

# OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT / A

21 DECEMBER 2025

A MAN OF HONOUR. Today's Gospel invites us to reflect on Joseph, the husband of Mary, who played such an important role in God's plan of salvation. Joseph was a man of honour who combined respect for the law with compassion for Mary. He was open to hear God's word to him. He is an example for us all.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### ENTRANCE ANTIphon

cf. Isa 45:8

**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.**

### GREETING

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

**R. Amen.**

P. Grace to you and peace from God our  
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**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. You were sent to heal the contrite  
of heart: Lord, have mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

P. You came to call sinners: Christ, have  
mercy.

**R. Christ, have mercy.**

You are seated at the right hand of the  
Father to intercede for us: Lord, have  
mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

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

**R. Amen.**

*The Gloria is not said during Advent.*

### COLLECT

P. Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts, that we, to  
whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son  
was made known by the message of an  
Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be  
brought to the glory of his Resurrection.  
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 7:10-14

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

*The virgin will conceive.*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask  
the Lord your God for a sign for yourself

coming either from the depths of Sheol  
or from the heights above.' 'No,' Ahaz  
answered 'I will not put the Lord to the  
test.'

Then Isaiah said:  
'Listen now, House of David:  
are you not satisfied with trying the  
patience of men  
without trying the patience of God, too?  
The Lord himself, therefore,  
will give you a sign.  
It is this: the maiden is with child  
and will soon give birth to a son  
whom she will call Emmanuel,  
a name which means "God-is-with-us".

**The word of the Lord.**

**R. Thanks be to God.**

### RESP PSALM

Ps 23:1-6. R. cf. vv. 7. 10

**R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.**

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.

It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm. **R.**

2. Who shall climb the mountain of the  
Lord?

Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure heart,  
who desires not worthless things. **R.**

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob. **R.**

### SECOND READING

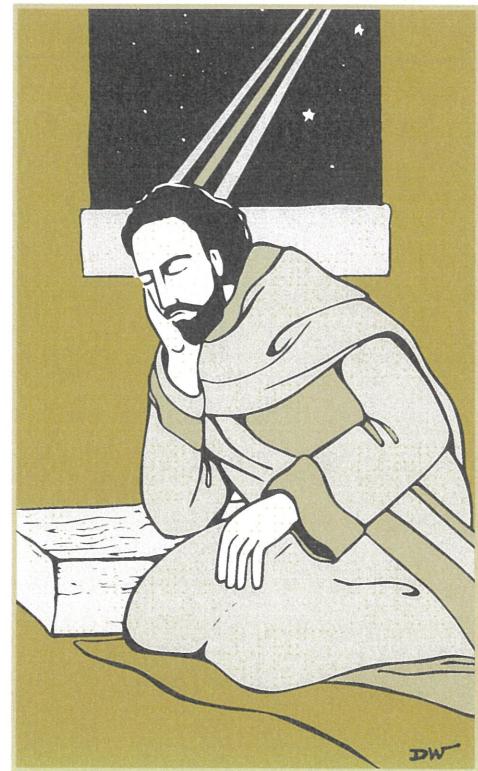
Rom 1:1-7

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the  
Romans**

*Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the  
Son of God.*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who  
has been called to be an apostle, and  
specially chosen to preach the Good News  
that God promised long ago through his  
prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who,  
according to the human nature he took,  
was a descendant of David: it is about  
Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of  
the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was  
in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all  
his power through his resurrection from



the dead. Through him we received grace  
and our apostolic mission to preach the  
obedience of faith to all pagan nations in  
honour of his name. You are one of these  
nations, and by his call belong to Jesus  
Christ. To you all, then, who are God's  
beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may  
God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ  
send grace and peace.

**The word of the Lord.**

**R. Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 1:23

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**The virgin will give birth to a son;  
his name will be Emmanuel: God-is-with-us.  
Alleluia!**

### GOSPEL

Mt 1:18-24

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.**

*Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed  
of Joseph, a son of David.*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born.  
His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph;  
but before they came to live together she  
was found to be with child through the  
Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a  
man of honour and wanting to spare her

publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,  
a name which means 'God-is-with-us'.  
When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

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

P. May the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 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 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: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,**  
**we proclaim your Death, O Lord,**  
**until you come again.**

## 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 ANTIphon** Isa 7:14

**Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;**  
**and his name will be called Emmanuel.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P. Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**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 in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

### GOD WITH US

With Christmas only days away, today's Gospel announces Jesus' birth. Unlike the perhaps more familiar story from Luke's Gospel, with the annunciation by Gabriel to Mary, Matthew's focus is on Joseph, a heroic character for the Gospel's Jewish audience, reminiscent of the Old Testament patriarch, Joseph. Matthew's story is different from Luke's. In Matthew's Jewish world marriage occurred in two stages. The first was engagement; the second, cohabitation. Mary and Joseph are married according to Jewish law, though not living together. We must remember, too, that the Gospel in general and this story in particular is a *theological* narrative. Matthew is not concerned with gynaecology, but *theology*. It is about God and the Holy Spirit. Mary's pregnancy is the fruit of God's action. As this becomes known to Joseph, he wants to step out of the scene and divorce her quietly without bringing her shame—an option open to him from Jewish law.

Through an angel in a dream—reminiscent again of the Old Testament patriarch, 'the dreamer'—Joseph comes to a profound theological truth. Mary's conception is the work of God's Spirit. This is God's act. Joseph is then instructed to name the child, an important Israelite convention that incorporates the one to be born into Joseph's kinship group. Matthew concludes the scene with a second naming, now provided by the prophet Isaiah. The child will be 'Emmanuel', 'God with us', a theme that will continue throughout Matthew even to the Gospel's concluding scene on Easter day. We celebrate and affirm God 'being-with-us' this Christmas. We want this God to 'be with us' for the year ahead.

FR MICHAEL TRAINOR

## A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

Unauthorised reproduction of this bulletin prohibited.  
Published with ecclesiastical approval by ST PAULS PUBLICATIONS, PO Box 906, Strathfield NSW 2135. Tel 02 9394 3400 Email: sales@stpauls.com.au Scripture readings taken from The Jerusalem Bible, © 1966 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. All rights reserved. Psalm text from The Psalms, A New Translation, © 1963, The Grail (England), HarperCollins. New translation of the Order of Mass from The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Artwork by Sr Dorothy Woodward rsj. Layout, commentaries and illustrations © St Pauls Publications, 2025. No 746. Website: www.stpauls.com.au



# WELCOME TO ST GREGORY THE GREAT—DONCASTER

## Fourth Sunday of Advent / A

### 20/21 December 2025

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

Email: [doncaster@cam.org.au](mailto: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:

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (A)**

Sir 3:2 – 6, 12 – 14, Ps 127:1 – 5, Col 3:12 – 21,

Mt 2:13 – 25, 19 – 23

**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](mailto:principal@sgdoncaster.catholic.edu.au)

#### PARISH SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS:

Email Margaret O'Donnell at [margaretodonnel@gmail.com](mailto: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 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 Alo, Bishop Terry Curtin, Madelaine Fitzpatrick, Don Pavone, John Reid, Meredith Barnes, Siv Cuasay

**and for those who died recently**

Raimonda Falcone

**and for those whose anniversaries occur about now** Manuelpillai Wilfred Rajanayagam, Leong Duen Ling, Charlie Cannizzo, Eddie Ong



#### Words from the desk of the PP:

##### ALPHA:

28<sup>th</sup> January start! I was reflecting on the past two years of Alpha with somewhere near 100 people having participated. Two people out of the 100 felt they gained nothing from Alpha – though what they needed and wanted something more like faith formation to deepen an already deep faith.

The other participants, including me, gained something, even though most of us are also people of deep faith. Some had a real ‘coming to Jesus’ moment. Most were already Catholic but found their understanding of Jesus enriched and their faith strengthened. Five have begun their journey with Christ in an intentional way with two still preparing for baptism/confirmation next Easter.

I give thanks for the encounter with the Holy Spirit all these participants have had. Hallelujah!

Alpha changes everyone who participates because it is grounded in spending time with Jesus our Saviour. Sometimes there is change in seemingly small ways. Sometimes change in immediately significant or major ways. But always Jesus and his Holy Spirit change us when we spend time with them.

Please take a moment. Think. Discern. Who do you know that would benefit from some relaxing time with Jesus? Please invite them or let me know and I can invite them.

#### Christmas 2025 and New Year 2026:

Thank you to each of you who is part of the parishes to which I am called to be shepherd. Thank you for the faith you bring to your life and the presence of Christ Jesus in St Greg's and St Kevin's. I pray you will have a most graced and joyful Christmas and New Year.

We live in uncertain times. We live amidst uncertainty and indeed, as the Bondi Beach murders showed, there is danger. But that is nothing new. Just look at the times the lie beside and behind the writings that make up the Bible. I grew up with the start of the Cold War and the Bay of Pigs and the Red Brigade and the PLO. A few of you have been around long enough that grew up with the Great Depression and WW-II.

Christ Jesus our Lord is the only certainty we have. The certainty that we are loved and cared for amidst all the joys and hardships and uncertainties of life.

The more **you** can be an intentional disciple of Christ, reaching out to the world with love, the more we can bring Jesus' love into reality in the world around us. Then we can foster peaceful co-existence of all peoples, recognising that all are created in God's image of love and mercy.

#### 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 roof / window leaks seems to be finished today (Thursday 18/12) Thank God.

Paper Hand Towels: I reiterate my plea of a few weeks ago: use only the minimum amount of paper towels. Leave plenty for others and leave the toilets clean and tidy.

God bless, Fr Charles.



##### **Fr Charles' Prayer Intention for this week:**

For the Jewish People of Australia, and especially those directly affected by the shootings at Bondi Beach: that they will know God's love and care and that we will seek to grow our own acceptance of them.

**THIS WEEK**

Sat 6.00pm Noel McClelland, Cathy McClelland  
 Sun 9.00am Luisa Yambao, 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

**LECTORS**

Noel McClelland, Cathy McClelland  
 Luisa Yambao, Chris Perera  
 Sauro Antonelli, Paola Villanueva  
 Isabelle Hii, Dot Haynes

**COMMUNION MINISTERS**

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

**MORNING TEA:** N/A

**FLOWERS:** Tessa Leung

**NEXT WEEK 27/28 Dec****LECTORS**

Sat 6.00pm Frances Cannizzo, Robert McHugh  
 Sun 9.00am Philip Dunlop,  
 Sun 10.30am Ivonne Gunawan, Amanda Stefanovski  
 Sun 5.00pm Mary Tonti Filippini, Enza Scaffidi

**CARE OF THE CHURCH:** Agnes Chee

**MONEY COUNTERS:** Marian See, Christopher Lim

**COMMUNION MINISTERS**

Noel & Cathy McClelland  
 Katica Puhaj  
 Agnes & Fred Fulia, Rob Rukavina  
 Dot Haynes, Seleana Ng

**MORNING TEA:** N/A

**FLOWERS:** Irene Dharmawan

For those who are **Coeliac**, we can provide low gluten (<20 pmm) 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.

**Children's Liturgy**

Please note that Children's Liturgy will be on break from Sunday, 28th of December. We will resume on Sunday, 2nd of February.

We thank our children, parents, and volunteers for their continued support and look forward to welcoming everyone back in February.



**Parents attending the Carols at 6:40pm followed by the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Mass are invited to dress their young children as angels or shepherds. This will help them—and all of us—to be more actively engaged in celebrating the birth of Jesus at Christmas.**

**COMMUNION MINISTERS**

Noel & Cathy McClelland  
 Katica Puhaj  
 Agnes & Fred Fulia, Rob Rukavina  
 Dot Haynes, Seleana Ng

**MORNING TEA:** N/A

**FLOWERS:** Irene Dharmawan

**St Gregory the Great Catholic Primary School**

For School Tours and Open Days visit [sgdoncaster.catholic.edu.au](http://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](mailto: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.

**St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal – Thank You**

A heartfelt thank you to all parishioners for your generous support of the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. To date, we have received \$742 in cash donations and 50 gifts for children. Your kindness and generosity will bring joy and hope to many families this Christmas season.

**Volunteers Needed****Church Flowers Ministry**

We are seeking volunteers to help with arranging and preparing flowers for our church. This is a beautiful way to serve the parish and contribute to the prayerful atmosphere of our liturgies.

**Care of the Church**

We are seeking volunteers to assist with the care of our church. This may include light cleaning, tidying, and helping to keep our sacred space welcoming and prayerful for all who enter.

No experience is required—just a willing heart and a little time. If you are interested on any of the roles or would like more information, please contact the parish office 03 94128425 or [doncaster@cam.org.au](mailto:doncaster@cam.org.au).

We are grateful for our volunteers who have dedicated their time and support throughout these years:

**Church Flowers Ministry:** Geraldina D, Mary P, Tessa L, Irene D, Connie A

**Care of Church:** Stephen M, Mary W, Agnes C, Carole T, Boris K, Mike Y, Phil H

**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](mailto: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.