

The story of the virginal conception of Jesus is historical but is also deeply symbolic, and your meditation will reveal to you that this is how Jesus Christ always comes to be born into the world, in all the various ways in which this happens.

You can read it as a story of Joseph, symbolic of those whose vocation it is to welcome the one who bears God within her. You might like to stay with the long and painful journey which this vocation involves, identifying with Joseph's fears, his hesitations and eventually his total commitment. You might prefer to concentrate on his vocation to name the child.



It is also the story of Mary; although she does not say a word right through. She is the symbol of those who bear God within them and must wait until their collaborators welcome them and so allow God's work to be born. Do not, however, invent your own story of how Mary felt or what went through her mind; take the text exactly as you find it and you will find ample material to help you understand the work of God. The fulfilling of prophecy is an important part of the passage and you might like to meditate on it as expressed in verses 22 and 23. It would help if you read the original passage in Isaiah; as you will see there, the prophecy is a response to the king of Judah who looked for security in alliances with the powerful nations around him. Like all of us, he did not recognise 'how Jesus Christ came to be born'.



### JESUS THE HOMELESS

A year ago Timothy Schmalz's sculpture was rejected by St Patrick's Cathedral in New York and St Michael's Cathedral in Toronto. But in late November, Pope Francis blessed the sculpture at one of his weekly general audiences in front of thousands of eager pilgrims.

The pontiff touched the knee of the sculpture and prayed for a few moments. Afterward, he told Schmalz he thought the sculpture was a 'beautiful piece of art.' When Schmalz saw Pope Francis touch the sculpture, he said, 'I thought well that's just it, this sculpture is symbolically representing what he's doing. He's out there touching the homeless people; he's reaching out to them every single day.'

Appropriately, 'Jesus the Homeless' may have found a permanent home in Rome, very close to the Vatican. The plan is for the sculpture to be placed close to the Vatican Radio offices near the Tiber River in memory of a homeless woman who slept there every night before dying outside in the cold.

## St Michael's Catholic Church

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**22<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2013 (A)**

**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY of ADVENT**

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING:** Isaiah 7:10-14

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:**

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

**2<sup>ND</sup> READING:** Romans 1:1-7

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us. Alleluia!

**GOSPEL:** Matthew 1:18-24

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:**

The Virgin is with child and shall bear a son, and she will call him Emmanuel.

**WEEKEND MASS TIMES:**

Sat. Vigil: 5pm

Sunday: 8am, 9:30am & 5pm

**WEEKDAY MASS TIMES:**

Mon, Tues & Thurs: 7:30am

Wed: 6pm

Fri: 9:15am

Sat: 9:15am (Stn Cross Apts)

**HOLY HOUR:** Wed: 5pm

**RECONCILIATION:**

Wed: 5:15 – 5:45pm

Sat: 4:15 – 4:45pm

**BAPTISMS:**

Sundays 9:30am Mass

**BAPTISMAL PROGRAMME &**

**WEDDINGS:**

By appointment

**ANOINTING MASS:**

Quarterly: 1<sup>st</sup> weekend

**1<sup>ST</sup> SAT OF EACH MONTH:**

11am Mass in honour of Our Lady.

**PLANNED GIVING PROGRAMME:**

**100%** tax deductible. Please join by contacting parish office.

**FAITH FORMATION:**

Sundays 3:30pm (in presbytery)

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Mon, Wed & Fri 9am to 2:30pm

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

**Sat Vigil:** †Carmelo La Macchia      **Tue 7:30am:** †Nan & Jack Gurney  
**Sun 8am:** †Audrey Dannaher      **X'mas Day Wed 9:30am:** †John Eves  
**Sun 9:30am:** Pro Populo      **Thu 7:30am:** †John Bevan  
**Sun 5pm:** †Dawn Dunn (8<sup>th</sup> Anniv)      **Fri 9:15am:** †Giovanna Tesoriero  
**Mon 7:30am:** †Archinal, McShane & Osboldstone families

**OUR SICK:** Marie Busuttill, Pat Raby, Maria De Andrade, Mollie Burgess, Patricia Flannery, Alan Sargeant, Josephine Helback, Carmella Cicciari Joy Williams, Moira Butler, Domenico Cirillo, John Heaney and John Spora...

Accommodation still available in Foley Gardens. Please call Fr. Jerzy on 93491292 or 0411125357 and you will be referred for further details to Mr. Robert O'Shea, the manager.

**Happy Birthday to Myrna Sarmiento (25<sup>th</sup>).**

We welcome Eoin Corscadden and his family to his Baptism this Sunday at the 9:30am Mass.

\* **Christmas Offering envelopes** are now in the pews for your kind contributions. These envelopes goes to a Central Fund that attends to the needs of the priests of the Archdiocese. These include: sick priests, priests in special works, migrant chaplains and priests undertaking further studies. Some of these priests are often "out of sight, out of mind" but they do need to be supported. Please give them some thought especially at this time. Thank you.



**Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Anne Maria Slattery. (24<sup>th</sup>)**

*Christmas Day Gathering: If you are on your own on Christmas Day, Fr. Jerzy cordially invites you to join him in the presbytery to share a meal. For catering purposes, please let him know if you are coming.*

**19 January 2014 is World Day Of Migrants And Refugees.** The theme is - "Migrants and Refugees: Towards a Better World". The text message from the Holy Father Pope Francis can be found on the Pontifical Council website [www.pcmigrants.org](http://www.pcmigrants.org).

**This weekend: Vigil:** J Haggar (A)    B Purdon, T Bell (R)    M Wong, Volunteer (C)    Thomas W (M)  
**8:00am:** G Diab (A)    Volunteer/F De Andrade (R)    A Burke, Sr Betty (C)    P Low (M)  
**9:30am:** A Varghese (A)    M Tjokrowidjaja, D Tjahjadi (R)    Volunteer (C)    A Burton (M)  
**5.00pm:** R Yang (A), Volunteers      **Counter:** G Hogan

**Next weekend: Vigil:** J Haggar (A)    M Butler, V Hage (R)    F & G Hogan (C)    Thomas W (M)  
**8:00am:** G Diab (A)    A Brinck, J Rupasas (R)    P Chen, R Houghton (C)    P Low (M)  
**9:30am:** A Varghese (A)    E Widjaja, H Widjaja (R)    S Pedisich (C)    A Burton (M)  
**5.00pm:** R Yang (A), Volunteers please      **Counters:** B Dunn, H Morris

**Christmas Season Programme:**

- \* **Christmas Eve: Tue 24 Dec: 6pm:** Family Mass
- \* **10:45pm:** Carols in Church    \* **11pm:** Night Mass
- \* **Christmas Day: Wed 25 Dec:** Mass times: 8am, 9:30am & 5pm.
- \* **New Year's Eve: Tue 31 Dec:** Thanksgiving Mass: 7:30am
- \* **New Year's Day/Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God: Wed 1 Jan:** Thanksgiving Mass **8am**

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*Christmas Eve Family Mass at 6pm: All children are invited to attend and come dressed as shepherds, angels, animals as depicted in the Nativity scene.*

**Christmas is drawing very near,** and it is time to consider how much or how little we are able to trust God when we have difficult situations to deal with. It can be very testing to let go in a confusing situation and trust God. Have there been times when you have done this, or have you felt that you needed to resolve things by yourself? What does this tell you? Make a decision to hand over some of your anxieties to God, rather than trying to fix things yourself.



Happy 4<sup>th</sup> week of Advent!

Are there times when you know that God is communicating with you about some decisions you have to make? How do you keep open to these? Have there been times, like Joseph, when you have acted as the result of a dream or an intuition? Advent is almost over and there is still time to be generous to others in need or who are lonely at this time of the year. Be willing to bless others this coming week.



A weekly **Holy Hour for young adults** will begin at St Mary's Cathedral from 4 Feb 2014, followed by dinner and drinks at Puntino Italian Restaurant, Woolloomooloo. Join the CYS every Tuesday from 6:30-7:30pm for adoration, music and reflection. If any young musicians can help with the music at city Silence on a rotating roster contact CYS at [events@catholicyouthservices.org](mailto:events@catholicyouthservices.org).