

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

Sunday 13 Dec 2020

Third Sunday of Advent B

First Reading

Is 61:1-2, 10-11

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

*I exult for joy in the Lord.*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. 'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.'

*The Word of the Lord*

**R. Thanks be to God**

### Responsorial Psalm

Lk 1:46-50, 53-54. R. Is 61:10

#### R. My soul rejoices in my God.

1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name! His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him.

3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy.

#### R. My soul rejoices in my God.

### Second Reading

1 Thes 5:16-24

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians*

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you

all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

*The Word of the Lord*

**R. Thanks be to God**

### Gospel Acclamation

Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!

### Gospel

Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me. A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.' Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

*The Gospel of the Lord*

**R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

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### REFLECTION by Fr Michael Tate Witness to the Light

St John's Gospel never calls John, 'the Baptist'. No, he is John the Witness: 'a witness to speak for the Light'. We discover in this Gospel that this light is embodied in Jesus Christ, most graphically portrayed in the Transfiguration when Christ's body is radiant, translucent, with Divine Light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the One who came to liberate human beings from the many dark captivities which imprison them, the One who vanquished the inky blackness of the tomb.

We can become partakers in the life of this Divine Light. At baptism, this is symbolised by the lighting of a small candle from the great Easter candle which is sung into the church on the Easter Vigil as 'Christ our Light', the Conqueror of Death.

As a baptised people our allegiance to 'The Light' is not to be a private matter between 'me and God'. No, like John, we must bear witness to 'The Light' by being instruments of His power to dispel the darkness which can enshroud people's lives.

We could pause for a moment to commit ourselves to fulfil the promise of our baptismal candle so that we might more authentically celebrate the birth of the Divine Light come into human history.

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All the  
darkness in  
the world  
cannot  
extinguish  
the light of  
a  
single  
candle.

- Francis of  
Assisi



**ST BERNARD'S PARISH**  
**BATEMANS BAY**  
2 David Avenue, Batehaven NSW 2536



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E: batemansbay@cg.org.au  
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## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR B

### 2020 PARISH ADVENT THEME

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This weekend, we celebrate *Gaudete Sunday*, the third Sunday of Advent in which the rose-coloured candle on the Advent Wreath is lit and the ministers vest in similar colours. Gaudete is the Latin for "rejoice" taken straight from Philipians 2, which is used as the antiphon for this weekend.

In common parlance, Advent is sometimes called "little lent"-a time to prepare ourselves through prayer and fasting for the daily coming of Jesus (in the word, the Eucharist and through our neighbours) and his second coming in glory at the end of time. In the middle of the season, on the Third Sunday, we have a relaxation of those Advent penances and with a spirit of joy that we're halfway through the season and ready to get to Christmas, just as in the Fourth Sunday of Lent we have the colour rose as we make it halfway through the six weeks of Lent. We are herefore, called to rejoice, because our liturgical time of Advent, a time of waiting, of longing, of expectation is nearly complete.

This invitation to joy and rejoicing is hard to respond to in a year that is marked with challenges and painful events. However, we are called to rejoice in hope and be glad, because the Lord knows us; the Lord gives us the privilege of knowing him and in knowing him we come to know ourselves ever more fully and clearly that we are His beloved daughters and sons. *Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face.* (1 Cor. 12:13). So, it is only fitting that in the midst of the many challenges of life and living that we focused on the experience of joy that the Messiah is finally going to come.

His coming is echoed in the gospel this weekend, with John the Baptist stressing that he is not the one who is to come. Rather, he identified himself as the figure from Isaiah 40, the forerunner, the Herald, the prophet of the new Exodus, and indeed the witness. The Greek word for witness is *martureó*, from which we get the word martyr. So, John is going to be the first Christian martyr, in so far as he's going to die for bearing witness to Christ, the Messiah.

John was a very popular Jewish figure, an extremely popular Jewish prophet. Some Jews wondered if he was in fact the Messiah. First, they ask him "who are you?" and he says I'm not the Christ. The Greek word is Christos, meaning, *anointed one*; it is a title, not a name. He is not the anointed one, not the king of Israel that everyone's been waiting for. John says that although he may look and act like Elijah he is not. In Malachi cc. 3-4, it was prophesied that God is going to send Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord. The Jews of the day had developed the expectation that before the Messiah Elijah would have to come first. So, when John the Baptist appears on the scene, and he is clearly a prophet speaking for God, some people say he must be Elijah.

Others ask: "are you the prophet?" referring to Deuteronomy 18 and the prophecy of the likes of Moses. The Messiah was seeing as the new Moses. The Old Testament reading for today is nothing less than a prophecy of the Messiah, one of the most famous prophecies of the Messiah, is from the book of Isaiah 61. The Messiah is going to bring good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, and to bind up the broken hearted.

In view of the arrival of the liberating messiah, we break forth with joy during this Gaudete Sunday and in union with Mary we magnify the Lord through the responsorial Psalm, "My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my saviour". In the same spirit, we congratulate the 2020 set of Year Six in St. Bernard's Primary and we wish the school community a happy holiday and a joyful Yuletide.

**Fr Martins**



## Pope Francis Monthly Prayer Intentions

**For a life of prayer**  
We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer

## WEEKLY MASS TIMES

**Tues 15:** 5.30 Mass  
**Wed 16:** 9am Mass  
**Thurs 17:** 9am Mass  
**Fri 18:** 9.15am Mass  
**Sat 19:** 9am Rosary/Mass  
9.30am Recon 6pm Mass  
**Sun 20:** 9am Mass 5pm Mass

## ROSTERS 12/13 DECEMBER

Church Cleaning  
B Coffey & M Paine (14-18)  
Welcomers  
6pm B Wilson  
9am J McClelland  
5pm D Ebejer  
Commentator  
6pm P O'Kelly  
9am N Beatty  
5pm S Ebejer  
Readers:  
6pm M Bridges  
9am A Brown  
5pm Volunteer  
Eucharistic Ministers  
6pm J Wain  
9am C Schor  
5pm L Favetta  
Computer Screen  
6pm T Jackson  
9am T Priest  
5pm J O'Sullivan

## REGISTRARS

6pm J Wain/J McCarthy  
9am B Basevi, G Norris  
5pm M de Smet

## ROSTERS 19/20 DECEMBER

Church Cleaning  
R & K Ison (21-26)  
Welcomers  
6pm Sr Marie McAlister  
9am C Connell  
5pm M de Smet

## Commentator

6pm J Quigley  
9am M Lowe  
5pm J O'Sullivan

## Readers:

6pm M Weatherall  
9am C Lowe  
5pm K O'Sullivan

## Eucharistic Ministers

6pm M Bridges  
9am L Stevens  
5pm Volunteer

## Computer Screen

6pm K Conway  
9am T Jackson/D May  
5pm M O'Neill

## REGISTRARS

6pm G & M Weatherall  
9am B Basevi, G Norris  
5pm J McCarthy



## COMBINED CHURCHES CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

If you will be on your own or know others who might be, please invite them to

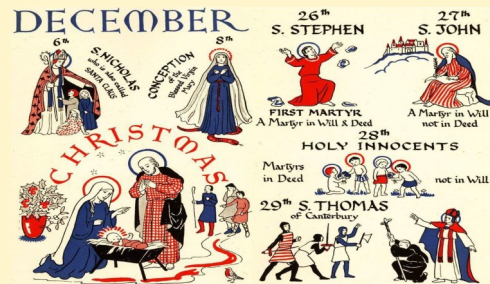
Christmas Lunch at 12noon at St Bernard's Church.

Spaces are limited so please phone 44729644 to book by December 18 and advise if you would like to be picked up.

**DON'T FORGET  
TO SAVE YOUR  
STAMPS FOR  
MISSION OVER  
CHRISTMAS  
AND DROP THEM IN.**



## Feasts of the Week



Sunday 13th—St Lucy of Syracuse  
Monday 14th—St John of the Cross  
Tuesday 15th—Blessed Mary Frances Schervier

Wed 16th—Blessed Honoratus Kozminski  
Thu 17th—Lazarus  
Fri 18th—St Rufus  
Sat 19th—Blessed Pope Urban V  
Sun 20th—St Dominic of Silos



**ADVENT RECONCILIATION**  
**MONDAY 21ST DECEMBER @ 5.30 PM**  
All are welcome

**Cenacle Prayer:** Tues at 4.45pm in Church  
**Bible Study/Faith Formation—**Wed 9.30am  
**Craft Group—**Thurs 10am-12pm  
**Men Alive—**1st & 3rd Wed 8 am  
**Adoration—**Friday 5.3– pm  
**Reconciliation—**Saturday 9.30am  
**Singalong—**Mondays 1 pm in the Church + Zoom



## 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Rejoice in God, Our Saviour

We continue our journey to Christmas on *Gaudete Sunday* – the pink candle - JOY.

We prepare with joyful expectation for the coming of Jesus by focusing on what is good in our lives and our world mindful of the pain and tragedy that exists.

*How do we understand Joy? It is not the same as happiness but rather as theologian, Fr Michael Himes describes it, 'the deep rightness of the way in which one is living one's life' – happiness can come and go but Joy is lasting if we are committed to embodying God's love in the world.*

*Loving God, help us to prepare for your coming by being committed to living with JOY inspired by Gospel values*

*Holy Spirit, open our hearts to others, listening to lived wisdom and responding with love.*

*Lord Jesus, we are preparing our hearts for you and for each other.*  
Amen

Pope Francis declares 2021 “The Year of St Joseph”  
Read more at the link below;  
<https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2020/12/pope-declares-year-of-st-joseph-offering-special-indulgences/>



## THE JESSE TREE IS GROWING!!

Our students from St Bernard's continue to add Symbols and Scripture Quotes to the Jesse Tree – the journey to Christmas has begun – how are we preparing?

The Jesse tree is named from Isaiah 11:1: “A shoot shall come out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.” Jesse was the father of King David.

The ornaments of the Jesse tree tell the story of God in the Old Testament, connecting the Advent season with the faithfulness of God across history.

THERE WILL BE A MASS TO COMMEMORATE THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLACK SUMMER FIRES on Thursday December 31 at 9 am. Parishioners are invited to bring a symbol of the fires or a symbol of survival (reasonable size to fit on table near altar). This will be an opportunity to connect, remember, heal and pray for one another and our community. All welcome. Please bring a plate for morning tea.

Enquiries: Marie Weatherall 0404 028 057

## PARISH ADVENT PROGRAM 2020

The Parish Advent Program will commence in the Church meeting room on Wednesday 25th November and continue on the following three Wednesdays: **2nd December, 9th December, 16th December.**

Sessions: Morning—9.30 am Evening 7.00pm

The program will be based on a booklet produced by the Wollongong Diocese called *Adore—Advent & Christmas Reflections.*

The Piety stall has Christmas cards, Columban and Mary MacKillop Calendars(\$8) and children's books for sale.

Archbishop Carroll's book “From Ganmain to Rome and Back” is also available to purchase.

## CHRISTMAS MASSES:

**Christmas Eve**  
**6 pm Family/Children's Mass**  
**8.30 pm Christmas Carols**  
**9 pm Christmas Vigil**

**Christmas Day**  
**9am Christmas Mass**  
**5pm Christmas Mass**



## PARISH FINANCIAL SUPPORT

From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 there will only be one collection which will be deposited in the Parish Operating Account this will include existing Credit Card transactions, Direct Debits, collection box and Tap machine. The collection will then be apportioned with a percentage forwarded to the Archdiocese for the Central Presbytery Fund each month. If you would like to join the Parish e-platform giving, the details are as follows:

**Acc. Name: St Bernard's Operating Account BSB: 062-786**  
**Bank Acc:000012939 Ref: Family Name**

Please note: For banking at any bank but not the Commonwealth Bank

If you currently have a direct debit to the Central Presbytery Fund a suggestion is that it be cancelled and combined into the St Bernard's Operating Account in order to facilitate the continuity of funds.

## Remembering the Sick:

Femia and Mark, Roberto Alivio, Vince Burns, John Dillon, Trish Hamilton, Daniel Coffey, Jim Banks, Dennis Sheather, James Lee, Mary Henderson, George Fitzgerald, Diane Lanzon, Marion O'Grady, Victor Edith, Jan Simpson, Dawn Robinson, Margaret Harris, Bill Giust, Allan Odium, Luke Ward, Rosemary Cooley, Andrew Morton, Ken Evendon, Judy Betts, Janet Thornberry, Anica Bautovic, Angela Mylott, Jeanette Clarke, and those in our local Nursing Homes and Hospital

## Death Anniversaries:

John Gallagher, Stephen Sly, Peter Baird, Gizella Bowmaker, Adalbert Planinsic, Sean Griffin  
**We pray for the recently deceased in the Parish Community:** Marian Owens, Susan McNamara, Dario Panes, Cathy Leoszko, Elizabeth Gallagher Kenneth Torkington, Shirley Keir, Ken Bow, Steven Thomas, Maureen Kinross, Nora Trompp Peter Varkulevicius, Ian McAdam, Jan Schor, Pio Lib-erale, Glenda Gallagher, Ivy Rootsey, Evert Ordelman Regina Mass, Mato Katic, Anacrita Villanueva Senci, Philip Lewis P. Bernasconi



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