



**St John  
Vianney**  
Parish Morisset



### **THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD YEAR A 8 JANUARY 2023**

*Today we celebrate the Feast of The Epiphany. We hear the story of the Magi who, guided by the light of a star, came to Bethlehem to honour the Christ child.*

*The story of the Magi has great relevance for us, because we too are on a journey-the journey of life. Though the Magi were guided by a star, they did not know where the star would lead them. Hence their journey was very much a journey of faith. Their journey can serve as a model for our journey of faith.*

*As a Church, we must also have the courage to do new things; we must be open to the Spirit leading us to new horizons even as we tend to revert to the old ways.*

*The future of the Church, will not be revitalised by way of simply repeating what was done in the past. It will not be simply a restoration project or doing old things better. Rather, we must have the courage to do new things; we must be open to the Spirit leading us to new horizons.*



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal People who, long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities. We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

#### **PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM:**

Foundation	Leader	In Office
1. Identity and Community		
2. Worship and Prayer.	Uta France	Mon
3. Formation and Education		
4. Mission and Outreach.		
5. Leadership and Structure.	John France	Sat & Sun

If you have any concerns or questions you can also talk to any member of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) who are: Juliet Hutchins, Mal and Pam Melvey, Kerry Lendon, and Rod Hay.

PRIEST SUPERVISOR:	Fr Joseph Figuardo
SACRAMENTAL PRIEST:	Fr John Purnell
Parish Secretary:	Mrs Rosanna Suckling

OFFICE: 60 Yambo Street, Morisset, PO Box 87, Ph: 02 4973.6859  
Office Hours: 9.00 am to 2.00pm—Monday to Friday (except public holidays)  
(Due to COVID we ask that you make an appointment to come to the office)  
Morisset Parish Office email: [morparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:morparish@mn.catholic.org.au)  
Morisset Parish Web site: [www.vianneymorisset.org](http://www.vianneymorisset.org)  
Morisset Parish Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>  
Morisset Parish Instagram : [https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish\\_morisset/](https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish_morisset/)  
Morisset Parish Bulletin Items: [morparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:morparish@mn.catholic.org.au)

#### **UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :**

Saturday	7th January 5pm Mass— Cooranbong
Sunday	8th January 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Saturday	14th January 5pm Family Mass— Morisset
Sunday	15th January 9.30am Mass— Morisset

There will be no Tuesday Liturgies during the Christmas School Holidays , they will resume in Feb 2023.

We are back to walk in at all services.

We are still recording our Sunday Services and placing them on our Website and Facebook page for you to view if you are sick and unable to attend services.

**TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITY SAFE WE ENCOURAGE :**  
**MASK WEARING ,**  
**PHYSICAL DISTANCING,**  
**HAND SANITISING,**  
**And STAYING HOME IF SICK**

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### **REFLECTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY YEAR A – 8TH JANUARY, 2023**

Each year on the feast of the Epiphany we hear this Gospel reading from Matthew. He was the only one of the four Evangelists who recorded the story of the wise men following the star. His account of the first revelation of the Christ child to mankind is very different from that of Luke, which we heard last week. In Luke's account the shepherds, the lowliest of the low, were the first to discover the child. Our nativity scenes and our Christmas narrative have become an amalgam of the two stories. However, we need to remember that these Evangelists were each writing with a different purpose and a different audience in mind.

For centuries the Jewish people had considered themselves to be chosen people of God and the promised Messiah was coming to them, but Matthew's Gospel provides us with a different perspective. Today, on this wonderful feast of the Epiphany, we are celebrating the revelation of Christ, the long-awaited Messiah, to human kind and Matthew's Gospel holds the key for us. Jesus is not only the Messiah of Israel, but the Saviour of the whole world.

The Magi were possibly astronomers and astrologers, who saw a special significance in the appearance of this star. As educated men, they would have been aware of Jewish expectations and so they followed where it led. In their pilgrimage we see the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah: *"The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness..bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord."*

Matthew wanted to emphasise the Kingship of Jesus, so it is appropriate that dignitaries from a foreign land should bring gifts to acknowledge the birth of a king. The gifts they brought were symbolic of Christ's destiny: gold representing kingship; frankincense, an aromatic incense, expressing the mystery of his divinity; and myrrh, a bitter incense from a small thorny tree, foretelling the pain and suffering that he is to endure for our sake.

It is especially significant that these first worshippers were non-Jewish and of a different faith. The homage they pay the Christ child provides a stark contrast to the duplicity and hostility of Herod and to the rejection of Christ by so many of the Jews. This is a key focus of Matthew's Gospel, that Jesus was accepted by the Gentiles but not his own people.

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul speaks of the "mystery" that has now been revealed. In Christ, Jews and Gentiles alike have been made the inheritors of His Kingdom. Paul says, *"The pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel."*

These scriptures leave us with two questions. Firstly, the Magi

had the star, but what signs do we have to show us the way? Secondly, what gifts can we bring to do homage to our Lord?

And we have the answers! Christ's teachings, recorded in the Scriptures, are a sure guide for us to follow in the way we live our lives. The greatest gift we can give is the gift of ourselves, as we seek to follow his command to love God and love our neighbour. Whenever we do an act of kindness to someone in need, whenever we reach out to someone who is sick or lonely, we are giving a gift to our Lord.

We have Christ's promise so we live in hope!  
Pam Melvey

### **DIOCESAN CLERGY APPOINTMENTS.**

#### **Morisset**

As you are aware, Fr Geoff Mulhearn retired from his role as Priest Supervisor of the Parishes of Morisset and Toronto just before Christmas. Fr Greg Barker the Diocesan Administrator has now appointed Fr Joseph Figueroa to the position of Priest Supervisor for Morisset. Fr John Purnell will continue as Sacramental Priest. Fr Joseph is also the Parish Priest of Blackbutt South Parish, (Cardiff, Kotara, and Adamstown) as well as the Dean of Wattagan Deanery.

#### **Other Diocesan Appointments:**

Fr Anthony Coloma has been appointed Priest Supervisor for Toronto.

Fr Peter Street has been appointed Priest Supervisor of Gloucester.

Fr Camillus Nwaha Priest Supervisor of Myall. (Tea Gardens, Bulahdelah, Karuah) Fr Camillus will also assist Fr George Anthicadu and Fr John Vo in the Chisholm Region Fr Graham Fullick has been appointed Parish Priest of Scone and Murrurundi.

Fr Velerian D'Souza has been appointed Parish Priest of Blackbutt North. (Lambton, Waratah, New Lambton) Fr Bogdan Wilkaniec will be chaplain to the Polish Community. Deacon Viane Perez has been appointed formally as the Deacon in the Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Parishes under the leadership of Fr James Lunn.

#### **The Marists**

You may not have heard that the Marist Brothers are leaving the Diocese. The last Brothers will move to new appointments in January. Whilst it is public now the Brothers have chosen a lower key ending to their time working and ministering in the Diocese. This Diocese has a lot of history with the Marists and our journey has not always been an easy one together. We pray that the road ahead has less bumps.

#### **Welcomes**

In January/February we will welcome three new clerics to the Diocese.

Fr Anil Kuchipudi arrives Sunday 22 January from India. Deacon Naveen Susainathan arrives Tuesday 24 January also from India.

Fr Raphael Madukwe arrives Wednesday 01 February 2023 from Nigeria.

Raphael and Anil are on short term contracts and Naveen is looking to see if this will be a place, he will want to call home.

Bishop's Office

**The Bishop's Office will be closed from 23 December 2022 till 16 January 2023.**

### **CHRISTMAS THANK YOU!**

Thanks to everyone who helped in any way, with all the events over the Advent / Christmas period. A special thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make the Christmas Eve Mass at the Morisset Showground a successful and memorable occasion.

### WELCOME.

Welcome to St John Vianney Parish, anyone who is visiting the Lake Macquarie Region during the Summer School Holidays. We hope you have a safe and enjoyable time with us.

St John Vianney Church Morisset has an "audio loop" for people with hearing aids with the "T" setting. Further information may be obtained from the Parish Web site.

### PARISH OFFICE

Please be advised the Parish Office will be unattended from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January until Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Our Parish Secretary Rosanna, is taking some well-earned leave. If you need assistance of any kind, at any time, please phone the Parish number, 49736859, and your call will be answered by a member of the Parish Leadership Team.

### POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY 2023

That educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than competition, and helping the youngest and most vulnerable above all.



### SAVE THE DATE: TORONTO MEN'S WEEKEND

A MenALIVE Men's Weekend will be held at the St Joseph's Toronto Parish on the weekend of 25 and 26 March 2023. The weekend is suitable for all men from 18 years of age and provides an opportunity for attendees to explore what makes them feel fully alive. More information including how to register will be provided closer to the date. For more information on MenALIVE, visit: [www.menalive.org.au](http://www.menalive.org.au)



### 2023 LENTEN REFLECTION: FINDING LIGHT WITHIN THE DARKNESS

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, Finding Light within the Darkness. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community. This resource will be available at the end of January.

"Men can have a positive role by having tough conversations about family violence with friends and relatives."

Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement 2022-23, p. 10

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2022-23  
**Respect: Confronting Violence and Abuse**

STATEMENT & RESOURCES AVAILABLE:  
[bit.ly/SJS22-23](http://bit.ly/SJS22-23)

### MESSAGE FROM FR GREG BARKER

Dear brothers and sisters,

You will have heard of the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on New Years Eve. What a wonderful day to be called home and to begin the next chapter of your journey in faith; one year (chapter) ends and another begins. Our prayers and thoughts go out to not only the wider Church community but also to Benedict's family who will have loved him as a son, brother, grandson, cousin and friend and for whom he was simply Joseph.

A Mass was held in Sacred Heart Cathedral on Wednesday, 4 January 2023 at 6.00pm as we mourn, commemorate and celebrate the life of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

We join in unity with all Catholic people around the world who mourn his passing and celebrate his life and lasting legacy.

Born Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger on 16 April 1927, Pope Benedict XVI was the son of a police officer and grew up in regional Germany. Together with his brother Georg, he was ordained a priest on 29 June 1951. As priest and Pope, Benedict faithfully served the Church during his illustrious ministry. During the Second Vatican Council he served as a chief theological advisor to the Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Frings. Ordained a Bishop on 28 May 1977 he took the motto 'Fellow Worker in the Truth' and he was elevated to Cardinal in June 1977. In 1981 he was appointed by Pope John Paul II as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

One of Pope Benedict XVI's greatest achievements was as President of the Commission for Drafting the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a role he held from 1986 – 1992. On Tuesday, 19 April 2005, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected the 265th Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, selecting the name Benedict XVI. He resigned as Pope in February 2013, becoming the first Pope to resign since Gregory XII in 1415.

Many of us will remember very fondly Pope Benedict XVI who led World Youth Day here in Australia in 2008. What a wonderful event that was for the Catholic Church of Australia.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Yours in Christ,  
Greg.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN UKRAINE

God of peace and justice,  
who change the hardened heart  
and break the power of violence,  
we entrust the people of Ukraine to you.


Protect them in this time of peril;  
let them know not death but life,  
not slavery but freedom.

You are Father of all;  
we are brothers and sisters.

Give us the strength  
to live that truth in love,  
choosing peace not war.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

 Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference

### **SUPPORTING THE CLERGY / 1ST COLLECTION**

If you would like to make contributions to support the Clergy / 1st Collection please do so at Mass in the BLUE bucket or electronically using the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page, the Diocese App, Bank Account Name: CCF BSB: 062815 No: 00328161 Ref: 5016 1st Collection or set up a direct debit arrangement (contact the parish office for this).

### **SUPPORTING OUR PARISH / 2ND COLLECTION**

If you would like to make contributions to support our Parish please do so at Mass via the RED bucket or deposit directly into the Parish Account our details are: Account Name: CCF 96014 Morisset Parish BSB:062815 Account Number: 00328161 Ref: 5004 2nd Collection or 5004 PG and your Giver Number or Surname, or you can use the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page or the Diocese App. If you are considering taking up **planned giving** you may like to know that **a percentage of the contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to know more on how planned giving works please contact the Parish Office.

### **WEEKEND ROSTERS**

		<u><b>THIS WEEK</b></u>	<u><b>NEXT WEEK</b></u>
<u><b>Presiders</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	Mass Mass	Mass Mass
<u><b>PROCLAIMERS:</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	F Dunn R Hay	J France M Shamley
<u><b>PSALMIST:</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Foo D Joyce	R McArdle H White
<u><b>GIFTS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	H White P Herbert J Hutchins K Amon	H White Jo Patrick P Melvey A Dussin
<u><b>SERVERS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey J France	M Melvey V Paulo
<u><b>AV</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan T Alexander	J Vipan M Foo
<u><b>SOUND / VIDEO</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	J France U France	U France J France
<u><b>WELCOMERS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	TBA TBA	J Andersen TBA
<u><b>COVID TEAM</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	H White P Herbert J Hutchins B Hutcheson	P Robertson P Melvey A Walker G Walker
<u><b>COVID CLEAN- ING</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	All available Covid team members	All available Covid team members
<u><b>CHURCH CLEANING</b></u>	COOR MOR	A Dussin L Hutchinson G Hutchinson	XXXX B Hutcheson P Robertson

*The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding (ph: 4979 1390 or email: [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au)), or visit their website for further information ([www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)).*

### **UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMNITIES**

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD— 8TH JANUARY  
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD— 9TH JANUARY  
SAINT ANTHONY— 17TH JANUARY  
SAINT AGNES— 21ST JANUARY  
SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES— 24TH JANUARY  
CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL— 25TH JANUARY  
AUSTRALIA DAY— 26TH JANUARY  
SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS— 28TH JANUARY  
SAINT JOHN BOSCO— 31ST JANUARY  
THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD— 2ND FEBRUARY

### **Please pray for those who are sick, in hospital or recovering at home:**

Peter Martyn, Chris Crowe, Brian Grogan, Fiona McAlinden, Stephen McKay, June Purcell, Jeremy McMullen, Harry Goldman, Yvonne Beecroft, Bernadette Martin, John Francisco, Joan Gillett, Bruce Gillett, Koby Smith.

### **Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.**

**Recently Deceased:** Tony Foo, Les Fowler.



### **PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE BULLETIN**

If you would like the parish to pray for a family member who is sick, recently deceased or you would like remembered please call or email the parish office or complete a prayer card for each person and place in the mail box near the parish office door. Cards are available at the back of the church and at the Parish Office.

All prayer requests require permission from a family member or the person. Due to Australian privacy laws.

### **AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

My Jesus,  
I believe that You  
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite  
myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.



**Live stream Mass every Sunday at 9.30am at**  
[www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream)





## SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE The Epiphany of the Lord Sunday 08 Jan 2023

### The Introductory Rites Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work and live. Our Parish of St John Vianney Morisset is located on the traditional lands of the Awabakal and Darkinjung people. We honour and pay respect to, Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the spiritual culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

### Gathering

*The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.*

### Sign of the Cross

**Leader:**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:**

**Amen.**

### Greeting

**Leader:**

Blessed be Jesus Christ  
the Word made flesh  
who is proclaimed among the nations.

**All:**

**Blessed be God forever.**

### Introductory Remarks

**Leader (in these or similar words):**

Friends in Christ,  
although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day,  
we gather in God's name  
for when two or more come together  
God is always with us.

We worship in union with the whole Church  
rejoicing at the birth of the Saviour.

### Opening Rite

#### LITANY OF PRAISE

**Leader:**

Before listening to the Word of God  
let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of Peace: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are Son of God and Son of Mary: Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are word made flesh and splendour of the Father: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

**Leader:**

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:**

**All: Amen.**

### Opening Prayer

**Leader:**

Let us pray.

*All pause for silent prayer.*

God of glory,  
by the light of a star you guided the Magi to the newborn king.  
Lead us to your light,  
and help us to seek the face of Jesus  
and unite the world in lasting peace.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever.

**All:**

**Amen.**

### The Liturgy of the Word

#### First Reading

**Is 60:1-6**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*The glory of the Lord shines upon you.*

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come,  
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,  
though night still covers the earth  
and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises  
and above you his glory appears.  
The nations come to your light  
and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round:  
all are assembling and coming towards you,  
your sons from far away  
and your daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant,  
your heart throbbing and full;  
since the riches of the sea will flow to you;  
the wealth of the nations come to you;

camels in throngs will cover you,  
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;  
everyone in Sheba will come,  
bringing gold and incense  
and singing the praise of the Lord.

*To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:*

The word of the Lord.

**All reply:**

**Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13, R. see v.11**

**(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.**

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,  
to a king's son your justice,  
that he may judge your people in justice  
and your poor in right judgement. **(R.)**
2. In his days justice shall flourish

and peace till the moon fails.  
He shall rule from sea to sea,  
from the Great River to earth's bounds. (R.)

3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts  
shall pay him tribute.  
The kings of Sheba and Seba  
shall bring him gifts.  
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,  
all nations shall serve him. (R.)
4. For he shall save the poor when they cry  
and the needy who are helpless.  
He will have pity on the weak  
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)

## Second Reading

**Eph 3:2-3. 5-6**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

*The revelation means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.*

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to Mathew.

All:

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**Mt 2:1-12**

*We have come from the East to worship the king.*

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,  
for out of you will come a leader  
who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his

mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

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

All are seated.

## Reflection on the Word

Q. Why did the wise men approach Herod to ask about the infant king of the Jews?

Q. Why is it significant that Jesus' birth be witnessed by important men from a distant land?

Q. Whether or not the wise men are a purely literary device, what 'truth' does their story convey?

Q. In what ways do you 'bear witness' to Jesus?

## Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church  
let us profess our faith.

All:

**I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Dearest friends, let us bring our intentions before Christ our Lord, the light of the world.

Reader: That all nations will walk in the light of Christ.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That the Church will not grow tired of working for justice and peace.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That cultural and ethnic diversity be appreciated as a source of strength and harmony.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That we may strive to find Christ in one another.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That, following Pope Francis' challenge, we will strive to live in solidarity with the poor.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That we will be attentive to the cry of the earth and respond in whatever ways we can.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That families will enjoy peaceful and happy holidays, returning safely and invigorated to begin the new year.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That the sick and housebound will find strength in the radiance of Jesus Christ, especially members of our community, friends and family.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That those who have died will embrace the light of eternal life, especially members of our community, friends and family.

*(pause)*

In your light:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Loving Father, you gave your Son as a light for all nations. Hear our prayers and grant us the radiance of Jesus Christ as we spread your Gospel to the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**Leader:**

At the Saviour's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

**All:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## The Concluding Rite

### Blessing

**Leader:**

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now and for ever.

**All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.**

**All:**

**Amen.**

### Dismissal

**Leader:**

Let us go in peace.

**All:**

**Thanks be to God.**

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## CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA MOURNS DEATH OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB says Pope Benedict XVI will long be remembered fondly in Australia as the Pontiff who led young people from around the globe in prayer at World Youth Day in Sydney in 2008.

Pope Benedict, born Joseph Ratzinger, led the Church from April 2005 until February 2013, becoming the first Pope in centuries to resign. He had earlier served as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, one of the Vatican's most influential departments, for more than two decades.

Pope Benedict died in Rome, where he had lived since his papal retirement, on Saturday evening, Australian time.

"From his time as an expert adviser – or peritus – at the Second Vatican Council onwards, there was no question that Joseph Ratzinger was a major figure within the Church around the world," said Archbishop Costelloe, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

"His papacy will be remembered as one of rich teaching, including his encyclicals on love, hope and truth, as well as his book series Jesus of Nazareth, and for important reforms in areas like liturgy and in the handling of child sexual abuse."

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP, the bishop who oversaw World Youth Day in 2008, said Pope Benedict had been a key influence and someone with whom he became close.

"I had the great privilege of spending some private moments with Pope Benedict, away from the spotlight," Archbishop Fisher said.

"They were moments I will forever cherish. He had a great intellect, which he shared through his work as a professor, a Church leader and ultimately as Pope.

"He did not seek nor enjoy the spotlight, but he produced some magnificent works that have shaped and will continue to shape Catholic thought and Catholic life."

Archbishop Fisher said he was very grateful to spend some time with Pope Benedict during his visits to Rome.

"Reminiscing about his time in Australia and learning from this gentle father figure was a real joy," he said.

Archbishop Costelloe said parishes around the country will hold special memorial Masses for Pope Benedict in the coming days, encouraging those wishing to attend to visit local church and cathedral websites for more information.

"These Masses will be a chance to celebrate the life and faith of Pope Benedict, but also to pray for the repose of his soul – just as we do for anyone who has died," he said.

Media release from: Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

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## THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL IS COMING BACK – AND THE COUNTDOWN IS ON TO THE NEXT EVENT IN JUST OVER ONE YEARS' TIME.

After a hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the premier gathering of young Catholics in Australia will return in December 2024, and the Archdiocese of Melbourne has been named host.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference last week supported the proposal for the 2024 Festival and expressed its gratitude for the Archdiocese of Melbourne's offer.

"We know what a great source of Christian energy the Australian Catholic Youth Festival has been over the past decade, and we have very much been looking forward to its return," said Archbishop Christopher Prowse, chair of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry.

"As bishops, we are inspired by the enthusiasm we see in our young people in our local ministry. But we also recognise the great sense of solidarity and fellowship that is evident when thousands of young people gather to share their love for Jesus."

Melbourne Archbishop Peter A Comensoli said he welcomed his brother bishops' trust in the Archdiocese of Melbourne hosting the Festival in 2024.

"The Archdiocese of Melbourne was host for the inaugural Festival 11 years ago. We are excited to have ACYF back, and to start planning how we will welcome young Catholics from around the nation," Archbishop Comensoli said.

"ACYF is a great opportunity for our young Church. It is a real invitation for pilgrims to enter more deeply into their relationship with Jesus and be empowered to be disciples in the world today.

"We will work closely with a national committee to determine a theme, but for the moment I just want to say to young people: put this time in your diaries and start planning your journey!"

More details about the 2024 Australian Catholic Youth Festival will be released later this year.