

Reflection on the Gospel-2nd Sunday of Advent Year C

Luke 3:1-6) -Veronica Lawson RSM

Tuesday of this week (8th December, 2015) marks the beginning of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. Pope Francis has called us to look into our hearts and to let go of all that is condemnatory and harsh or cruel and to bring the mercy of God to our troubled planetary home and to its inhabitants. Our courageous pope is giving extraordinary leadership to the global community. Like Luke, the author of the third gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, Pope Francis recognises that the message of the gospel is for the whole world and not simply for the chosen few.

For the third time within the space of three chapters, Luke situates his gospel drama on a national and international stage and in relation to global events. The gospel writer wants to insist that religion is no private affair and that the story of the movement around Jesus of Nazareth is no ordinary, everyday story. It is rather a story with momentous political and religious significance.

Luke is strong on dramatic impact and less concerned with precision of detail. He situates events in the “pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas”, implying that there were two high priests at the same time. In fact, Caiaphas succeeded his father-in-law Annas as high priest, even if the influence of the latter persisted into Caiaphas’ pontificate.

Luke presents John the son of Zechariah as a prophet in the long line of prophets that culminates in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the world stage. Jesus is the one who truly brings the salvation of our God. It is worth noting that prophecy in Luke is not reserved to the male characters.

Luke 3:1-6 contains some of Luke’s favourite themes: prophecy and its fulfilment; the word of God; reversal of expectations; conversion or repentance; proclaiming the good news; forgiveness of sins; salvation. As in Israel’s past, the wilderness or desert is the locus of God’s revelation. The prophet John calls on the people of the region around the Jordan River to turn their hearts and their lives around, to accept “a baptism of *metanoia* or conversion for the forgiveness of sins’.

We might listen to the Isaiah citation that follows (“Prepare the way...”) against the backdrop of the first reading from the prophet Baruch. God’s way involves putting on the “cloak of justice” or “robe of righteousness” and allowing God to provide an escort of mercy/works of mercy and justice/right relationship. If we take seriously the call to celebrate the Jubilee Year of Mercy, we shall surely search for ways to heal the broken relationships within our ailing planet.

BULLETIN for SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 7th DECEMBER 2015

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	11.00 am Mass
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am Mass
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	10.00 am Damascus College Staff End of Year Mass at Ss Peter & Paul's, Buninyong.
SATURDAY:	Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10.00 am

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
BUNINYONG	SUN	10.30 AM

READINGS -

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

First: Zephaniah 3:14-18

Second: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

RECENT DEATH: Fr Justin Woodford.

ANNIVERSARIES: Sr Christina Madden, Jim Power, Harry Thorpe, Peter Lamb.

LEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Mary-Rose McLaren, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Mary Barnett.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 1:** L. Noonan ©, G. Clarkson

Next Week: **Team 2:** B. Perkins ©, F. Nolan, J. Lewis.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	
Envelopes:	\$ 1,226.70
Loose money:	\$ 300.00
Direct debits:	\$ <u>1,657.00</u>
	\$ 3,183.70
PRESBYTERY:	\$ 800.00

EVENTS

- Wednesday, 9th December Social afternoon in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm.

JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

Pope Francis has declared an **Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy**, to Commence on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8th December.

To commence our parish involvement in the Holy Year, Sr Veronica Lawson will present some scriptural reflections on the concept and practice of mercy.

The evening with Sr Veronica, Tuesday 8th December, will be in St Alipius Hall from 7.00 pm to 8.30 pm.

This will be a great opportunity to reflect on mercy in our own lives and in the life of the parish.

In this Jubilee Year, let us allow God to surprise us. He never tires of casting open the doors of his heart and of repeating that he loves us and wants to share his love with us.

The Church feels the urgent need to proclaim God's mercy. Her life is authentic and credible only when she becomes a convincing herald of mercy...

Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, The Face of Mercy, 25

ST. VINCENT de PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our "Restore their hope this Christmas" appeal. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall. All donations are used in the Ballarat area and donations of over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

CHRISTMAS GIVING

There are many people who are less fortunate than we are, especially at Christmas. We have an opportunity to give them some happiness at this time. Please take a card from the tree, choose your gift, attach a card to it and return as soon as possible, but no later than Sunday, 20th December. Thank you.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS

Are available at the Piety Stall—\$9.00 each, or if multiple copies are purchased \$8.00 each. Christmas items also available including cards, packs of eight for \$3.00. They make great Christmas gifts.

MERCY WORKS

Has launched a campaign to raise funds to provide relief for the drought in PNG. The campaign is in direct response to a request from the Bishop of Daru-Kiunga who has requested funds to be able to supply fresh drinking water. People can donate by:

- The campaign is live on <https://chuffed.org/project/let-mercy-rain>
- Is on the Mercy Facebook page with a direct link to the crowd funding site
- Via the Mercy website - special donate button at www.mercyworks.org.au
- Paper campaign (see forms on notice board)

CENTACARE ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

Centacare Ballarat's 2015 Annual Toy Drive will run until 15th December, 2015. To donate please purchase an age specific toy, select a name tag from one of the gift trees located at Toyworld, Ballarat, Curves Sebastopol or Curves Wendouree and place your gift under the tree. For more information on donating and assisting this Christmas, please contact Centacare Appeal Coordinators, Keryn Monshing, Jenny Grima or Joanne Woodland on 5387 7900 or keryn.monshing@centacareballarat.org.au

OLHC CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

OLHC Christmas Day lunch will be held in OLHC Parish Hall, 482 Gillies St., Wendouree from 12.00 midday - 2.00 pm (meal at 12.30 pm). Transport provided. Bookings by 24th December (add any diets). Phone: 0419 975 914.

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

10.00 am Thursdays, in the meeting room of St Alipius Church.