

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

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St Francis Xavier, Montmorency and Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham

Merry Christmas! We made it through these past unpredictable three years of a world pandemic and very stressful times for everyone. Over this special Christmas weekend I am simply filled with 'gratitude' for life in general and your perseverance to be involved and continue to want to be apart of the Christian story in Eltham & Montmorency. Gratitude for the 'Gift of Life' that comes through the message of the Gospel over this weekend - that the birth of Jesus is an event in time, for all time, for all creation and for ever! God became human to show us all the true love of God. Gratitude for the gift of life that shines through each and everyone. I'm indeed 'thankful' to all those who helped in small and obvious ways to keep the spirit of Jesus alive and well throughout this past year at SFX and OLHC. It certainly hasn't been easy, but we made it! And finally, a very big "THANKYOU" to everyone involved in these Christmas Masses - I am very grateful for your help and love during these busy days. Warmest 'Peace and Blessings' to you and your families over these festive days, and also our thoughts and prayers for all those families caught up in the Australian floods and the terrible war in Ukraine.

May the Christmas message of Peace fill your hearts with gratitude too!

Warmest love, *Michael*

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally.

He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

Reflection:

By the time the community gathers for Mass for "During the Day", the summer sun has fully risen. What the prophet Isaiah dramatically declared in the dark of night - "on those who live in a land of deep

shadow a light has shone" - is now reflected in the elements. If there's an enchanting air about Mass During the Night, the Daytime Mass invites us to wake from our dreaming and open our eyes to the full blaze of Christ's glory.

Those who make their way to church on Christmas Day are likely to be a diverse lot, ranging from the devout who may already have attended a Vigil or Midnight Mass, through to regular parishioners who find this time suits them best, and on to the once-or-twice-a-year worshippers who still sense the importance of this day. Many may be on their way to festive meals with family and friends. They will find themselves served rich fare at the table of the word. It's a wonderful opportunity to treat them to a thoroughly well-proclaimed set of inspiring texts.

Isaiah thrills us with his jubilant announcement of good news for Zion, his high spirits being echoed throughout the responsorial psalm. The author of the letter to the Hebrews launches his magnificent homily on Christ's priesthood and sacrifice with bold testimony to him as Son of God. And all this culminates in the glorious and profound opening chapter of John's gospel. As the gospel acclamation declares, "Today a great light has come upon the earth".

Break Open the Word 2022

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 or pol.org.au/montmorency.

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





Prayers of the Faithful for 25 December 2022 Christmas Day



Leader: Let us pray today in a spirit of hope and joy.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Jesus' birth in all its simplicity and humility brings with it renewed light, joy and hope. May we cherish this gift and share our joy with others. We hold in our hearts all those who struggle to find joy at this time, isolated by grief, loneliness or separation, displaced by floods or natural disaster. May they receive the comfort of God's love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

The Lord's dominion is peaceful and just. We pray for peace and justice in our world. May our leaders govern with integrity, intelligence and compassion. We pray for justice for all those fleeing violence and war, seeking new homes and better lives for their families. Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the people of Ukraine, Russia and Europe as they struggle through a harsh winter of destruction and war. May the simplicity and peace of the Christmas message bring some light and hope for an end to the conflict.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For people of all faiths. Christ's message of joy and hope unites us all, as together we search for justice and peace.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We remember those who are sick, who will spend Christmas in hospital, who are suffering mental or physical illness and who find it difficult to participate in the joy and celebrations of this season. We give thanks and prayers for all those who work in the health and emergency systems.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Joseph was open to the Lord's word, he listened, trusted and acted. May we be people of thoughtfulness, courage and trust, always open to God's message in our lives.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died, *and* whose anniversaries are around this Christmas season, including *Kate Boyce, Vito Capuana, Peter Carbone, Mary Gioules, Terry Moylan, Sheila Mullane, Nancy Swindon & Gaetano Zappulla*. We treasure the gift of their lives among us. May they rest in the peace and love of the Lord.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: May the Lord bring Christmas joy and blessings to us all today. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen



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

Montmorency

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*Vito Capuana, Peter Carbone, Mary Gioules,
Terry Moylan (29 years), Nancy Swindon,
Gaetano Zappulla (2 years)*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Tony Belfiore, Rita Bevanda, Kim Brisbane,
Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert),
Alana Foulds Bob Fraser, Melanie Lam, Lita Lee,
Frances McDonald, Cindy Morrissey,
Andrew Pighin, Aquatha Spina, Melina Tenaglia*



Eltham

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

Kate Boyce, Sheila Mullane

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Violetta, Jade McAlear, Fiona Rogers, Rosemary Scully,
Ian Sturman, James Sutton, Sarah Thompson*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office
9435 4742 or eltham@cam.org.au.

Roster for THIS WEEKEND: 24/25 Dec 2022

Armstrong, Miranda	C10:00am
Armstrong, Miranda	E8:00pm
Bacani, Brian	C10:00pm
Beckford, Peter	C8:00pm
Boyd, Mary	PRYR
Castellanos, Rodrigo	E10:00am
Donnellan, Denice	E8:00pm
Dopheide, Marlis	R8:00pm
Edwards, Elisabeth	E8:00pm
Foxley, David	R10:00am
French, Jossie	R10:00pm
Griffin, Chris	R10:00pm
Iliffe, Yvonne	E8:00pm
McKinley, Michael	C8:30am
Northrop, Greg	E8:00pm
Rankin, Maree	R8:30am
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00am
Reardon, Peter	E10:00am
Scully, Greg	E10:00am
Scully, Helen	E10:00am
Wood, Marie	R8:30am

Roster for NEXT WEEKEND: 31 Dec/1 Jan 2023

Armstrong, Miranda	E10:00
Bacani, Brian	W6:00
Capuana, Marisa	W6:00
Davidson, John	PRYR
Dopheide, Marlis	E10:00
Dunell, Linda	ASE
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
Goss, Marion	E10:00
Iliffe, Yvonne	E10:00
Love, Philip	W8:30
McKinley, Michael	W8:30
Ramsdale, John & Sue	ASRC
Rough Family	PRSE
Saltalamacchia, Carmel	ASE
Taylor, Trish	C10:00
Zylstra, Diane	R10:00

ASE = Altar Society @ Eltham; C = Commentator; E = Euch. Minister;
H = Hospitality; PRSE = Pilgrim Rosary Statue @ Eltham;
W8:30 = Minister of the Word @ 8:30am Mass;
W6:00 = Minister of the Word @ 6pm Mass; R = Reader