



**First Reading: Baruch 5:1-9 (JB)**

A reading from the prophet Baruch

*Jerusalem - God will show you splendour.*

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east:

see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.

Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.

For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.

And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God;

for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory

with his mercy and integrity for escort.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.**

**Second Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11 (JB)**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

*Show yourself sinless and without blame in the day of Christ.*

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:

all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL: Luke 3:1- 6 (JB)**

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

*All people shall see the salvation of God.*

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

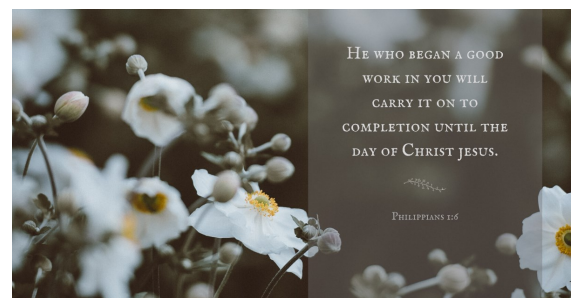
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low,  
winding ways will be straightened  
and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



**GOSPEL REFLECTION**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent, December 8**  
**Baruch 5:1-9**  
**Psalms 126:1-6**  
**Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11**  
**Luke 3:1-6**

*God has commanded that every lofty mountain be laid low, and that the age-old depths and gorges be filled. (Baruch 5:7)*

Today’s first reading contains a prophecy of what God would accomplish for the Jewish people as they languished in exile in Babylon. Baruch, scribe to the prophet Jeremiah, proclaims that “every lofty mountain” will be flattened and that “the age-old depths and gorges” will be filled in. So much so that the exiles would have a direct route, straight through the desert, back home (Baruch 5:7).

This was such good news! The only established road between Babylon and Jerusalem took travelers in a long northwesterly arc through the fertile land that surrounded the Syrian desert. But God was so eager to bring his people back to him that he promised to pave a new road directly through the wasteland. And, even more amazing, he promised to join them on the journey, “leading Israel in joy . . . with his mercy and justice for company” (Baruch 5:9)!

What a perfect way to describe the miracle of Christmas! God didn’t wait for us to stumble through the wilderness of sin that separated us from him. He didn’t stand on the border of the Promised Land and command us to make the treacherous journey on our own. He crossed that vast expanse to come to us. He entered this fallen world to offer us his “mercy and justice.” Visiting the land of our exile, he now extends his hand and promises to lead us into his heavenly home.

Baruch tells us that God has “commanded” the mountains to flatten out and the chasms to be filled in (5:7). And when God speaks, creation obeys! No amount of pride or selfishness, no matter how tall, can withstand his command. No sin, no matter how grave, can carve a ravine too deep for him to fill. Jesus has paved a “new and living way” so that we can finally come home (Hebrews 10:20)!

***“All praise to you, Lord, for coming to our rescue!”***

*Source: Word Among Us India*

**LITURGICAL FEASTS AND EVENTS OF THE WEEK**

**DECEMBER**

- Monday 9 Readings: Gen 3:9-15, 20. Eph 1:3-6, 11-12. Lk 1:26-38.  
**R:** Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous deeds.  
**The IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.**
- Tuesday 10 Readings: Is 40:1-11. Mt 18:12-14.  
**R:** The Lord our God comes in strength.  
**Our Lady of Loreto.**
- Wednesday 11 Readings: Is 40:25-31. Mt 11:28-30.  
**R:** O bless the Lord, my soul.  
**St Damascus I, pope.**
- Thursday 12 Readings: Is 41:13-20. Mt 11:11-15.  
**R:** The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger,  
and rich in compassion.  
**Our Lady of Guadalupe.**
- Friday 13 Readings: Is 48:17-19. Mt 11:16-19.  
**R:** Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.  
**St Lucy, virgin, martyr.**
- Saturday 14 Readings: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11. Mt 17:10-13.  
**R:** Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.  
**St John of the Cross, priest, doctor.**

**St Lucy**  
*pray for us*

Saint Lucy, whose beautiful name means light, by the light of faith which God bestowed upon you, increase and preserve His light in my soul so that I may avoid evil and be zealous in my good works, and abhor nothing so much as the blindness and the darkness of evil and sin.

Obtain for me, by your intercession with God perfect vision for my bodily eyes and the grace to use them for God's greater honor and glory and the salvation of souls.

St Lucy, martyr, hear my prayers.

Amen

Southern Cross

*Source: Ordo 2024*



**POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER 2024**

**For pilgrims of hope**

We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

## ST BENEDICT'S YOUTH GROUP

JOIN OUR YOUTH GROUP!

Fridays during School Term  
Time: 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM  
Ages: 8-12 years old

### LAST DAY FOR THIS YEAR: 6 DECEMBER

All of our youth leaders are accredited with Working With Children Checks.

Thank you, Gabe & Jules!

### YOUTH UPDATE SALT STARTER PACK

St. Benedict's Youth Group is excited to be considering the purchase of a Salt Starter Pack. The SALT Approach is a registered charity dedicated to promoting the Catholic faith through hands-on educational materials, helping children explore deep spiritual truths in an engaging and meaningful way.

The cost of the Starter Pack is \$2,500.00, with a retail value of \$2,825.00. We would greatly appreciate any donations to support this wonderful resource for our Youth Group. Your generosity is truly appreciated, and any contribution will make a difference. Thank you for your support!



The St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal has commenced. A big thanks to the people who have already kindly donated items.

We will be collecting donations of money and non-perishable food for the next few weeks, right up to Christmas. We would be appreciative of your support in this appeal. We have always been able to give our Local clients a much better Christmas with your generous giving. Envelopes are available around the church for donations, as well as our big buckets for any food, drinks and toiletries you may like to donate.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Rita, Lila, Marie & Karen - Arcadia Conference

## VOLUNTEER OF THE WEEK!

This week volunteer of the week nomination goes to:



**MIRIAM BROWN**

Thank you, Miriam, for everything you do for our parish. From preparing the music and PowerPoints for the Saturday night Vigil Mass to the hard work and dedication you put into coordinating the catechists, we are deeply grateful. We also appreciate your assistance in the office whenever needed. Your efforts mean so much to us, and we are truly thankful for all that you do.

*If you know someone who deserves to be recognised as next week's volunteer, please send an email to the parish.*

### MONASTERY RETREAT NOTICE NO MORNING MASSES

**The Monks will be on retreat from Monday, December 9 to Friday, December 13, 2024.**

During this time, there will be no **7:00 AM** or **9:30 AM Masses**.

However, you are warmly invited to join them for the **12:00 NOON Mass** each day.

**Please join us in praying for our monks during their retreat.**

May this sacred time of prayer, reflection, and renewal deepen their commitment to the Lord, strengthen their faith, and inspire them with new wisdom and grace.

We ask God to bless their retreat with peace, clarity, and spiritual growth, so that they may continue to serve our community with love, joy, and devotion.

**Let us hold our monks in prayer**, that they may experience God's presence in profound ways during this retreat, and return to us refreshed and strengthened in their vocation. May their time of solitude and prayer bring them closer to the heart of Christ and to the mission they are called to fulfill.

**AMEN**

## In Our Parish

*(please let us know if you would like someone added here)*

**We welcome into God's family, all who were recently baptised.**

**We pray for the sick of our Parish, especially Joseph Guiana, Charlie Micallef, Brother Mario, Father Alberic.**

**We remember in our prayers all our dearly beloved who have died, Especially Myra Martin, Biagio Abignano, Phil Dailey, Brother Peter Hancock, Brother Terry & Colleen Bennett ~ May they rest in eternal Peace.**



### THREE YEARS MEMORIAL MASS



In Loving Memory of  
**EMANUELE MONARDO**



**Monday, 16th December at 9:30 AM  
at the Parish Church**

Please join us for a special prayer service in memory of Emanuele Monardo, as we come together to honour and remember him.

*Eternal rest grant to him O Lord,  
and let the Perpetual Light shine upon him.  
May he rest in Peace.  
Amen.*



### FLOWERS ROSTER HELP NEEDED FOR NEXT YEAR 2025

We are in need of more volunteers for the flower roster. The commitment is just once every 6 to 7 weeks. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Please consider lending a hand to help brighten our beautiful Church with flowers. Thank you!

### FAN CLEANING VOLUNTEER REQUEST

We are looking for a kind volunteer to clean the small side fans in the Church before Christmas. Your help would be greatly appreciated! Thank you in advance.

### CHRISTMAS ROSTER

The Christmas roster is now posted on the Sacristy window. Please take a moment to check the dates that work for you and kindly write your name down to help out. Thank you!

### NEW ROSTER

**NOW AVAILABLE IN SACRISTY. Please pick up your copy with your name on it as soon as possible.**

### DELIVERY OF SECOND HAND BOOKS

We have some second-hand books in storage that weren't sold during our Fête. If anyone is available to help by driving them to the LifeLine store, it would be greatly appreciated. The Hornsby Book Depot is located at:

**1/51 Leighton Place, Hornsby  
Open Tuesday to Thursday, 9:30am – 1:30pm.**

Thank you so much for your help!

### ITALIAN ROSARY GROUP



Every **Monday 2.00pm.**  
Everyone welcome.

For more details call

Angela Egiziano on 9652 1358.

### CRAFT GROUP

The quilting and craft group will meet every **4th Tuesday** of the month at 10.30am in the parish meeting room.  
All Welcome.

## CATECHISTS' NEWS

Wishing all Catechists and families a very blessed and safe Christmas and New Year!

So many people to thank –

Fr Shansana and our priests for supporting us all year!

Our parish Catechists for their commitment and time in teaching the children throughout the year!

Robin and Mary for organising the Children's Masses throughout the year!

Paula and Paul for their assistance in everything!

Melanie and our parish musicians and singers for coordinating music and PowerPoint slides.

And finally a big thanks to all the children who have read, operated the TV or been involved in the Masses and the families that support them.

You are all wonderful and awesome!! May God bless you abundantly.

If you are interested in knowing more about being a Catechist (Scripture teacher) or helper please feel free to talk to me, or Paula in the parish office or our priests, or any parish Catechist.

God bless,

Miriam Brown  
[srearcadia@gmail.com](mailto:srearcadia@gmail.com)  
Parish Catechist  
Co-ordinator



Thank You to our  
Catechists &  
Volunteers

### 60 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

**SR FAYE HANCOCK AND SR HELEN HUNTER**

**7th December**



Congratulations to you both on the remarkable occasion of celebrating 60 years of being professed as Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St. Benedict! This milestone is a beautiful testament to your unwavering faith, dedication, and commitment to living out the charism of the Good Samaritan.

### CCC PRAYER GROUP

Prayer meeting every **Wednesday morning** after the 9.30am Mass.  
*Come and meet new people and have a cuppa!*



For more details call  
Mary Camilleri on 0403 116 987.



## FEAST OF THE WEEK

### Our Lady of Loreto

Feast Day: December 10



### Patron Saint of aviators and builders

Today's memorial celebrates a revered Christian relic—The Holy House of Loreto. The house, measuring 31×13 feet, rests in Loreto, Italy, inside the Basilica of the Holy House. The truth of its long, legendary history will only be known in Heaven. In the first century, the Apostles revered the Holy House, then attached to a cave opening that completed the Holy Family's Nazareth home, believed to have been the place where the Annunciation took place. Some traditions hold that the Blessed Virgin was born and raised there. Within the house is the "Altar of the Apostles," believed to have been built by the Apostles after Jesus' Ascension, with Saint Peter the first to offer Mass there. A wooden statue in the altar, a replica of one destroyed by fire, depicts the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child. It is believed that Emperor Constantine had a basilica built over the Holy House in Nazareth and that it was the site of pilgrimages by the end of the fifth century.

Between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, Muslim invaders destroyed two basilicas built over the Holy House. As the defeated Christian Crusaders prepared to leave the Holy Land in 1291, legend holds that angels transferred the Holy House to Tersatto, modern-day Trsat, Croatia. Entering, the shocked locals saw the altar with a cedar statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child. A few days later, the Blessed Virgin appeared to a priest in the house, revealing its sacred origin and healing him of an illness as proof of her words. The Holy House became an object of devotion. The legend continues that on December 10, 1294, angels again picked up the house, moving it to Italy. The heartbroken people of Tersatto built a replica and wrote, "The Holy House of the Virgin Mary came from Nazareth on May 10, 1291, and stayed here until December 10, 1294." Today, the Shrine of Our Lady of Trsat and a Franciscan monastery mark the Croatian pilgrimage site.

Legend says that the Holy House appeared in several places before landing in the middle of a public road in Loreto, Italy. Upon its arrival, the people did not know where the house came from until Mary appeared to a hermit, telling him the history and significance of the house. The hermit told the townspeople, who verified the story by traveling to Tersatto and then to Nazareth. Today, the Holy House is enshrined in a marble frame inside the Basilica of the Holy House in Loreto.

In 1900, a member of the papal household is said to have found documents in the Vatican archives that offer a different story. In 1291, prior to the Crusaders' departure from the Holy Land, a Byzantine family named Angeli paid for the relic's transfer to Croatia and then Italy. The name "Angeli," meaning "angels," could account for the lore that angels carried the house from Nazareth.

Some scientific evidence points to the house's miraculous transportation. The mortar and stones come from the Nazareth area, not from Italy. The walls have no cracks, indicating they were never dismantled. In the thirteenth century, transporting a house whole would have been nearly impossible. The house's size matches its foundation in Nazareth, and it landed on a public road where building is banned. The tradition of devotion to the house in Croatia and in its original Italian spot suggests that a miraculous move took place. Regardless of how the Holy House arrived in Italy, it remains a place of devotion. More than 150 canonized saints have made pilgrimages there. Many popes and royalty have visited the House, and countless others have been inspired by the story.

***Our Lady of Loreto, within your home, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. You shared a pure and perfect love with your Son and saw Him grow in grace and virtue there. Please pray that my home will reflect the grace and virtue that abounded in your Holy House. Our Lady of Loreto, pray for me. Jesus, I trust in You.***

Source: [mycatholic.life](http://mycatholic.life)

# PIETY SHOP NEWS

## PIETY SHOP SELLING ALL CHRISTMAS ITEMS!

Get ready for the holiday season! Our Piety Christmas Shop will feature:

- **Nativities:** Over 40 different sizes and styles available.
- **Christmas Cards:** Beautiful designs to share the joy of the season.
- **Christmas Candles:** Create a warm and festive atmosphere.
- **Christmas Angels:** Add a touch of elegance to your decorations.
- **Tree Baubles and Ornaments:** Perfect for personalizing your tree.



Front

Back

Every week we have new items in the shop.



### OPENING HOURS for DECEMBER 2024:

Saturdays: 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Sundays: 8.00am to 11.30am

Mondays: 9.30am to 2.30pm

Fridays: 9.30am to 2.30pm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PIETY SHOP ROSTER

Contact Lila 0418 360 024



Back - Hang on Stand



### \*\*\*DILEXIT NOS - POPE FRANCIS' NEW ENCYCLICAL\*\*\*

Pope Francis' newly released encyclical, *Dilexit Nos* ("He Loved Us"), Pope Francis calls on Catholics worldwide to rediscover the love and compassion found in the **Heart of Jesus Christ**.

The encyclical, issued on Oct. 24, examines the transformative power of Jesus' heart as a font of healing for a divided world. The theologically expansive text draws from the Catholic Church's traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart as a source of inspiration for centuries of saints, popes, and theologians.

Here are seven takeaways from [Dilexit Nos](#) on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ:

1. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ
2. The power of the heart in a fragmented world
3. The cross as the ultimate expression of Christ's love
4. Love as a missionary impulse
5. Acts of reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
6. Saints and the Sacred Heart
7. The wounded heart of Christ as a wellspring of peace and unity



Source: Catholicnewsagency.com

# Parish Roster

PLEASE JOIN US FOR MORNING TEA  
AFTER THE 9AM MASS

NEXT WEEKEND'S ROSTER

14/12/24 TO 15/12/2024  
3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR C

	SATURDAY 7.00pm	SUNDAY 9.00am	SUNDAY 10.30am
Acolyte		Lorraine D	
Reader1	Mary C	Judy H	Mirko J
Reader2	Margaret B	Teresa G	Eva F
Prayers	Maria G	Kath M	Martina J
TV		Mary A	Leon J
Music		Melanie H	Melanie H
Music		Marisa Q	Keith W
Music		Theresa N	Don R
Music			
Morning Tea		Mandah V	
FLOWERS	Angela S		



Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers,  
we really appreciate it!

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

## SAFEGUARDING MISSION STATEMENT

We the people of St Benedict's Parish are committed to fostering a community of safety and care for all people, especially for children and others in the community who are vulnerable. Our commitment is underscored by our faith in Jesus Christ.

If you have a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, tell someone who can help. These people in our parish can help: Fr Shansana 0437 884 233 - Lorraine Dailey 0416 081 882 - Office for Safeguarding 8379 1605.

For all parish OH&S and Safeguarding Children matters Contact:  
Lorraine Dailey on 0416 081 882.

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays & Fridays: 9.30am to 2.30pm  
*(During school holidays, the office will be open on Fridays only and closed on Mondays.)*

Parish Office: 02 9653 2312  
Address: 2 Fagans Road, Arcadia 2159  
Email: [arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au)  
Website: [www.bbcatholic.org.au/arcadia](http://www.bbcatholic.org.au/arcadia)  
Parish Priest: Fr Shansana Samarasinghe OSB  
Email: [sanshanasamarasinghe@yahoo.com](mailto:sanshanasamarasinghe@yahoo.com)  
After hours: 0437 884 233  
Facebook: [stbenedictsarcadia](https://www.facebook.com/stbenedictsarcadia)



## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES



### CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve 24th Dec 2024  
7.00pm & 11.30pm  
*(Midnight Mass commences 11.45pm)*

Christmas Day 25th Dec 2024  
9.00am & Latin Mass 10.30am

### FEAST OF HOLY FAMILY

Saturday Vigil 28th Dec 2024  
7.00pm  
Sunday 29th Dec 2024  
9.00am & 10.30am  
4.30pm Latin Mass

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

Feast Mary the Holy Mother of God  
Wednesday 1st Jan 2025  
9.30am

### EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Tuesday 7th Jan 2025:  
9.30am

### FEAST BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Wednesday 8th Jan 2025  
9.30am

**MONASTERY**  
Daily as usual  
7.00am



## LEBANON CRISIS APPEAL

Communities are being devastated by conflict and economic instability. Please help provide families with food, water, and medical care.

**DONATE NOW**

[caritas.org.au/lebanon](http://caritas.org.au/lebanon)  
1800 024 413



PARISH BANK DETAILS for  
ONLINE only donations:  
BSB: 062 784 Account: 100002141  
Account Name: Catholic Parish of Arcadia Bank:  
CBA—Catholic Development Fund

MONASTERY: 02 9653 1159  
121 Arcadia Rd, Arcadia 2159