

Associates News

**CELEBRATING
ADVENT
DECEMBER 2017**



**Welcome to the
Josephite Associate
Queensland
Quarterly Newsletter**

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**FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SEASONAL
NEWS PLEASE**

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Getting a Handle on Advent

Advent is in many ways difficult to come to grips with. This is especially so in Australia where it comes at the beginning of summer, as the school and working years conclude and beaches and barbecues beckon. There is a tendency for the busy-ness of shopping, parties and planning for Christmas Day to overtake the rhythm of the church year.

Advent is the curtain raiser and very much part of the Christmas season. Christmas Time does not end on 25th December but continues through the feasts of the Mother of God, the Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord. In the background is always Mary's 'Yes', which grounds these marvellous events and shows us how to respond.

The special focus of Advent, as the word's origins indicate, can be summed up in the phrase **Here he comes**. As we enter its meaning, we look back in time, look forward in time and open our eyes fully to the present.

We prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus as the beginning of the decisive answer to our prayers. As we look back in time and identify with our ancestors in faith, we marvel at how God's answer went beyond anything they had dreamt. **Here he comes**.

Advent is a time to let the Holy Spirit open our eyes to the presence of Jesus Christ alive today, even within ourselves. Every Christian in some way conceives and gives birth to the Word of God. In the faith, we bring Christ to a world that is waiting.

The period of Advent and Christmas is a time for us to ponder more deeply and proclaim to the world the Word of God made flesh. In this season, every Christian is called to share, through whatever opportunities the Lord provides, the good news that God has entered our human condition to unite us to him and to be hope, peace, joy and love to all those we encounter.

Week One

As we light the first candle we recall the hope we have in Christ.

Hope is like a light shining in a dark place. As the candle brings light to the darkness, Jesus brings hope to our hearts.

As we journey through this Advent time

Jesus born of Mary - Bless Us.

Spirit waiting with us in hope - Bless Us.



Week Two

We light the second candle of Advent, the candle of Peace.

The prophets foretold of the Saviour of the world, Jesus' birth would bring us peace.

As we journey through Advent may the 'Prince of Peace' bring peace to our hearts and bless all the nations with peace.

Week Three

As we light the candle of Joy we feel the Joy of Mary as the Angel Gabriel revealed to her the gift she would receive from God the Father.

From hope and peace grows joy. We remember that when Jesus is born in us we have joy and that through him there will be everlasting joy on earth.

God of light and darkness, you are the day spring of all our joy, may we be people who seek to leave no one in the darkness, bring light to all the dark corners of the world.



Week Four

As we prepare for week four we also light the Candle of Hope, Peace and Joy again as we remember Jesus our hope and our peace who brings us Joy. This week we light the fourth candle, the candle of love.

God of love prompt us with your inclusive love to be community minded and selfless as our journey in this Advent time is coming to an end.

The Birth of Christ

Christmas Day

Today we celebrate the birth of our Saviour as we light each candle again we remember;

1. We speak of hope because God keeps his promises to us.
2. We work for peace because Jesus is the 'Prince of Peace' and He calls His children to work for peace in His name.
3. We show love because Jesus gave everything for us and led us to know the forgiveness of God.
4. We share joy because the Holy Spirit fills our hearts and minds with the presence of God.

Now we light the Christ Candle in memory of the birth of our Lord and Saviour. As the prophets promised so long ago, you have come to us once again and we are filled with wonder and amazement.

You came as a tiny, fragile baby yet we know that you are God and you are with us.

May the flame of this candle remind us that you are the light of the world and that if we follow you, we will never walk in darkness,

May new hope and joy flood our spirit.

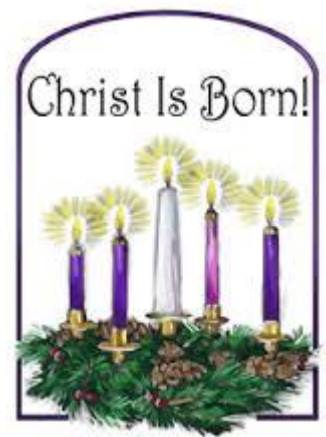
May a new energy for mission effuse our heart.

May the hospitality of our hearts expand.

May we experience love and appreciation.

May we find ourselves to be images of God

We make these prayers in the Spirit of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy Amen



TRIBUTE TO MARY STARK

Many would know of the death of Mary Stark, Partner in Mission with Carmel Street rsj. Mary faithfully lived her commitment as an Associate ministering with Carmel rsj for many years supporting the work of the Josephites on the Western Line to Mount Isa and places in between.

Mary was a Spiritual Director who had a listening ear for those who sought her help. Mary was a visionary in living the life of an Associate in Mission, not seeking fame for herself but humbly and honestly serving the ministry to which she was called.

Mary was also a great mother and friend sharing her home to her many family and friends. She and Carmel were a formidable team who worked closely together to further the work of God particularly in these rural and isolated areas.

May Mary rest in peace



CONFERENCE UPDATE

As you all are aware, we are planning an exciting Conference for 2018.

The dates are confirmed;
Friday 25 May to Sunday 27 May 2018.

The theme is;
'Step Forward with Mary MacKillop – Find our Path in the World Today'

Enclosed with this Newsletter is the brochure detailing the Conference Program and Workshop outlines.

Note that the venue is the Kedron/Wavell Services Club KittyHawk Drive Wavell Heights. The Staff there have been very helpful in supporting this initiative.

Further information, including Registration details, will be forwarded in a special mailing in January 2018.

You will be able to register on line or by post.

We look forward to many of you participating in this Conference.

The cost of \$150 for the three days includes lunches, dinners and morning and afternoon teas. *Flights and accommodation are not included in the registration.*

We have invited significant people to be guest speakers to inspire and encourage the Associates.

Christmas Blessing



*May the Christ Child fill your hearts with peace
and joy during this festive season.*

*"With fondest love I pray God to bless you all
and grant you a truly happy New Year".*

Mary MacKillop (1882)



Thank you to those who have made a contribution in 2017

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