

waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 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

Mk 1: 1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Make straight the paths of the Lord.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;

he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

10 DECEMBER 2023

IN THE WILDERNESS

In Australia we experience the desert and wilderness in all its beauty and expanse, yet it can be a lonely, dangerous place. Today we hear a voice crying out in the wilderness in the time of Isaiah and echoed in the Gospel. This voice also cries out to us today, in the wilderness and the desert of our lives. The voice is consolation: "Console, console my people" (Is 40:1). It bellows, "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Is 40:3). Isaiah's words create an image of the landscape of our life and soul, in need of God.

The Gospel engages this imagery for John the Baptist, a guide in the wilderness who heralds the Messiah. Mark gives name to the voice just as he identified that this writing is "The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1). Although the name of Isaiah is invoked, the first quote is from Malachi "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way (1:2 cf. Mal 3:1); then comes the echo from Isaiah 40:3. Here in the wilderness John announces the one who is to come who will baptise with the Holy Spirit (Mark 7-8). This is the announcement of the Messiah, the one longed for. As we hear that voice in our wilderness, we know that Jesus is with us. We can reflect on our attention to his presence and our welcome to him in our souls and lives.

Dr Rosemary Canavan

FIRST READING

Isa 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Prepare the way for the Lord.

'Console my people, console them' says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her

that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for,

that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low,

let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley;

then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it;

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah,

'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms,

holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

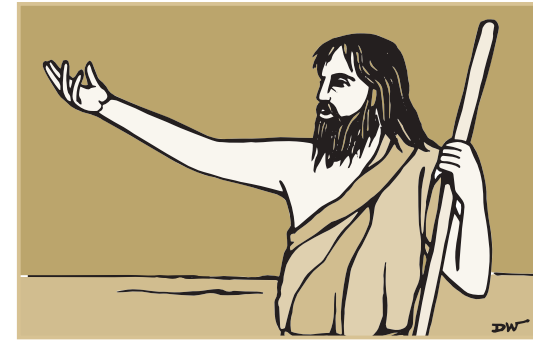
■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 84:9-14. R. v. 8

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,/ a voice that speaks of peace./ peace for his people./ His help is near for those who fear him/ and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**



2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;/ justice and peace have embraced./ Faithfulness shall spring from the earth/ and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

3. The Lord will make us prosper/ and our earth shall yield its fruit./ Justice shall march before him/ and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

SECOND READING

2 Pet 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

We wait for new heavens and a new earth.

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised; the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are



**ST ANDREW & ST AGNES
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Vigil Saturday 5 pm
Sunday 9 am
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Masses Tues, Wed, Fri: 7 am Thurs: 9 am
Vigil Saturday 5:30 pm
Sunday 10 am
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Sat 5pm - 5.15pm
Also available by appointment
Principal: Rose André
Sacred Heart School Matraville: 9311 2995



Our Parishes acknowledge and honour the Bidjigal and Gadigal People as traditional custodians of this land, that we stand on.



3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Go Make Disciples, The Mission Plan for the Archdiocese of Sydney



Please pray for the Faithful Departed:

Recently Deceased: Doris Bonanno, Ian Vernon, Steven Fehir, Evaristo Pinto, Allan Hart, Paul Blackmore, and all those who have died from the Covid-19 Virus.



Anniversary: Anthony Rotta, Peter & Winnie Blyth, Joseph Panetta, Carolina Sounios, Jenny Frost, Julie & Leon Laporte, Bailey Jones, Aida Cruz, Raymond Carmichael, Allison Lawes, Amanda Jane MacCarthy, Desmond Ebejer, Mary Hemelda Kandur, Candace Basheer, Joseph Strawbridge, Bryan McDonald, Patrick "Pat" Wiley, and Dr Ralph Baccash,

Deceased: Agnes Brisbane. All the souls in Purgatory

The Sick: Maureen Maron, Barry Dalton, Sandra Russell, Bishop Peter Ingham, Ange Portelli, Ha Oi Lan, Mario Assini, Sam Strano, Josephie Regan, Mary Vella, Beatriz Visperas, Michael Victor, Marcus O'Dean, Angela Beveridge, Merley Nate Fien, John Sarniak Thomson, Heracleo & Mamerta Dela Torre, Santa Viselli and Ernie Ross. Pray for the sick, the dying, the poor and homeless in our parishes, and those suffering from Covid.

Where will Fr. John be celebrating Mass next weekend?
Saturday - 23 December 2023 - 5.30pm St Agnes'
Sunday - 24 December 2023 9.00am St Andrew's (Livestreamed)

Funeral for the Late Doris Bonanno, Tuesday 19 December, 10.30am St Agnes' Matraville



Greetings dear parishioners and visitors of our Twinned Catholic Parishes of St Andrew & St Agnes Malabar-Matraville.

Schools have practically finished apart from some teachers doing tidying up for academic year 2023. We give thanks for all the many blessings that we have received in 2023 from our teachers and support staff of

our Catholic Schools together with our wonderful Catechists who teach about Jesus and the Church in our State Primary Schools of Malabar & Matraville.

I hope all your Christmas preparation are going well. We now move very quickly into the second half of Advent with this Gaudete Sunday (Rose Sunday—thanks to those who are wearing a rose garment today), the joyful celebration of Advent will conclude with next Monday on Christmas Day. Our Fourth Sunday of Advent next Sunday is concluded with the Christmas Eve Masses on Sunday afternoon. So next Sunday we still gather to celebrate with the Fourth Sunday of Advent and with the following day for Christmas day celebrations.

Many thanks to those who brought in gifts and placed them under the Jesse Tree to help with Vinnies hampers. The hampers were delivered by Vinnies members and their helpers—Many thanks! So, no need for further donation of food etc. In concern the Vinnies Christmas Appeal you can place you giving in envelopes provided in the Church and place them on any of the collection plates.

Please look at the Christmas Mass Times as some of the Vigil Masses have changed. Don't forget to bring along a friend or two to celebrate the birth of our Saviour at one of our Christmas masses

God Bless

Fr John

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

St Andrews' Malabar

Christmas Eve (Sun) 5.30pm (children) & 7pm

Christmas Day (Mon) 9am

St Agnes Matraville

Christmas Eve 4.00pm (children) & Midnight

Christmas Day 10am

CHRISTMAS RECONCILIATION TIMES

St Andrew's Malabar

Sat 16 Dec. 4pm—4.45pm

St Agnes' Matraville

Sat 23 Dec 4.30 pm—5.15pm



We welcome into our Parish Community **Victoria Jovanov, Viginia Jovanov, and Isaiah George Jovanov**, who received the sacrament of Baptism on Saturday at St. Andrew's Malabar. Congratulations also to David Jovanov who is being Received into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church on Saturday at St Andrew's. St Agnes' Matraville also welcomes **Aryna Rose Nada Herbut and Marley Watson** into the Parish Community who received the sacrament of Baptism on Sunday at St Agnes'.

Volunteers Needed St Andrew's

Christmas Eve Vigil Sunday (5.30pm) 1 Commentator, Offertory

Sunday (7.00pm) Ministers, Offertory

Christmas Day Monday (9.00am) 1 Commentator, Offertory, Collections

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney: Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguarding.enquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.