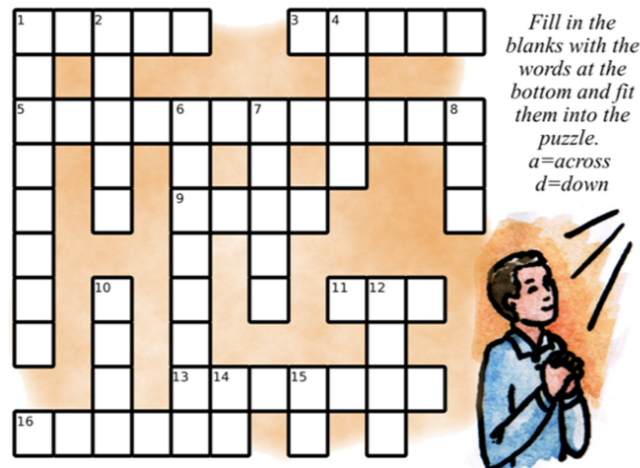


<b>Date:</b> 14th Dec/15th Dec 2024 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>				
<b>Mass Time:</b>	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>First Reading &amp; Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Second Reading &amp; Prayer of the Faithful</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>Vigil: 5:00 PM</b>	Ian Miles	Anne Maureen Scarff	Felix Kobus	No One
<b>8:00 AM</b>	Randall Noney	Kim Crawford	Tom Horsfall	
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Richard Merchant	Peta Sparkes	Steve Bishop	Chris Wilson
<b>Morning Tea:</b> East Timor				
<hr/>				
<b>Date:</b> 21st Dec/22nd Dec 2024 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>				
<b>Mass Time:</b>	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>First Reading &amp; Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Second Reading &amp; Prayer of the Faithful</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>Vigil: 5:00 PM</b>	Ed Junis	Margaret Smith	Wilhelmina de Raadt	Chris Wilson
<b>8:00 AM</b>	Marek Grus	Ros Comfort	Georgia Cook	
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Bernard Ellis	Katherine Mahns	Phil Saville	Streeters
<hr/>				
<b>Date:</b> 23rd Dec 2024 <i>Fourth Week of Advent - Monday</i>				
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Ian Miles	Roslyn Comfort	-	
<b>24th Dec 2024 <i>Fourth Week of Advent - Tuesday</i></b>				
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Richard Merchant	Roslyn Comfort	-	
<hr/>				
<b>Date:</b> 24th Dec/25th Dec 2024 <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>				
<b>Mass Time:</b>	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>First Reading &amp; Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Second Reading &amp; Prayer of the Faithful</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>Vigil: 5:00 PM</b>				
<b>Children's Mass</b>	Marek Grus	Jacinta Ellis	Martyn Ellis	Andrew Wilson
	<b>Carrying of Baby Jesus:</b> Archie Brown			
<b>12:00 AM</b>				
<b>Midnight Mass</b>	Phill Saville & Richard Merchant	Matt Aldous	Virginia Fortunat	STA Choir
<b>8:00 AM</b>	Ian Miles	Georgia Cook	Tanya Graham	Margaret Gresser
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Bernard Ellis	Anne Ellis	Margaret Smith	Streeters

**KID'S CORNER**

*Philippians 4 Cross-Word*



Brothers and \_\_\_\_\_ (13a): Rejoice in the \_\_\_\_\_ (12d) always. I \_\_\_\_\_ (3a) say \_\_\_\_\_ (14d) \_\_\_\_\_ (2d): rejoice! Your \_\_\_\_\_ (6d) should be known \_\_\_\_\_ (15d) all. The Lord is \_\_\_\_\_ (9a). \_\_\_\_\_ (4d) no anxiety at \_\_\_\_\_ (11a), but in everything, by prayer and \_\_\_\_\_ (1d), with \_\_\_\_\_ (5a), make \_\_\_\_\_ (10d) requests known to \_\_\_\_\_ (8d). Then the \_\_\_\_\_ (1a) of God that surpasses all understanding will \_\_\_\_\_ (7d) your hearts and minds in \_\_\_\_\_ (16a) Jesus.

GOD SHALL TO LORD YOUR  
 CHRIST ALL KINDNESS SISTERS  
 THANKSGIVING PEACE IT PETITION  
 NEAR AGAIN GUARD HAVE

*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

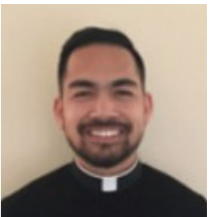
**Weekend Masses:** Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 pm, Sunday 8:00 am and 9:30 am  
**Weekday Mass:** Monday - Saturday 9:30 am  
**Adoration:** Monday - Saturday from 8:15 am - 9:15 am  
**First Friday Adoration:** Every first Friday of the month 7:00 pm  
**Reconciliation:** Saturday after 9:30 am Mass and 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



Support us!  
 Scan to donate

*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 3: Joy**



Only recently the Gospel for the day was the healing of two blind men. Upon being healed from their affliction, Jesus explicitly orders them to remain silent: 'Take care that no one learns about this.' Why would Christ instruct them to remain silent? In the words of St. John the Evangelist 'his hour had not come.' The blind men however are not concerned with Christ's instructions... they have been healed physically and spiritually and proceed to 'talk about him all over the countryside.' Their joy is unbounded as they are physically restored and have encountered the living God. Like Mary who proclaimed the Magnificat, her hymn of joy and thanksgiving, these two men sing the praises of God to the neighbouring countryside. Personally, this is one of my favourite miracles of Christ for two reasons:

1. Consider who the men saw when they received their sight: Jesus himself. Our earliest memories as that with our families and friends; their first memory with sight is seeing the Face of God.
2. An encounter Christ always leads to apostolate: Whilst I don't condone rejecting the precepts of Christ (this Gospel is my only exception) the joy these men experience lead them to be messengers of the Good News. How incredible is the gift of joy?

For the Third Sunday of Advent the Church celebrates *Gaudete Sunday*: we are called to rejoice as Christ's coming is imminent. We also have a shift in liturgical colour: the penitential violet is mixed with the white of the approaching festival to make Rose (not pink). In recognising today's celebration how can we best understand Gaudete Sunday? Our Gospel for today again makes mention of John the Baptist. He is clearly having a positive impact on the people as 'a feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ.' John however knows who he is: he is Our Lord's precursor, the one to direct the people towards the Messiah. As such he declares: 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' Consider his declaration: someone is coming who is more powerful than he. If the people are greatly impressed by the work of John the Baptist, consider the work of Christ. He will not only call the people to repentance, he will transform all human history. John's declaration is one of joy as the promised Messiah is just around the corner - salvation is very near.

Dear friends, as we celebrate *Gaudete Sunday* may we be filled with joy at the coming of the Messiah. Through him we are made whole. Through him we are freed from the burden of sin and death. Through him we have an inheritance in Heaven. Through him we are called to Eternal Life. How blessed are we to have Our Lord so near to us? May we exhibit the same unbounded joy as the blind men and St. John the Baptist and so await the birth of the Messiah.

*Wishing you a blessed week ahead,*

*Fr Chris*



**Second Reading** [Philippians 4:4-7](#)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

*The Lord is near.*

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation** [Isaiah 61:1 \(Lk 4:18\)](#)

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
Alleluia!

**Gospel** [Luke 3:10-18](#)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*What, then, must we do?*

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**Communion Antiphon** [Cf Isaiah 35:4](#)

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.  
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

**Entrance Antiphon** [Philippians 4:4-5](#)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

**First Reading** [Zephaniah 3:14-18](#)

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah

*With gladness the Lord will rejoice over you.*

Shout for joy, daughter of Zion, Israel, shout aloud!  
Rejoice, exult with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem!  
The Lord has revealed your sentence; he has driven your enemies away.  
The Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst; you have no more evil to fear.  
When that day comes, word will come to Jerusalem: Zion, have no fear, do not let your hands fall limp.  
The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior.  
He will exult with joy over you, he will renew you by his love; he will dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** [Is 12:2-6 R. v.6](#)

(R.) Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

- Truly, God is my salvation, I trust, I shall not fear.  
For the Lord is my strength, my song, he became my saviour.  
With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. (R.)
- Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!  
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!  
Declare the greatness of his name. (R.)
- Sing a psalm to the Lord for he has done glorious deeds, make them known to all the earth!  
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (R.)



**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.



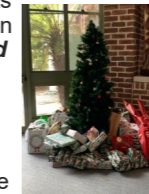
**FIRST COLLECTION: This goes to the Board of Management.** The fund supports the living expenses of the priests within our Diocese.

**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.

Thank you for giving comfort, faith, and hope to mothers and children this Christmas. Fr Fernando Montano Rodriguez and Parramatta Catholic Foundation thank you for your kind-hearted generosity and support to mothers and children in crisis. Because of your compassion, our Bishop's Christmas Appeal raised over \$600.80, which will provide services, shelter, support, financial counselling (not limited to the services mentioned). Thank you and God bless.

**ST THOMAS AQUINAS CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE:** Thank you to those generous parishioners who have placed gifts under the Christmas Tree at the back of the church in support of **Wimlah Women's Refuge Outreach and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service.**



These gifts will be collected from the church on **MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER** in order for them to be distributed to the women and children in their care in time for Christmas.

**FRONT / BACK YARD Pallet**



**CHRISTMAS TREES!**

Plain Trees : \$30  
Complete Set : \$40 (comes with lights and metal post)  
*Free delivery (if required)*

All proceeds to the WIMLAH Women's Refuge Outreach and Domestic Violence Advocacy Service Blue Mountains

Please contact Johann on 0409 402 095 or the St Thomas Aquinas Parish Office on 4754 1052

**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 **this weekend 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Dec.** to accept your donations which will help at least 45 local families celebrate the real meaning of Christmas. If anyone has a problem organising delivery please contact the Parish Office 02 4754 1052. May the Peace of the Christ Child fill your hearts at Christmas and throughout 2025!



**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 [springwoodparishpc@gmail.com](mailto:springwoodparishpc@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.

**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

**WHOLE PARISH CHRISTMAS EVENT** is 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. Choir, Streeters & Guest Artists will be performing on the night and Santa will make a guest appearance! 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.



We welcome into our Catholic Christian family the following children, who were recently baptised here:



*Lincoln Paul Garbellini, Renzley Bear Miller and Aria Sofia Piazza*

**WAYS TO GIVE THIS CHRISTMAS:** [Become a Catechist](#) If you love teaching and sharing the Gospel message, register to become a Special Religious Education (SRE) Catechist in our local public schools across the Diocese. SRE Catechists play a pivotal role in fostering Catholic faith and nurturing the spiritual growth among children. Get in touch with Wilhelmina de Raadt, our SRE Co-ordinator on 02 4751 3319 or Fr Chris on 02 4754 1052.

