

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.

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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.

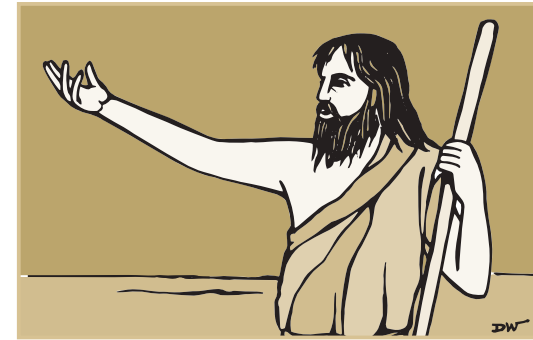
■ The word of the Lord.

## 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  
TWINNED CATHOLIC PARISHES**  
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**Secretarial Staff**

Julie Lippmann and Julie Wright  
Masses Tues, Wed, Fri: 9 am  
Vigil Saturday 5 pm  
Sunday 9 am

**RECONCILIATION:**  
Sat 4.30 - 4.45pm

Also available by appointment  
Principal: Mr Phil Tax

St Andrew's Primary School Malabar: 9311 1203

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Syro-Malabar Rite: 1st Sunday; 5pm  
Masses Tues, Wed, Fri: 7 am Thurs: 9 am  
Vigil Saturday 5:30 pm

Sunday 10 am  
**RECONCILIATION:**

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.



**2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

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



**Please pray for the Faithful Departed:**

**Recently Deceased:** Steven Fehir, Evaristo Pinto, Allan Hart, Paul Blackmore, Lucy Mary Winifred Tyler, Marie Cullen (Martina Rotta's mother), and all those who have died from the Covid-19 Virus.



**Anniversary:** Jenny Frost, Julie & Leon Laporte, Bailey Jones, Aida Cruz, Raymond Carmichael, Allison Lawes, Amanda Jane MacCarthy, Desmond Ebejer, Mary Hemelda Kandur, Candace Baseer, Joseph Strawbridge, Bryan McDonald, Patrick "Pat" Wiley, Dr Ralph Baccash, Cec Knight, Desmond Edeyer, Josephine Evans, Jennifer Blackmore, and Carmen Farrugia

**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 - 16 December 2023 - 5.00 St Andrew's (Livestreamed)  
Sunday - 17 December 2023 10.00am St Agnes'



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

As we have begun our new Church's New Year, we will be journeying with St Mark in our Year B cycle of Gospel readings this year. We are running very quickly through our Advent Season, I hope that you are finding your 2023 Advent Reflection Companion helpful in this Season of Grace. If you have not yet collected an Advent Companion, please collect one from the entrances of our Churches. Next Sunday believe it or not is our halfway Sunday of our Advent Season this year, as we have the shortest time between the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Day, there are no days in between. Next Sunday is called Gaudete Sunday rose Sunday in Advent, so let's wear a bit of rose colour in our garments next Sunday.

Congratulations to all the 2023 Year 6 graduates, who graduated from of St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Malabar, and Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Matraville, this last week. May the Lord continue to bless them in their next stages of life and beyond in their lives.

Please note below are Christmas Mass & Reconciliation times and don't forget the St Mary's Christmas lights at St Mary's Cathedral Forecourt in the city, from 14-25 December, Live entertainment from 6.30pm, Christmas Projection commences at 8.30am. **God Bless**

**Fr John**

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

**St Andrews' Malabar**

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

Christmas Day (Mon) 9am

**CHRISTMAS RECONCILIATION TIMES**

**St Andrew's Malabar**

Sat 16 Dec. 4pm—4.45pm

**St Agnes Matraville**

Christmas Eve 4.00pm (children) & Midnight

Christmas Day 10am

**St Agnes' Matraville**

Sat 23 Dec 4.30 pm—5.15pm

**OUR CHRISTMAS TREE (Malabar)**

We would be very grateful for donations of non-perishable food items and brand-new children's toys for our annual St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal. Please place them under the tree. (See notices near the doors of the church for suggestions. **The St Vincent De Paul Christmas appeal is this weekend, donations are 100% tax deductible. Envelopes are available, throughout our churches. Let's share with those less fortunate.**



We welcome into our Parish Community **James Kian Gacerez, Connor William Peel-Yates, Tyler Samuel Peel-Yates and Parker Rose Saddington** who received the sacrament of Baptism on Sunday at St. Andrew's Malabar. **Congratulations.**



Happy Birthday to **Roy Burton**, who celebrated his 80th Birthday on Thursday, December 7.

**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.