

Saint Luke the Evangelist Catholic Parish Blackburn South

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WEEKLY BULLETIN: SUNDAY 2 DECEMBER 2018

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR C

THE YEAR OF SAINT LUKE - OUR TIME PROMOTING GOD'S HOSPITALITY

This week's readings: Jer 33:14-16; 1 Thess 3:12-4:2; Gospel Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

GOSPEL REFLECTION BY GREG SUNTER: We are, perhaps, used to thinking of the season of Advent as a time of preparation for the celebration of Christmas. But this week's readings, and the readings of the next few weeks, remind us that the notion of preparation extends well beyond the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We are reminded that we are, in fact, living in an 'in-between time'. From this week's first reading we are reminded that the expectation of a Messiah was a very long-standing hope for Israel. The coming of the Messiah would usher in a new prosperity and a divine reign of God. The earliest Christians began to see that the ancient prophecies could all be applied to Jesus and they began to regard Jesus as the promised Messiah – the fulfilment of prophecy. However, Jesus also promised that he would come again, and the expectation of the first followers of Jesus was that his return would be in their lifetime. In our second reading from the letter to the Thessalonians, we can see the growing realisation that perhaps Jesus' return will not occur within the current generation. This realisation had a dramatic effect on the life and faith of the community. Imagine living with the belief that the end of time was going to occur not just in your lifetime but literally any day now. Slowly, they realised that Jesus' words were not that specific and the time of return had not been identified. What Jesus had called for was a state of readiness, a state of preparedness. This didn't mean he was coming immediately; what it meant was that there was need to get the house in order because he would be coming at some time. Advent is a time to remember that we still haven't really got the house in order.

Scriptural context: This week's gospel passage comes from a lengthy passage in the gospel of Luke in which Jesus speaks extensively about the future. It is a very different style of writing from the usual narrative, teaching and parable forms that make up most of the gospel. The style is an echo of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. Compare this passage with this week's first reading of other passages from the writings of the prophets. The style is always rich in metaphor and symbol. There is a grandness about the style. We know, just from the use of language, that great things are afoot!

Have you thought? – Waiting, waiting, waiting ... I'm not a big fan of waiting! Anticipation is pretty good; getting prepared and getting ready are OK, too. But when it comes down to being all dressed up and ready to go, I'm just hopeless at waiting. If Advent is a time of pointless waiting for Christmas then we've somehow missed the message. Rather than just waiting, Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation. But it's not just about anticipating Christmas. That's part of it, sure. However, Advent is about reminding ourselves that we have a job to do: preparing for the reign of God – in our lives and in our world.

Different View – We're doomed! Fundamentalists love readings like this week's apocalyptic gospel passage. Full of portent and urgency, it inspires the sort of thinking that says, 'Repent now, because you could be dead tomorrow!' It is easy to look at a passage like this and apply it to the conditions of the world today: everything's going to rack and ruin; it's just as the Bible foretold; the end of the world is just around the corner. But we have to remember that this was written nearly 2,000 years ago! Yes, there is still urgency! Yes, there is still need for change! But we still have time to get it right.

Raise your voices ...

Entrance antiphon: To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

Response to the Psalm: To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

Communion antiphon: The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

Saint Luke the Evangelist Catholic Parish Blackburn South

We are Companions on the Journey ...

www.cam.org.au/blackburnsouth

Whitehorse Deanery
Eastern Region
Archdiocese of Melbourne

Rev Father Gerard Johnson
Parish Priest

Sonya O'Farrell

Part-time Parish Secretary
Wednesdays, Thursdays &
Fridays
10.00am – 2.00pm

Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au

Website:

www.cam.org.au/blackburnsouth

SUNDAY MASS

Saturday Vigil – 6:00pm
Sunday – 8:30am & 10:30am

WEEKDAY MASS & ROSARY

Tues. 11.00am

Weds. – Sat. @ 9:00am

Rosary prayed after Mass times as
listed above. All welcome.

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 9.30am & 5.30pm

EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

The Blessed Sacrament is
exposed for Adoration
Wednesday

Start: 7:00pm | End: 8:00pm

WEDDINGS & BAPTISMS

By appointment and
six months (6) notice, please.
(This helps with the planning of both
celebrations and Parents usually know
nine months in advance when their
baby is to be born).

St Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parish Primary School
46 Orchard Grove,
Blackburn South Vic 3130
Tel: (03) 9877 4023

Mrs Jackie Purcell: Principal

Email:

principal@slblackburnsth.catholic.edu.au

Website:

stlukes@slblackburnsth.catholic.edu.au

Prayer to Saint Luke the Evangelist

Lord God, who chose Saint Luke to reveal
by his preaching and writings the mystery of
your love for the poor, grant that those who
already glory in your name may persevere
as one heart and one soul and that all
nations may merit to see your salvation.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever. Amen!

Patron Saint of artists, physicians, surgeons,
students and butchers.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER all who are sick and for those Parishioners unable to be
among us this weekend. For those who died recently and for all those whose
anniversaries occur about this time, especially members of Filomena's family, may they
all rest in peace.



LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK: Advent, new
liturgical year begins: Sunday cycle C, weekday cycle 1.
Monday: St Francis Xavier, priest. **Tuesday:** John Damascene,
priest, doctor. **Thursday:** St Nicholas, bishop. **Friday:** St Ambrose,
bishop, doctor. **Saturday:** The Immaculate Conception of the
Blessed Virgin Mary. **Sunday Masses:** Preface of Advent 1,
Eucharistic Prayer II. Eucharistic Acclamation No. II.

A VOCATION VIEW: Be on the watch! Allow God to lead you in the ways of truth and
justice. God is calling you to serve. (Jeremiah 33:14-16)

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: "But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and
raise your heads because your redemption is at hand." LUKE 21:28 We celebrate
Advent each year in preparation of the birth of Jesus, His first coming, as we await his
second coming. In this Advent season, use the sacrament of Reconciliation to
strengthen your relationship with Jesus. It's never too late.

OUR PARISH STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL PROGRAM new dual pledge
commitments took effect last weekend and to avoid any confusion please destroy any
old envelopes that you may still have. **Not yet completed your pledge?** Don't worry –
pledge cards are available on the table in the foyer of the Church. Completed cards
can still be placed in either collection bag. Our new program began well last weekend.
Parishioners are not required to tear their New Envelopes in half as it makes it easier for
the Counters and no sticky tape on them please; they can be placed in either
collection bag. Some Parishioners have chosen not to participate in this way and of
course Visitors who join us from week to week will not have Envelopes so the second
collection encourages them to support the Parish and the Parish Priest financially too.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY is now in recess until 27 January 2019. Thankyou Jess and Nina.
OUR PARISH SCHOOL CHILDREN'S CHOIR will sing this Sunday Dec 2nd at 10.30am
morning Mass.

NEWSLETTER NOTICES: Please send to the following e-mail address by **Wednesday**
5pm – BlackburnSouth@cam.org.au

ST VINCENT DE PAUL LOCAL CONFERENCE 2018 CHRISTMAS APPEAL:
A CHRISTMAS WITHOUT JOY – IS NO CHRISTMAS AT ALL. Our local Conference
wants to be ready to respond to our local community's needs for Christmas again this
year. This annual appeal will occur this weekend at all Masses. Please help our helpers
to help. *Your Gift could change a life. Margaret Gearon will address us this weekend.*

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020: WHAT IS GOD ASKING OF US IN AUSTRALIA AT THIS TIME?

The Plenary Council 2020 is a gathering
of the Church in Australia to make decisions for
the future. All people are invited to contribute to
the Plenary Council agenda by sharing their
experience of faith and of the Church. The
Plenary Council agenda will be developed from
the stories you share and the questions you raise.



Plenary Council 2020
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

Our questions about and our hopes for the Church will arise from hearts that listen to the
Spirit. This week, we are inviting all our Parishioners to pray the Advent Plenary Council
prayer at the end of our Prayers of the Faithful. **For the season of Advent on Thursday
evenings each week at 7.30pm till 8.30pm (6th, 13th & 20th December) there will be an
opportunity for Parishioners to gather in the Parish School Staff room to spend Advent
this year answering this question. Please come along.** To help Parishioners to prepare for
our Parish conversation next Thursday evening in our Parish School Staffroom please take
home the article on our notice table in our Church foyer titled – "Realising the Dream of
Vatican II". It will be helpful in providing a context for our deliberations and conversation.
<http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/PC2020ParishGuide.pdf>

"The real newness is the newness which God mysteriously brings about and inspires,
provokes, guides and accompanies in a thousand ways." Pope Francis
Evangelii Gaudium 12. <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

IN WHAT IS AN HISTORIC DECISION, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
have endorsed an Acknowledgment plaque for use in Schools, Parishes and
organisations across Australia. The plaque is produced on a steel substrate and can be
displayed both inside the Church or outside in a prominent location. "For us, Country is
a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated
with that area and its features. It describes the entirety of our ancestral domains."
Professor Mick Dodson [http://www.natsicc.org.au/acknowledgement-and-welcome-
to-country.html](http://www.natsicc.org.au/acknowledgement-and-welcome-to-country.html)

NATSICC & ACBC AGREED RECOGNITION: We acknowledge the Traditional
Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We
acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing
journey of Reconciliation. (Our sign will be installed in our Church foyer soon.)

PARISH MINISTRY ROSTER

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

		1 AND 2 DEC. 2018	8 AND 9 DEC. 2018
SATURDAY	6:00 PM	Monica Hodder	Melina Barcellona
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Beryl Chelliah	Godfrey Thong
	10:30 AM	Marg Yore	Val Gardiner

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

		1 AND 2 DEC. 2018	8 AND 9 DEC. 2018
SATURDAY	6:00 PM	Mia Perang	Ian Holmes
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Kana Chelliah	Rosemary Donaldson
	10:30 AM	Margaret Gearon	Jess Kilroe-Smith

WELCOMER'S ROSTER

		1 AND 2 DEC. 2018	8 AND 9 DEC. 2018
SATURDAY	6:00 PM	Terry Wells	Greg Grant
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Marie Pekish	Don Mckenzie
	10:30 AM	Mary Taranto	Leigh Kelly

SLIDE OPERATORS

		1 AND 2 DEC. 2018	8 AND 9 DEC. 2018
SATURDAY	6:00 PM	David Prabha	Tony Lobo
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Mary White	Megan McLean
	10:30 AM	Manny Gonzalez	Manny Gonzalez

CHURCH FLOWERS

No flowers during Advent

CHURCH CLEANING

8 DEC. 2018
Team 5 (Kellie's Team)
Kellie McCarthy, Emma Brodawka
Toni Wynne & Daniella Manolopoulos

MAINTENANCE

8 DEC. 2018
Team 2
Dale Dixon & Ian Holmes

ADVENT WEEK 1: PLENARY COUNCIL 2020: WHAT IS GOD ASKING OF US IN AUSTRALIA

AT THIS TIME? • The Plenary Council 2020 is a gathering of the Church in Australia to make decisions for the future.

- All people are invited to contribute to the Plenary Council agenda by sharing their experience of faith and of the Church.
- The Plenary Council agenda will be developed from the stories you share and the questions you raise.
- Our questions about and our hopes for the Church will arise from hearts that listen to the Spirit. This week, we are inviting all our parishioners to pray the Advent Plenary Council prayer each at each Mass as a way of preparing to share our stories.

PARISH CARE GROUP: It is that time of year again and the Care Group is starting to collect for our annual Christmas Hampers Raffle. The funds raised enable the Care Group to continue to support the St Luke's community. Tickets can be purchased in the foyer after each of the weekend Masses. Donations can be left in the hamper located in the foyer up to and including **Sunday 23rd Dec 10:30am. Some donations and festive food idea items such as:** biscuits, fruit cake, puddings, chocolates, lollies, Chips (snack food), wine, soft drinks **Gift items such as: (please nothing too fragile)** Mugs, Hand cream, Gift cards, Glasses - in packaging. **Please note:** Food products that are out of date or will be past the expiry date before Feb 2019 cannot be used in the hamper.

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAM – AIRS 2 DEC 2018 This week on The Journey, our very own Fr Stephen reflects on the Gospel of Luke, Sr Hilda from the Abbey shares her wisdom Remembering God, Bruce Downes, The Catholic Guy encourages us to "Change the World" and Trish McCarthy captivates us with her God Spot entitled "Eyes". Music soothes all souls and we are lucky to have some amazing Christian music on the Journey Catholic Radio program, where faith hope, love and life come together. Go to www.jcr.org.au or www.itunes.jcr.org.au where you can listen anytime and subscribe to weekly shows by email.

A PALMS ENCOUNTER is an intimate, immersive, inter cultural experience providing insights that challenge perceptions and deepen understanding for parishioners. Palms long-term volunteers guide the Encounter with our host communities in Timor Leste, Samoa and Myanmar. Special group Encounters are also available should your parish social justice team be interested. **Make an Encounter in 2019 Timor Leste- April & Sept; Samoa – June; Myanmar- November.** www.palms.org.au/encounters Palms Encounters are rich immersions that challenge perceptions of our neighbours, guided by Palms mission volunteers with cultural experience of Timor Leste, Myanmar and Samoa. Please see flier for **Palms Encounters** on our Church noticeboard being conducted in 2019. Palms Australia, PO Box 3109, PETERSHAM NORTH NSW 2049 ph: 02 9560 5333 e: kevin@palms.org.au web: www.palms.org.au **Palms Australia: Opening our hands to the World.** Please see Church noticeboard for more details.

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT – WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 7PM: Tickets: \$20 No concessions (Children under 15 free) Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/ZEUH> More details available on Church noticeboard.

SAFETY STATEMENT: We are committed to a safe and nurturing culture for all children and vulnerable adults in our Church. Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Blackburn South holds the care, safety, wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel. <http://pol.org.au/blackburnsouth/Policies.aspx>

Parish Groups & Contacts

Do not our hearts burn within us as we walk along ...

Lectors, Welcomers Collectors Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, & Rosters

Margaret Gearon - 0409 807 135

Children's Liturgy Group

Nina Grieve - 9877 4023

Jess Kilroe-Smith - 0452 613 863

Stewardship Counters

Dale Dixon - 0433 885 087

Steve Kilroe-Smith - 0404 864 232

Pastoral Council &

Child Safety Officer

Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

History

Margaret Gearon - 0409 807 135

Whitehorse Deanery

Finance Committee

Steve Brennan

Parish Accountant

Hall Hire

Parish Office - 9877 2292

Care Group & Gardens

Judy Noy - 9894 1506

Church Sacristan

Greg Grant 0401 644 474

Church Linen

Toni Plevier

Church Cleaning & Flowers

Megan McLean 0419 347 693

Maintenance

Bill Goodwin 9803 6056

Holy Communion

to the housebound

Parish & School Choirs

Maria Pinto, Lina Mafi

0411 136 043

Marg Yore & Kat Bergin

9877 4023

Parish and School

Fete Committee

Jackie Purcell - 9877 4023

Parish School Advisory Board

Jackie Purcell - 9877 4023

Parish School

Parents' Association

Jackie Purcell - 9877 4023

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

Parish Contact:

Margaret Gearon

RECRUITMENT NOTICE:

These Parish Groups welcome new members who choose to participate in the life of the Parish in these ways - would you like to make contact with one or more of them?

CARITAS GLOBAL GIFTS PROTECT THE MIRACLE OF MOTHERHOOD THIS CHRISTMAS: When you choose a Global Gift card to give to family or friends this Christmas, you are supporting women give birth safely with access to expert care before and after babies are born. **Order Global Gift cards online at www.globalgifts.org.au or call us on 1800 024 413** See Church noticeboard and notice table for more details.



MELBOURNE CATHOLIC APP AVAILABLE NOW: The new Melbourne Catholic app is now available for download in the app store. The app is your one stop shop for all things Melbourne Catholic, featuring Melbourne Catholic trending news, a search function for Mass times, Archbishop's Homilies, Daily Readings, Prayers and Weekly Reflections as well as local events and news about Plenary Council 2020.

DOWNLOAD FREE MELBOURNE CATHOLIC APP FOR ANDROID AND IPHONE

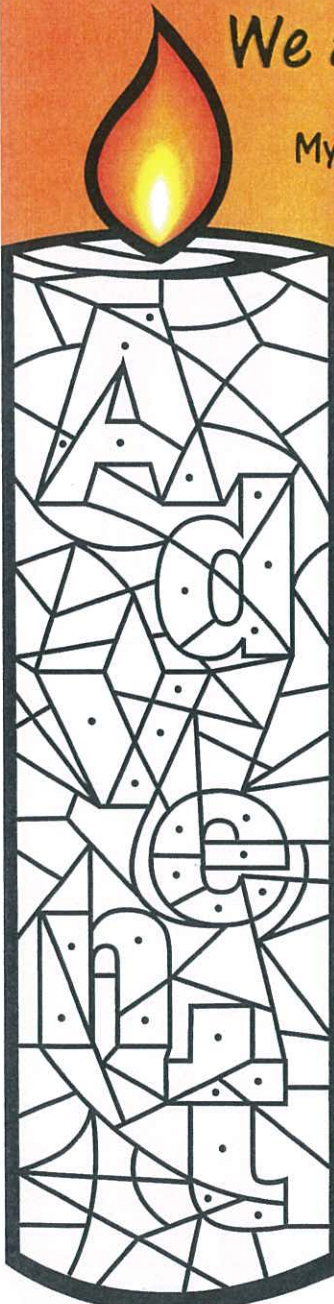

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ionic.melbournecatholic&pcampaignid=MKT-Other-global-all-co-prtnr-py-ParBadge-Mar2515-1>

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/melbourne-catholic/id1440438862?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

HEART OF LIFE - 2019 PROGRAM OUR 2019 PROGRAM is now available and can be downloaded [here](#). Weekday seminars and workshops are offered, as well as Saturday reflection days and weekends, and ministry formation programs. Please consult the brochure for more information. For Spiritual Direction or Pastoral Supervision, please contact the Centre at any time on telephone (03) 9890 1101.

We are Preparing for Jesus

My Name is _____

During Advent we can prepare for the arrival of Jesus by helping others. Write down some of the ways you can help family, friends and people in need during Advent.

I can help my family by

I can help my friends by

I can help those in need by

Find the opposite of each word, then use the circled letters to complete the sentence below

MAN	○ _ _ _ _
UNDER	_ _ _ ○ _
OPEN	_ _ ○ _ _
SAD	_ _ _ ○ _
ALWAYS	_ ○ _ _ _

“the Son of Man will be seen, coming in a cloud with great _____ and glory.”

Colour the shapes that contain dots purple.

Fill the other shapes with different colours.

Realising the dream of Vatican II

Oct 24, 2018



Earlier this year I read an excellent book, *An Unfinished Council: Vatican II, Pope Francis and the Renewal of Catholicism* by Richard Gaillardetz. In it he compares the pillars of the pre-Vatican II church with the new pillars of a Vatican II church. There is not space enough here to discuss them all so let me concentrate on the three more important changes relevant to our Plenary Council.

Before the Council, faith was understood primarily as believing in doctrine, a number of propositions or truths that the hierarchy taught to the laity who obediently believed without contributing anything. At Vatican II the bishops returned to the traditional understanding of faith. God reveals himself to us inviting into a personal relationship. Through faith we come to know not things about God, but God's own self – in a personal, relational way. Since all Christians personally know God, all have the *sense of the faith* that Pope Francis keeps reminding us of. All can contribute to the teaching role of the church. Certainly, the official teachers need to listen to the sense of the faithful before teaching. This understanding of a shared sense of the faith also leads to one of the strongest themes of Vatican II, dialogue.

Following on Vatican I, the church became more papal centred. This was something the bishops at the Council wanted to balance. The bishops fought strongly for a say, especially about matters the Curia was deciding without reference to them. They wanted a collegial church. Collegiality was accepted in principle at the Council but has waxed and waned since. It is still developing and maturing in practice. Witness the changes Pope Francis is making to the understanding and practice of the Synod of Bishops. All in the interest of making them more collegial and not just consultative. Collegiality, strictly speaking, refers to bishops, “with and under Peter”. But it is informed by ‘Synodality’ which includes the whole people of God. All

of us journeying together, serving each other and listening to one another and in that way to the Holy Spirit.

A final pillar of the pre-Vatican II church was an emphasis on a sacral priesthood. Clerics were seen as special, separate from the rest of the people of God, superior in holiness and knowledge, the sole and indispensable channels of God's grace, gifts and leadership. At Vatican II, the priority is given to baptism, not orders.

The most fundamental Christian calling is baptism and all the baptised share in Christ's prophetic, priestly and kingly offices. [LG #10-13] To highlight this, Pope Francis recently said, "This tells us that no one in the Church is useless... we are all necessary for building the Temple. No one is secondary.

No one is the most important person in the Church, we are all equal in God's eyes." To reinforce this the bishops deliberately changed the order of chapters in their Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, instead of beginning "from the top" with the hierarchy they began with a chapter on "the People of God". That is what unites us. We are all: pope, bishops, priests and laity members of the people of God. In a people of God theology, the "ontological gap" between clergy and laity dissolves. Our unity comes from our sense of being the people of God on mission. Such a vision can nourish among us great enthusiasm and hope, energy and equality. We are collaborating in something much larger than ourselves, God's life and mission in the world.

In the past year, since being appointed to the Plenary Council Facilitation Team, I returned to studying the history and theology of Vatican II. I am frequently surprised at the treasures it contains which we have yet to mine and develop. Through our Plenary Council 2020 we may make the dreams of Vatican II more real in Australia.

Fr Noel Connolly SSC is a lecturer in Missiology at both the Broken Bay Institute and the Catholic Institute of Sydney. He is also a member of the Adult Formation Team with Catholic Mission Australia and has recently been appointed by the Australian Bishops to the Facilitation Team for the Plenary Council 2020.

<https://www.columban.org.au/media-and-publications/newsletters-and-bulletins/columban-ebulletin/archive/2018/ebulletin-vol-11-no-9/realising-the-dream-of-vatican-ii>



Ten ways to Celebrate Advent at Home

Advent is a time of spiritual renewal as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. In what way will your home be 'different' because it's Advent? Try some of these practical ideas...

1. Light the Advent wreath

It's a very clear symbol that Advent is here! Unpack that Advent wreath, dust it off, or make a new one out of craft or natural materials. Use the wreath as a family gathering point and a call to prayer. Be faithful to lighting that new candle each week.

2. Use Advent symbols

Decorate your home in the spirit of Advent. A mauve table cloth, a banner, a child's artwork, a table centrepiece such as the Advent wreath. Refresh your home's 'sacred spaces' with some Advent imagination.

3. Show hospitality

Now that your home is decked out in sacred symbolism, fill it with warmth, prayer, laughter. Invite some parishioners over for an Advent meal or perhaps a night of faith sharing. Bask in the goodness of the body of Christ.

4. Family meals

Put extra effort into your family meals. For a start, be there! Pray grace together. Prepare a table topic: "If I could have three wishes this Christmas..."

5. Organize a family outreach

Is there a neighbour who could use some assistance? Is there a parish Christmas hamper to which we could contribute? A local nursing home we could visit? Find a way to share your family's wealth and talents so as to bring life to others in your local community.

6. Take time

Take time to nurture your key relationships. Cancel a work date to 'hang out' with your kids. Leave the shopping and write to a dear friend. Spend some precious, intimate time with your spouse. Or just sit in prayer and 'waste time' with God.

7. Feed your brain

Feeling a bit sluggish? Use Advent as a time to limber up, strength your faith, update your knowledge as a Catholic. Enroll in a short course. Do some spiritual exercises (do some physical exercises too!). Play an educative or prayerful CD in the car. Feed your brain. Nourish your soul.

8. Share your Advent activity

Involve your children or the whole family in making or doing something special during Advent. E.g., Make a nativity crib in the garden. Or share a simple treat on Sundays: ice cream cones after Mass, a family cricket match in the park, a walk in the sunshine.

9. Be reconciled

Prepare to receive the sacrament of reconciliation this Advent. Come before God with an honest and open heart, conscious of your brokenness and failures, yet confident in God's unconditional love and mercy. Is there someone to whom you need to say sorry?

10. Shop simply

Plan a strategy for your Christmas shopping this year. Rather than being swept along with the consumer tidal wave, make choices to simplify your lifestyle. Keep presents simple and shopping to a minimum. Give gifts of self (e.g., a gift of your time, affection, presence, prayer.)

Helpful Hint

To make Advent a priority in your busy life:

- Put it in the diary!
- Let go of a less important activity.
- Pray for the capacity to enter into the spirit of Advent. Or pray for the *desire* to celebrate Advent well.
- Team up with a friend or family member and support each other in your Advent goals.

TeresaPirola.net

Text: Teresa Pirola

Design: Sarann Ryan

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