

Third Sunday of Advent Year

Entrance Antiphon: Phil 4:4-5

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Indeed, the Lord is near.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah Is 61:1-2, 10-11

I exult for joy in the Lord.

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 Psalm Lk 1:46-50, 53-54. R. Is 61:10

(R.) 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

1 Thes 5:16-24

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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: Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Gospel

Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

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 not only declared, but 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 prophesied: 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.

Communion Antiphon:

Cf. Is 35:4

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.



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

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 3rd Sunday Advent

The official delegations from the capital(Jerusalem) asked John the Baptist two very basic questions: *Who are you? Why are you baptising?*

Their first one: *Who are you?* What is your sense of yourself, of your identity, of the deepest meaning of yourself as a person? John's answer was clear: *A voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord!* He was a voice crying out from the wilderness of life, from the midst of people caught up in illusion and distraction, adrift from their roots, their purpose, their meaning, submerged in what he would later identify as *the sin of the world*. He saw himself as a voice crying out on behalf of God. It was the voice of one in relationship with God, one whose sense of self whose sense of meaning arose from that deep bond with God. He saw himself as a man trusted by God, entrusted by God with a mission: *Make a straight way for the Lord.*

And that mission gave the answer to their second question: *Why are you baptising?* Why do you do what you are doing? John saw his role, the meaning of his life, as preparing and inviting people to encounter God; and in encountering God, to find themselves and their meaning, and to break free from the illusory world that is sin.

Next week's Gospel will present Mary to us. We could well ask her the same two questions: Who are you? Why do you do what you are doing? To the first question: Who are you? What is your radical sense of yourself? Mary's answer would be: *I am the handmaid of the Lord.* As was the case with John, so too her sense of who she was was rooted inextricably in her union with God. And if we were then to ask her: Why do you do what you are doing? What is the meaning of your life? What is your mission in life? she would answer: to shape the human face of the mystery we call God.

Perhaps Advent is a good time as we ask ourselves the same two questions: Who am I? Why do I do what I am doing? When I ask myself: Who am I? I hope that my answer would truthfully be: I am one loved and trusted by God. When I ask myself: Why do I do what I do? I again hope I could truly answer: I am one who wants to help others to see him more clearly, love him more dearly and follow him more nearly.

Both questions are in fact hard to answer, and depend very much on accurate self-knowledge. And the pursuit of that is proving to be a life-long task. But I believe it is a worthwhile task, not just for myself but for all of us. It is the only way to evaluate and to prioritise the myriad lesser things that fill our lives. It is the only way ultimately to break free from the power of the sin of the world.

And now we move into Eucharist. Who are we? I hope that Eucharist serves to remind all of us that we are persons in the deepest possible relationship with the God to whom we freely offer our lives in union with Jesus. Why do we do this? We do this because we want to, because we believe that our lives have meaning, because we want to associate our selves and all our activity with the saving work of Christ, because we seek to be nourished to become more like him, more suffused with his own spirit, by eating his very body broken for the world and drinking his blood poured out to liberate us and our world from the suffocating power of sin.

Source; Fr John Mckinnon

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Fr. Anthony Cruz anthony.cruz@cam.org.au
Phone: 87518112.
Parish Secretary: Email: belgrave@cam.org.
Parish Office: 97542141
Sacraments : belgrave@cam.org.au
Child Safety Contacts: Maria Mc9754 5200 & Jeanette Wicks 97542759
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Chairperson — Andrew Jans 0419590155
Monbulk: Rin Van Raay
Belgrave: Marie Madden
Gembrook: Pam Giulieri
Emerald: John Conway & Lisa McLean
Mt. Dandenong: Stephen Billington & Virginia Schneiders

ST. THOMAS MORE'S PRIMARY, BELGRAVE
 Principal: Caroline Quinton
 Phone: 9754-4444
 Email: cquinton@smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au
www.smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au

ST. PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, MONBULK
 Principal: Michael Watt
 Phone: 9756 7201
 Email: principal@spmonbulk.catholic.edu.au
www.spmonbulk.catholic.edu.au

REMEMBRANCE IN OUR PRAYERS:

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

Anniversaries: Paul Granieri, Terry McDermott, Dorothy ward.

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.

Topic: Father Cruz' Holy Mass Join Zoom Meeting

[https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?](https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMlZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09)

[pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMlZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09](https://zoom.us/j/7504645976?pwd=SOYwS3FiQndpMlZOSTYOTFRRYXJGQT09)

Meeting ID: 750 464 5976

Passcode: 7mJTWw

Note : Please be advised about the new changes due to relaxing of restrictions re covid19.

We are now allowed to have up to 150 people inside the church. But because we must also adhere to social distancing we calculated that we can fit the following numbers of people in each mass centre.

Belgrave - 75 people

Emerald - 35 people

Monbulk - 50 people

Gembrook - 25 people

Please sign in before you enter the Church with your *name and your contact number.*

Every Saturday after the 9am mass we pray the Rosary in the presence of the blessed Sacrament exposed during which the sacrament of reconciliation (individual confession) is available with all hygiene measures and social distancing. Confessions available on Tuesday to Saturday by appointment until 23rd of December 2020.

Thanksgiving Envelopes

Thanks giving envelopes are available at the church. Please place your donations in the collection box. Alternatively you can pay by direct debit.

We have a special collection this week for "**Melbourne Overseas Mission.**" Let us be generous in our donations so that our good Lord too will be generous to us.



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

Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve - Thursday 24th December

St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave
5.30pm Carols

6.00pm Children Mass

11.00pm Carols

11.30pm Midnight Mass

St. Joseph's Church, Emerald 6.30pm

St. Paul's Church, Monbulk

6.30pm Carols

7.00pm Mass

Christmas Day — Friday 25th December:

St.Thomas More Church, Belgrave 9.00am

Sacred Heart Church, Gembrook 9.00am

St.Paul's Church, Monbulk 11.00am



Pope Francis proclaims "Year of St Joseph"

from, today 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

The Letter marks the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To celebrate the anniversary, Pope Francis has proclaimed a special "Year of St Joseph," beginning on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception 2020 and extending to the same feast in 2021.

By Vatican News



Important Dates

13th December **St. Lucy of Syracuse**

14th December **John of the cross**

New Bishop for the Catholic Diocese of Sale

A small gathering of 91 people was present in St Mary's Cathedral, Sale Today (Tuesday 8 December) to witness the ordination of the tenth Bishop of Sale Greg Bennet.

Principal consecrator was the Most Reverend Peter A. Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne assisted by Co-consecrators Most Reverend Denis Hart, Emeritus Archbishop of Melbourne and Most Reverend Patrick O'Regan, Archbishop of Adelaide, former Bishop of Sale.



Dear parishioners,

On December 5th Our Archbishop A. Peter Comensoli has written a pastoral letter to the Clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, expressing his concerns over the Bill (Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020) quietly tabled last week by the State Government of Victoria. The Archbishop has asked us to make the parishioners aware the bill and its Implications, and encourage the parishioners to phone our local Member of Parliament to express our view.

Because the bill has not been widely publicized, many parents and families, clergy and people of faith are currently unaware of the contents of this proposed legislation, which might have a chilling effect on the ability of Victorian people of faith to express a view, share their faith, or talk about biblical teaching without fear of state interference. In fact, the ultimate outcome of this bill may not actually be to protect anyone who is vulnerable, but to silence people of faith from expressing their view.

Let us not forget to express our views to our Local Member of Parliament.

Fr. Anthony Cruz

WESTWARD HO!I would like to advise my Parish friends that John and I are moving to Edenhope in the Wimmera in the next few weeks. After 65 years in this beautiful parish, the wrench for me will be great. I will miss you all, but hope that we can keep in touch. If you are on the road to Penola (St Mary Mackillop country), Robe or Adelaide, please call in for a cuppa and a 'catch-up' - my phone number is 0400436793.

May God bless you all, and thank you for the treasured memories, especially of my time in the parish office. With much love, Helen Surman xx

St Vincent de Paul Society

St Vincent de Paul Society volunteers are committed to providing people with access to the resources and support they need to overcome personal hardship. Our service is run entirely by volunteers and funded through the generosity of donations from our local community.

If you require assistance, please phone our Welfare Assistance Line on:

Free Call 1800 305 330 Monday to Friday, 10:00am - 3:00pm, except for public holidays.

Mother and Child



Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai – circa 1300.

Rewritten by Erica Kurec 2020

Dear Parishioners

We have just lived through an extraordinary year, with Covid19 causing lockdown and isolation. Although we missed attending mass and other services suspended, we give thanks for remaining connected as a faithful community.

May this Christmas bring comfort and joy to you and your dear ones, and may the New Year be filled with blessings of peace, happiness and hope.

St. Thomas More Parish Team