

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 5
25th December 2019
Year C

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



VERITAS



HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

Parish Priest
Fr Kieran Adams OP

Assistant Priests
Fr Rafael Cabezon OP
Fr Bernie Maxwell OP

Holy Rosary Church
Cnr Phillip Avenue &
Antill Street, Watson ACT

Postal Address
PO Box 900, Dickson
Ph. 6248 5925

Email: watson@cg.org.au
www.cg.org.au/watson

Office Staff
Jacquie Cortese
Jim Smith

Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday
9.00am–12.30pm

Parish Council
Andrew Blakey

Mass times
Wed 5.30pm
Tues & Thurs 6.45am
Fri 5.30pm

Saturday 5pm (Vigil)
Sunday 8am, 10am & 5pm

9am Mass Saturday & Public
Holidays
excluding Mondays

Pray the Rosary
Wed & Fri before 5.30pm Mass
Saturday after 9am Mass
and First Saturday each month
3.30pm

Reconciliation
Saturday 12pm–12.30pm

Christmas is.....

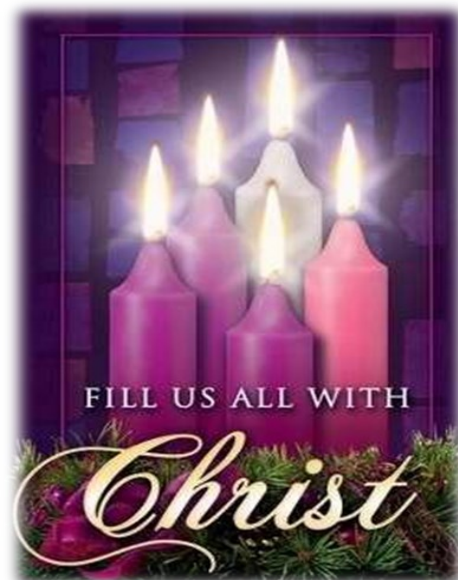
Jesus



If you are in Urgent need of
a Priest Call - 6248 8253

A warm welcome is extended to guests & parishioners celebrating our Eucharist today.

ENTRANCE	A child is born for us, a son given to us; dominion is laid on his shoulder, and he shall be called Wonderful-Counsellor.
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION	Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!
COMMUNION	All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.
READINGS NIGHT	Isaiah 9:1-7 Titus 2:11-14 Gospel Luke 2:1-14
READINGS DAY	Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-6 Gospel: John 1:1-5. 9-14



WELCOME

Every Christmas, the coming of the Christ Child brings other activities to a stop – and helps us re-evaluate what is precious in life especially the all-important relationships with our loved ones, our family and friends.

It also signifies God's enduring presence to us – the God who loved us so much that he took on human form to be close to us and who continues to hold us 'in the palm of his hand'.

A good way to carry forward this deeper dimension of life is to be part of the parish family here at Holy Rosary Church when we celebrate Mass on Sundays, we recall God's great love and care for us.

Come and pray with us - you will be very welcome!

Wishing you and your family a happy and a Holy Christmas with God's richest blessings!

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 97:1-6

All the ends of the earth have seen
the saving power of God.

Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

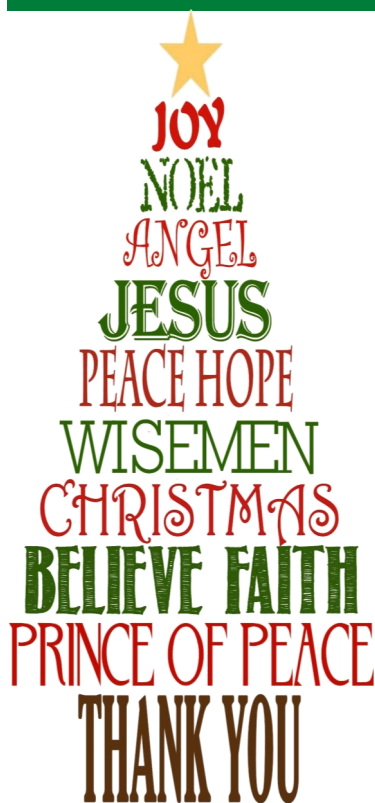
Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the saving power of God.

THANK YOU



Fr Kieran, Fr Rafael, Fr Bernie well as members of the Parish Team would like to thank all parishioners for your generosity and help during the year.

We have a huge list of people to acknowledge.

'Thank You' to members of the Parish Pastoral Council & Parish Finance Council. 'Thank You' to the Acolytes, Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Musicians & Choir, School of Religion Catechists, Counters & Collectors, Social Function, Pastoral Care, Flower Ladies, Maintenance, St Vincent de Paul, Altar Linen / Sacred Vessel Carers, Prayer & Reflection Groups, Sausage Sizzlers, and all the other quiet achievers who contribute to the life of our wonderful Parish!

We share with you the glory, the wonder,
the miracle of this Beautiful Holy Season.

ARCHBISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2019

The Archbishop's Christmas Appeal for 2019 is conducted at all Christmas Masses throughout the Archdiocese and will again have the funds raised split.

Our support will continue for **the ecumenical Christmas Bowl appeal** and its work in **bringing hope and opportunity** to those in need in Zimbabwe, South Sudan, Jordan, Sri Lanka and Tonga.

Contributions will be made to support **Diocesan** projects locally, within Wilcannia Forbes Diocese and globally, within the Dioceses of Otukpo, Nigeria.

Other international endeavours will include support towards: **enabling** the rebuilding of houses in the flood affected communities of Kozhikode and Malappuram within Thamarassery Diocese, India; Projects focused on helping the poor within the La Salette Matha Province in India; and further student assistance for those in need at Bethlehem University in the Holy Land. Assistance will also be given to **Bush Fire affected Dioceses in Northern NSW towards their recovery endeavours.**

In our thoughts and in our prayers please remember those in our community, those who have died or have anniversaries at this time (Bill McManus), also those who are ill, in nursing homes, hospital or homebound.

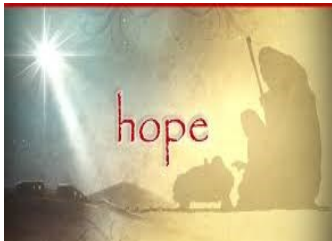
A FAMILY BLESSING

Lord of all,
bless our families.
Be they formed by blood or by circumstance,
make them holy.
May we look across all that divides us
and see family,
and embrace as a family does,
and love as a family ought to.
For where two or three gather in your name
there are you in the midst.
There indeed are you,
the one for whom we long so deeply. Amen.

OFFICE HOURS

The office will be closed on Friday 20th December and reopen Monday 6th January. If you are in urgent need of a priest please call **6248 8253**. Church enquires call Jim 0448 737 700

CHRISTMAS GIFTS



To your Enemy - Forgiveness.
To an Opponent - Tolerance.
To a Customer - Service.
To a Friend - your Heart.
To ALL - Charity.
To a Child - a Good Example.
To Yourself - Respect

THE GOOD NEWS

The person who brings the good news of salvation has beautiful feet, Isaiah says in the First Reading. That is a funny part of the anatomy to single out as beautiful. Hardly anyone has beautiful feet. On the contrary, human feet are often so ugly that they are funny. They tend to be dirty and smelly, too. When Jesus wants to set the apostles an example of humility, he washes their feet.

In the First Reading, the person with the beautiful feet brings the good news that God has provided salvation for his people. And, of course, this text is read at Christmas because the word of salvation that God speaks to his people is his Son, born as a baby in Bethlehem. The beautiful feet are his. He is the Saviour. The Saviour brings this good news: he can make beautiful all those who come to him.

The Second Reading says that the Saviour is the refulgence of the glory of God. Could anything be more beautiful than this glorious light? Maybe Isaiah means that for the Saviour even the feet, the human feet, are beautiful since the whole person of the Saviour is so luminous in glory.

But what did the Saviour, with his beautiful feet, bring? What is the good news?

The Gospel Reading says that the Saviour gives any person who comes to him the power to be a child of God, like the Saviour himself. But to be like him, refulgent in glory, is to be beautiful too. And so the person with the beautiful feet, the Saviour, brings this good news: he can make beautiful all those who come to him. He brings beauty all through, even for ugly feet, even for broken hearts, to all those who open to his coming.

Eleonore Stump <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>



SINGING ALL NIGHT

Christmas.

*Fr Richard Ounsworth OP preaches
on the three Christmas gospel readings.*

We begin with Midnight Mass, and the story of the birth of Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem, told in a very matter-of-fact way: St Luke at his pithiest. There is a striking contrast, in fact, between the humble ordinariness of Christ's birth and the dramatic scene when the angel of the Lord, and the whole heavenly host, appear to the shepherds in the nearby countryside. In fact, we leave the angels singing the *Gloria* until the Dawn Mass, when the story is taken up again with the departure of the angels. The shepherds then dash off to see the child for themselves. I rather like the idea that the angels are left singing all night by the liturgical arrangement of these two gospels. It reminds us that the heavenly choirs are joined in perpetual adoration of God, that heaven never sleeps; and that our participation in the liturgy, such as when we sing the *Gloria* at Mass, is a share in the eternal worship of the angels – the very life of heaven itself.

The shepherds, though, don't seem to pause to reflect on the extraordinary privilege they have been granted of witnessing the heavens opened: they go straight into town to 'see this thing that has happened'. And it is this – the apparently ordinary birth of a child in inauspicious circumstances – that really impresses them. A woman, her husband, her child. This is what causes them to go back 'glorifying and praising God.' Now of course, the birth of any baby is a remarkable and beautiful thing; the love between husband and wife, or between parent and child, is truly a sign that points us towards the source of that love which is God himself, the mystery of love at the heart of all existence. If we are able to see a new-born child, or witness the love that passes between two people, and not be moved to tears of joy, then it is because life has hardened our hearts too much.

But the shepherds know that in this particular child, in this particular time and place, they are encountering something much more. The angels have told them that this child, wrapped in swaddling clothes, is Christ, the Lord, the Saviour of the world. Their little glimpse of heaven has encouraged them to go back to look at the world with new eyes, to see the real meaning of events that look, outwardly, perfectly ordinary.

And this brings me to the Gospel for the Daytime Mass – the beginning of the Gospel of St John. Whereas St Luke takes us back to the beginning of Jesus's earthly life, St John takes us not so much back in time as into eternity. He shows us the eternal relationship of the Word to the Father; he grants us, in other words, a glimpse of the very life of God, a glimpse of heaven. But in the middle of granting us this glimpse, John also takes us into the human history of Jesus, beginning with his heralding by John the Baptist. He reminds us that in the earthly life of Jesus we see the eternal life of God – in other words, the eternal love of God – played out in something that looks, outwardly, quite ordinary.

A child is born. His mother loves him. Her husband loves and cherishes them both. This ought always to be a powerfully moving vision, though so many of us are hardened to the beauty of ordinary human love. But those of us who have been given a glimpse of heaven, who have indeed shared in the life of heaven, can see that this particular child is the perfect revelation of divine love.

And if we can see that, then we can look at the whole world again with our eyes opened by the message of an angel to the beauty of love that shines like morning dew over the whole earth, today and every day. <http://english.op.org/torch>

BIRTH OF JESUS

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus and mysterious and wonderful though the birth was, we have to say that it was in a way the most certain event in this world. From the beginning God has been as good as His word and His coming as man was meant from the beginning. The Word made flesh caught us by surprise—it even caught Mary and Joseph unawares. But it was always in God's mind to do this—to become part of His creation, to become one of us.

'God is asking us to renew our trust in each other and to build a world in which not only individuals but whole nations display a genuine care and concern for each other, a world in which we are more concerned with our duties to each other than a fearful preservation of our own petty rights on our own little patch of turf.'

'But God is not only asking us to keep trusting each other even when we feel let down. We are being asked to trust in something much more sure and certain than a vague hope in human benevolence. God is asking us to trust Him, the One who makes eternal covenants, the One whose Word is the surety of every human word.'

Excerpt from homily by John P Kenrick OP

THE LIGHT

'We discover at Christmas, not only the light that is God and the light that Jesus came to bring to the world, but the light that is and has always been in us because we are creatures who share in the light of God, beings in whom the spark of God's light and love has always shone.'

'Christmas reveals to us that like Mary and Joseph we too can be the light of Jesus, from the starlight that shone at Bethlehem.'

PARISH RENEWAL

Over the past year, a group of parishioners, inspired by Plenary Council conversations, have been praying and reflecting on Parish Renewal in Blackfriars Parish. As part of this process Fr. James Mallon's book "Divine Renovation" was the focus of two parish reading groups over the last couple of months. Now, following on from this, there is a desire to explore running an Alpha course in the parish next year. Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith based on a series of short films. Each film looks at a different question and is designed to create conversation. It is run in cafés, churches, universities and homes around the globe. The three key elements are: food, a talk and good conversation. It is currently being run in several dioceses in Australia, including ours.

If you are interested in participating in Alpha in the parish next year, you are warmly invited to get in touch with: Roger Paul (0421612572; rpaul2572@gmail.com) or Siobhan Tanzer (0432 292 498) for more information.

This Christmas, count your blessings....
Thank you Lord for shelter,
for warmth, for light, for food,
for clothing, for love.



...let us not
love in word
or speech but in
deed and in truth.

GETTING READY TO PRAY

We can pray with the delight of our being children who love to receive gifts. Advent has been our preparing-time for many things. Our prayer now is about our being open, honest about our size, and delighted. These few days before our Eucharistic celebration of his birth, we can pray with the openness of the empty. Mary's womb, a lowly stable, a gloomy world, all speak of longing and readiness.

THOUGHTS

We can pray with the deep desires we have to see friends and family again. That is a great joy and prayer, just desiring union which God's love labours to bring to this world. We can pray with all the stories of how the "little" becomes so much. The "littlest star," the "littlest tree," the "littlest snowflake" and even a laughed-at-reindeer, all speak of how God blesses our lowly condition and raises us all to the dignity of God's family.

We can pray with the delight of our being children who love to receive gifts. It is really much better to receive than give and so we can pray with all the cards, calls, greetings, and wrapped gifts which symbolize how God, in Christ, has come, and does continue to come through the gifts of our lives.

We can pray with the delight of God for us as parents delight in their children. They are not perfect, but made loveable by the love of mum and dad. There is division in our human family and in our personal families as well. There is much here about which to pray, wonder and wait. He has come, "to claim for Himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good." We can pray with the good things we are urged to do, these days of giving Him new birth in our stables.

Larry Gillick, SJ <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>

TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

The first people to experience the coming of the saviour were shepherds, those lowly, uneducated ones who lived among the animals. They were not the only ones, of course, but they were the first to welcome the saviour. It was no accident that such lowly people would be called in first to pay homage to the saviour. It is to the lowly, after all, that Christ came first as Lord and Redeemer. The circumstances of his birth testify to that: his mother "wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travellers lodged."

Christmas is the great annual renewal of our being a Church filled with wonder at the nearness of her God. The nearer we are to our God, the nearer we should become to those lowly ones who are God's special ones.

We are challenged at Christmas to do what Jesus and the angels did: bring the good news of redemption to the outcast and the lowly. The "tidings of great joy [are] to be shared by the whole people," and no one is to be left out, not even the most hopeless or despicable person.

Our holy Mother (the Church) does not neglect the care of the poor or omit to provide for their necessities; but, rather, drawing them to her with a mother's embrace, and knowing that they bear the person of Christ Himself, who regards the smallest gift to the poor as a benefit conferred on Himself, holds them in great honour.

She does all she can to help them; she provides homes and hospitals where they may be received, nourished, and cared for all the world over, and watches over these.

Gerald Darring <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>

For unto us a Child is born