

St Therese's Parish Essendon

4 & 5 December 2021
Second Sunday of Advent Year C



First Reading Bar 5:1-9 A reading from the prophet Baruch

Jerusalem – God will show you splendour.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them. Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory.

For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

Gospel Lk 3:1-6 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

All people shall see the salvation of God.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.



The advent of God's coming with its promise of fulfilment happens within world history. The first reading locates God's act of restoration in the city of Jerusalem. The gospel situates the ministry of John within a particular period of world history. They point us to historical experience as the place and the time of restoration, of incarnation, of redemption. They show us that God works within everyday life, in conventional places, during regular time. In fact, from a human point of view, the extraordinary events of salvation took place within what was quite ordinary.

John proclaims the kind of transformation that results in a change of heart. Reversals characterise such transformation: the robe of mourning is replaced by the splendour of glory; tears are turned into rejoicing; those led away by enemies are brought back by God; valleys are filled, mountains are levelled, winding roads are made straight; even nature offers itself as shelter for the people of God. Those who are shamed and discarded are made glorious; those who suffer are comforted; the oppressed are freed; all of life's obstacles are removed; the way to God is made straight; the natural world enjoys peace and harmony.

The transformation or repentance of heart takes place within human life, within relationships of justice between people and with the earth, in right living, in genuine unselfish love. It produces the fruits of righteousness of which Paul speaks. Advent is the time to prepare ourselves for this.

© Dianne Bergant CSA



VALE SR LIZ COSTIGAN Late last week we learned the sad news that our dear friend Sr Liz Costigan RSC had passed away. Fr John found the following warm and loving salute from CLC principal Stephanie Evans when Liz retired from Catholic Ladies College in 2017. It sums up beautifully how so many of us feel about a lovely, gentle woman of great spirit.

'Liz, you will be sadly missed by the CLC community. We have loved your gentle ways, wise counsel and patient listening. We have appreciated your sense of humour and realistic perspective. You have challenged our thinking and being and encouraged and stretched us, seeing what we sometimes could not see in ourselves.

We will miss your famous chats- you never miss much – always sensitive to our needs, never failing to pick up when things were not quite right. Those chats have made us feel valued and cared for. You always ensured that there was not too much time spent on wallowing or feeling sorry for ourselves, but instead the focus was on positive thinking and encouragement to get on with it and make the most of whatever situation was facing us.

Know that we will continue to share your story with the young women who join our College as we teach them about the history of CLC and inspire them with stories of women like yourself, strong, faith filled, courageous and compassionate women. Women who have and continue to make a difference in the lives of others.

When faced with personal and health challenges, your inner strength and spirit have held you in good stead.

In the words of St Francis de Sales,

Nothing is so strong as gentleness

nothing so gentle as real strength

Thank you for letting us be there for you. We have been privileged to have been part of your special celebrations, your 80th birthday last year and more recently your Diamond Jubilee.

You have touched the lives of so many members of this College community in different ways. Liz,

- thank you for your unfailing capacity to care for us
- thank you for so generously and graciously walking with us on our respective journeys
- thank you being there to celebrate the great times with us
- thank you for being there for each of us in times of personal challenge
- thank you for giving us the opportunity to experience the joy of feeling loved and truly known

Liz, when I think of you, I think about and I feel a beautiful gentle breeze, bringing love, compassion, joy and inviting discernment; spreading the love of Christ amongst us.'

Sr Liz Costigan's funeral Mass will be held at St Therese's on Monday 6 December at 10:30am.

Dear friends of St Therese's,

We have been advised that a person who attended 6:00pm Mass on Saturday 27 November has tested positive for coronavirus and this has been confirmed by the Department of Health (DH). As the service was primarily a school Mass celebrating First Eucharist for our year 4 students, our school leadership have been the point of contact for DH and they have been following the guidelines as set out by MACS (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools).

I understand this news will be concerning for many of you. I want to assure you that nothing is more important to us than the health and safety of our whole school and parish community. As a reminder, if you or anyone in your family develops even the mildest of symptoms, please get tested. If you need to get tested, please check coronavirus.vic.gov.au for up-to-date information about waiting times at testing sites across the state.

Please be aware that we cannot provide information about the person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and I ask that you respect their privacy.

Each week we publish the restrictions under which we have reopened for Masses, it is vitally important that we follow these guidelines. We must enforce the QR check in and fully-vaccinated requirements as two of the important steps in protecting our community. Please read the restrictions following so that you are familiar with what is required to attend Mass here at St Therese's.

Unfortunately Covid 19 is in our community and we should do all we can to protect our most vulnerable members. I would therefore strongly encourage anyone attending Mass to continue wearing a mask inside.

We will keep you informed of any further developments.

Stay well, stay safe.

John Hannon, Parish Priest



REOPENING AT ST THERESE'S: CHECKING IN

All fully vaccinated attendees are required to check in using the Service Victoria QR code in our church.

VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

All parish office staff are required to be fully vaccinated

All volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated in order to attend Masses and continue their ministry.

All Mass attendees over the age of 12 years and 2 months will be required to show proof of double-dose vaccination so please bring along your printed or digital certificate.

If you cannot prove your vaccination status, you will not be allowed to attend Mass.

Please bring your proof of vaccination EACH time you attend Mass

FULLY VACCINATED MEANS SOMEONE WHO:

- has received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, or
- has a valid medical exemption, or
- is under the age of 12 and two months.

MASSES FOR PERSONS OF UNKNOWN VACCINATION STATUS: Some local parishes and St Patrick's Cathedral are holding regular Masses for persons of unknown vaccination status. We are holding a Mass for persons of undeclared vaccination status on Tuesday 7 December where First Eucharist candidates will receive the Sacrament of First Eucharist.

COVID MARSHALS NEEDED We must have COVID MARSHALS AT ALL MASSES. We have a small group of regular volunteers but really need to boost numbers to support the roster.

LECTORS NEEDED We have had a few of our faithful lectors retire from the roster recently and are now seeking help to support those who read at our weekly Masses. Experience is ideal but not necessary, we can provide mentoring.

DATA PROJECTIONISTS NEEDED an important role in helping our attendees follow Mass and join in responses. Training provided.

If you are willing and able to assist in any of these roles please contact the parish office.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS All volunteers are required to have a current Working with Children Check which we can help with if necessary. Working With Children checks can be applied for online at: <https://service.vic.gov.au/find-services/work-and-volunteering/working-with-children-check> All volunteers must be fully vaccinated.



SVDP 'GIFT CARD' GIVING TREE please donate to SVDP this Christmas. This year we're again asking parishioners to donate gift cards for purchase of food and other necessities. Some examples are Coles Xpress fuel cards (value \$20-\$30) or Coles/Woolworths food cards of any value. These cards will be included in hampers for Companions (those people who are assisted by SVDP). You can drop gift cards the collection plates at Mass, or in the parish office drop box. You can also donate cash in a clearly marked envelope. Donations are needed by Monday 13 December. Please don't leave gifts or gift cards under the tree and please don't donate gift cards that can be used to purchase tobacco or alcohol



PARISH SUPPORT PROGRAMME ENVELOPES For parishioners who use envelopes for their PSP contributions, your new envelopes are on the tables near the main doors for you to collect. Envelopes are sorted in STREET NAME ORDER.

If you would like to continue your payments but are not currently attending Mass in person, you can deposit your PSP donations directly to the parish accounts. Note there are separate accounts for church and for clergy.

Contributions to the church account:

Name: St Therese's Church, BSB: 083 347, Account number: 67640 1701

Contributions towards supporting the clergy:

Account Name: St Therese's Church, BSB: 083 347, A/C number: 67616 4988

Deposits should be referenced with your **FIRST INITIAL and SURNAME** so that we know that the money is a PSP payment attributed to you.

ON SALE NOW – ST VINCENT DE PAUL: Selling Christmas Cards & Columban Calendars at the back of the Church after each weekend Mass. **Cards:** pack of 8 for \$5.00, **Calendars** \$9.00 each.

FOR SALE ON ENTRY TABLES: The Far East \$1.50

PARISH DATES		
Sunday 5 December	First Eucharist Mass RE candidates (public Mass)	10:30am
Tuesday 7 December	First Eucharist Mass for attendees of unknown vaccination status (limit of 50 attendees)	10:00am
Wednesday 15 December	St Therese’s School End of Year Mass End of Term 4	12:00pm 3:30pm
Thursday 16 December	Christmas Mass at Arcadia	11:00am
Tuesday 21 December	Communal Reconciliation Mass St Therese’s Volunteers Function	7:00pm 8:00pm – 10:00pm
Thursday 23 December	Parish office closes for Christmas break	3:00pm
Friday 24 December	Christmas Eve Mass Carols followed by Mass Carols followed by Mass Carols followed by Mass	10:00am 5:30pm then 6:00pm 8:00pm then 8:30pm 10:30pm then 11:00pm
Saturday 25 December	Christmas Day Mass	10:00am
Sunday 26 December	Boxing Day Mass	10:30am
Monday 10 January 2022	Parish office re-opens for limited hours	
Sunday 23 January	Parish Baptisms	12:00pm
Monday 24 January 2022	Parish office resumes regular hours	9:00am
Please note: Christmas Masses this year will not require booking and there will be no limit on the number of attendees. All attendees must however adhere to all COVID safety protocols and must be fully vaccinated. It is strongly recommended that Mass attendees wear face masks when attending crowded Masses.		

PARISH CONTACTS

Parish Priest: John Hannon john.hannon@cam.org.au
Baptism – Pastoral Outreach: Leanne Torr leanne.torr@cam.org.au
Business Manager: Kathy Gilmour kathy.gilmour@cam.org.au
Function Manager: Jac Radcliffe jac.radcliffe@cam.org.au
Bookkeeper: Irene Fritsche irene.fritsche@cam.org.au
Parish Leadership Team: essendon.plt@cam.org.au
Child Safety Officer: Olivia Metcalf essendon.safeguarding@cam.org.au
Office opening hours - Monday to Friday 9:00am – 3:00pm
Office Telephone: 9401 6330 – after hours Fr John: 0490 956 610
Office email: essendon@cam.org.au Website: www.stthereses.org.au
School email: info@stessendon.catholic.edu.au
St Vincent de Paul helpline: 1800 305 330 WEEKDAYS 10:00am–3:00pm

Mass Online:

Follow this [link here](#)

Weekday Masses:

Tuesday to Friday 10:00am (fully-vaccinated attendees only)

Weekend Masses

Saturday 6:00pm (fully-vaccinated attendees only)
 Sunday 9:00am (fully-vaccinated attendees only)
 Sunday 10:30am (fully-vaccinated attendees only)

St Therese’s Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country of the land on which our church stands and recognize their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and to Elders past, present and emerging.