

## First Sunday of Advent Year B

**Entrance Antiphon:** Cf. Ps 24:1-3

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.

In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.

Nor let my enemies exult over me;

and let none who hope in you be put to shame

### First Reading

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah Is 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8**

*Oh that you would tear the heavens apart and come down.*

You, Lord, yourself are our Father,

Our Redeemer is your ancient name.

Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways

and harden our hearts against fearing you?

Return, for the sake of your servants,

the tribes of your inheritance.

Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down

– at your Presence the mountains would melt.

No ear has heard, no eye has seen

any god but you act like this

for those who trust him.

You guide those who act with integrity

and keep your ways in mind.

You were angry when we were sinners;

we had long been rebels against you.

We were all like men unclean,

all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.

We have all withered like leaves

and our sins blew us away like the wind.

No one invoked your name

or roused himself to catch hold of you.

For you hid your face from us

and gave us up to the power of our sins.

And yet, Lord, you are our Father;

we the clay, you the potter,

we are all the work of your hand.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Responsorial Psalm Ps 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19 R. v.4**

**(R.) Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,

shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,

O Lord, come to our help. **(R.)**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,

look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it,

the vine your right hand has planted. **(R.)**

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,

the man you have given your strength.

And we shall never forsake you again:

give us life that we may call upon your name. **(R.)**

**(R.) Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

### Second Reading

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

**1 Cor 1:3-9**

*The revelation we looked for, Christ Jesus our Lord.*

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Gospel Acclamation: Ps 84:8**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

**Alleluia!**

### Gospel

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

**Mk 13:33-37**

*Stay awake! You never know when the Lord will come.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

**The Gospel of the lord.**

**Communion Antiphon: Ps 84:13**

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.





# Parish of Belgrave

## The Catholic Church

**P.O. Box 100, Belgrave, Victoria 3160**  
**Phone:** 97542141  
**Office Hours:** 10am–2pm Tuesday to Friday  
**After hours Phone No:** 87518112  
**Internet:** pol.org.au/belgrave  
**Email:** belgrave@cam.org.au

*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 Emerald Cnr. Emerald-Monbulk & Cornish Roads	Sacred Heart Gembrook Main Road	St. Thomas More Belgrave Reynolds Lane	St. Paul's Monbulk 59 Moores Road
MASS TIMES	WEEKEND	6.00pm Vigil Mass	9.00am	9.00am	11.00am
	WEEKDAY			9.00am	

### Homily for the first week of Advent

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, this Sunday we mark the beginning of a new liturgical year as well as the season of Advent, the time of preparation and spiritual purification for us to prepare ourselves properly for the celebration of Christmas, the birth of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now is a time of reconciliation between us and God, and for us to re-examine our way of life. As we mark the beginning a new year cycle and this blessed season of preparation, we enter into a time of reconfiguration of our lives and when we also take stock of what we have done and what we are going to do from now on, as we are about to celebrate once again, the joyous celebrations of our Saviour's birth into this world. Is it going to be just yet another Christmas and another celebration for us? Another season and time of merry-making and fun, but not accompanied by true and profound change of heart?

We all knew well that Christmas is celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, and Our God. But, how many of us actually internalise that fact and understand how it is so important and significant for us? Too many of us have treated Christmas, year after year, again and again, just as a season and time to be merry and happy, in tandem with what the world has done, in their secular celebrations. Do we really appreciate just how important Christmas is to all of us? Christmas, along with Easter that is to come in a few months' time, together celebrate the very important event in our history, that is the salvation of mankind and the fulfilment of God's long-held promises for each and every one of us, through Christ, His beloved Son, sent into the world as the ultimate gift for all of us. Without Christmas, there will be no Easter and its significance, and at the same time, without Easter, Christmas itself would have been of little importance.

Why is that so? That is because through Christmas, the Son of God and Saviour of all entered into this world, incarnate into flesh, born as the Son of Man through His mother Mary. At Christmas, we celebrate this newborn Baby, born the Saviour of the world and King of kings, the Divine Word Incarnate, Who was to be the One to make a New Covenant between God and His people, through none other than His ultimate sacrifice on the Cross. Without Easter and the Passion that happened before it, then Christmas will be just another birthday of another man. It is Easter that gave Christmas its full meaning and significance. That is because here we have the Son of God born and uniting Himself into the humanity He willingly took, that would eventually unite our sufferings and sins, and bearing all that burden together on His Cross that Christ became the source of all our salvation, our hope and the Light that dispels the darkness of this world surrounding us. Yes, and that is why, on this First Sunday of Advent, we focus on the theme of Hope, out of the four themes of Advent, 'Hope', 'Peace', 'Joy' and 'Love'.

Can we, as Christians, be bearers of Hope for the world, for our less fortunate brothers and sisters? If we ourselves have suffered and laboured in suffering this year due to pandemic, do not forget that there are definitely those others who have suffered even more and in even worse state than we are now. Let us restore the hope in others, by reaching out to them and helping one another in even small, little ways that we can do, to show the Hope of Christ through our actions.

Let us all enter into this season of Advent with internal reflection, and let us refocus our attention in life, that we turn our gaze and focus once again on the Lord and the hope that He has brought to us, that in Him alone lies our salvation, and through Him, we can overcome the darkness that are affecting us, and through Him, our sufferings and pains, our troubles and difficulties will eventually be gone, and in Him, we shall enjoy one day, the eternal glory and true happiness with Him, forevermore. May God bless us all and our Advent activities. Amen.

Your sincerely in Christ Jesus

Fr. Anthony Cruz

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**Belgrave:** Marie Madden  
**Gembrook:** Pam Giulieri  
**Emerald:** John Conway & Lisa McLean  
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## REMEMBRANCE IN OUR PRAYERS:

**Recent deaths** Many people across the world who have died due to corona virus and natural calamities.

**Anniversaries:** Nelly Van Raay, Edith Bramwell, Gerry Ruigrok, John van Graas (Snr.).

### Prayer for the deceased

Lord open wide the doors of your Mercy to all those who have passed away in the parish of St. Thomas More, Belgrave. In your compassion grant eternal bliss to all of them.

**Prayers for the Sick:** We pray for all who are ill, but especially the following people: Deanne Atkinson, Damien Van der Linden, Lil Warner, Fiona, Margaret Gilhooly, Daniel, Mason, Hero, Helen Smith, Irene and Kevin Ryan, Debbie Owens, Don Kempster, Irene, Linda and Robert Ploeg, Pat McCarrick, Joan Newman, Justin, Joy Goodie, Tom Fergus, Leo Walsh, Father Noel, MacKay. Stephen, Loise Lenaghan, B O'Connor, Linda Bullinant, Maureen & Peter Lyons, Laurie Fitton, Ingyin Collins, Alida Cabret, David Bourke, Eileen Banyard, Brendan, Martin Fergus.

**Topic: Father Cruz' Holy Mass Join Zoom Meeting**

[https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?](https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMIZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09)  
[pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMIZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09](https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMIZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09)

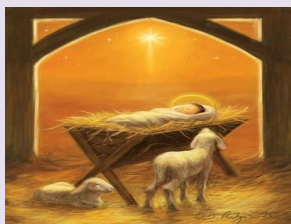
**Meeting ID: 750 464 5976..**

**Passcode: 7mJTwW**

*Our church doors are open to us. Let us come and participate in the Eucharistic celebration and prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus.*

We welcome you all to our church. Let's sing and praise the Lord as a community. Jesus is waiting for us. Open our hearts to "Emmanuel". See and feel the God's love.

May all your hearts fill with Holy Spirit and guide us on our journey.



**Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced people for the positions of:**

School Administration Officer (Finance responsibilities), St Gregory The Great Primary School, Doncaster

Sacramental Coordinator, St Thomas More Parish, Mount Eliza

Parish Secretary, St Patrick's Parish, Kilmore

Bookkeeper, St Francis of Assisi Parish, Mill Park

Parish Secretary, The Catholic Parish of Castlemaine

Animation Consultant: Clergy, Parish and Community Engagement, East Melbourne

Parish Coordinator, St Jude's Parish, Scoresby

Further details of the above positions can be found on the Archdiocese website at: <https://melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies>



Dear parishioners,

Kindly keep in your prayers the students of St Paul's School, Monbulk as they are preparing themselves to receive Sacrament next week, so that all of them would experience the Mercy of God the Father, redemptive and loving touch of God the Son and the strengthening and sanctifying grace of God the Holy Spirit in their lives.

### **Date for St Paul's School Monbulk:**

Confirmations - Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020 (7pm at St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave).

N.B: First Reconciliations and First Holy Communion for the students of St Paul' School are scheduled for next (2021) academic year.

**BAPTISM:** To arrange a Baptism in the Parish, please phone the parish office during the office hours on 97542141.

### **Advent Wreath Prayers for Lighting the Candles**



#### **Advent Wreath Prayer Week 1 - Hope**

Heavenly Father, Advent is a time for remembering and reflecting on the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Father, I pray that you will turn our hearts toward you as Christmas approaches. Let us not get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season this year and miss the chance to celebrate the gifts of hope, peace, joy, love, that you sent to us on that first Christmas.

Father God, every word in scripture points to the gift of hope that we have because of Christ Jesus. The Christmas story wasn't the beginning of that message of hope because the old testament is full of glimpses of your plan to redeem your people and restore them into a relationship with you, but we are able to truly begin to see and understand just how great your love for us is when we read the story of Jesus' birth in scripture.

You showed us a glimmer of that hope as you chose to send your son into this earth through a family tree that was a little bent and scarred. We glanced it again as you chose a tribe that was small and a city that was lowly. It can be seen when we recognize that you don't send your Son to be birthed in a fancy palace among the wealthy and the elite, but our King of Kings and Lord of Lords was born among common shepherds and livestock in a barn.

Help us to see that you are with us. Nothing is too difficult, too messy, or too dirty for you. Jesus came to give us the gift of eternal life through the salvation that only you, our Heavenly Father, can give when we believe on your Son, repent of our sins, and confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

That first Christmas, you gave us the gift of hope wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Thank you, Father, for your immeasurable gift. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen

### **Wanted: Loving Married Couples**

#### **Become a Sponsor couple**

SmartLoving is a Catholic marriage ministry and is calling for enthusiastic married couples to journey with an engaged couple as they prepare to be married in the Catholic Church. Find out more at this free information session: Wed, 9 December - 8pm AEDT |

[www.smartloving.org/webinar](http://www.smartloving.org/webinar)





## Children's Week Activity: "Just as I have loved you"

As people of faith strive to live by Jesus' message to his disciples: 'Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.' (John 13:34) Jesus' commandment reminds us that we are each loved by God, who created us in his own image and likeness. We are then invited to show that same love to our neighbours - within our families, our local parish, school communities and the wider community

### How to participate

To celebrate Children's Week this year, we are inviting all children and young people (from the ages of 4 years to 17) to participate in an activity. We want you to share with us what the words "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34) mean to you through a drawing or artwork (mixed media).

[Download the activity flyer & submission form](#)

[Download activity colouring sheet \(for the little ones!\)](#)

Along with your artwork, please include an answer (150 words or less) to the following question: *In what ways do you feel part of the parish community and how do you try to make others feel welcome?*

Entries should include the completed submission form and can be sent to [psu@cam.org.au](mailto:psu@cam.org.au) before 5pm on 18 December 2020. (Parents are welcome to answer the question on behalf of their child/ren if they are too young to do so.) For more information please visit <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/celebrating-childrens-week-2020>

It is important to note that this is not a competition, but a reflection and an opportunity for adults to hear the voice of our young ones. Those who participate will be invited to an online gathering with Archbishop Peter A Comensoli following the activity .

### Important Dates

29th November	Saint Andrew the Apostle
3rd December	Francis Xavier

### St. Andrew the Apostle

St. Andrew, also known as Andrew the Apostle, was a Christian Apostle and the older brother to St. Peter.

According to the New Testament, Andrew was born in the village of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee during the early first century. Much like his younger brother, Simon Peter, Andrew was also a fisherman.



Andrew's very name means strong and he was known for having good social skills.

In the Gospel of Matthew, it is said Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and saw Andrew and Simon Peter fishing. It is then he asked the two to become disciples and "fishers of men."

In the Gospel of Luke, Andrew is not initially named. It describes Jesus using a boat, believed to be solely Simon's, to preach to the multitudes and catch a large amount of fish on a night that originally was dry. Later, in Luke 5:7, it mentions Simon was not the only fisherman on the boat, but it is not until Luke 6:14 that there is talk of Andrew being Simon Peter's brother.

However, the Gospel of John tells a separate story, stating Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. When Jesus walked by one day, John the Baptist stated, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" It is then that Andrew and another made the decision to follow Jesus.

Little else is said about Andrew in the Gospels, but it is believed Andrew was one of the closer disciples to Jesus. It was he who told Jesus about the boy with the loaves and fishes, according to John 6:8. When Philip wanted to speak to Jesus about Greeks seeking him, he spoke to Andrew first. Andrew was also present at the last supper.

Per Christian tradition, Andrew went on to preach the Good News around the shores of the Black Sea and throughout what is now Greece and Turkey. Andrew was martyred by crucifixion in Patras. He was bound, rather than nailed, to a cross, as is described in the Acts of Andrew. He was crucified on a cross form known as "crux decussata," which is an X-shaped cross or a "saltire." Today this is commonly referred to as "St. Andrew's Cross." It is believed Andrew requested to be crucified this way, because he deemed himself "unworthy to be crucified on the same type of cross as Jesus."

Andrew's remains were originally preserved at Patras. However, some believe St. Regulus, who was a monk at Patras, received a vision telling him to hide some of Andrew's bones. Shortly after Regulus' dream, many of Andrew's relics were transferred to Constantinople by order of Roman emperor Constantius II around 357. Regulus later received orders in a second dream telling him to take the bones "to the ends of the earth." He was to build a shrine for them wherever he shipwrecked. He landed on the coast of Fife, Scotland. In September 1964, Pope Paul VI had all of St. Andrew's relics that ended up in Vatican City sent back to Patras. Now, many of Andrew's relics and the cross on which he was martyred are kept in the Church of St. Andrew in Patras.

St. Andrew is venerated in Georgia as the first preacher of Christianity in that territory and in Cyprus for having struck the rocks creating a gush of healing waters upon landing on the shore.

His saltire cross is featured on the flag of Scotland and is represented in much of his iconography. He is commonly portrayed as an old man with long white hair and a beard, often holding the Gospel book or a scroll.

St. Andrew is the patron saint of fishermen and singers. He is also the patron saint to several countries and cities including: Scotland, Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Patras and his feast day is celebrated on November 30.

Source: [www.catholic.org/saints/saint](http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint)