

Reflection on the Gospel-3rd Sunday of Advent Year C (Luke 3:10-18)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

The third Sunday of Advent used to be called Gaudete (be joyful) Sunday. It provided a mid-term break within a period of austerity or penance in preparation for Christmas. Advent is no longer celebrated as a penitential period, but rather as a reflective time of expectation and hope. The invitation to rejoice nonetheless remains part of the Advent liturgy. It is certainly present in the first two readings: God is in our midst, renewing us in love (Zephaniah) and there is no need for worry (Philippians). It is also implicit in the gospel reading from Luke with its sense of expectancy and John the Baptist's announcement of the "Good News" of the one who is to come.

There are ethical demands in the time of waiting. Three times John is asked, "What must we do?" In line with Luke's emphasis on the universality of God's saving power, the responses are directed to "all the people". Those with even minimal food (something to eat) and clothing (two tunics) are told to share. Tax agents, caught up in a system notoriously open to abuse, are to be honest. Soldiers are given three directives that provide some insight into the way the military was perceived: no extortion, no blackmail, and no complaints about wages. The third directive probably derives from the fact that soldiers were better off financially than most others. It is in no sense a prohibition on demands for just wages.

John situates himself in relation to Jesus, the anointed agent of God's

liberation. John's portrait presents someone more fiery than the

Lukan Jesus turns out to be. It is more like a self-portrait, especially in light of the context that has John addressing the crowds who flock to him as a "brood of vipers" or "children of snakes" (Luke 3:7). In contrast with John's water-baptism "for the forgiveness of sins", Jesus

will "baptise" with the Holy Spirit and fire. Fire, as we well know in this dry land of ours, is a challenging symbol, both friend and foe. In

the first-century *Manual of Discipline* from the Qumran community by the Dead Sea, water, refining by fire, and "a holy Spirit" are listed together as the instruments of God's saving and purifying action. John,

who may have been a member of the Qumran community, presents his own role as preparatory to that of Jesus, the Spirit-filled, powerful and enduring agent of God's refining and purifying work in the world.

We know our own ongoing need for a "baptism" with the Holy Spirit and fire. We prepare the way by doing what we must: sharing our goods and treating others with dignity, justice and forgiveness.

BULLETIN for THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 14th DECEMBER 2015

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	9.30 am End of Year Mass with St. Francis Xavier Primary School in Parish Church 12.00 noon End of Year Mass with St. Alipius Primary School in Parish Church
WEDNESDAY:	12.00 noon end of Year Mass with Emmaus Catholic Primary School in Ss Peter & Paul Buninyong
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
SATURDAY:	Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10.00 am

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	9.00 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	10.30 AM

READINGS - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

First:	Micah 5:1-4
Second:	Heb 10:5-10
Gospel:	Lk 1:39-44

RECENT DEATH: Mary Wood.

ANNIVERSARIES: Anna Ridsdale, James Wade.

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, Patrick Ryan.

COUNTING TEAMS:

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

Next Week: .**Team 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell, F. Colasante.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,052.00
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>1,657.00</u>
		\$ 2,909.00

PRESBYTERY: \$ 735.00

EVENTS

- Wednesdays **Rosary** in the Chapel of Visitation at St. John of God Hospital at 12.45 pm. All welcome.
- Wednesday afternoons **Legion of Mary** meets at Nazareth House, Mill St. Ballarat, at 1.30 pm. Enquiries: 5332 8624 or 5332 7227.
- **Legion of Mary Prayers:** Prayers of Petition to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, will be held at St. Patrick's Cathedral from 11.15 am - 11.45 am on 1st & 3rd Thursdays.

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

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

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: 5387 7900 or keryn.monshing@centacareballarat.org.au

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

A big thank you to all who have taken cards. Please return your gift with card attached no later than next Sunday, 20th December.

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)

DIARIES

A limited number of 2016 Catholic Mission Diaries are available this weekend.

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.