



Sunday 5th 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: **6.00pm (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.
6.00pm Mass on Saturday at Sacred Heart & 5.00 pm Mass on Sundays at St Mary's & 9.15am on Wednesday at St Thomas 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

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Prepare

WITNESSING TO NEW BEGINNINGS

The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

*'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.'*

LUKE 3:4

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

Leaving Collection after Masses this weekend.

Envelopes available in churches.



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.

Congratulations to Lola, Zoe, Zander and Koa who will all be baptized at St Peter's this weekend.

Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council Meeting: Thursday 9th December 7.30pm in the Parish Centre.

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

Columban Calendar 2020



The 2022 edition of the Columban Art Calendar is now available for purchase in the Church Foyer.
Calendars are \$10.00 (Cash only)

Roster for Weekend 12th December

Reader: R. Mc Evoy

Eucharist Minister: M. Jenkins, F. Ledda

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

25th December Christmas Day: 9.00am.

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: mqjisaustralia@sjasl.org



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**

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

Sacrament Celebrations

Congratulations to the children from St Thomas' who were confirmed this week, to the children from St Mary's who received First Eucharist last week and to those who are receiving First Eucharist at St Mary's this weekend.

May God bless them and their families on their special day and continue to bless them as they continue on their faith journey.

Columban Calendar 2020

The 2022 edition of the Columban Art Calendar is now available for purchase in the Church Foyer.

Calendars are \$10.00 (Cash only)

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 11th & 12th December

Saturday 6.00pm Mass

Reader: T. Holland **Commentator:** K. McMahon **Special Ministers:** J. Bohan, W. Watson, L. Leahy

Set Up: K. Salm

Sunday 10.30am Mass

Reader: M. Kenny **Commentator:** Volunteer **Special Minister:** E. Sutherland, A. Letzia, R. Piccolo

Set Up: C. & B. Riordan

Counters: T. Williamson, M. Bates **Cleaners:** 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



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

FIRST EUCHARIST AT ST MARY'S We congratulate the children who will be receiving the Sacrament of First Eucharist this weekend and pray that they will always be guided by the Lord throughout their lives.

FIRST EUCHARISTS will be celebrated on **4/5 December. In relation to 5.00pm Mass.** If you are doubly vaccinated and usually go to 5.00pm Mass, please consider coming to a different mass this weekend. The reason is that, if the restrictions for people of unknown vaccination status still apply, we will have some families (to a maximum of three families) with immediate family members only- coming to those 5.00pm Masses for their child's First Eucharist - and therefore may only have 15 places for others of unknown vaccination status at that Mass, on both weekends. As this is the only Mass where people of unknown vaccination status can attend, please be considerate of them.

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 5 Dec 5pm Church 25 <https://www.trybooking.com/BVIAI>

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.

THANK YOU TO OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY – EXCITING NEWS!

Rita Akuei would like to thank the St Mary's parish and community for all the support of her children over the years, in education and so many other areas. This support has been the reason her children have been able to be successful and the community has been like an extended family. Rita has very close in her heart all that has been done since she arrived as a refugee from South Sudan. Rita says that when she moved to Eltham there was no way she was going to change school or parish as the people of St Mary's have been supporting her always and she would never leave or forget them. How could she find the sort of people or support like this anywhere else? St Mary's is irreplaceable! Rita's family is doing very well – and her son Domanic has just been drafted to play with Carlton. You might be interested to read this media announcement from Carlton Football Club. <https://www.carltonfc.com.au/news/1034407/i-was-shook-speechless-akueis-journey-continues>

Belated congratulations also to Sam Philp, Maureen's grandson who was drafted to Carlton last year.

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

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.

SOMETHING TO PONDER

I've learned so much this year....I learned that things don't always turn out the way you planned, or the way you think they should. And I've learned that there are things that go wrong that don't always get fixed or get put back together the way they were before. I've learned that some broken things stay broken, and I've learned that you can get through bad times and keep looking for better ones, as long as you have people who love you. Jennifer Weiner.



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.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2021 CHRISTMAS APPEAL—*This year's Appeal will be officially launched at St. Mary's on the 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*

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS. We have a number of people in the parish who have contributed throughout the time of COVID restrictions. On **Saturday the 11th of December at 2.30pm** we will have an afternoon tea at which to thank all those who have helped out, whether ongoing or for a short period of time. Venue St Mary's Parish House. Please come together so that we can thank you, on behalf of the parish. RSVP to the parish office on 9435 1543 or greensborough@cam.org.au

PLEASE PRAY FOR

November 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: Carmel Mc Crorie

We Pray for those whose Anniversaries occur this week, may they enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Lucy Forssman, Evelyn Hall, Dick Hanan, Eva Hoare, Harold Loughnane, John Faigh, Girlie Simons, Lindsay Buckingham, John Trener, Peter Carr, John Farrell, Eileen Waller, Vsasos Georgiou, Herbert Barker, Herbert Veitch, Ellen Darcy, Peter Rowe, Ng Pak, Livinia Fernandez, Angela Alfon, Catherine Dowling, Mary Batchelor, Connor Deedman, Carmen Grech, Katherine McElroy, Margaret Rowse, Leslie Pereira, Irene Maher, Eileen Dunn, Eliodora Pons, Nairade O Neill, Thelma Parmenter, Kathleen Rutter, Keith Backman, Edith Maynes, Myra Kissane, Peter Willcocks, Serge Teycheney, Reynolds Fernandez, Stephen Thomas, Guerina Zoch, Patricia Tunny, John Fowler, Mabel Smith, Frederick Devlin, Mary Hussey, Herbert Strommer, Leo Van Oosterick, John Kilmartin, Rosina Casamento, Margaret Barry, Mauro DiFuntorum, Brita Daly, Gerald Hill, Tom Murphy, Herwald Hipfel, Fr Leo Fitzpatrick, Mike D'Souza, Amelia Aspe, Eugenio Sergio, Benny Rebeiro, John Dunn, Patric Mary Boswell, Jacqueline Duncan, Shirley Griffin, Anecito Entice, Michael Cheng

ADVENT

We continue our Advent journey, focusing on the theme of **Witnessing New Beginnings**. This week we light the second candle, a purple candle symbolising Faith.

We remember the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and prepare ourselves for Christ's coming.



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

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)

Holy Family: Sunday 26th December 10.30am



Reconciliation

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 watch the video <https://youtu.be/cn7PXVsZhQo> on the parish websites for further information on this project.

TAKE THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL SCRIPT

In May and June this year parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne first became aware that consideration was being given to how the local Church may best be organised in the future, changing the current arrangement of individual parishes. The priests of the diocese only learned about this at a meeting held for them on 28 April. The impetus for this action was the realisation, developed over several decades and supported by current demographic and economic data, that the existing structures were unsustainable and have been for some time, with declining numbers of Catholics participating actively in parishes and a declining number of priests available to minister in individual parishes.

The Archbishop outlined his vision for the Church in a pastoral letter to parishioners and in meetings with the clergy and lay representatives from all parishes. The vision, titled *'Take the Way of the Gospel'* was a re-imagining of our parishes, organising them into mission communities. A mission was described as a family of local faith communities coming together, that provides for personal and community faith development and worship, responding to the sacramental and pastoral needs of the community, and outreach and service to others. It was thought that 60+ missions would emerge from the current 209 parishes.

Emphasis was given to the importance of local communities discerning for themselves those local faith communities that may naturally fit together. It was stressed that this process was not about forced parish amalgamations or closures. Each parish and each region has to discern what they need and what is best for them, in their own time.

Since the initial meetings the partnered parishes of St Mary's, Sacred Heart and St Thomas have formed a combined group, consisting of our parish priest and associate priests, our pastoral associates, parish administration staff members and lay people from each parish. This group has come together to consider and share thoughts and understandings about this substantial project of mission formation, at a time when we have been unable to gather in person as faith communities and to begin the process of information sharing, discussion and discernment. Some members have attended additional online meetings about the process of forming missions and the support materials available to assist with communication, consultation and discernment within parishes.

It is hoped that as restrictions end, parishioners may meet together to gain a fuller understanding of this project and what it may mean for parishes and for their communities. It is vital that parishioners of our three partnered parishes are actively engaged in the process of discernment so that we have a voice in the decisions regarding the future of our local church.

We are very aware of the diminishing number of priests available to minister to our parishes. Currently there are 185 priests in active ministry and 15 are due to retire within the next year. We have seen partnerships emerge in our local area, including our own, to address this matter. However with partnerships our priests have even greater demands on their time to fulfill their sacramental, pastoral and organisational duties. The proposed missions may have 3-5 parishes coming together to form a much larger faith community, with two priests. Considerable support and collaboration between clergy and laity would be essential to create an effective, functioning and vibrant faith community.

While members of the laity have worked hard in parishes in a variety of roles for a long time, the nature of our congregations has changed. Many of our young people and families have withdrawn from active participation in our parishes. We have an ageing population to draw from for day to day support and participation in groups and committees. The institutional Church itself has been found severely wanting in terms of moral and pastoral leadership and accountability by the recent Royal Commission and this has been very painful for many Catholics. There is a growing realisation that this is the time for rebirth and renewal.

Each parish consists of each one of us, clergy and lay people, and as baptised people it is our right and responsibility to be part of its life and to determine its future. We all have the opportunity to work with our priests, in partnership, co-responsible in planning and decision making and in holding positions of leadership. We are able to envision and work towards a mission or partnership that enables members to bring forward their ideas with confidence and contribute to building flourishing faith communities. We are able to work together to build a sense of community and commitment to each other, to develop positive relationships, to share talents and skills, to recognise and care for those in need. This enables us to look outside of ourselves, to our broader community, and particularly to those who are marginalised and left behind and to determine how we may be of service.

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

This project is a tremendous opportunity for each one of us to discern the nature of the faith community to which we want to belong and to bring it to life. We encourage everyone to participate in the upcoming meetings and discernment sessions that will occur in the future. At this time in the history of our Church, with the Plenary Council also considering what God is asking of the Church in Australia for its future, it is important that all parishioners get involved, inform themselves of the proposed changes to the structures of our archdiocese and work together, with our priests, to consider, reflect and discern the best way forward.

There will be further information provided and opportunities to gather for reflection and discussion in the new year. If you wish to speak to someone now about the Missions Project, please contact your parish office, one of the priests or pastoral associates, or one of us.

Thank you.

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

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

Advent is a time of waiting, but it is not an uneventful time. 'Prepare the way of the Lord' says John the Baptist: the hills will be levelled, the valleys filled in and the roads straightened and smoothed. John speaks as if this smoothing process could happen in an instant; but time is relative when we are talking about the actions of the creator God. While the world has been waiting for its fulfilment in the end times, the processes of smoothing have been happening for millennia in places like the Australian desert. The landscape pictured here – near Coober Pedy – is worn down by millennia of weathering. It is difficult for humans to imagine the vast time spans that God uses to shape this environment, but the season of Advent acknowledges all time – past present and future – as the time of Redemption. *Photo by Tim Freeman*



Second Sunday of Advent, Year C

5 December 2021

First Reading Bar 5:1-9

Jerusalem – God will show you splendour.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress,
put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever,
wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you,
put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head:
since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven,
since the name God gives you for ever will be,
'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.
Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east:
see your sons reassembled from west and east
at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them.
Though they left you on foot,
with enemies for an escort,
now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.
For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills,
the filling of the valleys to make the ground level
so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.
And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade
for Israel at the command of God;
for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory
with his mercy and integrity for escort.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 125. R. v.3

(R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,
it seemed like a dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
on our lips there were songs. (R.)
2. The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels the Lord worked for them!
What marvels the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad. (R.)
3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land.
Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. (R.)

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing:
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves. (R.)

Second Reading Phil 1:3-6. 8-11

Show yourselves sinless and without blame in the day of Christ.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel Acclamation Lk 3:4. 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:

all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 3:1-6

All people shall see the salvation of God.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.
And all mankind shall see the
salvation of God.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Do we have to be like John the Baptist, eccentrically dressed and scavenging for food, to prepare the way of the Lord? No. You and I are called to be a John or Joan the Baptist, preparing people's hearts in our own time and place.

But we have to allow God to prepare our hearts for this role. John the Baptist challenges us to 'Repent', i.e. to turn around our own lives seeking God's forgiveness. John then challenges us to see the big picture which is that 'All who live shall see the salvation of God'.

Pope Francis is the exemplary universal pastor inspiring us to become 'les mercifuls sans frontieres'. And young people through social media are already saying 'We are one community of human beings on this fragile planet'.

The challenge for most of us is more immediate and apparently of smaller scope. The challenge this Advent is to identify the one person whose heart you can help prepare to celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus in three weeks' time. The best method is to let that person see your faith and joy centred on that little Jewish baby lying in a manger.

Do that, and who knows what may happen because that little baby is in fact the Sovereign Lord of history and of the whole cosmos. With God's grace, you don't have to be as eccentric or bizarre as John the Baptist to play your part in changing the course of history!

We could take a moment to pray that, repenting of our own sins where necessary, we may prepare the heart of at least one person so that the Lord Jesus may enter in this Christmas, helping him fulfil his mission that all who live shall see the salvation of God.

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