



St Michael & John's Parish

Dimboola – Horsham – Murtoa – Natimuk - Rupanyup - Nhill



BULLETIN

3rd Sunday of Advent - 17th December 2017



JESSE TREE

The Jesse Tree is decorated with Advent symbols.

You are invited to place gifts under the tree for children

(please write age & gender),

and non-perishable food. St V de Paul will distribute these to needy families at Christmas. *Thank you.*

PARISH CONTACTS

Parish Priest: Fr. Peter Hudson

Parish Secretary: Anita Masiero

10 Roberts Avenue, Horsham 3400

PO Box 212, Horsham Vic 3402

Phone: 5382 1155. Fax: 5382 3016

horsham@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Diocesan Website:

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

SCHOOLS

Ss Michael & John Primary

Principal: Andrea Cox

Phone: 5382 3000

St Brigid's College

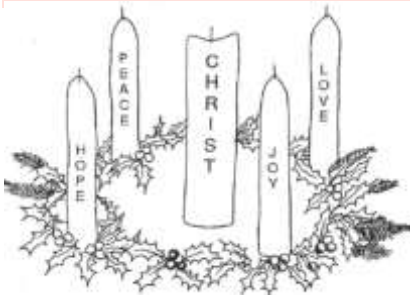
Principal: Peter Gutteridge

Phone: 5382 3545

Our Lady Help of Christians

Acting Principal: Cathy Grace

Phone: 5385 2526



Christmas Mass Times 2017

Horsham Sunday Dec 24th:

7pm: Children's Christmas Story

Carols 9.45pm. Mass 10.15pm.

Monday Dec 25: Horsham Mass 9am

Sunday December 24th:

Christmas Mass Murtoa 5pm.

Christmas Mass Dimboola 7pm.

Christmas Mass Nhill 5pm

Advent Reconciliation Service

This Tuesday December 19th at

7pm in SMJ Church. Scripture, Prayer, Examination of Conscience, Hymns, and Individual Absolution.

There will be these Masses on Saturday 23rd & Sunday 24th

Saturday Dec 23: Horsham 6.30pm

Sunday Dec 24: Horsham 10.30am

Sunday Dec 24: Natimuk 8.30am

Sunday Dec 24: Murtoa 10.30am

You can receive Holy Communion at these Masses and again at the Christmas Masses on Sunday 24th

***Subject to alteration depending on supply priests**

PRAYER FOR SICK and CARERS

Compassionate and ever-loving God, You are the source and creator of all healing power. We entrust our sick brothers and sisters to your loving care.

We pray your blessings upon all in their own homes, in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice care, palliative care.

May You be their source of comfort when they experience pain, their source of hope in moments of despair, sorrow, woundedness, their inspiration and solace when they are unable to lift their hearts, minds and voices to You in prayer. Bless them all with the courage and faith to place their trust in your healing touch and your healing love.

Bless **caregivers**, as channels of your love, they are your very hands on earth.

Give them gentleness as they help the sick, to respect their dignity and value to You.

Give them patience as they manage their time, to best serve those who are needful of their care. Give them courage to continue to serve when weakened by constant demands and when they need your enduring help. Give them love and understanding to be a caring companion, as they walk the path of pain and sadness with the sick.

Bless the **ministry** of those who take Holy Communion to the sick, elderly, and those in Homes and in Hospital.

MINISTERS at CHRISTMAS MASSES

There is a sheet in the Foyer, please put your name beside any ministries you can help us with in our SMJ Church Christmas Masses.

Thank you

Bishop's Christmas letter is

now available in the foyer. Grab one today

We welcome and thank Fr Tom Brophy for his assistance during Fr Peter's absence. Fr Tom will be here till Tuesday. Fr John will be back as of Wednesday

WEEKDAY MASSES:

Monday 18th Dec	10.30am 6.30pm	Bryce Craig's Funeral OLHC School Mass, Murtoa
Tuesday 19th Dec	2.00pm	John Coleman's Funeral
Wednesday 20th Dec	12 noon	SMJ School Graduation Mass
Thursday 21st Dec	9.30am	
Friday 22nd Dec	9.30am	
Saturday 23rd Dec	10am	

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God, my creator, breathe on me, renew me, refresh me, extend my abilities, comfort me in adjusting to changes in health, mobility and activity. Body of Jesus Christ flow through every fibre of my being. Keep me well, and hope filled, always. Holy Spirit use me in my situation, for the good of others. Amen



Please Remember in Your Prayers

RECENT DEATHS: Barry Bryne (cousin of John)-Melb
John Coleman—husband of Wally

ANNIVERSARIES: Preston Hyman, Eugene Gillard

SICK: Corey Panozzo, Ruby Spasic, Kobe Davidson, Peter Kelly, Brian Rice, Carmel Cannard, Joy Flynn, John Coleman, Joan Glen, Judy Francisco, Xavier Reicha, Jean Ivess, Terry Turvey, Debbie Nolan, Lorrain Holland, Jill & Christine Higginbottom, Maureen Ryan, Ken Dowsley, Peter Oakley, Fleur Armstrong, Heather McPhee, Rachel O'Connor, Maurice Brennan, Fr Peter Hudson

Emergency Care: Contact Betty 53826688

Each Saturday Morning:

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 9am. Rosary 9.20am
Prayer of the Church 9.40. Mass 10am. Confessions 10.25**

**Next Sunday 4th Sunday of the Month
Fourth Sunday of Advent. December 24th 2017**

Horsham **Saturday - 6.30pm. Sunday - 10.30am**

Dimboola **Christmas Eve Mass 7.00pm**

Natimuk **Christmas Eve Mass**

Murtoa **Sunday Mass 5.00pm**

**Rosary, Litany of Mary & Divine Mercy Chaplet
SMJ HORSHAM Wednesdays at 4.30pm. All welcome.**

Regular Activities in the Parish

Mother's Prayer Group Fortnightly Every Wednesday
2.00pm Church Meeting Room Contact Marina 5382 1047

Craft Group Every Monday - Parish Meeting Room
Mornings - 9.30am to 11.30am. Evening - 7pm to 9pm. BYO
Craft - Gold Coin Donation. Contact Anita at Parish Office

Meditation Group: Church Meeting Room Tuesdays 2.00pm.

CWL Meetings 1st Tuesday of Month 1.30pm. Meeting Room.

**Men's Group TEA at Natimuk Hotel this Wednesday 13th
at 6.30. Carpooling at Church.** Contact Patrick 0428847455
by Monday 11th December for catering purposes.

St Vincent de Paul Conference. Meets twice monthly. Available
Monday & Friday 11am-12pm for assistance. Phone 53812371

BAPTISM PREPARATION. 3rd Thursday of month at 7.30pm.
For appointment contact Parish Office 53821155.

CHOIR PRACTICE 2nd Wednesday 6pm in the Church

Affordable Counselling from Centacare Ballarat, for
families, individuals. **Free Call** 1300 303 988 for appointment

Marriage Tip: "And this is my prayer: that your love may
increase ever more and more." (Phil 1:9) God wants your
love to grow, always.

Daily Prayer: God of peace, whose word is good news to
the oppressed, healing for the broken- hearted and freedom
for all who are held bound, gladden our hearts and fashion
the earth into a garden of righteousness and praise! Sanctify
us entirely, in spirit, soul and body, for the coming of the One
who even now is among us, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Vocation View: There was a man _____ sent by
God, who came as a witness to testify to the Light, so that
through this person all people might believe. Is your name in
the Gospel today?



Morning Tea to farewell Judy Reid, Monday Dec
18th at 10am will now be held at the school

Piety Stall: Columban Calendars \$8 and Christmas Cards

ROSTERS

16/17 Dec	Vigil 6.30pm	Sunday 10.30am
Eucharistic Ministers	Joan Parker Anne Newton Cathy Taylor Pat Glaubitz Bernadette Trounce Peter Gutteridge Bob Hayes	Faye Wills Kingsley Dalglish Neville Strachan Lynda Hutchinson Bob Pritchett Karen Hill Mary Dalglish
Commentator	Anthony Amor	Alison McKinnon
23/24 Dec	Vigil 6.30pm	Sunday 10.30am
Readers	Anthony Amor	Bob Pritchett
Commentator	Maree Plazzer	Anthony Dowling
Eucharistic Ministers	Joan Parker Tess Hayes Sr Tirsa Silvanna Foster Anthony Amor Geoff Simpson Ann Hermans	Sr Manuela Zita Cannane Alison McKinnon Anna Robertson Kingsley Dalglish Karen Hill Neville Strachan
Projector	Gerard Natividad	Geoff Simpson
Musicians	Chris Robarts	Teresa Bottoms
Welcomers	Bill & Josie Phelan	Zita Cannane Mary Dalglish
Prayers	Darryl & Maree Wren	
Church Cleaning & Flower Arranging	24th December Zita Cannane Mary Lawson Lorraine Clancy Veronica Barker	31st December Pat O'Connor Win Stephens Barbara Connellan

FINANCE: 1st Collection (Presbytery Account):

Natimuk	\$	Murtoa	\$ 115.00
Horsham	\$ 835.00	Dimboola	\$ 56.00
Total			\$

2nd Collection (Parish Account)

Envelopes	\$ 1193.00	Loose	\$ 112.00
Total			\$ 1305.00

Making Connections: Light has become a synonym for Christ, who refers to himself as the light of the world (John 8:12). Thus the presence of Jesus is often symbolised by a lighted candle. How does this light shine in you? Bring light to someone's life this week by a visit, a phone call, a gesture... **Did you Know?: Points of interest and Catholic lore.** In the early years, there was rivalry between the disciples of John the Baptist and Jesus. This gospel makes it clear that John does not see himself as a rival to Jesus but as a witness to him. It is Jesus who is the one sent from God.

Sharing the Tradition: The Church is inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, and one of the ways we can encounter the work of the Spirit is 'in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation' (CCC§688). From the Church, a believer can 'learn the example of holiness and recognise its model', especially in 'the spiritual tradition and long history of the saints' (CCC§2030) who have given witness to Jesus, just as John the Baptist did.

Exploring the Word: In contrast to last week's text on John the Baptist, this one comes from the last of the written gospels. The Gospel of John was penned at the very end of the first century. One common characteristic, however, is clear: the Baptist is again presented as the forerunner. John the Baptist rejects all messianic or quasi-messianic titles. He throws human expectation into chaos. He claims for himself only the role of the 'voice' of Isaiah 40, but the evangelist presents him as the most reliable of witnesses, 'Sent by God...to speak for the light'. The only other person in John's Gospel to come from God is Jesus himself. Before an audience of the leaders of the religion of Israel, John witnesses with authority and truthfulness that has its source in God. How do you give witness to Christ?

Country Mass Times:

Sunday Dec 24: Natimuk 8.30
Murtoa AWC 9.00

Christmas Eve Sunday Dec 24th:
Murtoa 5pm. Nhill 5pm
Dimboola 7pm

Sunday Dec 31: Dimboola 8.30
Murtoa 8.30. Nhill 10am

New Year's Day: Horsham 10am

January 7th: Dimboola AWC 8.30
Murtoa Mass 8.30am



St Vincent de Paul Society Jesse Tree Christmas Appeal 2017

will again be distributing Christmas hampers to those less fortunate than most of us. Over the years as a Parish you have been extremely generous when we have sought your assistance.

The Vinnies Shop is in urgent need of volunteers to help in the Shop and with clothing sorting etc. If you can help please phone Heather or Pat at the Shop, 5382 4003, or just call in. You will need a Working with Children's card.

End of the Year School Masses and Graduations

OLHC School Murtoa Monday December 18th at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church Murtoa.

SMJ School Wednesday December 20th at 12 noon in SMJ Church.

St Patrick's School Nhill at 6pm Wednesday December 20th in St Patrick's Church.

The Year of Youth



The Australian Bishops celebrate the Liturgical year of 2018, as a **National Year of Youth, the theme**

is Open New Horizons for Spreading Joy, Anointed and Sent.

How might we celebrate locally? Year of Youth information is on the Ballarat Diocese website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au / Youth and Young Adult pages, or email youth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

The Year of Youth aims:

- To prayerfully discern the vision for ministry with young people,
- Authentic, personal engagement in the challenges and successes in young people's lives;
- acknowledging the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of young people, and young people acting upon the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church;
- upholding the dignity of young people, ensuring a safe environment from physical, emotional and spiritual harm. The Year of Youth is focused on local renewal and engagement.

If interested please see Fr Peter.

DID YOU ATTEND ST BRIGID'S COLLEGE



IN THE 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's, '00's?

Would love to hear from you!

Centenary Celebrations 2020. Please email us at 100@stbc.vic.edu.au with name, contact details, years you at SBC.

Up Date on Fr Peter

Fr Peter has had his operation that ended up requiring 5 bypasses. He is in ICU and recovering well in the Royal Melbourne Private Hospital..

If all goes well he will be transferred back to the ward over the weekend.

GREENERY AND FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS

Teresa Bottoms has once again agreed to do the flowers for Christmas.

If you are able to donate any greenery and white agapanthus could you please leave them at the back of the church (in a bucket of water) by Sunday 24th December. Thanking you in advance.

Srs Manuela and Tirsia pray the Rosary in the Church each Thursday and Friday at 4pm. You are welcome to join them anytime

Fr Richard Leonard's books

The majority of Fr Richard's books are now available for collection from the Parish office. If you have not yet got your copy please call in to collect.

COUGHLIN PARK BOWLS CLUB

New Years Eve Cabaret
Community Centre
31st December 2017
8pm

\$15 per head with light supper
Entertainment by Tony and Cynthia Lawrence.
Contact Judy Bryan on 0408 824 890 for numbers.

ARE YOU TRAVELING TO MELBOURNE?

If so we have an trolley that is to be taken back to 101 Holden Street, North Fitzroy.

Please contact the office if you are able to help in this matter.

Parish Pastoral Council Members:

Chris Robarts (Chair), Peter Gutteridge, Andrea Cox, Fr Peter, Lesley Price, Alison McKinnon, Daryl Wren, Bob Pritchett, Garry Heinrich, Marg Lingham, Joan Lane-Storey, Anita Masiero (Secre)

Child Safety Standards. Ss Michael & John Parish has Bob Pritchett as our Safeguarding Officer. We have a **Child Safety Policy** to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in our care. A **Child Safety Code of Conduct** has been adopted for all who work with children in the Parish. Our Parish seeks to always be a child safe Parish

Children's Story at 7pm Mass on Christmas Eve.

We invite children to participate in this story.

Please contact Alison McKinnon

at SMJ School if your child can participate.



1st Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

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.'

Resp Psalm Luke 1:46-50. 53-54

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.

The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name! His mercy is from age

to age, on those who fear him. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy.

My soul rejoices in my God.

2nd Reading: 1 The.ssalonians 5:16-24

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.

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 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.

Gospel Reflection – 3rd Sunday of Advent. Veronica Lawson rsm.

Today's gospel reading falls into two sections. The first section comprises a statement from the prologue of John's gospel and the second revolves around a question that has already been answered in the prologue. In other words, the reader knows the answer to the question posed by the characters in the second section. The prologue presents John the baptizer as "a man sent from God". He is not "the light"; he is rather a "witness" whose role is to testify to "the light". The true light [Jesus] was "coming into the world". As we proclaim Jesus as "the light", we might take time to appreciate the wonder and the properties of the material reality that informs this metaphor. In the face of less than friendly questioning, John the baptizer responds simply and honestly to questions about his identity. The questions are relentless and John's responses are unambiguous. He is not

the Messiah, the Anointed of God. He is not the prophet Elijah that some identified with God's messenger of Malachi 3:1-3 who would return and restore the "descendants of Levi" He is not the prophet-like-Moses of Deuteronomy 15. He states his identity with reference to the words of the prophet Isaiah: he is the voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting God's people to prepare the way for God's advent, God's coming. John knows who he is. He understands the parameters of his mission and he points his questioners in the direction of the truth. His role is a pivotal one in the story of God's saving action. His story is also pivotal in the unfolding of the drama of the fourth gospel. It is worth asking how we might answer the question that the priests and Levites put to John on behalf of the Jerusalem "Jews": "Who are you?" If we can honestly answer that question, if we can admit who we are with all our strengths and weaknesses, if we can

know our place in the scheme of things and own it in all humility, then we are probably in a good position to recognise and, like John, witness to the "one who is coming", the light of the world, the revelation of God. A caution is in order regarding this gospel reading: we must remember that not only the opponents of Jesus but most of the actors in the gospel drama, including Jesus, are Jewish. The group of characters specifically named in the narrative as "the Jews" includes some influential members of the Jewish religious leadership, but cannot be identified with them because it comprises a more extensive group who are consistently in conflict with Jesus. It would be a serious disservice to the gospel to condemn the Jewish people on the basis of this and similar stories of Jewish opposition to Jesus.

Next Week's Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not

be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel

answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.