

# Monty & Eltham

The Catholic Parishes of  
St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

## Consider Volunteering...

We need your help during Christmas Masses. Please add your name to the sign up sheets in the church foyers.

## 12 Days to Christmas



The count down to the celebration of the birth of Jesus is now entering these famous few days! School Graduation ceremonies are almost complete for students in year 6, and by the end of this next week our schools will be closed for the annual Christmas break.

The family preparations are in their final stages to host Christmas functions and it almost feels normal. The familiar rush to 'get things done' at the last minute is certainly building! What to buy for those special family members and friends - if you haven't purchased these items 'online' already? Yes, it's starting to feel very much like Christmas - even the selection of movies on TV are helping our collective mood into this family season. The streets and houses around Montmorency & Eltham, shops and sign posts, are decked out in colourful art. It is hard not to be somewhat excited as we journey to Christmas Day.

After living through 2 very difficult years of a world pandemic and all that these months have revealed about ourselves and our behaviour - I look forward to this sacred time with gratitude.

I am truly amazed at how we have all coped, with lockdowns and recovery - death and new birth, the mental stresses of severe loneliness and constantly having to adjust to terrible rules and enforced regulations to keep us all safe. Christmas for me is a time to be grateful for LIFE.

We never know exactly what is around the corner of each day, we can surely plan and attempt to control our destiny but for the past 2 years we have all been caught up in an unfolding drama in which we had very little say or influence. Our collective resilience was truly amazing! We made it. Naturally these Covid-19 times are far from over - I'm aware of the strange road ahead, but I believe, and importantly hope, that the worst is over! So, let's celebrate these next 12 days leading up to Christmas and breath deeply the gratitude for life... A Saviour has been born for us, Jesus the Christ.

*Michael*

### Covid-Safe Child-Friendly Parishes:



- Please **record your presence** via: QR Code on your phone, this is essential for Record Keeping and if necessary, tracing and numbers
- Vaccination Status: double vaccinated = unlimited;  
unknown/single or zero vaccinated = 50 people in attendance
- Please use **Hand Sanitiser** provided or other personal cleaning agent
- **Natural air flow** – where possible, windows and doors open



### For all volunteers and staff:

- **WWCC** – current working with children's check
- **Code of Conduct** – ensure you have signed the annual code of conduct



*This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.*

*For more information visit [pol.org.au/eltham](http://pol.org.au/eltham) or [pol.org.au/montmorency](http://pol.org.au/montmorency).*

*We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.*



## PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

### OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



#### **Parish Priests**

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

[michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au](mailto:michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au)

Terry Kean - Pastor in Solidum

[terry.kean@cam.org.au](mailto:terry.kean@cam.org.au)

Barry Caldwell

#### **Parish Office**

86 Mayona Road

**9435 4742**

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

[montmorency@cam.org.au](mailto:montmorency@cam.org.au)

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

Peter Williams:

Child Safety Officer

[SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au](mailto:SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au)

Website:

[www.pol.org.au/montmorency](http://www.pol.org.au/montmorency)

[www.pol.org.au/eltham](http://www.pol.org.au/eltham)

(pol stands for Parish OnLine)

Facebook:

St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

#### **Schools**

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

[principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

[www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

[principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

[www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Patrick Green: 9439 7824

[school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](mailto:school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)

[www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)

#### **RECONCILIATION**

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 4742

#### **Collections: 21 & 28 November 2021**

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
OLHC	\$760.00	\$774.50
SFX	\$2,737.50	\$1,591.25



Please help our parish continue our important pastoral activities.

You can give an offering online today with CDFpay.

Find our parish by visiting:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayEltham> or <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMontmorency>

## Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

### **Saturday 11**

12:00pm Baptism - Archie Montmorency

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### **Sunday 12 - Third Sunday of Advent (Year C)**

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

12:00pm Baptism - Lillian Montmorency

### **Tuesday 14**

9:30am Mass Montmorency

### **Wednesday 15**

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

11:00am Small Church Community Montmorency

### **Thursday 16**

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:30am ASRC food collection Montmorency

2:00pm Mass @ Lower Plenty Garden Views Lower Plenty

### **Friday 17**

9:30am Mass Eltham

### **Saturday 18**

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### **Sunday 19 - Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)**

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

12:00pm Baptism - Henrietta Montmorency

### **Tuesday 21**

9:30am Mass Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Eltham

### **Wednesday 22**

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

### **Thursday 23**

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:30am ASRC food collection Montmorency

### **Friday 24 - Christmas Eve**

6:00pm Christmas Eve Outdoor Mass Holy Trinity

8:00pm Christmas Eve Mass Eltham

10:00pm Christmas Eve Mass Montmorency

### **Saturday 25 - Christmas Day**

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

### **Sunday 26**

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

### **Tuesday 28**

9:30am Mass Montmorency

### **Wednesday 29**

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

### **Thursday 30**

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

### **Friday 31**

9:30am Mass Eltham

### **Saturday 1 January 2022**

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### **Sunday 2**


8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

### **Tuesday 4**

9:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

 *Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith...*

### Montmorency

For the recently deceased:

*Pasquale Vorpasso*



For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert),*

*Nora Edmond, John Tobin,*

*Terry Flannery (father of Elisha O'Dowd),*

*Kate Lagerewskij, Adrian Lamers, Sheila Smith*

### Eltham

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Violetta, Ryan Bennett, Lucy Bibby, Zara Bucknell*

*Ruth Decker, Geoff Haines, Luke Hawthorne-Smith,*

*Jeanette Jenkins, Tom Nolan, Paul O'Dell,*

*Les Robertson, Christine Scott, Rosemary Scully,*

*Barbara Snopkowski, Ibysek Wojciechowski,*

*Teresa Zammit, Sylvek Zyleviczc*

To include an anniversary in the bulletin, please contact

Parish Office: 9435 4742 or [eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

### Roster for WEEKEND 18/19 December 2021

#### *Montmorency*

Davidson, John

PRYR

McAleer, Peter & Denise

ASRC

#### *Eltham*

Frediani, Gabriella

Altar Society

Haines, Geoff

Commentator

Haines, Geoff

Eucharistic Minister

Haines, Jan-Marie

Eucharistic Minister

Scannell Family

Pilgrim Rosary Statue

Furtado, Denzil

Reader

### 2021 Kadasig Christmas Hampers

Celebrate Christmas by making a difference to the lives of others! The Kadasig Christmas Hampers bring great joy to many families in Cebu, Philippines. While you're sitting down to a feast with your family, know that a family in Cebu, Philippines will enjoy a hamper of food. There are a number of other 'grass root' options you can choose from to support families in need.

For more information or to purchase a gift certificate for a family or gift, please contact: Maree Kulkens (0430 549 516 or [mareekulkens@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mareekulkens@yahoo.com.au)) or Juanita Troemml (0409 514 565 or [jtroemml@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jtroemml@bigpond.net.au)) or visit our website: [www.kadasigaid.com.au](http://www.kadasigaid.com.au)

\* \$20 - Days for Girls (reusable menstrual kit)

\* \$20-\$100 - livelihood products

\* \$25 - medical care

\* \$30 - 25kg rice

\* \$40 - Christmas Hamper

\* \$40 - house repairs

\* \$60 - 50kg rice

\* \$60 - piglet

\* \$100 - small baking oven



(Christmas Hamper = provide food for a family for Christmas & New Year, these are packed & distributed by our staff)

### SVDP Montmorency Christmas Appeal 2021

Thank you to all parishioners who made a donation to our appeal over the last two weekends. The Montmorency conference has sent a Christmas card to all who filled in with their address on the envelopes or made an online donation. We presume that receipts for credit card donations will be issued by our head office who will be processing your details. However, if you do not receive a tax receipt in the next few weeks, please email Mike at [msaid@netspace.net.au](mailto:msaid@netspace.net.au).

This year's Christmas Appeal theme is **"No child should be born into a world without hope for the future"**.

As is the custom of SVDP Montmorency, all monies raised by the appeal are used **exclusively** within the local community serviced by our conference and go towards sharing the spirit of Christmas with those for whom daily life is a struggle. There are no administration costs associated with the preparation and distribution of the hampers.

It's not too late to donate!

#### How to Donate



- **Envelopes** are in the church pews for **cash, cheque or credit card donations**. Please place the envelopes in one of the three boxes in the church foyer.
- **On Line at Vinnies.org.au** and ensure you **nominate Montmorency or Eltham in the Comments/Conference box** to ensure your donation stays local.
- **Phone 13 18 12** again state "for Montmorency or Eltham conference Christmas appeal".

If you choose to donate online, it would be appreciated if you email [msaid@netspace.net.au](mailto:msaid@netspace.net.au) so that our conference can acknowledge your generosity.

If you, or someone you know, require assistance is always promptly available by contacting 1800 305 330 between 10am and 3pm weekdays.

Collection of quality household goods/furniture can be arranged by calling 1800 621 349. The St Vincent de Paul Montmorency's conference sincerely wishes to thank everybody for their continued support of our work and wish all parishioners and their families every blessing and happiness for Christmas and a very happy and safe New Year.



St Vincent de Paul Society  
*good works*



Our Lady's church choir is seeking a pianist to play at Christmas Eve Mass (24 Dec 2021 – 8pm). The choir would also need a rehearsal with the piano. The pianist would need to be proficient (as an accompanist) in playing the usual Christmas hymns and parts of the Mass.

Enquiries can be made to the Parish on: 9435 4742

#### ***We are here for you!***

If you or someone you know is unable to attend Mass due to ill health or for any other reason, we would be more than happy to bring Communion to you at home. The beautiful **Season of Advent** has begun and we would like you to know you are with us on the journey.

Please do not hesitate to call Kate (Parish Office) on 9435 4742, or Patsy Skipper on 0429 439 675. We are happy to arrange a suitable time to visit you.

You are in our thoughts and prayer during this Advent time.



## Important Child Safeguarding Information

As a faith community, we continue to stand united in embracing compliance with our policies and pursuing best practice in safeguarding children and all vulnerable people, in this way we are respecting the inherent value of everyone.

Child abuse can be defined as all forms of abuse involving a child including: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation and exposure to family violence.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know if your instincts about child abuse and neglect are right. There are often behavioural or physical signs of stress when a child has been, or is experiencing abuse. It is important to note that children may suffer from one or more types of abuse.

These forms of abuse and their associated warning signs are set out below.

### Some signs of abuse can include:

- Distrust or wariness of adults;
- Extreme behaviour: aggressive, submissive, anxious, distressed;
- Low self-esteem, being withdrawn or having difficulty relating to adults or other children;
- Being overly obedient and trying hard to please;
- Difficulty concentrating;
- Excessive rocking, humming, sucking, or biting;
- Bedwetting, frequent nightmares or sleeping difficulties (seeming tired and falling asleep at unusual times);
- Seeming to be accident prone or having unexplained bruises or injuries at different stages of healing;
- Explanations for injuries that are unbelievable, vague or don't align with the type of injury;
- Alcohol or drug abuse;
- Suicidal tendencies;
- Not wanting to go home (or somewhere else);
- Creating stories or artwork about abuse;
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for the age and development of the child;
- Wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions to hide injuries;
- An adult discloses historical abuse that occurred when they were a child.

### Reporting Abuse

Reporting child abuse requires a person to form a 'reasonable' belief that a child or young person has experienced abuse, is experiencing abuse or is at risk of harm.

Definitive proof or evidence that abuse has occurred, is occurring, or that a child or young person is at risk is not required and it is not appropriate for you to undertake an investigation.

The disclosure of abuse can be a very difficult and emotionally challenging process for a child, young person or adult and needs to be handled sensitively and respectfully.

All information relating to a concern, allegation or complaint is to be treated with sensitivity and the utmost confidentiality.



# REPORTING ABUSE OR SAFETY-RELATED MISCONDUCT

STEP  
01

## WHO CAN REPORT?

### Anyone:

- Child or young person and/or their parent or carer
- Adult
- Staff member or volunteer
- Clergy or religious person
- Any other person e.g. witness to an incident

STEP  
02

## WHAT TO REPORT?

### Abuse or safety-related misconduct:

- Current or historical disclosures of abuse or harm
- Current or historical allegations, suspicions or observations
- Breach of the Code of Conduct

### IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

STEP  
03

## HOW?

- Verbal report in person or by telephone
- Written report via email or mail

If you feel comfortable and it is appropriate to do so, report the matter to a person in a leadership position within your parish, as they can assist and support you to make a report.

STEP  
04

## WHO TO?

All reports are to be directed to:

### Professional Standards Unit

Phone: 9926 5621 Email: [psu@cam.org.au](mailto:psu@cam.org.au)

Or you can contact Victoria Police directly.  
Remember! Always call 000 if a child or adult is in immediate danger.

STEP  
05

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

### The Professional Standards Unit will:

- Offer support to the person(s) involved
- Initiate risk management processes to ensure the safety of the person and others, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary processes
- Report the matter to relevant authorities in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care as soon as possible e.g. Child Protection, Victoria Police
- Wait for clearance from authorities before starting an investigation
- Report the matter to regulatory bodies (if applicable) e.g. Commission for Children for Children and Young People

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT** Phone: 9926 5621 Email: [psu@cam.org.au](mailto:psu@cam.org.au)

This flowchart is adapted from the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Victoria, Flowchart: Child Safety Reporting Process & from the National Office for Child Safety, Australian Government, Flowchart: Child Safety Reporting Process Within an Organisation.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE

**A message from  
Aid to the Church in Need 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](http://www.aidtochurch.org/monthlyproject)



It is that time again where the less fortunate can be supported with donations of NEW toys and gifts suitable for teenagers and adults for Christmas presents. These can be left in the baskets available in Our Lady's Chapel at St Francis Xavier, Montmorency. Items may be delivered at Mass times, or to the Parish Office. Baskets will be available 1 to 19 Dec.

All enquiries to the Parish Office.  
Thank you for your continued support.

**Support  
Montmorency Parish  
by giving with CDFpay**

Simply scan the QR code with your mobile phone and in a few easy steps you can quickly and securely give to your parish.



**Support  
Eltham Parish  
by giving with CDFpay**

Simply scan the QR code with your mobile phone and in a few easy steps you can quickly and securely give to your parish.



**2022 Columban Calendars**

are available to purchase from the  
Piety Stall at  
Eltham & Montmorency for \$10.  
Anne Cotter & Mary O'Conner



**Opening The Doors Foundation**

*Keeping Koorie Kids  
in an Education of their Choice*

For just \$30 you can buy one of our Christmas ornaments to hang on your tree or gift to loved ones.

By purchasing an ornament, you will be supporting Aboriginal students across Victoria  
Our festive gum nut decorations are made from Australian timbers and are lightweight. Each one is 7.5cm in diameter and comes in a gift box.

*Here's what your purchase can help us achieve...*

- 1 ornament a school hat for a student
- 2 ornaments stationary, exercise books & pencil cases for a family
- 3 ornaments maths calculator for a Secondary School student
- 4 ornaments support a student with the costs of school camp
- 5 ornaments support a student with the costs of VET/VCAL
- 6 ornaments a full sports uniform for a student
- 7 ornaments stationary & books for up to 3 Secondary School students
- 8 ornaments a school bag
- 9 ornaments school shoes for a student
- 10 ornaments uniforms for up to 2 Primary School students
- 11 ornaments a blazer for a Secondary School student

<https://www.openingthedoors.org.au/christmas>



**Prayer Shawl Ministry Christmas Lunch**

Meeting 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10am @ OLHC from 1 Feb 2022

**On the Top Shelf @ OLHC**

Pro Hart's *Outback Christmas* is on the top shelf  
Also, are two gems by Brian Doyle: *A book of Common Prayer & Grace Notes*.



**Missing from library are** *The Story of the Other Wise Man* & also *Grace in Dying*. The latter was returned on October '21, so someone took it out not long ago.

Please return these books to the library when able. Trish Taylor

**The Way Prayer Group**

You are most welcome to join us for the final  
*Charismatic Mass* for 2021 & 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



## Prayers of the Faithful for 12 Dec 2021 Third Sunday of Advent

**Leader:** We gather together with our hearts open in faith and prayer.

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, and all who hold positions of authority in the Church. We pray that inspired by the Holy Spirit they will be enabled to convey a sense of joy to all Christians.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Let us reflect on the central mystery of this season: God took on the form of a helpless human baby all the joy, wonder and difficulties that is part of human existence. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For victims of Covid-19, suffering physically and emotionally. We pray that they find support and guidance in those closest to them. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

St Paul reminds the Philippians that "God is near". Let us take the time this Advent to contemplate this wondrous mystery. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Christians living in places where they are not free to openly celebrate and worship Jesus. May their personal and private prayer be heard by the Lord above. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray in particular for broken families who cannot be together for whatever reason. May they find a way that will enable them to spend some time together. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for children, in particular those who do not have the loving embrace of a father or mother or the warmth of family. May we be ever vigilant to the suffering of children. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who have died, *Pasquale Vorpasso*; and those whose anniversaries occur around this time. May they rest in the peace and love of the Lord. *Let us pray to the Lord.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** We make these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus the Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen



## Advent Meditation / Rejoice for the Lord is near

In her reflection on the first reading for the Third Sunday of Advent, **Leonie Caldecott** welcomes the warming flame of Rose Sunday

Gaudete Sunday brings a strange counterpoint between joy and imprecation. In the first reading we find ourselves in a triumphalist mosh pit of lockdown escapees. "Shout for joy, daughter of Zion, Israel, shout aloud!" (Zephaniah 3:14). A victorious warrior is coming to steady our traumatised limbs. *Gaudete in Domino semper!*

Meanwhile, out there by the murmuring Jordan, the Baptist is in full personal trainer mode, reminding us of the urgent need to act soberly and justly. Not to have our eyes on the main chance, but to share nicely; to take no more than our due. Not to treat necks like footrests. It's not exactly rocket science.

St Paul, a reformed legalist, reminds us that we are after all destined for happiness. But like St John's anxious interlocutors, we are rarely



clear what this might mean. "What must we *do*?" We long for quick solutions: but panic buying won't give us existential peace. John is trying to clear a path, not to simple answers, but to the One who will give us the underlying workings of the core problem: what are we here for? What does it mean to be human? Fatally flawed, apparently, but not hopelessly so. We have a choice. "Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very

near" (Philippians 4:5).

And of course, the forerunner now turns the spotlight away from himself and towards the headline act: the Lord who is near, Emmanuel. *God with us.* You can't throw a party without thinking about the point of the festivities; just as you can't bring in a harvest without agricultural know-how. Cue the "winnowing fan" (Luke 3:17).

For those who don't already know (and yes, it's fine to geek out on lists of ancient wheat varieties), this is a perfect piece of proportionate technology: a cross between a shallow basket and a large shovel. The wheat kernels need to be shaken free from the coating that surrounded them on the stalk: the manual agitation of the winnowing fan causes this organic material to fly off into the wind, leaving only the heavy

grain behind. When we hear the words "work of human hands" at the beginning of the Eucharistic rite, it is this kind of painstaking effort that is being referred to: extracting the sumptuous fruit of the earth, ready to be ground for the substance we call bread.

The chaff is then burned, much as we burn leaves in the autumn. St John, however, refers to a "fire that will never go out" (Luke 3:17). This is another of those "integrity" moments. The hands that are coming to shake things up are hands that know what they are doing. The Spirit that is going to blow away the parts of ourselves we don't really need is a spirit of love.

The unquenchable fire portrayed in George MacDonald's *The Princess and Curdie*: a regenerative fire of roses, its flames the purificatory blaze of hope, warming our wintry hands on Rose Sunday.

**Leonie Caldecott** is a write living in the West Country. She is the editor of the UK/Ireland edition of *Magnificat*.

## Gospel - Luke 3:10-18

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.

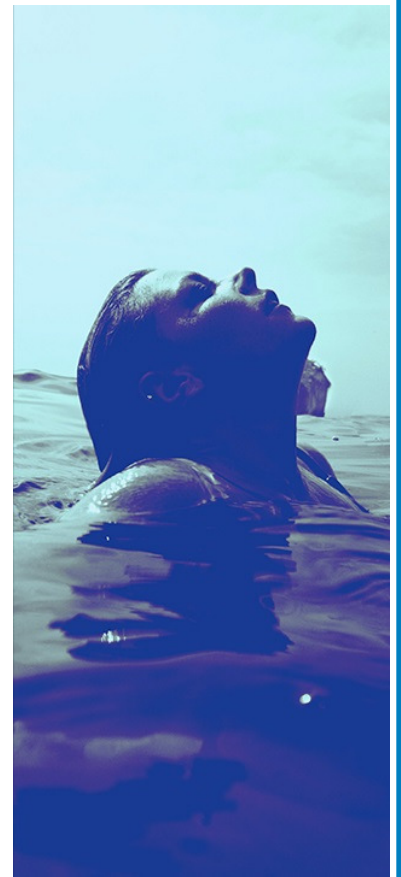
### Reflection

Having introduced us to John the Baptist last Sunday, Luke now gives us a fuller picture of his prophetic ministry. John's proclamation of a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" draws a crowd of listeners who want to know what they must do.

The question is posed in turn by the general populace, tax collectors and soldiers. Notably absent from this selection are the religious authorities. Perhaps they have been stung by John's use of the term "brood of vipers" in the verses preceding the reading. Luke is already signalling who will welcome the good news and who will not.

John's replies are eminently fair. The people are called to care for the needy. Tax collectors and soldiers are told not to abuse their power. Essentially John is doing no more than bidding them observe the precepts of the Law, in contrast with the rigorous demands Jesus makes in the Sermon on the Mount.

But John goes on to herald the advent of the long-awaited Messiah who will usher in a new era of Spirit and fire. A new era it may be, but John still uses the traditional imagery of divine judgement to describe it. It will take time for Luke to spell out what the Baptist's "good news" really means.



**Break Open the Word 2021**

# Christmas Mass Timetable

## Christmas Eve:

6pm

Holy Trinity Primary

8pm

OLHC Eltham

10pm

SFX Montmorency

## Christmas Day:

8:30am

SFX Montmorency

10am

OLHC Eltham

## Boxing Day:

8:30am

SFX Montmorency

10am

OLHC Eltham

Our Lady Help of Christians, 2 Henry Street, Eltham &  
St Francis Xavier, 88 Mayona Road, Montmorency

