

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

2 Sam 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

A Reading from the second book of Samuel.

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."' "

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 88:2-5,27,29. R. cf. v. 2

R. 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 Rom 16:25-27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

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.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 1:38

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

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Faith, Prayer & Time - Then the angel departed from her. Luke 1:38

What a wonderful day it is. Not only is it the Fourth Sunday of Advent, it is also Christmas Eve. Let us focus for a moment on a person who plays a central role in the Advent/Christmas seasons: Mary. In the story of the Annunciation, there's one line that always strikes me. It is the last line, the line cited above. The angel has just accepted Mary's "yes" to bear "the Son of the Most High," and then he leaves her! Couldn't he have given Mary some details on what she should do next? If I were Mary, I might have asked, "Is there a manual that goes with this? Something that will tell me how I am to raise the Messiah?" But no. The angel departs. Mary is left alone. But she is not really alone. Mary has her faith. She has her personal relationship with God. And she has one day at a time— one wonderful day at a time—to partner with God in bringing hope and love into the world. Mary has what each one of us has— faith, prayer and time. Plus, she has the presence of her beautiful son, who is also residing within us.

Sr. Melannie Svoboda, S.N.D.

CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
our Lord,
(All bow during these two lines)
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

ST PAUL'S PARISH

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Parish Secretary: Mrs Loretta Meilak

St Paul's School Principal: Mrs Maria Mercuri

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St Paul's Parish strives to create an environment where children are safe, respected and cared for.



PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon - Friday: 10.30am to 3.30 pm.

MASSES:

Weekends: Saturday: 6:00 pm (vigil),
8.00pm (Neo Catechumenate)

Sunday: 9:00am, 10.30am (Italian),

Weekdays: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri: 10.00 am.

CONFESSIONS: Saturdays - 11am and 6.45pm

JOKE OF THE WEEK



THANKSGIVING – DIRECT DEPOSIT BANK DETAILS

BSB: 083-347

Account Number: 67541 0884

Account Name: St Paul's Catholic Church.

Credit Card payments:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayCoburg>

LAST WEEK'S OFFERING \$578.00

Presbytery: \$383.45

Works done recently: Presbytery roof: \$40,000

Painting of presbytery inside: \$12,400

Thanks for your support in these challenging times.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE:

Confessions: 21st & 23rd after the 10am mass.

Wed., 23rd, 10am mass includes the Anointing of the sick.

Christmas Eve Masses: 6pm and 10pm.

Christmas Day Masses: Midnight, 9am and 10.30am(Italian).

NB. This year due to Covid-19, the parish has added an extra mass at 10pm to give the possibility of more availability for people to attend the Christmas Mass, as the parish has to observe the one square meter social distance, in church.

Only 120 people are allowed to attend at each mass. So, one needs to book to attend mass on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

To avoid disappointment, please, call on 9354 1564, leave a clear message with name and contact number, and the parish office will return your call to confirm. Thanks.

Ministers of the Word Christmas roster:

Vigil Mass 6pm Virginia Efthimiou, 10pm Stephanie & Dean Youil.

Midnight: Patricia Wright. 9am Rosa Touma.

10.30am: Rita Luci & Tom Costanzo.

Ministers of the Eucharist: Vigil Mass 6pm Virginia

Efthimiou 10pm ?

Midnight ? 9am ? 10.30am Sofia Tabacco.

COVID-19 CONTACTLESS VISTOR CHECK-IN

Scan QR code with phone camera



WE PRAY FOR

NEWLY BAPTISED: Charlie Meli

We pray for those in our local community who are **sick** and vulnerable: may they see in us the followers of a God who heals and serves.

Let us pray for those who have died recently, Arturo Vecchio, and those whose anniversaries we remember at this time, Fr Sean O'Connell (4th anniv.), Pompeo Paterno, Mario Carbone, John Flattley, Rosa Franco, that they may enter the peace of God.

STEWARDSHIP

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" - LUKE 1:28

Faith is a gift from God. Take time in silence and thank Him for all the gifts He has given you. Try to set aside any anger or resentment you have and really open your heart to receive the gift of God's mercy and forgiveness. We can't give what we don't have. We need to receive God's mercy and forgiveness first before we can give it to others.

REFLECTION: Jesus with Us

The angel Gabriel...coming to her...said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled...Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary..." Luke 1:26, 28-30. As I am writing this reflection, the whole world is greatly troubled by the pandemic of the coronavirus. We are constantly being instructed on what to do to keep ourselves and others safe. One thing stands out above all – we are to keep washing our hands for at least 20 seconds. Instead of timing it by singing Happy Birthday, I learned to say the Hail Mary twice. What a grace, as I wash and pray, to hear Gabriel's words to Mary spoken now to me: "The Lord is with you! Do not be afraid." What a grace to feel Mary's loving care for us! When this gospel is read in Advent, Christmas will be just five days away. Whatever has happened to our world by then, because of Mary's "Yes," Jesus, Imanuel, will be with us.

Pray for us, Mary, that we may be able to be together, preparing to celebrate the happiest birthday of all time.

Patricia Livingston

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

That we take time daily to thank God for the many gifts He has given us, especially the gift of Faith.

Pope Francis will celebrate the Vatican's traditional Christmas "Mass during the Night" on 24 December, but will begin the liturgy at 7.30 pm local time so that the few people invited to attend can get home in time to observe Italy's 10 pm curfew. The curfew is one of many measures the Italian government has employed in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus. In addition to the early start time, the Vatican's COVID-19 measures are still in force: only a small congregation will be allowed inside the basilica; people's temperatures are checked as they arrive; masks are required for the congregation and servers; the seating is socially distanced. While the night-time Mass often is referred to as "Midnight Mass," it has not been celebrated at midnight at the Vatican since 2009 when Pope Benedict XVI moved it to 10 pm Pope Francis moved it to 9.30 pm in 2013, his first Christmas as Pope.

Christmas, a time for radical hope

We have been a part of a truly remarkable policy and social landscape this year, and there have been some very real challenges being met and experienced by organisations across the CSSV membership. The path forward into the new year won't be easy for many, but there is a good platform to build creative and holistic responses to the chronic and compounded issues that we have seen and continue to see so clearly demarcated.

CSSV Council recently met with Mental Health Reform Victoria, a new mechanism established to work to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System's final report, which will be finalised and come out early next year. This, along with other various final reports coming out, which CSSV has had input into, means that after a brief break CSSV will be hitting the new year with all the energy and enthusiasm we can muster to continue our collective and cooperative work for positive systemic and social change.

Christmas isn't a happy time for many in our community, especially those that social services are often privileged to serve, and this should be acknowledged. But it is also a time for hope - the year ends, we celebrate the birth of Christ who, regardless of religious persuasion or none, represents a truly beautiful way of being and acting in the world. For us in Catholic social services, Christ is our example of how to be authentic and whole in service and solidarity, points us to who we should be standing with and alongside, and demonstrates a radical way of engaging with pre-existing systems and structures that often paradoxically contain good intent and oppression.

Let's continue to remember that Christ was a refugee at a young age, forced to flee internationally for protection. Christ was born and raised in a family of humble status and unremarkable profession. Christ was born in controversial, awkward and ill-fitting social circumstances. As we work through the mess and the grey of our social landscape, let's remember the quality of imagination, love, and humility in our work — as Pope Francis said on the world day of the poor last year: "The poor save us because they enable us to encounter the face of Jesus Christ." That's the kind of social service community that we seek to build up and encourage, and the challenge that is held before us. Hope in the new year!

This Christmas, let's together commit to continue to bear witness to the radical hope of Christ's birth and life by working cooperatively to change unjust systems, structures, and our own hearts, so that everyone can flourish.

Merry Christmas from all of us at CSSV,

Joshua Lourensz, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services Victoria

O COME DIVINE MESSIAH
THE WORLD IN SILENCE WAITS THE DAY
WHEN HOPE SHALL SING ITS TRIUMPH
AND SADNESS FLEE AWAY

1

DEAR SAVIOUR HASTE! COME COME TO EARTH
DISPEL THE NIGHT AND SHOW THY FACE
AND BID US HAIL THE DAWN OF GRACE

O COME DIVINE MESSIAH
THE WORLD IN SILENCE WAITS THE DAY
WHEN HOPE SHALL SING ITS TRIUMPH
AND SADNESS FLEE AWAY

O THOU WHOSE NATIONS SIGHED FOR
WHO PRIEST AND PROPHET LONG FORETOLD
WILT BREAK THE CAPTIVE FETTERS
REDEEM THE LONG LOST FOLD

DEAR SAVOIR HASTE! COME COME TO EARTH
DISPEL THE NIGHT AND SHOW THY FACE
AND BID US HAIL THE DAWN OF GRACE

O COME DIVINE MESSIAH
THE WORLD IN SILENCE WAITS THE DAY
WHEN HOPE SHALL SING ITS TRIUMPH
AND SADNESS FLEE AWAY

TODAY OUR HEARTS O LORD, WE OFFER ANEW,
TOGETHER WITH THE BREAD AND WINE TO YOU;
TODAY OUR SEPARATE LIVES WILL JOIN AS ONE,
AS WITH THE BREAD WE BREAK, WE WILL BECOME
MANY WILL BE THE BODY OF ONE
- CHRIST YOUR SON.

2

ALMIGHTY FATHER TAKE THE JOY AND CARE,
WE HAVE UNITED TO YOUR SON'S GREAT PRAYER;
HELP US TO TAKE YOU TO THE WORLD AGAIN,
THAT MEN MAY COME TO YOU, MAY COME AND LIVE
THE LIFE YOUR SON DIED TO GIVE - DIED TO GIVE.

O LOVING FATHER AS THE RISING SUN,
DISPELS THE DARKNESS,
MAY THE LIFE CHRIST WON
SHINE MORE RESPLENDENTLY
THROUGHOUT OUR LIVE,
AND LIGHT THE DARKNESS WHICH AROUND US LIES,
THAT LIVING FOR THEE, MAY WE ALL
- LIKE CHRIST BE,
LIKE CHRIST BE, LIKE CHRIST BE.

SHE WALKED IN THE SUMMER
THROUGH THE HEAT ON THE HILL,
SHE HURRIED AS ONE WHO WENT WITH A WILL;
SHE DANCED IN THE SUNLIGHT
WHEN THE DAY HAD BEGUN,

3

HER HEART KNEW NO EVENING
WHO CARRIED THE SUN.

FRESH AS A FLOWER AT THE FIRST RAY OF DAWN,
SHE CAME TO HER COUSIN
WHOSE MORNING WAS GONE.
THERE LIVED A LITTLE CHILD IN THE AGED WOMB,
AND THERE HEAVED A LITTLE HOPE IN EVERY
ANCIENT TOMB.

HAIL LITTLE SISTER WHO HERALDS THE SPRING,
HAIL BRAVE MOTHER WHO CARRIES THE KING;
HAIL TO THE MOMENT WITHIN YOUR BREAST
MAY ALL GENERATIONS CALL YOU BLESSED.

WHEN YOU WALK IN THE SUMMER
THROUGH THE HEAT ON THE HILL,
WHEN YOU'RE ONE WITH THE LORD
AND ONE WITH HIS WILL;
BE BRAVE WITH THE BURDEN
YOU ARE BLESSED TO BEAR,
FOR ITS CHRIST THAT YOU CARRY EVERYWHERE,
EVERYWHERE, EVERY - WHERE!

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH
AND LET IT BEGIN WITH ME
LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH,
THE PEACE THAT WAS MEANT TO BE
WITH GOD AS OUR FATHER, WE ARE FAMILY
LET US WALK WITH EACH OTHER,
IN PERFECT HARMONY

4

LET PEACE BEGIN WITH ME,
LET THIS BE THE MOMENT NOW
WITH EVERY STEP I TAKE,
MAKE THIS BE MY SOLEMN VOW
TO TAKE EACH MOMENT
AND LIVE EACH MOMENT IN PEACE ETERNALLY
LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH
AND LET IT BEGIN WITH ME

A PRAYER FOR THE Fourth Sunday of Advent

Jesus, you are constantly coming to your people,
even when we fail to see you.
In each and every moment that we are blessed
to recognize you here and now,
give us the courage to leap with joy at your coming.
Amen.

