

1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT, 3 December 2023

O come O come Emmanuel – these great words of one of the most popular Catholic Hymns sum up the Season of Advent. In the book of Revelation, chapter 22, we see St John teaching us that the Christian life is one of expectation of the coming of Jesus. We are to keep alive our thirst for Him, which is kindled in prayer. We see in all the saints a longing to meet their Saviour and Lord. Advent gives us a chance to refocus on this expectation – do we want him to come? Do we really want him to come now?

A Catholic tradition, which started in the home and of recent times has made itself into the Church, is the blessing of advent wreaths and lighting the candles. It is not a liturgical action, but rather a devotion which is meant for the home, to foster prayer among families. In this regard, we will not have a wreath in the Church, to encourage you to make it part of your home. Below is some info on the meaning of the wreath, and how to bless and use the wreath in your home.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

Even the individual evergreens that make up the wreath have their own meanings that can be adapted to our faith. The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering. The pine, holly, and yew signify immortality and the cedar signifies strength and healing. The pine cones that decorate the wreath symbolize life and resurrection. The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God’s promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice.

The first candle symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the “Prophecy Candle” in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. The second candle represents faith. It is called the “Bethlehem Candle” as a reminder of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem. The third candle is called the shepherds candle. It is pink to symbolize the joy of the shepherds who found Jesus among the lowly, and it is our joy of being halfway through advent. The fourth candle, the “Angel’s Candle,” symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: “Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.” Some people like to have a fifth, white candle, to light on Christmas day.

A prayer to bless the wreath and begin Advent

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Read Isaiah 9: 1-2, then pray the following prayer

“Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: He is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, He is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, He is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.

May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

FAREWELL MORNING TEA for Bishop-Elect Fr Richard this **Sun, 3 Dec** after the 10am Mass. Please bring a plate of morning tea to share.

FARWELL GIFT FOR BISHOP-ELECT FR RICHARD: The Parish will be giving a farewell gift to Fr Richard Laurenson and if you would like to contribute you can in the following ways:

- All Saints Parish bank a/c **020342 0050016 01** REFERENCE: Farewell Gift.
- **SPECIAL ENVELOPES** in the STM Church foyer on the bench marked “Farewell Gift”.
- **A DONATION BOX** will be in the foyer after Mass.
- **And at PARISH OFFICE**

BISHOP ELECT FR RICHARD ORDINATION: There may be spaces left for those what want to turn up & hope for a seat.

PRAYERS FOR BISHOP-ELECT FR RICHARD on his appointment as our new Bishop: Please continue to pray for Fr Richard. The blessings that he will bring to the peoples of our diocese and NZ will be abundant. His Ordination will take place on **Fri, 8 Dec at 6pm** at the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Hamilton East.

2024 BIBLE DIARY: Cost \$20. Diaries are available for purchase after the STM Sunday Masses. You can make payment either by Eftpos, or using your mobile phone or place \$20 cash in a specialy marked envelope (available on the bench in the foyer). Place envelope in slot on bench (in the envelope). Great as a Christmas gift.

PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP NEWS: **Edge Family Group** Christmas /potluck lunch at 40 Parewaitai Court Papamoa on **Sun, 3 Dec** at 11.30am.

St Patricks Family Group meeting **Sun, 10 Dec** for finger food lunch at 11 Kairua Rd 12 noon. Any queries ring Merrilyn 575 4148.

CASH FOUND AT ST PATRICK'S CHURCH, TE PUKE: Please contact parish office if you think it may belong to you.

BAPTISMS: We welcome Zoe Meurer Treptow & Tahlia O'Connor who are receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this weekend.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROGRAM 2024: Enrolments are now open for children that are Baptised Catholic to join the Sacramental Preparation for Reconciliation, First Holy Communion & Confirmation. Children need to be from the age of 7 years and upwards. Sacramental preparation will begin in February 2024 (Term 1) for children and their parents/caregivers.

For further information and to register your child please contact Heidi on 575 4807 Ext 6 or email: pastoral@allsaintsbythesea.nz

ADVENT TWILIGHT MARKET: **Mon, 4 Dec 4.30 - 6.30pm** at Suzanne Aubert Catholic School - 60 Monticola Drive, Papamoa. All welcome. There will be book stalls, baking for sale, raffles, stalls run by our children and food trucks available for dinner. The market will start at 4.30pm with a Nativity play performed by our youngest learners. We are fundraising for a senior playground for our school and all proceeds will go towards this. We appreciate your support.

BAPTISM COURSE: Will be held on **Mon, 4 Dec 7-9pm** for parents/caregivers at STM parish centre. If you have a child aged under 8 & would like them to receive the Sacrament of Baptism, please register to attend the course at parish office.

CHRISTMAS RECONCILIATION TIMES at St Thomas More Church:

Wed, 20 Dec 5.30pm-7pm

Thurs, 21 Dec 5.30pm-7pm

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES FOR ALL SAINTS BY THE SEA PARISH

Sat, 23 Dec 5pm Te Puke Vigil for 4th Sunday of Advent

Sun, 24 Dec 8.30am Suzanne Aubert for 4th Sunday of Advent

Sun, 24 Dec 10am St Thomas More for 4th Sunday of Advent

NOTE: There will be NO 5pm Sunday evening Mass at St Thomas More on Sun, 24 Dec.

Sun, 24 Dec 5pm Te Puke Christmas Vigil Mass

Sun, 24 Dec 10pm St Thomas More Christmas Mass During the Night

Mon, 25 Dec 8.30am Suzanne Aubert Christmas Day Mass

Mon, 25 Dec 10am St Thomas More Christmas Day Mass

Mon, 1 Jan 2024 9am St Thomas More Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

ADORATION will continue in January from 8-8.50am before the 9am weekday Masses.

RECONCILIATION will be available at the normal times, Wed 9.30am & Sat 9.30am.

PARISH OFFICE: Mrs Jan Baker admin@allsaintsbythesea.nz
9-12pm Tue-Fri Ph 07 575 4807 (Ext 2) 17 Gloucester Rd, Mt Maunganui 3116.
Parish Priest: Fr Richard Laurenson pp@allsaintsbythesea.nz
Assistant: Fr Matthew Gibson ap@allsaintsbythesea.nz
Pastoral: Mrs Heidi Nield pastoral@allsaintsbythesea.nz
WEB: www.allsaintsbythesea.nz www.facebook.com/catholiccoast/
APP: Churchapps nz - Allsaintsbythesea

formed.org is a premier on-line platform filled with over 4,000 Catholic studies, movies, cartoons, audio dramas, ebooks, and talks – and it's **FREE** for every parishioner. Enter parish code GNQDK3 or All Saints by the Sea.

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION: “Prayer of the Heart” Tues 7pm-8pm at STM Church, M Maunganui. We welcome all. Experience and develop Christian Meditation in a holistic setting. Ph Kylie 027 964 8969 Paula 027 576 5235.

ROSARY is held **Tuesday to Saturday** after the 9am Mass at STM Church.

PUBLIC ROSARY every **Wednesday** at 6pm, outside STM Church. For more information please see <https://public-rosary.org/https://t.me/NZPrays>

ADORATION & BENEDICTION is held on **Wednesday** at STM Church after the 9am Mass & also on **Sunday** from 3.45pm to 4.45pm.

AA: Do you, or someone you love, have a problem with alcohol? Alcoholics Anonymous meet in the STM Parish Lounge every **Sun 6.30–7.30pm**. All welcome.

READINGS for 2nd Sunday of Advent, 10 Dec: Sundays Year B; Weekdays Year 2

1. Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11 **2.** 2Peter 3:8-14 **Gospel: Mark 1:1-8**

MASSES FOR THIS COMING WEEK: Tues, 25 Nov to Sun, 3 Dec 2023

Mon St John Damascene
9am Tues STM
9am Wed STM St Nicholas
9am Thurs STM St Ambrose
9am Fri STM The Immaculate
Conception of the Blessed
Virgin Mary
9am Sat STM St Juan Diego
Cuauhtlatocatzin
5pm Vigil St Pats
8.30am Sun Aubert
11.30am Maketu,
(2nd Sun of month)
10am Sun STM Missa Pro populo
5pm Sun STM

If you wish to have a Mass offered, please contact parish office.