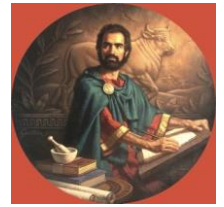


Saint Luke the Evangelist Catholic Parish Blackburn South

46 Orchard Grove Blackburn South Vic 3130

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CHRISTMAS BULLETIN: 25 DECEMBER 2018
YEAR C

THE YEAR OF SAINT LUKE - BEING THE GOOD NEWS & PROMOTING GOD'S HOSPITALITY

Christmas Day readings: Is 52:7-10; Heb 1:1-6; Gospel John 1:1-18

GOSPEL REFLECTION BY GREG SUNTER: If you were to give just a cursory glance at a collection of 'religious' Christmas cards, or even the local nativity scene, you would undoubtedly see a varied assortment of shepherds, wise men, livestock and angels gathered around the holy family in a timber structure of some sort. Even the most casual reading of Luke's account of the birth of Christ would reveal that most of the nativity figurines are missing! Our retelling of the birth of Christ tends to be an amalgamation of the Luke and Matthew versions with a bit of creative tradition thrown in for good measure.

The Luke account of the nativity carries a very specific theology that runs throughout the rest of that gospel. It is a theology that places the outcast and downtrodden at the centre of Jesus' mission. In this account, Jesus is born outside the town because there is no room for Joseph and Mary within the safety of the inn. Like those he will minister to later in life, Jesus is born 'on the edge' – even outside the boundaries. Rather than the impressive 'Wise Men' of the Matthew infancy account, the witnesses to Jesus' birth in the Luke account are lowly shepherds. Unlike the somewhat romantic notion we may have of shepherds, in Jesus' time they were regarded as little better than thieves and cut-throats. All they could be trusted to do was tend sheep outside of townships and away from 'civilised' society. They held one of the lowest positions in Jewish society. The gospel writer's choice of these witnesses to the birth of Jesus is a very deliberate one that clearly announces the purpose and direction of Jesus' mission.

Scriptural context – Matthew v Luke: Ask a child (or even most adults) to describe the scene at the birth of Jesus and you will hear a confused combination of the two scriptural accounts with several non-scriptural additions. It is a shame that the two versions have merged into one as each is deserving of its own integrity. The Matthew account emphasises Jesus as the fulfilment of prophecy and has Wise Men as the witnesses to his birth in a house. It is from Luke that we have the much humbler birth in a manger witnessed by the lowly shepherds. Each has something different and distinct to say about Jesus and his mission.

Gospel focus – A Great Census? The decree of a census for the whole Roman world appears to be an unlikely event. A census of people in local regions was not unusual but a census that required people to return to their place of birth carries no historical validity. The gospel writer correctly places Mary and Joseph in their home town of Nazareth but prophecy indicated the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. The author needed an excuse for Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem. We must remember that the gospels are not to be read as historical accounts but rather as faith accounts of the life of Jesus.

Historical context – The Nativity scene: St Francis of Assisi is credited with setting up the first nativity scene and thus establishing a tradition that is carried on today in homes, churches and public spaces in Christian communities everywhere. In 1223, in the town of Greccio he created a life size tableau of the nativity scene to heighten the awareness of the celebration of the birth of Christ. It included statues of the holy family and a live ox and donkey. The inclusion of the livestock has no scriptural support and it is to Francis that we owe the array of sheep, oxen and donkeys that have become standard inclusions in our nativity scenes.

Raise your voices ...

Entrance antiphon: A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

Response to the Psalm: All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

Communion antiphon: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

**Saint Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parish
Blackburn South**

We are Companions on the Journey ...

www.cam.org.au/blackburnsouth

Whitehorse Deanery
Eastern Region
Archdiocese of Melbourne

**Rev Father Gerard Johnson
Parish Priest**

Sonya O'Farrell

**Part-time Parish Secretary
Wednesdays, Thursdays &
Fridays (currently on leave)
10.00am – 2.00pm**

Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au

Website:

www.cam.org.au/blackburnsouth

SUNDAY MASS

Saturday Vigil – 6:00pm
Sunday – 8:30am & 10:30am

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Mon. 6.00pm (Family) & 10.00pm

Christmas Carols from 9.30pm

Tues. 8.30am & 10.30am

Weds. – Sat. @ 9:00am

Rosary prayed after Mass times
Weds. – Sat. All welcome.

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 9.30am & 5.30pm

EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

The Blessed Sacrament is
exposed for Adoration
Wednesday

Start: 7:00pm | End: 8:00pm

WEDDINGS & BAPTISMS

By appointment and
six months (6) notice, please.
*(This helps with the planning of both
celebrations and Parents usually know
nine months in advance when their
baby is to be born).*

**St Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parish Primary School
46 Orchard Grove,
Blackburn South Vic 3130
Tel: (03) 9877 4023**

Mrs Jackie Purcell: **Principal**

Email:

principal@slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Website:

stlukes@slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

**Prayer to Saint Luke
the Evangelist**

Lord God, who chose Saint Luke to reveal
by his preaching and writings the mystery of
your love for the poor, grant that those who
already glory in your name may persevere
as one heart and one soul and that all
nations may merit to see your salvation.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever. Amen!

*Patron Saint of artists, physicians, surgeons,
students and butchers.*

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER all who are sick and for those Parishioners unable to be
among us this Christmas. For those who died recently and for all those whose
anniversaries occur about this time, may they all rest in peace.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all Parishioners and Guests who have
joined us this year to celebrate Christmas. Thankyou for your kind wishes,
cards and gifts at this time. Your faithfulness to our Weekly Parish
Stewardship and Presbytery collections is very much appreciated. May
you enjoy this festive season with those closest to you and may the
Christmas moment pass slowly as we savour the goodness that has been
given and shared with us; for Jesus is the reason for the season. And
thankyou to all Parishioners who have contributed to making our festive
celebrations so memorable this year; especially Belinda and Paul Rose for

the Christmas lights, inflatable Crib and Sign that have 'lit up' the outside of our Church and have
added to our Parish preparations this year. Please travel safely, gentle regards Fr Gerard

CHRISTMAS MASSES: Preface of The Lord's Nativity I-III, Eucharistic Prayer III,
Eucharistic Acclamation No. III.

PARISH CARE GROUP 2018 CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE WINNERS:

First Prize: Lynda Kilroe-Smith; **Second Prize:** Krislyn Ariaratnam ; **Third Prize:** Frances Davidson. Once
again, a genuine thankyou for your generous support of our Raffle this year. The proceeds all go
to supporting the Parish Care Group's ministry during 2019.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS STUBBY HOLDERS are looking to go to a new and
good home. If you think you could put one or two to better use over this festive season
please help yourself from the basket in the Church foyer.

NEWS FOR 2019 - Dear Parishioners: I write to notify you that Mrs Jackie Purcell has accepted
a new role in Catholic education. Her years here have certainly made our Parish School an
outstanding educational community and we thank her for her considerable and significant
contribution. Please be assured that the leadership structure that exists in our Parish School will
continue to serve us all well as 2019 begins. Mr Ed Weekes has kindly accepted the role of Acting
Principal for the foreseeable future. This will be a transition time for all of us. Ms Purcell takes up her
new role on the 4 March 2019. Appointing a new Principal to our Parish Primary School will now be
my one of my most important duties next year.

MOMENTS IN TIME TO REMEMBER: It is two hundred years this Christmas since
Silent Night was written and first performed. Anniversary celebrations will culminate with a
special December 24 performance of **Stille Nacht** at the chapel in Oberndorf where it was
first performed 200 years ago. And the **PRAYER OF COMMANDER FRANK BORMAN**
Circling The Moon – Christmas Day 1968 (50 years ago)

**Give us, O God, the vision which can see Thy love in the world
in spite of human failure.**

**Give us that faith to trust Thy goodness
in spite of our ignorance and weakness.**

**Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray
with understanding hearts.**

**Show us what each one of us can do to forward
the coming of the day of universal peace.**

CONGRATULATIONS to all our Year 12 Parishioners who received their VCE results
recently. May they be an affirmation of the work you have done these past 13 years.

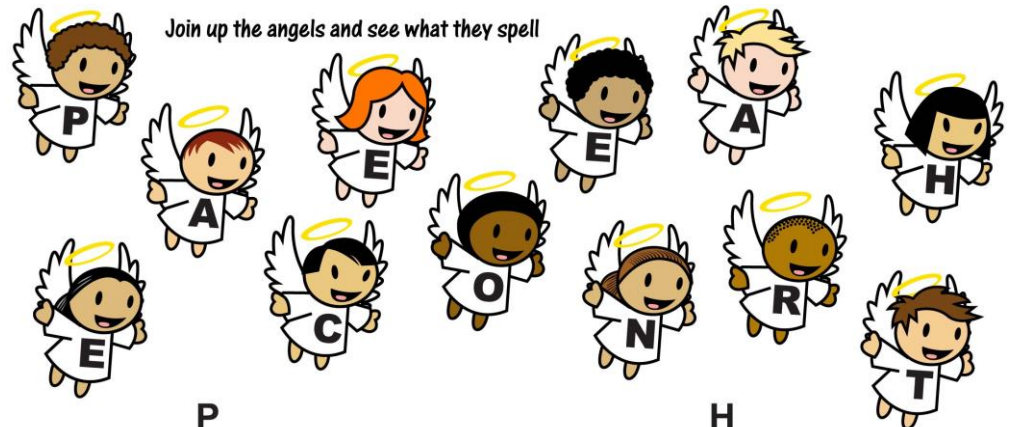
**PLENARY COUNCIL 2020: WHAT IS GOD ASKING OF US IN AUSTRALIA AT
THIS TIME?**

The Plenary Council 2020 is a gathering of the
Church in Australia to make decisions for the future. All people
are invited to contribute to the Plenary Council agenda by
sharing their experience of faith and of the Church. The
Plenary Council agenda will be developed from the stories
you share and the questions you raise. Our questions about
and our hopes for the Church will arise from hearts that listen

Plenary Council 2020

Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

to the Spirit. You can also respond via making your own
submission by visiting the following site: <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/have-your-say/>



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS who have walked upon
and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep
spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to
this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation. (Our sign
will be installed in our Church foyer soon.)