



St Madeleine Sophie Barat Parish



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OFFICE HOURS: TUES - FRI, 9AM - 4PM



29th November 2020

First Sunday of Advent

Is 63: 16—17, 64: 1, 3—8

1 Cor 1: 3—9

Mk 13: 33—37

Do not just exist, be fully awake -Lailah Gifty Akita

With the opening of borders between the states, a good number of families are reunited with their loved ones in great joy. There is already a huge line-up of bookings with the airlines, hotels and holiday places for the Christmas and summer vacation. With the increase of numbers for family gatherings, we are enthused to have our dear ones for family celebrations. All good at the moment and thanks to God! On the flip side of this encouraging situation, we need to stay alert and be vigilant in what we do. We can not be complacent and let loose on the restrictions still in place so as to avoid another wave of the pandemic.

As we begin the season of Advent, the beginning of the New Liturgical Year, the Scriptures invite us to be vigilant spiritually so as to experience the comforting presence of our Lord especially in this time. In the words of Blessed John Henry Newman, "Advent is a time of waiting, it is a time of joy because the coming of Christ is not only a gift of grace and salvation but it is also a time of commitment because it motivates us to live the present as a time of responsibility and vigilance. This 'vigilance' means the necessity, the urgency of an industrious, living 'wait'.

In his autobiography, Report to Greco, Nikos Kazantzakis recounts a conversation he once had with an old monk. Kazantzakis, a young man at the time, was visiting a monastery and was very taken by a famed ascetic, Father Makarios, who lived there. But a series of visits with the old monk left him with some ambivalent feelings as well. The monk's austere lifestyle stirred a certain religious romanticism in Kazantzakis, but it repelled him too; he wanted the romanticism, but in a more-palatable way. Here's their conversation as Kazantzakis records it: "Yours is a hard life, Father. I too want to be saved. Is there no other way?" "More agreeable?" asked the ascetic, smiling compassionately. "More human, Father." "One, only one." "What is that?"

"Ascent. To climb a series of steps. From the full stomach to hunger, from the slaked throat to thirst, from joy to suffering. God sits at the summit of hunger, thirst, and suffering; the devil sits at the summit of the comfortable life. Choose."

"I am still young. The world is nice. I have time to choose." Reaching out, the old monk touched my knee and said: "Wake up, my child. Wake up before death wakes you up." I shuddered and said: "I am still young." Death loves the young," the old man replied. "The inferno loves the young. Life is like a lighted candle, easily extinguished. Take care—wake up!"

We are very much asleep, both to God and to our own lives.

Wake up! This the main theme of the gospel. Jesus is always telling us to wake up, to stay awake, to be vigilant, to be more alert to a deeper reality. To make all this happen, we need to wake up from our slumber.

How are we asleep? All of us know how difficult it is for us to be inside the present moment, to not be asleep to the real riches inside our own lives. The distractions and worries of daily life tend to so consume us that we habitually take for granted what's most precious to us; our health, the miracle of our senses, the love and friendships that surround us, and the gift of life itself. We go through our daily lives not only with a lack of reflectiveness and lack of gratitude but with a habitual touch of resentment as well, a chronic, grey depression, Robert Moore calls it. We are very much asleep, both to God and to our own lives.

How do we wake up? Today there's a rich literature that offers us all kinds of advice on how to get into the present moment so as to be awake to the deep riches inside our own lives. While much of this literature is good, little of it is very effective. It invites us to live each day of our lives as if it was our last day, but we simply can't do that. It's impossible to sustain that kind of intentionality and awareness over a long period of time. An awareness of our mortality does wake us up, as does a stroke, a heart attack, or cancer; but that heightened-awareness is easier to sustain for a short season of our lives than it is for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years. Nobody can sustain that kind of awareness all the time. None of us can live seventy or eighty years as if each day was his or her last day. Or can we?

None of us lives each day of our lives as if it was his or her last day. Our heartaches, headaches, distractions, and busyness invariably lull us to sleep. That's forgivable; it's what it means to be human. So we should ensure that we have regular spiritual rituals, spiritual alarm clocks, to jolt us back awake—so that it doesn't take a heart attack, a stroke, cancer, or death to wake us up. Prayer and participation in the Eucharist call us out of a certain sleep. (Edited Ron Rolheiser).

A story comes to us from Eastern mysticism: A monk asked, "Abbot, what has God's wisdom taught you? Did you become divine?" "Not at all!" "Did you become a saint?" "No, as you can clearly see." "What then, O Abbot?" "I became awake!"

Lets us, not just exist but, be fully awake!

God's blessings,

Fr. Vince



PARISH NEWS

Social Justice @ St Mads

ACRATH Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans is leading 16 days of activism against gender-based violence starting Wednesday, 25 November the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which ends on 10 December - Human Rights Day.

As Advent begins visit the Global Catholic Climate Movement Advent Hope website <https://catholicclimatemovement.global/advent/> for the Advent calendar with lots of ideas to prepare for Christmas.

This year the Baabayn Christmas party will be held on December 12th at Nurragingy Reserve, Blacktown.



Come and pray the rosary after Morning Mass on Thursdays!
Time: 9.45am
Contact: Kay - 0429965858
Lydia Ceccato - 0400372561

Book Club is continuing via zoom. We are reading a thought provoking book called *The Universal Christ, Part 2*, by Richard Rohr. In this radical message of hope, Rohr shows how "Jesus" + "Christ" reveal the divine wholeness at the heart of things--and what that means for every one of us. If you would like to join our zoom group on Tuesday 1 December at 7.30pm send me an email to register.careyanmoylan@hotmail.com



Join us for the Sunday Gospel reflections on Tuesday mornings from 10:30am to 11:30am. For more info and Zoom details, contact Careyanne at careyanmoylan@hotmail.com or 0438 791 813

Women's Prayer Day

Join us for a day of reflection for Advent and healing. We connect with place, spirit, and heart to heal our world, refresh our minds and strengthen relationships.

Date: 12 December

Where: Annangrove; Time: 9.30 – 1pm and on.

Numbers limited. COVID safe.

Contact: Careyanne Moylan 0438791813 or careyanmoylan@hotmail.com



Our parish is a community gathered to worship God, bring His light to the world and care for his body. We have responded to this by creating the **St Mads Care Group** whose mission is "to bring Christ's light through giving hope and service to others." Our aim is to "provide to members of our parish practical support and care such as meals, transport, shopping and assistance". If you are interested in joining us, would be willing to cook an occasional meal for those in need or know of anyone who needs assistance, please contact us through Bernadette, 0418 248 256

The RCIA Programme is now on every Wednesday from 7pm–8pm at St Madeleine's Function Centre.

You are welcome to join the sessions!

Contact Steve Fry on 0411 470 416 for more information.



Congratulations to the newly baptised!

29th November 2020
Bentley Henderson-Smith



LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS:

1st Collection (for Diocese) = \$978.10

2nd Collection (for Parish) Envelopes = \$2861.00
Loose = \$616.90

Credit cards/Direct Debit ave weekly = \$2000

TOTAL OF 2ND COLLECTION = \$5477.90

If you would like to donate to the parish or have recently changed your credit card, please phone the parish office on 9654 2260.

Thank you for your generosity!

BAPTISM PREPARATIONS

The next baptism preparation session will be on **Saturday, 5 December at 4:30pm** in the function centre. Please ring or email the office to book in: 9654 2260 (Tue-Fri, 10am –4pm)

stmads@yahoo.com.au

Families who completed their preparations are welcome to get in touch with the office to schedule their child's baptism.



Rest in Peace

Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers to Patrick Tuttle, his siblings and the entire family over the demise of his beloved mother, Jill Margaret Tuttle. The funeral is on Tuesday, December 1 at 10.30 am here in our church. Her memory will live on forever.



PARISH PRAYER REQUESTS:

For healing of the sick

David Parslow, Maureen Burke, Murphy Family, Kerry Rogers, Michael O'Conner, Aureen Dunn, Nancy Anne Kazzi, Aura Krakowski, June Brennen, John Spencer, Keith Dawson, Joe Fuda, India, Vince Luca, Kylie Baker, Lara Sawaya, Sheila Cañabano, Candida Irugalbandra, Florence Smith, Gregory Borg, Maria Peach, Paul Byrne, Andy, Patrick Breen, Jacqueline Kelly, Tricia, Michael Foley, Samuel Abella, Harper Grace, Margaret Collison, Margaret Gaudry, Anis Nicholas, Dorothy Green, Pat D, Neil Rogers, Karen Bligh, Desmond Grogan, Louise, Vanessa, Ben Johnson, Cathy Voss, Mary Madden, John Donnelly, Louise Lambert, Charlie, Frank Tabone, John Lippman, Giuseppi Grasso, Sarah Bilford Beattie, Faye Willing, Patrick, Ben Eberand, Callum Goracz, Patrick Griffiths, Catherine Bourke, Tina, Marie, Joe, and Charles Vencyel



**If you would like someone to be included among these requests, please let us know by email, phone call, or by dropping a note in the locked box outside the parish office.*

PARISH VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Welcomers Coordinator:

Music Coordinator: Alexandra Mifsud

Junior Ministers Coordinator: Maree McNeil

Children's Liturgy Coordinator: Deb Rankin

Baptism Preparation: Angelique Easton

RCIA Coordinator: Steve Fry

Playgroup Coordinator:

SRE Coordinator: Maureen Jones

Friendship Group: Jenny Puleo

Ministry to the Nursing Homes Coordinator:

Suzanne Kingston-Hunt

Adult Faith Formation: Careyanne Moylan

Property Maintenance Manager: Rick Jones

Piety Stall: Sandra Tabone

Altar Linen Coordinator: Catherine Diekman

Parish Council Chair: Patrick Tuttle

Finance Committee Chair: Aaron Cauchi

PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest:

Rev Vincent Savarimuthu

Assistant Priest:

Rev Jessie Balorio

Parish Secretaries:

Jay-Ann Gutierrez

Yvette Jacobs

Sacramental Coordinator

Sally Coppini

St Madeleine's Primary School

Phone: 9654 6751

Principal: Mrs Jeanette Black

Marian College

Phone: 9654 6700

Principal: Mrs Jayne Campbell

PARISH SERVICES

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 5.30pm

Sunday 8:00am, 10:00 am, 5.30pm

Children's Liturgy

TBA

Weekday Masses

9:15 - Tuesdays to Fridays

9:45—10:15 Fridays - Adoration

Prayer Group: Wednesdays after the 9.15 am Mass

Reconciliation: Saturday 5.00pm

Baptisms: Every Sunday at 11:20
(Must make a booking)

Weddings: By appointment

An Advent Story

One December day, 16-year-old Gary Schneider and two friends set out on a four-day climb up Mt. Hood. Nine thousand feet up, a blinding storm engulfed the three boys. They tunneled into a snowbank to get out of the driving wind and to wait out the blizzard. Eleven days later the blizzard continued to rage. The boys' sleeping bags grew wet and lumpy. Their food supply dwindled to a daily ration of two spoonfuls of pancake batter a piece. Their sole comfort was a small Bible one of the boys had packed in his gear. The boys took turns reading it, eight hours a day. The only light was a spooky, reflected light coming from the cave's tiny opening. There the three boys remained huddled hour after hour, day after day, listening to the word of God against a background of howling wind. Waiting like this was not easy. All the boys could do was pray, hoping the blizzard would blow itself out and help would come. Finally, on the 16th day, the weather cleared and the boys crawled out of their snow cave. They were weak from the ordeal and could manage only a few steps at a time. Later that day, they caught sight of a rescue party. Their long ordeal of waiting finally ended. *(Mark Link S.J.)*

Bishop's Christmas Appeal

This Christmas, let us unite in demonstrating God's unconditional love and keep families together. Your compassionate gifts and prayers will help CatholicCare's Project Elizabeth to support vulnerable families to build strong, loving relationships. You can help give people the emotional and practical support they need to live their lives in love and joy. Please give generously to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal: yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal

We will be holding the Bishop's Christmas Appeal at all Masses for the 2nd Sunday in Advent, 5-6 December 2020. Thank you!



Join us for live-stream Masses on Sunday at 10 am on

ON AIR

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/St-Madeleines-Masses)

St-Madeleines-Masses



Stay in touch through our parish Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Madeleine-Sophie-Barat-Parish>

St Nicholas

Feast Day:
6 December

The absence of the "hard facts" of history is not necessarily an obstacle to the popularity of saints, as the devotion to Saint Nicholas shows. Both the Eastern and Western Churches honor him, and it is claimed that after the Blessed Virgin, he is the saint most pictured by Christian artists. And yet historically, we can pinpoint only the fact that Nicholas was the fourth-century bishop of Myra, a city in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor. As with many of the saints, however, we are able to capture the relationship which Nicholas had with God through the admiration which Christians have had for him—an admiration expressed in the colorful stories which have been told and retold through the centuries. Perhaps the best-known story about Nicholas concerns his charity toward a poor man who was unable to provide dowries for his three daughters of marriageable age. Rather than see them forced into prostitution, Nicholas secretly tossed a bag of gold through the poor man's window on three separate occasions, thus enabling the daughters to be married. Over the centuries, this particular legend evolved into the custom of gift-giving on the saint's feast. In the English-speaking countries, Saint Nicholas became, by a twist of the tongue, Santa Claus—further expanding the example of generosity portrayed by this holy bishop.

Source: <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-nicholas>



DIOCESE of
PARRAMATTA

Positions Vacant:

Sacramental Coordinator – Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Greystanes

Applications close Thursday 10 December

Catholic Outlook Magazine Summer 2020/21 Edition

Look out for copies of the next edition of the Catholic Outlook Magazine in your local Catholic Church, Catholic school or Catholic office from early December. Catholic Outlook is an A4 magazine published quarterly with a focus on Catholic faith formation, spirituality and a look at what is happening across the agencies and ministries of the Diocese of Parramatta.

Young Adult Faith Formation: 6 December

Young Adult faith formation sessions continue on Sunday 6 December at The Hustle, 4-6 Purdy Rd Minchinbury, at 7pm. Seminarian Andrew Rooney will speak and lead discussion on virtue ethics, particularly the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. We encourage all adults 18-35 to come along and enjoy some faith formation and fellowship! Call Mark on 0477 004 678 for more information.

Permanent Diaconate Information Session: 12 December

Couples considering a call to the Permanent Diaconate are invited to attend an information session on Saturday 12 December from 10am to 12noon at the Institute for Mission, Blacktown. Couples who decide to proceed with the discernment process will be asked to meet with the Vocations Committee in 2021. To RSVP, please contact Deacon Willy Limjap on 0428 332 619 or wlimjap@gmail.com or Deacon George Bryan on 0408 440 769 or George.Bryan@parracatholic.org

Lebanon Update: Immediately following the Beirut explosion, ACN provided an initial emergency grant of \$400,00 AUD for food. ACN has just announced a further commitment of \$8 million for the repair and reconstruction of churches and convents. ACN thanks everyone who has already donated to their national appeal and welcomes any further support. Visit www.aidtochurch.org/Lebanon or call 1800 101 201.



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28/29 NOV

	5:30PM VIGIL	8AM SUNDAY	10AM SUNDAY	5:30PM SUNDAY
WELCOMERS	Trish Keating Belinda Da Ruos	Maureen & Rick Jones	Teresa Capaldi	Joseph Spina
MINISTERS OF THE ALTAR	Peter Balnaves	Darren McNeil	Phyllis Hannah	Simmy Cesamolo
READERS	Mary Sammut Paul Cashman	Anthony Hooper Gerry McArdle	AnnMarie Duncan Marietta Nesci	Tiago Gregory Hannah Tran
JNR MINISTERS	Dom Bruggeling	Bailey & Casey Gambrill	Christian Maaait Elizabeth Cauchi	To be announced
COUNTERS	Parish Team		CHILDREN'S LITURGY	To be announced
FLOWERS	Arranged by Maureen, Mari and Pauline		ALTAR LINEN	Pat Brush

5/6 DEC

WELCOMERS	Dianne Millington	Rosa & Tony Carlino Helen & Charlie Harb	Michelle Eamer Adriana Kennedy	Joseph Spina Belinda Da Ruos
MINISTERS OF THE ALTAR	Peter Balnaves	Steve Fry	Joe Touma	Jan Schroder Gael Carpani
READERS	Belinda Da Ruos Mary Sammut	Gerry McArdle Nigel Saunders	Jacqui Nisbet Roslyn Earl	Jan Schroder Gael Carpani
JNR MINISTERS	Kerstin Grima	Bailey & Casey Gambrill	Christian Maaait Elizabeth Cauchi	Tiago Gregory Hannah Tran
COUNTERS	Parish Team		CHILDREN'S LITURGY	To be announced
FLOWERS	Donated by Denis Secco Arranged by Alice Garratt		ALTAR LINEN	Catherine Diekman