

OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / A

14 DECEMBER 2025

THE BLIND SEE AGAIN. Many of the Jewish people did not expect a Messiah like Jesus. Many wondered: 'Are you the one who is to come?' Jesus came not to exercise sovereignty and power over the people but to bring blessing to the poor and needy. Let us celebrate his birth this Christmas by being good news for the poor.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE ANTIphon

Phil 4: 4-5

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

GREETING

P. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

R. And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

P: Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

P. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. For we have sinned against you.

P. Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

R. And grant us your salvation.

P: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

R. Amen.

V. Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

V. Christ, have mercy.

R. Christ, have mercy.

V. Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

The Gloria is not said during Advent.

COLLECT

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever

R: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Isa 35:1-6, 10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
God himself will come and save us.

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, 'Courage! Do not be afraid.'

'Look your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy, for those the Lord has ransomed shall return.

They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy in their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

RESP PSALM

Ps 145:6-10. R. cf. Isa 35:4

R. Lord, come and save us. (or Alleluia!)

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, / who is just to those who are oppressed. / It is he who gives bread to the hungry, / the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R.**

2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, / who raises up those who are bowed down, / the Lord, who protects the stranger / and upholds the widow and orphan. **R.**

3. It is the Lord who loves the just / but thwarts the path of the wicked. / The Lord will reign for ever, / Zion's God, from age to age. **R.**

SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of St James

You also must be patient; do not lose heart, the Lord's coming will be soon.

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

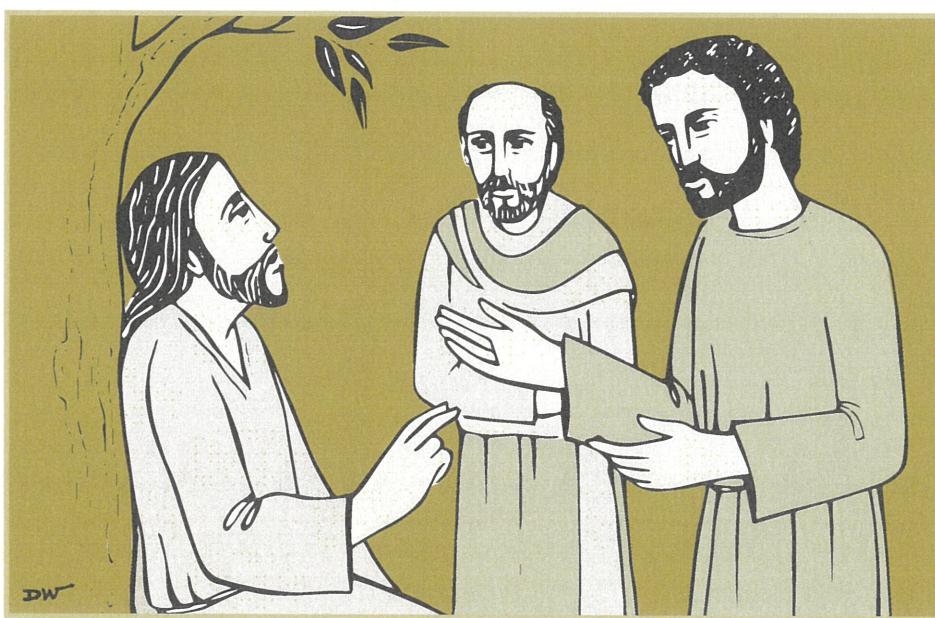
R. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Isa 61:1; Lk 4:18

Alleluia, alleluia!

The spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!



GOSPEL

Mt 11:2-11

P. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit

P. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

R. Glory to you, O Lord.

Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH APOSTLES' CREED

Or the Nicene Creed may be said.

I believe in God, / the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, / 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.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the priest raises the paten with the bread and prays, and then the chalice, we respond to each prayer:

R. Blessed be God for ever.

P. Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

R. May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.

Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: The Lord be with you.

R: And with your spirit.

P: Lift up your hearts.

R: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R: It is right and just.

PREFACE I OR II OF ADVENT

After the Preface, we sing or say:

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

THE MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

P: The mystery of faith

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

COMMUNION RITE

P: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...

P: Deliver us, Lord, we pray ...

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said ...

R: Amen

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

R: And with your spirit.

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace.

LAMB OF GOD

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

R: Lord, I am not worthy

that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTHOPHON

cf. Isa 35:4

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults

and prepare us for the coming feasts.

Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P: The Lord be with you.

R: And with your spirit.

P: May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son,  and the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

P: Go forth, the Mass is ended.

R: Thanks be to God.

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

THE ONE WHO IS TO COME

Today's Gospel focus continues with John the Baptist, introduced to us last Sunday. From prison he sends his followers to Jesus to find out if he is the 'one who is to come or have we to wait for someone else?' This question picks up an early memory that some thought John might have been the Messiah. Jesus explicates his Messianic credentials to John's enquirers: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear and the dead raised to life. In other words, Jesus affirms that he is the one who brings restoration, community and healing. Jesus' self-identification further affirms the blessedness of those who remain faithful to him.

In the biblical world, 'faith' was another way of affirming fidelity and commitment to another. This leads Jesus to attest, in this spirit of fidelity and commitment, John's prophetic mission of desert ascetism and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. As we come into these final days before Christmas, our role becomes like John: we align ourselves in fidelity and faith to the one who is to be born, who will bring healing and hope to our world that struggles to know this.

But we also hear Jesus' affirming words – the final sentence in today's Gospel passage addressed to us. Despite John's greatness as the one who prepares for the coming of Jesus, 'yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he'. The Gospel's audience, including us, are affirmed. We have unique status in the eyes of God. This divine promise accompanies us in the days ahead.

FR MICHAEL TRAINOR

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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Our Young Pilgrims at ACYF

Our youth and young adults were truly blessed to take part in this year's Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF). Joining thousands of young Catholics from across the country, they embarked on a vibrant pilgrimage of faith, friendship, and discovery.

We thank our parish community for your prayers and support, and we celebrate the wonderful gift our young people are to the Church. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and strengthen them as they share the hope and joy they encountered at ACYF.



Reflections on ACYF:

"ACYF was an unforgettable experience that allowed me to encounter God in a new way. It helped to put into perspective how there are so many moments in every-day life in which God is present, that I would usually miss or never realise. I particularly enjoyed the plenaries and talks that we went to, though my favourite was Sister Mary Grace's talk on 'How to hear God's voice' which offered advice that I can use."

"Finally, I found that I have learnt so much about my faith and the sacraments (especially the Eucharist & Reconciliation) that I will hold for the rest of my life, and I even experienced worship music for the first time!"

"ACYF was an incredible experience because I was able to meet other people with the same beliefs. I was able to attend talks and workshops that interested me (how to find hope in darkness) and I was able to experience different music I wouldn't normally have listened to."

"The pilgrim walk was excellent because I enjoyed the idea of why we were walking it and it allowed me to talk to other people in our St Gregory's group. It was a wonderful experience and I would go again."

"ACYF was an incredible experience. I enjoyed going on the pilgrim walk, because everyone was so supportive of each other. I liked that in the talks, you could tell the speakers were passionate and wanted to speak to youth. I was able to see that everyone that was there, wanted to be there. I really enjoyed the plenary which had music and talks. I enjoyed hearing experiences from the sisters and from people's personal experiences in seeing God. I enjoyed going to the expo and seeing the different organisations and religious orders and learning about them."



WELCOME TO ST GREGORY THE GREAT—DONCASTER

Third Sunday of Advent / A

13/14 December 2025

Parish Office:

Hours: Mon—Fri 9.00am to 3.30pm
Tel: 9412 8425

Email: doncaster@cam.org.au

Website: <https://www.stgregs.org.au/>

Parish Priest: Fr. Charles Balnaves

Assistant Priest: Anton Aseervathampillai

Business Manager: David Hii

Parish Secretary: Mon & Wed: Vera Arief

Tue, Thurs & Fri: Luisa Yambao

Mon: Bernadine De Silva (bookkeeping)

Sacristan: Mary Stocco - Mob: 0412 742 657

MASS TIMES:

St Greg's: Sat Vigil 6.00pm; Sun 9.00am, 10.30am & 5.00pm; Wed & Fri 9.00am

Holy Rosary: Every Wednesday after the 9.00AM Mass

Eucharistic Adoration: Every Wednesday and Friday following the 9.00AM Mass

CHILDREN LITURGY: Sunday mornings @ 10.30am

Reconciliation: Saturdays 9.30-11.00am (or by appointment or before/after any Mass but allow time)

Anointing of the Sick before/after any Mass or by appointment

St Kevin's: Sat Vigil 5.30pm; Sun 9.15am; Tue & Thurs 9.15am

Hygiene: An essential part of our everyday lives — always, forever, please be careful and caring.

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Fourth Sunday of Advent / A

Isa 7:10–14, Ps 23:1–6, Rom 1:1–7, Mt 1:18 – 24

BAPTISMS: Please ring the Parish Office for bookings

ST GREGORY THE GREAT CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL:

Tel: (03) 9848 4483

Email: principal@sgdoncaster.catholic.edu.au

PARISH SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS:

Email Margaret O'Donnell at margaretodonnel@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP:

Wednesdays at 9.45am in the church meeting room
Contact Paola Cheng 0415 280 216

CORNERSTONE YOUTH GROUP: 3rd Fridays of the month 7.00pm-9.00pm

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP: 4th Fridays 7:15pm—9.30pm

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE: 3rd Mondays 7.00pm in the School Parish Room

ST GREGORY'S TENNIS CLUB: Membership enquiries: Gianna Alessio (President) 0438 410 506

Please pray for: Those who are **sick** at this time including Raimonda Falcone, Anna M, Anna Ng, Monia Iaconi, Chee Mee Lian, Emmly Luethamphakdee, Phaisan Luethamphakdee, Priscilla Cheng, Marleen Liu, Amy Liu, Chantal Wong, Christopher Wong, Ximena Simian, Nik & Somaratna, Michael Mullens, Bob Ulehla, Carmel Aloi, Bishop Terry Curtin, Madelaine Fitzpatrick, Don Pavone, John Reid, Meredith Barnes, Siv Cuasay

and for those who died recently



and for those whose anniversaries occur about now: Manuelpillai Wilfred Rajanayagam, Jovita Fernando, Ivan Mohar

Words from the desk of the PP:

Joint Christmas Party:

We had something like 300 people at the St Greg's and St Kevin's Parish Christmas Party last weekend. A wonderful success, and with people from St Kevin's in clear evidence. My apologies to people who came especially but were unable to gain access for a parking spot: I am sorry you couldn't get in but feel most graced that there were so many people that parking became an issue. Thank you to the whole Social Group (with members from both parishes) – you catered most wonderfully. And thank you to St Greg's School for providing the choir with Choir Mistress. And thank you to Dai Sim and all with the Children's Liturgy and the beautiful way the children were prepared and gave us a Nativity Play.

Thank you and Merry Christmas to all.

ACYF Follow up!!! Youth/Young Adult Format:

You can read in other notices about plans to alter the format for the 5 pm Sunday Mass at St Greg's and make it more of a Youth Mass. Our first attempt will be in January – see notices for details. Let everyone know that you know that this event is happening.

2026 Assembly:

If you missed my note last week: please stay alert in early February for details of a Joint Parishes Assembly in May 2026.

Liturgy Learning:

An Exciting Development: Your liturgy groups for St Kevin's and St Greg's have booked Fr Frank O'Loughlin to spend some time with us on 20th February (10am-1pm) and 5th March (7pm-9pm). He will help us deepen our knowledge of the sources of the Mass and the meaning of the various parts.

I am hopeful that we will also arrange opportunities for us to delve into the scriptures / bible. But have no dates for that yet.

Alpha:

We held the training session for the Alpha Experience that will start on 28th January. The training is always well worthwhile. Thank you, Margaret (and the team), for your dedication to this important tool as we seek to grow and change to become a more invitational people who open ourselves and others to have a personal encounter with Jesus and intentionally commit ourselves as his disciples.

Columbarium:

To all those who have commented back expressing sorrow that our columbarium is not going ahead: thank you for your comments and thoughts. My decision, with others, was not made lightly and reflected a necessity so as not to cause harm to others.

Leaks & Toilets:

Final work on leaks is on-going but is scheduled for completion over coming weeks. And! I saw no excessive use of paper hand towels last weekend: thank you to whoever has modified their need or habit.

God bless, Fr Charles.



Fr Charles' Prayer Intention for this week:

For our youth and young adults: we pray that efforts to carry the Spirit of the ACYF into daily life and parish Mass will be successful.

THIS WEEK

Sat 6.00pm Peter Whiting, Gerard O'Donnell
 Sun 9.00am Greg Lesmana, Tony Nimmo
 Sun 10.30am Aditya Hendarto, Gril Job
 Sun 5.00pm Nat De Silva, Jane Ma

CARE OF THE CHURCH: Mary Wilson**MONEY COUNTERS:** Lina & Don Pavone**LECTORS**

Sat 6.00pm Peter Whiting, Gerard O'Donnell
 Sun 9.00am Greg Lesmana, Tony Nimmo
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 Sun 5.00pm Nat De Silva, Jane Ma

CARE OF THE CHURCH: Mary Wilson**MONEY COUNTERS:** Lina & Don Pavone**NEXT WEEK 20/21 Dec****LECTORS**

Sat 6.00pm Noel McClelland, Cathy McClelland
 Sun 9.00am Chris Perera
 Sun 10.30am Sauro Antonelli, Paola Villanueva
 Sun 5.00pm Isabelle Hii, Dot Haynes

CARE OF THE CHURCH: Phil Handang**MONEY COUNTERS:** Iris O'Farrell, Sharron Wilkinson

For those who are Coeliac, we can provide low gluten (<20 ppm) hosts or a separate chalice. Please let the priest or sacristan know your need.

We invite all parishioners to take note of the holiday Mass timetable below as we gather to celebrate the Christmas season and welcome the New Year.

Reconciliation Service 18 December, Thursday 7:30 PM
 at St Kevin's Church Templestowe

Christmas Eve – 24 December

7:00 PM (Carols at 6.40 PM) and 10:00 PM

Christmas Day – 25 December

9:00 AM and 10:30 AM

Feast of St Stephen – 26 December at 9:00 AM**Feast of the Holy Family**

27 December – 6:00 PM

28 December – 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 5:00 PM

New Year's Eve Mass – 31 December at 6:00 PM**New Year's Day Mass** – 1 January at 9:00 AM and 10:30 AM

Christmas Offering Envelopes are available in the Stewardship sets of envelopes and on the seats / in the gathering space.

This offering supplements your weekly giving to the presbytery in this special season. This offering directly supports our clergy in the following ways: 5% is allocated to the Archbishop, 12.5% helps support priests in underfunded parishes, another 12.5% supports retired and ill priests. The remainder covers essential expenses such as the lease and upkeep of the priest's car, operational costs of the presbytery, hospitality, and stipends for priests who provide supply when our priests are not available. Thank you for your generosity.



Are you interested in becoming a Permanent Deacon?

Walking in the footsteps of the Lord

'The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.'

MT 20:28, MK 10:45, JN 13:1-17

The permanent diaconate is a God-given calling to ordained ministry, open to married and single men, in the service of the Liturgy, the Word and Charity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Catholic Vocations Archdiocese of Melbourne website:

melbournecatholic.org/permanentdiaconate

Australian Catholic Deacons' website: www.ausdeacons.asn.au

Speak with your parish priest or contact the Office of the Permanent Diaconate: Phone: 03 9412 3357

Email: diaconate@cam.org.au

Applicants should be between 30–55 years of age.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

**COMMUNION MINISTERS**

Robert & Dianne McHugh
 Mary Stocco
 Agnes & Fred Fulia, Edith Ma
 Seleana Ng, Margaret O'Donnell

MORNING TEA: N/A

FLOWERS: Geraldina Donato
 Mary Piccoli

COMMUNION MINISTERS

Margaret O'Donnell, Iris O'Farrell
 Margaret Wallace
 Lilian & Sauro Antonelli, Nuccia La Rocca
 Judy Ablaiza, Mary Tonti-Filippini

MORNING TEA: N/A**FLOWERS:** Tessa Leung**St Gregory the Great Catholic Primary School**

For School Tours and Open Days visit sgdoncaster.catholic.edu.au

Parish Facilities: The Tennis Club Room and Courts and the Hall and the Parish Room are available. Room bookings can be made:

St.gregoryhall3108@gmail.com



Ways of Giving –
Thank you for your generosity and continuous support!

**Scan and Give**

Scan this code with your phone camera and donate directly to our church. Choose Payment for Church Donations. It's simple and secure.

Give by Contactless

Use our Eftpos Machine located in the church Narthex. You can donate with: a debit/credit card. It's simple and secure.

What an incredible night! Our Christmas celebrations kicked off at the 5:00 pm Mass, where the Parish Youth that recently participated in ACYF led the music and choir, filling the church with amazing energy and beautiful Christmas spirit. They also helped light the Advent wreath to mark the second Sunday of Advent. After Mass, everyone headed over to the hall for a Christmas party that welcomed over 300 people! We were treated to fantastic performances from the Children's Liturgy group and the school choir, and there was no shortage of delicious food, drinks, kids' activities, and of course- a visit from Santa!

A huge thank you to all our volunteers, helpers, and the Social Committee for making this event such a fun and memorable celebration for the whole community. And great news—thanks to your support, we raised \$1,247 in raffle ticket sales, which will go towards making future social events even better!

Raffle Winners:

1st: Nino X

2nd: Will

3rd: Phil F

4th: Marie M

5th: Elisa P

**Sacramental Preparation Classes**

Catholic children who do not attend our parish school are invited to participate in programs to prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation.

For further information parents may contact the parish office on 9412 8425 or by email on margaretodonnel@gmail.com

There will be an information session on Tuesday, 17th February at 4.30pm in St Gregory's Parish Church. Specific details for celebrating each sacrament will be made available at that meeting.

Please bring this information to the attention of any families you know who may wish to avail of this opportunity.