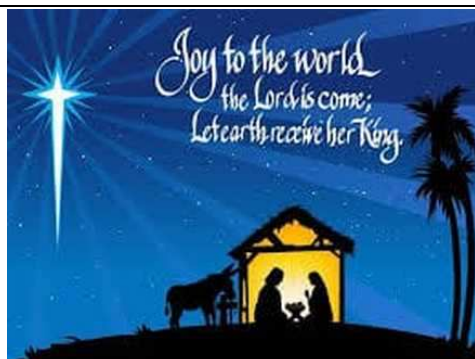




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The Nativity of the Lord - Year B Thursday 24th / Friday 25th December, 2020



*God in heaven,
Unto us this day a Child is born,
We thank You Father for this great gift of Jesus, that
in His birth, life and resurrection, we are restored by
your Grace, to eternal life with You.
Let our hearts overflow with joy today,
that we may extend this Grace to one another.
Throughout the year ahead. Amen.*

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" (Luke 2:14)."

Christmas is finally here. All four weeks of Advent we have been waiting and praying for the coming blessings of Christmas. And now Christmas is here. The angels are bringing the good news of great joy for all the people. This good news of great joy is for all the people of God. As people of God we have a claim to the joy and the peace that the birth of Christ brings to the world. But how do I personally enter into this "great joy" of Christmas? Christmas rings out "joy to the world," yes, but how do I make this joy my own? This is an important question, even though God has declared joy to the whole world. The feast of Christmas is a celebration of joy, love and peace. It is a feast of joy for us when we celebrate the birth of the King of Kings and go ahead to recollect the greatest moment in history. On this season we contact each other and greet them with the feast day wishes, exchange cards and sweets. We share with each other this happy event of the birth of the saviour.

The birth of Jesus as a child is the greatest moment of God's love. It is a day of peace experienced in the hearts of people and this is what was proclaimed by the angels at birth of Jesus: peace to those of good will. Jesus the God of peace will give his peace for us and this peace will last forever. The readings resonate with the theme of light and the baby in the manger is the Light of the World. Light surrounds the shepherds as the angels sing the praises of God: "Glory to God in the highest and, on earth, peace to all who are favoured by God." Christ chose to enter the world in total poverty. The only riches he depended on as a babe were the love and protection of his mother and foster father. In a sense, it was the generosity of Mary and Joseph that gave God the Father the proper portal through which his Son would enter the world.

Christmas is the time to give praise and thanksgiving for the new born King who silently teaches us to love. Christmas is saying to our loved ones that we truly love them. Christmas is saying I am happy that I am with you. Christmas is being thankful for all the graces received in the past year. Christmas is asking for forgiveness and reconciling with those we have done wrong. Christmas is for all the little ones and the poor in spirit, who have become our true teachers of love, care, truth and justice. It is for all who have reminded us of what a true Christmas observance is. It is showing to Jesus that we still adore and love him, by staying faithful and honest to Him.

May the Word, the expression of the Father, the Incarnated one that John testified grant them a reason to celebrate, may the Word who guides and illuminates humans inspire them to have courage and confidence. May the Word allow all of us to cooperate with His Divine Wisdom, so all of us can partake of his divine fullness. The beautiful child Jesus, who came in the humblest of all forms, brings us true Joy and Happiness, the good news that Christmas offer. The Lord is born! At this great time of joy and thanksgiving, I would like to send my personal gratitude to each of you and your families for being a part of our faith-filled and dynamic community here at St. John the Baptist. May the beauty, peace and joy of this most blessed season be with you and your family. - "Merry Christmas to you and your family, and to all your loved ones"!!!! - **Fr. Thomas Kuruvila.**



We pray for all who have died recently, may the peace and saving power of Christ be granted to them.

And for those who we remember at this time: Peter South, Rosa Saracino, Maria Daraio, Flora De Cristo, Maria Frederiks, Hans Hauer, James Phylant, Donald Fraser, Chanake & Olga Aponso, and the Johnson, Dalton, Mills & Bonacci Families.

Welcome to Christmas Mass at St John the Baptist.

Every December 25 a child lying in a manger brings us to a stop – and challenges us to recognise what is most important in life:

Our loved ones - our family and friends and our loving God who holds us 'in the palm of his hand'. Wishing you and your family a happy, safe and holy Christmas.



CHRISTMAS SEASON MASSES

Please note: there will be no weekday Masses on Tuesday 29th, Wed 30th and Thursday 31st December.

Feast of the Holy Family

Sun 26th December 6pm Vigil & Sun 27th Dec.: 9am & 11am.

The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God

Friday, 1st January – New Year's Day Mass – 11am.

Please Note: The normal weekday Mass schedule resumes at 9.15am on Thursday 2nd January, 2020.



ST JOHN'S PARISH GROUPS will take a break over the Christmas/January period and resume, *Covid-19 restrictions permitting* on the following dates. We wish everyone a happy and safe new year.

FRIENDSHIP GATHERING – To be advised

MOTHERS' PRAYER GROUP – Tuesday, 2nd February

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP – Tuesday, 2nd February

CHILDREN'S LITURGY – to be advised.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTMAS / JANUARY HOLIDAY PERIOD:

CLOSED FROM 3PM ON 24TH DECEMBER, 2020

RE-OPENS MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2021 AT 9.45AM Please note that as Tuesday 26th January is the Australia Day public holiday, the office will be closed. Merry Christmas to all, from *Fr Thomas and all the Parish Staff.*

The Nativity of the Lord

A reading from the prophet 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.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

***Response. 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)

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

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)

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

Second Reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus 2:11-14

**'God's grace has been revealed to the whole
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.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

***Alleluia, alleluia!
I bring you news of great joy:
today a saviour has been born to us,
Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!***

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to 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.'

The Gospel of the Lord