



Catholic Communities of:
St Matthew's, Bridgewater
Our Lady of the Rosary, Stirling East
St Joseph the Worker, Lobethal
St Matthew's, Birdwood

3RD SUNDAY of ADVENT YEAR A

13TH / 14TH DECEMBER 2025

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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SUNDAY'S GOSPEL REFLECTION

In today's gospel we meet John the Baptist in prison, sending his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" This is a poignant moment in the gospel. John was the fiery prophet who had proclaimed the coming of the Messiah. Jesus had come, but he doesn't seem to be what John expected. John sounds like he is wrestling uncertainty; might even be wondering if he had gotten God's message right. He lives in a state we know as well: between promise and fulfillment; between what has begun in Christ and what we still await and hope.

John voices our own questions in Advent when we ask, "Lord, where are you? Are you really present at this time in our world?" The world is in deep pain, spiritual and as well as physical. The delay in God's promises being fulfilled can cause us to wonder if God and the kingdom are really near. That is our Advent question and besides raising the question we are also invited to listen to Jesus' gentle reply.

Here is the answer Jesus gives to John's disciples about himself. "The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."

Jesus does not argue or explain. He points to what's happening: healing mercy and transformation. Aren't those signs of God's kingdom? Advent faith invites us to look for those same signs. They may be small and hidden, or right before our eyes, hard to miss. These signs announce to us to God's saving power is still at work among us. Do we not see? How can we participate in them?

We note the beatitude in today's gospel, "Blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." This is an Advent challenge because God's ways can surprise or unsettle us. We can't stumble when Christ comes to us in a form we do not expect in the poor, and suffering, in the slow process of grace. Faith means trusting that even when we do not see everything clearly, God's promises being fulfilled.

John the Baptist is a reminder to us that even the prophet of fiery conviction struggles to understand how God is working. Like him, we too may wonder: where is God's kingdom? Why does it seem delayed when the world needs it to come in its fullness?

Today is the third Sunday of Advent, also called "Gaudete Sunday." It is customary to light the third candle in our Advent wreath, the "Rose candle." With its lighting we are reminded that joy grows in patient faith, the kind of trust that even when the world seems dark, God's light is already dawning."

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

St Matthew's Birdwood

8.30 am: 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month

St Joseph's Lobethal

8.30 am: 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays of the month

St Matthew's Bridgewater

6pm Saturday Evenings

10.30 am Sunday

Our Lady of the Rosary East Stirling

5.30 pm Sunday

PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD



WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS ...

For those recovering from surgery, illness and the sick: Margaret Carroll, Betty White, Anne MacDonald. June Harvey, Jeff Oliver, Gabrielle Morgan, Mirla Mills, Judith McPhee, Krystina Rowland, Carolyn Whitfield

December Anniversaries: Kerry Liddell, Kathleen O'Grady, Justin Toome, Maria Smith, Margaret & Chappie Guthrie, Vernice Bevelander, Prudence Jolly, Tim McLoughlin, John Streich, Michael Smerdon, Troy Broadbridge, Christine Richter, Frank Keogh, Bill Guthrie, Adriana Beltrame, Barry Schultz, Linda Brawn, Jennifer Brooks, Diane Healey, Geoffrey Williams, Patricia McCalman, Alvina Hewish, Bill Healey, Bryce Carroll.

Recently deceased: Emma Vella, Doris Bonaci (Fr Fred's Aunties)

MASS TIMES DURING THE WEEK

Monday 15th	OLOR MASS	9.00a.m.
Tuesday 16th	Rosary at OLOR	4.00p.m.
Wednesday 17th	BIRDWOOD MASS	9.00a.m.
Friday 19th	BRIDGEWATER MASS	11.00a.m.
Saturday 20th	RECONCILIATION	12.00p.m.

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES December

Sunday 14th	3rd week of Advent	
	Blessings of Small cribs	6.30p.m.
Tuesday 16th	Start of the Christmas Novena	6.30p.m.
Wednesday 17th	Second day of Novena	6.30p.m.
Thursday 18th	Third day of Novena	6.30p.m.
Friday 19th	Fourth day of Novena	6.30a.m.
Saturday 20th	Fifth day of Novena	9.00a.m.
Sunday 21st	Fourth Sunday of Advent	
Monday 22nd	Seventh day with Carols	7.00p.m.
Tuesday 23rd	Eight Day of Novena	6.30p.m.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Jesus,
you make
the blind to see.
Help us to see our neighbors' needs.
You open deaf ears to hear.
Please open our ears
to hear the cry
of the poor.
You made
clean the lepers.
Clean us too, we beg,
of the many wrongs we do,
and the right things
we fail to do.
Our mute tongues
want to sing your praise.
We want to leap in joy
like the stag.
Heal us, please.



ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND MASSES

NORTHERN End	BIRDWOOD Sunday 21st Dec 8.30a.m.	LOBETHAL Sunday 28th Dec 8.30a.m
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Welcome`	Mary Nyeboeur	Gayle Raven
1st Reader	Gayle Raven	Gayle Raven
2nd Reader	Anne Moore	Eric Toome
Euch. Minister	Margaret S	Margaret S
Cleaning	Lea Crosby	Connie Golding

BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 20th Dec 6.00pm	Sunday 21st Dec 10.30am
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Sacristan	Mark McGeough	John Leeton
Welcoming	Lyn Norris	Gina Kelly
Reader 1	Henry D	Ric Sachse
Reader 2	Mark McGeough	Nolan Parodi
Euch. Minister	Kathy Lloyd	Jenny Porter
Musicians	Damien Mansfield	Folk Group
Counters	Kathrine Johnson &	Ric Sachse
Our Lady	Orma Paine	Orma Paine
Cleaning	Marianne Berry &	Karen Dutton
Flowers	Gloria Howe	Gloria Howe
Tea & Coffee		

OLOR	Sunday 21st Dec 5.30pm	Sunday 28th Dec 5.30p.m
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Sacristan	Paul Anderson	Paul Anderson
Welcoming	Sue Manchip	Jenny Johnston

TOILETRIES COLLECTION

The Social Justice Team is again collecting toiletries for the Vinnies Asylum Seeker and Refugee Service. VRASS mainly supports Asylum seekers on various visas, including some who are awaiting resolution of their visa status. Many hold a Visa type which prevents them from working and accessing Centrelink; they rely solely on help from services like VRASS. As well as donations of shampoo, body wash, soap, shaving cream etc, donations of toddler size disposable nappies and feminine products are needed. Toiletries collected from parishioners are distributed by VRASS to families who seek support. Toiletries should be unopened and placed in the tubs provided on the altar from Sunday 7 December. Thank you for your generosity – a simple gift of a bar of soap or a bottle of shampoo, or a clean nappy make a difference.

PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Please support our Parish Christmas raffle. There is a fantastic Christmas hamper up for grabs also a special gift form Offe Jewellery. Proceeds will go towards the Parish. Tickets are \$2 each or 3 tickets for \$5. Don't miss your chance it could be your lucky ticket this year.

PARISH ASSEMBLY ACTIONS

Inserted with the Bulletin is Meeting notes from of the Parish Assembly Actions This document will help guide PPC to deliver on actions and as part of communicating actions to the parish post the assembly. Still we will deliver the whole Parish Assembly report to those who have asked for a copy.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

On this Third Sunday of Advent we light the third candle known as the candle of joy. Instead of the previous two weeks of purple or violet candles, this week the colour of the candle will be different: it's pink. This candle reflects the joy that comes through Jesus' arrival, and through the salvation he has gifted us. During the weekend masses prayers will be taken randomly from the manger to pray during Advent for the intention of that particular family who wrote their prayer last week.

THE ADVENT WREATH—PINK CANDLE

Catholic priests modelled Advent celebrations on Lent, they wore rose-coloured robes and set the third Sunday of December as the time to remember joy. The pink or rose-coloured advent candle is lit on the third Sunday. The third advent candle is called "the Shepherd's Candle," and the shepherds' section of the Christmas story is very much about. The shepherds were watching sheep in their pastures when an angel appeared to them. As many people in the Bible reacted when angels showed up, the shepherds were frightened, so the angel said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."

BLESSING OF THE CRIBS/BABY JESUS

In keeping with the theme of joy and expectation, on Gaudate (JOY) Sunday, This weekend we will blessed small cribs. and images of Baby Jesus next Sunday during the weekend masses. This is tangible and meaningful way to prepare for the coming of the Lord as family. When we have a crib scene in our home it is not only a reminder of the first Christmas. Reflecting before the crib in silence or in prayer together is a meaningful way to prepare for the coming of Jesus into our lives this Christmas.

CHURCH DECORATION

On Monday 15th December we will decorate the church for Christmas at Bridgewater. It will be appreciated if any volunteers can come around 5.00pm. to help in the setting up of the Christmas crib and other decorations.

ADVENT REFLECTION AT BIRDWOOD

Mass on Wednesday at Birdwood. At 9.00a.m. we recite the morning prayer during mass and meditate and share the Sunday's Gospel

CHRISTMAS NATIVITY TABLEAU

A Nativity tableau will form part of the Vigil Mass celebrations at St Matthew's Bridgewater on Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December 2024 at 6.30 pm. Parents of children who are interested in participating the first rehearsal will be on Tuesday 16th December at 5.00p.m. at Bridgewater.

CHRISTMAS ROSTER

If you are available to fill any of the vacancies on the Christmas ministries roster, please put your name down on the sheet at the back of the church or email Cathie: catherine@adelaidenhillsparish.com.au

JANUARY ROSTER:

Please advise Cathie if you are unavailable for ministry during January before Friday.

CHRISTMAS NOVENA

The Christmas Novena is deeply rooted devotional practice in the Catholic tradition. It is prayed during the nine days leading up to Christmas Eve (December 16–23), recalling both the nine months of Mary's expectancy and the nine days of prayer made by the Apostles before Pentecost.

What Is the Meaning of the Christmas Novena?: Each day invites

us to reflect on a particular aspect of the mystery of the Incarnation, helping our hearts prepare for the Lord's birth. There will be Mass with reflection and prayers

Tuesday 16th—OLOR 6.00p.m. The Genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Wednesday 17th—OLOR at 6.00p.m. Mary engaged to Joseph

Thursday 18th— OLOR 6.00p.m. The Birth of John the Baptist

Friday 19th— OLOR 6.00p.m. The Annunciation

Saturday 20th— OLOR 9.00a.m. Mary meets Elizabeth

Sunday 21st 4th Sunday of Advent

Monday 22nd—OLOR at 7.00p.m. The Magnificat of Mary with Carols by candlelight.

Tuesday 23rd—OLOR at 6.00p.m. Birth of John the Baptist

THE BRIDGE

Every month, except for January, the parish publish its monthly magazine "The Bridge" of 24 pages! This month we have printed the last edition for 2025. It gives a close look on what the different groups have achieved throughout this year. It's something that we should be proud of, not too many parishes have this opportunity of having a monthly magazine in colour.. We need to thank Paul Robinson who give so much time and energy throughout the year to produce such an amazing magazine. Thanks to so many parishioners for their contributions which are needed to produce every month "The Bridge" Special thank you to those who advertise in the magazine.

CANDLES BY CANDLELIGHT

This seasonal celebration is a time to be enjoyed with family and friends together with the abundance of community spirit of the OLOR community which is renowned for. Get your vocals ready to join Damien Mansfield on the organ for your Favorite Christmas hymns. An all-ages event for adults and children alike. Carols by Candlelight will be held at the OLOR church Monday 22nd December at 7.00pm. Afterwards you are invited to stay for a cuppa and Christmas sweets..



Weekly Income 6th/7th December 2025 THANK YOU

First Collection:	\$485.60
Planned Giving Received:	\$1910.00
Loose Plate:	\$169.70

If you would like to donate by Direct Debit use the parish bank account details below:
BSB: 066-782 Account: 100000277
Account Name CCES ADEL HILLS
Refer payment as "donation"

3RD SUNDAY of ADVENT YEAR A

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy. The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, 'Courage! Do not be afraid. 'Look your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy, for those the Lord has ransomed shall return. They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy on their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

R. Lord, come and save us.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. R

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. R

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. R

A reading from the letter of St James

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ



READINGS FOR
4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

1st Reading	Is 7:10-14
2nd Reading	Romans 1:1-7
Gospel	Mt 1:18-24