

PARISH OF ST. AGATHA

7TH/8TH DECEMBER 2019

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Mr John Kelly: Chairperson Parish Pastoral Council
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Parish Mass Times

10am Mass & Rosary
11am Sat. Mass & Rosary/Adoration
5.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass
11.30am Sunday Mass

Eucharistic Adoration

10.30am—1pm Weekdays
11.00am—12.00pm Saturdays

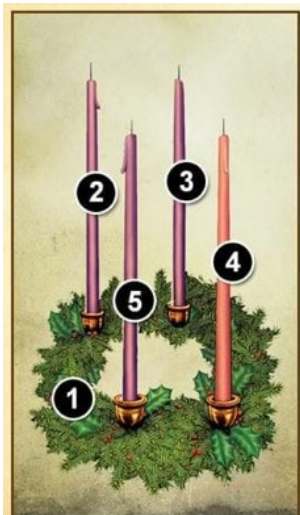
Confessions After Every Mass

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IS TOMORROW, MONDAY 9TH DEC

Because the 8th Dec falls on Sun, the Solemnity is transferred to **Monday 9 December 2019**. This year it will not be a Day of Obligation. Mass at 10am.

NEW CHAIRPERSON OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The annual rotating Chair-ship of the Parish Pastoral Council has occurred and Mr. John Kelly was elected as our new Chairperson for 2020. Welcome!



(1) Evergreen Wreath — The circle of the Wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the Eternity of God (the Alpha and Omega). The Evergreen is chosen as the base because God is the Foundation of all Goodness. Green is the colour that represents Growth, the Spiritual Growth of our Souls, to make room for Jesus to live in us.

Four Candles — represent the Four (4) Weeks of Advent. Traditionally, each week represents one thousand years, summing up the 4,000 years from Adam and Eve until the Birth of the Jesus Our Saviour. The Advent Candles symbolise **Hope, Trust, Love, Joy, Path, Peace and Jesus who COMES in all these Forms.**

The burning flame of the candles symbolises our Faith and the Light of Christ Coming (Advent) into the World.

REPENT, FOR HEAVEN IS CLOSE

Advent and Christmas are a time to renew our faith by practicing the spirit of repentance. This is having the desire to change our lives for the spiritual better and *produce the appropriate fruit*, such as, kindness, tolerance and mercy towards each other and not be hypocrites, like *broods of vipers*, (snakes) who talk and act unkindly behind peoples backs and at the same time, take God's Mercy for granted, thinking they are entitled to enter Heaven regardless how they lived their lives on earth. Jesus tells us (Mt 3:1-12) that the tree (us) *which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down (Judgement Day) and thrown on the fire*

HUMILITY

We are reminded to give better witness to the Christian/Christmas message which is love and mercy, and to repent for our sins in the Sacrament of Confession. Humility allows us to acknowledge our offences (sins) against God. Pride stops us. John the Baptist was dressed in *a garment made of camel hair*. This would have been very uncomfortable on the skin but it was done as an act of repentance for the sins of the world and his willingness to make a sacrifice of himself to God, for the conversion of sinners. John ate curd and honey which was the food of a poor man full of humility and reliance on God's Providence.

LIVING AS ONE IN SPIRIT

All the animals lying down and living in harmony with each other symbolises the State of Grace. Love, Tolerance and Peace in Heaven. Everybody and everything live as one in the Holy Spirit. Jesus is asking us now to make-up (repair) with our neighbour, because there is no place in Heaven for the angry, intolerant, sinful, arrogant and gossipy soul. Jesus describes these unpleasant souls as useless *chaff*, only fit to **burn in a fire that will never go out**. Jesus is making us aware that **Hell** still exists and people who produce the rotten fruit of hatred ultimately send themselves to this eternal death. Our earthly pilgrimage is a sacred time to repent, to change our sinful ways and throw off the garment of sin, by replacing it with the garment made of mercy and love and like John, wear *a leather belt*, around our waist symbolising the girdle of integrity, truth, purity and obedience to God's Will.

A VOICE CRIES WITH TEARS OF URGENCY

A Voice that cries in the wilderness (darkness), is **Jesus calling** us through the voice of St. John. Today, Jesus is asking us to **prepare** ourselves for His Second Coming which is called Judgement Day. None of us can avoid this. Sometimes we can be absorbed in our own worldly ways, forgetting that to get to Heaven we must become absorbed in Him, who is *Christ the Saviour*. We must become like Him in all ways and mannerisms. We must be cleansed of all sinful attachments and addictions before entering Heaven. Be 'baptised' in the Love and Mercy of Christ now, before it's too late. NEVER think that you are too far gone. His Divine Mercy awaits us all in the Sacrament of Confession which Heals the soul from the disease of sin, and prepares us to get into Heaven. God bless, Fr Brendan.