

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



Solemn Mass

Fourth Sunday
of Advent

21 December 2025
10.30am

WELCOME

to St Mary's Cathedral which stands in the centre of Sydney as a Christian statement of grace and beauty. Generations of artists have bequeathed to it their magnificent gifts in stone and glass, designing a unique space of solace and prayer within this vibrant city. This Cathedral represents the spiritual origins of the Catholic Church in Australia. It is one of Sydney's most treasured historic buildings and one of the finest examples of English-style gothic churches in the world. William Wilkinson Wardell, the 19th century architect, dreamed of a gothic structure shaped from the local yellow-block sandstone on which this city is built. The building was finally completed 100 years after the architect's death. The Cathedral is dedicated to Mary, Immaculate Mother of God, Help of Christians.

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR

St Mary's Cathedral Choir is the oldest musical institution in Australia. In 1818 a group of choristers was formed to sing Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament in the Dempsey household, the centre of Catholic worship in the penal colony. After the establishment of St Mary's Cathedral in 1833 the successors of these choristers formed the permanent Cathedral Choir. In faithfulness to the Benedictine English tradition from which the Cathedral's founders came, the Choir was formed of men and boys, preserving the historical character of Catholic liturgical and musical heritage. However, from 2025, St Mary's began a girls' choir, and St Mary's is the only Catholic Cathedral in Australia to have an on-site Choir School where the boy and girl choristers are educated. The other parts of the Choir are provided by lay clerks who are professional singers. The Choir's primary function is to sing Vespers and Mass in the Cathedral which it does almost daily, but it has also undertaken several international tours, recordings and concert projects.

REGULAR CHORAL SERVICES

Sunday	1030	Solemn Mass <i>Full Choir</i>
	1700	Solemn Vespers and Benediction <i>Lay Clerks</i>
Monday	1700	Vespers <i>Lay Clerks</i>
	1730	Mass <i>Boy Choristers & Lay Clerks</i>
Tuesday	1700	Vespers <i>Cathedral Scholars</i>
	1730	Mass <i>Boy & Girl Choristers</i>
Wednesday	1700	Vespers <i>Cathedral Scholars</i>
	1730	Mass <i>Girl Choristers & Lay Clerks</i>
Thursday	1700	Vespers <i>Lay Clerks</i>
	1730	Mass <i>Lay Clerks</i>

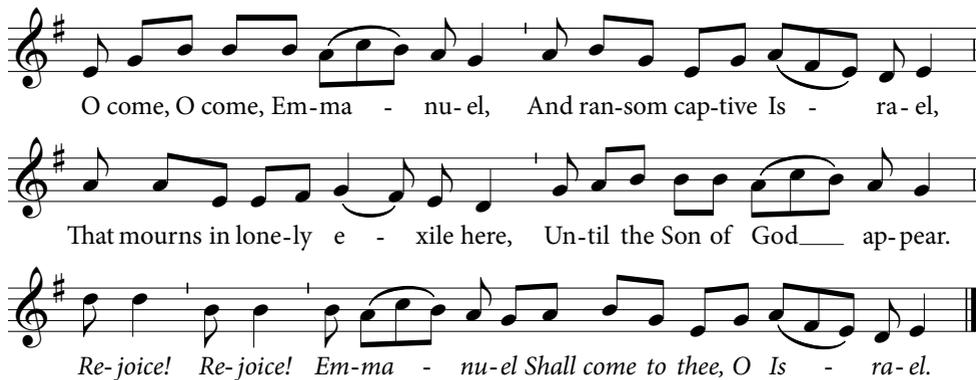
Download the weekly Music List at <http://stmaryscathedral.org.au>

**TO MAINTAIN A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SOLEMNITY,
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

ORDER OF MASS

At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand and sing

THE HYMN



O come, O come, Em-ma - nu-el, And ran-som cap-tive Is - ra-el,
That mourns in lone-ly e - xile here, Un-til the Son of God ap-pear.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-ma - nu-el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra-el.

**O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.**

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

**O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

**O come, O come, thou Lord of Might,
Who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.**

*Veni Emmanuel
Adapted from a French Missal
by Thomas Helmore (1811-1890)*

*Veni, veni Emmanuel
Cologne 1710
tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866)*

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Choir sings the INTROIT

cf. Isaiah 45:8; Psalm 18

RORATE cæli desuper, et nubes pluant iustum: aperiat terra, et germinet Salvatorem. V. Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei: et opera manuum eius annuntiat firmamentum.

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. V. The heavens proclaim the glory of God and the firmament shows forth the work of his hands.

All make the Sign of the Cross as the Archbishop says

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

℟: **Amen.**

Peace be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

After a brief silence all say

I CONFESS to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

All strike their breast thrice, saying

through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The Archbishop gives the absolution, saying

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

℟: **Amen.**

The Choir sings the KYRIE

from Missa Alma redemptoris mater

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594)

Kyrie, eleison. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The Archbishop says the COLLECT

℟: **Amen.**

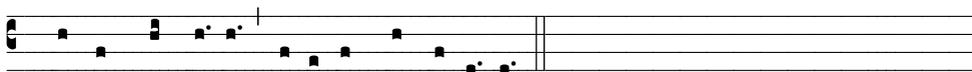
THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-14

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 23:1-6 ℟: cf. vv.7. 10



℟: **Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.**

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. ℟:

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. ℟:

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. ℟:

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

The Choir sings the ALLELUIA

Alleluia.

℣: Veni, Domine, et noli tardare: relaxa facinora plebis tuæ.

Come Lord, and do not delay. Pardon the sins of your people.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

℟: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The Gospel of the Lord.

℟: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

All bow during the following line:

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Choir sings the OFFERTORY MOTET

Franz Biebl (1906–2001)

ANGELUS Domini nuntiavit Mariae, et concepit de Spiritu sancto. Ave Maria, gratia plena: Dominus tecum: Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus. Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. Et verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis. Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived by the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Archbishop says

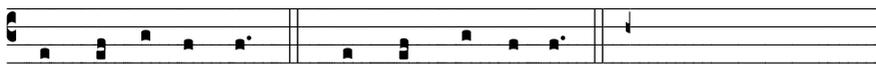
Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

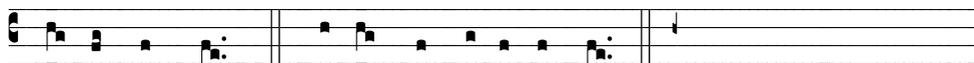
℟: **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

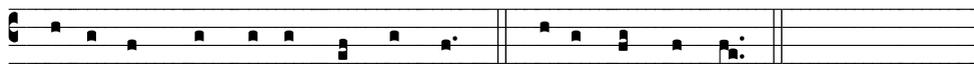
The Archbishop says the PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

℟: **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

T HE Lord be with you. ℟: **And with your spi-rit.**

 Lift up your hearts. ℟: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ℟: **It is right and just.**

THE PREFACE

S

An- ctus, * San- ctus, San- ctus Dó-mi-nus De-us Sá- ba-oth. Ple-ni
 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

sunt cæ- li et ter- ra gló-ri- a tu- a. Ho- sán-na in ex-cél-sis. Be-ne-díc-
 Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed

tus qui ve-nit in nó-mine Dómi-ni. Ho- sán-na in excél- sis.
 is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

When the Archbishop sings

The mystery of faith.

All sing

W

HEN we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death,

O Lord, until you come a-gain.

When the Archbishop sings

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

All respond

A-men.

COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All sing

O UR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our dai-ly bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as we for-give those who trespass a-gainst us;
and lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion, but de-liv-er us from e- vil.

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

⌄ For the kingdom, the power and the glo-ry are yours now and for ev-er.

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

⌄ **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

⌄ **And with your spirit.**

The Choir sings the AGNUS DEI

from Missa Alma redemptoris mater

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

The Archbishop shows the host to the congregation, saying

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

℟: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

***Catholics who have made the proper spiritual and sacramental preparation
may come forward in the procession to receive Holy Communion.
The sacred host must be consumed in the presence of the communion minister.***

During Holy Communion the Choir sings the AGNUS DEI II

from Missa Alma redemptoris mater

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

The Choir sings the COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Isaiah 7:14

Ecce virgo concipiet, et pariet filium: et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel.

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

All sing

THE HYMN



The an - gel Ga - bri-el from hea - ven came, — His wings as drift-ed snow, his
eyes — as flame; 'All hail' said he, 'thou low-ly maid-en Ma - ry, — Most
high - ly fa-voured la - dy.' Glo - - - ri - a! —

**'For known a blessèd Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold.
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name.'
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

**Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

Text
Music

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924)
Basque Traditional arr. Edgar Pettman (1866–1943)

The Archbishop says the PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

℟: **Amen.**

THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Lord be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

Bow down for the blessing.

May the almighty and merciful God, by whose grace you have placed your faith in the First Coming of his Only Begotten Son and yearn for his coming again sanctify you by the radiance of Christ's Advent and enrich you with his blessing.

℟: **Amen.**

As you run the race of this present life, may he make you firm in faith, joyful in hope and active in charity.

℟: **Amen.**

So that, rejoicing now with devotion at the Redeemer's coming in the flesh, you may be endowed with the rich reward of eternal life when he comes again in majesty.

℟: **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

℟: **Amen.**

Go forth, the Mass is ended.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Le Monde dans l'attente du Sauveur (Symphonie-Passion)

Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

LATER TODAY IN THE CATHEDRAL

Solemn Vespers and Benediction *sung by the Lay Clerks
of St Mary's Cathedral Choir*

5.00pm