

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B

### Entrance Antiphon Cf Isaiah 45:8

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.

### A reading from the second book of Samuel 2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

*The kingdom of David will be established for ever in the sight of the Lord.*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent'. Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

**The word of the Lord.**

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 88:2-5. 27. 29. R. see v.2

*For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.*

### A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans Romans 16:25-27

*The mystery kept secret for endless ages is now revealed.*

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

**The word of the Lord.**

### Gospel Acclamation Luke 1:38

**Alleluia, alleluia!** I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done. **Alleluia!**

### A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke Luke 1:26-38

*You will conceive and bear a son.*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

### Communion Antiphon Isaiah 7:14

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



# St. Thomas More Parish, Belgrave

The Catholic Church in the Dandenong Ranges

P.O. Box 100, Belgrave, Victoria 3160

Phone: 97542141

Office Hours: 9.30am–2pm Tuesday to Friday

Internet: [pol.org.au/belgrave](http://pol.org.au/belgrave)

*The Parish of St Thomas More and the Archdiocese of Melbourne are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and vulnerable people in our community. May our message be that child protection and the dignity of every person is the responsibility of every adult. You can find out more about the Church's work in this area at: [www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention](http://www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention)*

## Our Parish Vision Statement:

*We are called to be a welcoming, compassionate community, empowered for our faith journey for active service.....*

CHURCH CENTRES		St. Joseph's Church Emerald Cnr. Emerald- Monbulk & Cornish Roads	Sacred Heart Church Gembrook Main Road	St. Thomas More Church Belgrave 17 Terry Avenue, Belgrave	St. Paul's Church Monbulk 59 Moores Road
MASS TIMES	WEEKEND	Vigil Mass 6.00pm	9.00am	9.00am	11.00am
	WEEKDAY			9.00am	

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B - 24TH DECEMBER, 2023

#### REFLECTION by Nick Brodie

Reflecting on Mary's final words in today's Gospel, Pope Francis suggests that we might take them as an 'invitation to take a genuine step towards Christmas'.

We all know that the real meaning of Christmas goes well beyond gifts and dinners and decorations – as pleasant as those things might often be. But sometimes we need to stop and remind ourselves what matters most. We should never let our busyness push Jesus away from our minds and hearts and behaviours. 'Consumerism is not found in the manger in Bethlehem', the Pope points out. Rather, the Pope sees the manger as something which can teach us about the real meaning of Christmas. It shows us, he says, the importance of closeness, poverty, and concreteness. By closeness he means the closeness of God with humanity, which should always give us hope and lead us to be close to others. 'The poverty of the manger', he adds, 'shows us where the true riches in life are to be found: not in money and power, but in relationships and persons.' Finally, by concreteness, the Pope means realness. God really became human. This must ground our faith, which means moving past appearances and good intentions to put the faith in action. 'At Christmas, God is concrete', the Pope says, suggesting we should therefore 'help a little hope to be born anew in those who feel hopeless!'



<https://www.liturgyhelp.com/calendar/date/2023Dec24/0/RefNickB>

#### The Pope's Monthly Intentions for 2023 —December

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

<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/popes-monthly-intentions-2023>

### WE ARE A CHILD SAFETY PARISH AND WE BELIEVE IN CHILD SAFETY.

**PARISH PRIEST:** Fr. Anthony Cruz MC  
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 Chairperson — Evie  
 Sue Luxford  
**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:**  
**Monbulk:** David Bhoynz  
**Belgrave:** Evie and Irene Reed  
**Gembrook:**  
**Emerald:**

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## **REMEMBRANCE IN OUR PRAYERS:**

### **Recent deaths:**

Many people across the world who have died due to natural calamities and ongoing Wars. May their souls rest in peace.

**Anniversaries:** Father Joseph Patrick Hynan PE, Dorothy Surmen, Jean Moule, Maria Wotkiw, Ian Schofield, Anne Oude Vrielink, Anthony Vale.

**Prayers for the Sick:** We pray for all who are ill, but especially the following people: Flynn Kroeger, Verity Loke, Helen Bye, Peter Lawrence, Stephen Billington, Anne Radocaj, Simon Kuyper John Barber, Dimuthu, Glen Butler, Juhyeon Kim, Peter Hicks, Margaret Campion, Cameron DiCasio, Jack Weir, Ewa Wallis, Jane Schellenbach, Deanne Atkinson, Daniel, Mason, Hero, Helen Smith, Irene, Debbie Owens, Don Kempster, Pat McCarrick, Justin, Tom Fergus, Josie Walsh, B. O'Connor, Maureen Lyons, Ingyin Collins, David Bourke, Eileen Banyard, Brendan, Martin Fergus, Margaret, Maureen, Patricia Gilchrist, Stephen Mc., Cheryl McInnes, Kate Arnott, Julian Neesham, Fa Perisipi, John Reid, Dieter Farmer, Margaret Sheanon, Dianne Zidek, Mark Pickthall, Terry Schubert, Neil Weatherill, Margaret Herbert, Rob Zwagerman, Joshua McQuade, Lanie Brereton, Sandra Dowling, Francesca, Neil Holland, Maureen Hughes, Marilyn Ward, Isabelle Henry, Phillis Willoughby.

- **Sick List: If you are aware that any names on the sick list need to be removed, please contact the Parish Office on 97542141.**

### **Reading Roster - 24th December, 2023**

**Helen Garrick & Marianne Kuyper**

### **There will be no weekday mass on 26th December.**

Christmas Crib will be on display at St. Thomas More church, from this Sunday with some additions from new parishioners. A basket for nonperishable goods for St Vincent de Paul will be available as well as a box for gift cards you may wish to purchase. This will be under the Christmas tree. These will be distributed to those families in greatest need and can be used for them to purchase items for their own families.

### **The new year mass times - 31st December**

St. Thomas More church, Belgrave - 9am

Sacred Heart church, Gembrook - 9am

St. Paul's church, Monbulk - 11am

Dear Parishioners

*Thank You!*

I would specially like to thank our parishioners who contributed to the life and the functioning of the parish in 2023 through their generous service.

And also to our Volunteers...

Mass Managers, Liturgy group members, Parish council members, Parish Finance Committee members, Bookkeeper, Parish property manager, Social Justice group, Alter servers, Lectors, Money collectors and counters, Sacramental Coordinator, Musicians, Choir members, visitation group, Special communion ministers, Working bee organizing committee members, Vincent de Paul Committee members, Garden maintain volunteers, Child Safety Committee members, Alter decorators, Cleaners, and other Volunteers...

**May the blessings of the Holy Night be with you today and always. Merry Christmas and a peaceful, prosperous New Year.**

### **Welcome the new principal Mr. Nichlas Frederiksen to St. Paul's school, Monbulk**

Behalf of St. Thomas more parish, I would like to say thank you to Mr. Michael Watt for his fabulous work for last 8 years as a principal at St. Paul's Catholic Primary School Monbulk. Wishing him all the best for his new appointment as a principal at St. Clement of Rome, Catholic Primary School, Bulleen.

We warmly welcome Mr. Nichlas Frederiksen who is our newly appointed principal for St. Paul's Catholic Primary School, Monbulk. He is currently acting principal of the Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School in Yea.

Wishing him all the best as he will take up the leadership role in 2024.

**Fr. Anthony Cruz MC**

*Congratulations!*

### **Belgrave parish office notice**

Parish office will be closed from 27th — 5th January 2024. Re open on 9th January, 2024.

### Next Week's readings

1st Reading	Genesis 15:1-6. 21:1-3
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 104:1-6. 8-9. R.vv.7.8
2nd reading	Hebrews 11:8. 11-12. 17-19
Gospel	Luke 2:22-40

## Christmas Mass Times



### **Christmas Eve Mass (Sunday 24th December )**

#### **St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave**

5.30pm Carols

6.00pm Children Mass (**Salesian Priest**)

11.15pm Carols

11.45pm Midnight Mass (**Fr. Cruz**)

#### **St. Joseph's Church Emerald**

6.30pm (**Fr. Cruz**)

#### **St. Paul's Church, Monbulk**

7.30pm Carols

8.00pm Mass (**Fr. Cruz**)

### **Christmas Day Mass ( Monday 25th, December )**

#### **Sacred Heart Church, Gembrook**

9.00am (Fr. Cruz)

#### **St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave**

9.00am (**Salesian Priest**)

#### **St. Paul's Church, Monbulk**

11.00am (**Fr. Cruz**)

**In his Christmas message for 2023, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli reflects on the beautiful words of the prophet Isaiah, who speaks of 'the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation'.**

Transcript:

Dear friends, we hear these words from the ancient prophet Isaiah (52:7):

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation ... These are beautiful words—old words, first spoken in old days, yet so sorely needed in our day!

Amid this time of conflict, suffering and exile, Isaiah speaks to us words of peace and the good news about the Prince of Peace.

Our hearts ache for reconciliation of peoples; respect for our shared humanity; care for our crying planet. Our world and its people seem to be groaning and railing against pathways to true peace.

Yet we experience the hope of God through simple words of joy, mercy and peace.

The shepherds experienced this. So did the Magi. Mary and Joseph knew it intimately.

God knew we needed his Son to come amongst us, to show us the way ahead.

As we come to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord this year, might we be attentive to the broken people across the world who are held captive by the tragedy of war and old hatreds.

Might we also remember those exiled in other ways—bereft of knowing God; lost and searching for identity and purpose.

We too can be the messengers whose footfalls bring light into the world, announcing mercy, bringing joy, offering Good News.

God has come among us, simply, humbly and hopefully in a little child, his Son, our Brother.

May the peace that comes through this child, the Prince of Peace, be with you this Christmas.

And with every footstep, may you take His message, and life, out into the world.

Happy Christmas to you all!

