Thomas

A thought on the Mass of Christmas Night. . .

One of the most beautiful things in the treasury of our Church is the tradition of the Mass of Christmas Night – celebrated either at Midnight itself or late in the evening on Christmas Eve.



'The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light.' Advent reminds us of something that's true of all life – that we search and look for God sometimes in darkness, sometimes full of our human uncertainties. We discover God *in* that darkness – we glimpse those moments of light and peace which enable us to continue on the journey.

The timing of the Mass of Christmas Night is beautiful. Our gift to God is to stay awake on this great feast till those still night hours, that time of deep darkness which symbolises the darkness in which we wait for God to enter our lives. And then the celebration of the light of God's coming is even more symbolic: light and joy break into the stillness and darkness of that night hour. It's a beautiful way to keep vigil and to usher in the celebration of the birth that changes the world. We do it at a time free from all the frantic preparations of Christmas Eve and before the busyness of Christmas Day itself.

Please try to come along to the beautiful celebration of the Mass of Christmas Night this Christmas – at 10:30pm in Lindfield church on Christmas Eve (preceded by a Service of Carols from 10:00pm). Mass will be concluded by 11:30pm and you can be tucked up in bed before midnight!

Fr Colin

A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO ATTENDED LAST WEDNESDAY NIGHT'S CELEBRATION OF THE SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION:


At the end of the booklet for that celebration the times for our Christmas celebrations were given. However there was an error – the Mass on Christmas morning at Killara was incorrectly listed as 9:00am. In fact it will be at 9:30am.

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THE PRAYERS AND RESPONSES OF MASS

We abstain from the joyful words of the Gloria during these days of Advent as we prepare our hearts and our community to celebrate once again the birth of the Lord Jesus

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION:



When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we pro-claim your Death, O Lord, un - til you come a - gain.

At Masses at which the Psalm is sung the response is: Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

THE PSALM Ps 79:2~3. 15~16. 18~19. R. v.4

○ Shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
○ Lord, rouse up your might,
○ Lord, come to our help.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

May your hand be on the one you have chosen,
the one you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name.

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

RESPONSES TO THE PSALM FOR WEEKDAY MASS THIS WEEK:

Monday: For ever I will sing the
goodness of the Lord.

Tues: All the ends of the earth have
seen the saving power of God.

Wed: Into your hands, O Lord, I
entrust my spirit.

Thursday: Let the just rejoice in the
Lord.

Friday: Our soul has escaped like a
bird from the hunter's net.

Saturday: Let heaven and earth
exult in joy!

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
(all bow at the following words in bold):
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the
dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME DATES FOR 2019



The letter giving all the details and dates for our Sacramental Preparation Programmes for First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion is now available **on the parish website under 'Sacraments' → 'Children's Sacraments.'**

Please download the letter and note all the dates involved in the sacraments which your child will celebrate next year.

A NOTE RE WEEKDAY MASS AFTER CHRISTMAS

In the first couple of weeks after Christmas Fr Thomas and myself will take turns at a short 'breather' after a busy year. During that time there will be just one Mass each weekday in the parish. Please see the bulletin each week for the Mass times.

Fr Colin

THE WEEKLY CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP will be in recess until Wednesday 6th February.

ARE YOU GETTING A NEW FRIDGE, OVER, DISHWASHER ETC.? We'd love to have the cardboard carton it came in. We need some large cartons to store the church Christmas decorations. If you're getting a new whitegood and can offer us the box please let the Parish Office know.

RICHARD ROHR'S MEDITATION: CONTEMPLATION: RELATIONSHIP

The contemplative potential . . . is the capacity to gradually unfold into intimacy with God. God is relationship: a relationship that has no end and unlimited possibilities. — Thomas Keating [1]

Christian contemplation is never simply meditation on something but is necessarily the deepening of relationship with Someone. — Vincent Pizzuto [2]

God is Being itself, but also a Being that is more me than I am myself. This changes everything. God has become a Thou, and not just an energy field. And I have become an I, and not just a statistic.

The spiritual path is relationship itself, not just practice, discipline, or holy posture. Authentic contemplation of the Other, through all the necessary stages of personal relationship, calls us beyond our tiny and false selves and into The Ultimate Self.

We become the One we gaze upon. “The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me: my eye and God’s eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, and one love,” as Meister Eckhart says. [3] This reciprocal gaze is the True Self, perfectly given and always waiting to be perfectly received. It is so dear and so precious that it needs no external payoffs whatsoever. The True Self is abundantly content.

[1] Thomas Keating, *From the Mind to the Heart* (Temple Rock Company: 2017), first page (pages are not numbered).

[2] Vincent Pizzuto, *Contemplating Christ: The Gospels and the Interior Life* (Liturgical Press: 2018), 56.

[3] Meister Eckhart, *Qui Audit Me*, sermon on Sirach 24:30. See *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, tr. and ed. Maurice O’C. Walshe (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2009), 298.

Parish Retreats in 2019

Each year we offer the opportunity for Parish Retreats at Tarrawarra Abbey, located in the beautiful Yarra Valley to the east of Melbourne, and/or at the Benedictine Abbey at Jamberoo, located on the beautiful Illawarra escarpment just two hours south of Sydney. The heart of the retreat is to experience the richness of the monastic tradition in the life of our Church, and to draw on its wisdom for our own life. For 2019:

A. Tarrawarra Abbey:

Arriving mid-afternoon Tuesday 30th April; retreat proper running from Wednesday 1st – Sunday 5th May; departing after breakfast on Monday 6th May.

B. Jamberoo Abbey:

We have tentative bookings for the following two options:

a. Arrive Monday afternoon 23rd September; depart Friday morning 27th September (the week before school holidays begin)

b. Arrive Monday afternoon 14th October; depart Friday morning 18th October (the week school returns)

We will choose the week which suits the majority of those wishing to go to Jamberoo. You are welcome to book for both the Tarrawarra and Jamberoo retreats.

Booking:

If you are interested in taking part in one of these retreats or just finding out more about what’s involved please contact Fr Colin. More details can be found on the parish website under ‘Groups and Ministries’ → ‘Parish Retreats’.

Parish Staff and Contact Information

We are the one parish of Lindfield-Killara containing our two distinct but collaborating and cooperating communities centred on our two churches at Killara and Lindfield.

Holy Family Church: cnr Pacific Hwy and Highfield Rd, Lindfield
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church: cnr Fiddens Wharf Rd and Charles St, Killara
Parish Priest: Fr Colin Blayney colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au 9416 7195
Assistant Priest: Fr Thomas Alackakunnel VC thomas@lindfieldkillara.org.au 0421 406162

PARISH OFFICE:

Parish Secretary: Philita Marundan (Tues-Fri): philita@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Office Coordinator and Child Protection Coordinator:

Alison Williams (Mon, Wed, Thur): alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Address: Level 1, 2 Highfield Road (cnr Pacific Hwy) Lindfield NSW 2070
 (Postal: PO Box 22, Lindfield NSW 2070)

Ph: 9416 3702 **Fax:** 9416 3913 **Email:** parish@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Catechist Coordinator (Primary Schools): sue-anne@lindfieldkillara.org.au
Sue-Anne Sherwood 0416 141 508

Sacramental Programme Coordinator: sue-anne@lindfieldkillara.org.au
Sue-Anne Sherwood 0416 141 508

Assistant Sacramental Programme Coordinator:
Maia Schulze Tsang maia@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Priest's Secretary: Maia Schulze Tsang maia@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Facilities Coordinator (volunteer): Anthony Cassidy anthony@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Youth Ministry Coordinator (volunteer): Jean Shatek youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Primary School: Holy Family School, 4 Highfield Rd, Lindfield 2070

Ph: 9416 7200 **Fax:** 9416 9342

School Website: www.hfldbb.catholic.edu.au

Parish Website: www.lindfieldkillara.org.au

Saturday		22 Dec	29 Dec
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Michael Smith
Killara	5:30pm	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel
Sunday		23 Dec	30 Dec.
Lindfield	8:15am	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Michael Smith
Killara	9:15am	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel
Lindfield	10:15am	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Michael Smith
Lindfield	12:00noon	Fr Gerard Kelly	Fr Peter de Souza
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel

CHRISTMAS MASSES

LINDFIELD			KILLARA		
CHRISTMAS EVE EVENING:					
Children's Vigil Mass		6:00pm: Fr Colin	5:30pm: Fr Thomas		
Mid-evening (early 'Midnight') Mass		10:30pm: Fr Colin			
CHRISTMAS MORNING:					
8:00am (NOT 8:15am)		Fr Colin			
9:30am (NOT 9:15am)		Fr Colin			
10:15am		Fr Thomas			

CHINESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

將臨期第四主日

23-12-2018

讀經一 (將由白冷出生一位統治以色列的人。)

恭讀米該亞先知書 5:1-4

上主這樣說：「厄弗辣大白冷！你在猶大郡邑中，雖是最小的，但是，將由你為我出生一位統治以色列的人；他的來歷源於亙古，遠自永遠的時代。」因此，上主必將遺棄他們，直到孕婦生產之時；那時，他弟兄中的遺民，必將歸來，與以色列子民團聚。他必卓然屹立，以上主的能力，及上主、他天主之名的威權，牧放自己的羊群。他們將獲得安居，因為他必大有權勢，直達地極。他本人將是和平！——上主的話。(默想片刻)

答唱詠 詠 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

【答】：天主，求你復興我們；請顯示你的慈顏，好拯救我們。(參閱詠 80:4)

領：以色列的牧養者，懇求你留心細聽。坐於革魯賓之上者，求你大顯光榮。求你發顯你的威能，快來作我們的救星！

【答】

領：萬軍的天主，求你領我們回去；求你從高天之上，垂視而

憐恤！求你常看顧這葡萄樹，和你右手種植的園圃，保護你所培養的小樹。**【答】**

領：願你右手扶持你右邊的人，並扶助你所堅固的子民！從此，我們再不願意離開你；請賜我們生存，為能傳揚你的名。**【答】**

讀經二 (我已來到，為承行你的旨意。)

恭讀致希伯來人書 10:5-10

福音前歡呼

領/眾：亞肋路亞。

領：看！上主的婢女，願照你的話，成就於我吧！(路 1:38)

眾：亞肋路亞。

福音 (我主的母親駕臨，這是我那裡得來的呢？)

恭讀聖路加福音 1:39-45

瑪利亞就在那幾日起身，急速往山區去，到了猶大的一座城。她進入匝加利亞的家，就向依撒伯爾請安。依撒伯爾一聽到瑪利亞請安，胎兒就在她的腹中歡躍。依撒伯爾於是充滿了聖神，高聲說：

「在女人中，你是蒙祝福的，你的胎兒，也是蒙祝福的。我主的母親，駕臨我這裡，這是我那裡得來的呢？看，你請安的聲音，一入我耳，胎兒就在我腹中，歡喜踴躍。那信了由上主傳於她的話必要完成的，是有福的。」——上主的話。

(講道後默想片刻)

華人天主教會 北區中心

主日彌撒 12 時, 彌撒後, 午餐聚會. 餐費成人\$6 小童\$4

牧職修女 司徒金美修女

聯絡 ☎ 0419- 426899

中心聯絡 Gloria Cheung

聯絡 ☎ 0416-118089

Sunday School 主日學

12noon Parish Meeting

Room

2018- 28th 家庭營

26-28 December 三天營/日營

St. Paul International College, Moss Vale

粵語組主講: Sr. Laura Watt, spc

www.ccc-inc.org.au

30/12 Sunday

2:30-5:00 pm

Lindfield 中心講座,

Sr. Laura Watt, spc 主講 「東西蒼萃的巨人 - 多默牟敦」(三) 隨後晚宴



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(continued from p.16): at a point, must ponder (as Mary did). She must let herself be painfully stretched in understanding, in not knowing, in carrying tension, in letting go. She must set free—to be itself—something that was once so fiercely hers. The pains of childbirth are often gentle compared to this second wrenching.

All of this is what Mary went through to give Christ to the world: Pregnancy by the Holy Spirit; gestation of that into a child inside of her; excruciating pain in birthing it to the outside; nurturing the new life into adulthood; and pondering, painfully letting go so that this new life can be its own, not hers. When the woman in the crowd told Jesus, “You must have had a wonderful mother!” his answer had precisely this in mind. Mary was a wonderful mother, but in ways that went far beyond the simple fact of motherhood. She heard the word of God and kept it. That obedience, more than biological motherhood, gave both an infant Jesus and an adult Christ to the world.

And in this, Mary wants imitation, not admiration. Our task is to give birth to Christ, and Mary is the paradigm for doing that. From her we get the pattern: let the word of God take root and make you pregnant. Gestate the new life by giving it the nourishing sustenance of your own life; submit to the pain that is demanded for it to be born to the outside; then spend years coaxing it from infancy to adulthood. And finally, during and after all of this, do some pondering, accept the pain of not understanding and of letting go.

Christmas isn't automatic, it can't be taken for granted. It began with Mary, but each of us is asked to make our own contribution to giving flesh to faith in the world.

Fr Ron Rolheiser omi, Centre for Liturgy, University of St Louis

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Jason 0448 455 556 or
jason.roach@century21.com.au

If I can ever be of assistance
to you, a family member or a friend
with any property advice for buying,
selling or renovation tips, I would be
delighted to help.

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

Recently deceased: Roger Lindsay, Belen Infante Rodriguez.

And for: Marion and George Blayney, Thomas and Eileen Wade, Bill and Peggy Joyce, Paul Wade.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK : Alex Noble, William Wise, Lise Therese Ferriere, Daniella Schulze, Ian Coffey, Rebecca Turner, Maureen Hobbs, Brian Couper, Russell Adams.

REFLECTING ON THIS SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURES

MARY, AS MODEL OF FAITH

Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!

Picture the scene: Jesus has just impressed a crowd and a woman, probably a mother, shouts out: "You must have had a wonderful mother!"

Jesus responds something to this effect:

Yes, I had a wonderful mother, though in ways you don't imagine. She was wonderful not because she gave me biological birth, all mothers do that. What made her a great mother is that she gave me birth in the faith.

Here, as in others places, we have to be careful to understand what Jesus is really telling us about his mother. We see places in the gospels where he seemingly does not speak highly of her when in fact the reverse is true. For example, the instance when he is approached and told: "Your mother is here, trying to see you," and he answers, "Who is my mother?" Then, pointing to the people sitting around him, he says, "Those who hear the word of God and keep it are mother and brother and sister to me."

Is Jesus distancing himself from his mother in such a case? No. He's pointing out the real link between them, namely, among all the people in the gospels, Mary is the pre-eminent example of the one who hears the word of God and keeps it. For this reason, more than because of biological motherhood, Jesus claims her as his mother. Giving birth to Christ is something more than biological.

Moreover, it's also something we're asked to do.

How?

Look at how Mary gave birth to Christ. We see that it's not something that's done in an instant. Faith, like biology, also relies on a process that has a number of distinct, organic moments. What are these moments? What is the process by which we give birth to faith in the world?

First, like Mary, we need to get pregnant by the Holy Spirit. We need to let the word take such root in us that it begins to become part of our actual flesh.

Then, like any woman who's pregnant, we have to lovingly gestate, nurture, and protect what is growing inside us until it's sufficiently strong so that it can live on its own, outside us. This process, gestation, as we know, is often accompanied by nausea, morning sickness, and a stretching of the flesh that permanently scars the body.

Eventually, of course, we must give birth. What we have nurtured and grown inside of us must, when it is ready, be given birth outside. This will always be excruciatingly painful. There is no painless way to give birth.

Birth, however, is only the beginnings of motherhood. Mary gave birth to a baby, but she had to spend years nurturing, coaxing, and cajoling that infant into adulthood. The infant in the crib at Bethlehem is not yet the Christ who preaches, heals, and dies for us. Every mother needs to give birth twice, once biologically and once in faith, once to an infant and once to an adult.

Finally, motherhood has still one more phase. As her child grows, matures, and takes on a personality and destiny of its own, the mother, *(continued on page 15):*