



Parish of St Justin

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Email: WheelersHill@cam.org.au Website: pol.org.au/wheelershill

St Justin's Parish is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.

The NATIVITY of the LORD (Christmas Day)

25th December 2022

**"St Justin's Community Welcomes"
Our Parishioners', Friends and
Visitors,
May the peace and joy of the birth
of the Infant Saviour remain with
you throughout the coming year,**



With Best Wishes and Blessings

Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil

Gospel

Mt 1: 1-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord

Response - Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Midnight

Gospel

Lk 2: 1-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing:

'Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Response - Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Next Week's Reading
Mary, The Holy Mother of God
Num 6 :22-27: Gal 4: 4-7:
Lk 2: 16-21:

Nativity of the Lord Christmas Day

Gospel

Jn 1: 1-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

In the beginning was the Word:

the Word was with God and the Word was God.

He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things came to be,

not one thing had its being but through him.

All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower.

The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him.

He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him.

But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself.

The Word was made flesh, he lived among us.

And we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,

full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord

Response - Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ



REFLECTION -

The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are dynamically related in the baby in the manger. This is the song of the angels, and it is our privilege to join in that song at this Christmas Mass.

Every baby is a promise of a new future which fills one with hope. But this baby is unique.

This Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. This baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. This baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant. And this baby fulfils all the yearning of the human heart. We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. This baby enables both because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints:

He is in-finite love reaching out to us. Can we grasp all this? Probably not. So, like the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, we just follow some deep intuition which says: 'I must kneel in adoration, it is good to be here.' We could pause for a moment to pray for the resolve to do our bit to echo the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by all peoples.'

The Story of St Justin

Our Patron - St Justin

St. Justin Martyr, (born c. 100, Flavia Neapolis Palestine (now Nablus)—died c. 165, Rome (Italy) ; Feast Day June 1, one of the most important of the Greek philosopher (*Apologists*) in the early Christian church. His writings represent one of the first positive encounters of Christian revelation with Greek philosophy and laid the basis for a theology of history.

A pagan reared in a Jewish environment, Justin studied Stoic, Platonic and other pagan philosophies and then became a Christian in 132, possibly at Ephesus, near modern Selçuk, Turkey. Soon after 135 he began wandering from place to place, proclaiming his newfound Christian philosophy in the hope of converting educated pagans to it.

He spent a considerable time in Rome. Some years later, after debating with the cynic Crescens, Justin was denounced to the Roman prefect as subversive and condemned to death with six companions. Authentic records of his martyrdom, by beheading, survive.

The Founder of St Justin's Parish

Fr Michael Wheeler

In 1986 Fr Mick became Parish Priest of the newly established Parish of St Justin, Wheelers Hill. For more than 30 years Fr Mick was the much love Parish Priest who served his community with humility, commitment and a down to earth manner which endeared him to many. Fr Mick retired in 2016 due to ill health. He sadly passed away in Melbourne on Tuesday 11 August, 2020.

Our Parish has always relied on the generosity of parishioners to support the Priest and the expenses of running the Parish.

Fr Andrzej Madry CR (current parish priest)

St Justin's is a Child Safe Parish

Here at St Justin's, Wheelers Hill Parish we follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we implement procedures and standards as directed by the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

If you wish to Volunteer in our Ministry Roster which re-news every 6 months please complete the talent form available in the church foyer.

All our Volunteers' have submitted their Working with Children Card, following the Safeguarding guidelines to keep our community safe and be respectful.

If you have any concerns whatsoever - please contact the Parish Office or

Fr Andrew - wheelershill@cam.org.au on 9401 6335.

Safeguarding group ;

wheelershill.safeguarding@cam.org.au

Our committee members are Mai-ling Sholl & Ophelia D'Souza



Christmas Message for 2022, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli



Reflects on the God who came to dwell with us and for us, touching the earth with the bare soles of his feet.

He invites us to 'stand barefoot with Jesus', encouraging us this Christmas and in the year ahead to 'come before him barefoot in our frailties yet alive in the wonder of our humanity—made in his image—ready and willing to live as the people of God he has created us to be—fraternally, lovingly, caringly; generous, forgiving and hopeful.'

Friends, I recently heard an Advent prayer that has a striking line in it, describing Jesus' birth. It said:

[Jesus], when the soles of your feet touch the ground,

... you become one of us, to be at one with us.

The image of God's bare feet touching the earth is such an evocative one.

Especially at this time of year, we know only too well what it feels like to do the 'great Aussie dance' across a hot beach or prickly lawn!

But of course, this image is far more than a physical reminder.

For Christmas is the divinity of God born into our humanity.

Through the Incarnation, God comes to us, withholding nothing of himself from us.

Barefooted—taking on our flesh, our human condition—in order to touch, and to be touched, in the particularities of our lives: this is Emmanuel—God with us.

Christmas is God placing an exclamation mark on his words, 'I am with you!'

Our God, whose name is Jesus, has walked with us through the tough years of the pandemic and is touching the ground now where healing and renewal is needed.

The Son of God is walking through the streets of Ukraine and Myanmar, Ethiopia and Lebanon, with feet bloodied from war, conflict and repression, yet still taking the steps needed towards peace and liberation.

He has seen and felt both the joy of our existence and the suffering of those who are lost or vulnerable. He has awakened us to an attentiveness for our global humanity, and a care for our common home.

So I wonder if, this Christmas and for the year ahead, it is time to remove the 'shoes' that keep us from standing barefoot with Jesus—to feel the sacred ground of our lives with God?

Might we come before him 'barefoot' in our frailties, yet alive in the wonder of our humanity—made in his image—ready and willing to live as the people of God he has created us to be—fraternally, lovingly, caringly; generous, forgiving and hopeful.

May Jesus, the barefooted child of the living God, fill you and your loved ones with abundant joy and peace. Happy Christmas!

Notice :



**St Justin's Parish Office will be closed
from the 26th December to the 3rd of
January 2023**

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year



We pray for the sick of our Parish:

Carmel Welsh, Lois O'Loughlin, Francis & Joanne Downs, Fred Clarke, Tiana Mugagulio, David Booth, Carolyn Egan, Maria Macan, Rita, John Charman, Steven & Georgette Mizher, Annette & Stephen Sachie, Judy Mead, Aaron Thomas, Melissa Fernandes, Pauline Fisher, Briget Gunaratnam.

We pray Joan Lopes, Dudley Ludekens, Peter Tang Kam Kok, , and all souls who passed away recently, may they rest in peace. We remember Chan Swee Chow and all whose death anniversaries that occur at this time.

Thanksgiving Collections 18th December

1st Collection (house)

Presbytery - \$ 681.50

2nd Collection (church)

Thanksgiving - \$ 554.50
Loose - \$ 186.90

Thankyou and appreciate for your continuous support given to St Justin's Parish, God Bless,

Sacraments, Classes for 2023

Parents of children who attend schools other than our parish school who wish to enrol their children to prepare to receive their Sacraments,

Please notify the Parish Office by the 7th of February 2023 as enrolment day is the 14th of February 2023 from 4.30pm - 5.30pm

**Email: wheelershill@cam.org.au or
Parish Office 9401 6335**

**The grade levels for each Sacraments are:
First Holy Communion/Reconciliation Grade 4
Confirmation - Grade 6
(This is so that classes and teachers can be organised for 2023)**

All Parish Bulletin requests must be in
by **Wednesday midday.**

Please email all requests to wheelershill@cam.org.au

Blinded by Fairy Lights



I've spent Advents and Christmases in Japan, Rome and Australia, but even months ago, I could tell that possibly no country does Christmas quite like the Philippines. Walking into a local shopping mall in Manila, I needed to sneak a glance at my watch to check the date. Christmas trees had suddenly appeared that had not been there two days before; reindeer were ready to greet me at the door, and on the sound system, the mall's ear-worm theme song had been joined by Christmas carols on high rotation.

In a sense we can all be blinded by fairy lights—distracted by all the flashy distractions that come with Christmas. Sometimes when we prepare for Christmas, we try to recapture the joy of childhood Christmases—nostalgically trying to evoke a time when we felt perfectly happy—but find that each succeeding Christmas doesn't quite live up to those early ones, even if we don't really remember them anymore.

In his book *Remade for Happiness*, Venerable Fulton J Sheen recalls this sense of disappointment:

"Do you remember when you were a child, how ardently you looked forward to Christmas?" he asks. 'How happy you thought you would be, with your fill of cakes, your hands glutted with toys, and your eyes dancing with the lights on the tree! Christmas came, and after you had eaten your fill, blown out the last Christmas light, and played till your toys no longer amused, you climbed into your bed, and said in your heart of hearts, that somehow or another it did not quite come up to your expectations. "

Sometimes, our solution to this problem is to try to augment those things we think contain the 'magic' of Christmas. If only we had more treats, more toys, more lights, then perhaps that would be enough. Sure enough, we buy more lights to put around the house, more Christmas cakes and festive treats, more expensive toys—the latest game from Nintendo, a newer iPhone, a fancier car or whatever we think will satisfy. But then we find ourselves in the same position. At the end of the day, with new toy or drink in hand, we find ourselves staring, exhausted, at the flashing fairy lights and feeling disappointed, again. Sometimes we almost think we've got there, but *almost* is never enough.

Since our ideal of happiness never seems to be realised, the cynics conclude that the 'magic of Christmas' can't really exist. They find themselves bitterly wanting what they cannot achieve or have. But our desire for that perfect happiness pokes at our hearts and minds and never quite goes away—no matter how much we try to ignore it or how bitter we become.

The religious see these same imperfections and conclude that the perfect happiness we hope for and try to capture every Christmas cannot be found in material or passing things because they are incapable of providing it. Every blasted hope as we unwrap a present that isn't what we expected, every frustration when things don't work out exactly as we wished, every bulb that stops the whole row of lights from shining as we imagined reminds us that we cannot be satisfied by the passing things of this world.

To avoid being blinded by the fairy lights, sometimes we need to remember to be a light for others and to keep our eyes fixed on him who is the light of the world.

Written by Fr Nathan Rawlins is a priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. He is currently undertaking further studies at the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas in Sampaloc, Metro Manila, in the Philippines.