### **Focus on the Readings**

Today the church begins the Season of Advent. But Advent begins at the end: the readings and prayers of the Liturgy focus on the second coming of Christ at the end of time. The Gospel of Luke explicitly refers to the end of time, space, the earth and the heavens when Christ will come with power and great glory. Luke grants us a smidgin of comfort the other gospels omit: "Stand up, ... your liberation is near." (24:28). It will be a time of confidences, hope and joy. The Prophet Jeremiah words have, as at several times, two levels of interpretation: the Messiah's first coming or his next coming at the end of time: "In those days and at that time" (Jer 33:15) The Advent Preface also carries the two comings of Christ: At Bethlehem and when He comes again in glory and majesty. Again, the prophecy is not gloom and doom but speaks of great promise and hope (Advent Preface 1).

The Christians progresses through Advent, starting at the end being vigilant and waiting, On the second Sunday on hearing the warnings in the mission of John the Baptist, Third Sunday on the coming of the Messiah – a time of rejoicing. And the Fourth Sunday on the events leading up to the birth of the saviour, the first Christmas, a new beginning.

### **Quote of the Day**

The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognise him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognising the coming of the Lord. Henri Nouwen

### **Excerpts from the Synod 2024**

The Synod on "Communion. Participation and Mission" published its final document containing an Introduction and Five Parts. Each begins with a quote from the Gospel of John. All post-resurrection passages inspired the titles of the five parts: The Heart of Synodality Called to Conversation; On the Boat Together, Cast the Net; An Abundant Catch; and finally: So I Send You". The synodal journey took place in the light of the second Vatican Council with its two foci: Aggiormento [bringing up to date] and Ressourcement [returning to the sources]. The synod described the Council like a seed thrown onto the field of the world and the Church. to grow and flourish. (n.5)

### On the lighter Side

A Christmas pageant that went badly: Hand puppets were given to all the children to act out the nativity at Bethlehem. There were sheep, cattle, camels, shepherds, kings and Mary and Joseph. However, a wolf was mistakenly put in the bag. A very creative lad found it. The wolf terrorised the sheep, bit the shepherds and howled all night, giving no-one any peace.



## Liturgical Jottings Springtime of the Liturgy II

After the New Testament books that provided many liturgical texts came early writings of the Church: The Didache, perhaps collated from several sources in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries contained framework of the Eucharistic Prayer, though not a complete text. Letters from Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria and a homily of Melito of Sardis give us witness of the way of celebrations of prayer and sacraments. The most important document of this era is the Apostolic Tradition of St Hippolytus (ca 213) which describes the liturgy and Chrisitan practice in Rome. Other rich sources are found in Catechesis from Jerusalem, the Anaphora of Addai & Mari (Syria) and from Serapion in Egypt.

St Mel's Parish would like to acknowledge the elders past and present of the Yorta Yorta Nation, and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our parish and church is situated.



### **Weekly Reflection**

Advent: A Time of Preparation and Anticipation

As we enter the Advent season, we find ourselves called to a sacred time of waiting and expectation. The message of Advent is one of vigilance, urging us to keep our eyes on the horizon and to remain ready for the coming of the Bridegroom. This powerful imagery speaks to the core of our spiritual journey, reminding us that while we may not know the exact day or hour of His arrival, the promise remains steadfast—He will come.

The invitation to keep watch is not merely about passive waiting; it is an active engagement in our faith. We are called to be proactive in our spiritual preparation, ensuring that we are not caught unprepared when that moment arrives. This notion resonates deeply within us, especially in a world that often distracts and pulls our focus away from the divine.

Advent offers a unique opportunity to reflect on the "Hidden Advents" of our lives. These moments might be subtle but are rich in significance. They remind us of the small, often overlooked instances of grace and divine presence woven throughout our daily existence.

Recognizing these moments can fortify our spirits and bolster our resolve as we navigate our journey.

The celebration of the mass, especially during this time, becomes a source of nourishment and strength for our souls. It acts as a reminder of Christ's presence in our lives and provides the spiritual food we need to continue our Advent journey. In this sacred space, we gather with a community of believers, united in our hope and anticipation, sharing in the divine mystery that unfolds before us.

As we embrace the season of Advent, let us reflect on our readiness to welcome this promise. Are we cultivating a sense of hope amid uncertainty? Are we opening ourselves to the transformative moments that God places in our path? By doing so, we not only prepare for the coming of Christ but also deepen our relationship with Him and each other.

In this season of preparation, let us commit ourselves to a journey of faith that goes beyond mere tradition. Let it be a time for introspection, prayer, and active participation in the life of our faith community. With hearts open and eyes focused on the horizon, let us prepare to celebrate the joy of the coming of our Savior, understanding that each step along the way is significant and filled with purpose.

May this Advent season be a time of profound growth and renewal, drawing us closer to the love and light that is Christ.



### **Planned Giving Program Envelopes**

Our new look Planned Giving envelopes are now available for collection in the Narthex. These commence on Sunday 1 December. We would appreciate you collect your envelopes as soon as possible and assist us in saving on postage costs.

To everyone on our program, and to all those who contribute financially to our parish, we thank you for your generosity and support.

We are seeking expressions of interest for a charted bus service to attend

The Episcopal Ordination of Bishop-elect Fr Rene on Saturday 1 February 2025

Please contact the office or Sev as soon as possible to allow us to gauge the possibility and our options.

Sev Cortese - Ph: 0417 229 038

## Parish Volunteers Bring a Plate Christmas Dinner

Through out the year, many parishioners volunteer their time and talents in support of our Parish community. To acknowledge and thank you, we welcome all those who assist in the various ministries and roles, on **Wednesday 11 December from 6 pm** in the Gathering Room for an evening of festive celebration! We encourage all parish volunteers to join us and bring along a plate to share. To RSVP or any queries, please contact the office.



### **International Day of People with Disabilities**

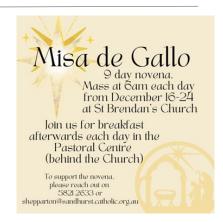
In the lead-up to IDPwD on December 3, the ABC is featuring content that highlights the wins, stories and challenges experienced by millions of Australians with disability, the goal being to increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of people living with disabilities, visible or invisible. I hope you manage to connect with some of these programs on radio or TV. Under the Act (1992), those living with disabilities should be treated equally in all day-to-day activities, without having to face discrimination. Mary Pianta. Disability Contact Coordinator.

### **Lebanon Crisis Appeal**

The escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah has pushed Lebanon into severe turmoil, with tragic consequences that have spread from Southern Lebanon to the entire nation. The situation is dire: over 3,000 lives have been lost, more than 13,000 people injured, and critical infrastructure has been destroyed.

In response to a heartfelt plea for assistance by Bishop Tarabay and Bishop Rabbat, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in partnership with Catholic Religious Australia, Caritas Australia and Caritas Lebanon, has launched the Lebanon Appeal. This appeal aims to provide essential humanitarian aid to our brothers and sisters suffering in Lebanon, especially those who are displaced and without homes or shelter. Donate today: www.caritas.org.au/lebanondonate





On the 21st of December, St. Mel's Parish will be leading the Misa De Gallo celebration at St. Brendan's. Our priest, choir, and lectors will lead the celebration as part of the 9-day inter-parish preparation for Christmas. Attendees are encouraged to bring a plate for the breakfast following the Mass.



Subscribe to Flocknote, to receive parish news & updates about upcoming events: Subscribe by using the QR Code.





# Shepparton & Nagambie Mass Schedule

### St Mel's

### SUNDAY

 St. Mel's
 9:30 am

 St. Mel's
 5:00 pm

**TUESDAY to SATURDAY** 

St. Mel's

9:15 am

## St Malachy's

SUNDAY (1st & 3rd)

St. Malachy's 09:00 am
\*2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays
Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion

#### CONFESSIONS

St. Mel's: Every Thurs at 8:10 - 9:10 am

**BAPTISMS (St Mel's)** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

MARRIAGE

2 months-notice required

### Parish Staff

Fr. Rene Ramirez RCJ Parish Priest

Fr. Ruel Desamparado RCJ
Assistant Priest

**Sr Pam Barlow** Religious Sister of Mercy

> Carmel Zito Bookkeeper

> > Mel Shiels

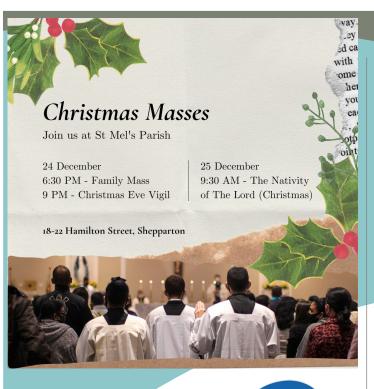
Secretary Sacramental Program Coordinator

#### Office Address

18 Hamilton Street Shepparton VIC 3530 sheppartonsouth@sandhurst.catholic.org.au www.smps.org.au (03) 5831 2194

#### **Office Hours**

Tuesday to Thursday: 9:30am- 2:30pm Friday: 9:30am -12:30 pm



### Join us today!

On the first Sunday of each month our PPC members rotate to volunteer and have the urn boiling after 9:30am Mass. Stay for a cuppa, biscuit, and chat with your fellow Parishioners. There will be no monthly cuppa in January.

We ask for your prayers for the Eternal Repose of

Anniversaries: Aurelia Andreola, Vincenzo Martino, Annunziata Cardillo, Antonino Iaria, Cecelia Iaria

### Commentators/Lectors/ **Special Ministers**

Commentators 9:30am Pauline Pettigrew **Sunday 8th** December

9:30am Mary Calandro (L1) David Sellwood (L2) 5pm Samoan Community (L1) (L2)

**Special Ministers** 

9:30am Gabrielle Barrette & Gita Kelleher

### Support your Parish!

Help fund our initiatives to move from maintenance to mission!

### "Together we do more"

Use the QR Code to access our Donations Page.

Our December Target is now \$14,358.



### \$14.066 **November Target**

\$12.022 Week Four \$3,681

\$8,341 Week Three \$2,354

\$5,987 Week Two \$2,571

\$3,416 Week One \$3,416

#### **TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

JOIN US IN REACHING OUR MONTHLY GOAL



ST. MEL'S PARISH



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> CORPORATE **SPONSORS**



0417 374 105

**Vincent Tassoni** 



We are a Safe Church Community. We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all and a zero tolerance to abuse.

St Mel's Parish Safeguarding officer is Trish Mathisen. Ph: 0428 213 757 To find out more ways on how you can help improve our Parochial Community please contact Mel at (03) 5831 2194 Tuesdays to Thursdays, between 9:30am to 2:30 pm email: sheppartonsouth@sandhurst.catholic.org.au or visit our website at www.smps.org.au