

Bellerive - Lindisfarne Catholic Parish

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Fr Fidelis Udousoro

Dear Parish Family,

As we reach the fourth Sunday of Advent, our focus quickly shifts to Christmas itself, and the readings today tell the story of the birth of Jesus. Isaiah foretells the virgin birth and the awesome promise of the Saviour's name: "God is with us". St Matthew recalls this name and reassures Joseph that the Lord is at work here. St Paul reasserts the incarnation of the Son of God as a descendant of David. In other words, the entire Bible points to this moment, the birth of Jesus, as the final intervention of God in human history. After the first Christmas, the world is never the same again.

With our tired modern eyes, we often fail to grasp the significance of this. We are grappling with the relevance of the Christmas story in the midst of a commercial frenzy which seemingly contradicts everything Jesus talked about and in the face of a society rejecting the concept of God.

I think we need to move beyond the celebration of the birth of Jesus to rediscover the significance of the birth of Christ. This takes honesty and courage, because we first must admit that we need Christ, our savior. From what do we need to be saved? With security, education and opportunity, we have developed an independent mindset that tells us we can achieve anything we desire, and our lives have never been so good. Yet still there lurks a frustration, a disappointment, a drive to escape the deeper questions through drugs, alcohol and even suicide.

Words like peace, joy and love have become irrelevant, even trite. And yet they are the very real gift of the Christ child. A deep abiding peace which satisfies the human heart, a joy which gives strength in the midst of darkness and pain and a love which transcends the human experience and brings happiness and fulfilment through service of others, especially the poor. Our world needs these gifts and this mindset more than ever, so the Christmas story has never been so relevant.

May the celebration of the birth of Christ bring you and your family peace, joy and love this Christmas.

Fr Richard

CHILDREN'S NATIVITY PLAY AT CHRISTMAS MASS: Children are invited to help present the Christmas story at both the 6pm Masses on Christmas Eve. All children attending these masses are invited to come along dressed as an angel, a shepherd, a king, a sheep or other nativity animal and meet in the foyer of the Church by 5.45pm. Please invite your children/grandchildren/next door neighbor... the more the merrier! We look forward to seeing all our angels, shepherds, kings and animals there!

SACRAMENTS 2020: We are welcoming registrations for any children ready to celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist in 2020. This seems to fall around the age of nine or ten, but anyone is welcome if their parents believe them to be ready. Please spread the word among your family and ask them to contact the parish office, preferably via email: bellerive@aohtas.org.au

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL Vinnies Members will again be distributing hampers in December to our friends in need across the Parish from Risdon Vale to Lauderdale. The hampers comprise good quality food items and will be supplemented by children's toys and gift cards. Your contributions are once again requested to support this Christmas Assistance and will be greatly appreciated. Contribution envelopes are available at all Masses.

2020 PLENARY: The Archdiocese of Hobart has been asked to send two delegates to the Plenary Council General Assembly in October 2020 and June 2021. Delegates can be both from Clergy and Laity. If you wish to be considered as a delegate, please contact the Archbishop's office by email: archbishop.assistant@aohtas.org.au by no later 25 January 2020.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS \$10:00 cash & carry

MASS TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS WEEK

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|----------------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| Tues (Christmas Eve) | 6pm | John Paul II, Rokeby |
| | 6pm | Church of Incarnation, Lindisfarne |
| Weds (Christmas Day) | Midnight | Corpus Christi, Bellerive |
| | 9:30am | Corpus Christi, Bellerive |

WEEKEND MASSES

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| Sat | 6:00pm | Incarnation |
| Sun | 8:30am | John Paul II |
| | 10:30am | Corpus Christi |
| | 6:00pm | Corpus Christi |

Next week's Readings: SIR 3:2-6; COL 3:12-21, MT 2:13-15,19-23.