



# 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.

## 15TH / 16TH DECEMBER - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

### BLESSING OF NATIVITY SETS

*(Families are encouraged to use this blessing prayer to bless their nativity set at home.)*

**PARENT:** Let us ask for God's blessing on this Christmas manger and upon ourselves, that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus may share in the salvation he accomplished.

**ALL:** *Come, Lord, dwell with us.*

**CHILD:** For the Church of God, as we recall the circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ, that we may always proclaim his gift of new life for all people, we pray to the Lord.

**ALL:** *Come, Lord, dwell with us.*

**CHILD:** For the world in which we live, that it may come to recognise Christ who was greeted by the angels and shepherds, we pray to the Lord.

**ALL:** *Come, Lord, dwell with us.*

**CHILD:** For our families and our homes, that Christ who was laid in the manger may dwell with us always, we pray to the Lord.

**ALL:** *Come, Lord, dwell with us.*

**CHILD:** For parents, that their love for their children may be modelled on that of the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, we pray to the Lord.

**ALL:** *Come, Lord, dwell with us.*

**PARENT:** Let us pray as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us: *Our Father who art in heaven ...*

**PARENT:** God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise up our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Saviour of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**ALL:** *Amen.*

**ALL:** *May Christ our God enlighten our hearts and minds, now and for ever. Amen.*



**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/>

**GIVE GLOBAL GIFT THIS CHRISTMAS:** support women to give birth safely with access to expert care before and after babies are born. This year you can help bring the gift of water, food and sustainable livelihoods to women and children around the world. Order Global Gift cards online at [www.globalgifts.org.au](http://www.globalgifts.org.au) or by calling 1800 024 413.

**Make an Encounter in 2019:** Timor Leste, Samoa or Myanmar. Visit: [www.palms.org.au/encounters](http://www.palms.org.au/encounters).

**PHILIPPINES MISSION IMMERSION TRIP, 4TH TO 19TH JANUARY 2019:** A group of St John's parishioners and primary school teachers are engaging in a mission immersion experience this January. The parishioners traveling to the Philippines will be commissioned by our community at the 10:30am Mass this Sunday. You can all participate in this experience by your prayers for the group, as well as by supporting this experience financially. You can also follow the experience on Facebook ([facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg/](http://facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg/)) or on Instagram ([Instagram.com/stjohnheidelberg/](http://Instagram.com/stjohnheidelberg/)); we will try to post as many photos and reports as possible! During this time, Fr Ted Teal and Fr Wayne Edwards will be celebrating Masses at St John's. There will be a Communion Service on Mondays 8th and 15th January at 9:15am.

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION** During Weekend Masses: We urgently need more parishioners to come forward and take on this ministry in order for us to be able to continue offering Communion as both Body and Blood at our weekend Masses. A workshop will be held on Monday 28th January at 7:00pm in the parish church. All welcome to join.

## PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

**THE SICK:** Jenny Ferriere, Marie Hankin, Elizabeth Larkin, Francis Micallef, Joyce Quinn, Noeline Zerna.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** George O'Callaghan, Ronald Berry.

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Keith Ashworth, Maureen Ennor.

*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.*

15 Dec / 16 Dec	<b>Sat 6:00pm</b>	<b>Sun 8:30am</b>	<b>Sun 10:30am</b>	<b>Sun 5:00pm</b>
1st Reader	Zen Zebrowski	Jack Naden	Bob Dowling	Rosemary Vecchies
2 <sup>nd</sup> 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
22 Dec / 23 Dec	<b>Sat 6:00pm</b>	<b>Sun 8:30am</b>	<b>Sun 10:30am</b>	<b>Sun 5:00pm</b>
1st Reader	Sue Lew-Kee	Marguerite Ryan	Leela Cherubim	Peter Penson
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reader	Maddy Lew-Kee	Claire Newsome	Robyn Laurie	Matthew Sanders
Communion	Lorraine Mascarenhas	Margaret Bradley	Doris Schembri	Charito Cosio
	Maria Basilone	Elizabeth Williamson	Tim Boyle	Leo Cosio
	Emma chang	Leo Hernandez	Leonore Giliberto	Michelle Penson
	TBA	Teresa Lincoln	TBA	TBA
Counters	<b>16 Dec:</b> Des O'Brien, Peter Peyton, Percival Makin. <b>23 Dec:</b> Garry Sproules, Janice McGrath, Giuseppe Amoroso.			
<b>Collection Weekly Average for November</b>				<b>Heidelcare Co-Ordinator</b>
Parish		Presbytery		December: Elaine 0490 254 928
Stewardship	\$2965.34	Stewardship	\$599.69	January: Elaine 0490 254 928
Loose	\$638.68	Loose	\$320.00	
<b>Thank you</b> for supporting St John's financially. Please advise if your credit card is lost/stolen or the expiry date has changed.				

### CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

Monday 24th December

**CHRISTMAS EVE:** 7:00pm @ OLMC Nalleijerring Centre

Tuesday 25th December

**MIDNIGHT MASS:** starting at 11:30pm with Carols

**CHRISTMAS DAY:** Masses at 8:30am & 10:30am

**AUSTIN HOSPITAL MASS:** at 9:30am

*No evening Mass on Christmas Day.*

Monday 31st December

**NEW YEAR'S EVE:** 9:15am & 7:00pm

Tuesday 1st January

**NEW YEAR'S DAY:** 10:30am

*No 9:15am Mass on New Year's Day.*

**VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL:** at all Masses this weekend. Money collected at this appeal will be given to our Heidelberg Vinnies conference for use among less fortunate people. Thank you for your continued generosity towards Christ in the poor!

**CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDARS:** Members of our Vinnies Conference are selling Christmas Cards and 2019 calendars. Proceeds support the work of the conference. Cards and calendars will also be available from the parish office during office hours.

**St John's Walking Group:** Our last walk for 2018 is at Westerfold Park. We meet outside the parish house at 10:00am and carpool to the park. All welcome to join. Contact Jan (0423478504) to let us know you are coming! Thankyou.

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE:** St John's parish office will be closed from Wednesday, 19th December to Friday, 4th January 2019. For any urgent requests, please email: heidelberg@cam.org.au or leave a message on the parish answering machine (9457 1066—press 3 to leave a message). Thank You.

**2019 SACRAMENT PROGRAMME** at St John's: Reconciliation (year 3 and higher) on 17th & 24th October (St John's Primary), 7th November (other schools); First Communion (year 4 and higher) on 15th June at the OLMC Nalleijerring Centre; Confirmation (year 6 and higher) on 11th August at St Patrick's Cathedral. 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.

**CHARISMATIC MASS:** and Christmas break-up on Thursday, 20th December at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Eltham at 7:30pm. Contact Emilia (9435 7475) or Sandra (9434 7553) for information.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION) BEFORE CHRISTMAS:** 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.

**STEWARDSHIP (THANKSGIVING) ENVELOPES:** The January to April instalment of Stewardship Envelopes is ready to be picked up from the porch of the church. Envelopes are in alphabetical order. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES:** are available in the pews. Money contributed to the Christmas Offering supports our parish priest, sick and retired priests, priests in poorer parishes and the ministry of the archbishop. Thank you for your generosity. These envelopes can be placed in the weekly collection baskets.

**MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL:** The appeal collection amounted to \$795.05. Thank you for your continued generosity.

**FIRST READING**

Zephaniah 3:14-18.

Shout for joy, daughter of Zion, Israel, shout aloud! Rejoice, exult with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has repealed your sentence; he has driven your enemies away. The Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst; you have no more evil to fear. When that day comes, word will come to Jerusalem: Zion, have no fear, do not let your hands fall limp. The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult with joy over you, he will renew you by his love; he will dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM***Isaiah 12:2-6.*

**TOGETHER:** Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

**LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)**

Truly, God is my salvation, I trust, I shall not fear.

For the Lord is my strength, my song,  
he became my saviour.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

**RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!

Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!

Declare the greatness of his name.

**LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)**

Sing a psalm to the Lord for he has done glorious deeds,  
make them known to all the earth!

People of Zion, sing and shout for joy

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

**TOGETHER:** Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

**SECOND READING**

Philippians 4:4-7.

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Luke 3:10-18.

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE**

Today's Gospel continues to let us hear the preaching of John the Baptist. His message comes in two rather different parts.

In response to the people's query about how conversion of heart might work itself out in practice, John first offers some concrete suggestions, addressed to three distinct groups: the crowds, tax collectors and soldiers. Beneath the advice in each case is a central Lukan concern: nothing so hinders our relationship to God, dehumanizes human beings, and ruins life in community, as attachment to wealth and possessions.

In each case John urges generosity. The tax collectors and the soldiers were both in a position to extort money from ordinary people. John urges the former to exact no more than is just and the latter, who performed a role more like that of police today, not to augment their pay by violence and extortion. The acid test of conversion of heart is always social justice.

The second part of John's message returns more directly to his role as precursor of Christ. Deflecting speculation that he himself might be the Messiah, he points to the distinction between his role and that of the One who is to come: while he baptises with water—a simple ritual of repentance—the Messiah will baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Such a 'baptism' may sound a bit threatening. But 'fire' refers to the fire of God's love communicated by the Spirit. Jesus' ministry will extend to us his own experience of the Father's love following *his* baptism at the hands of John (Luke 3:22).

Fr Brendan Byrne sj