

SCHOENSTATT MOVEMENT



The month of December is dedicated to the
Immaculate Conception

WA NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023

Schoenstatt Shrine a Pilgrimage Place

Address: 9 Talus Drive Mt Richon WA 6112

Open: Monday - Sunday 7am to 8pm

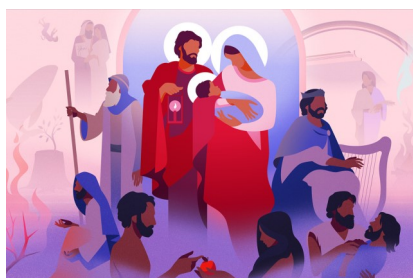
☎ 9399 2349

✉ schoenstattwa@gmail.com

Website: www.schoenstattwa.org.au



The first two days of December fall during the liturgical season known as **Ordinary Time** and is represented by the liturgical color green. The



next 22 days fall during the liturgical season of **Advent** and are represented by the liturgical color purple—a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the **Christmas** season. The liturgical color changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

POPE FRANCIS INTENTIONS



For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Focus of the Liturgy The Gospels for the four Sundays in December 2023, are taken from St. Mark and are from Cycle B. The Weekday readings are from Year II.

December 3rd First Sunday of Advent

Mark 13:33-37: Be watchful! You do not know when the lord of the house is coming

December 10th Second Sunday of Advent

Mark 1:1-8: Make straight the paths of the Lord.

December 17th Third Sunday of Advent

Jn 1:6-8, 19-28: There is one among you whom you do not recognize.

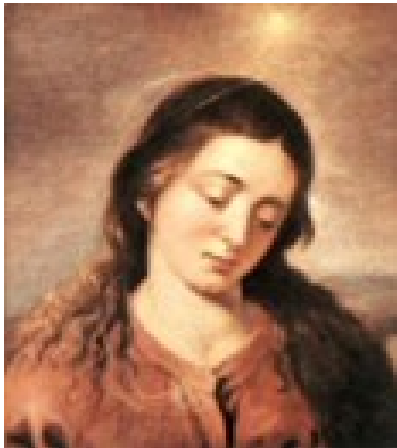
December 24th Fourth Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:26-38: Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son.

December 31st Feast of the Holy Family

Luke 2:22-40: The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.

LITURGICAL FOCUS



The liturgy of Advent focuses on remembering Christ's first coming at Bethlehem which then directs our mind to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. The readings focus on the people of the Old Testament awaiting the Messiah, John the Baptist, heralding the way for Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary and her maternal preparations.

The main feasts of Advent are:

St. John Damascene (December 4), **St. Nicholas** (December 6), **St. Ambrose** (December 7), **Immaculate Conception** (December 8), **St. Juan Diego** (December 9), **St. Damasus I** (December 11), **Our Lady of Guadalupe** (December 12), **St. Lucy** (December 13), **St. John of the Cross** (December 14), **St. Peter Canisius** (December 21) and **St. John of Kanty** (December 23).

Christmastide begins with the First Vespers (Evening Prayer) of Christmas on December 24th and ends on the Sunday after Epiphany, Christmas and Easter are the only solemnities with octaves attached in the current calendar.

The Christmas octave differs from Easter in that it includes some major and minor feasts: **St. Stephen, Protomartyr** (December 26), **St. John the Evangelist** (December 27), **the Holy Innocents** (December 28), **St. Thomas Becket** (December 29) and **St. Sylvester I** (December 31). The octave day is on January 1, **the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**.

The Reason for the Season

The month of December is filled with expectation and celebration.



Preparation is the key word for the first 24 days of December. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas — shopping and decorating, baking and cleaning. Too often, however, we are so busy with the material preparations that we lose sight of the real reason for our activity.

Christmas is a Christian feast — and we must reclaim it as such! In the same way that a family eagerly prepares for a baby, so in Advent should we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. We should keep Advent as a season of waiting and longing, of conversion and of hope and keep our thoughts on the incredible love and humility of our God in taking on the flesh of the Virgin Mary. Let us not forget to prepare a peaceful place in our hearts wherein our Savior may come to dwell.

The best person we can turn to for help during Advent is Mary, Christ's and our Mother. She awaited the day of His birth with more eagerness than any other human being. Her preparation was complete in every respect. Let's crown our preparation and borrow something of Mary's prayerfulness, her purity and whole-hearted submission to God's will. This item 12537 digitally provided courtesy of CatholicCulture.org



SCHOENSTATT W A

Daughters of Mary Spring Events 2023: A Program for Mothers and their Daughters in Perth

Saturday 16 September 2023 event at St. Aloysius Parish, Shenton Park. This day was a special occasion as it marked the moment that we offered our *Daughters of Mary* Schoenstatt program on the virtues regularly run at the Shrine in a more central location of Perth



Linda and Charlotte, part of the *Daughters of Mary* program since the beginning of the year, welcomed the Mothers and Daughters group to their parish, St Aloysius in Shenton Park. For Linda and Charlotte, it was a wonderful opportunity to share their parish life with other members of the group. For the parish, hosting the group was a chance to open their doors and extend their welcome to others.



The group initially gathered outside the parish hall, where we learnt about St Aloysius Gonzaga, the history of the church building and the life of the parish. The parish is currently overseen by the Vincentian order who also support the local hospital responding to their special charism as hospital chaplains. The Mothers enjoyed their activities in the parish's outdoor seating area and daughters in the parish hall and came together in the church for prayer and hymns.



The planned activities culminated with a mother-daughter blind folded obstacle course encouraging the pairs to listen carefully to each other and to continue to build on their relationship through mutual trust and encouragement.

The afternoon ended with a beautiful

spread put on in the hall, allowing the friends to enjoy each other's company over afternoon tea.

From Linda and Charlotte, a big thank you to everyone involved in preparing the activities and presenting on the day, especially to Sr Luka for her ongoing energy and enthusiasm for the group. And thank you to the parish of St Aloysius for making the group so welcome.



On Sunday 29 October, a City Retreat was held for mothers and their daughters, as well as young women, and we also had a couple of mums bring their own mums along, so that we had women and girls of three generations there.

We started the event at the Cathedral, then car-pooled to Kings Park, where we started our three walk sections:

Firstly, a loop walk on which mothers and daughters could talk about the theme 'journeying together' and choose an intention for today's pilgrimage back to the Cathedral. While walking, we also prayed the Divine Mercy chaplet.

The second part was a personal quiet reflective walk modelled on Dadirri – a practice of deep listening to nature and into oneself from the Northern Territory First Nations Peoples.

After a picnic and community activity we then embarked on the final stretch of the walk leading from St Georges Terrace back to the Cathedral. For each of the sections we had a reflection and prayed the rosary along the way. Those who wished could finish the retreat with the 5pm evening Mass at the Cathedral.



Coming events



Why Me Lord ?

Listen to God

Me, Lord, when I pray I seem to keep chattering like a monkey up a tree. What's wrong?

The Lord, Put a Banana in your mouth and listen.

Me, I know I should listen more, but it seems there are so many things to talk to you about.



The Lord, Sometimes, you talk so much there is very little time left to listen to me or to sit in my presence just silently aware of our friendship. If you wait and listen first, you will be much more selective about the way you spend your time with me.

Me, Then, some of the things I was rushing to say won't seem so important?

The Lord, Listen Listen Listen. Then you may talk a little.

Me, It seems, rather impersonal, doesn't it?

The Lord, I don't want you to become impersonal. I'd like to hear you say "Hello" and thank **Me** for what's happening in your life. But work on silence. That's where you need the practice. And friends don't have to say many words, do they?

Me, I'll be the quietest little monkey in the Jungle.

The Lord, but don't overdo it with the bananas, your waistline you know.



An encounter between brothers: A visit to the Motherhouse of the Pallottine Fathers

A fraternal encounter between the Schoenstatt General

Presidium and the General Leadership of the Pallottines marked the days of the meeting of the International Presidium in Rome.

The International Presidium of the Schoenstatt Movement visited the Generalate of the **Society of the Catholic Apostolate** – the Pallottine Family – in Rome. The meeting took place on November 8th during the conference of the Presidium.

Together they took part in the Eucharistic celebration and in a time of exchange. Fr. Alexandre Awi Mello, President of the General Presidium of the Schoenstatt Movement, recalled that there have already been other visits by Schoenstatt representatives to the Pallottines:

It is an encounter that has already taken place on other occasions. We participated in Holy Mass and in a moment of prayer; we had dinner together with the members of the Pallottine government. It is a visit from friends, from brothers, so that we can keep this contact alive," he explained.

As brothers before the altar



The Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Alexandre at the altar where the body of St. Vincent Pallotti rests. At the beginning of the celebration, Father Jacob Nampudakam, President of the SAC (Society of the Catholic Apostolate), welcomed the members of the Schoenstatt

Family, also on behalf of the Rector General, Father Zenon Hanas, who was in Rome. Fr. Jacob recalled that it was St. Vincent Pallotti who

brought the two spiritual families together for this moment of celebration, whose spiritual and apostolic ideals are shared by both communities.

Both Father Alexandre Awi Mello and Dr. Christian Löhr, Rector General of the Schoenstatt Institute of Diocesan Priests, expressed their joy at the privilege to celebrate Holy Mass at the altar of St. Vincent

Pallotti. Both expressed their gratitude for the **spiritual and apostolic heritage** that they were able to share with the Pallottine Family. "It was an extraordinary experience for me to experience the welcome and joy of the Pallottine community to meet with members of the Schoenstatt Movement this afternoon. I also realized again how important the common root of the two works of evangelization is in the person of St. Vincent Pallotti.



I am certain that with our charisms we can make a very concrete contribution to solving the current problems of our Church today. This meeting was synodality in action," said Sr. M. Cacilda Becker of the International Schoenstatt Coordination, recalling a theme that was highlighted during the meeting.

Reflections Father Nicolas Schwizer #223 – 1 December 2019

Mary Leads Us To Acknowledge Our Smallness

Baptism is the fundamental sacrament. On that day in which we were baptized, we began a love story with Christ. But this story – throughout our long life – is filled with repeated infidelities. Each time we sin, we are stealing from God some of the love He asks of us and we surrender it to one of his rivals.....to an idol which can be money, sensuality or pride.

The people from Israel were already suffering from the weight of its infidelities – just like us. And then God promises them that some day He will give power to his own and will convert them into a faithful people.

Christ brought that power and He gives it to the Church through the sacrament of reconciliation. Through this sacrament, the Lord comes close to us and gives us the spirit of mercy, of forgiveness and of reconciliation. It is the power which makes possible our conversion and a renewed fidelity.

Before God, we have all been unfaithful: prodigal sons who have fled the house of our father seeking to be happier in our own ways. But Christ has not come to condemn us but to save us. He does not look for those who are good and who are saints but for sinners and those who are sick. Because these are the ones who need a doctor who can cure them, a hand to lift them up.

God gives in to our lack of love by giving us more love: He triumphs over our infidelities with mercy. That is what the woman adulteress felt when Jesus forgave her with so much kindness. Or the prodigal son who instead of an angry face, finds – waiting for him – a father with open arms who is ready to celebrate his return with a feast. It is not difficult for us to understand that God loves the humble, the poor and the weak. But it is hard for us to believe that HE also loves the smallness or the culpable weakness of sinners. **Page 10**



Therefore, when we feel the weight of our guilt on our conscience, we frequently tend to flee from God and hide. And we ask ourselves: Why does God allow/permit sin? Then St. Paul gives us the answer: "God permitted sin in abundance in the world in order to make his mercy superabundant." Because love reaches its peak in mercy, nothing obligates our future fidelity more than an undeserving forgiveness. Therefore, God permits us to sin: to be able to forgive us and to thus convince us of the infinite greatness of his love. Like no one else, the Blessed Virgin knew how to rejoice before the capacity of mercy and forgiveness which God had demonstrated before Her. Because She knew that if She was without sin, it was not by her own merit, but because God, through pure mercy, God had forgiven her beforehand. Mary felt "picked up/embraced" even before tripping, "raised" before falling, "immunized" even before whatever possibility of being contaminated. Therefore, She was considered the creature most fully forgiven and redeemed.

Like no one else, the Virgin experienced the joy of receiving forgiveness, and the infinite joy which God himself feels upon giving it. Therefore, no one better than She – the humble servant of the Lord – to teach us the joy of acknowledging our smallness and frailty. Nobody better than She – our Mother – to make us understand the meaning of the sacrament of reconciliation.

Mary is capable of freeing us from all fear we could feel when approaching the confessional. She helps us to discover that the priest who awaits us is not a representative of a God-judge, but the Good Shepherd, the Father who awaits the prodigal son with open arms. The sacrament of confession is a sacrament of liberation and of reconciliation, the sacrament of re-encounter and of joy. Mary invites us to acknowledge our smallness and to open ourselves to the forgiveness of God.

And She wants us to give testimony to that divine mercy which we have received, that we also know how to forgive those who have offended us. She asks us to conquer the bad with the good, to overcome hate, resentment or the desire for revenge... with forgiveness and reconciliation.



COMING EVENTS

Fridays

- Shrine 10am **HOLY MASS**
- 11am to 815pm **Silent Eucharistic Adoration**

Third Sunday of the month

- 130pm to 245pm **Formation**
- 3pm **Covenant Sunday Devotion** followed by refreshments

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Please forward any contributions to
Joy and John Doherty for the next edition of
"Schoenstatt WA News" by 16 December 2023

We look forward to your input
Email: joy@jaysbus.com.au