



St Christopher's Cathedral Parish, Canberra

(including St Peter Chanel's Church, Yarralumla)



The Nativity of the
Lord
Year B -
25 Dec 2020

Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn
Archbishop: Most Rev Christopher Prowse DD STD
Vicar General: Fr Tony Percy VG
Administrator: Fr Trenton van Reesch
Assistant Priest: Fr Norvin Dias

Masses at St Christopher's
will be offered with a maxi-
mum of 260 people present
until further notice

PARISH OFFICE

55 Franklin Street, Forrest ACT 2603 (02) 6239 9846 (bh) Emergency Phone for Priests: 0491 072 304
cathedral@cg.org.au www.cg.org.au/cathedral
Online Payments Link: <https://www.bpoint.com.au/payments/sccp>
Parish Secretary: Michelle O'Connor—Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.15pm, 12.45pm-4.30pm
Accounts Officer: Karina Widjaja—Friday, 8am-4pm

Sunday Mass

St Christopher's

Cnr Canberra Ave & Furneaux
Street, Forrest (Manuka) ACT

Sat. Vigil: 5.00pm

Sunday: 8.00am,
11.00am (livestreamed),
5.30pm

St Peter Chanel's

Cnr Weston & Loch Streets,
Yarralumla ACT

Saturday: 6.00pm Vigil

Sunday: 9.30am
2.00-3.00pm Adoration
& Confessions

Weekday Mass

St Christopher's

Monday to Friday: 7.30am &
12.15pm

Saturday: 9.00am & 12.15pm

St Peter Chanel's

Tuesday: 5.30pm

Thursday: 10.00am (9.30am
Adoration): Anointing Mass first
Thursday of the month.

Reconciliation

St Christopher's

Wednesday: 11.30am-12.00noon

Thursday: 6.00 - 6.30pm

Saturday: 11.00am - 12noon

St Peter Chanel's

Tuesday: 6.00 - 6.30pm

Saturday: 5.15 - 5.45pm

Adoration

St Christopher's

Tuesday to Friday: 5.00-6.00pm

Baptisms

Sundays: 12.30pm

Weddings

St Christopher's: Saturday
1.30pm & 3.00pm

St Peter Chanel's: By arrangement

Bethlehem hope - Snapshots of 2020/21

Hope is one of our fundamental three theological virtues – Faith, **HOPE** and love. This means it is God's gift to us. It also requires our response.

The greatest HOPE that God has given us is JESUS. At Christmas, we reflect on this in a profound way. The little and vulnerable baby Jesus of Bethlehem stills and silences us. We reach out to respond. To hold. To caress love itself. To offer the Son of God to the world.

Jesus makes our faith both gift and task – invitation and mission. Bethlehem hope keeps us from despair (no hope) and presumption (arrogant over-confidence in our own resources).

Surely, the gift of hope is what is keeping us going in this most unexpected 2020/21. I have experienced some wonderful examples of hopeful living in these months. Here are some snapshots.

There were the bushfires on the South Coast. The trauma is ongoing for those affected.

I witnessed hope in hearing of the generosity of heart shown by the frightened gathered at the Moruya Showgrounds. There was the raw courage shown by the two women who saved our Cobargo Church and belltower. I witnessed Fr Luke Verrell and others offering hope to the people at the Bega Emergency Centre. The three families I visited who had lost their homes along the Eurobodalla Rd impressed me deeply by their Marian Catholic faith and hopeful determination to build again. Sadly, this rebuilding still remains a dream.

There was hope and excitement from some who pointed out to me small green shoots starting to come from charred trees.

South Coast families expressed much hope and thanks from the incredible generosity of Canberra parishes [including our Cathedral parish] who sent immediate financial help to those most in need.

Our social welfare agencies continue to provide hope for the homeless, hungry and mentally ill.

At the other end of the Archdiocese, there is the hope that the long and devastating drought is finally breaking.

The rains have come. The canola fields near Harden are healthy and brilliant in gold. The vision exudes hope. Travellers are stopping to take photos and breathe in the clean air. It is a total change from smoky and hail-damaged Canberra in January. Even the farmers themselves seem rather upbeat and hopeful for the immediate future. The despair surrounding suicides and mental health issues remains a threat to hope.

The COVID-19 global catastrophe has really worn us out. We are tired. Schoolteachers have exhausted themselves by offering so much hope to their students and parents. They have kept our schools open during the threatening weeks. Whole families studying and working from homes has not been easy. People are turning to prayer and silence in greater numbers.

From the "monastic" feel at home, egotistical presumption is challenged. Reliance on Jesus in faith and hope has received a more favourable listening heart.

The sick, aged and vulnerable appreciate the extra on-line Masses and prayer the Archdiocese and parishes have offered this year.

The youth, as always, have shown us an example of on-line evangelisation. Parishioners talk of the hope that a phone call or visit gives the house bound. Grandparents delight to see their children and grandchildren on FaceTime, Viber or whatever is electronically available.

In so many ways, the underlining pandemic of loneliness and isolation is conquered by all these "little miracles" of practical hope and closeness, as Pope Francis would phrase it. In 2021, we await in hope a vaccine. Will it ever come? We hope it does.

In the meantime, we continue to offer others the "new normal" of a kindly smile and generous word and help. It is all part now of the vaccine of hope we offer. This is especially shared at Christmas.

Over the centuries, Christians have knelt in awe before the Holy Family at the Bethlehem stable. They have done so in greater fervour in times of war, pestilence and catastrophe. They have done so not simply to draw personal hope for life after death. They have prayed too for the communitarian hope in the here and now that unfolds from the Kingdom of God arising from the humility of the Bethlehem stable.

This is our hope. This is our Christmas prayer. *Emmanuel* – God is with us! Do not be afraid!

A prayerful and Happy Christmas and New Year to all!

- Archbishop Christopher Prowse

Readings of the Day – The Nativity of the Lord —Year B

VIGIL/MIDNIGHT

Entrance Antiphon

The Lord said to me: You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day.

First Reading

Is 9:1-7

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.

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Second Reading

Ti 2:11-14

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.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Good News and great joy to all the world: today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

Gospel Reading

Lk 2:1-14

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.'

Communion Antiphon

The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Entrance Antiphon

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

First Reading

Is 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, 'Your God is king!' Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as he returns to Zion. Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling his people, redeeming Jerusalem. The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

Second Reading

Heb 1:1-6

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

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!

Gospel Reading

Jn 1:1-5. 9-14

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us. And we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Communion Antiphon

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