



The Living Spirit

The Bulletin of Holy Spirit Catholic Parish, Byron Bay / Bangalow

St. Finbarr's, Byron Bay



St. Kevin's, Bangalow

Accepting God's commands.

21st December, 2025
4th Sunday of Advent, Year A



A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew: 18-24

Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

Today's Liturgy - Psalm Response.

*"Let the Lord enter;
he is king of glory."*

Gospel Acclamation.

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son;
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.

Alleluia, alleluia!

TODAY'S READINGS – Isaiah 7:10-14; Ps 23; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

Accepting God's commands.

When Joseph learns that his young fiancée is pregnant, he must have been quite distressed. He probably thought that she had been unfaithful, had been attacked, or was delusional. He knows that the child is not his, so his long genealogy linking the family to David would be irrelevant. We can only imagine the confusion, hurt, and anger of this 'man of honour'.

According to Jewish law, Joseph had the right to shame Mary publicly and have her stoned if she was found to be unfaithful. He decides to divorce her quietly, but God intervenes, and an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream and tells him to proceed with his plans to marry Mary. The angel also tells him, that the child that Mary bears has been conceived by the Holy Spirit and is to be named Jesus.

However, there is a surprise in the next sentence when we hear that Jesus is to be named Emmanuel which means "God is with us." This seems to be a contradiction, so how can we explain the two names? The name "Jesus" is derived from the Hebrew name "Yeshua" which means "The Lord saves." This name emphasises the purpose of the incarnation and ministry of Jesus which is about His mission which is the salvation of humanity.

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PLANNED GIVING CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES / DIRECT DEBIT

- * **Option 1: Collection Boxes at Church entrance.**
- * **Option 2: Church Collection Plate.**
- * **Option 3: Direct Debit, details as follows:**

1st COLLECTION: (Clergy) **2nd COLLECTION:** (Parish)
BSB: 082 489 BSB: 082 489
A/C: 172 178 008 A/C: 172 177 961

*Thank you for your continued
Parish financial support.*



Fr David Gilbey PP

**28 December
2025**
The Holy Family
of Jesus Mary &
Joseph, Year A

**St Finbarr's
Byron Bay**
6pm
Saturday 20/12/25

**St Kevin's
Bangalow**
9.30am
Sunday 21/12/25

LECTOR/S

Suzanne
Wallington

Trisha
Bleakley

MINISTER OF
COMMUNION

Tony
McCabe

NEXT WEEK: (Holy Family Year A)
Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14: Colossians 3:12-21;
Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

Please Pray for the Recently Deceased.

Magaret Mazzer, Dale O'Leary, Adam Roevery, Warwick Smith, Rhys Thomas, Lawrence Farrugia, Fr Frank Mulcahy, Peter Grant, Patricia Tiernan, Terry Bible, Margaret Hargraves (nee McGettigan), Eris Hackett, Paul Campton, Richard De Leede, Fr Michael Brady, Gordon Elder, Gloria Kennedy, Kathleen Lourey

Those whose Anniversaries occur at this time:

Kevin Collins, Kevin Scanlon, Eileen Gilbey, Mark Stickens, Frances Buckley, Warren Meanwell, Carmel Apps, Faith Denholm, Joan Hurley, Terry Potts, Vlad Sezemsky, Hazel Holland, Josephine Farrugia, Fr Vince Doyle, Hazel O'Meara, Vince Boyle, Stephen Buckley, Carmel McLean, Teresa Pezzutti, May Higgins

As a faith community, we pray with our brothers and sisters in their time of need:

David Biddulph, Frances Raisch, Lee Rogers, The Conroy family, Angeles and Karla Zapala, Rhonda Noonan, Louise Banno, Mary Phelps, Matthew O'Sullivan, Carmel Kenway, Mathew O'Meara

(Due to Privacy Laws, names are only placed on this list when requested by the sick person or family member and will remain on the list for at least 6 weeks. As we are not aware if illness improves or continues, you are welcome to make a further request for inclusion.)

Pray for the Deceased Priests of the Diocese of Lismore.

James Duffy, William Byrne, Patrick Kiely, John Dalton, John Patrick Curran, +Norman Thomas Gilroy Card. Archbishop of Sydney, John Henry Fitzpatrick, George C Barry, Synan McDonnell, Alexander Fillodeau, Cyril Cummins



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH BANGALOW/BYRON BAY WEEKLY MASSES

St Finbarr's, Byron Bay	St Kevin's, Bangalow
8.00pm Wednesday	5.30pm Wednesday
7.30am Thursday	9.30am Thursday
9.30am Friday	9.30am Sunday
6.00pm Saturday	



ST. JOHN'S PARISH BRUNSWICK VALLEY WEEKLY MASSES

LOLO Brunswick Heads	St John's Mullumbimby
5.30pm Wednesday	7.00pm Wednesday
	8.00am Thursday

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH - Father David Gilbey – Parish Priest

Parish Office 50 Tennyson St, (PO Box 1816) Byron Bay NSW 2481 **Churches** St Finbarr's 50 Tennyson St, Byron Bay
St Kevin's Deacon Street, Bangalow

Office Hours Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am – 2pm
Phone: (02) 6685 6260
Email: stfins@bigpond.com

Parish School: St Finbarr's Primary School
Principal: Tim Bleakley **Ph:** (02) 6685 6342
Email: sfpbyron@lism.catholic.edu.au

Parish Website: <https://byronbayparish.org.au>



4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT PRAYER

Priest: Last Sunday we lit the three Candles of **Hope, Love and Joy** in our Advent Wreath. Today we light the fourth candle the '**Peace candle**' as we place our hope in Jesus, the blessing of God for all nations.



Let us pray:

All: Lord Jesus, Light of the World, the prophets said you would bring peace and save your people. Give peace in our hearts and in our troubled world this Christmastide. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus our Saviour, the babe of Bethlehem. Amen

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC PARISH BYRON BAY / BANGALOW

Christmas Eve – 24 December

St Kevin's 5.30pm
Bangalow

St Finbarr's 8.00pm
Byron Bay



Christmas Day – 25 December

St Finbarr's 7.30am
Byron Bay

St Kevin's 9.30am
Bangalow

ST. JOHN'S PARISH, BRUNSWICK VALLEY

Christmas Eve – 24 December

Our Lady of Lourdes 5.30pm
Brunswick Heads

St John's 7.00pm
Mullumbimby

Christmas Day - 25 December

St John's 8am
Mullumbimby



Prayer for Priests

Lord, We pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around your priests and through her intercession strengthen them for their ministry.

We pray that Mary will guide your Priests to follow her own words, '*Do whatever He tells you*' (Jn 2:5)

May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary's most chaste spouse.

May the Blessed Mother's own pierced heart inspire them to embrace all who suffer at the foot of the cross.

May your priests be holy, filled with the fire of your love seeking nothing but your greater glory and the salvation of souls.

Amen.

DID YOU KNOW?



1st & 2nd Collections

The 1st Collection is your donation to the support of our Priests and the Clergy of the Diocese.

The 2nd Collection is your donation to the upkeep and running of the Parish. This includes expenses such as electricity, insurances, building maintenance and upkeep of Church equipment.

A sincere thank you to all that continue to support our parish through planned giving and weekly collections. Your generosity supports the ongoing mission and pastoral life of our parish community.



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The name “*Emmanuel*” also comes from the Hebrew and means “*God is with us.*” “*Emmanuel*” is not used as a proper name for Jesus in the New Testament, but it serves as a powerful theological statement about His nature. The dual significance of these names, “*Jesus*” and “*Emmanuel*,” provide a comprehensive understanding of who Jesus is and what He came to accomplish. “*Jesus*” highlights his role as Saviour, while “*Emmanuel*” emphasises the divine presence with humanity.

Joseph was faced with a decision, to either put his trust in the law given by God to Moses, and to leave Mary, or to put his trust in something new that God was to do. In making his decision, Joseph is a reminder to us that while observing the law is important, one must always be open to what God is asking of us in the concrete circumstances of our own lives.

This brings us to the question of how we listen to God and allow God to speak to us.

Listening to God will mean that we must continue to wrestle with the complexity of our own lives. We need to listen to the wisdom of tradition, and to the law of the Lord handed down to us, while remaining open to any new initiative that God might be attempting in us and through us.

As we prepare for Christmas, let us pray that we might be able to say yes, like Joseph, to the questions and challenges that we face in life’s journey knowing that God is with us and calling us to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Michael A Kelly CsSR @ Majellan Media 2025



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS TO DRIVE CULTURAL CHANGE.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) shone a spotlight on thousands of cases where organisations in Australia failed to protect children in their care from abuse. It highlighted that abuse that occurs within an organisational context is not just a problem of the past, it continues today. Many victims and survivors were motivated to tell their stories to the inquiry, to prevent harm to children now and into the future.

The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission provide a framework for making organisations safer for children. They have been accepted by the NSW government. Based on extensive research and consultation, the Standards provide tangible guidance for organisations to create cultures, adopt strategies and act to put the interests of children first, to keep them safe from harm.



Office of the
Children’s Guardian

Marist House of Light - Spiritual Accompaniment.

Are you interested in exploring your spiritual world?

One way of doing this is by considering regular spiritual direction.

If you would like to chat about what this could look like for you please contact us at maristhouseoflight@gmail.com or phone us on 0438 689 137.

We are located at 8 Keen Street, Lismore.



Safeguarding Office.

The Safeguarding Office is available:

to listen to your concerns respectfully, offer support, and provide guidance in embedding Safeguarding Standards.

Phone (02) 6621 9444

email: safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au



Interest Rate – 3.40%

For further information and our current interest rate, please visit our website www.dif.org.au or contact us on 1800 802 516