

PARISH OF ST. AGATHA

9TH DECEMBER 2019

Fr. Brendan Kealy Adm.: 087 9117575 Office : Tel: 8554078

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

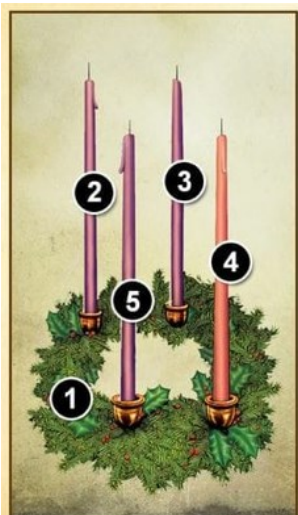
Confessions After Every Mass

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION THIS YEAR 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.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION – UNTOUCHED BY SIN

The Immaculate Conception, is not to be confused with the conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary at the Annunciation, or the Virgin Birth of Jesus, that we celebrate at Christmas. The Immaculate Conception refers to Mary's own moment when she was conceived inside the womb of her own mother, St. Anne.

MARY IS FREE FROM ORIGINAL SIN

Mary was conceived through a loving physical union between her Mum and Dad, St. Joachim and St. Anne and it was this conception of Mary, in the womb of St Anne, which we celebrate today. Immaculate Conception means that from the womb of her mother, Mary was preserved or untouched from the stain of Original Sin. When we were all conceived in our Mum's wombs, we inherited the mark of Original Sin from Adam and Eve. Only Baptism removes this mark of spiritual death from our little souls and replaces it with the mark of Eternal Life. God created a Singular Grace for Mary, hence she is *full of grace*, so her body was never touched by sin and a perfect dwelling place for God.

NEVER LOST TRUST IN GOD

The Immaculate Conception is celebrated in December because in nine months time the birth of Mary will be celebrated in September 8th. St. Anne and St. Joachim prayed for a child all their lives. As time passed, Anne became barren, but continued to pray to God to become a mother. Anne promised God if blessed with a child, she would pledge the baby to Him through the Religious School of the Holy Temple. Many years passed, Anne never lost her trust in God and one day an Angel appeared to her revealing that God would grant her request. The Angel instructed Anne to go home and enter into a physical union with her husband and she conceived. Anne became the mother of a little girl, who she named Mary (Vessel of God).

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

Anne fulfilled her promise to God and presented (entered) Mary to the Temple School of God, as soon as she reached the age of three. Mary was being prepared by God for her unique role to come. She was received by the High Priest Zechariah, who later became the father of John the Baptist. Mary studied Holy Scripture for twelve years. God had chosen her to be the New Eve. The Presentation of Mary in the Temple is celebrated on the 21st November. Sts. Joachim and Anne are the Patron Saints of Religious Education and their Feast is 26th July.

MIRACULOUS MEDAL

Mary was always destined to be the Mother of God and Christian disciples (us), as the New Eve, the *offspring* who would crush the head of the Serpent Satan (Genesis 3:15). Shortly after Mary exited the Temple school, she received a Visitation from the Archangel Gabriel (Annunciation), asking her would she become the Mother of God. Mary had already offered/pledged herself to God through the vow and martyrdom of Virginity, and needed clarification on how this could happen. The Angel Gabriel explained that the Holy Spirit would overshadow her and she would conceive a child to be named Jesus. Remember, this is not the Immaculate Conception but the Incarnation of Jesus. She said *Yes*, as the handmaid of the Lord. ***O Mary conceived Without Sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.*** God bless, Fr Brendan. Ave Maria!