



The parish of *St Joseph*
Newport & Spotswood

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

10th DECEMBER 2023

Parish Office

9 Newcastle Street, Newport
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Mass Time

Tue & Thu – **9.15am, Spotswood**
Wed & Fri – **9.15am, Newport**
Sat – **5.30pm, Spotswood**
Sun – **10.00am, Newport**

Reconciliation

Sat 10.00-10.30am, Newport
5.00-5.20pm, Spotswood

Parish Clergy

Father Binh Le PP

Parish Pastoral Council

Katherine Wong
Chairperson

Secretary & Safeguarding Officer

Ivana Toulmin
Tuesday & Friday: 9am – 5pm

Sacramental Co-Ordinators

Sr Lorraine Robinson
Irene Bongetti
Carmel Crawford
Grace Frazzica
Katherine Wong

Sacristans

Irene Bongetti
Maureen Llewellyn
Michael Nardella
Barbara Payne

Choir

Larissa Cairns
Director

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Sacred Heart

Principal: Kaylene Carlin
9391 6262
principal@shnewport.catholic.edu.au

St. Margaret Mary's

Principal: Colleen McCambridge
9391 3118
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**SAFETY OF YOUNG CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE
ADULTS.**

The parish of St Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and all vulnerable people as a central and fundamental responsibility for our community.

REFLECTION BY MARK O'BRIEN OP

The readings for our Second Sunday of Advent are primarily about epiphany, the manifestation of the presence of God in our lives. The reading from Isaiah prophesies how God will come to deliver Israel from exile in Babylon; the first verses of Mark's Gospel announce God's messenger John who in turn announces the imminent appearance of Jesus. The passage from the second letter of Peter provides instructions for its readers about how to prepare for 'the day of the Lord'. What is striking is that each reading goes against the grain of what one might expect.

According to modern critical analysis, the reading from Isaiah commences the prophecy of the so-called 'Second-or Deutero-Isaiah', an individual or group that operated during the Babylonian exile, well over a century after Isaiah of Jerusalem (whose prophecies are identified throughout chapters 1- 39). The picture of God's deliverance of his people and their return to Zion evokes the grand victory processions of ancient Near Eastern conquerors. This would have warmed the hearts of Israelites, given their experience of the superpowers Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. God will vanquish these enemies in a mighty display of divine power. But, as we come to the end of the reading, what is the nature of God's power; how is God's army described? It is a flock of sheep and the divine warrior is its shepherd. Instead of wielding thunderbolts, the shepherd tenderly carries lambs in his arms. Our prophet is radically rewriting the time-honoured understanding of Israel God's as Lord of history and creation, the one who wins the battle against the rival nations of the ancient Near East and their gods. The challenge is, which understanding or description do we turn to in our times of trouble, our imprisonment? Do we pray for triumph over our enemies or for personal transformation? The Gospel of Mark is just as radical in a somewhat different sense. John the Baptist, the voice in the wilderness, calls for repentance in preparation for the coming of one 'who is more powerful than I'. A great crowd gathers, presumably in expectation of a dramatic manifestation of this powerful figure which the trackless wilderness will be turned into a right royal road. But, when Jesus does arrive in the following verses of the Gospel, no one notices him as he is baptised along with all those seeking repentance and renewal. Mark does not even record that John noticed his presence, a marked contrast to the scene in Matthew. There is no clear sense that the dove descending upon him and the heavenly voice are directed to anyone else but Jesus himself. Such is how he first appears in Mark's Gospel, as a humble pilgrim in solidarity with his brothers and sisters.

The second letter of Peter indicates that there was plenty of speculation in the early Church about the time and nature of the 'day of the Lord', fueled in part no doubt by reading apocalyptic literature. The author hoses down speculation about the delay of the second coming of Jesus by reminding readers that with God there is no passage of time: how can you accuse one who is outside of time of being slow or late? All the same, the author of the letter does not attempt to dilute the nature of the 'day of the Lord'. But for believers this 'fearsome' day of the Lord' is not a day to fear but one to long for, the triumph of God's saving purpose and the definite establishment of righteousness and peace. The eye of faith enables believers to see the imminent arrival of all that is best for human life whereas others see only the end of their selfish and therefore distorted idea of life.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Parish of St. Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, acknowledges the Yalukit-willam people of the Bunurong Country who are the traditional owners of the land on which the churches of Sacred Heart and St. Margaret Mary stand.

We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

THE WORD OF GOD

First reading **Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11**

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low. Let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 84

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people.

His help is near for those who fear him and his glory will dwell in our land. **(R.)**

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced.

Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**

3. The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit.

Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

2nd Reading

2 Peter 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: 'PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD'

Advent is a sacred time of longing and preparation for the Lord; a time for waking up to listen to the Spirit calling deep within us. The words of Isaiah (First Reading) bring to this Sunday's liturgy a cry of consolation for a people desperate for peace. As we make a straight path to welcome the Lord into our lives, he gathers us up into his arms like a shepherd tenderly holding his lambs.

Our world is thirsting for this peace now, the deep peace that only Christ can bring. The Psalm is a prayer that speaks to the longing and yearning that is within us all. Christ is not slow to respond to our desire for this peace. Peter's letter (Second Reading) to the early Christian community teaches that the Lord wants no one to be lost: he desires for all to be gathered unto himself. Since we do not know the time of the Lord's return, our prayerful preparations will draw us nearer to the peace that he promises.

The Gospel of Mark that we follow throughout this coming year begins the revelation of the Good News with that same call of the prophet Isaiah that began our readings: 'Prepare a way for the Lord'. John the Baptist, a voice crying in the wilderness, calls us to repentance and renewal. He baptises with water but tells of the time when we will be made new by the Holy Spirit.

Let us continue our Advent journey together,

praying for this same spirit of renewal and preparation. Let us pray too for peace in our hearts, in our communities and especially in the Holy Land.



COMBINED PARISHES CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND READINGS

You are invited to a Christmas Carols and Readings of the combined Catholic Parishes of Yarraville, Kingsville, Brooklyn, Newport and Spotswood on Saturday, 16th December 2023, at St Augustine Church's, Yarraville at 7:00pm



CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate Trang & Adrian on their 15th Wedding Anniversary. May the Lord continue to bless and strengthen their love for each other.



THE VINNIES TRESS ARE HERE

Our Vinnies Christmas Appeal this year collects both funds and gifts to provide hampers for companions in our local area that we have assisted throughout the year. If you'd like to donate, please pick up an envelope in the church, a tag off the tree or head to:

<https://my.fundraiseforvinniesvic.org.au/vinnies-christmas-appeal-2023/newport-conference>

Please return any physical donations to our churches by Sunday 17 December at the latest! Thank you in advance for your support! If you'd like to find out more about the work of our local conference, speak with one of our members after Mass or contact president Clare on 0421 164 091.

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL, NEWPORT

Congratulations to our Year 3 Educator, Christy, who has successfully completed her Victorian Institute of Teaching research inquiry to become a fully registered teacher! Christy blew the leadership team away with her presentation on 'Improving students' self-efficacy through feedback. Congratulations Christy 🎉 We are so blessed to have you on the team.



CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT THE CATHEDRAL

When: Sunday 17 December 2023- 3.00pm–4.15pm
Come along for a family concert of traditional and modern Christmas carols in the beautiful and inspiring space of St Patrick's Cathedral. Featuring Cathedral Brass, Cathedral Schola and the Grand Organ, this performance will include plenty of audience participation, a children's segment and 'special guest' appearance. For more information visit

<https://melbournecatholic.org/events/christmas-carols-at-the-cathedral>

CHRISTMAS IN THE COMMUNITY: WHAT'S ON AROUND MELBOURNE:

This Advent and Christmas, parishes across the Archdiocese of Melbourne are alive and bustling with community events. From Christmas carols to serving the poor, a great way to enter meaningfully into this season is to participate in the many local and wider community festivities taking place. We take a look at just



OUR SICK

Ana Cegac, Anthony Peter Watt, Tibor, Luca Barun, Helen Kelly, Teresa Mustica, Helen Callinan, Esther Colton, Mary Fenech, Kristy Robinson, Paul Orfali, Barbara Payne, Alex Abou Saba, John, Anna.

ANNIVERSARIES

Jordane Saric, Sarah Montesano, Salvatore Solano, Francesco Solano and Lucrezia

RECENTLY DECEASED

some of the things going on in our local neighbourhoods of grace. To continue reading, visit:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/christmas-in-the-community-whats-on-around-melbourne>

CARITAS AUSTRALIA 'S GAZA CRISIS APPEAL

An estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza with immediate food, shelter, health, and psychosocial needs. 'This is a period of incredible turmoil and sadness. The escalation of violence has only exacerbated needs for the people in Gaza and West Bank, who already live in dire conditions. We are working with our partners on the ground to provide comprehensive and critical support to over 17,000 families affected by this devastating conflict.' With your support, we will be able to help our partners on the ground to assist people displaced and affected by the current conflict. Please donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal. You can donate online <https://www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/gaza-crisis/gaza-crisis-appeal> /or phone 1800 024 413

THE GIFT OF LIFE AND HOPE

Each Advent, as we usher in a new Church year and patiently count down the days to the arrival of the Christ Child, our sense of hope is stoked by glimpses of a world transformed—of life blossoming, like a Jacaranda, into all its promised fullness. Advent invites us to see each life as a gift, and to see Jesus Christ—God's gift of himself—as the most wonderful gift of all.

WE ARE AN ADVENT PEOPLE

Abbot Steele Hartmann of Tarrawarra Abbey said on Wednesday 6 December to a gathering of staff from the Archdiocese of Melbourne. 'Advent should be a time of waiting, of longing, of hoping,' he said, but often we move 'quite quickly' to the Christmas story before wrestling with the themes of the season's opening weeks. 'Advent is not about the birth of Jesus. Advent, as the focus of its first couple of weeks tells us, is about the second coming of Christ,' he explained. To continue reading visit:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/we-are-an-advent-people-abbot-steele-hartmann-on-living-as-children-of-god>

SR JOAN HEALEY RSJ, EMBRACING GOODNESS AND HOPE

It is 1989 and Sr Joan Healy RSJ is working at a refugee camp on the Thai–Cambodian border, where she will be based for some time. In this camp, where asylum seekers are restrained by barbed wire and armed guards, she meets a young man—a medic and battlefield surgeon, To continue reading visit:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/sr-joan-healy-rsj-on-hope-and-goodness>

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We gather as the parish of Saint Joseph as we
welcome all into our community. We celebrate our
faith, share in the Eucharist and Sacraments and
come together to embrace each other's joys,
sorrows, hopes and dreams.

We pray that we will always be a welcoming
community, embracing our future and the
uniqueness of all who come amongst us.

We are led by the example of Christ, the
cornerstone of all we are and all we do. We are
guided by the Spirit to be the heart of God, as we
find grace in each other. We are inspired by the
charism of Mary MacKillop and the work of the
Sisters of St Joseph.

We pray that we will follow St Margaret Mary's
devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, be with us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Margaret Mary, pray for us.

St Mary of the Cross, pray for us.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible
and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only
Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before
all ages. God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father; through him all
things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,

*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin
Mary, and became man.*

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and
rose again on the third day in accordance with
the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the
right hand of the Father. He will come again in
glory to judge the living and the dead and his
kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic
Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus,

I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I long for You in
my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though You have already come, I embrace
You and unite myself entirely to You;
never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

1 st Collection Presbytery Offering	2 nd Collection Thanksgiving Offering
To support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parish clergy• Sick and retired priests• Priests in needy parishes• Archbishop & auxiliary bishops	To support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parish running costs• Parish pastoral initiatives• Diocesan and various services
If you would like to join parish thanksgiving programme, please contact the parish office. Thank you.	

ST MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

O St Margaret Mary, through you, Jesus pours
out His abundant graces to all mankind. Help us to
put aside personal interests and abandon
ourselves entirely and lovingly to His Adorable
Heart. May our work, like yours, merit His special
care and favour, through Jesus' Holy Name. Amen.