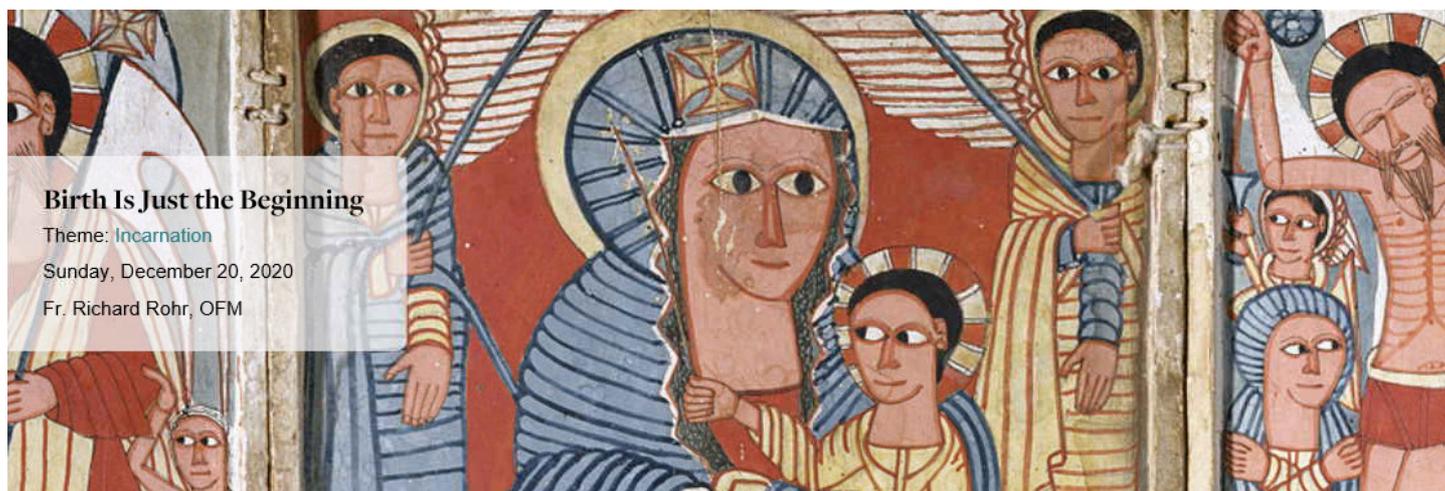




We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.



Birth Is Just the Beginning

Theme: [Incarnation](#)

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM

We must move beyond a merely sentimental understanding of Christmas as “waiting for the baby Jesus” to an adult and communal appreciation of the message of the incarnation of God in Christ. We Franciscans have always believed that the *incarnation was already the redemption*, because in Jesus’ birth God was saying that *it was good to be human, and God was on our side*.

Jesus identified his own mission with what he called the coming “reign of God.” We have often settled instead for the sweet coming of a baby who asked little of us in terms of surrender, encounter, mutuality, or any assent to the actual teachings of Jesus. Too much sentimentality, or juicing up of our emotions, can be a substitute for an actual relationship, as we also see in our human relationships. When we are so infatuated with the “sweetness” or “perfection” of another, we easily “fall” out of love at the first sign of their humanity. Let’s not let that happen with the infinitely compelling person of Jesus!

The celebration of Christmas is not merely a sentimental waiting for a baby to be born. It is much more *an asking for history to be born!* Creation groans in its birth pains, waiting for our participation with God in its renewal (see Romans 8:20-23). We do the Gospel no favour when we make Jesus, the Eternal Christ, into a perpetual baby, who asks little or no adult response from us. One even wonders what kind of mind would want to keep Jesus a baby. Maybe only one that is content with “baby Christianity”.

Any spirituality that makes too much of the baby Jesus is perhaps not yet ready for “prime-time” life. God clearly wants friends and partners to be images of divinity, if we are to believe the biblical texts. God, it seems, wants mature religion and a thoughtful, free response from us. God loves us in partnership, with mutual give and take, and *we eventually become the God that we love*.

The Christ we are asking and waiting for includes our own full birth and the further birth of history and creation. It is to this adult and Cosmic Christ we can say, “Come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20) with a whole new understanding and a deliberate passion. This makes our entire lives, and the life of the church one huge “advent”.

The Christ includes the whole sweep of creation and history joined with him - and each of us, too. This is the Universal (or Cosmic) Christ. We ourselves are members of the Body of Christ and the Universal Christ, even though we are not the historical Jesus. So we very rightly believe in “Jesus Christ”, and both words are essential.

Richard Rohr, www.cac.org

This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.

For more information visit pol.org.au/eltham or pol.org.au/montmorency.

We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.





Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...

Montmorency

For the recently deceased:

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:
Francis James Mannix, Christine Newton

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Eltham

For the recently deceased:

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:
Violetta, Christine Scott

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House
9435 2178 or eltham@cam.org.au.

Collections last weekend: 10 Jan 2021

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
Eltham	\$266.00	\$485.60
Montmorency	\$697.50	\$489.20

Please note the above figures are monies banked & do not include visa/mastercard or direct debits. Thank you so much for your contributions.



Please help our parish continue our important pastoral activities. You can give an offering online today with CDFpay. Find our parish by visiting:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayEltham> <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMontmorency>

Rosters:

Week ending 24 January

Montmorency

McAleer, Peter & Denise

ASRC

Eltham

Reardon, Kathy

Altar Society

Scully, Helen

Altar Society

Stewart Family

Pilgrim Rosary Statue

Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

Saturday 16th

6:00pm Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

Sunday 17th

8:30am Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

10:00am Mass (160 people)

Eltham

12:00pm Baptism: Evelyn

Montmorency

Tuesday 19th

9:30am Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

Wednesday 20th

9:30am Mass (160 people)

Eltham

Thursday 21st

9:30am Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC food collection & delivery

Montmorency

Friday 22nd

9:30am Mass (160 people)

Eltham

Saturday 23rd

6:00pm Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

Sunday 24th

8:30am Mass (160 people)

Montmorency

10:00am Mass (160 people)

Eltham

12:00pm Baptism: Rose

Montmorency

2

Gospel: John 1:35-42

As John stood with two of his disciples, Jesus passed, and John stared hard at him and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi,' - which means Teacher - 'where do you live?' 'Come and see' he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' - which means the Christ - and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas' - meaning Rock.



Reflection

Today's gospel is the first of the passages from John that are used to supplement Mark's short gospel. As with the majority of gospel readings, we hear this text only once in the three-year cycle. It links with last Sunday's gospel for the baptism of Jesus via the figure of John the Baptist. He is the stepping stone to Jesus' call of the first disciples, an episode which John describes quite differently from the other gospel writers.

The very first words spoken by Jesus in the fourth gospel are telling. He asks the disciples, "What do you want?" His response to their answer is equally simple and profound, "Come and see". And, John reports, "they went ... and stayed with him". In these few words John has defined the role of the disciple. The theme of abiding with Jesus and of the divine presence abiding with us recurs insistently later in the gospel.

The reading is punctuated with names and titles. Jesus is variously named as "lamb of God", "Rabbi/Teacher", and "Messiah/Christ". Right from the outset and throughout this gospel, the issue of Jesus' true identity is a constant question. For his part Simon Peter is given a new name and thus a new role as "Cephas/Rock"; the gospel will conclude with a fresh commission to him to shepherd the flock of Christ. **Break Open the Word 2021**



Thomas Heywood

6-7pm, Friday 5th February, 2021

St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne

Music by Bach, Elgar, Verdi, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, Guilmant, Cocker & Mulet

Tickets \$25, Children under 15, free

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/BNSIT

RECONCILIATION

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 2178