



The Parish of Our Lady and St Therese, Essendon

20 & 21 December: Fourth Sunday in Advent Year A

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14 A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The virgin will conceive.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said: 'Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

Responsorial Psalm: Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

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 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

COMMUNAL PRAYER FOR ADVENT

In this Pilgrim Year of Hope, we remember that the Advent & Christmas stories have many people waiting in hope, being surprised by grace, and on the move, away from home. May our own journeys of hope lead us to life.

INTERCESSIONS

Confident that God is with us, let us bring our needs before the God of all.

That the Holy Church may be united as one in God's promise of salvation.

That conflict and war will be silenced and people of all nations may live in secure peace.

That those who must make difficult decisions will be given strength and courage.

That those who await the birth of a child will be filled with joy at the wonder of God's creative love.

We pray for those who lost their lives while attending Hanukkah celebrations at Bondi Beach last weekend. We pray for strength and healing for those who have been injured and traumatised. We pray for all who carry the heavy burden of dread in the wake of this violence. We entrust our Jewish friends—our neighbours and fellow Australians—to the embrace of God.

We pray for those who are ill especially Veronica Boros.

We pray for our own special needs.

We pray for those who have died recently especially Robert Salpietro, Nazzareno Conidi and Sean Kenon. And for those we remember at this time, especially: Angela Cardamone, Andrew Bastian, Joe Ciantar, Sam Cassar, Philip Kenny, Michael Heggarty, Joseph Dunne and Patricia Fogarty.

God of peace, hear our prayers and plant within our hearts the living presence of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

WHICH PRIEST WHERE This weekend Fr John will preside at all OLN Masses as well as 9:00am Sunday Mass at St Therese's while Fr Tony will preside at Saturday 6:00pm and Sunday 10:30am Masses at St Therese's. Next weekend Fr John will preside at all St Therese's Masses while Fr Tony presides at OLN for both Masses.

PARISH MORNING TEAS THIS SUNDAY Parishioners are invited for a cuppa and biscuit after Sunday morning Masses this weekend at both churches. At St Therese's the cuppa will be served in PACE and at OLN they will be served in the church foyer. We thank the members of our Welcoming and Parish Leadership teams who have organised and hosted the morning teas this year. Our hosts will take a well-deserved break in January and the next parish morning tea will be held on Sunday 15 February 2026.

VALE ROBERT SALPIETRO We convey the sad news that long-time St Therese's parishioner Robert Salpietro has passed away. We keep in our prayers Robert's wife Isabel, their children and grandchildren, Robert's siblings and the extended Salpietro family. Requiem Mass for Robert will be held at St Therese's on Friday 2 January 2026 at 11:30am.

SVDP FUNDRAISING Vinnies Christmas Appeal envelopes are still available in our churches and can be used for cash, cheque and credit card donations or donate online at: <https://fundraising.svdp-vic.org.au/essendonconference>. Completed envelopes can be dropped on any collection plate or dropped in to the parish office. Vinnies will also be hosting another fundraising sausage sizzle at Bunnings Maribyrnong on Saturday 3 January.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS AND VINNIES CHRISTMAS CARDS ON SALE at both churches at weekend Masses while stocks last. Calendars are \$10 and cards are \$5 for a pack of 5. Stocks are limited.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES Are published on the parish website: <https://www.essendoncatholic.org.au/mass-prayer-times/christmas/> and we have now published the parish Christmas card with Fr John's Christmas message. Christmas cards and a few remaining Christmas Mass Time cards are available from church entry tables. Please note that the printed cards are missing Carols at 9:30am on Christmas Day at St Therese's.

CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED We are still looking for parishioners to fill spots in our volunteer rosters for Christmas Masses. There are clipboards on entry tables this weekend where you can sign up. If you can assist please add your name and contact number to the sign-up sheets. If you are volunteering as a once-off you are not required to undertake the Safeguarding obligations/certifications.

PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE The parish office will close this coming Tuesday 23 December, reopening on Tuesday 20 January 2026. During the office closure Fr John will respond to messages on our after-hours answering service for end-of-life anointing and funeral arrangements.

PACE FUNCTION ROOM CHRISTMAS CLOSURE Our PACE Function room is now closed for bookings until February 2026. PACE booking enquiries made during our office closure will not be responded to until the office reopens.

ESSENDONWEST EMAIL SHUTDOWN Please note that the mailbox essendonwest@cam.org.au is scheduled for deactivation early 2026. All email communications to the parish should now be directed to essendon@cam.org.au

LOW GLUTEN HOSTS Are made from wheat starch and water with a gluten content of 6.2 parts per million.

PARISH OF OUR LADY AND ST THERESE
SAFEGUARDING
Volunteers must:

- Hold a current Working With Children Check and must list the parish as a place you volunteer
- Complete the CAM Safeguarding Essentials Training Certification every three years
- Acknowledge The Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct every three years

DOES THIS APPLY TO YOU?

SCAN FOR DETAILS

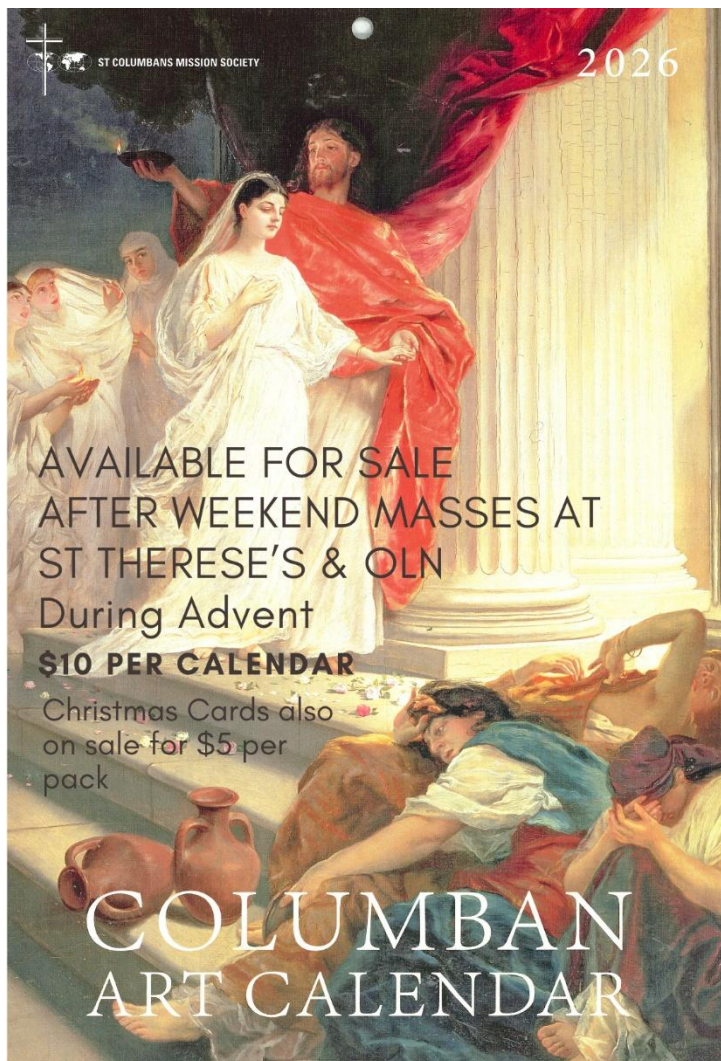
YES

DO THE SAFEGUARDING REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO YOU?
NO MATTER HOW YOU VOLUNTEER IN THE PARISH
THE ANSWER IS YES

To maintain accurate records ALL volunteers must be registered parishioners

Church Cleaning ~ Collector ~ Counter
 Data Projector Operator ~ Eucharistic Minister
 Finance Committee ~ Gardening ~ Kids at Mass
 Lector ~ Liturgy Team
 Maintenance ~ Men's Choir ~ Music Ministry
 Parish Leadership Team ~ Pastoral Visitation
 Play Group Leader (Tiny T's)
 Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group
 Sacristan ~ Parish Friendship Group
 Special Projects ~ Wedding Helper ~ Welcoming Team

MINISTRY ROSTER FOR THIS WEEKEND 20 & 21 DECEMBER (WEEK 3)		
MASS	READERS	EUCHARIST
OLN 5:00pm	Michael Portelli	Fred Grima
OLN 10:00am	Natale Cutri	Adrian Commadeur
St T's 6.00pm	Tric Joseph	Trish Giacomini
St T's 9.00am	John Harvey	Maria Cricri
St T's 10.30am	Rosemary Patterson & Mary O'Brien	Cherrie Arnold & Therese Hanna
MINISTRY ROSTER FOR NEXT WEEKEND 27 & 28 DECEMBER (WEEK 4)		
MASS	READERS	EUCHARIST
OLN 5:00pm	Michael Balia	Fred Grima
OLN 10:00am	Adrian Commadeur	Michael Portelli
St T's 6.00pm	Tric Joseph & Tony Proctor	Joe Fittipaldi
St T's 9.00am	Bruce White & Christine Nelson	Marg Tormey & Mick O'Brien
St T's 10.30am	Jim Maderazo & Lanelle Eid	Marita Hassed-Dunne & Miriam Gandolfo
Online resource for Sunday Readings: https://sundayreadingsandreflections.a.weebly.com/Urtl0m1hb.html		



ESSENDON PARISH

Vinnies Christmas Appeal

THIS CHRISTMAS, HELP STOP POVERTY BECOMING THE NEW NORMAL FOR PEOPLE LIKE SARAH

YOU CAN STILL GIVE TO OUR VINNIES APPEAL

SVDP envelopes are still available at our churches and can be placed on the collection plates or dropped to the parish office

Use the QR code to link to the website:
<https://fundraising.svdp-vic.org.au/essendonconference>

Phone Donations: call 13 18 12 & donate to Essendon Conference #176.



IF YOU CAN MAKE IT
 PLEASE SUPPORT OUR
 ESSENDON PARISH VINNIES TEAM
 AT THEIR

Vinnies Fundraiser Bunnings Sausage Sizzle

SATURDAY 3 JANUARY
BUNNINGS MARIBYRNONG

Cnr Rosamond Rd & Williamson Rd
Maribyrnong
9am until 4pm

Our Vinnies team will be fundraising
at Bunnings Maribyrnong in January

Come along and buy a sausage in support the great work of our SVDP Essendon Conference

Tiny Ts Playgroup IS MOVING TO FRIDAYS IN 2026

All-weather with indoor and outdoor space
 For infant to school-aged children
 Grandparents welcome!



**TINY TS IS ON A BREAK FOR
 THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND
 WILL RETURN
 FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY
 9:30AM IN PACE**

	Saturday 20 December	Men's Choir singing at OLN church	5:00pm
	Sunday 21 December	Fourth Sunday of Advent Parish Morning Tea after morning Masses at St Therese's Parish Morning Tea after 10:00am Mass at OLN Men's Choir singing at St Therese's church Parish Baptisms at St Therese's	10:30am 12:00pm
	Tuesday 23 December	Parish office closes for Christmas break	3:00pm
	Wednesday 24 December	Christmas Eve Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at St Therese's Carols and Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at OLN Carols and Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at St Therese's Carols and Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at St Therese's Carols and Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at St Therese's	10:00am Begins 5:00pm Begins 5:30pm Begins 8:00pm Begins 10:30pm
	Thursday 25 December	The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day) Carols and Christmas Day Mass at St Therese's Christmas Day Mass at OLN	Begins 9:30am 10:00am
	Friday 26 December	Church closed: no morning Mass	
	Thursday 1 January	Mary, The Holy Mother of God New Year's Day Public Holiday Mass at OLN with Fr John Hannon Mass at St Therese's with Fr John Hannon	9:00am 10:00am
	Friday 2 January	Requiem Mass for Robert Salpietro with Fr Peter Matheson	11:30am
	Saturday 3 January	Vinnies Sausage sizzle at Bunnings Maribyrnong	
	Sunday 4 January	The Epiphany of the Lord celebrated this Sunday	
	Tuesday 6 January	The Epiphany of the Lord (moved to closest Sunday)	
	Sunday 11 January	The Baptism of the Lord	
	Sunday 18 January	Baptism Welcoming Mass at St Therese's	10:30am
	Tuesday 20 January	Parish office reopens after Christmas/New Year break	9:00am
	Sunday 25 January	Parish Baptisms at St Therese's	12:00pm
	Monday 26 January	Australia Day Public holiday: Parish office closed	
	Tuesday 27 January	First day of school term 1 Mass at Ryman Raelene Boyle Village Aged Care	11:00am
	Thursday 29 January	Gospel Reflections returns for 2026 in PACE Meeting Room Mass at Arcadia Aged Care	10:30am 11:00am
	Monday 2 February	The Presentation of the Lord Statue of Our Lady moves to the NAME family	
	Wednesday 4 February	Italian Prayer Group Meet in St Therese's Annex	9:00am

MASSES	ST THERESE'S CHURCH 48a Lincoln Rd, Essendon Weekday Services: Tuesday to Friday 10:00am Weekend Masses: Saturday 6:00pm Sunday 9:00am & 10:30am Reconciliation: Saturday 5:45pm	OUR LADY OF THE NATIVITY CHURCH 31 Fawkner St, Aberfeldie Weekend Masses: Saturday 5:00pm Sunday 10:00am Reconciliation: Saturday 4:45pm

PARISH CONTACTS	<p align="center">PARISH PRIEST Fr John Hannon</p> <p align="center">Office phone: 9401 6330 Office address: 48a Lincoln Rd, Essendon</p> <p align="center">Office email: essendon@cam.org.au Website: www.essendoncatholic.org.au</p> <p align="center">Office hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm</p> <p align="center">After-Hours phone: 0490 956 610 (answering service)</p> <p align="center">St Vincent de Paul Helpline: 1800 305 330 WEEKDAYS 10:00am–3:00pm</p> <p align="center">To subscribe to our newsletter go to the link below or use the QR code: https://www.melbcatholic.org/s/subscription?id=0012w00000LOj4wAAD&req=subscribe</p> <p align="center"><i>Our Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.</i></p> <p align="center"><i>We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land of the Kulin Nation who have walked upon and cared for this country for thousands of years. We pay our respect to them and their cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging.</i></p>	