



# The Parish of Saint Anthony Glen Huntly

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## Homily at Mass 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Year B – 13 December 2020

What makes you feel better? Do you like to sing a favourite song or listen to a favourite piece of music? Do you like to go for a run or play a bit of sport? Do you enjoy a glass of wine or an icy cold beer? Do you like to do a bit of shopping or even window shopping? Do you have a favourite film/DVD/TV series or show on Netflix or Stan?

Anything which brings a smile to our face is included on this joyful Sunday of Advent – the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent or its Latin name: Gaudete – Rejoice! Be joyful in the Lord whose birth is at hand just 2 weeks away. Even the saints share our joy today: Our Lady bursts into song in the responsorial psalm; St Paul is in a lighter mood and St John the Baptist leaves us in no doubt about our hope and expectation: “One is coming after me ... he stands among you, unknown to you ... I am not fit to undo his sandal strap.” The Lord is near!

Bishop Elliott describes the rose colour of today’s Mass vestments as the colour of the dawn. After a long and dark year, dawn is breaking, the sun is rising, a brilliant new day begins. This is the life that Christians – people like you and me – recognise: a day filled with the light of Christ. While some have stumbled during this year, please God you and I have retained our hope. No day is without the living God, without the presence, comfort, hope and joy of Christ our Lord. We begin and end the day with prayer – our morning offering presents our prayers, works, joys and sufferings to God as a gift. We place ourselves in his hands, we ask his blessing. As we retire to bed at night, our minds and hearts turn again to God with thanksgiving, as well as the prayer of sorrow for our sins. In this way we live in the presence of God. In this way God is active in our lives to make us holy, to make us more and more, better and better, beloved sons and daughters of God.

Have you set up the Nativity scene at home? Mum and dad can sit with their children before the crib and pick out the different statuettes: the shepherds, with their sheep: the magi and their rich gifts; the angel, the star. At the heart of the crib scene is the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Both parents rapt in silence, adoration, joy and wonder. The infant Jesus, his arms outstretched, already a sign of his Cross, even in the manger. And at the same time a wide armed, open hearted gesture that calls us, beckons, embraces us: “come to me”.

But I often think there’s someone essential to the story who is always missing in the Nativity scene. And that is our friend, the Lord’s cousin, John the Baptist. He stands tall in the season of Advent. He prepares the way for the Lord, calling us to a change of heart, a new openness to God, to push away the clutter, and open our hearts, lives, homes to the Lord who comes. At the River Jordan, John points to Christ in words that call us to the altar and to the Eucharist Sunday by Sunday: “Behold Christ ... who stands among you ... the Lamb of God”.