



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

15 High Street
Healesville, 3777

<http://www.stbrigidshalesville.cam.org.au>

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Francis Denton
Postal Address: PO Box 547, Lilydale, 3140

Parish Office: 03 9739 5977
Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 9am to 2pm
Email Address: Healesville@cam.org.au



**25th December 2022
THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
(Year A)**

Mass & Sacrament Times for this week:

Saturday 24th December

10:00-11:00am – Confessions at St Patrick's, Lilydale
5:00pm **Christmas Vigil Mass** at St Brigid's, Healesville
7:30pm **Christmas Vigil Mass** at St Patrick's, Lilydale
11:00pm – Carols Service *followed by Midnight Mass (12:00am)* at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Sunday 25th December – The Nativity of the Lord

12:00am **Christmas Midnight Mass** at St Patrick's, Lilydale
8:30am **Christmas Day Mass** at St Brigid's, Healesville
10:30am **Christmas Day Mass** at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Monday 26th November – No Mass

Tuesday 27th November – Feast of Saint John
7:00pm Mass at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Wednesday 28th November – Feast of the Holy Innocents
8:00-9:00am – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Lilydale
(8:30-9:00am – Confession available)
9:15am Mass at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Thursday 29th December – 5th day in the Octave of Christmas
8:00-9:00am – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament,
Healesville
(8:30-9:00am – Confession available)
9:15am Mass at St Brigid's, Healesville

Friday 30th December – Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary & Joseph
8:00-9:00am – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Lilydale
(8:30-9:00am – Confession available)
9:15am Mass at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Saturday 31st December
10:00-11:00am – Confessions at St Patrick's, Lilydale
6:00pm Vigil Mass at St Patrick's, Lilydale

Sunday 1st January – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of
God
8:30am Mass at St Brigid's, Healesville
10:30am Mass at St Patrick's, Lilydale

FATHER FRANCIS WILL BE AWAY December 26th, and
will return Tuesday December 27th for 7pm Mass at St Patrick's
(please note there is no 9:15am Mass on this day).
Father will also be away from Monday 2nd January to Friday 6th.
There will be no weekday Masses or sacraments during this
week.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Please note, the Parish Office will be closed from December
24th to January 2nd. Normal office hours will resume Tuesday 3rd
of January, 2023. Merry Christmas everyone, and see you in the
New Year!

Reading Roster for Sunday 8:30am Mass:

1 st January 2023	-	Anne Lehmann
8 th January	-	Veronica Ireland
15 th January	-	Josh Tilley
22 nd January	-	Andrea/Molly Houlihan
29 th January	-	Maree Jeffcott

Assistance Needed: A parishioner, who lives in Woori Yallock,
is in need of a lift to the 8:30am Mass on Sundays. If you can
assist, please contact the Parish Office (9739 5977)

As from the *1st Sunday of Advent, 27 November 2022, the
**general dispensation from our Sunday and Holy Day Mass
obligations has been lifted.*** As always, the ordinary individual
exemptions will remain in place (e.g. for reasons of ill health,
family care of the vulnerable, etc.).
If you would like to read **Archbishop Comensoli's** full pastoral
letter, please visit <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/welcome-home-a-pastoral-letter-from-archbishop-comensoli>

St Brigid's Parish Hall for Hire

A reminder that the St Brigid's Hall is available for hire: for
community groups and/or private functions.
It's a great, versatile space with access to industrial kitchen.
Very reasonable rates: \$30 per hour or \$250 per day. Make your
enquiries via the Parish office.

For details relating to **Baptisms, Marriages & Anointing of
the Sick**, please contact the parish office.



Dear Parishioners,

The Lord Jesus has come into the world to bestow upon us grace and life-everlasting. At each Christmas we celebrate not only Jesus' human birth, but the birth of our salvation. Indeed, we celebrate the mystery of the incarnation at every Mass. As the priest prepares the chalice adding a few drops of water to the wine he says this prayer: *'by the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.'* This is a great summary of the meaning of Christmas. God descends to us, so as to elevate us to Himself, making us, by His grace, sharers in His own divinity. How can we not rejoice at so great a gift? There is literally nothing greater that God could possibly have bestowed upon us. At every Christmas the Church proclaims with one voice: Jesus Christ our Lord is indeed *Emmanuel*: God with us! May we, for our part, be one with Him, in heart, mind and soul.

Let me take the opportunity to convey my heart-felt gratitude to all the many parishioners who contribute to the life of the parish in so many ways: Sacristans, servers, choir, money collectors and counters, groundsman, church cleaners, care-group, prayer groups, readers, various committee members, and the list goes on! Without your support the parish could not survive, much less flourish as it does through the generosity of your time, talents, and financial support. It's been great to see the parish recovering from the COVID era and being built up. With God's abundant blessings may it continue to go from strength to strength in the coming year.

Wishing you and your families a blessed and peaceful Christmas!

Yours in Christ,

Fr Francis Denton

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Recently Deceased: Father Joseph Hynan

Sick: Mia, Babies Emmett, Noah Glen Christie, Tedi and Santi; Roman, Blake Smith, John Snell, Peter Munro, Megan, Bernie Jansen, John, Glenn, Lyn Francis, Dorothy Barber, Fiona, Annie Preuss, Damian, John, Alison, Heather, Julie Bates, Garry Dettman, Bradley Jordan, Jeanette Henkel, Richard Galbraith, Debbie Huby, Geoff Lucas, Glen, Fred Coullas, Evie Gleeson, Indy Dawes, Rade Krstic, Megan Williams, Michael Wood, Michael, Margo & Stephen Youngberry, Marie Hammond, John Mulholland, Rhiannon Days, Val Savitt, Ron Garland, Jaz Nueber, James Cooney, Robert, Mary & Gerard Bariola, Lydia, Joyce Slattery, Annie, Michael Christie, Ted & Peter Bowling, James, Mitchell Wilson, Veronica Ireland, Lauren, Brooke, Anthony, Laura Baosde Pinto, Michelle, Judy, Annette Fromholtz, John Wray, Lynn Doensen, Elsa Gianforte, Fiona M, Louise Jansen, Carol Biddiscombe

Those Whose Anniversaries Occur In December:

Josephine Fassler, Lucy Mahedy, Mark Broomhead, Ilona Huebel, Doris Dennehy, Danny O'Meara, Nora Podesta, Paul Dunlop, Neil Lindorff, Noel Dudgeon, Pietro Bariola, Bishop Joe Grech, Dolly (Florence) Reeves, Dennis Eldred, Dawn Flannaghan, Paul Hansen, Hans Rietbergen, John Burger, Maria Kermac, Silvano Kermac, Tony Grieve, Wynn Wislon, Anne Bateman.

WEEKLY THANKSGIVING

4th December:

St. Brigid's:
 Presbytery \$ 479.15
 Thanksgiving Collection \$ 468.45

11th December:

St. Brigid's:
 Presbytery \$ 292.85
 Thanksgiving Collection \$ 574.05

15th December:

Our Lady of the Snows:
 Thanksgiving Collection \$ 110.00

18th December:

St. Brigid's:
 Presbytery \$ 234.20
 Thanksgiving Collection \$ 560.85
St. Aloysius':
 Presbytery \$ 146.00
 Thanksgiving Collection \$ 160.00

1st Collection is for Presbytery – *Orange envelope* – Fr Francis, plus priests & retired priests of the Archdiocese living expenses.
2nd Collection is Thanksgiving – *Green envelope* – Running expenses of the Church

If you would like to make a donation:

St Patrick's Presbytery Account
 BSB: 083-347 Account: 63931 5513

St Brigid's Church Account
 BSB: 083-347 Account: 65080 2080
 Ref: Surname or Thanksgiving Number



Made for More: Visions of the Promised Land creatively blends **live music, media and sacred art** for an **evening of beauty and reflection on the meaning of life, love and human destiny**. Join Christopher West and team as they offer a vision of the Gospel through the lens of St John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*.

Choose from:

Tuesday 24 January 2023, St Francis of Assisi Parish Hall, 290 Childs Rd, Mill Park or,

Wednesday 25 January 2023, St Mary's Community Centre, 26 New Street, Dandenong

Schedule:

6pm - food for purchase, 7pm start, 9.30pm finish

Open to all. *All children under 18 years must be supervised by an adult.*

Tickets: \$25 general, \$10 concession/student, free for children 10 and under.

Register: www.trybooking.com/CETXQ

Summer School of Evangelisation

Are you a young adult aged 18-35 years old?

Join other Catholic young adults and become ***Alive Again*** at Summer School of Evangelisation Melbourne, a week-long retreat led by prayer, fellowship, praise & worship, catechesis and sacraments.

There's no better way to start the year than on a retreat spent with the Lord.

Jan 15-22, 2023. Early bird rates now available. Register at ssemelbourne.org.au or follow us on Facebook & Instagram @ssemelbourne for more info and updates.

Veterans of the armed services who are former members of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are entitled to financial benefits under a patriotic fund established by the YCW in 1949. The fund includes coverage of former YCW members who were in the armed services in the 1960s and early 1970s. If you are, or know of, a Veteran who was involved in the YCW, or you know of a Veteran who may have been involved in the YCW, please contact Brian Lawrence at brianlawrence@optusnet.com.au

Lifeboat Geelong Foundation is seeking any unused vehicles that can be donated. Please contact Fr Kevin Dillon (0421 777 360, or frkdillon@outlook.com.au) or Adam Kaali (0411 486 605, or adam-kaali@hotmail.com).

Catholic Influencer's Podcast – hosted by Fr Rob Galea, Alyssa Agius & Justine Cumbo, who study the weekly readings and break them down into lay man's terms, showing you how they are relevant to our life today. Available weekly, on all podcast platforms.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

The Parish of Ivanhoe has a couple of vacancies for its Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 11th – 28th April 2023. If you are interested please visit our Parish Website www.melbcatholic.org/ivanhoe and click on the News Page or phone Fr. Bill Edebohls 0427 879 733.



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN AUSTRALIA

A message from Aid to the Church in Need Australia: ACN is the Pontifical Foundation dedicated to supporting the suffering and persecuted Church.

Aid to the Church in Need is asking for support to aid our brothers and sisters who are suffering so deeply in Syria and Lebanon through our Christmas appeal *Sharing Hope with Christians in Syria and Lebanon this Christmas*. The support we are pledging to them is very much emergency relief to sustain the Christian population in hope. The projects we are supporting are projects such as medical aid, community help and gifts for children in Lebanon, as well as support for lay faithful and accommodation for families in Syria.

It is only with your help that ACN can support Christians in Lebanon and Syria this Christmas!

To watch videos and read stories of the projects we are supporting visit www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022



Palms Australia
Reach Beyond

You've got a lot to give beyond Christmas gifts.

In January you can prepare for mission at home or abroad.

Palms Australia has trained Australians to live and work within cultures and communities overseas since 1961. Now four days of that training will be available for parishioners interested to assist harness the diverse gifts of our community and make it stronger.

At Home: Palms' Neighbours Without Borders program (January 7 – 11) will **“focus on building communities that are welcoming to all, with particular attention to those on the margins of society and the church”** as urged by the recent Plenary Council.

Overseas: Completing a further four days (January 12 – 15) will prepare you to meet one of the many requests Palms has from communities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific who need educators; health professionals; administrators and others to assist build on the strengths of their people who otherwise have little opportunity for training.

Enquire about Palms Orientation for mission via www.palms.org.au or call 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.

Safeguarding children news for all enquiries, contact Safeguardinghealesville@cam.org.au



"THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS" (Part One)



We're all familiar with the popular Christmas carol, 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' yet how many Christians celebrate all twelve days of Christmas? In the retail world it seems that by boxing day all the Christmas decorations have miraculously vanished overnight, and they're getting ready for the next event in the retail calendar: Valentine's Day.

Properly speaking, Christmas is celebrated with an octave (eight days) taking us to the 1st January (the Solemnity of the Mother of God). The next five days take us up until the feast of the Epiphany (ie. when the magi come to Bethlehem to adore the Christ child) which is celebrated on the 6th January. The revelation of the Jewish Messiah (Christ) to the gentile world (as represented by the Magi) is obviously a key part of the Christmas story. It reminds us that Jesus is not merely the Saviour of the Jews, He is the Saviour of the world. The Epiphany used to be celebrated with an octave in its own right, and had its own season – Epiphany-tide that went up until the feast of the Presentation on 2nd February. Because the Epiphany stands on its own as a Solemnity, the twelve days of Christmas are from 25th December to 5th January. In Australia the feast of the Epiphany has been transferred to the nearest Sunday which has the unfortunate effect of doing a hatchet job on the original twelve days of Christmas. Even so, it's good to remember that Christmas is not merely a single day – it is celebrated with a season: Christmastide.

Well, that's half the mystery explained. But what about the strange menagerie of gifts mentioned in the carol? What do they mean? Some context helps to unravel the riddle. In 1558 The English parliament under Elizabeth I passed the Act of Supremacy and the following year the Act of Uniformity (1559) which has the combined effect of making it treason to be a Catholic in England. Under Elizabeth it was legally impossible to practise the Catholic faith either in public or private. This automatically pushed the Church underground (in a situation similar to the Church in China). Up until the Catholic emancipation Act of 1829 English Catholics were, at best, second class citizens, although the enforcement of the law did begin to relax by the end of the 17th century. Until then Catholics could be arrested, fined or imprisoned for even owning Catholic books or devotional items, such as rosaries or pictures. Needless to say, this made teaching the Catholic faith very difficult, and so the English Catholics got creative. They invented a carol that sounded like a nonsense poem that they could teach to their children without fear of suspicion, since it was entirely allegorical. The days of Christmas was, in effect, a miniature catechism for the underground Church, enumerating the key tenets of the faith.

Each of the gifts of the 12 days represents a different aspect of the 'gift' of Christian faith.

The Song begins: "On the first day of Christmas by true love gave to me: a partridge in a pear tree." Here the 'True Love' is God. In the passion account of John's Gospel, John refers to himself in code as "the one whom Jesus loved." In doing so every disciple of Jesus who reads the gospel can place himself in the scene, as the 'beloved' of Jesus. This romantic language in which the faithful are described as being in an intimate relation of love with God, is prominent in the Song of Songs: "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine!" (Sg 6:3). The God who *is* Love (see 1Jn 4:9) reveals His love for us by sending His Son into the World. As St Paul writes in his letter to the Romans: "But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). Jesus Christ is represented symbolically as the partridge, because a partridge is known to mimic being critically wounded by dragging its wing along the ground, as a decoy to attract predators away from its chicks. Christ's apparent defeat on the Cross was the ingenious ploy by which the Devil was defeated, and the children of Christ were thereby saved. The pear tree is an allusion to the tree from which Adam and Eve ate and thereby fell into sin: and simultaneously it represents the cross, as the new tree of life, by which sin was conquered 'on a tree'.

The song continues: "On the second day of Christmas my True Love gave to me: two turtle doves..." The two turtle doves represent the two covenants (ie. the Old Testament and the New Testament). The first covenant God made was with Noah and his family, as heralded by the return of the dove bringing a stem of olive. The covenants of the Old Testament culminate in the covenant that God makes with Moses (see Exodus). At the Last Supper Jesus establishes a new and eternal Covenant with His Church. This time He sends the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost. The dove which is a symbol of peace, is a fitting symbol of the two covenants by which God in successive stages, sought to reconcile the world to himself.

"On the third day of Christmas my True Love gave to me: three French hens..." The three French hens represent the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (love) which are poured into the soul at baptism. They are called 'theological virtues' to distinguish them from the natural virtues (particularly, the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude). The theological virtues are bestowed upon us as a free gift of God, whereas the natural virtues are acquired by our own effort. So long as we remain in a state of grace, the Catholic faith teaches us that we retain these gifts of the faith, hope and charity which we need to attain to eternal life. St Paul writes in 1Corinthians "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face... So these three endure, faith, hope, love; but the greatest of these is love. (1Cor 13:12-13). Incidentally I have a Mauritian priest friend who kept three hens. He named them Faith, Hope and Charity!

"On the fourth day of Christmas my True Love gave to me: four calling birds..." The four calling birds represent the four evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Their gospels are the divinely inspired accounts of the life of Jesus Christ by which we learn of our Salvation. The word 'Gospel' (in Greek, *evangelion*) means Good News. Just as the beautiful sound of bird-song fills the heart with joy, so too the voice of the Gospel being proclaimed to the whole world fills the world with joy.

"On the fifth day of Christmas my True Love gave to me: five golden rings..." The five golden rings are the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Mt 5:17-18). The value of the entirety of Old Testament as part of Revelation has always been affirmed by the Church. Even so the five Books of the Pentateuch hold a preeminent place in the Old Testament (just as the four Gospels do in the New Testament) because they contain the 'precious gold', that is, the most essential teachings concerning salvation history and the summary of the moral law, under the old dispensation.

To be continued next week...