

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Luke 1:46-50. 53-54

**RESPONSE:** My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

**Response.**

The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him.

**Response.**

He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy.

**Response.**

**SECOND READING:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
**A reading from first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians**  
*May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything - hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** Isaiah 61:1 (Lk 4:18)  
**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL:** John 1:6-8. 19-28  
**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**  
*There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.*

A man came, sent by God.  
His name was John.  
He came as a witness,  
as a witness to speak for the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was not the light,  
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite

openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:  
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you unknown to you the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:**

**Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.**

**READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK:**

**2 Sam 7: 1-5,8-12, 14, 16;**  
**Rom 16: 25-27;**  
**Lk 1: 26-38.**



**Safeguarding our Community.**

If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Archdiocese of Sydney, please call the appropriate authorities OR The Safeguarding & Ministerial Integrity Office on 02 9390 5812 OR **speak with our Parish Safeguarding Support Officer Helen Vaz OR Parish Priest, both of whom will be able to provide support and guidance.**

**Mobile phones at Mass.**

To maintain a spirit of reverence and solemnity, please turn off and refrain from using all mobile telephones and other electronic devices during Mass.

**THE Catholic Weekly**

IS ON SALE NOW FROM THE FRONT FOYER.

- Prominent Catholics receive papal awards p1-3
- Pints with Aquinas host Matt Fradd fires up youth p14-15
- Christmas cave brings joy to struggling families p4
- Interfaith service mourns Holy Land violence p5
- Jo Hayes: Discernment, love and relationships p20
- Simcha Fisher: Evergreen offerings at Christmas p21



**PARISH OF ST. THERESE, DENISTONE**

**Presbytery and Office**

8 Inkerman Rd, Denistone 2114 Tel: 9809 2925

Website: [www.sttherese.org.au](http://www.sttherese.org.au)

Administrator: Fr Simon Apablaza

Deacon: Rev Mr Aruna Perera

Parish Secretary: Gayle White [admin@sttherese.org.au](mailto:admin@sttherese.org.au)

Office hours Tues, Thurs and Fri from 8am-4pm

St Therese's School

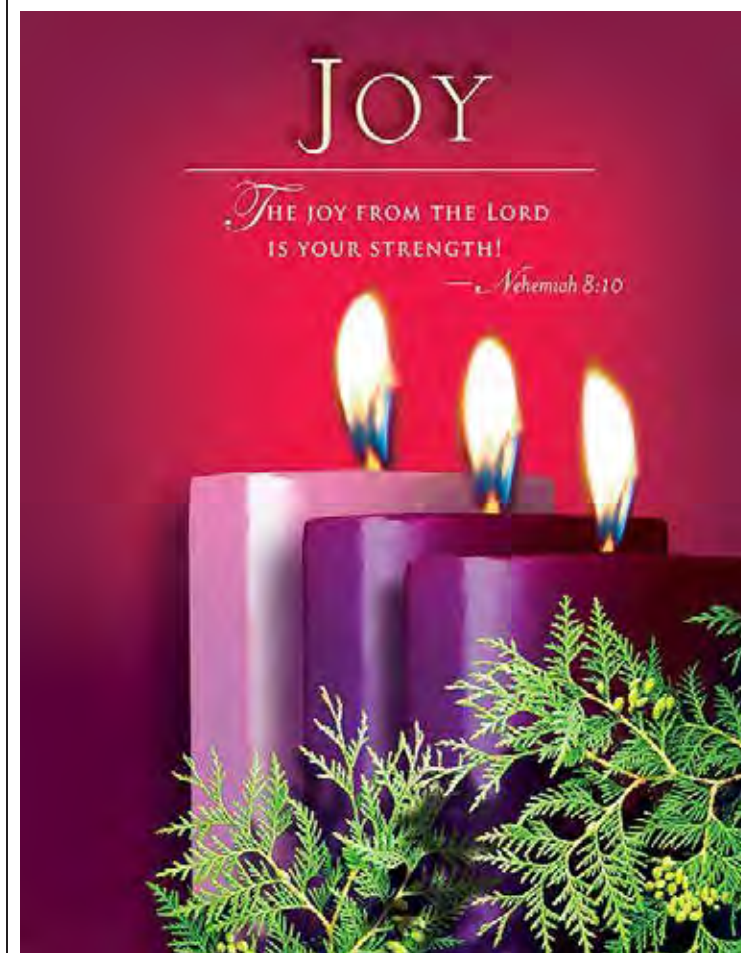
448 Blaxland Rd, Denistone 2114 (02) 9874 0412



**MASS TIMES:**

SATURDAY VIGIL:	6:00 pm.
SUNDAY:	8:00 am and 10.00 am.
MONDAY:	9.30am Communion Service.
TUESDAY through to SATURDAY:	9.00 am Mass.
FRIDAY:	9.00 am Mass.
	Exposition & Benediction from 9.40am – 10.15am every Friday after Mass.
RECONCILIATION:	Friday during Exposition and Saturday 5pm – 5.45pm or by appointment.
Baptism:	Every Sunday at 11.30am. Please contact Parish Office.
Marriage:	By appointment.
Anointing of the sick:	Please give names to Father Simon Apablaza.

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year B)**  
**16<sup>th</sup> / 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023**



**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**  
*I exult for joy in the Lord.*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,  
for the Lord has anointed me.  
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,  
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,  
freedom to those in prison;  
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord,  
my soul rejoices in my God,  
for he has clothed me in the garments of  
salvation,  
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,  
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,  
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,  
as a garden makes seeds spring up,  
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise  
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*(continued on back page)*

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:**

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.**

**16 / 17 DECEMBER 2023 – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

	<b>SATURDAY 6.00PM</b>	<b>SUNDAY 8.00AM</b>	<b>SUNDAY 10AM – Family Mass</b>
<b>ACOLYTE</b>	R MORFUNI	D D'MELLO	A STANTON
<b>READER</b>	LUEN UYMATIAO / BILL KINDER	SHERRY JAYAMMANE	HELEN VAZ / HANNY WIDJAYA
<b>OFFERTORY</b>	DABBAH FAMILY		SCOTT & SONYA DIMICHIEL
<b>PROJECTION</b>	ANNA PLEADIN		BUDY WIDJAYA
<b>ALTAR SERVERS</b>	GRP 3: BERNLEITNER FAMILY, NIARA PAREKELEM & FREDERICK LI		GRP 7: WIDJAYA FAMILY, ANNABELLE BOGER, LENNOX HO
<b>WELCOMERS</b>	ALICE CHAN & PENNY ONG		VOLUNTEER NEEDED
<b>COUNTERS</b>	GROUP 4: ROBERT WHITE GAYLE WHITE		
<b>ALTAR FLOWERS</b>	ANNE-MARIE NAGANATHAN	<b>DECEMBER ALTAR LINEN: PENNY ONG</b>	

**23 / 24 DECEMBER 2023 – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

	<b>SATURDAY 6.00PM</b>	<b>SUNDAY 8.00AM</b>	<b>SUNDAY 10AM</b>
<b>ACOLYTE</b>	T DABBAH	M MORELLI	G MOODLEY
<b>READER</b>	JOY PERERA	YVONNE LEUNG	PAUL MCLACHLAN / SCOTT DIMICHIEL
<b>OFFERTORY</b>	WONG FAMILY		VOLUNTEER NEEDED
<b>PROJECTION</b>	VIDURA PERERA		
<b>ALTAR SERVERS</b>	GRP 4: WONG FAMILY		GRP 8: ELIE & ALYSSIA BARAZ, DOMINIC MCLACHLAN
<b>WELCOMERS</b>	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		VOLUNTEER NEEDED
<b>COUNTERS</b>	GROUP 5: PATRICIA HO FRANCESCA HO ANTHONY STANTON		
<b>ALTAR FLOWERS:</b>	JAN KEYSER	<b>DECEMBER ALTAR LINEN: PENNY ONG</b>	

**MASSES AT CHRISTMAS**

**SUNDAY MASS TIMES AS USUAL:**  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> 6pm & Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> 8am & 10am

**CHRISTMAS MASSES:**  
Christmas Eve - Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec Vigil:  
5pm & 7pm  
Christmas Day – Monday 25<sup>th</sup> Dec:  
8am & 10am.



**PARISH NOTICES:**

**Mass intentions Request for Mass and Prayers.**

We pray for those who have recently died. Also pray for those who celebrate anniversaries especially Jan Flaton, Ron Taffa and Greg Clark.



**Christmas Reconciliation.**

Reconciliation will be available within the Parish and our Deanery.

- St Michael’s Meadowbank on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm
- Holy Spirit, North Ryde on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm
- Holy Name of Mary, Hunters Hill on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> Decembver at 7pm
- St Charles Borromeo, Ryde on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm – 8.30pm
- St Therese, Denistone on Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> December at 7.30pm.
- St Kevin’s, Eastwood on Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 7pm.

**Advent prayer and discussion groups.**

This will be our last week of our Advent prayer and discussions. All the discussions have been fulfilling and thoughtful and I’m sure it has helped you to know others within the parish. Continue your prayers and thank you for taking the time to prepare for Christmas.

**Christmas Message for 2023**

As we joyfully anticipate the celebration of Christmas, I just want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks for the warm welcome I've experienced since stepping into our parish five months ago. Being part of this welcoming community is truly humbling.

Our St. Therese Parish, though small, channels the spirit of St. Therese herself—making the ordinary truly extraordinary. In the simplicity of our little parish, we have a unique chance to be a stronghold of faith, inspiring everyone who comes our way.

I am excited about the various projects on our horizon, ranging from sprucing up the church building and presbytery to the more important work of Divine worship, pastoral engagement, faith learning, spiritual formation, and community building. None of this can be achieved without you. Together we are actively building the body of Christ.

As we approach Christmas, the celebration of Christ's birth many years ago, may this year see Him truly born in each of our hearts and homes. May we, inspired by the love of Christ, be propelled to greatness.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas filled with the joy and love of Christ, Fr Simon.

**Christmas Carols.**

Friday was a wonderful evening sitting in the church and listening to the Christmas carols.

The Christmas Spirit is growing as Christmas Day draws near.

We sincerely thank all the talented singers and musicians for their sharing their time, talents, and energy with our parish. Also, the evening was made extra special by all those who attended. THANK YOU!

**Advent-Christmas Giving Tree.**

Once again, our generous parishioners have supported our St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal and we have collected **\$2,450.00**.

This money has already been converted to \$50 Gift Cards and given to the West Ryde branch this week. The staff at St Vincent de Paul were most grateful for our parish’s generosity as one of their donors had recently pulled their support this year.

Our gift cards were a wonderful surprise.

Many thanks to all who donated, sharing the Christmas spirit to those in need.

**Christmas Rosters.**

**WE HAVE MANY VACANT POSITIONS ON OUR ROSTERS FOR CHRISTMAS.**

**Your participation would be greatly appreciated.**

**Altar Servers Christmas Party:**

Last Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> December sixteen of our faithful altar servers gathered at Strike Macquarie to enjoy some fun together. The servers played three games of laser tag where they battled in teams and then individually for victory. Fr Simon even played in the last half! The altar servers then enjoyed a meal of chicken tenders and chips along with some lollies and chocolates! Thanks to the parents who volunteered to assist with supervision. This event was only a small token of our appreciation for the wonderful service that all our altar servers give to the parish.



**Parish Bulletins during Christmas break and January.**

Our last bulletin for 2023 will be on Sunday the weekend of the 23/24 Dec.

For the last week of December and all of January, we will have a weekly A4 sized page with the Sunday Mass readings and the rosters printed out for the congregation.

The full bulletins will resume in February.

**Parish of St Therese Pilgrimage – Graces of France and Italy.**

Leaflets detailing the pilgrimage are available from the front foyer.

If you are considering joining the pilgrimage group from the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024 for 18 days please register your interest by contacting the parish office either via email or telephone.



**OTHER NOTICES:**

**Drivers Needed.**

Drivers URGENTLY needed to transport students to a special needs school in Epping. If interested and would like more details, please contact Deacon Aruna on 0421 189 771.