



## The Barra

Weekly Newsletter of St. Finbar's Catholic Parish, Glenbrook  
1st Sunday of Advent - Year B  
2nd & 3rd December 2023

Isaiah 63:16-17; Ps 79; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:33-37

WE ARE FILLED WITH THE PRESENCE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST INTO THE HEARTS,  
SOULS AND MINDS OF ALL OUR PARISHIONERS.

### FR JOE'S MUSINGS

First Sunday of Advent Year B

For years, I have been refusing to decorate my presbytery with Christmas decors: no Christmas balls, no trees, no lights. I just want Christmas to be a normal day, like any other day throughout the year. At one stage I was even angry at Deacon Andrew, who loves Christmas. When he was serving at St Finbar's, he ornated every corner of the presbytery with Christmas decorative stuff.

However, I only realised that it was not the Christmas decoration, but rather my internal objection since each Christmas was reminding me of the years that I was denied the opportunity to celebrate Christmas at **home** with my own family: Christmas was not like coming home! As a priest, I have served in many countries, far from my family and parents. It has now been more than 25 years since my last celebration at home with my family.

This year, I decided to make a change and to embrace the Christmas joy: God in Jesus child is now visiting me here in Glenbrook, a home far from my home. He comes to the lonely of heart and invite me to communion with him. His stable is now in front of the presbytery welcoming all of us who are burdened with all sorts of human weaknesses. My heart is now his manger; and I only wish that His heart also becomes the place of consolidation for me, and for all who find life difficult and cheerless.

I want to stay alert and awake for Him, as the gospel of this first Sunday of Advent admonishes us. Staying alert means to free myself from the obsession with my own being. The fixation on myself is a deception that makes me believe in my own strength which in the end can only lead to stagnation and depression. Instead, I wish to be awakened for the encounter with the God who "humbled Himself and who entered the world through a backdoor in Bethlehem".

(St Augustine).

You may have noticed that since this Sunday, there is a big nativity scene in the front yard of the presbytery. Besides its festive decoration, the stable is at the centre with Jesus in the middle surrounded by Mary and Joseph. There is also a place reserved for me and you to enter and to participate in the wonder that defies all human sciences and knowledge. At the stable in Bethlehem, the infinite love God has for every human being is expressed with disarming simplicity. In the crib we contemplate God made human for us. The crib celebrates the covenant between God and humankind, between heaven and earth.

Bethlehem, a place of joy, also becomes a school of goodness, because the mercy and love that joins God to his children are expressed there. It visibly demonstrates the brother/sisterhood that must bind all who are brothers and sisters in faith, since they are all children of the one heavenly Father.

*Please continue reading on page 3*

### PARISH INFORMATION

**Parish Priest:** Fr Joseph Lam

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**Secretary:** Juliana Khnouf

E-mail: [secretary@stfinbars.org.au](mailto:secretary@stfinbars.org.au)

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E-mail: [admin@stfinbars.org.au](mailto:admin@stfinbars.org.au)

**PPC:**

E-mail: [stfinbarsppc@gmail.com](mailto:stfinbarsppc@gmail.com)

**Office Hours:** 9.30am – 3.00pm

Tuesday to Friday

(Closed on Mondays)

Office Phone: (02) 47426958

**Parish QR Code:**

Please use this QR Code to donate to St Finbar's Parish Glenbrook using your Credit Card, or to make any payments. Please select from the list.



**Address:**

52 Levy Street, Glenbrook 2773

PO Box 123 Glenbrook NSW 2773

**Sacraments**

Confessions: Saturdays 4.30-5.15pm

Baptisms: By Appointment

Weddings: By Appointment

**Web:** [www.stfinbars.org.au](http://www.stfinbars.org.au)

**Facebook:** Glenbrook Catholic Church St Finbars

**Parish School:** Principal

Mrs Robyn Clarke

Phone: 4724 3600

### SPONTANEOUS CHRISTMAS CAROLS

To inaugurate the lightening of the Nativity Scene in the front yard of the presbytery, I would like to invite you to our spontaneous open Christmas carols after the Vigil Mass at 5.30 pm on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Bring your own picnic or BBQ (grill is provided) and beverages. **Fr Joe**

On behalf of St Finbar's, I wish Frank Fitzpatrick on the occasion of his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday God's abundant blessing and health. Thank you for your generous commitment to our Parish. Best wishes **Fr Joe**



**WE WELCOME**

*all visitors to our church today. We extend our greetings to you. If you wish to join St Finbar's Parish, please make yourself known to one of our Wardens so we can give you our Parish Welcome Pack.*

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE**

*the Traditional custodians of this land on which we worship at St Finbar's - The Darug and Gundungurra People. We pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.*

<p><b>Sunday</b> 3rd December</p> <p><i>1st Sunday of Advent</i> <i>Year B</i></p>	<p><b>7.30am Mass</b> <b>9.30am Mass</b> <b>6.00pm Youth Mass</b> 7.00pm Senior Youth Group P/C</p>
<p><b>Monday</b> 4th December</p>	<p><b>No Mass. Office is closed</b> 5.00pm SVDP Meeting M/R 6.30pm Finnie's Choir Practice</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b> 5th December</p>	<p><b>9.15am Mass</b> 5.30pm Cantabile Choir Practice 7.30pm Liturgy Committee M/R</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b> 6th December</p>	<p><b>9.15am Mass followed by Rosary</b> 9.30am Playgroup P/C 3.30pm Advent Group M/R 7.00pm Bridge Club P/C 7.00pm Concert Rehearsal</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b> 7th December</p> <p><i>St Ambrase</i></p>	<p><b>9.15am Mass</b> 1.15pm Bridge Club P/C <b>7.30pm Advent Adoration and Confessions</b></p>
<p><b>Friday</b> 8th December</p> <p><i>The Immaculate</i> <i>Conception of the</i> <i>Blessed Virgin Mary</i></p>	<p><b>9.15am Mass</b> 1.00pm Bowlers 7.00pm Concert Rehearsal</p>
<p><b>Saturday</b> 9th December</p>	<p><b>9.15am Mass</b> 4.30pm Confessions <b>5.30pm Vigil Mass</b> 6.30pm Christmas Carols picnic in front of the new Nativity.</p>
<p><b>Sunday</b> 10th December</p> <p><i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> <i>Year B</i></p>	<p><b>7.30am Mass</b> <b>9.30am Mass</b> <b>10.45am Baptisms</b> 3.00pm Concert Rehearsal 12.00pm Bridge Club Christmas Party P/C 7.30pm Christmas Concert</p>

**2024 Religious Calendars**

Next year's beautiful calendars are now available for purchase at the Wardens' table.

The cost is quite modest being \$8 for the Franciscan and \$10 for the Columban.

All proceeds go to the St Vincent de Paul Society.

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP NOMINATION OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FOLLOWING PORTFOLIOS:-**

- + Social Welfare & Wellbeing
- + Parish Evangelisation, Formation & Renewal
- + Personal Evangelisation, Formation & Renewal

Please contact the office for more information.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR 2024**

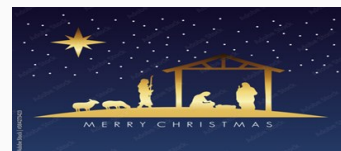
I have started preparing the new rosters for 2024 and we are in urgent need for more volunteers across the board. Help is needed for lawn mowing, church care, hospitality, special events, IT operators, Catechists and Wardens.

If you are able to help please add your name and phone number to the new volunteers list on the Warden's table. Thank you.

Juliana Khnouf / Parish Secretary

**MUSIC and READINGS for CHRISTMAS**

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm



Academy Singers, Penrith City Choir,  
Penrith Children's Choir  
Penrith City Brass  
Harp and Vocal Soloists  
Amy Johansen – Pipe Organ  
Robert Ampt – Conductor and event creator  
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*Suggested Donation: \$15 individuals, \$35 Family  
Cash preferred*

**Inquiries 0421 105 017**

**Bishop's Christmas Appeal for Catholic Care chaplaincy services**

Will you support our chaplains to listen with the ear of the heart? Your compassionate generosity and prayers will help our 15 Catholic Care Chaplains to provide pastoral, spiritual, and sacramental support to seriously ill, lonely, and distraught people this Christmas. Envelopes are on the pews, or use this link [yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal](http://yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal) or scan this QR code. Please give generously to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal. Thank you.



**Liturgical Ministry Course returns in 2024**

The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence in February 2024. This is formation for anyone interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries either as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to the Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact the Office for Worship on 0460 037 795 or [mary.gale@parracatholic.org](mailto:mary.gale@parracatholic.org) or visit our website to download an enrolment form at <https://officeforworship.org.au/>

Fr Joe's Musings Continued from page 1

In this place of communion, Bethlehem shines as the house where everyone can find nourishment - etymologically its name means "house of bread" - and the paschal mystery of the Eucharist is, in a certain way, already foretold. With Mary and Joseph, we remain in adoration before the cradle of Bethlehem, as we imploringly call upon heaven: "Let your face shine upon us and save us, Lord!".

In Bethlehem, as if on a symbolic altar, the undying Life is already celebrated and the people of all time are granted, as it were, a foretaste of the food of immortality, which is "the pilgrims' food, truly bread for sons" (Sequence for Corpus Christi). Only the Redeemer, born in Bethlehem, can fulfil the deepest longings of the human heart and soothe its sufferings and wounds.

I pray that we all find our home in the crib where we participate in the joy of the Lord's coming into this world. At the same time, it is also our home coming to God.

*Fr Joe*

## EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE 2024 PRAYER REQUESTS

Our parish community will be hosting the Epiphany Pilgrimage group again in 2024 as they journey up the mountains from 2 - 9 January. In preparation for the pilgrimage, you are invited to write any prayer requests on the cards provided and place them in the Epiphany Pilgrimage prayer box to be prayed each day by the pilgrims. To participate in some or all of the pilgrimage - including walks, Mass, Adoration / prayer sessions and meals - visit [www.epiphanypilgrimage.org](http://www.epiphanypilgrimage.org), or to assist with hospitality when the group visits our parish, please contact the parish office.

## CHRISTMAS ROSTER

Parishioners are invited to nominate themselves, if qualified for the Liturgical Roles at one of our three Christmas Masses. A blank roster is placed on the notice board in the Narthex near the Wardens' table.

Please write your name against any one ministry vacancy that you can fill. Thank you for all your help and support.

## SVDP CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2023

### Christmas Hampers

This year we will be following the format where families, groups or individuals make up and donate a full hamper or contribute items to be included in a hamper. A list of suggested hamper items is available from the wardens' table. **Please ensure that all food items are within the expiry date**

### Christmas Gift Tree

The Christmas Gift tree will be put up during the week commencing 1st December and if parishioners wish to support this activity then please take a blue or pink tag from the tree or wardens table, purchase a gift for a child as suggested on the tag and return the Christmas wrapped gift with the tag securely attached to the outside.

**All hampers items and gifts will need to be left at the church no later than Thursday 14 December 2023.**

### Volunteers

We will need helpers at 3.30pm on Friday 15 December to assist with Hamper packing and on Saturday 16 December to assist with the delivery of the hampers at 9.00am . If you are able to assist us with either of these activities please send a SMS message to 0413 549 518 and include your name and contact details.

### Poor Box Donations

All donations to the Poor Box till the end of January will count towards our Christmas Appeal. Any and all donations will be greatly appreciated and will support our work over the Christmas period and into 2024.

**We will be holding a leaving collection after each Mass on the weekend 16/17 December 2022. We are moving into the digital world this year and you will also be able to donate with your debit or credit card. All donations are tax deductible and receipts will be available at each mass.**

Thank you, fellow parishioners, for your generosity in helping a family put food on the table this Christmas.

## Bateman Battersby

L A W Y E R S

*We invite members of the Parish to take advantage of our legal services specialising in :*

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
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**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED:**

Maria Faggion (Fran Isaksen's Mother), Marie Kovacova (Mila Svehla's Cousin) and Lyn Beltran.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR SICK PARISHIONERS, RELATIVES & FRIENDS:**

Huia Kingi, Bernie Fisher, Katie Maloney, Christopher Thomson, David Haynes (Yvonne Scanlan's Dad), Gwen Cullinan, Pat Bell, Chris Paine, Lyn Downes, Jacqui Visser, Margaret Stevens, Margaret Christensen, Mark Bates, Terry Stevens, Sophie Hollies, Colleen & Michael Nolan, Maddison Farrugia, Harrison Aggar (Margaret & Ian Dickson's Grandson), Diosdado Roque (Geraldine Agahari's Father), Joan and Hubert Periera & Maureen Brown (Marcia Periera's Sister, Brother & Niece).

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME:**

Frank Culliver, Simon Culliver, Thomas O'Malley, Julia Rudnicki, Ronald Lowe, Winifred Nolan, Paul Gibbeson, Carolyn Van Dyke, Phillip Moloney, Peter May, Marjorie Clarke, Stephen Riddle, Stanley Lucas, Leo Hayes, John Debeck, Terence Hunt, Theresa Hemsley, Cornelus Van Der-Loo, Mary Bohan and Felice Macri.

**LITURGICAL ROSTER FOR 9TH & 10TH DECEMBER 2023**

Liturgical Ministries	5.30pm	7.30 am	9.30 am
Sacristan	Anaru Veitch	Peter McMahon	Garry Pursehouse
Senior Server	Anaru Veitch	Peter McMahon	Garry Pursehouse
Junior Servers	Quentin Lynch & Matilda Howard		Leia Agahari & Volunteer Please
Warden	Allan Jones	Volunteer Please	Patricia Murnane
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Maureen Tulk	Carl Moll	Dan or Tim Kensey
2nd Reading	Eileen Jones	Elizabeth Konza	Kristina Rajnoch
Intercession	Dawn Willis	John Isaksen	Yvonne Scanlan
Music	Cormac's Choir		Finnie's Choir
IT Operators	Anne Hobbs	Kylie Mills	Pat Watson
Gifts	Thea & Brian Robertson	Volunteers Please	Dorothea Walsh
Communion	Thea Robertson	Jim Tierney	Yvonne Scanlan
Children's Liturgy	Danielle		
Piety Stall	Beth Culliver		
Church Care	Volunteers please		
Hospitality	Anne King, Lynne Atkinson, Darren & Liz Dukes		
Lawn Mowing	Kevin Debeck, Rob Lennon & John Killeen		



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