

Fourth Sunday of Advent Year

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Is 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 Sm 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

(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **(R.)**

I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.' **(R.)**

He will say to me: 'You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me.'

I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure. **(R.)**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Rom 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: Lk 1:38

I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

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.

Communion Antiphon

Is 7:14

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



Parish of Belgrave

The Catholic Church

P.O. Box 100, Belgrave, Victoria 3160
Phone: 97542141
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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 fourth Sunday of Advent

Today's celebration of the Mass commemorates the Fourth Sunday of Advent. In a few days, we will join together to celebrate the coming of the Light of God into the world on December 25 (Christmas Day). On Christmas we celebrate the coming of Jesus in the world. Maybe more than any other time of the year, we feel God's closeness to us for it seems to be easier to open our hearts to Him. And so today's gospel presents Mary and her initiation to the first Christmas. Seeing her faith during the annunciation, this helps us to prepare properly for Christmas. Let us pay attention to what happened to the conversation between Mary and the angel Gabriel.

Mary listens. The angel announces that the Messiah will be born in her and she listens. Her greatness comes through her faithful listening. Mary listens, asks for clarification and finally accepts to be the servant of the Lord.

Prayer, in the first place, is a listening. We can ask questions but the answers will come through listening. It is not only with God that we need a listening attitude. If there are difficulties with members of our family, it is often because we do not know how to listen. We are ready with our answer but we have not understood yet the question.

Mary accepts. Mary is deeply disturbed even by the initial greeting of the angel. But Angel Gabriel showers her with assurances that everything will be alright. "Do not be afraid....The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; hence the holy offspring to be born will be called Son of God," (v. 35). These words of assurance eventually brought Mary to turn her negative emotion to a humble word of acceptance.

The important word in these angel's words of assurance is overshadow. The word is rarely used in the Bible. In the Old Testament, however, we can find it in the book of Exodus. It says that as soon as the cloud overshadowed the tent, "The Lord's presence filled it," (Ex. 40:34). It was in the tent that the Ark of the Covenant was kept and God overshadowed or covered it. Luke's choice of this word is not accidental but it is deeply symbolic. He compared Mary's body to the tent in which the Ark of the Covenant was kept. He compared Mary's womb in which Jesus will be housed, to the Ark of the Covenant in which the tablet of the Ten Commandments were housed. Thus when God's power overshadows Mary, the Lord's 'presence' fills her.

Mary believes. Her faith was humble and hence she first believes and only then reasons upon it and so the angel said to her: "Know that Elizabeth your kinswoman has conceived a son in her old age; she who was thought to be sterile is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible with God," (vv. 36-37). The important words in the sentence are the words, 'nothing is impossible with God.' Before God's power overshadows Mary, the world had no hope. Sin and violence were everywhere. The human race had no hope of salvation. It was held slavery by Satan. St. Elizabeth had no hope of giving birth to a son because she was old and sterile. Even the Blessed Virgin Mary had no hope of bearing a child because she is a virgin. But when God overshadows Mary, He changes all these especially when Jesus has entered the world through Mary's great fiat. Yes God wants Mary to submit even the noble reason of faith.

Mary obeys. Her obedience is risk-taking when she says, "Let it be done according to your word," (v. 38). Her obedience is loving. She loves God and hence trusts in Him and obeys. She kept on saying, 'yes' to God until the end of her earthly life to be the Mother of God. Mother of Christ is a title we usually reserve to Mary. But Mary is mother of Christ in two senses. She is mother of Christ in the physical sense that she carries Jesus in her womb and gives birth to Him. This is an unrepeatable event and an honour that no other human being could share with her. But she is also mother of Christ in a spiritual sense. In a spiritual sense the role of being mother of Christ is available to all Christians. And so as we continue to celebrate the Holy Mass, let us remember that the Lord Jesus is with us, having established His spiritual Kingdom on earth on the Day of Pentecost. May we remember that by partaking in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the visible Body of Christ, we are participating in the great feast in the invisible Kingdom of God on earth.

Source : <https://justmehomely.wordpress.com/>

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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: Joyce Lester, John Horton –Crundall, Brett Schmidt, Steve Tupper, Sylvia Schmuki Mueller, Evelyn Kiker.

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.*

Confessions: Dates and Times

St Thomas More, Belgrave - 19th-24th, December (9.30 -10.30 am).

St Joseph's Church, Emerald - 20th December (5-6pm).

St Paul's Church, Monbulk - 23rd December (5- 6 pm).

Sacred Heart's Church, Gembrook – 22nd December (5.30-6.30pm)

Be Best Prepared to Meet the Babe of Bethlehem!

Places of Worship and Religious Gatherings for Christmas Masses

- Record Keeping is still required for all attendees beyond a 15-minute visit – and must include: First Name + Contact Number + date and time at which the person attended the place of worship. Records must be kept for 28 days;
- People must carry a face covering at all times. If a distance of 1.5m cannot be maintained, either indoors or outdoors, then face coverings must be worn (unless they are people that live with each other, or have a lawful reason, or are children under 12 years of age).

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



Difficult Decision

For the last 12 years, our Parish Social Justice Group has operated a free meal service at the Tin Shed in Belgrave's main street. Those who used the service, regularly praised the warm friendly atmosphere and the generous quantities of nourishing food we offered. Teams of cooks from our parish, St John the Baptist Ferntree Gully, Mater Christi College and St Thomas More Primary School, supported by our three dedicated co-ordinators, Janette Van Santen, John Shaw and Lou laquinto, have sustained this initiative and made it successful.

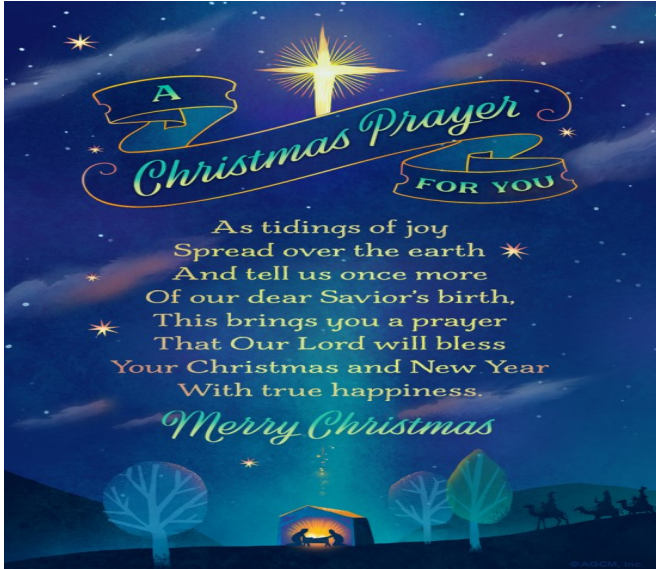
A recent meeting of the Social Justice Group decided to discontinue Tucker in the Tin Shed. In making this difficult decision, we recognized that the number of diners we were serving has diminished; that more meal services such as Kindness Kitchen in Tecoma, Dig In Café in Emerald; Upwey Baptist Church Community Meals have developed over the years, making more meals available to more people; our ministry has required devoted efforts many people for 12 years.

An uncertain future awaits many in our area, as the full effects of pandemic related unemployment are realized. The Social Justice Group would like to continue working in areas of social need. Our Vision Statement indicates that we exist to raise awareness of Social Justice issues and to be actively involved in addressing them. We would welcome suggestions from parishioners as to where and how our group can be involved. Please send your ideas to Marilyn Huber's email address: mm.huber34@gmail.com

Marilyn Huber

Important Dates

21st December	Peter Canisius
25th December	Christmas SOLEMNITY
26th December	Stephen, M



Greetings everyone

Re: Farewell and presentation to Helen Surman

Apologies for the short notice - but it is a case of now or never !

We would like to invite everyone to a morning tea this coming Tuesday 22nd December at 10.30am in the presbytery.

Please bring a plate to share - many thanks

Marie Madden

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.

FUNDRAISING NEWS:

Would you like to share your old stamps and coins with the Parish

We are in the process of collecting old stamps and coins. Can you please keep all used postage stamps (Australian and overseas) and overseas money, also old stamp albums.

These are for sale at the next Parish fete. Please send to the parish office or call Tony Whyte (St Paul's Monbulk) for collection.

Thank you



Archbishop Peter A Comensoli's 2020 Christmas message

Visit the below link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zveSsoAKgiA>



May the Lord Jesus Christ provide you with both divine and physical strength and prosperity to last you through the rest of your time on earth!

Merry Christmas