



SEASONS

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St. Thomas More, Mount Eliza

2nd Sunday of Advent — Year A

4th December 2022

Diary:
SVDP Meeting
Monday Dec 12 9.30am
Undercroft

313 Canadian Bay Rd
Mount Eliza Vic. 3930
Phone: 9787 7777

Email: MountEliza@cam.org.au

Website: <http://pol.org.au/mounteliza>

Office Days/Hours:

Tuesday 10.00am to 4pm

Wednesday 9.30am to 4pm

Friday 9.30am to 4pm

Pastoral Leadership Team

Fr Patrick Bradford

Ruth Hilton Joe Sayah

Paul Keane Emma Chapple

Sandra Taylor Kathy Raccanello

Church Services:

This Week
from 5th Dec

Tuesday Adoration 6.00 pm
Tuesday Mass 7.00 pm

Wednesday* NO MASS

Thursday* Mass 10.00am

Friday Mass 10.00am

*Rosary before Mass

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil 5.00 pm

Sunday 8.00 am

Sunday 10.00 am

Reconciliation

Tuesday 6.30 - 7.00pm

Saturday 4:30 - 5:00 pm

St Thomas More acknowledges the Traditional Land owners, the Bunurong people on which we live, work and worship. We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging.

Dear Friends

The following reflection was taken from an essay by Fr. Peter M.J. Stravinskis which was printed in the Catholic World Report.



Living Advent and celebrating Christmas in a secularised, materialistic society.

Eight suggestions on how to re-capture a proper celebration of the Advent-Christmas cycle of the Church's year.

This morning I will offer some reflections on how a Catholic can experience a spiritually fulfilling Advent and Christmas in the secularised and materialistic society we inhabit. Given the vantage point of the "downside," some of my advice will be retrospective (but useful for future Advents), while some will be prospective – looking toward the goal of a truly joyful Christian Christmas.

When the average Catholic is asked about the meaning of Advent, he or she generally says it is concerned with the coming of Jesus as the Babe of Bethlehem and is correct, but only one-third so. What do I mean? Traditionally, Advent directs our attention to three comings of Christ: The first half of the season looks toward His glorious Second Advent as Judge of the Universe, ushering in the Kingdom of His Father in all its fullness, while the second half is focused on His historical coming in the mystery of the Incarnation. There is another coming, however, which we expect – one which links the other two – and that is His coming among us through the Church's sacraments. In other words, as we look back on His coming as Man and look forward to His coming as Judge, we experience His presence in veiled and sacramental ways. The sacraments prolong or continue His Incarnation, making available to us the benefits of that saving event and giving us the strength we need to look forward to His final appearance with joy and confidence, rather than fear and trembling.

With the total destruction of Advent and the near-total destruction of Christmas due to their commercialisation over the past forty years or more, it might be helpful to offer some suggestions on how to re-capture a proper celebration of the Advent-Christmas cycle of the Church's year. Let us try to make the most of it.

Use Advent well and wisely. That means spiritual preparation. If you cannot attend Mass, at least meditate on the Scripture readings assigned to the Masses of the season. Since the Church's "particular voice" for the season is Isaiah, try to read a chapter a day of that prophetic book. Make friends with the key figures of the season: John the Baptist and his parents for the first half; Our Lady and St. Joseph for the second half. Having lived the first Advent two millennia ago, they can provide us with valuable examples for us who seek to do so today.

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**We
pray
for.....**

Those who have passed away recently...

Jurgis (George) Mikolajunas



Those whose anniversaries fall at this time..

Jim Hutchinson, Ella Hutchinson, Clarence Wearne, Lloyd G Beard, Audrey Hussey

The sick... Maureen Mirabella, Adrian & Maree Gobel, Caroline Herbert, April Morrissey, John Spirason, Thomas Parrish, Rodney Abbatangelo (kidney transplant 18/8/22) , Bev Johnstone, Kate Matheson, John Xavier Clifton, Michael Leonard, Liz Spurdle, John Spurdle, Evonne Paddison, Maree Bracken, Bill Luscombe, Brigitte Rohner, Eileen O'Beirne, Ava Macias, Michael MacKenzie, Betty Corke, Maria Kelly, Elizabeth Ware, Althea Greeff, Michael Blick, Maureen Anstey, Rosalie McKiernan, Julian Collins, Sue Emerton, Jimmy and Gary Lakeman, Anneliese Rose and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre and the parishioners of St Thomas More Parish, Tequinomata, East Timor, St Therese Parish, Bathurst Island and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, Alice Springs.

The Welfare officers for December are Tom and Maree Shelton 0418337950

STM Social Club - December

Lunch at the **Girl and Bull Mt Eliza** on
Wednesday 7th December at 12.30

Please book/confirm by:
Wednesday 30 November.
Contact Fiona on 0420 764 234

The next meeting of the
St Vincent de Paul Society
will be held on



Monday the 12th December
in the
Undercroft at 9.30am.



Palms Australia

You've got a lot to give beyond Christmas gifts.

In January you can prepare for mission at home or abroad.

Palms Australia has trained Australians to live and work within cultures and communities overseas since 1961. Now four days of that training will be available for parishioners interested to assist harness the diverse gifts of our community and make it stronger.

At Home

Palms' Neighbours Without Borders program (January 7 – 11) will "focus on building communities that are welcoming to all, with particular attention to those on the margins of society and the church" as urged by the recent Plenary Council.

Overseas

Completing a further four days (January 12 – 15) will prepare you to meet one of the many requests Palms has from communities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific who need educators; health professionals; administrators and others to assist build on the strengths of their people who otherwise have little opportunity for training.

Enquire about Palms Orientation for mission via
www.palms.org.au or call 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.

Working Bee

Thank you to all those who helped with the Parish working bee on Saturday. It was a great opportunity to get together and look after our parish grounds and buildings. As our property matures we are finding more work to do in ensuring a safe and beautiful space for us to gather and worship.

Special thanks to Barry Hansen and Bob Ribbons who co-ordinated activities.



The next working bee will be in the weeks before Easter 2023.

- Fr Patrick

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No Christmas parties during Advent. The first battle I always had to wage in taking over a new parish was my adamant refusal to allow Christmas parties during Advent. There is still a quasi-penitential character to Advent as a time of preparation, first of all, for the Final Judgment and then for the coming of the Christ Child. Both demand self-examination, self-denial, and penance. The Church signals this attitude with purple vestments and abstaining from the Gloria (except for feasts and solemnities). Furthermore, there has always been a Catholic intuition that feasting ought to be preceded by fasting; in fact, the feasting takes on its deepest meaning only when preceded by fasting.

Bring Advent into your home, the domestic church. For years now, the Advent wreath has become rather common in Christian homes. Make the construction of the wreath a genuine spiritual and family activity. Use it on the dinner table or the coffee table as a focal point for family prayer during the season. Introduce the Jesse Tree and keep an Advent calendar, especially if there are little children in the family, capitalizing on their keen sense of anticipation – a real virtue and asset in one's ability to celebrate Advent properly.

Advocate for a return of Christ to Christmas in the public arena. One small way to do this is to put up a nativity/Christmas scene at home, and encourage your parish priest to have one in front of the church if that has not heretofore been the case. Make sure that local retail stores are selling nativity scenes and religious Christmas cards; if they're not available, ask the manager why not.

Decorate at the right time. Don't follow the example of many shopping malls the absurdity of putting up Christmas in early November. Beginning on December 17, in proximate preparation for the Lord's historical coming at Bethlehem, the Church has recourse to wonderful biblical prophecies which describe the coming Messiah as Wisdom, Adonai, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Dawn from on High, King, and Emmanuel. These titles are incorporated into antiphons used to frame Mary's Magnificat during the praying of Vespers in the week leading up to Christmas. Everyone should recognize them as the titles for the verses of the old-time Advent favourite, O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. And speaking of hymns, no Christmas carols until Christmas! We are most fortunate to have a panoply of beautiful Advent hymns in the English language.

Make the necessary Christmas preparations holy. We Catholics are not dour Puritans or Scrooges, who shun a genuine Christmas spirit; nor should we do "Christmas things" grudgingly. Shopping for gifts for family and friends should be done happily. Let's remember that we give gifts at Christmas in imitation of our Heavenly Father, Who began the whole process by giving us the inestimable gift of His Only Son.

While generosity is called for, extravagance is not. Give religious gifts like spiritual books, thoughtful literature, Christian art for home decoration, as well as spiritual bouquets. When family members ask you what you want, don't be afraid to ask for something that really matters to you, like getting family together or attending Mass together at Christmas. When writing Christmas cards (or email versions of them), make a point of praying for the people to whom you are writing.

And remember the poor, not with perfunctory or token gifts, but gifts imbued with a true sacrificial dimension. So much of popular Christmas lore brings to mind the poverty of the Christ-Child, born in a stable.

Make the Sacred Liturgy the high point of your Christmas celebration. All too often, Catholics have developed the unseemly habit of "squeezing" Mass into a convenient slot amid the other observances of the day. How many priests bemoan the fact that the vigil Masses of Christmas at four and five in the afternoon are jammed, while the Midnight Mass (if one is even scheduled) and the morning Masses are depressingly empty! When Holy Mass is honored the other aspects of the day have real meaning; indeed, then the opening of presents, the visiting of friends, the Christmas banquet all become "sacraments" of the Sacrament. Nor should we forget that for us Catholics, Christmas happens every day as the great mystery of the Incarnation is re-presented as Emmanuel once more "pitches His tent among us."

Keep Christmas alive for the duration of the liturgical season. The Christmas season ends with the feast of the Lord's Baptism in January. So keep up the tree and outdoor decorations until then; don't stop singing those Christmas carols until then; and have all the Christmas parties you want then (be sure to have a really big splash for the Solemnity of the Epiphany on January 6). Undoubtedly, not a few friends or neighbours will ask you why you're behaving in that way, which will give you an opportunity to catechise or evangelize on the meaning of the feast.

With St. Paul, then, I want to urge you once more: Gaudete in Domino semper; iterum dico, gaudete! (Rejoice in the Lord always; I say it again, rejoice!).

Entrance Antiphon

O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

Penitential Act

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,

And, striking their breast, they say:
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. Amen

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest and on earth
peace to people of good will.
we praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
We give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

First Reading **Isaiah 11:1-10**

The Lord gathers all nations together into the eternal peace of God's kingdom.

Responsorial Psalm:

Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

Second reading **Romans 15:4-9**

Christ is the Saviour of all men.

Gospel Acclamation **Luke 3:4,6**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Gospel **Matthew 3:1-12**

The one who follows me will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

The mystery of faith

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
And behold the joy which comes to you from God.



Next Sunday's Readings

11th December - 3rd Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Isaiah 35:1-6,10

2nd Reading: James 5:7-10

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11