

The Epiphany of the Lord

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Mal 3:1; 1 Chr 29:12

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah Is 60:1-6

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples. Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness. Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried. At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you; the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13, R. see v.11

(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. **(R.)**

In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds. **(R.)**

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him. **(R.)**

For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. **(R.)**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Eph 3:2-3. 5-6

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same

inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew Mt 2:1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.' Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the lord.

Communion Antiphon: Cf. Mt 2:2

We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.



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

Homily for the Epiphany of the Lord

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. "Epiphany" comes from the Greek word "epiphaino", a combination of two words: "epi" (upon) and "phaino" (show). Literally, it means, "to show upon", or manifestation. In Christian usage, Epiphany connotes the manifestation of the glory of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles represented by the Wise Men or Magi. Who are these Wise Men or Magi? How many are they? What are their names? We have no definite answers to these questions. Scriptures say that they were men of great learning, particularly in the field of astrology and the occult. The appearance of an unusually bright star moved them to search for the newborn King. Through the guidance of this star, they found the Holy Infant lying in the manger in Bethlehem.

Although they were Gentiles, they came to offer homage to Jesus and to bring Him the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These are gifts that convey profound meaning and symbolism. Gold is a gift fit for a King, for indeed, Jesus is the King of kings. Frankincense is a gift for a priest. The Magi perceived Jesus as priest, the bridge between God and man. Myrrh is a fragrant gum resin, which was used as incense, perfumes and medicines. But its most notable use was that of an embalming material, used in Egyptian mummies. While the Magi acknowledged Jesus as king and priest, they also perceived that He would die for the salvation of mankind. St. Odilo of Cluny said: "To offer gold is to proclaim Christ's kingship, to offer incense is to adore his Godhead, and to offer myrrh is to acknowledge his mortality."

This feast expresses the fact that the birth of the Incarnate Word was known throughout the world. This is the meaning of the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. This is what we proclaimed in the Psalm: "Lord, every nation on earth will adore you!" St. Gregory the Great said: "When the king of heaven was born, the heavens knew that he was God because they immediately sent forth a star; the sea knew him because it allowed him to walk upon it; the earth knew him because it trembled when he died; the sun knew him because it hid the rays of its light."

The coming of the Magi to visit the Newborn King in Bethlehem was a clear message that the birth of Jesus was a significant event not only for a small group of people but for the entire humanity as well. For, indeed, Jesus is the savior not just of the Jews but also of all mankind. Their encounter with the Holy Infant gave the Magi their first-hand experience of His saving power. This experience radically transformed them. They came as astrologers; they left as believers. They came as searchers; they left as followers. They came aided by the bright star; they left guided by divine wisdom. They came as Magi; they left as Wise Men.

The encounter with Jesus, the God in the flesh, should make us understand that nothing really matters in this world but God. When we have God in our lives, we do not need anything else, for we have everything. Where the sun is, the stars have no light. And yet, we have to ask ourselves: Do we really have God in our lives? If we believe that Jesus is our only God and Savior, why do many people still continue to read the horoscope, believe in fortunetellers and feng shui, and admire black magic and witchcraft? Just look at how popular and successful are the books and movies of Harry Potter and the vampires. How many of us have the image of Buddha in our homes? Is Jesus not enough for us?

Unfortunately, for many people, that is the case: Jesus is not enough. This is demonstrated in the example of King Herod. He sought to kill the Child whom he considered to be a real threat to his ambition for power and wealth. For many people, the desire for material wealth and worldly power leads them to ignore God and turn to magic, horoscope, astrology, and fortunetelling. However, the Catechism of the Catholic Church makes it very clear: "Consulting horoscopes, astrology, (etc.) contradict(s) the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone" (no. 2116). Furthermore, the Magi were called Wise Men because they used their scientific knowledge not for their personal gain and ambition, but to search for the truth and the real meaning of life. And so they rejoiced in finding the Lord Jesus. What we see now is the opposite. Many people use science and technology to eliminate God from human society. There is a flagrant and concerted effort by worldly people to put science over and above divine revelation and the Word of God.

The new year has just begun. Let the lesson of the Wise Men serve as our guiding principle. Let us cast away the spirit of materialism, pride and egoism. Let us begin this year in the spirit of profound humility and awe before the glory of God. Like the Wise Men, let us seek Jesus in our lives, worship and love Him, and then we become heralds of the good news in the world.

Source: Fr. Mike Lagrimas

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: Fr. John Edmond Marry OSA, Ronald Jeanes, James Whyte, Linda Soden, Maria Van Graas.

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. Pat McCarrick, Joan Newman, Justin, Joy Goodie, Tom Fergus, Leo and Josie Walsh, Father Noel MacKay, StepheLois Lenaghan, B. O'Connor, Linda Bullivant, Maureen & Peter Lyons, Laurie Fitton, Ingyin Collins, Alida Cabret, David Bourke, Eileen Banyard, Brendan, Martin Fergus, Margaret & Fiona Gilhooly, Maureen, Patricia Gilchrist, Stephen Mc., Cheryl McInnes, Kate Arnott, Julian Neesham, Robert Drake, Helen Hermann, Lyn Blackman, Joan Munday, Fa Perisipi, John Reid, Dieter Farmer, Margaret Sheanon, Dianne Zidek, Mark Pickthall, Terry Schubert, Neil Weatherill, Margaret Herbert, Rob Zwagerman, Peter Champion, Joshua McQuade, Jim & Ed Hodapp, Lanie Brereton, Sandra Dowling, Francesca, Neil Holland, Maureen Hughes, Marilyn Ward, Isabelle Henry, Phillis Willoughby.

Places of Worship and Religious Gatherings

- We are now allowed to have up to 150 people in the church. We can't have more than the permitted numbers. So we follow, "First come first served"
- Record Keeping is still required for all attendees beyond a 15-minute visit – and must include: First Name, Last name, Contact Number, Date and Time at which the person attended the place of worship. Records must be kept for 28 days;
- People carry a face covering at all times as we may not be able to maintain 1.5m social distance. (Children age under 12 and those who have lawful reasons are excepted from wearing masks).

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:

We are in the process of collecting old stamps and old 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. Send to the parish office or call Tony Whyte (St Paul's Monbulk) for collection.

Thankyou



BAPTISM

Let us welcome **Levi Troy Plozza** into our faith community as he is going to be baptized this week at Sacred Heart Church, Gembrook. May he be richly blessed throughout his life, constantly being aware of the unconditional love and mercy of God.

BAPTISM:

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

Invitation for Readers for 2021

***O Lord, open my lips,
That my mouth may declare Your praise.***

Psalm 51:15

Who got a passion to serve the God by joining the readers team. We invite the people who would like to read the Holy bible at the Sunday mass. Please contact Helen Smith via helenypsmith@gmail.com.



Pope Francis proclaims “Year of St Joseph”



With the Apostolic Letter “Patris corde” (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph” from today, 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

At the conclusion of his Letter, he adds another prayer to St Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,

Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

To you God entrusted his only Son;

in you Mary placed her trust;

with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,

show yourself a father

and guide us in the path of life.

Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,

and defend us from every evil. Amen.

Source:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-12/pope-francis-proclaims-year-of-st-joseph.html>

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 of 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 publicised, 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.

<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/bills/591143exi1.pdf>

<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/bills/591143bi1.pdf>

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

Fr. Anthony Cruz

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 Iaquinto, 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

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

*Happy
New Year*