

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

GOSPEL

Lk 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

You will conceive and bear a son.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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Breaking Open the Word

THE ANNUNCIATION

On the eve of Christmas, today's Gospel reminds us of how the birth of Jesus is possible. Luke's narrative describes God sending the Angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee. It is a familiar story to us, yet nothing of it is in our realm of experience.

This event is reported in a series of stories paralleling the annunciation and birth accounts of John the Baptist and Jesus. The narrative will present John as herald of the arrival of Jesus as Messiah when the time of his public ministry arrives, fulfilling God's promise.

Rightly this is an account of God's activity via Gabriel announcing first to Zechariah and then to Mary. Here is a moment bathed in God's grace. God's incarnation will occur in a natural human manner, born of a woman. Yet take a focus on Mary and imagine again the appearance of an angel. No surprise that she might be perplexed (Luke 1:29). Yet Mary responds, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (v. 38).

Mary also hears of her cousin Elisabeth's fortunate conception and sets off to see her. Their meeting, the centrepiece of the double annunciations and births, reveals these two women in embrace, together they usher in the birth of the Son of God. Today, the focus is on Mary's embrace of her mission but she is part of a larger story, God's story. Mary is a courageous woman who in the face of an impossible challenge steps forward in faith.

Dr Rosemary Canavan



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

THE SAVING WORD

24 DECEMBER 2023

FIRST READING

2 Sam 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel
The kingdom of David will be established for ever in the sight of the Lord.

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 88: 2-5, 27, 29. R. cf. v. 2

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; / through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. / Of this I am sure, that your love lasts



for ever, / that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. R.

2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one; / I have sworn to David my servant: / I will establish your dynasty for ever / and set up your throne through all ages.' R.

3. He will say to me: 'You are my father, / my God, the rock who saves me.' / I will keep my love for him always; / for him my covenant shall endure. R.

SECOND READING

Rom 16:25-27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

■ The word of the Lord.

24 Dec 23
Wk 4 Advent Yr B

WELCOME TO ST PATRICK'S CHURCH

Website: <https://stpatrikswesttamworthparish.org>
Email: westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au




Parish Priest	Fr Anthony Koppman	
Pastoral Associate:	Sr Kathryn Sweeney RSJ.	Office Hrs: Wed & Thurs 8.30-11.30 am
Administration	Di Bolitho, Anne Bowden	Presbytery 67658211
Sacristan	Elaine Smyth	Pastoral Associate 0411703608
School Principals	Greg O'Toole and Maree Holland	St Josephs School 67654079

WEEKEND MASSES
WEEKDAY MASSES

Sat: 5.30 pm Sun: 9 am Sun: 5 pm

No Weekday Masses this Week



CONFESSIONS
Sat: 4.30-5.00 pm
*Or by appointment

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;

May God have mercy on all those asked to be remembered in prayer:


RECENTLY DECEASED: Patricia Mooney, Grzegorz (Greg) Jurek, Cathie Menck.

ANNIVERSARIES: Richard Bowler (1/12), Mary Sampson (2/1), Perce McInnes (2/12), John O'Brien (3/1), John Paul Vella (4/12), Pamela Mary Davy (nee Barry) (6/1), Rod Kelly (20/1), Lawrence Vella (23/1), Anna Chu.

DECEASED: Sr Iris Fittler rsj, Jacqueline Galvin, Father Morrie Clarke, Jack Sampson, Hugh and Dalis O'Brien, John O'Brien, Raphael, Evita and Philomena Smith, Peter Nally, Fr John Carey, Sandra Sheedy, Frank Koppman (Fr Anthony's Dad).

SICK: Elaine Murray, Pauline Miller, Monica Austin, Margaret Doyle, Baby Walker MacAlpine, John Betts, Gerard Dunn, Sr Gerard Joseph, Shane Davidson, Joan Crowe, Lisa Foster, Norma O'Brien, Terry Dean, Barbara Brennan, Colin MacPherson, Graeme Bussell, Kate Harrison, Maureen Harrison, Deacon Peter Harrison, Alison and baby Huxley Gallagher, William Bonner, Fr Bernie Flood, Pauline Wiley.

VEENA'S VERSIONS - Father O'Malley and the Clever Christmas Beggars

 It's just before Christmas and two beggars are sitting on a park bench in Ireland. One is holding a cross and the other a Star of David there is a steady stream of shoppers. Father O'Malley, the priest observes that both are holding hats to collect contributions. People walk by, lift their noses at the man with the Star of David and drop money into the hat of the man with the cross. Soon, the hat of the man with the cross is filled and the hat of the man with the Star of David is empty. Father O'Malley, having watched for a while, approaches the beggars. He says to the man with the Star of David, 'Don't you realize that this is a Catholic country? You'll never get any contributions holding a Star of David.' The man turns to the one with the cross and says, 'Moishe, can you imagine, this goy is trying to tell us how to run our business?'

CHURCH COLLECTIONS: **BSB 082 105**

1st. Collection West Tamworth Presbytery (Diocesan collection) Acc No: 001023642

2nd Collection West Tamworth Church (St Pats Church) Acc No:001041198

COMING EVENTS:

Dec 25 Christmas 9am Mass **1 Jan** New Years Day

"He knows our hearts, and much that is hidden from His creatures is well known to Him." (1871)



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve: Sunday 24 Dec 23 - Vigil Mass 6pm

Christmas Day: Monday 25 Dec 23 - Christmas Mass 9am

**** No evening Mass on Christmas Day**



PRAYER FOR OUR NEW BISHOP

God our Father, in Jesus, your Son,
You have given to your Church the perfect model of priest, prophet and king, and so You have blessed us through His sacrifice, taught us through His Word, and guided us through His rule.
We ask You, Father, to guide and enlighten those who will be tasked with helping to choose the next bishop of our diocese.
May the person they choose be one of deep and true prayer, a person of a compassionate heart and firm resolve, and a person of joy and peace, who desires above all to do Your will.
We entrust our prayers to our Patroness, Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, and ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

IMMACULATA MISSION SCHOOL 2024: FISHERS OF MEN: Daily Mass, Adoration and the Rosary, praise and worship, fellowship and more! There are two different programs, -Youth & adults (14 years & up): 1-6 Jan. 2024 Married couples & families (specifically designed for married couples. Includes children's and teens program): 7-10 Jan 2024. Special guest speakers: Dan & Stephanie Burke from the USA (co-founders of the Avila Institute, presenters on EWTN. Dan is an author of over 15 books on Catholic spirituality), plus Fr Francesco Gavazzi (from the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal). Held: NEGS (New England Girls' School), Armidale NSW. For costs, additional information and to register visit: <http://www.immaculata.org.au/ims>
CATHOLIC VIEWPOINT: Our Diocesan magazine is now available online at https://issuu.com/diocesefarmidale/docs/catholic_viewpoint_issue_12_-_oct_-_dec_2023 . It is recommended reading especially in this quieter time of year for many of .

It all started with the Angel Gabriel just over 2000 years ago. The Angel Gabriel proclaimed that Mary would have a very special baby and that the newborn would be called Jesus.

WEEK 1 ROSTER: 24/12/23

Christmas Vigil: R Sr Kathryn P Bamford

9am Sun: R S Nichols G Clout

5.00pm Sun: No Mass

Counting Team 27/12 O & J Whale, C Lavell

Altar Linen: M Vella

WEEK 2 ROSTER: 31/12/23

Vigil: R Sr Kathryn N Pullman

9am Sun: R S Brown R Paul

5.00pm Sun: R Volunteer D Bearman

Fri Cleaning 5/1 M Vella A Jones

Counting Team S Brown, A Bowden

Altar Linen: E Smyth

We acknowledge the First Nations people who have walked upon and care for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations people to this land and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

