



St Peter's Church, Surry Hills

235-241 Devonshire St (between Crown and Marlborough Streets),

Parish phone: (02) 9698 1948

Email: admin@stpeterssh.org.au

Website: www.stpeterssurryhills.org.au



Most Reverend Danny J Meagher: Bishop in Residence, Episcopal Vicar for the Northern Region

Fr. John A Macdonald: Administrator

Fr. Nicola Falzun OP: Priest in Residence for the *Missio ad gentes* of the Neocatechumenal Way

Sunday Masses: 9:00am and 10:30am (Sung Mass)

Daily Mass: **Mon:** 7:30am; **Tue - Sat:** 10:00am

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: **Tues – Thurs: 5 – 6:00pm**

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction: **Fri: 5 – 6pm**

Confessions: **Fri:** 5:00pm – 5:45pm; **Sat:** 9:30am - 10:00am

Holy Rosary: Daily before Mass

Feast Days – Third week of Advent (Year A/1)

Mon 12 Dec Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tue 13 Dec Saint Lucy

Wed 14 Dec Saint John of the Cross

Christmas Mass Times

Sat 24 Dec 8:00pm, Vigil Mass (followed by a parish supper in the 1880 Hall and the courtyard for which parishioners are requested to bring a plate to share, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, tea and coffee will be provided by the parish)

Sun 25 Dec 10:00am

We Pray For:

Our sick and injured: Ricardo Francisco, John O'Brien, Gabe Very, Catherine Murphy, Adi Soediarlo, Gerry Cassar, Makram Nammour, Camilla Pascoe, Ana Teresa Rodrigues, Mafalda Triolo, Aimi McEwen, Louise McCann, Marija Barclay, Dan Southee.

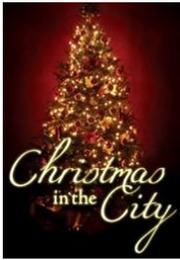
Our deceased: Joachim Kerowa, Lydia Garrone (death anniversary, (Patrizia O'Brien's mum)), William Henry Lewis (Florence's father), Mackenzie Lamb, Grace Galea (10/11, (Pauline's sister)), Brian LaBrooy (30th death anniversary, (Geneviève's father)), Henrietta Pham, Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood & Margaret D Hailwood.

Our house bound elderly: Bernadette Hailwood, Newton McMahan, Robert Pearce, Joyce Regoski, June Holt, Shirley Kennedy, Anna Maria, Patricia Wells.

If you would like to add names to the 'We pray for our deceased' list, please contact the office. Please note that any names added for an anniversary to the pray for the deceased will remain for 4 weeks.

Partaking in the Eucharist commits us to others, especially the poor, teaching us to pass from the flesh of Christ to the flesh of our brothers and sisters, in whom he waits to be recognised, served, honoured and loved by us.

*Pope Francis
Catechesis on the Mass 2018*



CHRISTMAS IN THE CITY (Sydney) - 11 Dec 2022
ENTRY: \$20 or by Donation - [BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL Here](#)
Where: St Peter's Parish Surry Hills
Time: 4:00pm – 5:15pm

Sydney City Catholics - Annual Lessons & Carols (followed by BBQ) - from 6:00pm Friday 23 Dec 2022

This event is hosted by the young adults of the City Deanery. It will begin with carols at 6:00pm in Saint Peter's Church followed by BBQ in the courtyard. For more information, please speak with Sarah Birch or Gerard Horsfall.

Pope at Angelus: With Jesus, we can always begin anew, By Vatican News staff writer, Dec 4, 2022

At the Angelus on the Second Sunday of Advent, Pope Francis underscores the way of humility as essential in our lives, in recognizing our weaknesses and failings, and asking for the Lord's forgiveness. And with Jesus, we can always begin anew in returning to God and welcoming His boundless love.

Speaking to pilgrims gathered for the Sunday Angelus, Pope Francis spoke about the role of John the Baptist as recounted in the Gospel in inviting everyone to conversion, saying "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!**" John the Baptist was an austere and radical believer, the Pope said, calling people to conversion with a "**cry of love to return to God.**"

Allergic to hypocrisy

The Pope said we might think that John the Baptist, given his severity, was a harsh person, even instilling a bit of fear, and we might wonder why he is our primary companion during the Season of Advent. Instead, rather than harshness, it was the Baptist's strong reaction when he encountered duplicity in persons. Recalling episodes when the Pharisees and Sadducees, known for their hypocrisy, approached him, he would challenge them, the Pope explained. They thought "they had it all together" and did not need repentance, he continued, and with this presumption and duplicity did not welcome this moment of grace and the opportunity to begin a new life.

"So, John tells them, "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance!" This is a cry of love, like the cry of a father who sees his son ruining himself and says to him, "Don't throw your life away!""

Hypocrisy presents the greatest danger, the Pope said, because it can ruin even the most sacred realities. And this is why John the Baptist, and Jesus later, would be harsh with hypocrites, those without humility or any sense of their own sinfulness and weaknesses, and seeing these problems only in others.

"Therefore, bravura is not important to welcome God, humility is. It requires getting off the pedestal and being immersed in the water of repentance."

The way of humility

The Pope said then we also need to think about our own behaviours and attitudes and consider if we also are at times a bit like the Pharisees recounted in the Gospel. Do we sometimes think

we are better than others, that we have everything under control, or do not have daily need of God and our brothers and sisters?

“Advent is a moment of grace to take off our masks and line up with those who are humble, to be liberated from the presumption of the belief of being self-sufficient, to go to confess our sins and to welcome God’s pardon, to ask forgiveness from those whom we have offended.”

When we ask God for forgiveness, we begin a new life, the Pope emphasized, and “there is only one way, the way of humility,” that can lead us to being forgiven and purified from our weaknesses, sense of superiority, or hypocrisy, to realizing that we are all sinners. “Jesus as the Saviour...comes for us just as we are, with our poverty, misery and failings, above all with our need to be raised up, forgiven and saved.”

“And let us remember one thing: with Jesus, there is always the possibility of beginning again. Always!”

Jesus awaits us, and never gets tired of us, the Pope emphasized. And Advent offers us a special time of grace to return to the Lord, he added, praying that Mary may “help us to meet Him and our brothers and sisters on the way of humility.”

Pray for peace

Following the Angelus prayer, the Pope recalled that this Thursday we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, and that we might entrust to her intercession our prayers for peace, especially for the suffering people of Ukraine.

Among the groups of pilgrims present in St. Peter’s Square, he also mentioned in particular those from Poland, expressing his gratitude for those supporting today’s Day of Prayer and the collection of funds for to assist the Church in Eastern Europe.

Our Lady of Guadalupe (Feast day 12 Dec) and the Tlaxcalans, Dr. AnnaMaria Cardinali, Ascension, Dec 12, 2019

On this feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, like many Hispanic Catholics, I am especially proud to celebrate my cultural heritage and its special place in our faith history! Here in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I am an eighteenth-generation native, batches of the *bizcochitos* and *empanaditas* we are perfecting for Christmas come out of the oven early, friends gather around, and little gifts are presented to children that remind them of the extraordinary happenings in 1531 that are still manifest today.

The Tilma of Guadalupe

We re-tell the story of how the Franciscan bishop of Mexico City, troubled over the mistreatment of native peoples by Spanish political powers, prayed for a sign—a rose of his native Castille in winter. The faithful visionary St. Juan Diego, an Aztec Catholic, delivered to him a message from Our Lady along with those roses, hidden in his roughly woven *tilma*, or cape. When he unfurled the cape, the image of Our Lady—the only icon painted by the hand of heaven, we might say—was impressed there as perfectly and impossibly as it remains now.

It is a fine, detailed image on cactus-fiber fabric, with no means of holding pigment, which should have biologically degraded centuries ago. It maintains a human body temperature of 98.6 degrees. It heals where it is cut and stood unharmed in the blast zone of a bomb planted during the persecutions preceding the Cristero war. It depicts Our Lady, pregnant in the days just before Christmas, bringing Christ’s presence with her to a new continent, with the stars on her mantle showing precisely their arrangement in the Mexican skies at the time of her apparition.

“Am I not here, who am your mother?” Our Lady spoke assuringly to Juan Diego, and through him, to all of us who would bear the Catholic Faith in the Americas. How powerfully she has been our mother indeed, and what loyal children she has preserved. This year, her feast day reminds me to reflect on the faith of the people she came to comfort and strengthen in their Catholic Faith.

A Visible Reminder

There is a narrative that exists today which, if we are not careful, can eclipse the inspiring heroism of such faithful Catholics—a narrative that says that Christianity in the New World was always and everywhere an imposition on the native population. Certainly, wherever fallen humanity clashes politically and culturally, great tragedies are bound to occur. The European conquests of the Americas were no exception.

Here in Santa Fe, however, we are faced with a visible reminder of a different facet of Catholic history. We see evidence that many souls were grateful to

be liberated from the demands of Mezoamerican religious practices. The most onerous reality of these was the astonishing degree and regularity of human sacrifice.

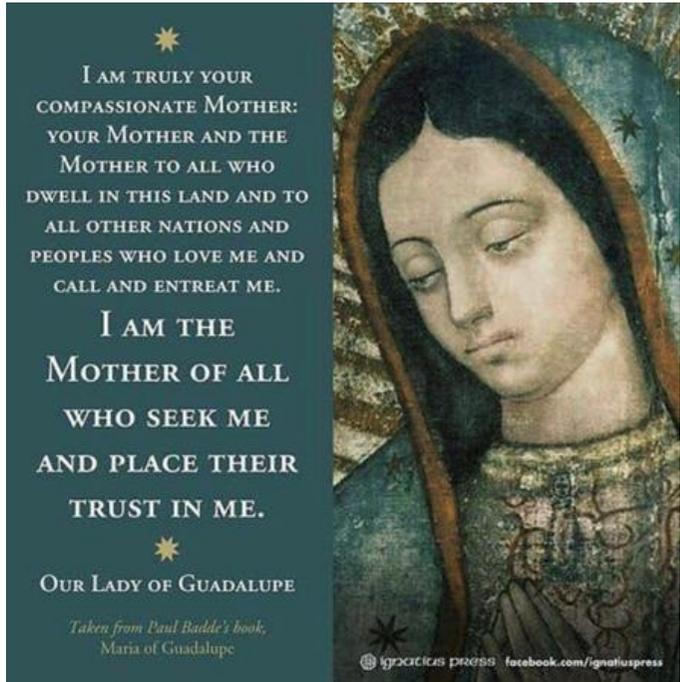
On the way to the downtown Plaza in Santa Fe, a visitor will pass the oldest church in the United States in which Mass has been continually celebrated. (Florida claims an older Church building, but it has not remained in continual use.) It’s called [San Miguel Mission](#), and it was built by a forgotten but influential group of people—the Tlaxcalans of central Mexico.

The Story of the Tlaxcalans

The Tlaxcalans were a sophisticated, if small, cultural group who spoke Nahuatl, the same language in which Our Lady of Guadalupe addressed Juan Diego. They lived on the edges of the Aztec Empire. They were extremely gifted warriors for a singular reason.

The Aztec religious aristocracy, being practical, wasn’t interested in depleting its own population for the purpose of human sacrifice, if this could be avoided. So, they sent their military might to hunt others. Their nearest neighbors were hounded.

When the Spanish arrived, the first local people who came to embrace a Catholic missionary presence were the Tlaxcalans. Sometimes I try to meditate on what the gospel would have



sounded like to Tlaxcalan ears. I wish I could experience the same joy and relief and profound, visceral understanding that must have pervaded the souls of those weary warriors.

Venturing North

For the first time, they heard that not only was the serpent-god—who demanded to drink the blood of their still-beating hearts—not the True God, but that the True God loved them so enormously that he gave his own Body and Blood to them. His [Sacred Heart](#) was laid open for them, rather than their hearts for a cruel and false god. In short order, the Tlaxcalans became the first native Catholics in Mexico.

It was the Tlaxcalans' Catholic faith that made them quick allies with their Spanish in military matters. The Tlaxcalans could teach the Spanish the fighting strategies of their Aztec enemies, and the Spanish could equip the Tlaxcalans with horses and steel. It can be argued that the fall of the Aztec Empire depended on this alliance.

The Spanish themselves attributed so much of this victory to the Tlaxcalans that they were made *hidalgos* under Spanish law—a title of nobility that most Spanish officers would never themselves attain. After the war with the Aztecs, as new compatriots and brothers in Christ, the Spanish and Tlaxcalans ventured further north together.

A New Beginning

By 1610, they stopped in the place they named Santa Fe, or Holy Faith. A previously abandoned pueblo settlement near a river and between mountains, the geography was reminiscent of the Santa Fe outside of Granada—the site of the final Christian victory against the Islamic rulers of Spain. Victorious warriors themselves, the Tlaxcalans believed that God had rewarded them with a home far from the dangers they once faced.

Before beginning to build even their own permanent houses, the Tlaxcalans started an ambitious project. They wished their first act to be the construction of a church dedicated to St. Michael. They took St. Michael as their special patron because they believed that with the help of the archangel who had cast down the serpent, they had defeated the serpent-like false god of the Aztecs in its reign of terror over their lives.

San Miguel Mission became ground zero of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680—a rebellion led by local native religious leaders against the foreign Catholic presence of the Spanish and Tlaxcalans in New Mexico. The first arrows of the conflict were fired onto the roof of the mission. While the adobe walls held firm, the wooden roof gave way to flames.

Trapped inside and barred from escape were those who had gathered to pray. These included innocent Tlaxcalan and Spanish families who held to their faith amidst violence and died among the first martyrs on the soil of this country. These were true sons and daughters of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It would be from the seeds of faith like theirs that Catholics of a future generation would march under the banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the [Cristero War](#).

An Evergreen Connection

It is striking how this story is repeated in many times and cultures. As we return our thoughts to our Advent preparations, we are reminded how even that warm and innocuous tradition of the Christmas tree takes up the theme. The life of St. Boniface includes a legendary account of how [he felled Thor's Oak](#) amidst a pagan crowd on the verge of a child sacrifice. Like the miraculous appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe, this was said to happen at this very time of year, as the winter solstice approached, and as Catholics prepared for the birth of the Son. With a mighty swing of his axe, St. Boniface proved to the crowd that the child sacrifice was unnecessary and that the pagan god was false. He saved the child and a people. (The delighted

crowd took up the tradition of felling trees and bringing them into their homes to celebrate that no false god lived in them to take vengeance!) Similarly, he was later martyred with many of the followers he converted, thus planting the seeds of great faith among a once-pagan people who would become staunch defenders of Catholic truth in future generations.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Pray for Us

It is interesting in this context to meditate on Our Lady of Guadalupe under the especially apt, even prophetic, titles given her by Pope St. John Paul II—Empress of the Americas and Protectress of the Unborn. The scale of human sacrifice that existed in the Americas prior to the arrival of the Spanish was unparalleled elsewhere in its time. It made the sacrifice that Boniface prevented, at least in numerical terms, seem almost mild.

Today, however, our need to invoke Our Lady's protection against the sacrifice of innocents exists on a scale more stunning than even the ancient Mezoamericans could have envisioned. In this season of Advent, when we await the birth of the Christ Child, may we ask her intercession especially for those most vulnerable little ones in the womb.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

Saint Lucy (Feast day 13 Dec)

Every little girl named Lucy must bite her tongue in disappointment when she first tries to find out what there is to know about her patron saint. The older books will have a lengthy paragraph detailing a small number of traditions. Newer books will have a lengthy paragraph showing that there is little basis in history for these traditions. The single fact survives that a disappointed suitor accused Lucy of being a Christian, and she was executed in Syracuse, Sicily, in the year 304. But it is also true that her name is mentioned in the First Eucharistic Prayer, geographical places are named after her, a popular song has her name as its title, and down through the centuries many thousands of little girls have been proud of the name *Lucy*.

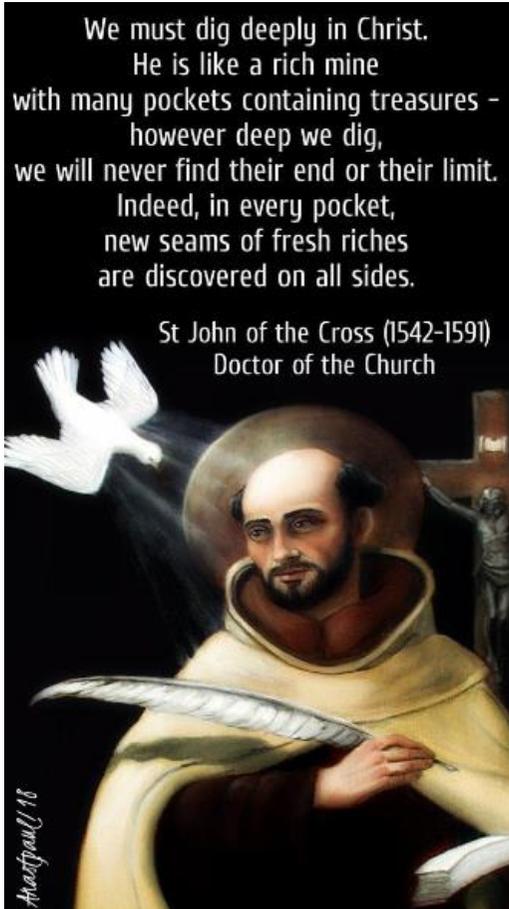
One can easily imagine what a young Christian woman had to contend with in pagan Sicily in the year 300. If you have trouble imagining, just glance at today's pleasure-at-all-costs world and the barriers it presents against leading a good Christian life.

Her friends must have wondered aloud about this hero of Lucy's, an obscure itinerant preacher in a far-off captive nation that had been destroyed more than 200 years before. Once a carpenter, he had been crucified by the Romans after his own people turned him over to their authority. Lucy believed with her whole soul that this man had risen from the dead. Heaven had put a stamp on all he said and did. To give witness to her faith she had made a vow of virginity. What a hubbub this caused among her pagan friends! The kindlier ones just thought her a little strange. To be pure before marriage was an ancient Roman ideal, rarely found, but not to be condemned. To exclude marriage altogether, however, was too much. She must have something sinister to hide, the tongues wagged.

Lucy knew of the heroism of earlier virgin martyrs. She remained faithful to their example and to the example of the carpenter, whom she knew to be the Son of God. She is the patroness of eyesight.

Reflection: If you are a little girl named Lucy, you need not bite your tongue in disappointment. Your patron is a genuine authentic heroine, first class, an abiding inspiration for you and for all Christians. The moral courage of the young Sicilian martyr shines forth as a guiding light, just as bright for today's youth as it was in A.D. 304

Saint John of the Cross (Feast day 14 Dec)



Sunday 10.30am Mass Readers' Roster

Sunday 11 December	John and Patricia O'Brien
Sunday 18 December	Alex Leech and Alexandra Vella
Sunday 25 December	Brendan and Theresa Byrne

(If there is a fifth Sunday of the month, readers will be arranged *ad hoc* for that day.)

NB If you are unable to read on your rostered Sunday, and you have been unable to find a replacement, please contact the parish office. Other parishioners are welcome to contact the office if they wish to read at either of the Sunday Masses

Archbishop's Flood Appeal



Archbishop's Flood Appeal
SUPPORTING FLOOD VICTIMS ACROSS NSW

donate online
www.ourfaithourworks.org

CHARITY PARTNER FOR CHRISTMAS AT THE CATHEDRAL, 8-25 DECEMBER

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

OUR FAITH, OUR WORKS

CHRISTMAS at the Cathedral

Archbishop Fisher has emphasised “**Christmas is very much a time when we open our hearts to those in need, inspired by the unfailing love Christ shows for each of us**”.

May this appeal offer comfort and hope to flood-affected communities as they start to rebuild their lives.

Donations can also be made online here: <https://www.ourfaithourworks.org/flood-appeal/>

Christmas at the Cathedral, presented by Paynter Dixon.
St Mary's Cathedral Forecourt, 8-25 December

Festivities begin at 7:00pm with Christmas market stalls, food, fun activities for the kids and live entertainment.