

Tuesday 29th November	9.15am 7.00pm	Mass at St. Mary's Church. Continuation of Catholic Faith at the Presbytery with Fr. Greg. All welcome especially those who desire deeper faith.
Wednesday 30th November	9.15am	Mass at St. Mary's Church.
Thursday 1st December	9.15am 6.30pm	Mass at St. Mary's Church. Parish Council meeting at the Presbytery.
Friday 2nd December	11.30am	Senior's Mass at St. Mary's Church, followed by a luncheon in the Parish Centre.
Sunday 4th December	6.00pm	Memorial Mass at St Mary's Church for all deceased relatives and friends who passed away during the year.

Dear Parishioners

I come back into the real world after annual holidays this weekend! God has been very good to me and my priest friends of my original 1971 Seminary Year. By my saying hello to a lady on a train with fellow seminarians in 1974 - travelling on our annual holidays to QLD, we were invited to come and check out Byron Bay the next May holidays in 1975. This led to 7 of us very close Year mates to spend almost all our annual holidays going to Watego's Beach just under Byron Bay lighthouse for the past nearly 50 years now. As I said God has been very good to us and we couldn't be happier for what has eventuated..... Now back into the real work God has called us to do.

I couldn't have predicted what has happened since I left on annual holidays! The fete had to be postponed due to incredibly bad weather. Also due to other unforeseen circumstances our normal **annual 'Opera/ Music night scheduled for Dec 3rd has also had to be postponed to early next year.** And I could not have predicted normally healthy Columban priest Fr Tony Cox having a heart attack two days before he was supposed to supply my weekend Masses while I was away!! Fortunately I gather an other Columban priest Fr Tom Cleary was able to fill in. I will need to ring and thank him for that. By the way Fr Tony Cox informed me that he was recovering well after his own particular heart attack.

This weekend is the **First Sunday of Advent.** Advent is divided into two parts. The first part, which runs from the beginning until December 16th, focuses on the final coming of Christ at the end of time as we know it. The second part which runs from December 17th to December 24th, focuses on the first coming of Christ at Bethlehem.

Today's first bible passage from the great Old Testament prophet Isaiah contains a vision of a world at peace under God. The most compelling image then is that of nations turning their weapons of war (swords and spears - tell that to Putin) into farm instruments (ploughshares and sickles).

The Gospel passage is a brief extract from Jesus' discourse concerning the Parousia. The emphasis is on readiness. Since the exact time of the Lord's final coming is not known, the disciples (that means us in our time) are urged to be ready to greet him at any time. The phrases **"stay awake"** and **"stand ready"** convey a sense of urgency.

Most Christian denominations and particularly the Catholic consider the Second Coming of Christ (Parousia) to be the final and external judgment by God of the people in every nation resulting in the glorification of some and the punishment of others. This brings us to the importance of Advent's message of not only being ready to 'stay awake' but to cultivate a better way of loving others. For surely the image of God is at its best and brightest in us when we love. People who love shed light around them. They are like a lamp alight and shining. Those who live in the light have no fear of the Lord's final coming. Quite the contrary. They ought to welcome it.

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YOUR CHILD CAN FLOURISH AT A CATHOLIC SCHOOL. Technical terms can be very helpful or they can be very confusing. For instance, although VISION STATEMENTS are often difficult to explain, as I see it a 'vision statement' is mainly to do with the objective of an organisation. Our Parish objective is to encourage every student who comes to our school to be inspired by a love of learning. Our objective as a team together with the parents of our school is to try and encourage progress in academic, artistic and sporting activities without neglecting what should be the icing on the cake 'spiritual formation'. This cannot be achieved without cooperation between parents, teachers and priest. It should go without saying that as a vital cog in the wheel we should hope for and expect from teachers good teaching, commitment, prudent judgment, enthusiasm and expertise. Luckily, as I also see it, St Mary's Primary School is such a place that meets the main objectives of running a Catholic school in inspiring the vast majority of the present day students to a love of learning and a knowledge of God. No school staff is perfect but going into 2023 we have a terrific blend of experienced staff, younger enthusiastic staff, and a great mix of men and women on staff. We are also doubly fortunate to have Anthony Hockey as our Principal as he has a vast knowledge of modern educational methods and needs.

Yours ' in Christ ' Fr Greg 24/11/2022



www.acrath.org.au
People are NOT for sale

The 16 Days campaign against gender-based violence continues this week. Pope Francis reminds us that

"It is not possible to remain indifferent before the knowledge that human beings are bought and sold like goods!"

ACRATH'S website www.acrath.org.au has much interesting material on this campaign with prayers and actions that you may wish to examine and undertake this week.

ACRATH calendars \$10

Calendars will be available for sale or order after each Mass from next weekend. These are full of information about human trafficking in Australia and globally. Please support ACRATH by purchasing at least one!

SENIOR'S MASS AND CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Our annual Senior's Mass and Christmas Luncheon will be held on **Friday 2ND December at 11:30am** at St Mary's Church followed by a luncheon in the Parish Centre.

All Welcome.

Memorial Mass

All are welcome to attend a Memorial Mass on **Sunday 4th December at 6.00pm** at St Mary's Church for recently deceased parishioners and family There will be light refreshments following Mass in Parish Centre.