



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street

HEIDELBERG

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our parish stands, the Wurundjeri-Balluk clan of the Woi wurrung people in the Kulin Nation.

Central to the mission of St John's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe and supportive environment in which to flourish.

19TH/12TH DECEMBER 2020 , FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

*Wishing all Parishioners, Visitors and Friends a
Very Holy and Happy Christmas*

Dear friends,

As if you needed reminding, Christmas is almost upon us. The traffic would seem indicate this if nothing else. Especially around the major retail outlets. A stark contrast to the empty roads of 6 months ago!

In the church's life, we are in the midst of the 8 days or 'Octave' in the lead up to Christmas. These days are marked with special antiphons, which are little prayers and praises said or sung prior to our liturgies. You may be familiar with the Entrance or Communion antiphon in the mass, which are beautiful ways to give our prayer a particular focus. These antiphons are

Though a few days of the octave have already passed, I'll list the remaining ones below. They may give you and your family a helpful spiritual focus in the lead up to the great solemnity of Christmas.

SATURDAY, DEC.19

O Root of Jesse, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.

SUNDAY, DEC. 20

O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel,

controlling at your will the gate of heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom.

MONDAY, DEC. 21

O Radiant Dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice:

Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

TUESDAY, DEC. 22

O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart;

O Keystone of the mighty arch of man: Come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust.

WEDNESDAY DEC. 23

O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver,

desire of the nations, Saviour of all people: Come and set us free, Lord our God.

These antiphons really do bring home to us what Christmas truly is about: God breaking into our world to bring us out of the darkness of sin and into his wonderful light of truth and love.

With every blessing,

Fr Joel.

PARISH PRIEST Fr Joel Peart
PARISH SECRETARY: Mary Peeris
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
CHAIR: Michelle Robertson
COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Domenica Ashworth;
Timothy Boyle
Margaret Bradley
Adrian Daly
Moira Di Cesare
Karen Frost
Russell Lew-Kee
SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE CHAIR:
Michelle Penson (0499 891 101)
PARISH PROGRAMME COORDINATORS:
Jan McCaffrey (0423 478 504)
Elizabeth Williamson
(0447195553)
PARISH OFFICE:
52 Yarra Street Heidelberg
VIC 3084
Tel: 9457 1066
Email: heidelberg@cam.org.au
Webpage: pol.org.au/heidelberg
Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg
OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: Tues to Sat: 9am &
Sat Vigil 6pm, Sun: 8:30am &
10:30am.
RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
by appointment, Sat 9:30-10am
WEDDINGS: By appointment
**FIRST RECONCILIATION,
FIRST COMMUNION,
CONFIRMATION:**
Parish Secretary (9457 1066)
LEGION OF MARY: meeting on
Zoom All Welcome. contact Sue
mob 0499260206.
PARISH PILGRIM STATUE OF MARY:
Statue not in circulation until
further notice mob Sue
0499260206
**ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH
PRIMARY SCHOOL:**
PRINCIPAL: Maureen Stella
55 Cape St Heidelberg 3084
t: 9459 2963;
office@sjheidelberg.catholic.edu.au
HALL HIRE:
Contact parish office during
hours.

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.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

TO COMPLY WITH GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS YOU ARE PLEASE REQUIRED TO SIGN IN AND PROVIDE US WITH YOUR FIRST NAME AND A CONTACT NUMBER WHEN YOU VISIT THE CHURCH

Please open the camera app on your smart phone and focus on the QR code below to sign in contactless.

Once you focus on the code, a message will appear on the top of your screen, Please tap on it and follow the instructions (only first name and contact number is mandatory)

****If multiple parishioners have the same contact number they can be checked-in together by entering their first names separated with a comma.*

When you finish, please see if any other parishioners need your help. You can use your mobile phone to sign in any number of people.



Your information can ONLY be used in event that a confirmed case of COVID-19 has attended St John's and you may need to be contacted to help stop the spread of the virus.

The information is stored in a private location and the parish does not have access to this information.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY BAPTISED: Altair Dumayas, Elsie Quinn.

ANNIVERSARY: Sheila and 'Bill' Jackson, Mary Sullivan, Nicola Tino.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: Elizabeth Finn, Pauline Hewatt, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, Sam Palmieri.

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**.*

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE: St John's parish office will be closed from Wednesday 23rd December to Monday 4th January 2021. 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.

ENVELOPE THANKSGIVING CONTRIBUTIONS: The next instalment of envelopes start from January 2021. Those who would want to continue the Envelope contributions, kindly collect them from me at the parish office during office hours or please do email or leave a message for me to post them to you. Thank you to all who have continued to support the parish through this time.*Mary Peeris*

ST JOHN'S WALKING GROUP: On Monday the 21st December will depart from Yarra Street outside the Parish House at 9.30am for our weekly walk. To join us please contact Jan on 0423 478 504.

CALLING FOR NEW READERS, EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS AND SACRISTANS: As we prepare for 2021, if you are interested in supporting our liturgies by fulfilling any of these roles please contact the parish office on 9457 1066. Training will be provided.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES: are available in the porch. 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.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ASSISTING REFUGEE STUDENTS: Mercy Connect Melbourne, Mercy Works Ltd. is currently recruiting volunteers to support Refugee Students and Asylum Seekers in Primary and Secondary schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese. The volunteer commitment is approximately half a day per week during school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred but not limited to. Please contact Sr. Mary Lewis RSM for an application form and further information. Training Day for new volunteers with emphasis on Child Safeguarding at the end of January. (preferred) Email at somml@bigpond.com Website: www.mercyworks.org.au Tel: 9326 1895

SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES: If you or a loved one are celebrating a significant birthday (18th, 21st, 30th, 40th...) or a wedding anniversary please let us know at the parish office (Heidelberg@cam.org.au) so we can celebrate and pray for you as a community.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

ALL MASSES ARE HELD INSIDE CHURCH (MASKS MANDATORY INSIDE)

CHRISTMAS EVE: THURSDAY 24TH: 6pm (*fully booked*) & 9pm

MIDNIGHT MASS: starting 11:30pm with Carols

(Booking required for above 3 masses)

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

No evening Mass on Christmas Day.

NEW YEAR'S DAY: 10:30am

No 9:00am Mass on New Year's Day

Please note: Booking required for Christmas Eve and midnight masses. Please contact Parish office on 94571066, between 9:30am and 2:30pm on 21st or 22nd December or Email at heidelberg@cam.org.au to make a booking.

You still need to scan QR code to register your presence when you arrive for all masses.

MARY'S "YES" TO GOD

With the Gospel of the Annunciation to Mary, we arrive today at the events leading directly to the celebration of Jesus' birth.

Following a greeting and word of reassurance, the angel Gabriel tells Mary that she is to be the mother of a child, whose title ('Son of the Most High') and future role indicate that he will be the long-awaited Messiah.

Mary, understandably, asks how this birth is to occur. She is married but, in accordance with the custom of the time where women married very young, is still living in her parental home and not yet having relations with her husband.

The angel's majestic explanation lifts everything to a new level. The birth will not come about through relations with her husband but through her being "overshadowed" by the power of God's Holy Spirit. The child to be born from her will be God's 'Son' in a unique way. He will have a divine status far outstripping conventional expectation concerning the Messiah.

The explanation requires of Mary faith in the highest degree. Unlike Zechariah in connection with the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:11-19), she does not simply have to believe that God will overcome barrenness and old age. She has to believe that God's power will take the place of the male parent entirely. Later, her cousin Elizabeth will say to her, "Blessed is she who believed the the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled" (1:45). Mary's faith is the channel for God's presence and power to enter the world in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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.

FIRST READING Samuel 2 Sm 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

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."'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 88:2-5. 27. 29.

RESPONSE: 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./

SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

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**

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