



Sunday 12th December 2021

Parish Priest: Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priests:** Fr. Tao Pham & Fr. Dixon George

Parish Pastoral Associates: Jacinta Bright & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

The Partnered Parishes of:

St. Mary's

204 Grimshaw St.,
Greensborough, 3088

Parish: 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

Email: Greensborough@cam.org.au

Website: www.cam.org.au/greensborough

Secretaries: Francesca Olofsson & Sharon Prosser

Mass Times

Tuesday to Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday: Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & **5.00pm**
(Unknown Vaccination Status)

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: By Appointment only please call the Parish Office

Parish School Principal

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**
principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

Sacred Heart

25 Gipson Street,
Diamond Creek 3089

Parish: 9401 6361

Email: DiamondCreek@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

Secretary: Pat Guatta

Mass Times

Wednesday & Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: **1st & 3rd Saturday 7.15pm at**
St Peter's (Unknown Vaccination Status)

Sunday: Mass 9.00am

Reconciliation Times

Friday: 9.45am to 10.15am

Parish School Principal

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**
principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au

St. Thomas the Apostle

251 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough Nth 3088

Parish: 9434 7373

Email: greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Secretary: Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass 9.15am

Wednesday: **9.15am (Unknown Vaccination Status)**

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Sunday: Mass 10.30am

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.30am to 10.00am

Parish School Principal

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**
principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au

THE CELEBRATION OF MASS IN OUR PARISHES

Weekday Masses has resumed in our 3 Parishes.

Sacred Heart: 9.15am Wednesday & Friday. St Mary's: 9.15am Tuesday-Friday. St Thomas: 9.15am Tuesday & Thursday.

5.00 pm Mass on Sundays at St Mary's, 9.15am on Wednesday at St Thomas & 7.15pm on 1st & 3rd Saturday at Hurstbridge has been set aside for people of unknown vaccination status.

Mass is recorded each weekend and uploaded onto our Websites for you to view.

St Mary's: www.cam.1.org.au/greensborough Sacred Heart: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

St Thomas: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Mass at Home: St Patrick's Cathedral: On Channel 31, 44 on Digital TV, for Sunday Mass at 11.00am

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Witness

WITNESSING TO NEW BEGINNINGS

John said, 'One who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

LUKE 3:16

Sacred Heart, St Mary's & St Thomas the Apostle are all members of the Diamond Valley Deanery.



www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

www.cam.org.au



Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



Thank you to parishioners for their patience while Diamond Creek is experiencing ongoing Internet issues which also affect the Parish Office phone.

St Vincent de Paul Diamond Creek Christmas Appeal

Diamond Creek St Vincent de Paul thank everyone for their wonderful generosity last weekend.

Envelopes can be put in the collection baskets this Sunday.

The Parish has been notified that the Vinnies Charity Clothing Bin at the front of the Sacred Heart Hall

will be removed next week.



Sacred Heart Parish Residence: We hope to welcome a new resident to Mercy Cottage in the New Year. A working bee will be held on **Saturday 11th December 9am-11am**. If you are available please contact the Parish Office for more details.

QUIET CHRISTMAS

The Combined Churches of Diamond Creek "Quiet Christmas" Service for those who have been bereaved or who have experienced loss, ill health or other difficulties throughout the year will be held at St John's Anglican Church at 7.30pm on Wednesday 15th December.

St Peter's 7.15pm Mass 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month is for people of unknown vaccination status. TryBooking will be required so links will be circulated.

Sacred Heart Church Christmas clean up and vacuum will be at 10am on Wednesday 22nd December.



Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Bridie Burke, Bernice Burke, Miran Kasalo, Martin Leonard, Joan Moran, Catherine Leonard, Tony Ledda, Margaret Holland, Jacob Draper, Thomas Keenan, Maureen Roberts. Shirley Curran

We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of December that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Adam Hibbert, Martin Padget, Eileen Dunn, Kevin Hewitt, Frank Orders, Julian Federico, Brian Bell, Bridgette Tancredi-Roberts

Roster for Weekend 18th & 19th December

Hurstbridge Mass for those of Unknown Vaccination Status

Saturday Hurstbridge 7.15pm: Reader: B. Greaves Eucharistic Minister: A. Perera

Sunday Sacred Heart 9.00am: Reader: A. Pieper Eucharistic Minister: C. Bell, C. Ledda

Diamond Creek Christmas Mass times: 24th December Christmas Eve: 6.00pm & 9.00pm

25th December Christmas Day: 9.00am.

PRAYER, WORSHIP & WELLBEING

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK WITHIN OUR PARISHES: If you wish to have someone added or removed from the sick or Anniversaries list for our newsletter could you please notify **Sacred Heart Pat: 9401 6361 St Mary's Sharon /Francesca:9435 1543**

St Thomas Lisa 9434 7373

THE WAY PRAYER GROUP: You are most welcome to join us for the final Charismatic Mass for 2021 and Christmas break-up on Thursday, 16th December at St Thomas the Apostle Church, 251 Diamond Creek Rd, Nth Greensborough commencing at 7.30pm with praise & worship. Bookings are not required. For further details, please contact Rose 0411 650 339 or Emilia 0418 120 902.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS

Parish Pastoral Council - Recommendation for membership

Recommendation for membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is now open. Membership is open to any member of the St Thomas community. You may wish to recommend yourself or another parishioner. The Recommendation form may be found on the parish website or forms are also available in the Gathering Space. Please give some thought to this and we hope we have many people interested in this vital leadership role.

PPC Establishment Team

Please pray for Chiara, Ariana, Lia, and Mary who are being baptised in December.

We look forward to welcoming these families into the St Thomas Parish community.

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Peg Wilcox, Dawn Ellis, Miran Kasalo, Trevor Corcoran

We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of December that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Emilia Micomonaco, Adrian DeGier, Doris Morfea, Frank Jordan, John Winter, Arthur Eames, Cass Sheehan,

Nancy Marzella, Giovanni Marzella, Leo Glennon, Rose Hegarty



Rosters for Weekend 18th & 19th December

Saturday 6.00pm Mass

Reader: D. Haesler **Commentator:** T. Holland **Eucharistic Ministers:** M. McKenzie, K. Salm, T. Holland

Set Up: J. De Carlo

Reader: F. Landy **Commentator:** M. Kenny **Special Minister:** C. Riordan, A. Kerr, B. Riordan

Set Up: C. O'Brien

Counters: C. O'Connor, E. Sacchetta **Cleaners:** *Tuesday 21st December 10.00am after Mass*

Last year a group of us got together to give the Church a clean before Christmas.

If anyone is available on Tuesday 21st December at 10.00am for approximately 1-2 hours could you please let me know.

Thank you Lisa



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2021 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year's Appeal will be officially launched at St. Thomas on the weekend of 11th/12th December and the theme this year is ***No child should be born without hope for the future.*** We see education as being a big part of that future and aim to especially support families who have children commencing in Year 7, 2022 with the associated costs that starting secondary school brings. We also continue to make sure that families receive a Christmas Meal Hamper. Our Parish schools are providing us with a large number of hampers, for which we are most grateful. We are also hoping that the parishioners of St. Thomas will once again be in a position to donate in whatever capacity they can afford -

- ◆ Appeal envelopes will be provided in the Gathering Space - they can then be placed in the Collection Baskets before/after Mass
- ◆ Credit card donations can be arranged by calling 13 18 12 and stating you are donating to the Greensborough Conference
- ◆ Donations can be made online via vinnies.org.au – please make sure you include Greensborough in the 'Comments/Conference Name' section

With our continued gratitude for your ongoing support!

Maureen Lonsdale, Greensborough Conference President

St. Vincent De Paul Society



ALL THINGS NEW 2022 - IGNATIAN GATHERING FOR YOUNG ADULT (18-30YRS)

The Society of Jesus (Australian Jesuits) invites you to its Ignatian Gathering for Young Adults (18-30 years), to take place in Melbourne on 17 – 21 January 2022, at Newman College. This gathering is a chance for young people to 'reset, reconnect and re-engage' through building friendships, sharing values, celebrating gratitude, offering service.

To register go to : <https://www.trybooking.com/BUNRC>

Cost: \$320 + Trybooking fee (\$8.50) - (includes all meals, individual rooms and all program activities).

For any questions, please contact us at: magisaustralia@sjasl.org



Ignatian Gathering 2022, 17-21 January, Newman College Melbourne, 18-30yrs

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"



NEW PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Parish office hours have now resumed with a slight change. Francesca and Sharon will provide for our **secretarial needs on Mondays 9am-5pm and Thursdays and Fridays 10am-4pm** and Jacinta's **days will be Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-5pm.**

Please continue to send any bulletin contributions to Francesca and Sharon at greensborough@cam.org.au by 2pm Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend combined bulletin.

Resources for Sanitising the Church

Thank you to those who faithfully sanitise after our Masses and we would always welcome more help at whatever Mass you attend without needing to go on a roster. Now that we are back to sanitising the whole Church for weekend Masses we are finding the costs rising to approximately \$300 per month. We would be very grateful if anyone would like to donate paper towel, disposable powder-free gloves (large), bin bags (small) so that our sanitising volunteers are ably equipped. Donations could be left in the kitchen in the Gathering Space. Thank you!

Welcome back to St Mary's Library



St Mary's Library will be open again at most Masses (6.30 Saturday and 8 and 10 Sunday) from this weekend. All parishioners from the partnered parishes are very welcome.

We would love to see new volunteers and/or committee members. Volunteers need no literary or computer expertise – just a friendly face. Anyone interested can contact Anne on huntleyajias4@gmail.com

See the library catalogue at cloud.collectorz.com/247780

Can you please check your shelves for outstanding loans and return through the returns slot at the Library?

St Mary's Library Committee

MASSES Tuesday to Friday at 9.15am, Saturday 6.30pm, Sunday 8am and 10am for fully vaccinated people. No booking required.

5pm Sunday for people of unknown vaccination status. Bookings are essential. The TryBooking link closes at **2.00pm on Sunday afternoon**. If you can no longer attend, please use the link on your TryBooking Confirmation email to cancel your booking before 2:00 pm Sunday afternoon as places are limited at this Mass.

Sunday 12 Dec 5pm Church 25 <https://www.trybooking.com/BWEHC>

Please note children over 12 months must have a ticket booked and will be included in the total count for masses.

PLEASE NOTE: It is essential that if you are booking via TryBooking, for more than one member in your family or for a friend for a mass, that each name **MUST be booked for and entered separately.**

Reminder - please bring Proof of Vaccination each time you come to Mass, as we are required to sight it at every gathering.

EXCITING NEW STUDY TO COMMENCE MID FEBRUARY WITH GUEST SPEAKER!

The Mass Explained— why we do the things we do? Watch this space for further details.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT A COST OF \$10.00 EACH.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2021 CHRISTMAS APPEAL—This year's Appeal will be officially launched at St. Mary's this weekend of **11/12 December** and the theme this year is- **No child should be born without hope for the future.** We see education as being a big part of that future and aim to especially support families who have children commencing in Year 7, 2022 with the associated costs that starting secondary school brings. We also continue to make sure that families receive a Christmas Meal Hamper. Our Parish schools are providing us with a large number of hampers, for which we are most grateful. We are also hoping that the parishioners of St. Mary's will once again be in a position to donate in whatever capacity they can afford -

1. Appeal envelopes will be provided in the Gathering Space - they can then be placed in the Collection Baskets before/after Mass
2. Credit card donations can be arranged by calling 13 18 12 and stating you are donating to the **Greensborough** Conference

Donations can be made online via vinnies.org.au – please make sure you include **Greensborough** in the 'Comments/Conference Name' section. With our continued gratitude for your ongoing support! Maureen Lonsdale, Greensborough Conference President, St. Vincent De Paul Society

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S CONTINUED

STAY TUNED - Thank you to all who participated in last month's session – *The Whole Story of Mental Health*. The feedback indicated that what Ros presented was very helpful and provided much fruit for reflection. A second session will be held in late February. Based on the feedback received, we have decided that this next session will delve deeper into this whole area of spirituality and mental ill health, perhaps with some exploration around listening skills. We will keep you posted. Also, keep an eye on our website www.cam1.org.au/greensborough We are updating our resources page with a number of helpful resources, to support people in every aspect of life, including mental ill health. We will also be uploading a great video of a talk hosted by the Uniting Church Vic/Tas, Mental health: *Does Religion/Spirituality support or hinder?* with John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology, University of Aberdeen. This video is highly recommended. John Swinton is very easy to listen to and engaging.



Support Group for people experiencing anxiety during this COVID transition time Whilst, as a society, we navigate coming out of lockdown, anxiety seems heightened, for various reasons. Whether we are vaccinated or not, and for whatever reasons we make our choices, we are all human and we are all made in the dignity and likeness of God. At a time when there is a danger of judging, let us be a community of compassion. This is an invitation for anyone feeling anxious at the moment, to come along to a small support group in the parish. It isn't a therapy group. It's a support group. There will be some ground-rules, such as confidentiality and listening, but also no discussion about politics or conspiracy theories. Whilst some who are anxious hold certain beliefs about the vaccine, that others don't, this needs to be a space where we find compassion and care and support and respect – and perhaps a sense that we are not alone, and that all will be well. If you are interested, even just to find out more, please contact Jacinta at Jacinta.bright@cam.org.au or call the parish office on 943.5 1543. We gather as a group of a Wednesday at 9.15am.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

PLEASE PRAY FOR

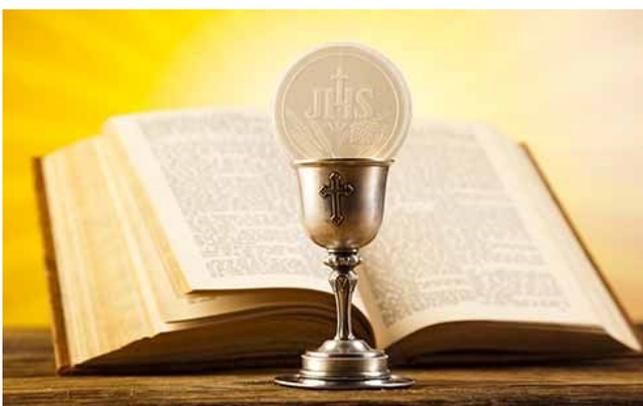
December Baptisms: Stella Bowen, Grace Rehlicki, Isla Tedesco Milani Dowling, Hollie Hull, Lucas Kent, Dakota Ilsley, Theodore Tink, Heath Kinkade, Archer Kinkade, Evelyn Drummond, Leon Castropil, Francesca Stelfox, Hannah Menichelli

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners & friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Adele Wilkinson, Peter and Elsa, Larubina, Eileen Martin, Cecilia Chang, Isla Magann, Thomas Hyde, Miran Kasalo, Pat Garrard, Michael McAleer, Matt Lorkin, Julie Daynds, Trevor Corcoran

Recently Deceased: Mervyn Shedded

We Pray for those whose Anniversaries occur this week, may they enter joyfully into God's Kingdom: Leonard Ollington, Ritty Beck, Jesiane St. Martin, Pamela Anne Griffin, John Hill, Ignacio Drendain, Nick Kelly, Giuseppe Agosta, Thecla Meneze, Paul Debonis, John Bowler, Gwen Phillips, Phyllis Shewan, Primo Santucci, Roland Gonzaga, Norman Rose, Mons John Murphy, Finbo Woroh, Hinko Novak, Philippa Morgan, Francesca Pezzopane, Anne Mackie, James Cheevers, Simon Sequeira, Sarah Robinson, Franc Hack, Charlie Bedington, Mario Sculli, Sr Aletha, Franz Denk, Cyril Shead, Antonio A Pena, David McAleer, David Turner, Gwen Rooney, Antonio San Pedro, Cliff Rowse, Joseph Puckeridge, Doris Doolan, Mary Russell, Betty Robins, Jose Tarnate, Sr Josephine, E.M.Thomas, Stefan & John Dancek, Mary Ashby, Irene Barker, Noel Dragwidge, Ken Walters, Hugh McCloskey, John Beck, Hubert Fernandes, Ana Paula Fernandes, Shannon Feehan



*The love and favour that Jesus experiences from the Father will become the experience of all who respond in faith to the Gospel.
Third Sunday of Advent Year C,
12th December 2021.*

© Australian Catholics Magazine

ADVENT

We continue our Advent journey, focusing on the theme of
Witnessing New Beginnings.

This week we light the third candle, a pink candle symbolizing joy.
This candle reminds us that God had promised to send a savior and the joy we
feel with the imminent coming of Jesus.

ADVENT CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE FOR OUR PARISHES

Communal Penitential Service (For those fully vaccinated)

Will take place at St Thomas Church on Wednesday, 15th December at 7.30pm.

Bookings not required. The service will conclude with a light supper.

Reconciliation (For those fully vaccinated)

Individual Reconciliation will take place at **Sacred Heart & St Mary's** on Thursday 16th December from 7.00pm-8.30pm
and at **St Thomas** on Friday 17th December from 7.00pm-8.30pm.

Bookings not required. Reconciliation will be heard on the Sanctuary at the Church.

Reconciliation (for those of unknown vaccination status)

Will be available at St Mary's, Sacred Heart & St Thomas by booking an appointment by emailing the individual Priest:

Fr Steven Rigo: Steven.Rigo@cam.org.au Fr Dixon George Dixon.George@cam.org.au

Fr Tao Pham: Tao.Pham@cam.org.au

Advent
Reconciliation 

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Sacred Heart

Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December 6.00pm & 9.00pm

Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December 9.00am

Holy Family: Sunday 26th December 9.00am

St Mary's

Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December 6.30pm & 10.30pm

Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December 8.00am & 10.00am (No 5.00pm or 6.30pm Vigil Mass)

Holy Family: 26th December 8.00am, 10.00am

& 5.00pm (For those of unknown vaccination status)

St Thomas

Christmas Eve: Friday 24th December 5.00pm & 7.30pm

Christmas Day: Saturday 25th December 10.30am (For those of unknown vaccination status)

<https://www.trybooking.com/BWFPX>

Saturday 25th December No 6.00pm Vigil Mass

Holy Family: Sunday 26th December 10.30am



FORMATION OF MISSIONS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE - TAKE THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL

As you are aware, the Archbishop has outlined his vision for changing the current arrangements of individual parishes. We have been aware for some time that the existing structures are unsustainable with declining numbers of Catholics participating actively in parishes and a declining number of priests available to minister in individual parishes.

A combined group has been formed by the partnered parishes of St Mary's, Sacred Heart and St Thomas to begin the process of information sharing, discussion and discernment.

Please follow the link <https://youtu.be/cn7PXVsZhQo> or watch on the parish websites, also to obtain for further information on this project.

CASUAL WORK REQUIRED BY SEMINARIAN OVER SUMMER BREAK

Rajith Fernando is a Redemptorist seminarian who is looking for casual work over the summer break for him to earn some money. Rajith helps with Catechetics at St. Mary's on Sundays, helps with the Sunday morning Masses, is a leader in our Gospel discussion group and is one of the leaders of the "Alight" Youth Group of our partnered parishes.

If you can use some casual work over the summer break, please email Fr. Steven Rigo: steven.rigo@cam.org.au

COLUMBAN CALENDAR 2020

The 2022 edition of the Columban Art Calendar are now available for purchase in all of our Churches.

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like one put aside for you to pick up from the Parish office please give you Parish a call.

Calendars are \$10.00 (Cash only)



AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED ACN AUSTRALIA

This month can you provide Transport for Pastoral Care in Malawi? Your support will help priests and religious to visit their people and aid their ministry to administer the sacraments and to keep the Faith alive. Visit: www.aidtochurch.org/monthlyproject

Monday Bible Study Group Zooming Near & Far

Monday night bible study group has moved from meeting at Sandra Bishop's house, to meeting on Zoom. This has enabled overseas, interstate and country participants to attend.

Currently we are working through the Ignatius Catholic Study Bible of 1 & 2 Samuel, which we are finding somewhat bloody. We learn together, exploring the points "for understanding" taking us deeper into the scripture and sometimes also the Catechism. The "points for application" often challenge us about our life choices both in the past and the present.

As we accompany each other discovering the fullness of God's Word we commence and conclude with prayer and in the midst of the study and reflection there is often a laugh.

There is no homework! Everyone welcome!

Mondays 7.30 to 9.30pm

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/79611838040>

Further info: sandraebishop@optusnet.com.au

LECTIONARY ART AND REFLECTION BY JENNY CLOSE

In the natural world water usually quenches fire, but in Luke's gospel the two elements are reconciled in the experience of baptism. Both the material and the spiritual aspects of baptism are evoked when John baptises with water and Jesus will baptise with fire and the Holy Spirit. In the same passage, Luke describes Jesus' fire as unquenchable. It is in the context of this rich terrestrial/celestial imagery that the advent of Jesus is prophesied.



Third Sunday of Advent, Year C

12 December 2021

First Reading Zep 3:14-18

With gladness the Lord will rejoice over you.

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 a 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

Is 12:2-6 R. v.6

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

1. 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. (R.)
2. Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to
his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the
peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name. (R.)
3. 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. (R.)

Second Reading Phil 4:4-7

The Lord is near.

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 Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News
to the poor.*

Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 3:10-18

What, then, must we do?

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.



Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

We are at the midpoint of Advent.
Today we celebrate *Gaudete*
Sunday. The principal theme of the
day is joy. According to Paul, joy is
one of the fruits of the Spirit (cf. Gal
5:22). Such joy is a religious
sentiment, not emotional happiness.
Along with gratitude, it is the heart's
response to God's goodness. Zion is
told to shout for joy because it has
been saved by God from its enemies
and because God is in the midst of
the people. The psalm response
proclaims the same message; the
reading from Philippians announces
that the Lord is near. This is cause for joy.

Advent is a time for joy, not primarily
because we are anticipating the
anniversary of the birth of Christ, but
because God is already in our midst
(Immanuel). The readings for this
Sunday assure us that God is with
us, not as a judge but as a Saviour.
We rejoice over the saving acts of
God that make us confident of
God's care and unafraid of whatever
may cross our paths. We rejoice in
the peace of God that surpasses all
understanding. Advent joy is like the
delight that fills a woman who has
just given birth, even if it occurred in
the throes of birthpangs. Advent joy
springs from the realisation that the
presence of God in our midst can so
transform our lives that the
promises of peace and security will
be fulfilled. Advent joy is the way we
live in the tension between already
and not yet.

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the Lectionary for the Mass © 1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from *The Psalms, A New Translation*, ©1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the *Jerusalem Bible*, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.
© 2017 Creative Ministry Resources Pty Ltd
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.