

Glancing Thoughts - Where the Truth Lies

In the Readings for Sunday, there is the sketch of a wonderful world.

In that world there are angels, who take care of human beings. There is a ruler, who shepherds people and protects them. By his power and his goodness he brings peace to all the earth.

There is peace for the troubled psyche of every person too. God turns each unsettled, uneasy, unhappy heart to himself. And, turned to God, every heart can be at peace.

There is salvation from sin and even holiness. God has redeemed his people and consecrated them to himself. They are the saints of God.

And there is glory.

Who was this Elizabeth? An ordinary Jewish woman of her time, distinguished by her barrenness and not much more. And yet look at her in the Gospels, filled with the Holy Spirit and exercising the office of prophet to Mary, mother of the Lord. She is glorious in this story, isn't she? In the world sketched by the Readings there is the glory and beauty of holiness available for all God's people.

But consider the everyday world we live in. Do we find angels, majestic rulers, goodness protecting the people, peace in the world, holiness in our hearts, glory in our lives? Look around the mall, listen to the news media. What world are the writers of the Readings living in?

And yet our own experience of grace gives us hope in the world of the Readings, doesn't it?

The ugliness and the evil, so easy to see, overlie a deeper reality, which we can sense in the quiet moments of our lives when, like Mary, we are open to the call of the Lord. The everyday world of the mall and the news media, which looks so compelling, is a thin thing which will crumple and dissolve in time. What will remain is the world we hear about in Sunday's Readings.

In Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people, "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms!" (Dt 33:27). Underneath, in the refuge of the everlasting arms, is where the truth of the Readings lies. And the Truth behind the Readings lies in the womb of Mary, waiting to be born

Eleonore Stump

Eleonore Stump is Professor of Philosophy, Saint Louis University

Thank you Message from Chris Joy, Parish Secretary

To All at St Thomas Aquinas Parish,

Thank you for all your assistance and support over the last 10 years. My time in the mountains has been a time of enjoyment and friendship. It is now time to spend more time with my family and retire.

May God bless and keep you all in the palm of His hand always.

Chris



HAPPY RETIREMENT CHRIS

.....(Our personal message to follow in next week's bulletin)

St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin



168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777
PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777
Parish Office: 02 4754 1052

Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm
Parish Email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stachurchspringwood.org.au
Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Parish Priest: Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0418 461 316
Assistant Priest: Fr Shinto Francis - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0415 077 969

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5.00 pm, Sunday 8.00 am and 9.30 am
Weekday Mass: Tuesday - Saturday 9.30 am

Rosary Devotion: Tuesday - Saturday 9.00 am
Adoration, Rosary & Chaplet: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, 7.30 - 8.30 pm
Intercession & Adoration: None until further notice

Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 10.30am and by appointment
Reconciliation: By request
Weddings: By appointment
Funerals: By appointment

MASKS are to be worn in Church

A Poem to Sit With

Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb"
(Gospel)

Angel's seeds
with
angel hair
sing
serviam
and

holy—holy—holy

J. Janda

Serviam: Latin for "I will serve."

THE GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-44

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb.

Treasures spilling over,
secrets pouring out
in sheer delight.
The women
hugging
as the baby
leaps for joy!

Holy Spirit,
fill us too.
With yourself.

Teach us to love.
And let us cry out in joy,
since the Lord has come to be
within us and within all humankind.

Let our spirits
jump for joy!

Anne Osdieck

Today's Readings: Micah 5:1-4; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-44

Entrance Antiphon: 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.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 79:2-3, 15-16, 18-19. R. v. 4

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord: may his will be me be done. Alleluia!

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

Next Week: The NATIVITY of the LORD



Recently Deceased: *Joe Lopez, John Apap*

Sick: Molly Hurley, Gerry Thistleton, Roshan Rupesinghe, Evelyn Robinson, Susie Ziino, James Wallace, Mischa Damaguc and family, Margaret Day, Adam McCully, Christopher Coombs, Kate Moore, Luca Hurley and all Private Intentions.

Due to the strict privacy laws, names of the deceased and sick can only be included in the Bulletin with the express permission of the immediate family. Thank you.

Parish and Local Community News

THANK YOU: Dawn Brohier would like to sincerely thank our Parish Community for all of the prayers and support she has received over the last several months. You have helped her immensely in her recovery and Dawn is incredibly grateful. *Dawn gives glory and praise to God for her healing.*

BLUE MOUNTAINS EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE AND FIESTA: 2 – 3 January 2022; Celebrate the Christmas season with a two-day pilgrimage and fiesta! Choose from a classic pilgrimage experience or family adventure pilgrimage on Sunday, 2 January then join the family-friendly festivities at St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook including Mass, a festive meal and children's movie night. Stay overnight at St Finbar's, then continue the celebrations on Monday 3 January with a morning pilgrimage and Mass in the bush. For more information and to register visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org

IMMACULATA MISSION SCHOOL 2022: You are invited to discover what it means to *Be A Saint!* Program includes talks on the faith, praise & worship, daily Mass, Adoration & the Rosary, recreation, community & friendship. Families welcome and children's ministry available! Come and join us for an amazing time to grow in faith and love for God, and make new friends! 1-9th January, 2022 (Family program 4th-9th); NEGS (New England Girls' School) 13-83 Uralla Road, Armidale, NSW; **Cost:** Individuals 15+ years: \$410 (before 8th December) \$450 (after 8th December) .Includes accommodation, food, speakers, and activities. For additional information and TO REGISTER see: <http://www.sistersoftheimmaculata.org.au/ims>

SYNOD OF BISHOPS – HAVE YOUR SAY: What would you say to Pope Francis if you had 10 minutes? Catholics across the world are invited to participate in a period of local consultation for the next international Synod of Bishops. Find out how to send your message at parracatholic.org/synod-of-bishops

FUNERAL: The Mass of Thanksgiving for the life of Joe Lopez will take place on Tuesday, 21st December, St Thomas Aquinas Church at 10.30am. *May Joe rest gently in the presence of God.*

Advent is a treasured time to ask quietly, humbly, how do we love in return.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES 2021:

	<i>Springwood</i>	<i>Lawson (OLN)</i>
Christmas Eve, Fri 24 th Dec	5.00pm Children's Mass 8.00pm VIGIL	5.00pm Children's Mass 8.00pm VIGIL
Christmas Day, Sat 25 th Dec	9.30am	8.00am, 9.00am
Boxing Day, Sun 26 th Dec	9.30am	8.00am, 9.00am
Tues 28 th , Wed 29 th Dec	9.30am	
Thurs 30 th Dec	9.30am	
Fri 31 st Dec	9.30am	
Sat 1 st Jan	9.30am	
<i>2nd Rite of Reconciliation</i>		
Tues 21st Dec	7.00pm	Mon 20th Dec 7.00pm (Lawson)

St Thomas Aquinas Parish Christmas Giving Tree

This year, our Parish is supporting the **Wimlah Women's Refuge Outreach and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service**, a specialist domestic violence service, located in the Blue Mountains.

They offer a Domestic Violence Support Group, and Family Law Support Group (National online support), in addition to residential crisis accommodation and many other forms of support.

On Monday, 20th December your most generous gifts will be transported to Wimlah to be placed under their own tree in time for Christmas.

On behalf of Wimlah Women's Refuge Outreach and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service along with CatholicCare, THANK YOU. We really are an amazing Parish.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Re: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Update

The NSW Government has announced some changes to the reopening roadmap for the COVID-19 restrictions.

Based on the announcement, the restrictions will ease further when NSW reaches 95% double vaccination or on 15 December 2021, whichever comes first.

For places of worship the following will apply from when the state hits the milestone:

Density Limits: There will no longer be any square meter rules applicable for Parishes. This includes the Church and other buildings within the Parish.

Weddings and Funerals: Proof of vaccination will no longer be mandatory. All will be able to attend regardless of vaccination status.

Choir and Singing: Singing will be permitted for everyone in attendance.

Masks: Masks will no longer be mandatory at places of worship. However, this is still **strongly encouraged** in venues where social distancing is not possible.

COVID-19 Safe Check-in and Record Keeping: Check in using the NSW QR Code and record keeping of all attendees are **still required** for places of worship.

COVID-19 Safety Plans: COVID-19 Safety Plans will no longer be mandatory.

Yours in Christ,
Very Rev Peter G. Williams
Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia

Saturday, 25th December : *Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)*
Sunday, 26th December : *Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph*
Monday, 27th December : *Feast of St John the Evangelist*
Tuesday, 28th December : *Feast of the Holy Innocents*

