



*Third Sunday of Advent  
12th / 13th December 2020*

**Parish Clergy**  
Fr Martin Cruickshank

**Parish Office**  
Gemma Whitehead—Monday  
Fran Kernaghan—Wednesday, Friday  
9.00 am – 2.00 pm  
Phone: 60251516

Email: sacredheartna@gmail.com  
Web: <http://sacredheartnorthalbury.com/>

**Mass Times**

SATURDAY VIGIL: 6.00 pm  
SUNDAY: 9.30 am

WEEKDAYS: This Week:  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday  
9.30am

**RECONCILIATION**  
SATURDAY: 5.15 PM-5.45 PM  
**BAPTISMS**—By appointment.  
Preparation Course: 0411 883 661



As we draw near to Christmas, the readings for this ‘*Gaudete*’ Sunday are full of rejoicing. We light a pink Advent candle to focus our attention on that spirit of joy. Perhaps this year, more than any other, our hearts are longing for news of joy and happiness. Though it may not be possible for us to worship today with those we long to gather with, Christ shares in our longing, standing among us and within us wherever we come to pray.

At this time we are like the people of whom the prophet Isaiah speaks in the **First Reading**; a people who long for the One who will bring good news and proclaim liberty to captives.

In the **Responsorial Psalm** we pray the words that Mary proclaimed as she rejoiced when visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Her joyful prayer of thanks celebrates God’s saving promise to us all.

In the **Second Reading** we are encouraged to pray at all times with a spirit of gratitude, never dampening the flow of the Spirit in our lives.

The **Gospel** introduces John the Baptist as a messenger for the light. Hidden within a challenging dialogue with the priests and Levites, John reveals a deep truth: Christ stands among us and is truly Emmanuel – God with us – even when we are ignorant to his presence.

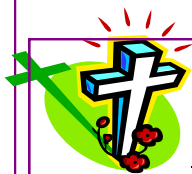
Let us remember each other, and the needs of the world in our prayer this week. We remember also that we belong to a loving community of prayer that longs for and trusts in the light of Christ, even in the midst of the dark winter nights and difficult times in which we live.

So may our hearts and lives proclaim with every fibre of our being ...  
‘Rejoice! The Lord is near!’



**Rejoice Sunday**

# Parish Community



*We pray for those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith especially:*

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Corrie Van Lint, Rita Clear, Jean Parker, Margaret Liston, Margaret Wighton, Sandi McDonald, Trixie Stephens, Frances Nelson, Marie Thomas.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Fr Jim Victory, Shaun Brady, Ernest Elias, Kent Van Every, Michael Murphy, Wendy Murphy, Irene Unger, Chris Thumpston, Ruby O'Keefe, Owen Drysdale, Lillian Clear, Len Syphers, George McShane, Marlene Clea, Nell Seymour, Harry Collins, Beryl Splatt, Norm Frauenfelder, Jason Black, Francis Clancy, Francis Henry, John Muldoon, Lesley Beach.

*Gather our loved ones into your arms. Quiet our doubt and anger and send us your healing grace. Through Christ our Lord.*

## Prayer for the Sick

*We pray for all those who are sick. May they draw strength and healing from God's presence with them and from our prayers and thoughts for them. May they have peace in their hearts and know they are greatly loved by all. We offer our prayers believing that God's presence and power can do more than we can ever know. Amen*

## ADVENT

This weekend we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent. Advent is the time in the church when we wait and prepare for the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day. The word Advent comes from two Latin words that mean "Coming Towards". We use this time to prepare ourselves in a special way to welcome Jesus. In our families, we prepare for Christmas by buying gifts, sending cards, decorating the tree and organising family celebrations. In the church we also prepare for Christmas.

The Advent wreath is a ring of evergreens with four candles, one for each week of Advent. Every part of the wreath reminds us of an important truth about God. The circle shape stands for the unending love of God, with no beginning and no end. The green leaves represent life and growth and hope. The candles represent Jesus, the light of the world.

The first candle is the Prophets' candle. The prophets prepared the people in the early days for the coming of the Messiah.

The second candle is called the Bethlehem candle, which reminds us that Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem.

The third candle is the Shepherds' candle and reminds us of the visit of the shepherds.

And the last candle to be lit is called the Angels' candle. An angel announced to Mary that she was pregnant, and then angels announced His birth to the shepherds in the fields.



## *Prayer for Lighting the Third Advent Candle The Candle of Joy*

Almighty God, As we light this third candle on our Advent wreath may we be filled with your everlasting joy.

May your spirit guide us this Advent, as we strive to find the joy in the highs and lows of our days. God, you are the source of joy in the world, let us be a reflection of your joy to all we see and meet.

Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us from the joy and hope that the presence of Christ brings. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name.  
Amen



*This weekend we welcome into the community of the Christian church through the sacrament of Baptism:*

**Hallie April Mee** daughter of Bryan & Samantha;

**Thomas Eurston Jones** son of Russell & Patricia;

**Matilda Taylor** daughter of Andrew & Emma

## Thought for the Week ( Pope Francis):

*"May the Virgin Mary help us to open our hearts to the God who is coming, because he floods our whole life with joy."*

# Parish News

## CHANGES TO STATE COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

As of Monday 7th December:

- 4 sq metre rule now the **2 sq metre rule** across the board outdoors and indoors. In other words we can have twice as many people in our churches.
- Uncontrolled outdoor events can have 3,000 in attendance complying with **2 sq metre rule**. That means that our outdoor masses can have up to 3,000 people with BYO chairs.
- Singing—up to 50 in a choir indoors—and are to practice social distancing. No maximum cap on outdoor choir and congregational singing permitted—wearing masks while singing is optional.

## UPDATED COVID-19 DIOCESAN PROTOCOLS

**If you are feeling unwell, have a cough or cold, sore throat or flu like symptoms please do not attend our physical gatherings as this puts others as well as yourself at risk.**

After having your name registered or ticked off please use the hand sanitiser located at the four entrance points of the church at the beginning of our liturgical celebration and as you leave the church building.

Communion will begin with those on the car park side and then move to those seated on the Swan Street side. Please allow space between each recipient.



## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Taking into account the above changes to state guide lines for social gatherings please be aware of the altered arrangements for our celebration of Christmas masses this year.

### CHRISTMAS EVE

**6.00pm Mass to be celebrated in the grounds of Xavier High School.** BYO chair or blanket and mask if possible. (Liturgy adapted for families, children and teenagers). **9.00pm Mass** in Sacred Heart Church.

### CHRISTMAS DAY

Two celebrations of the Eucharist **8.00am & 9.30am**

## CHRISTMAS MASSES—Musicians, Choir Members and Readers Needed

If you wish to participate in the Christmas choir which will sing at the 9.00pm mass on Christmas Eve please contact Val Hayes: [best4mann@yahoo.com.au](mailto:best4mann@yahoo.com.au) or ph: 6025 5904. Choir practice will take place on Wednesday 23 December at 7.30pm in the church. All welcome.

**Readers & Commentator (prayers of faithful)** required for all Christmas masses in the church. **Christmas Eve 9.00pm Christmas Day 8.00am, 9.30am.** Please add your name to the list located at the Swan Street entrance.

We are still looking for children, teenagers and families to be involved in the liturgy for 6.00pm Christmas Eve mass in the grounds of Xavier High School.

If you wish to participate in any way contact Margie Brown at: [brownm3@ww.catholic.edu.au](mailto:brownm3@ww.catholic.edu.au) or Jane Murtagh at: [rmur5035@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rmur5035@bigpond.net.au).

## Vinnies Covid-19 Christmas Appeal

Appeal Envelopes will be at the door of the Church.

We invite parishioners to support this Appeal, by donating gifts (unwrapped) suitable for children up to 12 years, Gift Vouchers, monetary donations or non-perishable food items. Please leave these gifts in the baskets provided at the entrances to the Church. Your support will be gratefully received and it will help make Christmas for those doing it tough.

## Australian Catholics—Parish Edition—Summer 2020/21

**Pilgrim Life**—In his autobiography, St Ignatius Loyola describes himself as ‘the pilgrim’. He considered his life as one long journey through which he sought to know, and become closer to God. What if we also viewed our whole lives as pilgrimages? How does that shape our life choices, our journeys and our encounters with others?

In this edition we explore how our life journeys - with all their twists and turns, joys and challenges - can inevitably lead us into a deeper relationship with God, if only we remain open to that possibility.

Please take and distribute your free copies.

## Celebration of St Joseph

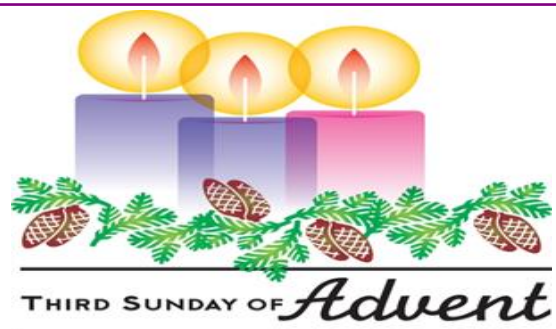
December 8 marked the 150th anniversary since Pope Pius IX declared St Joseph the patron of the universal church. St Joseph is the saint that St Mary of the Cross Mackillop prayed to and trusted in. St Eugene de Mazenod placed the Oblates of Mary Immaculate under his patronage. Prayer cards available on the table in the middle and entrance to the church.

## ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Christmas Cards—pk of 10—\$5

Columban Calendars—\$10 each

On Sale at back of church





# Liturgy of the Word

## **First reading Isaiah 61: 1-2, 10-11**

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation. He has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.

The word of the Lord.

## **Responsorial Luke 1:46-50, 53-54**

### *My soul rejoices in my God*

My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R**

The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy his name!  
His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him. **R**

He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy. **R**



## **A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 5: 16-24**

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything—hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you. The word of the Lord.

### **Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia , alleluia!  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
Alleluia!

## **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 1:6-8,19-28**

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?', he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not', he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesised: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him. 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal strap'. This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising. The Gospel of the Lord