



## MOYNE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Infant Jesus Parish, Koroit

[www.moyneatholic.org.au](http://www.moyneatholic.org.au)



# *The Nativity of the Lord*

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December and Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:1-7

*A Son is given to us*

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils.

For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian.

For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt, and consumed by fire.

For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity.

From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of Hosts will do this.

### RESPONSORIAL

Ps 95(96):1-3,11-13

*R/. Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

O sing a new song to the Lord,  
sing to the Lord all the earth.

O sing to the Lord, bless his name.

*R/. Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

Proclaim his help day by day,  
tell among the nations his glory and  
his wonders among all the peoples.

*R/. Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,  
let the sea and all within it thunder praise,  
let the land and all it bears rejoice,  
all the trees of the wood shout for joy  
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,  
he comes to rule the earth.

*R/. Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

With justice he will rule the world,  
he will judge the peoples with his truth.

*R/. Today is born our Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.*

### SECOND READING

Rom 16:25-27

*God's grace is revealed to the human race*

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 2:10-11

V/. Alleluia!

R/. Alleluia!

V/. I bring you news of great joy: today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord.

R/. Alleluia

## GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14

*“In the town of David, a saviour  
has been born to you!”*

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David’s House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.

In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, ‘Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing:

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.’

## PRAY FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

We pray for **Norm Brooks**,  
**Noreen Dalton**, and **Tess King**,  
who died recently, and all those  
whose anniversaries occur at this  
time. May they rest in peace.



## GENUFLECTION DURING THE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.



For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES (Solemnity of Mary, Mother Of God)

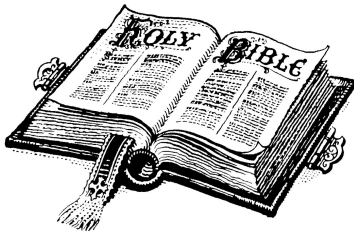
*New Year's Eve:* 10:00pm, Port Fairy

*New Year's Day:* 10:00am, Koroit

## CHRISTMAS BLESSING

On the patronal feast day of our Koroit parish, may God bless you and your loved ones with the strength of St Joseph, the joy of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the peace of the Infant Jesus. Amen.





## Reflection on today's Readings

by Fr Francis Fernandez

### HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY LEAD US TO RECOGNISE CHRIST IN OUR LIVES

It is the shepherds around Bethlehem whom the prophet Isaiah describes in today's First Reading: "on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone."

They are the first and only people to learn the news of our Lord's birth on that first Christmas night. "On the other hand, today, millions throughout the world know of it. The light of that night in Bethlehem has reached many hearts – but nevertheless, at the same time, darkness remains. Sometimes the darkness seems even more intense ...

"The men of that night welcomed the news; they experienced great joy – the joy that comes forth from light. The world's darkness overcome by the light of the birth of God ...

"It does not matter that on this first night, the night of God's birth, the joy of that event should have reached only a few hearts: it does not matter. It is destined for every human heart! It is the joy of the whole human race, a superhuman joy! Could there be any greater joy than this, any greater Good News than this: man has been accepted by God so as to become his son in this Son of God who has become man?" (St John Paul II, homily at Midnight Mass, 25<sup>th</sup> December 1980.)

God also wanted those shepherds to be the first *bearers* of the news: "When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say." (Luke 2:18.) In the same way Jesus reveals himself to us in the midst of the ordinary incidents of each day; and we need the same dispositions of simplicity and humility in order to reach him. It is possible that throughout our lives he gives us signs that mean nothing to us if we rely on human outlook. We must be alert to discovering Jesus in the simplicity of

ordinary life, "wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger," without any showy manifestations.

Naturally, the shepherds would not have set out without taking gifts for the baby. In first-century Palestine, it was inconceivable that anybody should present himself before a respected person without a gift. The shepherds would take what they had; a lamb, cheese, butter, milk. Doubtless it is not far removed from reality to imagine the scene as it is portrayed in the countless Nativity scenes of our days and in the Christmas carols which Christians sing with child-like faith.

Mary and Joseph, surprised and delighted, invite the shy shepherds to come in and see the Child, to hold him, to sing to him, and to leave their gifts beside the manger. So many centuries later, how can we approach Jesus without presenting our own gifts?

Perhaps what Our Lady would most thank us for is a resolution that we are more devoted, more affectionate, more cheerful because we are conscious of our divine filiation – we too are sons and daughters of God.

Mary and Joseph are inviting us to go in. And once inside we join the whole Church in saying to Jesus: "King of the universe, whom the shepherds found wrapped in swaddling clothes, help us always to imitate your poverty and your simplicity." (Lauds, 5<sup>th</sup> January.)

During these days of Christmas we sing with exultation because love will be among us till the end of time. The presence of the Child is Love among men; the world is no longer a place of darkness; those who seek for love know where to find it. It is essentially love that each one of us needs – even those who claim to be already fully satisfied.

Today, whenever we gaze at an image of the Child Jesus, or contemplate a Nativity scene, or meditate on this great mystery, let us thank God for having wanted to come down to us so that we could understand him and love him. Let us make up our minds to become as little children so as to enter one day into the kingdom of heaven. The whole Church prays today, "that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity."



## THE YEAR OF ST JOSEPH

In, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (2009), Kenneth Bailey writes this about Joseph:

“In his cameo appearance, Matthew presents Joseph as a human being of remarkable spiritual stature. He possessed the boldness, daring, courage and strength of character to stand up against his entire community and take Mary as his wife. He did so in spite of the forces that no doubt wanted her stoned . . .

“. . . in the Middle East, men usually represent their families in any official or legal matters. Why did Joseph take Mary with him to Bethlehem for the registration? The easiest explanation is that he was unsure what might happen to her if he left her in Nazareth without his presence to protect her. It behooves us to see Joseph as the hero of the story without whose courage and understanding of the prophets there would have been no Christmas story to tell.”

## Pope Francis' Prayer to St Joseph

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

## FAREWELL TO FR MICHAEL LINEHAN

Bishop Paul Bird is joining an official farewell for Fr Michael next Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December. Refreshments will be served after 10am Mass at St Pius' in West Warrnambool. If you would like to share in the occasion, please call or text Karen Johnson on 0447 838 747.

## MASSES IN JANUARY 2021

Fr Michael's retirement takes effect on New Year's Day, and we will need a few weeks to determine how the Warrnambool Masses are reduced. So in January, local Mass times are:

*Saturday Vigil:* 6:30pm, Koroit

*Sunday morning:* 9:00am, Port Fairy

## THE BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Bishop Paul Bird has asked us to take up the usual Christmas Collection so that we can share our seasonal giving with others who have needs in Australia and elsewhere. Last Christmas, \$42,000 was collected, and the money was distributed as follows:

St Vincent de Paul Bushfire Appeal	\$5,000
Catholic Mission	\$5,000
Caritas Australia	\$5,000
Taal Volcano Appeal (Philippines)	\$5,000
St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal (Ballarat)	\$5,000
St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal (Mildura)	\$5,000
Nazareth House, Ballarat	\$4,000
3BA Christmas Appeal	\$4,000
Exodus Community, Wendouree West	\$2,000
Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans	\$2,000

## THIS SUNDAY'S MASS (6:30pm Vigil)

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

**First Reading.** *Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6,12-14.*

He who fears the Lord honours his parents.

**Second Reading.** *Colossians 3:12-21.*

Family life in the Lord.

**Gospel.** *Luke 2:22-40.*

'My eyes have seen your salvation.'

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