

**CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEALESVILLE, INCORPORATING HEALESVILLE (ST BRIGID'S),
YARRA GLEN (ST ALOYSIUS) & MARYSVILLE (OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS)**



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THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (YEAR B) 13TH DECEMBER 2020

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm: Luke 1:46-50, 53-54

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

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. **R.**

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

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

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

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

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

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. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation: Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

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

FROM FR FRANCIS

Victorian Bill Set to Criminalise Christianity

The chaos of COVID-dysfunction (this strikes me as a more apt descriptor than 'COVID-normal') has conveniently presented the Victorian Government with the opportunity to attempt to push through legislation which will have far-reaching consequences for Christians and all people of faith. Most people are too busy with end of year Christmas preparations and/or implementing absurdly incoherent work-place protocols to have the energy to even notice the "Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020" which is set to effectively criminalise basic Christian beliefs around gender and sexuality found in the first chapter of Genesis and beyond. If passed this Bill will ensure that any Christian (or otherwise) who expresses his/her beliefs about the Biblical understanding of sexuality, could be prosecuted, fined and even sent to prison for up to ten years. The legislation is simultaneously so extreme and so ambiguously worded that one has the sense of having arrived in the Orwellian land of "Thought Crimes." This Bill quite literally prohibits the mere expression of certain personal convictions. For example the Bill specifically targets the 'crime' of praying with/for people with gender/sexuality struggles. It applies not only in public but even in the privacy of one's home. If passed the most basic libertarian notions of "freedom of speech" and "freedom of religious belief" will be effectively abolished and criminalised in Victoria. While this is the last thing any of us wants to be doing this time of the year, I would encourage you to read the Bill that is before the Victorian Parliament and consider writing to the Premier and/or your local Members of Parliament to address your concerns. Archbishop Peter Comensoli has boldly called upon all the clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne to draw the attention of the Catholic faithful to this pernicious and unjust legislation, and to make it clear that this is unacceptable to people of faith.

Below is the link to the Archbishop's letter:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/uploads/media/2020/statement-re-change-or-suppression-conversion-practices-prohibition-bill-2020/07Dec20-STATEMENT-Conversion-Therapy.pdf>

Monday 7 December 2020

Statement re Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020 Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne

Last weekend I wrote to the clergy of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne expressing concerns regarding a new government bill, tabled in Parliament:

<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/bills/591143bi1.pdf>
<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/bills/591143exi1.pdf>

The bill purports to protect vulnerable people from harm through what has been called 'conversion therapies'. In faith communities, 'conversion' has a meaning of positive change, upholding human freedom and dignity.

I encourage every action to protect people from harm. A bill that protected people would have my full support. The problem is this bill doesn't merely do what it claims. It targets prayer, and appears to impose silence on people of faith from sharing their beliefs in an open, honest and faithful way. The bill imposes on the right of parents and children to speak plainly and honestly with one another. It robs adults from seeking whatever guidance and pastoral support they seek concerning deeply personal matters. No government has an interest in what a person prays for, who they pray to, who they pray with, or what conversations happen between members of a family. Despite affecting religious communities in such a direct way, faith groups were afforded little consultation and were not shown a draft of this bill before its publication.

It is not clear that parents in Victoria have been told clearly that this bill affects what they can say and how they say it with their own children. This looks like a dramatic over-reach of the state into family life, private matters, pastoral contexts of conversion, prayer and spiritual accompaniment.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne has a range of questions for which we seek resolution – some of those questions are attached to this statement. The ultimate outcome of this bill may not actually be to protect anyone who is vulnerable, but to silence people of faith from expressing a view.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

Online Advent Seminar

Parousia Media are hosting this great online series of talks for Advent. They run daily and are FREE! Since we've missed the opportunity for a parish based program this is great alternative that you can watch at your convenience.

Welcome to the Advent Pilgrimage – Bill Synder and Charbel Raish

<https://watch.parousiamedia.com/programs/bill-and-charbel-welcome-videomov-10ea29?autoplay=true&categoryId=65394>

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION, 2020

The following children will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation this Sunday 13th December. Please keep them and their families in your prayers. Our congratulations to:

Oliver, Blake, Tadhg, Mia, Gideon, Harrison, Samuel, Ringo and Tyler

*May you receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit with joy.
and come to an awareness of God's active presence in your lives
this week, and in the years to come*

WEEKLY MASS TIMES

St Brigid's Healesville: Sunday 8.30 am and Thursday 9.15 am

(No Thursday morning Mass this week. Mass will be at Our Lady of the Snows, Marysville)

St Aloysius Yarra Glen: No Masses until further notice

(St Aloysius church is currently undergoing maintenance and is not open for Masses or Rosary gatherings until further notice. Essential works have commenced.)

Our Lady of the Snows, Marysville: This Thursday 17th December at 10.30am

**St Patrick's Lilydale: Saturday Vigil: 6.00 pm and Sunday 10.30 am,
Tuesday to Friday 9.15 am, Saturday (Latin) 9.00 am**

KEEPING US CONNECTED

Check out the Living Faith page on St Brigid's website. This page is kept up to date with the latest news and provides us with resources to assist our prayer life and enhance our reflection time with the Lord.

WEEKLY MASSES ARE STILL AVAILABLE ON OUR ST BRIGID'S YOU TUBE CHANNEL

A reminder that Fr Francis' Sunday Masses are recorded each weekend and are available on St Brigid's You Tube Channel each Sunday morning. The link is accessible through St Brigid's Healesville's website, by searching St Brigid's Healesville on You Tube, or using the link: <https://bit.ly/StBsHville> **A big, big thank you to Rod, who gives up much time and energy in making this happen for us each week.**

This week's Mass comes from St Patrick's in Lilydale



TRYBOOKING FOR MASS BOOKINGS

The numbers allowed to attend Masses are determined by the size of each church. Under current restrictions we can have **80** people attend each Mass at St Brigid's.

**Social distancing rules apply, please sit 1.5m away from others.
Families from the same home may of course sit together.**

Bookings are essential to ensure our compliance with regulations. Please book online through TryBooking.

If you don't have access to a computer, or need assistance with TryBooking, please call Debbie on 0448 664 731.

THIS WEEK'S MASS TIMES AND LINKS AT ST BRIGID'S

The link for Sunday 20th Dec is <https://www.trybooking.com/BNOOV>

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve Children's Nativity Play: 6.30 pm followed by **Christmas Eve Family Mass: 7.00 pm.** On the lawns between the hall and the church. Byo picnic rug and sunscreen.

Christmas Morning Mass, Friday 25th Dec: 8.30 am in the church

Midnight Mass will be celebrated at **St Patrick's Church in Lilydale: 12 am.**

New Year's Day Mass at St Brigid's: 12.00 pm (noon)

St Patrick's Lilydale: Christmas Eve Family Mass 5 pm; Christmas Morning 10.30 am. For bookings see St Patrick's Parish newsletter, available on the website. Please note that there will be no Latin Mass on Saturday 26th Dec. New Year's Day Mass: 9.15 am

The links for Christmas Mass bookings will be uploaded to the website and emailed out to those who receive the bulletin by email shortly.

CHILDREN'S NATIVITY PLAY

If your child would like to have a role in our Nativity Play this year, please contact Debbie or leave a message at the school office. The play is always a highlight of our Christmas celebrations.



THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Available on request. The Sacrament is also available at St Patrick's Lilydale on Saturday mornings at 10 am.

CARE GROUP CHRISTMAS HAMPERS – THANK YOU!!

Our Care Group has been very busy this week making up wonderful hampers for special friends. Many thanks go to those who have donated festive cheer, and to Maree and the team who have worked so hard to make Christmas special for more than 50 delighted recipients. For further information, please call Maree on 0417 087 199. .

COLUMBAN CALENDARS.

Columban Calendars for 2021 are available in the church. Cost: \$10.00. Please place your money in an envelope clearly marked with 'Columban Calendar' in the collection basket when you come to Mass, or contact Debbie.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM DEBBIE

A letter to our Grade 6 children, who receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and graduate this week

Dear Grade 6s. Congratulations to you and to your families as you wave goodbye to us and head off to conquer new horizons next year! No doubt Mum and Dad will be buying you new shoes, all those new exercise books, and a whole new range of dinky pens and pencils to equip you for your new adventures. They will most likely plan to set aside the money to buy new shoes for you towards the end of summer, allowing your feet to grow over the holidays before choosing just the right sized school shoes to take you through at least most of next year. I know the ropes! Mums and Dads are constantly looking ahead, planning the best way to provide for you and to keep you safe. So as you graduate from primary school, some of you will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, the greatest gift you will receive this Christmas, and the completion of the journey your parents chose for you at your Baptism. You will be fully confirmed Catholics, ready to face the world. You will grow out of your year 7 school shoes. The exercise books will be filled and binned, or kept in a box under the bed so that you can bin them yourself when you are 37. And the pencils and pens will slowly disappear. But the Gifts of the Holy Spirit will remain with you forever.

We light the pink Advent candle this week, the third candle. It is also the second last candle. In the sombreness of the purple candles of preparation, there is a spark of joy as the pink candle is lit. Our waiting is nearly complete. The readings at Mass this weekend all speak about joy, the joy of history holding its breath in preparation for the celebration of the birth of our saviour. We look backwards in time to remember the birth of Jesus, but to the people of his time, life had gone on as usual. The angels' light had faded, Jesus was taken to Egypt, the animals ate the hay that he lay on. Yet the world was changed forever in the moment of Jesus' birth, and no doubt there was a bunch of shepherds who told everyone they knew of their joy at seeing our saviour, Jesus, lying in the manger. The greatest of prophets, John the Baptist, cried out in his eagerness to let others know of what had happened in Bethlehem 30 years earlier. Those with hearts open to God heard his voice. Eventually Peter, his friend, acknowledged to Jesus himself the words "you are the Christ, the one who was to come in to the world".

As you, our Grade 6s, go off into the world on your new adventures, we ask God to help each of you to do so as Jesus' witnesses. For those receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, you are sent out to take the joy of the Gospels to others. Like the shepherds who told those they met of the miracle of Jesus' presence among us, or John the Baptist, who called others to change their lives, or Peter who understood that Jesus, his mate, was actually the Christ, the saviour of the world, you will

become his herald. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit bring us that wisdom, understanding, knowledge, right judgement, that sense of reverence, awe and wonder in God's presence in our world, that allows us to be his witnesses, and we don't have to use words to do so. The way we live says it all. The Holy Spirit gifts us with the courage we need to reveal Jesus to our world through our own lives, as temples of the Holy Spirit. A true Christmas miracle for every day of the year! *Congratulations to you all!*

ANNUAL COLLECTION FOR MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION

This year you can donate to the Melbourne Overseas Mission Collection online through their website at: MOM annual appeal donation link: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMOM>

COLLECTION TOTALS WEEK ENDING 29TH NOV 2020

Healesville:	Thanksgiving: \$754.30	Yarra Glen:	Thanksgiving: \$35.00
	Presbytery: \$136.00		Presbytery: \$17.50

PARISH PRAYER LIST

WE PRAY FOR ALL WHO HAVE DIED

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK

Babies Emmett, Noah Glen Christie, Tedi and Santi; Roman, Blake Smith, Trish Leahy, John Snell, Abby Sharp, Peter Munro, Megan, Bernie Jansen, Andrew Sharp, John, Glenn, Lyn Francis, Dorothy Barber, Fiona, Annie Preuss, Michelle Ryan, Damian, John, Alison, Heather, Julie Bates, Garry Dettman, Bradley Jordan, Jeanette Henkel, Richard Galbraith, Debbie Huby, Geoff Lucas, Sandra Donkin, Dorothy Fraser, Glen, Fred Bullas, Fred Coullas, Evie Gleeson, Indy Dawes, Rade Krstic, Megan Williams, Michael Wood, Bill Howie, Jennie, Michael, Margo & Stephen Youngberry, Marie Hammond, John Mulholland, Rhiannon Days, Val Savitt, Ron Garland, Jaz Nueber, James Cooney, Robert, Mary & Gerard Bariola, Tilly Van der Zee, Lydia, Joyce Slattery, Lawrie Field, Annie, Bob Ireland, Val & Michael Christie, Ted & Peter Bowling, Natasha, Mia, James, Richard Adams, Mitchell & Wynn Wilson, Carina Warton, Anne Bateman, Veronica Ireland, Lauren, Brooke, Anthony, Michelle, Judy.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE IN DECEMBER

Josephine Fassler (06.12.95), Lucy Mahedy (09.12.96), Mark Broomhead (11.12.13), Ilona Huebel (12.12.74), Doris Dennehy (12.12.95), Danny O'Meara (12.12.10), Nora Podesta (14.12.06), Paul Dunlop (14.12.06), Neil Lindorff (19.12.08), Noel Dudgeon (20.12.09), Pietro Bariola (27.12.88), Bishop Joe Grech (28.12.10), Dolly (Florence) Reeves, Dennis Eldred, Dawn Flannaghan, Paul Hansen, Hans Rietbergen, John Burger, Maria Kermac (6.12.18), Silvano Kermac, Tony Grieve (4.12.19), Fr Bernie Hammond

