

Date:	7th Dec/8th Dec 2024		Second Sunday of Advent	
Mass Time:	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>First Reading &amp; Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Second Reading &amp; Prayer of the Faithful</b>	<b>Music</b>
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ed Junis	Tamsyn Baldwin	Tanya Baldwin	Chris Wilson
8:00 AM	Randall Noney	Jim Gresser	Tanya Graham	
9:30 AM	John Belfanti	Anne Edwards	Brian Edwards	Streeters
Date:	14th Dec/15th Dec 2024		Third Sunday of Advent	
Mass Time:	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>First Reading &amp; Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Second Reading &amp; Prayer of the Faithful</b>	<b>Music</b>
Vigil: 5:00 PM	Ian Miles	Anne Maureen Scarff	Felix Kobus	No One
8:00 AM	Randall Noney	Kim Crawford	Tom Horsfall	
9:30 AM	Richard Merchant	Peta Sparkes	Matt Aldous	Chris Wilson
Morning Tea:	East Timor			

KID'S CORNER

## Make a straight path for the Lord

2nd Sunday of Advent, Year C

There have been many people who came before Jesus to prepare the way for his arrival.

**ABRAHAM** was called by God from his home in the east to a new land called Canaan. God promised that this land would belong to the family of Abraham forever. Abraham is often represented with a symbol of a tent. Draw a picture of Abraham's tent.

**DAVID** was a young shepherd who was chosen by God to be the new King of Israel. The prophet Jeremiah told how one day a great ruler from the family of David would come into the world. As we know, that great ruler is Jesus. Draw a picture of King David's Crown.

**MARY:** Write down the things you know about the mother of Jesus

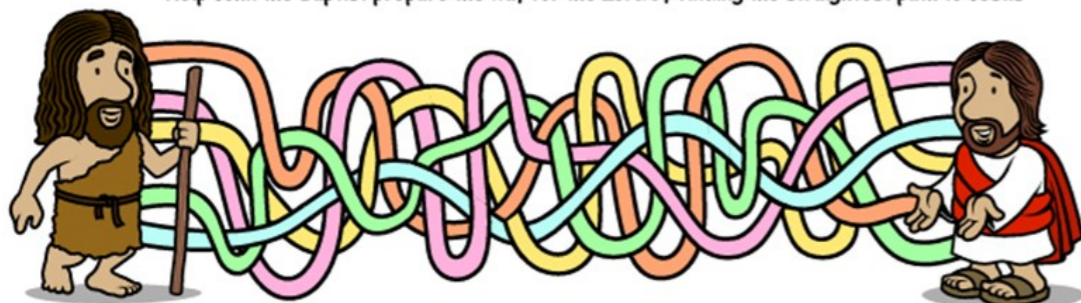
**JOHN THE BAPTIST:** Write down the things you know about John the Baptist

There are special people in your life who are helping you prepare the way for Jesus. Draw a picture of 2 of these people helping you. Write their names and how they are helping.

\_\_\_\_\_ is helping me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is helping me \_\_\_\_\_

Help John the Baptist prepare the way for the Lord by finding the straightest path to Jesus



## St Thomas Aquinas Parish

168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777  
 PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777  
 Phone: 02 4754 1052; Emergency ONLY: 0474 631 168

**Parish Email:** email: [springwood@parracatholic.org](mailto:springwood@parracatholic.org)  
**Parish Website:** [www.stachurchspringwood.org.au](http://www.stachurchspringwood.org.au)  
**Parish Facebook Page:** St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood  
**Parish Administrator:** Rev Christopher del Rosario (E: [christopher.del-rosario@parracatholic.org](mailto:christopher.del-rosario@parracatholic.org))  
**Parish Pastoral Council:** Email suggestions to [springwoodparishpc@gmail.com](mailto:springwoodparishpc@gmail.com)  
**Parish Office Hours:** Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm

**Weekend Masses:** Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 pm, Sunday 8:00 am and 9:30 am  
**Weekday Mass:** Monday - Saturday 9:30 am  
**Adoration:** Monday - Saturday from 8:15 am - 9:15 am  
**First Friday Adoration:** Every first Friday of the month 7:00 pm  
**Reconciliation:** Saturday after 9:30 am Mass and 4:00-5:00 pm before the Vigil Mass  
**Children's Liturgy:** 3rd Sunday of every month, 9:30 am  
**Baptisms:** 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 11:00 am and by appointment  
**Weddings:** By appointment  
**Funerals:** Please Contact the Parish Office



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We respect the Darug people and their elders both past and present, as the traditional custodians of this land on which we celebrate the Eucharist.

## Advent Candle 2: Faith



In the first Eucharistic Prayer the orations mention the Patriarch Abraham as 'our father in faith.' This title is not exclusive to the Eucharistic Prayer, it is found throughout Jewish, Muslim, and Christian tradition highlighting Abraham as an exemplary model of faith. Sacred Scripture maintains this as St. Paul writes: 'Thus Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."' (Gal 3:6) In examining Abraham's life it is clear he is one moved by faith: he is called to journey to a foreign land with his elderly wife; he is promised to be a father of a great nation despite not having any children; after bearing Isaac he obeys God's command to sacrifice his son. Abraham models faith as he trusts in the goodness of God who shields him from the foe - he willingly lays his comfort aside and journeys onward in faith at the promptings of God.

For the Second Sunday of Advent we light the candle of faith. Last week we were reminded of the virtue of Hope - God does not give up on his people as he has created us for relationship. He desires perfect communion for us in Eternal Life; through the Incarnation we are given an assurance of hope that can never fade - God has visited his people. Today we reflect on the gift of faith and its importance. In our Gospel we hear of the prophecy of Isaiah concerning St. John the Baptist: 'A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.' John is not the foretold Messiah but simply the voice of the Word - he prepares the people for the coming of the Christ despite being branded the Messiah. Consider the Baptist's predicament: his fidelity to his mission has resulted in a huge following, one that could elevate him amongst the people. He is already deemed a revolutionary - he could lead the people in a spiritual revival. Despite the possibility John acknowledges his role: he is the voice; he is not the messiah for he trusts in the King who is to come. He knows the one to come is the prophesied Messiah who will renew the world in love. As such he fades into the background following Christ's arrival. That, dear friends, is faith at its finest: trusting in God's vocation for the sake of the kingdom.

Dear friends, as we journey towards the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord may we ask for the gift of faith. May we trust in his divine providence knowing he is very near to us. May we imitate the example of John the Baptist and allow Christ to shine forth in our lives so that the world may be transformed into the Kingdom of God.

Wishing you a blessed week ahead,

Fr Chris

**Entrance Antiphon** Cf Isaiah 30:19,30

O people of Sion, behold,  
the Lord will come to save the nations,  
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard  
in the joy of your heart.

**First Reading** Baruch 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch

*Jerusalem – God will show you splendour.*

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress,  
put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever,  
wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you,  
put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head:  
since God means to show your splendour to every nation  
under heaven,  
since the name God gives you for ever will be,  
'Peace through integrity, and honour through  
devotedness'.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights  
and turn your eyes to the east:  
see your sons reassembled from west and east  
at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has  
remembered them.

Though they left you on foot,  
with enemies for an escort,  
now God brings them back to you  
like royal princes carried back in glory.  
For God has decreed the flattening  
of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills,  
the filling of the valleys to make the ground level  
so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.  
And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade  
for Israel at the command of God;  
for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory  
with his mercy and integrity for escort.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 125. R. v.3

(R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled  
with joy.

- When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,  
it seemed like a dream.  
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
on our lips there were songs. (R.)
- The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels  
the Lord worked for them!'  
What marvels the Lord worked for us!  
Indeed we were glad. (R.)
- Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage  
as streams in dry land.  
Those who are sowing in tears  
will sing when they reap. (R.)
- They go out, they go out, full of tears,  
carrying seed for the sowing:  
they come back, they come back, full of song,  
carrying their sheaves. (R.)

**Second Reading** Philippians 1:3-6. 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

*Show yourselves sinless and without blame in the day of Christ.*

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy,  
remembering how you have helped to spread the Good  
News from the day you first heard it right up to the present.  
I am quite certain that the One who began this good work  
in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ  
Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving  
you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love  
for each other may increase more and more and never  
stop improving your knowledge and deepening your  
perception so that you can always recognise what is best.  
This will help you to become pure and blameless, and  
prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the  
perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for  
the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation** Luke 3:4. 6

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:  
all people shall see the salvation of God.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel** Luke 3:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*All people shall see the salvation of God.*

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign,  
when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea,  
Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the  
lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch  
of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas,  
the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the  
wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district  
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of  
sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the  
prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
Every valley will be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low,  
winding ways will be straightened  
and rough roads made smooth.  
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Communion Antiphon** Baruch 5:5; 4:36

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,  
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.



**Sick:** Colleen Baker, John Hunia, Eva Fitzgerald, Philip Coggan, James Connor, Richard Ford, Julie Somerville,  
Fr Bob Bossini, Dane San Pedro, Marama Watson, Margaret Munro, **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 DIOCESAN NEWS**

**FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING OUR PARISH AND ITS WORKS:** Please support our Parish and its projects.



- Direct Debit:** Please contact the Parish Office for more details.

- Direct Deposit:** Details are as follows:  
Bank Account Name: Springwood; BSB: 067-950  
Bank Account Number: 00000560  
Reference: Your name in full.

**FIRST COLLECTION: This goes to the Board of Management.** The fund supports the living expenses of the priests within our Diocese.

**SECOND COLLECTION: This goes to our Parish of St Thomas Aquinas**—directly funding operational costs, pastoral activities and various programs that enrich our community.

**MASS OFFERING ENVELOPES** are also available which can be used to express your ongoing generosity and support. Thank you.

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** Next Sunday **15th December** children aged between 4-12 will be called forward and sent with a blessing over to our parish rooms for Gospel lesson. The children will return to their family in the church as the offertory and Liturgy of the Eucharist begin.

**ST THOMAS AQUINAS CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE:** This year our parish is again supporting Wimalah Women's Refuge Outreach and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, a specialist domestic violence service located within the Blue Mountains.

Please leave your gift under the Christmas Tree at the back of the church from Saturday **30th November**. The gifts will be collected one week prior to Christmas Day to the women and children who are relying on the refuge this year for a safe haven – a place to call home.

We have been notified by DV West that they are currently supporting:  
19 mothers and 12 single women

**Children's Ages:**  
6 months – 2 yrs: 4 boys and 3 girls      3 yrs – 7 yrs: 7 boys and 11 girls  
8 yrs – 10 yrs: 9 boys and 1 girl      11 yrs – 14 yrs: 4 boys and 5 girls  
16 yrs: 1 girl

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL:** Just a gentle reminder that members of our St. Vincent de Paul conference will be available at all Masses on **the weekend of 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Dec.** to accept your donations of Christmas Hampers and cash towards fresh food and fruit and vegetable vouchers. Through the generosity of our parishioners to this appeal, at least 45 local families will be able to make this Christmas a real celebration, because they will experience the true Christmas spirit through your care, concern and gifts. If anyone has a problem organising delivery on this weekend please contact the Parish Office 02 4754 1052. May the Peace of the Christ Child fill your hearts at Christmas and throughout 2025!

**CHRISTMAS TREE PALLETS:** Christmas Trees made from old pallets are for sale. Your support goes to Wimalah Women's Refuge Outreach and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. Plain trees: \$30, complete set with basic lights and dropper to keep up with cable ties: \$40. Pls speak to the team if you require delivery free of charge. Thank you.

**LETTER OF THANKS FROM THE AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED:** We want to offer our thanks to the parish for welcoming us recently. It was wonderful to be present with the community at the weekend of Masses, meet people, and of course speak about the work and mission of Aid to the Church in Need. We would encourage anyone who might have been struck by our work in support of the suffering Church to visit [www.aidtochurch.org](http://www.aidtochurch.org). We also have an online store at [www.thatcatholicshop.com](http://www.thatcatholicshop.com). Thanks and God bless you. Aid to the Church in Need AU/NZ

**SAVE THE DATES! PPC MEETING:** PPC will hold its next meeting on **Thurs 19th December**. If you would like to include any item to the agenda, place email [springwoodparishppc@gmail.com](mailto:springwoodparishppc@gmail.com)

**PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAY CLOSURE:** STA Parish Office will be closed for the holidays from **Wednesday 25th December 2024** and will reopen on **Tuesday 14th January 2025**. Masses and Confessions will continue as normal during this period.

**SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS / Acolytes, Readers, Musicians:** on **Saturday 8 February 2025 from 10.15am**. EVERYONE who did their Safeguarding training two years ago is required to renew these modules. Please contact the parish office via email to confirm your attendance. If you do not attend this training you will NOT BE ABLE to volunteer in the parish as per the Diocese of Parramatta Safeguarding requirements.

**HELP WANTED:** Readers at Mass on **Monday 23rd Dec at 9:30am** and on **Tuesday 24th Dec at 9:30**. Anyone interested please contact the Parish office asap on 02 4754 1052 or send an email to: [springwood@parracatholic.org](mailto:springwood@parracatholic.org)

**EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE 2025:** STA Parish will be hosting the Epiphany Pilgrimage group again in 2025 as they journey up the mountains from **2 - 9 January** and celebrate 10 years of pilgrimage through our deanery. In preparation for the pilgrimage, you are invited to write any prayer requests on the cards provided and place them in the Epiphany Pilgrimage prayer box to be prayed each day by the pilgrims. Please join the pilgrimage group for Adoration at **5.30pm** followed by a festive meal on **3 January** at St Thomas Aquinas, and Mass on **4 January at 6.30am**. To participate in some or all of the pilgrimage - including walks, Mass, Adoration / prayer sessions and meals - visit [www.epiphanypilgrimage.org](http://www.epiphanypilgrimage.org).

**EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE 2025 MEAL:** You can be a part of the celebration and help welcome the pilgrims to our beautiful mountains by assisting with the festive meal when they visit us at STA Parish on the **3rd-4th January**. Please contact Colleen Kime on 02 4754 4335 / 0407 125 427 or leave your details at the parish office.

**STA CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES 2024**

Sun 22 Dec:	4.30pm Christmas Evening (Carols/ Readings/Reflections/BBQ)
Mon 23 Dec:	9.30am Mass
Tues 24 Dec:	9.30am Mass 5.00pm Children's Mass 12.00am Midnight Mass
Wed 25 Dec:	8.00am Christmas Morning Mass 9.30am Christmas Morning Mass
Thurs 26 Dec:	9.30am Mass
Fri 27 Dec:	9.30am Mass
Sat 28 Dec:	9.30am Mass 5.00pm Vigil Mass
Sun 29 Dec:	8.00am and 9.30am

The Parish Choir will present on **Sunday 22nd December at 4:30pm** a 'Christmas Evening' with carols, readings and reflections. Families are invited to attend and children are welcome to dress up as angels or shepherds from the nativity scene. At the conclusion of this wonderful community gathering, we will have a BBQ set up along with tea/coffee/drinks available for purchase. We are hoping to make this an annual event.

