



## St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Berala

*Streams of living water will flow from within. ~John 7:38*

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**Parish Website:** [www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au](http://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au), **facebook:** [stpeterstjoseph](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterstjoseph) **YouTube:** [BeralaParish](https://www.youtube.com/BeralaParish)

**Holy Mass at Berala:** Monday to Friday 6.45am, Saturday 8.00am | **Holy Hour:** Saturday 8.30am-9.30am

**Lord's Day Mass Berala:** Saturday 5.00pm (Vigil), Sunday 8.00am & 10.00am

**Reconciliation at Berala:** Saturday 8.30am - 9.30am. Or contact the parish office for any other time.

For Baptisms, Weddings, Bible Study and Catholic Enquiry, please contact Fr Thomas or the parish office on 9644 7787.

### THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

3 JANUARY 2021

#### Epiphany: Have You Met God?

What a year it was in 2020! In this New Year we wish and pray that 2021 will be better than the one that is past. COVID 19 continues to challenge humanity in all aspects of life. Our proudly established medical systems are failing to ensure health and wellbeing. The rising graph of economy, we all dream of, seems to remain as a dream. When we thought we have arrived at a 'global village' with no one in any part of the world too far to meet in person, borders are closed and we have become aliens to each other. Churches, the houses of God, have become out of reach for the faithful to visit as they wished. Any plan to travel to any pilgrim centres in search of God experience is also hindered by the pandemic. So is God still with us?

The season of Christmas is continuing for us. Today we are celebrating another Christmas in the Feast of Epiphany. The term 'epiphany' means manifestation of God. Matthew (2:1-12) narrates how God manifested himself as a child Jesus at Bethlehem. The search for God incarnate by the magi in Jerusalem and in the palace of King Herod were futile. They had to reach the poor manger in Bethlehem to meet baby Jesus, God incarnate. God the creator decided to be part of human story in a humble manger surrounded by not the elite but the shepherds. It was the star, the symbol of God's fidelity to his people through King David, that led the magi to their God experience. The magi from the East represent the gentile world who were not part of the first chosen people of God.

The imagery Matthew paints of God's revelation in child Jesus helps us to reflect on how and where we find God in the uncertainties of this COVID stricken world. This virus has made humanity to look for the divine revelation of hope, joy, and peace not in the rich, the powerful, and the learned. We are challenged to be humble to find our God manifesting himself through compassion, generosity, and trust. Disillusioned by the agents of the world, you now follow the divine star of hope to where God is. The star could be in the form of a person or an experience in your life. Who or what is that star that is guiding you to meet God? Like the group of magi who travelled together, you too need companions in this world humbled by COVID, as you search for God born into humanity. Who are the people travelling with you in your journey?

The magi came to Bethlehem bearing gifts. What are the precious gifts you are bearing to God? Selfishly keeping the God given talents to yourselves is not the way to pay homage to God's manifestation.

The magi, after paying homage to child Jesus, went home another way, distancing themselves from the evil king Herod. Your God experience also will make you leave the ungodly ways of the past and follow a new way of life from now on. Having met Jesus in the fragility of the world today, have you commenced a new way in this New Year?



#### MASS INTENTIONS

**Sick:** Sr Tomsy, Graham Turner, Sr Salve Stuart, Theo Bergstedt, Tony Michael, Doreen Stanmore, Ann Bechiom, Grazyna Lukasiewicz, Ray Jarque, Ruby Amores

**Recently Deceased:** Lourdes Zabala, Elena Figueras, Cecil Scharenguivel, Nora Cleary

**Deceased:** Ted Duffy, Diogo Cardozo

**Deceased Members and Friends of:** O'Dwyer & Erwin Families, Ross & Mitchell Families, Michael & Baini Families, Scully & Lynch Families, Amores, Florendo & Domingo Families

**Other Intentions:** For all those affected by the Corona Virus. The intention of the Holy Father.

#### Are you struggling financially?

If you or you know anyone needing financial assistance during this time may contact Fr Thomas. He may be able to help you. Send a confidential email to [pp@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au](mailto:pp@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au).



Please do not put the  
bulletin back in the church.

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## ANTIPHONS & READINGS

### Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Mal 3:1; 1 Chr 29:12

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

### First Reading

Is 60:1-6

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you; the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-13, R. see v.11

**R Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.**

O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement. **R**

In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds. **R**

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts shall pay him tribute. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring him gifts. Before him all kings shall fall prostrate, all nations shall serve him. **R**

For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. **R**

### Second Reading

Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets

was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

### Gospel Acclamation

Mt 2:2

Alleluia, alleluia!

We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord.

Alleluia!

### Gospel

Mt 2:1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

### Communion Antiphon

Cf Mt 2:2

We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

### Next Week's Readings:

1st Reading: **Is 52:1-4, 6-7**

2nd Reading: **Acts 10:34-38**

Gospel: **Mk 1:7-11**

## REFLECTIONS ON MATTHEW 2:1-12

### Historical Context – The Magi

In some translations, the ‘wise men’ of this passage are referred to as ‘Magi’. Magi was the name given to the Persian priestly caste. Persia (now, Iran) lies to the east of Israel. These wise men are also sometimes portrayed as astrologers, but that is largely because of the reference ‘We saw his star as it rose’. It is interesting that the passage describes ‘some’ wise men; tradition has developed a specific number of three – based on the three gifts presented. These anonymous (and purely literary) figures have been given names and their ‘relics’ lie in honour beneath the Cathedral of Cologne.

### Have you thought? – Epiphany

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus to humankind. The wise men are the representatives of humanity bearing witness to this revelation. However, the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus as not only the Messiah of Israel but the Saviour of the whole world. Interestingly, in this gospel that emphasises the ‘Jewish-ness’ of Jesus, the witnesses to the birth are gentiles from a foreign land. Their inclusion is a powerful declaration that the revelation of Jesus is for all people. Regardless of the liturgical year, this reading is always used on the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate this pivotal moment.

### Gospel Focus – Going home

The wise men, or Magi, are warned in a dream not to go back to Herod and they go home by a different way. How could they do anything but go home another way – indeed, go home as different people? They are changed by their encounter with the child Jesus and they go home a different way; in a different state; in a whole different frame of mind. When we genuinely encounter Jesus – in scripture, in life, in prayer, in ourselves – then we cannot go home the same way; we must go home by a different way as the Magi did.

## The Lord has made his salvation known to the whole world

*From a sermon of Saint Leo the Great, pope*

The loving providence of God determined that in the last days he would aid the world, set on its course to destruction. He decreed that all nations should be saved in Christ.

A promise had been made to the holy patriarch Abraham in regard to these nations. He was to have a countless progeny, born not from his body but from the seed of faith. His descendants are therefore compared with the array of the stars. The father of all nations was to hope not in an earthly progeny but in a progeny from above.

Let the full number of the nations now take their place in the family of the patriarchs. Let the children of the promise now receive the blessing in the seed of Abraham, the blessing renounced by the children of his flesh. In the persons of the Magi let all people adore the Creator of the universe; let God be known, not in Judaea only, but in the whole world, so that his name may be great in all Israel.

Dear friends, now that we have received instruction in this revelation of God’s grace, let us celebrate with spiritual joy the day of our first harvesting, of the first calling of the Gentiles. Let us give thanks to the merciful God, who has made us worthy, in the words of the Apostle, to share the position of the saints in light, who has rescued us from the power of darkness, and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. As Isaiah prophesied: *the people of the Gentiles, who sat in darkness, have seen a great light, and for those who dwelt in the region of the shadow of death a light has dawned.* He spoke of them to the Lord: *The Gentiles, who do not know you, will invoke you, and the peoples, who knew you not, will take refuge in you.*

This is the day that Abraham saw, and rejoiced to see, when he knew that the sons born of his faith would be blessed in his seed, that is, in Christ. Believing that he would be the father of the nations, he looked into the future, giving glory to God, in full awareness that God is able to do what he has promised.

This is the day that David prophesied in the psalms, when he said: *All the nations that you have brought into being will come and fall down in adoration in your presence, Lord, and glorify your name.* Again, *the Lord has made known his salvation; in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice.*

This came to be fulfilled, as we know, from the time when the star beckoned the three wise men out of their distant country and led them to recognise and adore the King of heaven and earth. The obedience of the star calls us to imitate its humble service: to be servants, as best we can, of the grace that invites all men to find Christ.

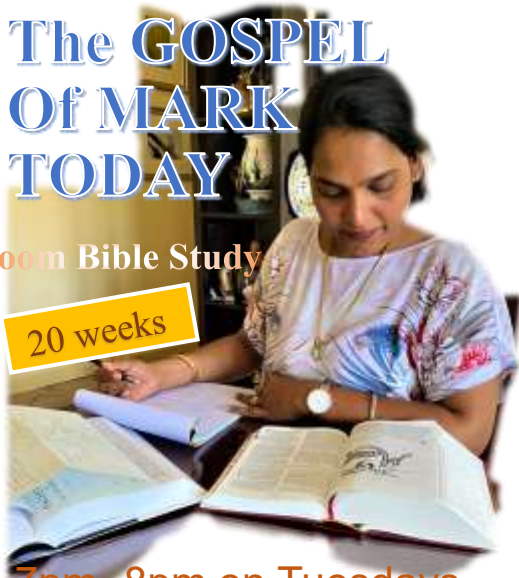
Dear friends, you must have the same zeal to be of help to one another; then, in the kingdom of God, to which faith and good works are the way, you will shine as children of the light: through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with God the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

# The GOSPEL Of MARK TODAY

Zoom Bible Study

20 weeks

7pm -8pm on Tuesdays  
20 April- 31 August 2021



## Mrs Nora Cleary Passed Away

Mrs Nora Cleary sadly passed away on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December as a resident of a nursing home in Port Stephens. May her soul rest in peace.

St Peter Chanel was her local parish for well over 70 years and her family (Nickeas) were long stranding parishioners with 11 children in the family. Given the current pandemic the family has decided to privately cremate her body on 31 December. A memorial Mass is to be celebrated for her at Peter Chanel Church at 2 pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2021, the day which would have been her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

*St Kuriakose Elias Chavara was a great missionary in Kerala who worked hard to re-establish the dignity of Syro Malabar Church after a time turbulent time of history in India. Following is a note about this exceptional and timely saint.*

### Day and night he fought to arrest the spread of schism

*From a note written by Fr Leopold Becarro, spiritual director of St Kuriakose Elias Chavara*

Today, Tuesday, January, 3, 1871, at 7:15 in the morning, Fr Cyriac (Kuriakose) Elias of the Holy Family, the first Prior, died after a life of great innocence. He could declare before his death he had never lost his baptismal innocence. He was exercising himself in the practice of virtues, especially in simplicity of heart, living faith, tender obedience, and devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament, to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to St Joseph. He has undergone immense hardships for the good of the Christians of Malabar, especially during the time of the schism of Rochos, when he, having been appointed vicar general of the Syrians, showed his extraordinary devotion to the Holy See. He fought day and night to arrest the spread of schism from which he would save no less than forty parishes. On this account the Holy Father Pope Pius IX sent him a letter expressing his great satisfaction. He was the founder and the first Prior of the Carmelites of Malabar. He founded also the convent of nuns after undergoing many hardships. On account of his endearing virtues, learning and profound knowledge of the Syriac language he enjoyed great influence among the Syrians of Malabar. He was always greatly loved by the Vicars Apostolic of Malabar, and even more by the people of Malabar, the gentiles and Nestorians not excluded. He endured his last illness for two years in a spirit of great resignation, nay with joy. He was detached from all disorderly affections for earthly things, which was all the more true in the last days of his life. Having received the last sacraments with extraordinary piety and devotion, in a heavenly joy, and amidst the tears of all who knew him, especially my own, who knew him even as myself, he breathed his last at the age of sixty-five and was buried in the church of St Philomena at Koonammavu. O holy and beautiful soul, pray for me.

## 10 JANUARY 2021

## BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Mass	VIGIL	8AM	10AM
ACOLYTE	William ANDREWS	Charlie SCULLY	Trevor BREWTY
LECTOR/S	Noeline DONNELLAN	Michael CHOW	Joshua LU
	Jann ROCKLIFF	Maris MARSH	Hilary RIOFRIO
CHURCH SHOP	Charlie SCULLY	Catherine MCGINN	Margaret THAM

Cleaners SPC: Marian Rosary Group | Altar & Sacristy: Group 6 Korina Kinda, Antoinette Boudaher

Saturday 8AM | 9 JANUARY

LECTOR FOR MASS

Christine KENSEY