



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street
HEIDELBERG

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which our parish stands, the Wurundjeri-Balluk clan of the Woi wurrung people in the Kulin Nation. We respectfully recognise elders, both past and present, and join in a silent prayer for healing of the pains caused by our ancestors.

Central to the mission of St John's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

8TH / 9TH DECEMBER - SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

Dear Parishioners, Visitors to our parish and Friends,

PREPARE!

What does it mean to prepare? At home we prepare for the great feast of Christmas by setting up our Christmas tree, sending Christmas greeting to friends and relatives, and buying gifts.

Our environment is an important part of a celebration; decorating our environment helps us prepare ourselves for the celebrations. The Christmas tree with its lights decorates our home. Perhaps its greenery might also help us remember the need to respect the nature around us.

Christmas is also a time to reach out. We reach out by sending greetings to relatives and friends, especially those we have not had time to catch up with often enough in the past twelve months. We also give gifts. The baby in the manger in Bethlehem is the greatest gift we have ever received. Our gifts reminds us of God's love.

We give gifts to people who have somehow shared our journey over the past year. Let us also find time and space to reach out to people around us who are in need. I often encourage children to sacrifice some of their gifts and give them to children who have less. This is a way of educating our young ones of this need to remember others who are less fortunate.

A very important part of our decorations is our simple nativity reminding us of the reality of God become human for us. I believe that each of our houses, in a special place where the family gathers, a simple nativity needs to be set up. Christmas only makes sense around the young baby in the simple manger. Christmas is a story we can never tire of narrating.

In the gospel Luke reminds us of the need to prepare. Taking his imagery from the way emperors built roads to reach to the furthest parts of their sprawling empire, Luke invites us to make straight the roads for the Lord. If there are hills and mountains they need to be levelled or tunnelled under, if there are valleys they need to be filled up or bridged over, so that the Lord can march triumphantly into our hearts and lives.

Let us prepare! Let us welcome God, born in our life!

Fr Mario



Plenary Council 2020
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

ADVENT PRAYER FOR THE PLENARY COUNCIL:

Be still
Be still and know
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know that I am your God.
God of this Advent time, as we watch, wait,
long and hope, awaken our hearts to your
presence, encourage us in our efforts to listen
humbly to each other, inspire in us the words
to speak boldly with each other, create within
us a spirit of discernment, give us hopeful
hearts as we continue our journey to the
Plenary Council.
We ask this in the name of Emmanuel—
God-with-us. Amen.

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Mario Zammit
PARISH SECRETARY: Mary Peeris
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIR:
Christopher Ratnayake
CHILD SAFETY OFFICER:
Michelle Robertson m:0409 533 100
SACRAMENT COORDINATOR:
Sr Loreto Lynch rsm

PARISH OFFICE:
52 Yarra Street Heidelberg 3084
t: 9457 1066
e: heidelberg@cam.org.au
w: cam.org.au/heidelberg
facebook/stjohnheidelberg
OFFICE HOURS:
Mo, Tu, Th, Fr; 9:30am to 2:30pm

MASS TIMES:
WEEKEND: Saturday: 6:00pm
Sunday: 8:30am, 10:30am, 5:00pm
AUSTIN HOSPITAL:
3rd Sunday of the Month at 9:30am
WEEKDAYS: 9:15am

RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
Saturdays at 9:45am & 5:30pm
or by appointment
BAPTISMS: Sundays at 11:45am, by
appointment
BAPTISM INFORMATION EVENING:
Last Thursday of each month at
7:30pm in the parish house, except
Dec and Jan
WEDDINGS: By appointment

ROSARY: Monday to Saturday after
morning Mass
EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:
Wednesday: 7:30pm - 9:00pm;
Thursday: 9:40am - 11:00am,
Friday: 8:00am - 9:00am

LECTIO DIVINA: Every second and
fourth Monday of the month at
7:00pm, in the parish house
LEGION OF MARY: Every Tuesday night
at 7:00pm in the parish house;
contact Sue 9459 8604
PARISH PILGRIM STATUE OF MARY:
To have the statue of Mary in your
home for one week contact Marj
McBroom m: 0414 289 304

ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH PRIMARY:
PRINCIPAL: Maureen Stella
ADDRESS:
55 Cape St Heidelberg 3084
t: 9459 2963;
office@sjheidelberg.catholic.edu.au

HALL HIRE:
Fran Gasior: m:0417972317
10:00am-5:00pm; Mon-Fri only

NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME:
Please contact parish office to
introduce yourself

PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we the parishioners of St John's are grateful for all we have received from the men, women and children of our past. Help us to cherish and maintain our parish heritage. Most of all, enable us to be people who welcome the stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely. Like St John, our patron saint, may we be people who love others, as your Son Jesus, asked us to do. We make this prayer, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

DOWNLOAD THE MELBOURNE CATHOLIC APP FOR IPHONE AND ANDROID: Enjoy Melbourne Catholic on-the-go with our new free app. Search for Mass times across parishes and deaneries, access the archbishop's homilies, read trending news, daily Mass readings, prayers and weekly reflections, events and updates from Plenary Council 2020. iPhone App Store: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/melbourne-catholic/id1440438862?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>; Android Play Store: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ionic.melbournecatholic>

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020: What is God asking of us in Australia at this time? Have your say by Wednesday 6th March, 2019. Details: <http://www.cam.org.au/plenary/>

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Wednesday 12th December, 7:00pm. A Christmas Concert in the glorious setting of St Patrick's Cathedral. Featuring Anthony Halliday (organ) and Joel Brennan (trumpet). Works by Handel, Bach, Corelli, Daquin and Halliday. Bookings at: <https://www.trybooking.com/ZEUH>

Prayers, Carols and Readings: on Friday 14th December, 7:30pm at St Patrick's Cathedral.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION AND OF THE SICK: Once again it is time to ask for parishioners who can offer some of their time to offer ministry in our parish as Ministers of Communion. We urgently in need more ministers for our Sunday Masses in order to be able to continue to offer both Body and Blood at all Masses, to continue with our ministry of visiting the sick at the Austin hospital and in the nursing homes, and to visit the homebound in our parish. I invite you to consider becoming a Minister of Communion; anyone aged 18 and older is welcome to become a Minister. Training will be provided. Please contact the parish office on Heidelberg@cam.org.au or 9457 1066.

PHILIPPINES MISSION IMMERSION TRIP, JANUARY 2019: Next Sunday 16th December, at the 10:30am Mass, as a community we will commission and pray over the members of our parish who travelling to the Philippines for our first Mission Immersion experience next January. Let us keep the group of 'missionaries' in our prayers as they venture into another culture meeting people in another part of the Church.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY MARRIED: Sam Penso with Luisa Molinari.

THE SICK: Elizabeth Larkin, Keith Ashworth, Jenny Ferriere, Marie Hankin, Francis Micallef, Joyce Quinn, Noline Zerna.

ANNIVERSARIES: Annie Cunnigham, John Maliyekkal, Marie Lanigan, Rita Foote, Alfonso & Palmira Favretto.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Sr Marie Duffy RSM.

*Names on the sick list remain for six weeks, unless otherwise advised.
Please submit any items for the newsletter, including sick, recently deceased and anniversaries, by **Thursday morning** latest. Thank you.*

8 Dec / 9 Dec	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Adrian Daly	Peter Penson	Michael Leonard	Mary Kotefski
2 nd Reader	Pamela Smith	Pietro Sciotto	Elizabeth Williamson	Matthew Sanders
Communion	Lorraine Mascarenhas	Fiona Curry	Tim Boyle	Charito Cosio
	Maria Basilone	Michelle Penson	Leonore Giliberto	Leo Cosio
	Emma Chang	Peter O'Donoghue	Doris Schembri	Leela Cherubim
	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
15 Dec / 16 Dec	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Zen Zebrowski	Jack Naden	Bob Dowling	Rosemary Vecchies
2 nd Reader	Michael Leonard	Garry Sproules	Michelle Robertson	Leela Cherubim
Communion	Donna Richardson	Pauline Griffiths	Nigel Mant	Sally Tramontana
	Jeanette O'Sullivan	Val Wallis	Marni Mant	Jenny Hollaway
	Jan Mc Caffrey	Stanly Devasia	Yannick Jonas	Matthew Sanders
	TBA	Chris Ratnayake	TBA	Olivia Sanders
Counters	9 Dec: Stephen Devanish, Nicole Pelizzaro, Thomas Bechelli & 16 Dec: Des O'Brien, Peter Peyton, Percival Makin.			
Collection Weekly Average for November				Heidelcare Co-Ordinator
Parish		Presbytery		December: Elaine 0490 254 928
Stewardship	\$2965.34	Stewardship	\$599.69	January: Elaine 0490 254 928
Loose	\$638.68	Loose	\$320.00	
Thank you for supporting St John's financially. Please advise if your credit card is lost/stolen or the expiry date has changed.				

CHRISTMAS MASS AT THE AUSTIN HOSPITAL: The December Mass at the Austin Hospital will be held at 9:30am on Christmas Day. No Mass will be held on the third Sunday of December.

MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL: this weekend. Since 1969 Melbourne parishioners have supported Melbourne's own mission fund to help developing nations. Archbishop Peter A Comensoli commends the fund to your continuing support. Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. Envelopes available at each entrance.

GEMS AND FRIENDS: Tuesday 11th December, from 10:00am to 12:00 noon in the Francis Xavier meeting room for Christmas trivia, a chat, a cuppa and some Christmas treats. All welcome. Inquiries: Elizabeth 0447195553

ST JOHN'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS: hosted by the parish primary school on Tuesday 11th December in the church gardens. 6:00pm BYO picnic dinner and drinks. Carols at 7:00pm. Please join us!

BLESSING OF NATIVITIES: at all Masses on the weekend of 15th and 16th December. As we prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus, we are invited to bring our nativities or statues of baby Jesus for a special blessing.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES: Christmas Eve 7:00pm Vigil Mass at the new OLMC Nalleijerring Centre. Midnight Mass starting at 11:30pm with Carols. Christmas Day Masses at 8:30am and 10:30am. No evening Mass on Christmas Day. New Year's Eve, Masses at 9:15am and 7:00pm. New Year's Day, morning Mass at 10:30am (no 9:15am Mass).

St John's Walking Group: This Monday, 10th December, meeting outside the parish house at 10:00am making our way by car to the carpark at Banyule Tennis Club near Buckingham Drive from where we will walk to the Banyule Silos. All welcome to join. Contact: Jan (0423 478 504).



St Vincent de Paul Society
VICTORIA
good works

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL: As Christmas approaches St John's Vinnies group are preparing to assist those less fortunate in our area. It is customary to give hampers to these families. Please donate items for these hampers; items required are: tinned ham, tinned tuna, pasta and pasta sauces, breakfast cereals, rice, tetra packs of juices, long life milk, long life custard, Christmas cakes, biscuits sweet and savory, tinned vegetables, soup, tea, coffee & sugar. **Kindly donate the requested items** so that we can organise balanced hampers. Please bring your donations by this Monday 10th December, latest. A collection will also held on the weekend of 15/16 December. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDARS: Members of our Vinnies Conference will be selling Christmas Cards and 2019 calendars. Proceeds support the work of the conference. The Christmas cards feature two stained glass windows in our parish church. Cards and calendars will also be available from the parish office during office hours.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION): the Second Rite of Reconciliation will be celebrated at our parish on Friday 21st December at 7:30pm. We gather to pray and prepare ourselves as a community and then have time for individual reconciliation.

2019 SACRAMENT PROGRAMME: at St John's: Reconciliation (year 3 and higher) in 17th & 24th October (St John's Primary), 7th November (other schools), First Communion (year 4 and higher) in 15th June, Confirmation (year 6 and higher) 11th August. For St John's parishioners who do not attend St John's primary, enrolments for all sacraments need to be in by not later than Monday 5th March. Contact parish secretary for details.

FIRST READING

Baruch 5:1-9.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness.' Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them. Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory. For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 125.

TOGETHER: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,
it seemed like a dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
on our lips there were songs. .

RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)

The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels
the Lord worked for them!'
What marvels the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage
as streams in dry land.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.

RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing:
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves.

TOGETHER: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3-6. 8-11.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is

that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.'

PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD

A striking feature of Luke's presentation of the message of John the Baptist is the care with which he pins it down historically by mentioning the rulers of his time: from the emperor in Rome to the high priests in Jerusalem. The salvation that John heralds and that Jesus will bring is not something confined to a purely spiritual realm detached from ordinary, everyday life and history. It comes at a particular time, into a particular culture. As it works itself out—beyond the time of Jesus into that of the Church—it will interact with all the cultures that it meets, challenging and transforming them as it seeks to bring the human race as a whole back to its true home in God.

Beyond Baruch's vision (in the First Reading) of the return of the dispersed Israelites, John sees the '*way of the Lord*.' At the head of the new humanity, restoring it to freedom, will be Jesus. Those whom he gathers and leads will be 'returned ones,' not so much in the physical sense of returnees from exile but in a biblical sense of 'return' where it denotes conversion of heart.

Once again, this Advent, John summons us to the change of heart whereby the Church becomes ever more deeply the vanguard of the human race making its homecoming to God and its own true humanity. The vocation of the Church is to be the 'light of the nations,' through which all humankind may see a foretaste of 'the salvation of God.'

Fr Brendan Byrne sj