



May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours

Glory to God, Peace to People

Thank God, unlike last year, we are able to celebrate Christmas. Yet the fear of the virus is hindering the exuberant joy which is due for the season. But inhospitable circumstances should not make us hesitate to express our Christmas joy. The mystery of incarnation makes more sense in the challenges and inadequacies of human life. Different readings at Christmas Masses are results of the meditations on the Christ event by the early Christians who lived through challenging times.

The Gospel reading for the Vigil Mass is from Matthew. The genealogy used by Matthew to introduce Jesus is not meant to be the ancestry of the child. Matthew contextualised the story of Jesus in the story of God's first chosen people. The names and events mentioned in the genealogy reminds us of God's disclosure to the Jewish people, including some related foreigners and sinners. In a much fuller way, God is with us, Immanuel, in the person of Jesus. David and Solomon were sinners. Tamar and Ruth, two of the four women mentioned were not Jewish; they were foreigners. Yes, the incarnation of God was not for the righteous, but for sinners and outsiders. Therefore, no one needs to feel excluded from the grace of the incarnation. You may have learned of shadows in your own family history. Still the grace of Christmas is meant for you too. Christmas means, in spite of the human imperfections, our God is with us, Immanuel.

Readings from Luke are used in Midnight Mass. The politics of the time is pertinent to understanding these readings. According to Luke "In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered." (Luke 2:1). Emperor Augustus, with his military power, wealth, and clever systems of governing, was presenting himself as the symbol of peace (Pax Romana) and stability. He even declared himself as the 'son of god'. In contrast, the true Son of God, Jesus, was born in a manger without any royal regalia. It is the poor shepherds, not the mighty military who kept company for the divine infant born to be the real king. Though in a stable, Luke writes that the baby Jesus was wrapped in bands of cloth to mean that the birth of baby Jesus was truly royal. Yes, Jesus is the one who saves humanity, not the might of the emperor. A meditation on this narrative should make us realise that in the face of the tall claims of scientific advancements, promises of a welfare state, and comfort of affluence, nothing can replace Jesus as the real saviour. Are you prepared to acknowledge it?

Reading at the day Mass is from John's Gospel and he states that Jesus is the incarnation of the Word of God. Just as in the beginning the Word of God created light and the world (ref Genesis 1:1-2:4) the birth of Jesus as the incarnation of the Word of God can enlighten people and recreate the humanity. By accepting Jesus as your saviour, you and I are made new creations. The new found life with God incarnate helps to dispel all kinds of darkness, including any sense of hopelessness. The more you acknowledge God incarnate people's lives of others, the greater will be the peace and joy of Christmas for you. Our God, the true saviour, is with you and me. Therefore, let us sing praises and say, "Glory to God in the highest". Let your life and mine bring peace to all people of good will. Have a merry Christmas!

~Fr Thomas Kurunthanam

Wishing you a blessed Christmas!

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

~ Matthew 2:10

The Nativity of the Lord - Year C

7PM VIGIL MASS

24 December 2021

First Reading

Is 62:1-5

About Zion I will not be silent, about Jerusalem I will not grow weary, until her integrity shines out like the dawn and her salvation flames like a torch. The nations then will see your integrity, all the kings your glory, and you will be called by a new name, one which the mouth of the Lord will confer. You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the Lord, a princely diadem in the hand of your God; no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken', nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be called 'My Delight' and your land 'The Wedded'; for the Lord takes delight in you and your land will have its wedding. Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the one who built you wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you.

Second Reading

Acts 13:16-17. 22-25

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak: 'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out. 'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was

heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".

Gospel

Mt 1:18-25

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

Antiphons & Readings

Entrance Antiphon Cf. Ex 16:6-7

Today you will know that the Lord will come, and he will save us, and in the morning you will see his glory.

Responsorial Psalm:

(R) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.' **(R.)**

2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face, who find their joy every day in your name, who make your justice the source of their bliss. **(R.)**

3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me." I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure.' **(R.)**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed: the Saviour of the world will be our king.

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon Cf. Is 40:5

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see the salvation of our God.



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The angel said to them: 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'

~ Luke 2: 10

The Nativity of the Lord - Year C

MIDNIGHT MASS

25 December 2021

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.

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

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.'

Antiphons & Readings

Entrance Antiphon Ps 2:7

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

Responsorial Psalm:

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

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless his name. **(R.)**
2. Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. **(R.)**

3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for he comes, he comes to rule the earth.' **(R.)**

4. With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. **(R.)**

Gospel Acclamation Lk 2:10-11

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon Jn 1:14

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

For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

~ Luke 2:11

The Nativity of the Lord - Year C

8AM & 10AM MASS

25 December 2021

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.

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

Jn 1:1-18

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.

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.

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.

John appears as his witness, He proclaims: 'This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me.' Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received yes, grace in return for grace, since, though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Antiphons & Readings

Entrance Antiphon Cf. Is 9:5

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.

Responsorial Psalm:

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

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. **(R.)**

2. 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. **(R.)**

3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy.' **(R.)**

4. 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.

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 Antiphon Cf. Ps 97:3

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



St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Berala

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

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

Lord's Day Mass : Saturday 5.00pm Vigil - LiveStreamed, Sunday 8.00am & 10.00am

Reconciliation: 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 HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH YEAR C

26 DECEMBER 2021

Holy Family



With or without a house, children are normally reared in families. We all are, to a great extent, products of our own families. I remember, my parents' insistence on an hour of family prayer each evening. They also made sure their children did not miss the Sunday Masses. Walking about two kilometres to and from the parish church in the tropical sun was not an issue then. Such a strong religious upbringing shaped my view of life and plans for my future. My aspiration to become a missionary priest started there. Though my parents proposed a career oriented education for further studies, I was set on my priestly vocation. I am glad that I did it, because the joy and the sense of fulfilment I have by being at the service of a variety of people from cradle to grave is amazing. The foundation for such a way of life for me was laid from my home formation. Like me, you too may recollect how much your family formation has impacted on what you have become.

Child Jesus was raised as a pious Jew by his devoted parents. As good parents do, Mary and Joseph thanked God for the gift of their child, Jesus. The circumcision of the child and the offering they made in the temple marked the beginning of a religious formation for Jesus. Therefore, the child Jesus grew not only in stature, but in enlightening divine wisdom as well.

While wanting to do the right thing, parents of present times may be confused by competing moral and religious teachings. To make matters worse, some agencies and ideologies may even try to steal the parental role of formation of the kids from their biological parents. Be vigilant therefore that your children grow not only in stature, but also in divine wisdom. The stronger the foundation you lay for them, the greater the height your children will reach.



If unable to attend Mass in person
Join us on Saturday at 5PM for the Sunday Vigil Mass

@BeralaParish YouTube Channel

Don't forget to subscribe & switch the notification bell on.

Fr George Kallumkal

Many of you wanted me to convey your greetings and wishes to Fr George. I spoke with him on Wednesday before Christmas. He was getting ready to visit one of the villages in his parish. His church in Meghalaya State in the North Eastern corner of India, and has 70 village communities in addition to the town folk. Though he is the only priest in the parish, he makes it a point to offer Mass and other sacraments in each of these villages during Advent! Christmas celebration in villages and the main church are full on. After the 9.30 pm (Vigil) Mass on Friday night, carol singing groups will visit homes carrying a statue of the infant Jesus to the accompaniment of drum beats. Carols night has a very different meaning for them. This tour of the homes by carol singers will continue till Christmas day break. On Christmas Day there is only one Mass and it is at 11 am after which the singing, dancing, eating and drinking will continue till late in the night. On Christmas day there's only one mass and one big celebration! They do know how to celebrate.

Fr George, with cherished memories, sends his Christmas wishes to Berala parishioners. I too wished him a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year on behalf of all Berala Parishioners. *~Fr Thomas*

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Pastoral Council

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Healing After Abortion: 0400 092 555

Vincentian Retreat Centre Somersby -
 www.divineretreatcentre.org.au
 Ph: 4372 1598

Sara's Place: For pregnancy support or
 grieving after abortion visit
 www.sarasplace.org.au Ph: 9699 8190

PARISH DIARY THIS WEEK

Mon 27/12	St John, apostle (Feast) 6.45am Mass
Tue 28/12	The Holy Innocents, martyrs (Feast) 6.45am Mass
Wed 29/12	6.45am Mass
Thu 30/12	6.45am Mass
Fri 31/12	7.00pm Mass (Family)
Sat 1/1	8.00am Mass 5.00pm Vigil Mass
Sun 2/1	8.00am Mass 10.00am Mass

2 JANUARY 2022**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

Mass	VIGIL	8AM	10AM
ACOLYTE	Bob KENSEY	William ANDREWS	Roland JAVIER
MUSIC & SINGING		Liva Funaki & Lavinia Fifita	Salt enLight
LECTOR/S	Noeline DONNELLAN	Joe MOSES	Katrina YIP
	Christine KENSEY	Michael CHOW	Phirum DUCH
CHURCH SHOP	Charlie SCULLY	Jenny MICHAEL	John SHANLEY

Cleaners SPC: Uisa Family

Altar & Sacristy: Group 5 Carol Mabon, Maria Wood

Saturday 8AM**1 JANUARY**

LECTOR FOR MASS

Christine KENSEY

*"Family that pray together
 stay together"*
PILGRIM STATUE



FROM ST PETER CHANEL

Flores Family

**To host the Pilgrim Statue and
 Rosary prayer please contact Mona
 on 9709 8701 or 0417 282 603.**

**FROM THE LEGION OF MARY,
 BERALA**

**To host the Rosary Statue Legion of
 Mary, Berala call
 Phil Lopez on 9646 1756.**

MASS INTENTIONS

Sick: Graham Turner, Theo Bergstedt, Doreen Stanmore, Judith Anderson, John Rodrigues, Joseph Rodrigues

Recently Deceased: Lola O'Dwyer, Alexandra Saba

Deceased: Cecil Scharenguivel

Other Intentions: Holy Souls in Purgatory. The intention of the Holy Father.

ANTIPHONS & READINGS FOR SUNDAY

Entrance Antiphon

Lk 2:16

The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

First Reading

Sir 3:2-6. 12-14

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons. Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune. Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays. Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord. My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life. Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength; for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten but will serve as reparation for your sins.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 83:2-3. 5-6. 9-10. R. v.5

Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper. **R**

Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. **R**

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life. **R**

Second Reading

Col 3:12-21

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all

wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

Gospel Acclamation

Col 3:15. 16

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 2:41-52

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant.

He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

Communion Antiphon

Bar 3:38

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Next week's Readings:

1st Reading: **Is 60:1-6**

2nd Reading: **Eph 3:2-3. 5-6**

Gospel: **Mt 2:1-12**

REFLECTIONS ON LUKE 2:41-52

Historical Context - Jesus the Jew

This gospel passage reminds us of the fact that Jesus and his family were faithful Jews throughout their lives. Although in his public ministry Jesus challenged some of the practices and attitudes of the institutional religion, he nevertheless remained faithful throughout his life. In this incident, we see the practice of travelling to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover and we also see the very Jewish method of teaching and exploring Torah through question and answer. Some people oddly struggle with the notion of Jesus as a Jew and yet the gospels repeatedly demonstrate how he was faithful to the tradition.

Have you thought? Mary

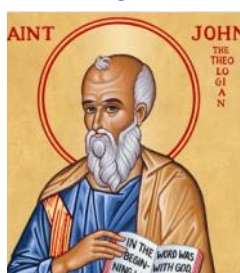
We're told in today's gospel that Mary 'stored up all these things in her heart'. Mary is a model of the reflective life. When extraordinary, life-altering events occur to her, she is portrayed as pondering these events in her heart. She responds to these events by allowing them to speak to her and speak to her heart rather than simply 'reacting' as so many of us do. The ability to reflect on events, rather than react to them, can lead to a much better considered response and less chance of making the same mistakes over and over again.

Living the Gospel - Importance of family

It is sometimes easy to glibly declare that our families are important to us, but it is in the everyday living of family life that we have the opportunity to demonstrate how serious we are. It is inevitable, as we establish our individual identity, that we will at times clash with our family's expectations and challenge the authority of parents. However, we can never forget the love, care and security our family has provided throughout our lives. Parents try to protect their children from disappointment and harm and reflect the love of God when they're repeatedly prepared to try again with damaged family relationships.

FEAST & MEMORIALS OF THE WEEK

Monday, 27 December - St John, apostle



(Feast)

First-century Galilean fisherman, son of Zebedee, who, with his brother James, left their nets to follow Jesus. With Peter, these "sons of thunder" form an inner group among the twelve. Probably the "disciple whom Jesus loved" of the Fourth Gospel and, according to ancient tradition, the author of this Gospel and also of three letters and the book of Revelation. Remembered for his contemplative reflection on the life and death of Jesus and for his emphasis on Christian love.

Tuesday, 28 December - The Holy Innocents



(Feast)

In an attempt to kill the child Jesus, Herod ordered the massacre of all male children, two years old and under, in and around Bethlehem. The Holy Innocents have been honoured as martyrs for Christ since the fourth century and their feast has been celebrated on this day since the sixth century. In remembering them, the Church laments the suffering and death of children everywhere and honours all who die in innocence.

Christian, remember your dignity

From a sermon of Saint Leo the Great, pope

Dearly beloved, today our Saviour is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to men of good will* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvellous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, and *when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ*, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

NEWS

Have a Merry Christmas

Thanks to all who have wished me Christmas greetings and for all the Christmas gifts. Many of you also assured prayers for the sick members of my family. I am grateful to your kind hearts and concern for me. I too wish all of you a Merry Christmas with a joy that surpasses all worldly limitations. May God bless you for happy and safe New Year, a much better one than 2021.

~Fr Thomas

Sacraments 2022

Registrations for sacraments 2022 are now open! Please use the QR Code or link under the respective sacrament for further information and registration.

Reconciliation



<https://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au/reconciliation/>

First Holy Communion



<https://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au/holy-communion/>

Confirmation



<https://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au/confirmation/>

If for any reason you do not have access to the above options or are having difficulty with the above process, please do not hesitate to contact our office via email.

Wishing each one of you a blessed Christmas and may Jesus be the reason for the season! Happy Holidays!

Sophia Brewty, Sacramental Coordinator | Email: sacraments@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au

COVID-19 Restrictions UPDATE

As per relaxation of the restrictions on 15 December, masks are no longer compulsory while inside a church, (though they are still strongly encouraged in settings where social distancing is not possible). There is no density limits. That means all are welcome to Church. Archbishop Anthony Fisher has now withdrawn exemption from Sunday Obligation and has urged all Catholics to attend Mass in person here after, unless are unable to do so. QR Codes and our established check-in procedures are to continue in our Church. Also please continue with the hygiene procedures like sanitising the hands. I wish all a safe and Happy Christmas!

Bible Study

When: 8 February to 27 September 2022 (Excluding Lent)

Time: 7-8PM on Tuesdays

Lent: Special Program During Lent 2022

Registration Fee: \$10

Online or face to face option.

E-book Handout at the end of the course.



To Register Scan the QR Code or Visit the Parish Website:

<http://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au>

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE TODAY



CROW

A Guide to Reading the Gospel with historical and Old Testament background

For any queries, email thomas.kurunthanam@sydneycatholic.org.

Rev Dr Barry Craig on the Christmas Mass Readings

An array of readings is offered for this feast, with a different set for each of the four Masses appointed to particular times—the vigil (the preceding evening), during the night, at dawn, and during the day. However, great latitude is permitted for pastoral needs to select from among them at any Mass. Since the vigil, unlike the anticipatory Mass on Saturday evenings, does not celebrate the feast but still looks forward to it is in fact the last preparatory liturgy, it is more appropriate in parishes not to use it in any evening Mass; the setting for during the night should be used instead. For this reason the vigil readings are not treated here.

Luke's nativity account is divided between the Masses during the night and at dawn: the birth and its annunciation to the shepherds is read in the night (2:1-14), then at dawn the shepherds' visit to the child (2:15-20). Each portion is accompanied by Isaiah (9:1-7 and 62:11-12) and the letter to Titus (2:11-14 and 3:4-7). The night's Isaiah passage is understood to refer to Christ since it fore-echoes the themes found in Luke's account of the annunciation to Mary read on the read Fourth Sunday in Advent in Year B. Luke's account echoes elements from Isaiah thus presents Jesus as the fulfilment of Isaiah's words: the shepherds are in darkness as they guard the flocks, then glory shines round them and they learn that a saviour is born for them. Here Luke's concern for those on the fringes of society already reveals itself. In fact, in line with his greater attention to women in Christ's ministry, Luke has already focused on Mary, unlike Matthew for whom Joseph takes a more prominent role in the infancy account. Throughout Luke, and so here in the story of the birth, the real humanity of Jesus is presented: he is born humble among the humble, and so he understands their needs and has great concern for those who are pushed around by the world and displaced within it.

At Mass during the day joyful thanksgiving continues again in Isaiah (52:7-10), lines of which are shared with the responsorial psalm. It is when we turn to the second reading (Heb 1:1-6) and the gospel (John 1:1-18) that we encounter the feast's main theme, the Incarnation. Since Christmas is the feast of the Incarnation, this gospel pericope has long occupied a privileged place in the Roman Rite. Recent research has identified links between John's Gospel and Targumim (ancient Jewish translations, paraphrases and expositions of the Scriptures mainly in Aramaic) that make it even clearer how definitively John claims Jesus to be divine; the Word is the unpronounceable *YHWH* who has ever been at work in the world creating and saving, and now visibly in it. This understanding is also portrayed in iconography, especially of Genesis scenes in which it is Christ depicted performing the acts of creation—mosaics in the cathedrals of Venice and Monreale being well-known examples. Jesus (in Hebrew meaning "God saves") is the world-shaping Word, the God of salvation history now come down from heaven, in flesh, to perform an even greater work.

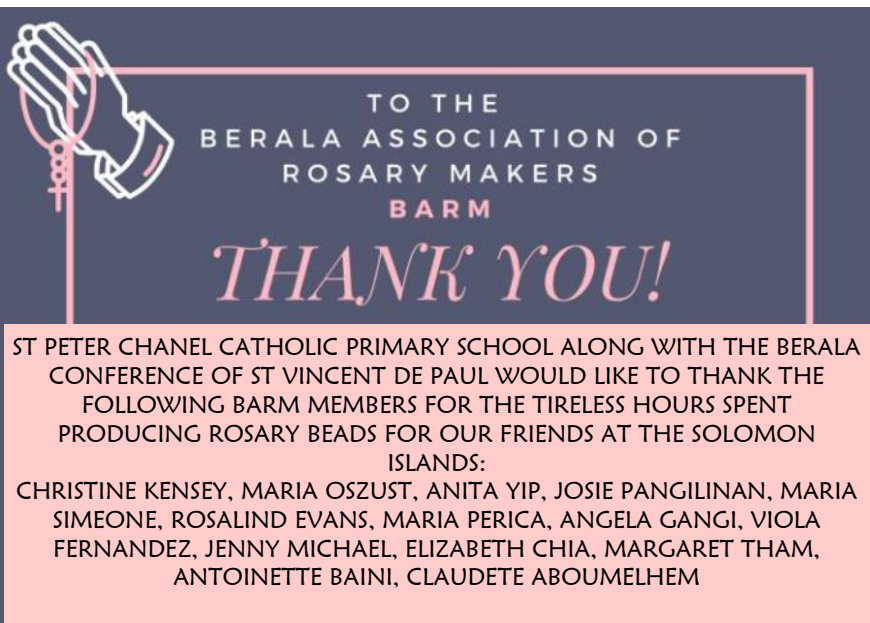
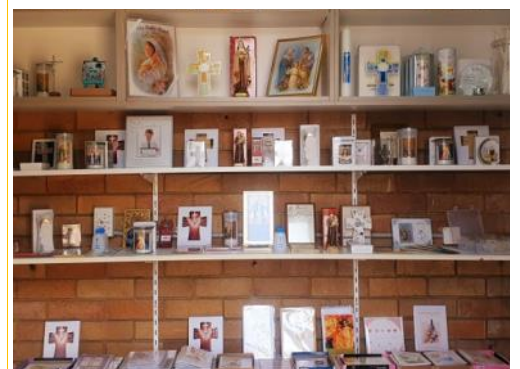
The depth of this mystery is developed in the prayers of the liturgy; there is a twofold movement, not only the *downward* in God being born, *in-fleshed* as a human being, but also the *upward* in human nature being drawn into the divine. This is uttered most clearly in the Collect of Christmas Day, in that part found also in the mingling of water and wine at the preparation of the gifts at every Mass, "we may (come to) share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity". The same idea is found in the prefaces, but especially in the third, where it says "when our frailty is assumed by your Word not only does human mortality receive [or more literally from the Latin, "cross over to"] unending honour but by this wondrous union we, too, are made eternal".

This feast poetically expresses our incarnational theology, the understanding that while creation is not God it is not separate from God; it exists in relation to God. In recognizing the Incarnation we learn that we cannot so easily divide the sacred from the profane, the divine from the secular, God from the world. The message of Christmas is that God is always near, that the world is a place for encountering God, that somehow through the very stuff of the world we interact with God. When such recognition is conscious it changes the way we deal with world; it ceases to be merely a place filled with resources to be used for our own ends. But this all points to the other side to this mystery; while the world is where we can experience the wonder and joy of God, it is also where God, in Christ, experiences our pain and suffering. In the human being God suffers and dies; in God the human lives.

Church Shop - New Stock

The Church Shop is open on Saturdays before and after the 5.00pm Vigil mass and on Sundays after the 8.00am & before the 10.00am masses. Drop by our Church shop and grab a gift for that special someone.

The shop is filled with a range of religious items perfect as presents for those celebrating the Sacraments of Holy Communion, Baptism, Reconciliation and Confirmation.



TO THE
BERALA ASSOCIATION OF
ROSARY MAKERS
BARM
THANK YOU!

ST PETER CHANEL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ALONG WITH THE BERALA CONFERENCE OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING BARM MEMBERS FOR THE TIRELESS HOURS SPENT PRODUCING ROSARY BEADS FOR OUR FRIENDS AT THE SOLOMON ISLANDS:

CHRISTINE KENSEY, MARIA OSZUST, ANITA YIP, JOSIE PANGILINAN, MARIA SIMEONE, ROSALIND EVANS, MARIA PERICA, ANGELA GANGI, VIOLA FERNANDEZ, JENNY MICHAEL, ELIZABETH CHIA, MARGARET THAM, ANTOINETTE BAINI, CLAUDETE ABOUMELHEM



Carols 2021





Thanks for making Carols 2021
such a wonderful night!

Singers: Tongan Choir,
Liva & Lavinia,
Sacred Heart Choir,
Salt enLight
BBQ: Charlie Scully & Team
Light & Sound: Keith Isaacs
Coordinator: Sophia Brewty

