



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 1 JANUARY 2023

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD, YEAR A

Our Clergy

Fr John Lovell

Fr Paul Chackanikunnel

Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

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Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)

Monday, Tuesday, Friday

Anne Warren (*Business Manager Finance*)

Tuesday and Thursday

Jade Simonsen (*Business Manager Property*)

Monday

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.



If a poor Hebrew peasant girl 2000 years ago could become the Queen of all Creation, shine brighter than the highest angels and become the Mother of God, what should this mean to us? It means that all things are possible to those who believe and cooperate with the Lord in His great plan of Redemption. Mary gave herself completely to God. How much of our selves are we willing to give to God?

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)

Monday—2nd January

Memorial of Sts Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tuesday—3rd January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Wednesday—4th January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

Thursday—5th January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Friday—6th January

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—7th January

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

5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West

7:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral (*Polish*)

Sunday—8th January

The Epiphany of the Lord, Year A

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 and on the Diocese website*

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Please be aware the Parish Office will be closed until **Thursday 5th January.**

Phone calls during this time will be answered ASAP upon our return in 2023. The best way to contact us is via email.

ROSARY FOR UKRAINE

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



PRAYER FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW BISHOP

Shepherding God

you reveal your way of unfailing love

in the image of the Good Shepherd

who seeks the lost,

shows compassion

knows and is known by the sheep

and lays down his life for them.

We your people of Maitland-Newcastle

are without a bishop to shepherd us.

We ask that your Holy Spirit

who moves through this great south land,

inspire the choice of our new Bishop,

empower his 'yes'

and open our hearts in hospitality and love.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help pray for us

Mary MacKillop of the Cross pray for us

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



TAIZE SERVICE

Sunday January 1: Immaculate Heart

of Mary Catholic Church Tighes Hill

5.00pm – 6pm followed by a shared

supper.



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!

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Is 60:1-6

Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

Mt 2:1-12

REFLECTION

by Fr Michael Tate

The Calendar-Shattering Mary

It is fitting that on this day when we note the start of a New Year, we celebrate an entirely new calendar-shattering, calendar-shaping, event in human history. We celebrate the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

Mary of Galilee was a teenager in a small village of perhaps a few hundred families. Yet today that teenager is especially venerated by the Church.

The Greek word for this day describes Mary as 'Theotokos' – God-Bearer.

It is a way for the Church to say that the One whom Mary bore in her womb was no mere prophet or guru or wonder-worker, but EMMANU-EL – God with us, God embodied, God enfleshed. Hence: Theotokos, Godbearer.

But, in the Western Church, the title 'Mother of God' was used to convey the same truth, and I prefer it. It is less clinical, more relational, less instrumental, more personal – in short, it is maternal. As soon as one proclaims Mary to be 'Mother of God', one immediately signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship which goes well beyond carrying in the womb to a safe birth.

We can quite easily imagine that relationship which was not altogether placid and straightforward. One thinks of her anguish and fright at his disappearance at the age of twelve. Humanly speaking, he was undergoing his growing awareness of his true identity. She was experiencing the pangs of a certain distancing by this adolescent son.

Yes, she was pre-eminently a Mother, with all that that entails, including the horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but Mother of God.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? How did Divine Revelation picture the event which set all calendars going? We need to go to the very beginning, the Book of Genesis which commences the Hebrew scriptures.

Billions of years ago, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void. Light, and then the whole of the beautiful order of the cosmos came into existence at the word of the Creator.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word,' the Light of the World was united to our human nature. The human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began.

On this calendar-changing day of 1 January, it is indeed fitting that we celebrate the maternity of Mary, the calendar-shattering event which is the fulcrum of history and from which we count the passing of the years.

At the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, may we share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

Rev Prof Michael Tate graduated in Law from the University of Tasmania in 1968, and in Theology from Oxford University in 1971. He lectured at the University of Tasmania from 1972-78, being Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1977-78. He was a Senator for Tasmania from 1978-93, being Federal Minister for Justice from 1987-93. He served as Ambassador to The Hague and the Holy See from 1993-96. He then returned to Australia and was ordained in May 2000 and has been a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Hobart since then. He is an Honorary Professor of Law at the University of Tasmania where he lectures in International Humanitarian Law.

THE CHUCKLE

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.



from the perspective of the Shepherds

What must the shepherds have made of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus? Shepherds occupied a very lowly status in Jewish society – they were generally regarded as thieves and cutthroats. Suddenly, these very lowly characters were thrust into great events: visions of angels; prophecies; the birth of the Messiah; and powerful experiences of the greatness of God. The gospel says they went back to their sheep glorifying and praising God. They must have been changed by this experience. Perhaps they never really made sense of what happened to them but more likely it was the beginning of a whole new life experience.

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

St Peter's Basilica Saturday, 1^o January 2022

The shepherds found “Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger” (Lk 2:16). For the shepherds, the manger was a joyful sign: it was the confirmation of the message they had heard from the angel (cf. v. 12), the place where they found the Saviour. It is also the proof of God's closeness to them, for he was born in a manger, an object they know well, as a sign of his closeness and familiarity. The manger is also a joyful sign for us. Jesus touches our hearts by being born in littleness and poverty; he fills us with love, not fear. The manger foretells the One who makes himself food for us. His poverty is good news for everyone, especially the marginalized, the rejected and those who do not count in the eyes of the world. For that is how God comes: not on a fast track, and lacking even a cradle! That is what is beautiful about seeing him there, laid in a manger.

Yet such was not the case with Mary, the Holy Mother of God. She had to endure “the scandal of the manger”. She too, long before the shepherds, had received the message of an angel, who spoke to her solemnly about the throne of David: “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David” (Lk 1:31-32). And now, Mary has to lay him in a trough for animals. How can she hold together the throne of a king and the lowly manger? How can she reconcile the glory of the Most High and the bitter poverty of a stable? Let us think of the distress of the Mother of God. What can be more painful for a mother than to see her child suffering poverty? It is troubling indeed. We would not blame Mary, were she to complain of those unexpected troubles. Yet she does not lose heart. She does not complain, but keeps silent. Rather than complain, she chooses a different part: *For her part*, the Gospel tells us, Mary “kept all these things, pondering them in her heart” (cf. Lk 2:19).

That is not what the shepherds and the people do. The shepherds tell everyone about what they had seen: the angel that appeared in the heart of the night, and his words concerning the Child. And the people, upon hearing these things, are amazed (cf. v. 18). Words and amazement. Mary, instead, is pensive; she keeps all these things, pondering them in her heart. We ourselves can have the same two different responses.

The story told by the shepherds, and their own amazement, remind us of the beginnings of faith, when everything seems easy and straightforward. We rejoice in the newness of God who enters into our lives and fills us with wonder. Mary's pensiveness, on the other hand, is the expression of a mature, adult faith, not a faith of beginners. Not a newborn faith, it is rather a faith that now *gives birth*. For spiritual fruitfulness is born of trials and testing. From the quiet of Nazareth and from the triumphant promises received by the Angel – the beginnings – Mary now finds herself in the dark stable of Bethlehem. Yet that is where she gives God to the world. Others, before the scandal of the manger, might feel deeply troubled. She does not: she keeps those things, pondering them in her heart.

Let us learn from the Mother of God how to have that same attitude: to *keep* and to *ponder*. Because we may well have to endure certain “scandals of the manger”. We hope that everything will be all right and then, like a bolt from the blue, an unexpected problem arises. Our expectations clash painfully with reality. That can also happen in the life of faith, when the joy of the Gospel is put to the test in troubling situations. Today the Mother of God teaches us to draw profit from this clash. She shows us that it is necessary: it is the narrow path to achieve the goal, the cross, without which there can be no resurrection. Like the pangs of childbirth, it begets a more mature faith.

I ask, brothers and sisters, how do we make this passage, how do we surmount this clash between the ideal and the real? By doing exactly what Mary did: by keeping and by pondering. First, Mary “keeps”, that is she holds on to what happens; she does not forget or reject it. She keeps in her heart everything that she saw and heard. The beautiful things, like those spoken to her by the angel and the shepherds, but also the troubling things: the danger of being found pregnant before marriage and, now, the lowly stable where she has had to give birth. That is what Mary does. She does not pick and choose; she *keeps*. She accepts life as it comes, without trying to camouflage or embellish it; she keeps those things in her heart.

Then, Mary's second attitude is about how she *keeps*: she keeps and she *ponders*. The Gospel speaks of Mary “bringing together”, comparing, her different experiences and finding the hidden threads that connect them. In her heart, in her prayer, she does exactly that: she binds together the beautiful things and the unpleasant things. She does not keep them apart, but brings them together. It is for this reason that Mary is said to be the Mother of Catholicity. In this regard, we can dare to say that it is because of this

that Mary is said to be Catholic, for she unites, she does not divide. And in this way she discerns their greater meaning, from God's perspective. In her mother's heart, Mary comes to realize that the glory of the Most High appears in humility; she welcomes the plan of salvation whereby God must lie in a manger. She sees the divine Child frail and shivering, and she accepts the wondrous divine interplay between grandeur and littleness. Mary *keeps* and *ponders*.

This inclusive way of seeing things, which transcends tensions by "keeping" and "pondering", is the way of mothers, who, in moments of tension, do not divide, they *keep*, and in this way enable life to grow. It is the way so many mothers embrace the problems of their children. Their maternal "gaze" does not yield to stress; it is not paralyzed before those problems, but sees them in a wider perspective. And this is Mary's attitude: she keeps and ponders right up to Calvary. We can think of the faces of all those mothers who care for a child who is ill or experiencing difficulties. What great love we see in their eyes! Even amid their tears, they are able to inspire hope. Theirs is a gaze that is conscious and realistic, but at the same time offering, beyond the pain and the problems, a bigger picture, one of care and love that gives birth to new hope. That is what mothers do: they know how to overcome obstacles and disagreements, and to instill peace. In this way, they transform problems into opportunities for rebirth and growth. They can do this because they know how to "keep", to hold together the various threads of life. We need such people, capable of weaving the threads of communion in place of the barbed wire of conflict and division. Mothers know how to do this.

The New Year begins under the sign of the Holy Mother of God, under the sign of the Mother. A mother's gaze is the path to rebirth and growth. We need mothers, women who look at the world not to exploit it, but so that it can have life. Women who, seeing with the heart, can combine dreams and aspirations with concrete reality, without drifting into abstraction and sterile pragmatism. And the Church is a Mother, this is what makes the Church feminine. For this reason, we cannot find a place for women in the Church without allowing the heart of the Woman and Mother to shine. This is the place of women in the Church, the great place, from which other places, more concrete and less important, are derived. But the Church is Mother, the Church is woman. And since mothers bestow life, and women "keep" the world, let us all make greater efforts to promote mothers and to protect women. How much violence is directed against

women! Enough! To hurt a woman is to insult God, who from a woman took on our humanity. He did not do it through an angel; nor did he come directly; he did it through a woman. Like a woman, the Mother Church, takes the humanity of her sons and daughters.

At the beginning of the New Year, then, let us place ourselves under the protection of this woman, the Mother of God, who is also our mother. May she help us to keep and ponder all things, unafraid of trials and with the joyful certainty that the Lord is faithful and can transform every cross into a resurrection. Today too, let us call upon her as did the People of God at Ephesus. Let us stand and, facing Our Lady as did the people of God in Ephesus, let us together repeat three times her title of Mother of God: "Holy Mother of God, Holy Mother of God, Holy Mother of God"! Amen.

BECOME AN SRE VOLUNTEER

Did you know that some 50% of Catholic children are in state schools? Have you ever thought of spreading the good news of the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ with children? Have you ever thought about becoming a Special Religious Educator?

This could be an opportunity for you to meet new people, discover new friendships and build quality relationships whilst mastering skills and confidence in Catechetics.

You can make a difference in the schools within your parish! For people of faith, knowing you are participating in Christ's call to share the Good News to all is a great source of joy and meaning.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please contact the Pastoral Ministries team on 4979 1200.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

WHAT A WOMAN!

Luke's image of Mary is a very strong one. We must remember that Mary was no more than a girl – probably 14 or 15 years old. This was the usual age for young women to marry at that time. However, there wasn't much that was normal about the previous nine months of her life. In the midst of all the chaos involved in giving birth away from home and in less than ideal circumstances, she remains completely calm and 'treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart'. What an extraordinary young woman!

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH

God kept His promise to Mary

Lk 2:16-21

X D U K S H E P H E R D S U D
 I O R X I E Q Y R T V S G A S
 S B Z B O L G F A N G E L F H
 M H C O M M A N D S X L B M E
 Y R P J E S U S S W S W R H E
 W H F L N W D C A K W G K V P
 V L U O V S P P J J H R D Q V
 Q B A B Y L R N A M E D M Q D
 V F D W F A A M A R Y N C D M
 Q A B N A E I P L C C C I Y G
 A S O U X H S P R O M I S E D
 F A C A J P I P A R E N T S N
 C I M N T I N P M O S E S U B
 I S Z K F H G G K Z M B O S R
 V K H B W I O I J U F E L I X

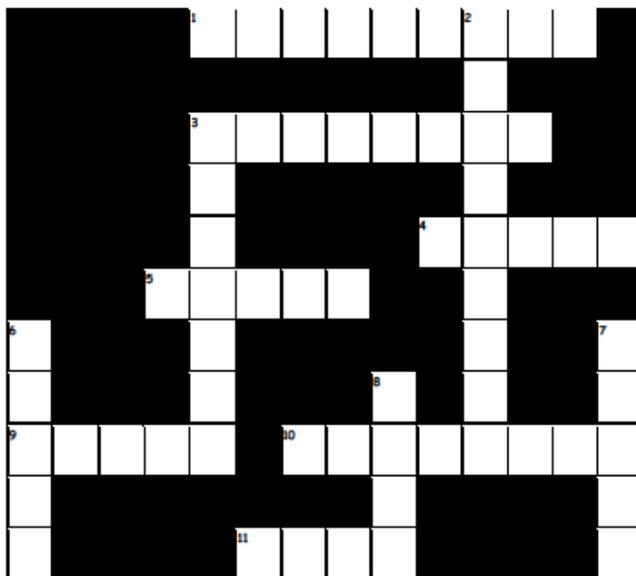
Try to find these words:

- angel
- baby
- commands
- Jesus
- Mary
- Moses
- named
- parents
- praising
- promised
- sheep
- shepherds

CROSSWORD

God kept His promise to Mary

Lk 2:16-21



Across

- 1: not expecting something
- 3: to have given someone your word
- 4: animals that produce wool
- 5: the Son of God
- 9: Old testament prophet who received the commandments
- 10: giving praise
- 11: the mother of God

Down

- 2: people who look after to sheep
- 3: mothers and fathers
- 6: given a name
- 7: a special messenger sent by God
- 8: infant

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice



One of the WDP Guiding Principles states that ‘Prayer is rooted in listening to God and to one another. In WDP we listen to the Word of God and to voices of women sharing their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their opportunities and needs.’

The theme of the worship service “I Have Heard About Your Faith,” based on the letter to the Ephesians, is an invitation to active listening, which is the ground of our prayers. Following the example of the letter (1:15-19), where the author praises the church for their faith in Jesus and love toward all the saints, the worship service contextualizes the witness of the saints with the stories from Taiwan.

The worship service shares the letters of encouragement sent to women who faced suffering and injustice. Their stories of faith contemplate issues that are shared by women and girls around the world and that continue to challenge us to prayerful action.

They remind us of the urgency to protect the environment and have a nuclear-free homeland; to be aware of the gender stereotypes women face when defying the traditional role in the workplace or in the family, and to care for the healing of the victims of verbal and sexual abuses. It also brings to light the hidden struggle of the essential workers during the pandemic who had to balance between work and

family in a vulnerable economic situation. The sisters thank God for the natural resources of the island and pray for wisdom in face of the political isolation of Taiwan in the international community. They ask for our prayers. What are the stories of faith in your community? How do you encourage them with your prayers and actions? Include those stories in the WDP activities. Praise God and be inspired by those testimonies of love and justice.

May God give us the wisdom and courage to tell the stories of faith that transform lives.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The next World Day of Prayer is 3 March, 2023. Read about the world day of prayer at worlddayofprayeraustralia.org.

If you would like to help plan the liturgy for the Newcastle Inner City Region, please contact Anne Millard on 4979 1101 or by email anne.millard@mn.catholic.org.au.

PRAYER REQUESTS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Gino Malaspina, Narelle Turner, Margaret Broad, Tadeusz Janiszewski

ANNIVERSARIES: Ken Hurtz, Doris Pearson, Bessie Maurer, Clem Ross, Ken Johnson

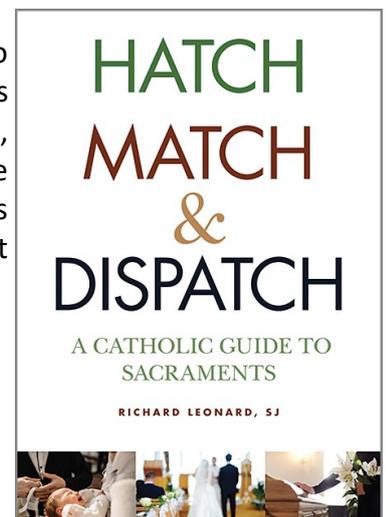
SICK: Christine Dowling, Margaret Cox, Helen Tumbers, Phil Bawden, Madge Humphries, Ronnie Jennings, Eileen Howard, Eva Grant, Colin Bryant, Maureen Sunman, Maree Halbert, Carlo Rossi, Kath Murray, Veronica McCann, Peter Skinner, Tiani Bishop, Tom Parker, Sam Broad, Ronald Watt

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.

VIEW, CHEW, AND CHAT:

Returns in February to discuss Richard Leonard’s book “Hatch, Match, Dispatch: A Guide to the Sacraments.” The book is available from Paulist Press

<https://www.paulistpress.com/Products/0650-9/hatch-match-and-dispatch.aspx>



TODAY'S LITURGY

Entrance Antiphon

Hail, Holy Mother, who gave birth to the King,
who rules heaven and earth for ever.

First Reading: Nm 6:22-27

*They will call down my name on the children of
Israel and I will bless them.*

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 66:2-3. 5. 6. 8. R. v.2

(R.) May God bless us in his mercy.

1. God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. (R.)
2. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples.
you guide the nations on earth. (R.)
3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. (R.)

Second Reading: Gal 4:4-7

*When the appointed time came, God sent his
son, born of a woman.*

Gospel Acclamation: Heb 1:1-2

Alleluia, alleluia!
In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the
prophets;
now he speaks to us through his Son.
Alleluia!

Gospel: Lk 2:16-21

*The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the
infant lying in the crib... When the eighth day
came they gave him the name of Jesus.*

Communion Antiphon: Heb 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

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SHARING HOPE WITH CHRISTIANS IN SYRIA AND LEBANON THIS CHRISTMAS

Aid to the Church in Need is asking for support to aid
our brothers and sisters who are suffering so deeply in
Syria and Lebanon through our Christmas appeal
Sharing Hope with Christians in Syria and Lebanon this
Christmas. The support we are pledging to them is
very much emergency relief to sustain the Christian
population in hope. The projects we are supporting
are projects such as medical aid, community help and
gifts for children in Lebanon, as well as support for lay
faithful and accommodation for families in Syria.

It is only with your help that ACN can support
Christians in Lebanon and Syria this Christmas!

To watch videos and read stories of the projects we
are supporting visit [www.aidtochurch.org/
christmas2022](http://www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022)

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.

SAVE THE DATE: TORONTO MEN'S WEEKEND

A MenALIVE Men's Weekend will be held at the St
Joseph's Toronto Parish on the weekend of 25 and 26
March 2023. The weekend is suitable for all men from
18 years of age and provides an opportunity for
attendees to explore what makes them feel fully alive.

More information including how to register will be
provided closer to the date. For more information on
MenALIVE, visit: www.menalive.org.au