

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah 7:10-14*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the

Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David:

are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too?

The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R/. Let the Lord enter, he is king of glory.*

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 1:1-7*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*A virgin will give birth to a son;  
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.*

*Alleluia!*

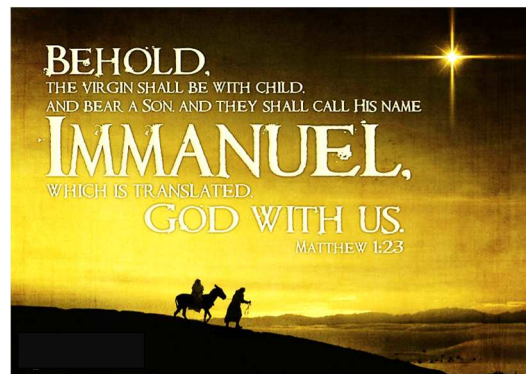
## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 1:18-24*

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.

*The Gospel of the Lord*



## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

Knox Deanery

19 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully, 3156

Phone: 9758 1029

Email: [office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)

Website: [www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au](http://www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au)



**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent– Year A**

**17<sup>th</sup> /18<sup>th</sup> December, 2022**

*Lord Jesus,  
as we patiently wait,  
Open our hearts  
so that they may be filled  
with Your light and love,  
Help us to stay focussed on You,  
as we prepare to receive You into our lives.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
Advent - Love*

**FOCUS ON THE WORD:** In our last week of Advent, we are invited to experience the love of Christ, and share that gift with others. It is love that brings Jesus into our world and it is love that transforms our being. Advent has prepared us for the coming of Christ, and as we approach this last week we bring it all together.

- "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son" (John 3:16).

And it is because of that love that we are called to be loving to the stranger, oppressed, and marginalised. So, as we ponder **Emmanuel; God-is-with-us** –we understand that this is what we celebrate through Christmas and it's what we've been preparing for during Advent. We celebrate God-with-us in a particular time and place through our celebration of the birth of Jesus. But we remember it every year because we also use the Christmas celebration to **remind ourselves that God continues to be with us.** That is what is so remarkable about the Christmas season: that God-is-with-us **now**, not just in a stable in Palestine so many years ago, but now! Advent is the time to remind ourselves of this incredible truth and prepare ourselves to acknowledge it once again... And so, as Christmas approaches. **Are you ready?**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN:** The Parish of St John the Baptist, and the Archdiocese of Melbourne are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and vulnerable people in our community. May our message be that child protection and the dignity of every person is the responsibility of every adult. You can find out more about the church's work in this area at: [www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention](http://www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention)

**FEAST DAYS** Mon 21<sup>st</sup> Dec St Peter Canisius Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec St John of Kanty  
Sat 24<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Eve Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Dec The Nativity of the Lord

*I have come that you may have life and have it to the full*

*(John 10:10)*

**PARISH PRIEST:**  
Fr Thomas Kuruvila 9758 1029  
Email: thomas@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**DEACON:**  
Rev. Peter Stringfellow 9758 1029  
Email: Peter.Stringfellow@cam.org.au

**FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR**  
Mary Makarucha 9758 1029  
Tuesdays and Wednesdays. 10.00am -2.00pm  
Email: marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**PARISH OFFICE:** 9758 1029  
Monday 9.45am – 3.45pm  
Tuesday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm  
Secretaries: Charmaine Premaratne & Maree Wilson  
Accountant: Sara Luk  
Email: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**SCHOOLS:**  
**St John the Baptist** 9758 1013  
Acting Principal: Ursula DeCorrado  
**St. Joseph's College** 9758 2000  
Principal: Catherine Livingston  
**Mater Christi College** 9754 6611  
Principal: Maria Haggett

**MASS TIMES:**  
**Saturday** 6:00 pm  
**Sunday** 9:00 am, 11:00 am  
**Tuesday** 7.00pm  
**Wed & Thurs** 9.15 am  
**Friday** 11.00 am

**RECONCILIATION:** Saturdays 5.15 pm  
**And Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December, after the 7pm Mass**

**GLENGOLLAN VILLAGE MASS** 1<sup>st</sup> Friday 2pm  
**WILLOWBROOK MASS** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 11am

**BAPTISMS:** Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. 6 weeks' notice required. Please refer to our Guidelines for Infant Baptism on our Parish Website.  
**Contact the Parish Office on: 9758 1029 or via email at: [office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)**

**WEDDINGS:**  
By appointment, 6 months' notice required. Saturdays or weekdays (not Sundays). Contact the Parish Office: on 9758 1029.

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent - Year A**  
**17<sup>th</sup> /18<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.**  
**Love**

**PRAYING FOR...**

*All who have died recently:*

Fr. Joseph Patrick Hynan PE, Charlie Kelly

*Those who we remember at this time:*

Kevin Weddin, Alyda Donegan, Patrick O'Reilly, Terrence McDermott, Judith Cherry, Rosa Saracino, Ryan Castricum, Filomena Barbatiello, Josie Jordon, George Kuhlmann, Margaret King

*The sick:* Catherine Ziegfried, Ben McLaey, Ray Stackpole, Don Roberts, Maureen Wilson, Lucy Denzin, Gabby Sundstrom, Kathryn Kircos, Ruby Samtoy, Elsie Johnson, Barbara Kenny, Anne Jayawardena, Lea Hatley, Catherine Turner, Patricia Quinn, David Merton, Michael Byrne, Bev McNamara, Anthony McNamara, Victoria Lewis, Nicole Moore, Peter Fairhurst, Hans Whitaker, Edward Osborne, Allida Serafin, Clive Geach.

**SICK LIST – If you are aware that any names on the sick list need to be removed, please contact the Parish Office on 9758 1029.**



**ROSARY** is recited prior to Morning Weekday Mass on Wed, Thurs, Friday, in the Church. All welcome to join in the recitation.

**GROUP ROSARY SESSION FOR PEACE**

When: First Saturday of the Month at 10.30 am.  
Where: 37 Lane Road, FTG. All are welcome.  
Contact: Pauline Barlow on 9758 5106.

**FRIENDSHIP GATHERING:** will take a break, Dec 15<sup>th</sup> to **resume on 12<sup>th</sup> January**. Best wishes to everyone for a Happy Holy Safe Christmas, and New Year.

**CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** Is now in recess until next year. A very Merry Christmas to all!

**MOTHERS' PRAYER GROUP** is now in recess

**LECTOR ROSTER** The new lector roster for the period of January to April 2023 has been distributed electronically. Hardcopies are available at the exit door. If you are not available to attend the date you have been rostered please make changes with another lector. Please contact the Parish Office for any further information you may need: [office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)

**ELECTRONIC THANKSGIVING** is available through CDFPay, Should you wish to Donate using this method All gifts are gratefully received Please.. [click here](#) for the link. Thank you.



**CHRISTMAS MASSES AT ST JOHN'S**  
**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve:**

✦ 6pm Family Mass (Carols: 5.30pm)

✦ 9.30pm Mass of Christmas Night  
(Carols: 9.00pm)

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day:**

✦ 9am & ✦ 11am

**RECONCILIATION**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm**, with extended Penitential Rite. Followed by the Sacrament of Reconciliation (individual)

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December** (Individual) following the 9.15am Mass.

**MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL**

**Thank-you** all for your donations to the Special Collection. The Amount raised was **\$694.60**. If you missed out, donations can be made through CDFpay via this [link](https://www.mom.org.au). <https://www.mom.org.au> Thank you for your support.



Aid to the Church in Need  
**ACN AUSTRALIA**

**A message from Aid to the Church in Need Australia: ACN is the Pontifical Foundation dedicated to supporting the suffering and persecuted Church.** *Aid to the Church in Need* is asking for support to aid our brothers and sisters who are suffering so deeply in Syria and Lebanon through our Christmas appeal *Sharing Hope with Christians in Syria and Lebanon this Christmas*. The support we are pledging to them is very much emergency relief to sustain the Christian population in hope. The projects we are supporting are projects such as medical aid, community help and gifts for children in Lebanon, as well as support for lay faithful and accommodation for families in Syria. It is only with your help that ACN can support Christians in Lebanon and Syria this Christmas! To watch videos and read stories of the projects we are supporting visit [www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022](http://www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022).

**ANNOUNCING THE DAMASCUS SPIRITUAL LEADERS PROGRAM!** Part-time in Feb-Nov 2023 - either in person or online - through Heart of Life Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation. This program is designed for people in various positions of leadership, spiritual formation and parish or outreach ministries. It will equip individuals to lead with integrity, vulnerability and resilience, and will focus on the inner spiritual journey in order to create fully-formed leaders who listen, learn and accompany others with strength and sensitivity **Read more about the program on the [Heart of Life website](#) or contact us on (03) 9890 1101. Applications close on 6/1/23.**



....from Fr Thomas & the Parish Staff

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTMAS/JANUARY HOLIDAY PERIOD:**

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December- Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 – Closed.  
Re-open - Mon 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2023**

**SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2023.** The Sacramental program for children **who do not attend** a catholic school, will begin early in term 1 2023, for the grade 3 and 4 students to **celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation**. If you have children who are at these grade levels and interested in celebrating the sacraments, please contact the parish office: email [marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au) or Phone: 9758 1029

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS 2022 ANGEL** On behalf of our SVDP local conference, we



would like to thank you, most sincerely, for your ongoing generosity this year in supporting our work with the disadvantaged. We will be delivering the hampers during the week of Monday 19th December.- SVDP- Ferntree Gully Conference.

**HELP FOR CHRISTMAS LITURGIES** at the **6.00pm Family Mass** on Christmas Eve

**1. All children**, especially the little ones, are invited to come dressed as Angels or Shepherds. You will need to do the costume, but it doesn't need to be elaborate – a fairy skirt and tinsel or a tea towel headwear will do. – All other masses we need:-

**Please write your name on the sign-up sheets on the glass wall in the Church.**

**3. If you can sing or play an instrument, you are desperately needed!!!** we are looking for additional people to join the Choirs. **Please sign-up or call the Parish Office if you can help.**

**ROSTERS: Mon 19<sup>th</sup> Dec to Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2022**

Flowers	Sue N & Lynne K
Linen	Sue O'H
Welcomers	6pm Lia U & Kathryn C 9am Rosa L & Florence J 11am Shamindri & Chamal A
Christmas Lectors	6pm: Terry S & Rosina L 9.30pm Jan R 9am: Pamela E 11am Alvi M
Counters	Byron, Ruby, Guil
Gardening	Patrick S, Harry R

**POSITIONS VACANT** Please see below an update to current vacant roles listed on our Melbourne Catholic website.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced people for the positions of:

**Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne**  
<https://melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies>

- **Front-End Developer**

**Catholic Development Fund**

- **Integration Engineer**
- **Risk & Compliance Analyst**

**Parish Positions**

- **Pastoral Worker – St Andrew’s Parish, Werribee**
- **Pastoral Worker – St Clement of Rome Parish, Bulleen**
- **Cleaner – St John the Baptist Parish, Ferntree Gully**
- **Parish Bookkeeper – St Andrew’s Parish, Werribee**
- **Parish Secretary – St Christopher’s Parish, Syndal**
- **Youth Pastoral Worker - St Christopher’s Parish, Syndal**

**THE 2022 AUSTRALIAN NATIVITY SCENE (ANS)**  
**5 December, 2022 - 13 January, 2023** St Elizabeth's Parish - Dandenong North. Australian Nativity Scene (ANS) Event display\*: **Monday, 5 December, 2022 to Friday, 13 January, 2023. Times: 10.30AM to 8.00PM**  
**Where: St Elizabeth's Parish, 107 Baker Rd, Dandenong North** \*Note: Closed on Christmas Day | Boxing Day | New Year's Day This event is open to everyone, children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. **Cost: Free and open to all age groups** Viewing time: **By appointments only** Contact Wilson on 0428 927 110 or 9795 6217 (parish office)  
<https://www.onlymelbourne.com.au/aus-nativity-scene-dandenong-north>



Creator & Artist: Wilson Fernandez

**HEART OF LIFE CENTRE for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation is looking for individuals keen to join our team of 2023. We would be most grateful if you could include the excerpt below in your parish bulletin.**

**Join our Heart of Life Team:**

Is Social Media Your Thing? Applications are invited for an individual to look after our social media content and assist in sharing news about Heart of Life and its programs. We seek a person who enjoys social media and can help to engage with our community to spark what may begin or continue the 'opening' process of being on earth the heart of God. The role is part-time – approx. one day per week - and is a volunteer role, at least initially. Please apply by 31/12/22 with a view to commencing in Feb 2023.

**General Admin Assistant Applications** are invited to support the growing team at Heart of Life where we are dedicated to supporting those who wish to deepen their spiritual journey. The position is part-time - one day per week (Mondays) during school terms - involving general office duties and providing some support with Zoom. It is a volunteer role with petrol/transport expenses paid. Please apply by 6/1/23 with a view to commencing in Feb 2023.

**Position descriptions for the above and more information available from [info@heartoflife.melbourne](mailto:info@heartoflife.melbourne), or tel 9890 1101. Heart of Life Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation, Malvern**

**Thank you and we will you a joyful Christmas and blessed New Year!**

**Regards, Susanah Tan**

**NEED TO DISPOSE OF A VEHICLE? NEED TO DISPOSE OF A VEHICLE?** Disposal of a car from a deceased estate, or when a family member has had to relinquish their licence or go into residential care, can be a challenging process - getting a roadworthy, taking photos to advertise on the internet, cleaning and polishing, taking calls (if they come), even garaging it until a prospective buyer turns up (if indeed they do!). If you need to dispose of a vehicle either from a deceased estate or which is no longer required, please consider gifting it to the "Lifeboat Geelong Foundation", a registered charity with tax deductible status which for nine years has been providing pastoral and practical support to nearly 150 victims / survivors of church-related sexual abuse.

Many of these suffer post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and have limited or no employment. A donated vehicle could vastly improve their quality of life. If you would like to explore the possibility of gifting a potentially suitable vehicle to "Lifeboat", please contact Fr. Kevin Dillon (0421 777 360, or [frkdillon@outlook.com.au](mailto:frkdillon@outlook.com.au)) or Adam Kaali (0411 486 605, or [adam-kaali@hotmail.com](mailto:adam-kaali@hotmail.com)).



**SUMMER SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION MELBOURNE.**  
**"Are you a young adult aged 18-35 years old? Shed the weight of the past two years and become Alive Again at Summer School of Evangelisation Melbourne. start the year with**

**CHRISTMAS MASSES AT ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL** We look forward to welcoming the community to St Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate the great feast of Christmas!

**Christmas Eve Masses** (24 December) will take place at **6pm, 8pm and 11.30pm\* (carols followed by Midnight Mass).**

**On Christmas Day (25 December), Masses will take place at 8am, 9.30am and 11am\*.**

\*These Masses will be livestreamed to the Archdiocesan [YouTube Channel](#).

For all enquiries, email [communication@cam.org.au](mailto:communication@cam.org.au).



**A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP COMENSOLI**

**Friends, I recently heard an Advent prayer that has a striking line in it, describing Jesus' birth. It said: [Jesus], when the soles of your feet touch the ground, ... you become one of us, to be at one with us.**

The image of God's bare feet touching the earth is such an evocative one.

Especially at this time of year, we know only too well what it feels like to do the 'great Aussie dance' across a hot beach or prickly lawn!

But of course, this image is far more than a physical reminder.

For Christmas is the divinity of God born into our humanity.

Through the Incarnation, God comes to us, withholding nothing of himself from us.

Barefoot—taking on our flesh, our human condition—in order to touch, and to be touched, in the particularities of our lives: this is Emmanuel—God with us.

Christmas is God placing an exclamation mark on his words, 'I am with you!'

Our God, whose name is Jesus, has walked with us through the tough years of the pandemic and is touching the ground now where healing and renewal is needed.

The Son of God is walking through the streets of Ukraine and Myanmar, Ethiopia and Lebanon, with feet bloodied from war, conflict and repression, yet still taking the steps needed towards peace and liberation.

He has seen and felt both the joy of our existence and the suffering of those who are lost or vulnerable. He has awakened us to an attentiveness for our global humanity, and a care for our common home.

So I wonder if, this Christmas and for the year ahead, it is time to remove the 'shoes' that keep us from standing barefoot with Jesus—to feel the sacred ground of our lives with God?

Might we come before him 'barefoot' in our frailties, yet alive in the wonder of our humanity—made in his image—ready and willing to live as the people of God he has created us to be—fraternally, lovingly, caringly; generous, forgiving and hopeful.

May Jesus, the barefooted child of the living God, fill you and your loved ones with abundant joy and peace. Happy Christmas!

