

St John the Apostle Parish

A Missionary of the Sacred Heart Parish

Third Sunday of Advent Year C

13 December 2015

#3.16

“To be on earth the Heart of God”

Parish Administration:

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MASS TIMES

Vigil Saturday 6:00pm

Sunday 8:30am, 10:00am, 6:00pm

Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9:30am

LITURGIES

Liturgy of the Word with Communion: Tues 9:30am

Baptisms: 1st & 3rd Sun 11:30 am

Reconciliation: Sat 11:00 – 11:30 am or by
appointment with the priests

PRAYER

Charismatic Prayer: Thursday 7:30pm

Maida: 0423 658 326 Rosary 7:00pm

Meditation [Library] Friday 7.30-8.15 pm

Morning Prayer: Mon, Tues, Fri 9:10am

Stations of the Cross First Fri Monthly 5:30pm

From the Pastor's Desk.....

Anyone listening to J. S. Bach's 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' cannot help but be enraptured by the beauty of this music and its ability to lift the soul. The joy that Bach so exquisitely expresses in his music is a deeply religious sentiment. It is not a joy that can be manufactured, bought or procured. Rather, it is the joy that is experience through our encounter with the living God.

On this third Sunday of Advent the theme of joy threads its way through the liturgy. The entrance antiphon announces the theme: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near." We light the rose candle, a symbol of joy. In the first reading from the prophet Zephaniah we have an image of a God who dances with delight for his people. The people are exhorted to shout for joy and to rejoice, for their God is in their midst: "Rejoice, exult with all your heart". God's presence among them lifts them up out of their misery. The theme continues in the responsorial psalm "Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the holy one of Israel".

We are left no doubt that joy is meant to be a characteristic of the Christian life. Joy does not cancel out the sufferings that afflict our lives and our world. But the gift of grace that we experience as joy, lifts us up, and empowers us to be God's liberating presence in our world.

In his apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis concludes with a prayer to Mary part of which reads: "Filled with Christ's presence, you brought joy to John the Baptist, making him exult in the womb of his mother. Brimming over with joy, you sang of the great things done by God. Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith, you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection, and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit so that the evangelizing Church might be born."

Peace & blessings,
Gerard

Joy

The principal theme of *Gaudete* Sunday is joy. According to Paul, joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit (cf. Gal 5:22). Such joy is a religious sentiment, not emotional happiness. Along with gratitude, it is the heart's response to God's goodness. Advent joy is like the delight that fills a woman who has just given birth, even if it occurred in the throes of the pangs of birth.

We tend to think of joy this way: There is ordinary time in our lives, when duty, work, emotional and financial burdens, tiredness, worries, and pressure of all kinds keep us from enjoying life and from being as cheery and pleasant as we would like. We think of ordinary times in our lives as keeping us from joy – the grind, the routine, the rat-race, the work-week – and so we look forward to special times, weekends, nights out, vacation times, social times, celebrations, and parties where we can break the routine, break out, enjoy ourselves, and experience joy.

Joy is always the by-product of something else. As the various versions of The Prayer of St. Francis put it, we can never attain joy, consolation, peace, forgiveness, love, and understanding by actively pursuing them. We attain them by giving them out. That's the great paradox at the centre of all spirituality and one of the great foundational truths within the universe itself: The air that we breathe out is the air we will eventually breathe back in. Joy will come to us if we set about actively trying to create it for others.

You can't find joy, it has to find you. That's its real quality. You can go to a party and say, "Tonight I'm going to have a good time, if it kills me!" It might! Indeed parties and letting off steam have their place. You might even find good cheer at a party or find a good distraction and these can be needed therapy and a good respite from hard work. But neither is joy.

Advent joy springs from the realisation that the presence of God in our midst can so transform our lives that the promises of peace and security will be fulfilled. Advent joy is the way we live in the tension between already and not yet.

Resources used: *A Meditation on Joy*, by Ronald Rolheiser OMI, & *Reflections at LiturgyHelp* by Dianne Bergant CSS

Key Quotes from *Laudato Si'*

Pope Francis' Encyclical on Ecology and Climate

On Ecology of Daily Life: A wholesome social life can light up a seemingly undesirable environment. At times a commendable human ecology is practised by the poor despite numerous hardships.

PARISH NOTICES



The Parish Office has a new email address. Please update your email contacts: kippax@cg.org.au

SUNDAY AFTERNOON BOOK CLUB

We are reading

"I know why the caged bird sings" 

By Maya Angelou

Sunday 20 December 3:00 pm Parish Library.

THE MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIESTS

invites you and your friends to

THE 9th ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE PRAYER VIGIL

Where: St John the Apostle Church
Address: Cnr Blackham & Chave Streets, Holt
Date: Thursday 31st December 2015
Time: 8.30pm

Exposition from 8.30pm until midnight
 Supper available after midnight
 All inquiries:-Judy & Joe Mewburn Ph: 6254 6202

St John the Apostle Parish Bookshop:

Columban Calendars \$9.00
 St Vincent de Paul Christmas Cards \$4.00 pk 8

Tribunal of the Catholic Church: Marriage breakdown is usually a traumatic experience for all those concerned with many divorcees unsure of the validity of this marriage within the Catholic Church. The Church reaches out in support of those whose marriage has broken down, while upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage. If you are divorced or in the process of finalising your divorce and would like information about the annulment process, please contact the Tribunal on 6201 9802 or by email tribunal@cg.org.au. All enquiries remain confidential to the Tribunal.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
13 Lk 3:10-18 3rd Sun of Advent Light the first three candles on your Advent Wreath.	14 Mt 21:23-27 I will speak the truth with love today.	15 Mt 21:28-32 Today I will forgive someone who has hurt me.

JUBILEE OF MERCY

From Pope Francis....

With the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy I would like to focus on several points which I believe require attention to enable the celebration of the Holy Year to be for all believers a true moment of encounter with the mercy of God. It is indeed my wish that the Jubilee be a living experience of the closeness of the Father, whose tenderness is almost tangible, so that the faith of every believer may be strengthened and thus testimony to it be ever more effective. I have asked the Church in this Jubilee Year to rediscover the richness encompassed by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The experience of mercy, indeed, becomes visible in the witness of concrete signs as Jesus himself taught us. Each time that one of the faithful personally performs one or more of these actions, he or she shall surely obtain the Jubilee Indulgence. Hence the commitment to live by mercy so as to obtain the grace of complete and exhaustive forgiveness by the power of the love of the Father who excludes no one. The Jubilee Indulgence is thus full, the fruit of the very event which is to be celebrated and experienced with faith, hope and charity.

LENTEN PROGRAM 2016

We will be ordering the program from the Wollongong Diocese this Lent. The program is titled "Mercy" to celebrate the Year of Mercy. Lenten groups and orders will be taken in early January as lent begins on Wednesday 10th February. For more information contact Sabina 0400 269 951.



Singers and musicians are invited to join our Christmas Choirs

Children's Christmas Eve 6:00pm Mass

Practice in the church
Thursdays 3:30pm – 4:30pm

Christmas Eve 9:00pm Mass

Practice in the church
Thursdays 7:30pm

Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

Practice in the Church
Wednesdays at 8:00pm

Contact the parish office on 6254 3236 for more information.



St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal

Thank you for your continued support. A total of \$2456.85 was received from the leaving collection last weekend.



5 more gift card tags for children have been added to the tree

Parishioners are again invited to make a contribution to the Christmas hampers by returning the items in the next week or so.

The tree in the foyer is a Chrismon tree.

Chrismons are Christmas decorations with Christian symbols on them. The word Chrismon is a combination of Christ and monogram (meaning symbol).

Chrismons are traditionally coloured white and gold. White symbolises that Jesus was pure and perfect. Gold symbolises His majesty and glory.

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16 Lk 7:19-23 I will find a quiet place and sit for a few minutes, just letting God love me.	17 Mt 1:1-17 I will be a peacemaker today.	18 Mt 1:18-24 I will not complain today, even if I must do things I do not want to do.	19 Lk 1:5-25 Today I will put my trust in God that God is leading me in my life to where I need to be.

*Hope
Love
Joy
Peace*

ROSTERS

20 December Ministers of Communion

6:00pm	Joy McInerney, Trevor Williams, Barbara Witzens, Laurine and Daryl Smeaton
8:30 am	Janet Almond, Jean Tierney, Margaret Conlon, Pat Cowburn, Clyde Sloan
10:00am	Marie Flint, Colin Fox, Erin Pitt, Maida Kajkic, Robin Williams
6:00 pm	Peter Polkinghorne, Brian Mahony, Jacinta Le, Robert and Mary Sharf

Reading Roster

6:00pm	Jim & Mindalesia Jones
8:30 am	Violet Duve, Sigrid Kropp
10:00am	Libby Kain, Vacant
6:00 pm	Meg Millband, Matthew Toohey

Hospitality Roster

6:00pm	Mary Barrett
8:30 am	Norma and Clyde Sloan
10:00am	Cass and Jason Pepper
6:00 pm	Brian Mahony

Other Rosters

- 14 Dec **Altar Society** Margaret Stanford
- 14 Dec **Church Cleaning:** Ted and Carol Quade
- 19 Dec **Presbytery Cleaning:** Maresa Laird
Meg Millband, Pat Cowburn, Sabina Van Rooy, Linnie Traynor
- 20 Dec **Counting Roster:** Therese Kercher, Matthew Toohey
- 19 Dec **Grounds:** David Pigram, Rob Caskie, Matthew Garton

School of Religion: – 9.15 am-10.00 am
Sundays Parish Centre (School Term Only)
For children not attending a Catholic School



Hearing Loop: - We have a hearing loop in the body of the church. To access it turn your hearing aid to the T-Switch setting.

LIBRARY NEWS: From now until Christmas we shall display books for meditation based on the Church's season of Advent and Christmas

On A Lighter Note:

Question:.....What 5 letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

Answer: short

☞ Let us pray for those who are sick.
We remember them in our Masses. ☞

Recently Deceased: James Maher msc

Anniversary: John Martin, Martina Forjanic, Brodie McMahon, Ryan Jasczyk, Dinah Muench, Leo Hill msc, Maria Gillard, Margaret Woodland, Maria Tabisz, Kevin Hiscock, Winifred Lilley, John Ashton, Michael Allars, Andre Domjan, Daniel Morris, Raymond Kernan, Kathleen Randall, Bernadette Anetts, Branko Kukolic, Amy Carney, Edward Clifford, John Mackay, Marie Cody, Robert Carew, Christopher Fitzsimon, Dora Roberts

RESPONSE TO THE PSALM:

To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL Lk 3:10-18

John makes clear to his audience the difference between himself and the Messiah who is still to come. His ritual of baptism will pale in comparison with the baptism with the Holy Spirit that the Christ will offer. Compared to a symbolic action of baptism, Jesus will offer the people a tangible experience of life in the Holy Spirit. He will give them not only a glimpse of the reign of God, but an invitation to enter fully into it. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a lived experience, not just a ritual action.

John's words to the crowd, the tax collectors and the soldiers are about adopting a spirit of generosity and a generosity of spirit. A generosity of spirit can be expressed simply in the attitude with which we approach other people: a positive, hope-filled and generous attitude will often turn around a potentially negative situation. As we approach the Christmas season, there is a need for practical actions of generosity as well. Those in need can approach Christmas with dread rather than joyful expectation. It can be the hardest time of year for struggling families. Acts of generosity can make all the difference.

Resources used: Reflections by Greg Sunter at LiturgyHelp.