



## ST. MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP PARISH UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS



3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY).

YEAR B

13 DECEMBER 2020

### Reflection on the Sunday Readings by Fr. John:

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,  
In the midst of the 'busy-ness' that infects us all at this time of the year, the Liturgy calls us to 'rejoice'!  
We rejoice in the First Coming of Christ; we rejoice that Christ will come again; but we also rejoice in the 'here-and-now' / the present moment - when Christ's presence is made known to us in the little things of life. As Christians, JOY is one of the hallmarks of our faith. This is not 'happiness' - for happiness is not something that is consistent. Rather, joy is a deep-seated emotion that is borne of an act of will, and which persists even in the difficult times. So, as we get caught up in the frantic pace of December in Australia, let's try to model ourselves on Christ, and not on the world around us: let's strive to be people who are obviously full of joy to others, enabling all to see that there is something beyond the busy-ness of our world. Let's prepare to worthily celebrate the great Feast of Christmas with love and thanksgiving. God bless you all, Fr John

### FIRST 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.'

**RESPONSE** My Soul rejoices in my God.

### SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 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** Alleluia, alleluia! **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.** Alleluia!

### THE 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.

### COMMENT ON THE GOSPEL

John Scotus Erigena (c. 810-77)

Into the theological plan of his gospel John the evangelist draws John the Baptist; deep calls to deep at the utterance of divine mysteries. We hear the evangelist relating the story of the forerunner, the man whose gift it was to know the Word as he was in the beginning, speaking to us of the one who was commissioned to go ahead of the Word made flesh.

"There was," says the evangelist, not simply a messenger of God, but "a man."

This he said in order to distinguish the man who shared only the humanity of the one he heralded from the man who came after him, the man who united godhead and manhood in his own person.

The evangelist's intention was to differentiate between the fleeting voice and the eternally unchanging Word. The one, he would suggest, was the morning star appearing at the dawning of the kingdom of heaven, while the other was the Sun of Justice coming in its wake.

He distinguished the witness from the one to whom he testified, the messenger from him who sent him, the lamp burning in the night from the brilliant light that filled the whole world, the light that dispelled the darkness of death and sin from the entire human race.

So then, the Lord's forerunner was a man, not a god; whereas the Lord whom he preceded was both man and God. The forerunner was a man destined to be divinized by God's grace, whereas the one he preceded was God by nature, who, through his desire to save and redeem us, lowered himself in order to assume our human nature.

A man was sent. By whom? By the divine Word, whose forerunner he was.

To go before the Lord was his mission. Lifting up his voice, this man called out: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness!" It was the herald preparing the way for the Lord's coming.

John was his name; John to whom was given the grace to go ahead of the King of Kings, to point out to the world the Word made flesh, to baptize him with that baptism in which the Spirit would manifest his divine sonship, to give witness through his teaching and martyrdom to the eternal light.

*Homily on John's Prologue 15*

**COMMUNION** Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

**NOTES FROM FR JOHN:** 1. Please remember to check the Mass times for Christmas this year, as there are some changes to times and place due to the need for more liturgies during our COVID restrictions.

2. If you wish to receive Communion on the tongue, please wait until all who are receiving on the hand have received.

3. Although the seating restrictions have been removed in most churches, please observe the 1.5m social distancing rule when choosing a seat.

**ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED:** If you would like to help serve at this year's Midnight Mass and/or serve in the coming year, please contact Hugh Jones on 0402 904 681.

**SUNDAY MASS:** Due to an easing of covid-19 restrictions you no longer need to book to come to Sunday Mass. You will still, however, need to sign on when you arrive and observe social distancing requirements. Attendance is on a first come first served basis.

**PERPETUAL ADORATION CHAPEL ADORERS** - Dear adorers, as we approach the 'holiday season' we ask you to consider the weeks ahead. The chapel will continue to be open for adoration during the holiday season, If you are going away and have a rostered time slot please start to search and find a replacement adorer from the contact list, or a parishioner friend to cover for you. You will need to let your team leader know what dates you'll be away, and who will be covering you. If you are a parishioner (or visitor) who would like to be on the temporary fill in list for a Holy Hour, please contact Jacquie on 0405 600 155 to register your details, Many thanks!

**2021 EPIPHANY PILGRIMAGE GROUP** will be in our parish January 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup>. More details to follow in next week's bulletin. You are invited to write down any prayer intentions that you might have, and place them in the Epiphany Pilgrimage boxes in our churches. The pilgrims will pray for these intentions every night on their journey. For information about the pilgrimage itinerary and to register visit [www.epiphanypilgrimage.org](http://www.epiphanypilgrimage.org)

**PLANNED GIVING:** Would the owners of Planned Giving Envelope numbers 38, 41 and 53 kindly contact the Parish office immediately to submit your contact details. Your contributions are unable to be recorded until we have this information.

**FINANCES:** If you would like to contribute to the 2nd Collection for the parish: Bank Transfer: BSB 067 950 Account 000 00594 Name: Mary MacKillop Parish Reference: Surname and envelope number or Parish Donation (with or without surname if preferred).

If parishioners would like to contribute to the First Collection for the clergy of the diocese: BSB 067 950 Account No 00004265 Account Name Diocesan Clergy Reference either the Parish Name or the parish code 6038

**MIDNIGHT MASS:** This year at St Canice's, to celebrate the solemnity of Christmas, we are going to hold a High Mass at midnight with a thurible and an organist with a small, socially distanced choir. This is a great opportunity for parishioners and visitors to experience the true beauty of our Catholic traditions this Christmas. We hope to see you all there for this special occasion, especially after many of us may have felt distanced from the beauty of our liturgies during this difficult time of COVID.

**BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL:** Please give generously to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal: [yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal](http://yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal)

### ROSARY AND OTHER DEVOTIONS: Ad Jesum per Mariam.

SAT and SUN: 4:10pm, Leura.

MON: after 8:30am Mass, Katoomba.

TUE: 4:30pm Divine Mercy, Rosary and Exposition, Leura.

WED: after 8:30am Mass, Wentworth Falls.

THU: after 8:30am Mass, Leura.

FRI: 11:30am before Mass, Katoomba.

FRI: 5pm Divine Mercy Hour, Leura.

SAT: 8:30am before Mass and also after Benediction following Mass, Katoomba.

ADORATION CHAPEL: 9am Monday - 9am Saturday, Katoomba.

### SUNDAY MASS TIMES

You need to book Sunday

Leura 5pm (Saturday)

Wentworth Falls 8am

Katoomba 10am

Leura 5pm

\*10am on public holidays

### WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

MON: 8:30am\* Katoomba

TUE: 5:15pm Leura

WED: 8:30am W-Falls

THU: 8:30am Leura

FRI: 12pm Katoomba

SAT: 9am Katoomba

### CONFESSION TIMES

TUE 4:45-5:00pm Leura

SAT: 9:30am Katoomba

SAT: 4:30-4:45pm Leura

Confessions are always available on request.



## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

### CHRISTMAS EVE (Thursday)

*Vigil of the Nativity*

6:00pm Katoomba

9:00pm Leura

### CHRISTMAS DAY (Friday)

*Midnight Mass*

(Sung Mass with incense)

12:00am Katoomba

*Mass During the Day*

8:00am Wentworth Falls

9:00am Leura

10:30am Katoomba

\*NO EVENING MASS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

### BOXING DAY (Saturday)

10:00am Katoomba

5:00pm Leura

### NEW YEAR'S DAY (Friday)

10:00am Katoomba

## CHRISTMAS CONFESSION TIMES

Saturday 19 Dec: after the 9:00am

Mass Katoomba

Saturday 19 Dec: 4:00-4:45pm Leura

Sunday 20 Dec: after the 8:00am

Mass Wentworth Falls

### SAINTS THIS WEEK: Ora pro nobis.

MON: St. John of the Cross.

NEXT SUN: 4th Sunday of Advent.

**MASS OFFERING INTENTIONS: DECEASED and ANNIVERSARIES:** MARK GLASHEEN, ELIZABETH SINNAPPAN, ALLAN LEATHWOOD, MARIA LAZNIC, and All the faithful departed especially those for whom you requested prayers and masses AND THE FORGOTTEN SOULS IN PURGATORY.

**SICK LIST:** Monique Haulber, Valerie Small, Marie Thuez, Mary Sullivan, Kathleen Hayes-Gilson, Evelyn Maw, Wanda Heffernan, Mary Roberts, Jacquelin Singh, Kath Paine, June Way, Robert Sullivan, Natale Assanti, Susan Keegel, Eugenio Natonton, Emiliana Santiago, Pat Coyne, Inga Morphet, Amanda Peters, Alison Michaels, Aimee De la Motte, Lorraine Russelle, Margaret Murphy, Joan Nolan, Pat Wolthers, Tricia Hogan, Shiela Page, Sr Jeanie Heining, Michelle Scully, Julie Walss, Edwin Wulff

**PARISH OFFICE:** 158 Katoomba Street, Katoomba 2780

**Postal Address:** P.O. Box 526, Katoomba NSW 2780

**Phone:** (02) 4782 2804 **Hours:** 10am-3pm Tuesday-Friday.

**Parish Email address:** [bluemountains@parracatholic.org](mailto:bluemountains@parracatholic.org)

**After Hours Emergency Number:** 0428 878 810 Calls only; no

**Weddings:** Please call Parish Office for details. **Baptisms:** upon request.

**Parish Website at:** [www.bluemountainscatholic.org.au](http://www.bluemountainscatholic.org.au)

**Parish Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/bluemountainscatholic](https://www.facebook.com/bluemountainscatholic)

**Parish School:** St Canice's Catholic Primary School, Katoomba.

**Principal:** Ms. Miriam Meaney



# Christmas Novena

Wed 16 Dec – Thurs 24 Dec



All. **Sign of the Cross, Our Father and Hail Mary.**

Ÿ. **O Lord, you will open my lips.**

R. **And my tongue shall announce your praise.**

Ÿ. **O God, come to my assistance.**

R. **O Lord, make haste to help me.**

Ÿ. **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

R. **As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

All. **Novena Prayer** (on opposite side).

Ÿ. **Let us bless the Lord.**

R. **Thanks be to God.**

Ÿ. **May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.**

R. **Amen.**

All. **Sign of the Cross and Salve Regina** (sung).

Note: If you are not familiar with singing the Salve Regina (Hail Holy Queen), in the Youtube search box type: Salve Regina Simple Tone.



Hail and blessed be the hour and moment  
in which the Son of God was born  
of the most-pure Virgin Mary,  
at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold.  
In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God,  
to hear my prayer and grant my desires,  
[here mention your request(s)]  
through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
and of his Blessed Mother. Amen.

Imprimatur +Archbishop Augustine, of New York, 1897.

THE TRUE LIGHT WHO GIVES LIGHT TO EVERY MAN WAS COMING INTO THE WORLD (JOHN 1:9).