

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

40:1-5, 9-11

Console my people, console them 'says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R./ Lord, let us see Your kindness,
and grant us Your salvation.*

SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St. Peter

3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains

will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised; the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight His paths:

all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH
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Second Sunday of Advent – Yr B
9th / 10th December, 2023

*Lord God,
in this Advent time,
we pray that our hearts
may be aligned with Your will
and Your peace will be realised in ourselves,
our community and our world.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



PEACE

FOCUS ON THE WORD We often think that we can bargain with God to get the best possible deal out of life. The problem with this bargaining image is that it cannot be reconciled with a Christian faith which believes in Advent. The bargaining image of God is the furthest thing from the mind of the writers of today's readings – Isaiah, Psalm (84) 85, St Peter and St Mark.

These scriptures remind us that **God has not held back one thing in his love for us.** By becoming one with us in our flesh, God has done everything he can to assure us of his saving love. **He has shown us all what can be shown about how to live lives of sacrifice, justice and love and how to transform our world for better.** The image of us 'doing a deal' with God is so prevalent in our theology and prayer that we can find ourselves lapsing into it all the time. 'If you make me well, God, I will lead a better life.' 'I will return to Sunday Mass if I pass my exams.' 'I will raise my children Catholic if I have a fine day for my wedding.' etc., The scriptures tell us from the beginning of time to the preaching of John the Baptist, to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to the continuing work of the Holy Spirit among us today, that **we have a God who risked everything so that we might know love and life in this world and in the next.** We hold and proclaim, in season and out of season, a God who emptied himself of power and might and came to us as a baby. That's not the profile of a deal-doer. It's the portrait of a lover. So this Advent let's not ransom ourselves to a benevolent dictator. Let's ask for anything we need with confidence that God has heard our words and so sent love itself in Jesus Christ our Lord.' Richard Leonard SJ

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

FEAST DAYS	Mon 11 th Dec	<i>St John Damasus I</i>	Tues 12 th Dec	<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i>
Wed 13 th Dec	<i>St Lucy</i>	Thurs 14 th Dec	<i>St John of the Cross</i>	

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full
(John 10:10)

PARISH PRIEST:
Fr Thomas Kuruwila 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
PPG CHAIR Carolyn Sombekke
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SCHOOLS:
St John the Baptist 9758 1013
Principal: Kelli Johnston
Email: kjohnston@sjferntreegully.catholic.edu.au
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

GLENGOLLAN VILLAGE MASS 1st Friday 2pm
WILLOWBROOK MASS 3rd Thursday 11am

BAPTISMS: Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.30pm on the 2nd 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

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

2nd Sunday of Advent – Yr B
9th /10th December, 2023

PRAYING FOR...

All who have died recently:

Rita White

Those who we remember at this time:

Wally Johnson, Cosimo Petracca, Anthony Goldsmith, Pasquale Parente, Maureen Hawkins, Noel Ryan, Jacques Walter, Bob Barker, Robyn Samual, Maureen Bicker.

The sick:

Eamon Smith, Fame Pelgrim, Elsie Johnson, Peggy Spencer, Alan Alcock, Ann Good, Ben Mc Laey, Don Roberts, Maureen Wilson, Lucy Denzin, Gabby Sundstrom, Kathryn Kircos, Ruby Samtoy, Barbara Kenny, Anne Jayawardena, Lea Hatley, Patricia Quinn, David Merton, Michael Byrne, Bev McNamara, Anthony McNamara, Victoria Lewis, Nicole Moore, Peter Fairhurst, Hans Whitaker, Edward Osborne

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.

MOTHERS' PRAYER GROUP has finished for the year. A Merry Christmas to all, and a blessed New Year.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP meet in the Parish Hall at 10.15am for a cuppa and beginning the meeting at 10.30. All welcome to share in the Praise & Worship and Prayers. Some members will later see the Movie: Journey to Bethlehem, 2pm at Boronia Metro Cinema. All welcome.

FRIENDSHIP GATHERING: All welcome on Thursdays between 10.15 am and 12.30pm drop in for a chat over a cuppa, join a card game, knit or just sit for a while.

KOGO. Just a note to let everyone know, that **Kogo has a break over the Christmas Period, and won't be accepting items at that time, so the collection bag will be removed from the Foyer on 3rd December.** Prior to this date, feel free to drop off completed items or collect any wool, to take and knit over the break. The collection back will come back again in the New Year. Happy Knitting!!

PARISH OFFICE HOURS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTMAS/JANUARY HOLIDAYS. The Office



Closes Friday 22nd December 2023

Normal offices hours resume

Tues 9th January 2024.

Please note that as Friday 26th January is a public holiday, the office will be closed.



CHILDREN'S LITURGY TEAM, I would like to thank you all for service with the children's liturgy ministry this past year. Well done to all of you! I am sure the parish appreciates it, especially the children. I would like to thank those of you who were in a position to support the Advent workshop. Your passion, enthusiasm and creativity is amazing! It was unfortunate regarding the small numbers that attended but we can only do the service and leave the rest to God. Those families that were able to attend, thank you, especially for the positive feedback!

MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL takes place this weekend. All donations gratefully received.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS Dear Parishioners, I would like to thank you all for your support, service and prayers throughout this past year. It has been a very busy year! At present I am on annual leave until mid January but did not want to go without wishing you all a blessed Christmas Season and may you and your families and the parish be blessed abundantly throughout the New Year 2024! - Mary Makarucha

SUNDAY AFTERNOON TEA & Sr Pat Just a note say thank you to those who were able to attend the talk by Sr Pat last Sunday 3rd December. It was very worthwhile as she offered her personal report on her valued work on social justice with the local communities.

FUNERAL PRAYERS for the late **Rita May White** will be celebrated here at St John's Church on Tuesday 19th December – at 1pm.

IMPORTANT DATES
Thurs 14th December Year 6 Graduation Mass - 5pm.

SACRAMENTAL CLASSES 2024 for children who do not attend catholic schools will begin early February 2024. If you have children ready to make the sacraments or know of any children who do not attend catholic schools and are interested in celebrating their sacraments, please contact marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au or 9758 1029

COMBINED CATHOLIC PARISH RAFFLE – 2023 results of our CCPR 2023 Raffle drawn on December 2nd 2023 at Resurrection Parish Keysborough.
1ST Prize CAR Marian Flynn Ticket No 25450
\$5,000 voucher Ann McGeary Ticket 26548
\$3,000 voucher Liam Gill Ticket 16925
\$1,000 voucher David Swllesz Ticket 09756
\$1,000 voucher Mirco Kovac Ticket 07033
\$500 voucher Peter Agardy Ticket 09505
\$500 voucher Losefo (Holy Child Parish) 55483
I would like to sincerely thank you all, once again for your participation and support in our CCPR Raffle for 2023

BAPTISMS – We offer our congratulations to **Eliyana Faggian** daughter of Damien & Emily, who is to be baptised this weekend: The Church of God welcomes you with great joy.



ARCHBISHOP'S ADVENT APPEAL FOR UKRAINE In response to the continued conflict in Ukraine, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli has launched a special Advent appeal, the proceeds of which will go towards providing aid and practical assistance to those who have been displaced and are without basic supplies, especially as winter approaches.
'There are no winners in war, only families torn apart. Sadly, this is the painful reality facing so many at this time,' Archbishop Comensoli reflected. 'I'm inviting the faithful of Melbourne to offer whatever they can at this time. And I pray that, together, we can be a sign of God's nearness to those who need it most.'
All parishes have been sent cards and envelopes for the Advent Appeal, which we encourage you to distribute to your parishioners throughout the Season of Advent. Donations can be made using the envelopes or QR code. For more information and resources, please visit <https://melbourneatholic.org/adventappeal>

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS 2023 ANGEL TREE Each year we provide needy families who we have visited throughout the year with a Christmas Food Hamper and Gift cards for each of their children. We invite you to contribute to either of these. The gift cards that you donate allow the parents to purchase a suitable gift themselves according to the age and needs of their child/ren. Thank you most sincerely for your ongoing generosity.



PIETY STALL UPDATE We have received a very generous donation of **very nice small Advent Books** which are selling at a reasonable cost. Also, extra Christmas Cards and Columban Calendars are available.

FOOTHILLS COMMUNITY CHURCH CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH. To be held in our School Hall. is now **FULLY BOOKED.** if you have an enquiry, we invite you to please contact them via email contact@foothillscare.org.au



ROSTERS: Mon 11th Dec to Sun 17th Dec 2023	
Flowers	Sue N & Lynne K
Linen	Laurel S
Welcomers	6pm Myra N & Wilma H 9am Terry S, Neil & Loraine, Peter C 11am Priya H & Patrick S
Lectors	6pm Louise D 9am: Carolyn Q 11am: Cynthia M
Counters	Peter G, Peter C, Florence J & Joan R
Gardening	Patrick S & Harry R