



# City Pastoral REGION

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

**Inner Newcastle Parish:** Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West; St Joseph's Church, The Junction; St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill; St Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow. **Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West. **Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

## SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER 2022

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

#### Our Clergy

Fr John Lovell  
Fr Paul Chackanikunnel

#### Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

25 Farquhar Street, The Junction  
PO Box 6, The Junction 2291  
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E: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au  
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#### Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)  
*Monday, Tuesday, Friday*

Jade Simonsen (*Business Manager Property*)  
*Monday*

Anne Warren (*Business Manager Finance*)  
*Tuesday and Thursday*

Dr Anne Millard (*Music, Liturgy, Sacraments, Bulletin*)

#### Other Contacts

**Lingard Hospital Team:** Contact the Parish Office  
**Mercy Pastoral Team:** Sr Patricia Whitten rsm  
0429 923254  
**St Joseph's Pastoral Team:** Contact the Parish Office

**Parish Bulletin:** Prayer requests and items for the Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.



#### THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Dreams play a very significant role in our faith history. In today's Gospel St Joseph is reassured by God in a dream to take Mary home as his wife. And later on, after Jesus' birth, he received another dream from God warning him to take the child and his mother and flee into Egypt. Various other great figures in the scriptures also received important revelations through dreams or had the gift to interpret dreams. These included: Jacob, Daniel and the Apostle Peter. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves, if amidst the noise and distractions of everyday life, could the Lord be trying to communicate some important wisdom and guidance to us in our dreams. *Fr John*

*Our Parishes incorporate suburbs located on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, pay respect to their Elders past and present, and commit ourselves to work together for reconciliation and justice.*

## THE PARISH DIARY...(for the week ahead)

Fourth Week of Advent, Year A

Monday—19th December

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tuesday—20th December

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Wednesday—21st December

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

5:30pm Second Rite of Reconciliation @ The Cathedral

Thursday—22nd December

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Friday—23rd December

9:50am Rosary for Ukraine @ The Junction

10:15am Mass @ St Joseph's

11:00am Exposition, Adoration & Reconciliation @ The Cathedral (until 12pm)

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Saturday—24th December

9:15am Mass @ The Cathedral, followed by the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help (followed by Reconciliation)\*\* Cancelled

5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West

7:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral

10:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral (Polish)

11:30pm Carol Singing @ The Cathedral

Sunday—25th December

The Nativity of the Lord, Year A

**Midnight Mass @ The Cathedral**

7:30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral \*

11:00am Mass @ The Junction (Italian)

11:30am Mass @ The Cathedral (Polish)

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West (Vietnamese)

\* Livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel—  
[www.youtube.com/c/SacredHeartCathedralHamilton](http://www.youtube.com/c/SacredHeartCathedralHamilton)

## SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION:



5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Wednesday, 21st December

@ Sacred Heart Cathedral

## SIMBANG GABI MASSES

Our Filipino community celebrate their annual Christmas Simbang Gabi novena of Masses in the Sacred Heart Cathedral each night at 7.30 pm from Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022.

Everyone is welcome. At each Mass a collection plate will be passed around to support the Cathedral.



Please be aware the Regional Office will be closed over Christmas and New Year **from 4pm on Friday, 23rd December till 9:30am on Thursday, 5th January.**

Phone messages and emails received during this time will be answered ASAP upon our return in 2023.

Please also note that prayer requests for the Sunday Parish Bulletin for Sunday 25th December AND January 1st need to be received at the Regional Office no later than close of business **on Wednesday, 21st December. Thanks for understanding!**

## GOSPEL FOCUS

### What's in a name?

*It appears from the passage that Mary's child is to be called both Jesus and Emmanuel. Emmanuel is not intended as a different name for Jesus but rather one of the many titles that will be applied to him. The title means God-is-with-us. That one word, Emmanuel, sums up the essence of Jewish and Christian belief. The Jewish people's faith in God was built on the basis that God travelled with them and through their lives. Christians believe that God took on an even closer sense of being with us through God's incarnation in the life of Jesus.*



## THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN SACRED HEART

Sunday 18th December @ 2pm: **The Newcastle Tudor Singers** present "The Joy of Christmas" a wonderful afternoon of carols old and new, directed by Anne Millard

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES 2022

#### Christmas Eve – 24 December

5.30pm @ Sacred Heart Cathedral  
5.30pm @ The Junction  
6.00pm @ Mayfield West  
7.30pm @ Sacred Heart Cathedral  
10:00pm @ Sacred Heart Cathedral  
(Polish Mass)



#### Christmas Day – 25 December

Midnight @ Sacred Heart Cathedral  
7.30am @ St Mary's  
8:00am @ Tighes Hill  
9:00am @ Stockton  
9.30am @ Sacred Heart Cathedral  
11:00am @ The Junction (Italian Mass)  
11.30am @ Cathedral (Polish Mass)

### ROSARY FOR UKRAINE

Pray the Rosary from 9.50am on Fridays at St Joseph's Church, The Junction.



### VIEW, CHEW, AND CHAT

Recommences in February. Stay tuned for more information.

### NOVENA CANCELLED FOR TWO WEEKS

There will be no Novena this coming Saturday (Christmas Eve) and next Saturday (New Year's Eve)

### PRAYING THE GOSPELS

Will recommence in February



### BOOK CLUB

**Sunday, 5 February @ 6:15pm:** Bookclub meets to discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email the office

## 2023 LENTEN REFLECTION: FINDING LIGHT WITHIN THE DARKNESS

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, Finding Light within the Darkness. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community.

This resource will be available at the end of January. Ash Wednesday is Feb 22.

## ENROLMENTS FOR 2023 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

A child's catholic faith journey began with the Sacrament of Baptism and continues by the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation, Confirmation and First Eucharist.

The preparations for these sacraments in the Inner Newcastle Parish run between February and June of every year and is designed for children going into Year, 4, 5 or 6 in 2022. Preparations are completed as a family with online activities and volunteer work within the community.

Enrolments are now open for the 2023 program. If you are interested in being apart of the program this year please visit the parish website and complete the online enrolment form.

<https://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/sacramental-enrolment-form/>

For more information please contact the office on 49791101 or newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au



### VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Vinnies Christmas Appeal envelopes are available this weekend in all churches. Thank you in anticipation of your generosity.



## POPE FRANCIS' HOMILY

*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

The liturgy for today, the Fourth and last Sunday of Advent, is characterized by the theme of closeness, God's closeness to humanity. The Gospel passage (cf. Mt 1:18-24) shows us two people, the two people who, more than anyone else, were involved in this mystery of love: the Virgin Mary and her husband, Joseph. A mystery of love, the mystery of God's closeness to humanity.

Mary is presented in the light of the prophet who says: *"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son"* (v. 23). Matthew the Evangelist recognizes that this happened in Mary, who conceived Jesus through the Holy Spirit (cf. v. 18). The Son of God "comes" into her womb in order to become man, and she welcomes him. Thus, in a unique way, God drew near to mankind, taking on flesh through a woman: God drew near to us and took on flesh through a woman. To us too, in a different way, God draws near with his grace in order to enter our life and offer us the gift of his Son. What do we do? Do we welcome him, let him draw near, or do we reject him, push him away? As Mary, freely offering herself to the Lord of history, allowed him to change the destiny of mankind, so too can we, by welcoming Jesus and seeking to follow him each day, cooperate in his salvific plan for us and for the world. Mary thus appears to us as a model to look to and upon whose support we can count in our search for God, in our closeness to God, in thus allowing God to draw close to us and in our commitment to build the culture of love.

The other protagonist of today's Gospel is Saint Joseph. The Evangelist highlights that alone, Joseph cannot explain to himself the event which he sees taking place before his eyes, namely, Mary's pregnancy. Just then, in that moment of doubt, even anguish, God approaches him — him too — through his messenger and [Joseph] is enlightened about the nature of this maternity: *"the child conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"* (cf. v. 20). Thus, in facing this extraordinary event, which surely gave rise to many questions in his heart, he trusts totally in God who has drawn near to him, and after his invitation, does not repudiate his betrothed, but takes her to him and takes Mary to wife. In accepting Mary, Joseph knowingly and lovingly receives Him who has been conceived in her through the wondrous work of God, for whom nothing is impossible. Joseph, a just and humble man (cf. v. 19), teaches us to always trust in God, who draws near to us: when God approaches us, we must entrust our-

selves to him. Joseph teaches us to allow ourselves to be guided by Him with willing obedience.

These two figures, Mary and Joseph, who were the first to welcome Jesus through faith, introduce us to the mystery of Christmas. Mary helps us to assume an attitude of openness in order to welcome the Son of God into our concrete life, in our flesh. Joseph spurs us to always seek God's will and to follow it with full trust. Both allow God to draw near to them.

*"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel, which means, God-with-us"* (Mt 1:23). Thus the angel says: *"the child shall be called Emmanuel, which means God-with-us"*, in other words, God near to us. And to God who draws near, do I open the door — to the Lord — when I sense an interior inspiration, when I hear him ask me to do something more for others, when he calls me to pray?

God-with-us, God who draws near. This message of hope, which is fulfilled at Christmas, leads to fulfilment of the expectation of God in each one of us too, in all the Church, and in the many little ones whom the world scorns, but whom God also loves and to whom God draws near.

SOURCE: [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2016/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20161218.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2016/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20161218.html).

# LIVING GOSPEL

## Advent

*Emmanuel; God-is-with-us – that's what we celebrate through Christmas and that's what we've been preparing for during Advent. We celebrate God-with-us in a particular time and place through our celebration of the birth of Jesus. But we remember it every year because we also use the Christmas celebration to remind ourselves that God continues to be with us. That is what is so remarkable about the Christmas season: that God-is-with-us now, not just in a stable in Palestine so many years ago, but now! Advent is the time to remind ourselves of this incredible truth and prepare ourselves to acknowledge it once again.*

# NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

by Mary Coloe PBVM

## Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

*'Joseph, do not be afraid.'*

In this final Sunday before Christmas, the readings take us back into Jesus' origins in Israel. Paul reminds the Romans of Israel's long time of living with hope in God's promises. Over the past three weeks we have heard in the First Readings from the prophet Isaiah's catalogue of these promises:

'In the days to come the mountain of the Temple of the Lord shall tower above the other mountains... All the nations (or gentiles) will stream to it.' (1st Sunday of Advent)

'A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, and a branch thrusts from his roots; on him the spirit of the Lord rests.' (2nd Sunday)

'The wilderness and dry-lands exult; let the wasteland rejoice and bloom. Look your God is coming.' (3rd Sunday)

'The Lord will give you a sign. The young woman is with child and will soon give birth to a son.' (Today – 4th Sunday).

Paul proclaims to the community in Rome that these promises have now been fulfilled – that Jesus is the one from the stock of Jesse, the one on whom the Spirit rests, and that Paul is the one sent to proclaim this good news to all the nations. Paul speaks of Jesus as a son of David, and son of God. For many years, we have so emphasised Jesus as the son of God that we overlooked that he was also the son and child of Judaism. For both Paul and Matthew Judaism is a great gift of God to humanity and through the Jewish people God's blessing is to reach out to all the nations. God's covenant with Judaism has never been revoked, even though we consider Jesus as the fullness of God's revelation. In a few days' time we will celebrate the birth of a Jewish child, born of Jewish parents, and through this child God comes to us.

The birth of Jesus in Luke's Gospel focuses on Mary; in Matthew's Gospel the focus is on Joseph. It is through Joseph that Jesus comes into the House of David. It is Joseph who receives an annunciation that the child has been conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit. In Israel's past history there was a Joseph, famous for his coat of many colours, who had strange dreams, who looked after his family, and even went down into Egypt, which is where Joseph will later take Mary and Jesus. In the story of that Joseph, Matthew has found a model for how to present Mary's

husband. This is typical of Jewish methods of teaching. Here again we have Matthew shaping the birth narrative to bring out the connection between the story of Jesus and the story of Israel. Remember, Matthew is writing for a community who have come to faith in Jesus through Judaism, so they would know the biblical stories of Joseph and make the connection. The quotation from Isaiah makes this even more explicit – Jesus is Emmanuel, God-with-us, and he is the one to fulfil Israel's longings.

Jesus begins his life as do many children, in the midst of anxiety, hope and much that is unknown. The future lies hidden from Joseph, as the future of any child lies hidden from its parents. Joseph trusts this future into God's hands. Perhaps this is the image we adults need at Christmas. When we look at the crib scenes of the child resting peacefully in a manger, or the arms of Mary, dare we believe that even as adults we can rest as peacefully in the arms of God? Adult and child are one in this divine birth of Emmanuel, God-with-us.

© Mary Coloe

**Dr Mary Coloe PBVM** is a Presentation sister and teaches in the field of New Testament studies at the Yarra Theological Union. She was Associate Professor in New Testament at the Australian Catholic University and has taught at Boston College, the Jesuit School of Theology Berkeley, and at the Ecce Homo Biblical Institute Jerusalem.

Her specialist research areas include the Gospel of John and early Jewish Christian relationships. Dr Coloe has written numerous books, essays and journal articles on these and other topics and is a member of Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas and other biblical associations. Her home page is <http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/staffhome/macoloe/>



## TAIZE SERVICE

Venue: Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church  
Tighes Hill

Date: Sunday January 1, 2023

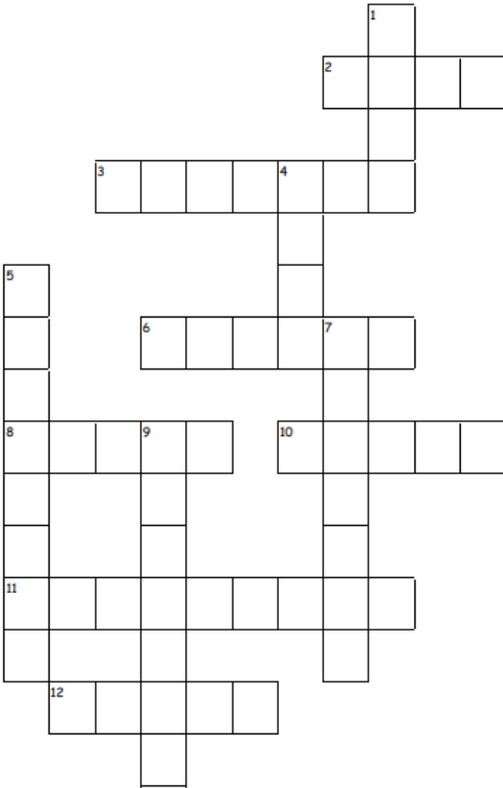
Time: 5.00pm – 6pm

*followed by a shared supper.*

**CROSSWORD**

**His name will be Emmanuel: God is with us**

Mt 1:18-24



**Across**

- 2: Jesus' mother
- 3: with little or no noise
- 6: he was engaged to Mary
- 8: a special messenger of God
- 10: not old
- 11: to make someone feel uncomfortable or self-conscious
- 12: the angel appeared to Joseph in a ...

**Down**

- 1: a newborn
- 4: the opposite of false
- 5: this name means 'God is with us'
- 7: to give someone your word
- 9: betrothed, to be married

**JUNIOR WORDSEARCH**

**Jesus Christ is the Son of God**

Rom 1:2-4  
Ps 24:1-2, 3-4abc R.v. (7c and 10b)  
Mt 1:18-24



Try to find these words:

- baby
- death
- dream
- Emmanuel
- engaged
- family
- holy
- human
- Joseph
- Mary
- news
- promised

## REFLECTION

by Richard Leonard

Today's Gospel announces that 'God is with us'. In this final week of Advent the following story reminds us that God comes to us in unpredictable ways often with unsettling messages.

'I hurried into the shop to grab some last minute Christmas gifts. I looked at all the people and grumbled to myself. I would be in here forever. I hurried to the toy department and wondered if the grandkids would even play with my gifts.

'My eye caught a little boy holding a doll. He kept touching her hair and he held her so gently. I watched him turn and ask, "Aunty Jane, are you sure I don't have enough money?" Gently, the woman replied, "Emily doesn't need a doll David." The woman went to another aisle. The boy continued to hold the doll. David looked so sad that I couldn't resist asking who the doll was for. "My sister wanted it so badly for Christmas." I told him that maybe Santa was going to bring it. He said "No, Santa can't go where my sister is...I have to give the doll to Mummy to take to her." I asked him where his sister was. He looked at me with the tear-filled eyes, "She has gone to be with Jesus. Daddy says that Mummy is going to have to go to be with both of them soon too." My heart nearly stopped beating.

'David went on, "I told Daddy to make sure Mummy goes nowhere until I got back from the store. I want Mum to take this doll to Emily."

'While he wasn't looking I reached into my purse and pulled out some cash. "David how about we count that money again?" He grew excited, "I asked Jesus to give me enough money. I just know I have enough." I slipped my money in with his and we began to count it. He looked up from the count and exclaimed, "Jesus has given me enough money for Emily's doll."

'In a few minutes his aunty came back and I wheeled my cart away. I could not keep from thinking about the little boy as I finished my shopping in a totally different spirit than when I had started.

'On the way home I remembered a story in the newspaper several days earlier about a drunk driver hitting a car and killing a little girl and that the mother was left on life support. Two days before Christmas I read in the paper where the family had turned the machine off. The day before Christmas there was a funeral notice saying that a Requiem Mass would be celebrated on St Stephen's Day for Julia Norris and her daughter Emily. Michael was their husband and father, and their son and brother was David.

'As I gathered with my family in front of an overblown meal which none of us could finish, holding expensive gifts we didn't need and drinking more alcohol than was necessary, I thought "we've lost the plot with Christmas". God-with-us arrives as a simple child in need of love; and in the honour of that day we spend money, eat too much and get drunk.

'I left the table went to my desk and wrote a card for each member of my family. I told them what I'd never been able to say: "I want you to know I love you."

'When they read those cards, my family thought I was losing it, but through David and that doll, God visited me in the last week of Advent and Christmas will never be the same again.'

© Richard Leonard SJ

**Richard Leonard SJ** is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

## SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

*Today's first reading is from the prophet Isaiah and contains the prophecy that is quoted in the gospel passage. The book of Isaiah was written at a time when the people of Israel were under threat and had once again fallen away from their covenant with God. Isaiah's prophecy is one of the 'Messiah' prophecies but despite the future-focus is a promise to the people of the time that God-is-with-us. The promise is that God-is-with-us now, despite the conditions we find ourselves in, and God-will-be-with-us in the future when God's Messiah is born of a young woman.*

## TODAY'S LITURGY

### Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Is 45:8

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,  
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

### First Reading: Is 7:10-14

*The virgin will conceive.*

### Responsorial Psalm: Ps 23:1-6. R. see vv 7. 10

(R.) Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.  
It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)

2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?  
Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure heart,  
who desires not worthless things. (R.)

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

### Second Reading: Rom 1:1-7

*Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.*

### Gospel Acclamation: Mt 1:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

### Gospel: Mt 1:18-24

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

### Communion Antiphon: Is 7:14

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;  
and his name will be called Emmanuel.

## BEQUESTS

To help our Catholic Pastoral Region of Parishes continue its important mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus, you might consider including us in your Will. You would just need to specify which parish or parishes you would like to help with your bequest. Thank you!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Francis (Frank) Cleary, Pat Trueman

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Sr Clare Tobin rsj, Ron Hazelman, Mary Mills, Br. James Maher msc, Matthew Forman, Diane Stavros, Yunduk Kim, Saeon Yoo, Kelvin O'Neill, Pat Croke, James (Jim) Bridges, George and Mary Bridges, Maxwell, George, and Patrick Bridges, Marion Bridges, Jack Bleakley

**SICK:** Margaret Cox, Helen Tumbers, Phil Bawden, Madge Humphries, Ronnie Jennings, Eileen Howard, Eva Grant, Colin Bryant, Maureen Sunman, Maree Halbert, Carlo Rossi, Kath Murray, Veronica McCann, Peter Skinner, Tiani Bishop, Tom Parker, Sam and Margaret Broad, Ronald Watt

*Names may be placed here by contacting the Parish Office. Please refer to the Policy Document on the Parish website—visit [www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads](http://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads).*

## FOOD BASKETS FOR THE NEEDY

Items of dry goods or tin food e.g. (Vegemite, cornflakes or breakfast foods, sugar, packet or tin soup, sardines, tea, coffee, tin fruit etc but NOT PEANUT BUTTER), can be placed in the basket at the back of St Joseph's Church. St Vincent de Paul members will pick up for distribution to the needy who are very grateful to receive the items. When donating please check expiry dates. Thank you Questions to Sr Carol Woodland rsj (mob) 0423 700 523/4967 2998 Collection baskets also at Tighes Hill.

CatholicCare Social Services Community Pantry food donation bins have been placed in the Sacred Heart Cathedral and St Mary's Star of the Sea Church. These are blue flip-top bins with our flyer on the lid, suggesting the types of foods that could be donated.

We are appealing to the parish community to support people in need in our wider community by donating non-perishable food items. These donated items are put into our 'Community Pantry', from which we are able to provide emergency food hampers. We are desperately low of all foods in our pantry at the moment as we have seen an unprecedented need lately for this service. Ideal foods to donate are: UHT Milk, Breakfast cereals, Rice, Pasta, Pasta sauce, Sweet and savoury biscuits, Instant coffee, Tea bags, Canned soups. Also appreciated coming into Christmas season: UHT custard, Tinned fruit, Jelly

## THE CHUCKLE

People act like the North Pole and the South Pole are exactly the same, but really, there's a whole world of difference between them.

