

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



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SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
(YEAR B) 24TH & 25TH DECEMBER 2020



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD
Vigil Mass, Christmas Eve

First Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 88:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

'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.**

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.**

'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.**

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading: Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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".'

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed: the Saviour of the world will be our king. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

A genealogy of Jesus Christ son of David, son of Abraham:

Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers,
Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah,
Tamar being their mother,
Perez was the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,
Ram was the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,
Salmon was the father of Boaz, Rahab being his mother,

Boaz was the father of Obed, Ruth being his mother,

Obed was the father of Jesse;
and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,
Solomon was the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam was the father of Abijah,
Abijah was the father of Asa,
Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram,
Joram was the father of Azariah,
Azariah was the father of Jotham,
Jotham was the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,
and Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers.

Then the deportation to Babylon took place.

After the deportation to Babylon:
Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud,
Abiud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
Azor was the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Achim,
Achim the father of Eliud,
Eliud was the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob;
and Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus who is called Christ.

The sum of generations is therefore: fourteen from Abraham to David; fourteen from David to the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen from the Babylonian deportation to Christ.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Christmas Morning

First Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 97:1-6

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

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

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.**

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.**

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. **R.**

Second Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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: John 1:1-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

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 this 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM FR FRANCIS

Christmas Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

Some two thousand years ago a child was born
in a stable in Bethlehem, an event that would
change the course of human history like no
other. The cruel, corrupt and sensual world of
paganism was one where 'might makes right'.
The powerful asserted themselves at the
expense of the weak. Within this world life was
very cheap. Slavery and infanticide were
accepted as facts of life. Spectators watched
gladiators fight to the death for their
entertainment. Emperors could save or take
human lives at the movement of a thumb. In this
world one's worth as a human being was
determined by one's social status.

With the coming of the Christ-child God
showed the true worth of the human person,
even in the weakness of a newborn child. Lowly
shepherds wept with joy, kings fell prostrate,
angels chorused in exaltation before a babe
wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. This
sentiment is beautifully captured in the hymn
'O Holy Night'.

*Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;*

Jesus Christ came into the world for one
purpose: to redeem us. In his work of
redemption wrought through his own
degradation, Jesus Christ restored and unveiled
the true dignity of man that he had been disfigured
and buried through the filth of sin and the agony
of his fallen condition. As St Irenaeus (and
indeed many the Fathers of the early Church)
put it: "God became man, that we might
become 'gods'". With the incarnation Christ
enters the world in poverty and weakness in
order to overthrow the existing order (one that

all too often tramples the powerless underfoot) and show us how precious every human being is in the sight of God. The worth of every human life is intrinsic and therefore not conditional upon our wealth, social status, personal accomplishments or whether society considers us 'valuable'. From the unborn child in the womb, to the elderly in palliative care, to the disabled and cognitively impaired, every human being is of infinite value in the sight of God, because we each bear the stamp of our Divine Creator. Yet, tragically so many in the world today seem to have lost sight of their true worth, and wonder, 'does God really care about me?'

At a time when God can seem very distant, in a nihilistic culture that denies that there is any meaning or purpose to life beyond the pleasures of this world, our celebration of the birth of Jesus is an important reminder of the nearness of our God who is *Emmanuel*, 'God with Us'. Yes, God *is* with us through all the trials of life, and in spite of them we retain our inalienable human dignity, just as Christ's dignity was unblemished by the mess of his humble origins. The Christ-child of Bethlehem reminds us that God has a glorious plan for each of us, amid the mess of life. Draw near to the manger and behold the humility of our God. Put away all fear and receive the greatest gift God ever gave us – His own Son!

A final word of thanks to the all the many parishioners who have made me feel so welcome since my arrival in April. This is also an opportune moment to thank all those who have been working so busy behind the scenes: sacristans, musicians, servers, florists, and particularly the office staff Sharon Jacob and Debbie Edwards, who have shouldered the burden of over-seeing the booking process for all the Masses. Finally, I've been very touched by the many expressions of kindness and generosity shown to me by so many parishioners these past weeks – my heart-felt thanks!
Wishing you all the joy, peace and grace of this Holy Season to you and your families, and blessings for the new year.

Yours in Christ,
Fr Francis Denton

[MASS TIMES AND LINKS THIS WEEK](#)

Link for 27th Dec (Sunday Mass) 8.30 am:
<https://www.trybooking.com/BNRJD>

Mass: Thursday 31st Dec at 9.15 am

Link for New Year's Day Mass,
Friday 1st Jan 12 pm:
<https://www.trybooking.com/BNRAY>

Link for 3rd Jan (Sunday Mass) 8.30 am:
<https://www.trybooking.com/BNTQA>

[SPECIAL CHRISTMAS COLLECTION](#)

This year's special Christmas collection will stay in our Parish to help cover the cost of well-overdue maintenance and refurbishment of the Parish house. As Fr Francis has reported, most of the cost of the works is covered by insurance, but we still need to find some funds ourselves to take advantage of this golden opportunity to undertake renovations we could not afford under normal circumstances. Thank you, your generosity is much appreciated.

[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 WHO HAVE DIED AND 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