*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*



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 16 Drummartin St., Albion 3020

 Principal: Rob Macklin

Mother of God Primary School - 93631734

 Blanche St., Ardeer 3022

 Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

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FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT Year B 2 & 3 December 2023

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 16th December 9am at Queen of Heaven, 10am at St Theresa’s, 11am at Mother of God

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December Mother of God Church, Blanche St., Ardeer 6.00pm

 Queen of Heaven Church, Holt St., Ardeer 8.00pm

 St Theresa’s Church, Drummartin St., Albion 12.00 Midnight

 Mother of God Church, Blanche St., Ardeer (Pol) 12.00 Midnight

Christmas Day Monday 25th December Queen of Heaven Church, Holt St., Ardeer 9.00am

 Mother of God Church, Blanche St., Ardeer (Polish) 10.15am

 St Theresa’s Church, Drummartin St., Albion 10.30am

MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL.

A volunteer based missionary organisation with a focus on providing face to face assistance to disadvantaged communities - Papua New Guinea, Peru, Pakistan and Israel A special collection will be taken up at all masses next weekend (Dec 10 & 11) please give generously.

2024 COLUMBAN ART CALENDAR

Calendars are on sale this weekend - $10each. The Columban Art Calendar is an iconic Catholic Calendar, well-known for its traditional religious paintings and liturgical information and is a major fundraiser for Columban Missionaries Buy one today.

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| MASSES THIS WEEK ST THERESA’SDrummartin St, Albion 9.00am Friday10.30am SundayMOTHER OF GODBlanche St, Ardeer10.00am Wednesday(Pol) 9.00am Thurs 6.00pm Friday (Polish) 5.30pm Saturday10.15am Sunday (Polish)QUEEN OF HEAVENHolt St, Ardeer  8.00am Wed 9.00am SundayCHRIST’S CATHOLIC COMMUNITYMeeting Thursday, 7.00 - 8.30pm, at Queen of Heaven Church |  | CUPPA AFTER MASS Join us today after each Mass for a cuppa and a chat.RECONCILIATION (Individual Confession)Saturday 9th,10.00am at Queen of Heaven or other times or places on requestCOLLECTIONS RECEIVEDThanksgiving $715 Loose Money $327 Presbytery $524 COUNTERS 10th December  Team 5: J Camilleri, M Buhagiar, J ZammitFEAST DAYSSt Ambrose, 7 DecemberThe Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 8 DecemberREADINGS Today Next WeekIsaiah 63.16b-17;64.1,3-8 Isaiah 40.1-5,9-11Ps 80.1ab+2,14-15,17-18(R3) Ps 85.8ab+9,10-11,12-13(R7)1 Corinthians 1.3-9 2 Peter 3.8-15Mark 13.31-37 Mark 1.1-8 |

*St Theresa’s Parish is* committed *to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults*

Gospel Reflection

First Sunday of Advent Mark 13:1-37

REFLECTION By Sr Veronica Lawson rsm

As I write, I am watching the magpies in the yard, ever alert, rarely asleep, ready to protect their territory and their young. “Eyes wide open” is the proper stance, not just for the magpies, but for gospel people too. The little parable that is the gospel reading for this first Sunday of the new liturgical year forms the conclusion to Mark’s so-called apocalyptic discourse. Apocalyptic literature emerged within Judaism in the context of crisis or persecution. It was intended to provide hope in the midst of disaster. Its message was that God’s coming can reverse the sufferings of the present, a hopeful message for our contemporary world if we envisage multiple “comings” and not simply an end-time return. The Markan discourse is delivered as a farewell teaching to the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples. The concluding verse indicates that it is intended for a wider audience, however: “what I say to you, I say to all….” Like Peter, James, and John, Christian disciples through the ages are invited to stay awake, to be on the lookout, to be alert.

This cycle of the liturgical year begins and ends with Mark 13 and a focus on the end of the present order of things. It may seem strange to begin the year with such a reflection. Is Advent not a time of preparation for Christmas, for the coming of the Christ child into the world? Mark’ has no account of the birth of Jesus. His gospel begins with the immediate preparation for the adult ministry of Jesus. From the very outset, his interest is in the coming of God‘s reign of justice and compassion. That is, in fact, what Advent is about: living in hopeful expectation that God’s dream for a transformed world might be realised.

The parable of the watchful gatekeeper forms the conclusion to a farewell discourse that the Markan Jesus addresses to his disciples. The disciples are told to be alert and watchful through the four watches of the Roman night: in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrow, and at dawn. The parable thus foreshadows aspects of Jesus’ suffering that was to be compounded by the abandonment of his closest friends. Peter, James, and John will fall asleep in Gethsemane. The disciples will all disperse and Peter will deny him. We find our own experience mirrored in that of the disciples. It is easy to lose hope in the face of overwhelming violence and even to lose focus.

Advent is about recognising our own tendency to be less than vigilant and even to turn away when our presence is most needed. It is about allowing the grace of God to take hold in our hearts, keeping us watchful for the sake of those on the edge and for the sake of a regenerated Earth. Most of us would agree that our Earth communities are in crisis. We need to be alert to causes as well as to consequences so that the cycles of violence might eventually be broken. Our gospel asks no less of us.