

# St. John's Parish

"Hand In Hand "

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – Year C**  
**December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024**

**www.stjohnstrafalgar.com.au**



**our stories,  
our church,  
our mission.**

*Diocese of Sale*

**St John's Church –**  
52 Waterloo Rd, Trafalgar

**St Jarlath's Church –**  
cnr Campbell and Rollo Sts. Yarragon

**PARISH PRIEST:**  
Fr. Bernard Buckley VG Phone: 5633 1166

**PARISH SECRETARY AND  
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:**  
Mrs. Julianne Keily.  
Parish e-mail: trafalgar@cdsale.org.au

**OUR SCHOOLS:**  
**St Joseph's Primary School**  
58 Waterloo Rd. Trafalgar. Phone 5633 1151  
Mrs Trish Mulqueen - Principal

**Marist Sion College**  
165 Burke St. Warragul. Phone: 5623 5944  
Ms Lisa Harkin - Principal

**WEEKEND MASS TIMES:**  
St John's: Saturday: Vigil Mass – 6pm  
St Jarlath's: Sunday – 10am.

**THIS WEEK'S LITURGY TIMES:**  
**Monday** 23.12: -

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

**Christmas Eve:** Tuesday  
**6:00pm:** Family Mass at St John's, Trafalgar  
**9:00pm:** Mass at St Jarlath's, Yarragon.  
**Christmas Day:** Wednesday  
**9:30am:** Mass at St John's, Trafalgar

**Thursday** 26.12: -  
**Friday** 27.12: -

**RECONCILIATION:** The sacrament of Reconciliation can be celebrated at St John's on Saturdays from 10:00am, or any time by arrangement with Father.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:**

*'We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather, the Gunai Kurnai people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. 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 CONFITEOR:** I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; *(All strike their breast 3 times)* therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

**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.

**APOSTLES' CREED:** I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL:**

**CELEBRANT:** Dear friends, Mary's gracious visit to her cousin Elizabeth was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Sharing their gladness and gratitude, let us pray for God's blessing on the world.

**READER:** We pray for the leaders of the world's great faiths, that together they will proclaim a powerful message of grace and peace for all humankind. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for Catholic believers, that the opening of the Jubilee Year on Christmas Eve will call us to set out afresh as pilgrims of hope in our shadowed world. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord

We pray for women of spirit like Mary and Elizabeth, that their bold belief in God's saving power will inspire young and old alike to lives of daring faith. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord

We pray for those who carry grief in their hearts at this time of the year, that whatever sorrow afflicts them they will be comforted by the love of friends and the embrace of the community. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord

We pray for our Diocese, on the path to the Diocesan Assembly. *May we bring Good news to our needy world, as wind and fire for one another.* (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord

We pray for those who have died recently, . . . , and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time, that they will be led by the Good Shepherd to the banquet of eternal life. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

**CELEBRANT:** Faithful God, from the dawn of time you have watched over your people. Be with us always on our way through the seasons of our lives. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**REFLECTION:** It has been claimed that, except for some sincerely religious people, Christmas has become an occasion of dusty sentimentality – something pretty, yet not quite authentic. There is more than a little truth in this. Many people who all year long scarcely give Jesus' teachings a thought – much less live by them – at Christmas time wallow in cheap and sentimental piety. We need to be careful not to fall into the same trap. Mary, who is at the centre of today's Gospel, will help us. She is a great model. No sooner does she say her "Yes" to God, than she hurries to her cousin Elizabeth. Mary's religion was not merely sentimental. It was the expression of a genuine feeling, which she converted into deeds. By all means, let us light candles for our children and sing carols. But let us not be content with mere pious sentimentality.

Let us pray: Lord, help us to demand more of ourselves. If it's true that only love can redeem us, then help us, Lord, to let our love be real, and not confine it to one day in the year.

**THE PROCESSION OF THE GIFTS:** It would work well if the Commentator, at each weekend Mass, could, before Mass, seek two people to bring forward the Offertory Gifts of bread and wine. They can process to the altar with the gifts and with the collectors when they have finished their task and are bringing forward the people's monetary offering. Those carrying the bread and wine ought bring it up to the side of the altar, standing close to the altar, and stand there while the celebrant takes each gift and says the two "Blessed are you Lord God of all creation....." prayers. When they have been said, they bow with the celebrant to the altar, and then return to their seats.

## **Lighting the Advent Candle the Fourth Sunday of Advent**

### ***Christ our Light brings about change in us:***

The first candle is the candle of Love. The second candle is the candle of Hope. The third candle is the candle of Joy. The fourth is the candle of Peace. We light a fourth candle because Jesus makes peace between God and us so that we may live in the sight of God's presence. The candles are now lit.

### **Penitential Rite:**

**Celebrant:** Lord Jesus, you bless us with your love.

**Response: Come be with me.**

**Celebrant:** Lord Jesus, you are the light to the world.

**Response: Come be with me.**

**Celebrant:** Lord Jesus, you are our hope and our joy.

**Response: Come be with me.**

**Celebrant:** Let us pray, that we recognize the true peace of Christ.

**Opening Prayer:** Heavenly Father, may Christ shine in our lives, showing us the path of peace between God and all people. Amen.

**WELCOME:** This weekend we welcome Fr Peter Bickley to the parish while Fr Bernard attends a family wedding celebration in Melbourne. Thanks for coming to be with us Fr Peter. We hope you enjoy your visit.

**WE REMEMBER:** We pray for those who have died recently and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time including Bruce Turra, Kay Orgill, Marie Keily, Istvan Horvath, Kevin O'Rourke.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

**WE PRAY FOR THE SICK:** We pray the Lord's healing touch upon Ann Ford, Lesli Perera, Jean Huffer, Kellie Monson, Brian O'Connell, Fr Andrew Wise, Elly Van Den Broek, Connor O'Sullivan, Stephen Casonati, Shirley Deane, Peg O'Rourke and Shirley Devlin.

*"Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from mass ay sin, save you and raise you up."*

**ST JARLATH'S NEWS:** Prayer Meeting: The next Prayer Group meeting is on Monday, Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00pm in St Jarlath's hall. Everyone is welcome. Christmas Eve: Mass is at St Jarlath's at 9:00pm on Christmas Eve, followed by a cup of 'Christmas Cheer' in the hall afterwards. Everyone is welcome, Please invite family and friends to join with us all to celebrate Christmas. Centenary book: The Centenary Book, re-published, is now available at the church. Cost is \$12. See Bryan for a copy. Recycling Project: There has been a good response to our project to recycle suitable glass items. You can place yours in the bin at St Jarlath's after Mass any weekend, or see Bryan on Sundays. Cuppa on Sunday: Everyone is welcome every Sunday, for a 'cuppa' in the hall after Mass.

## **CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES - 2024:**

### **Christmas Eve:**

**6:00pm:** Family Mass at St John's, Trafalgar

**9:00pm:** Mass at St Jarlath's, Yarragon.

### **Christmas Day:**

**9:30am:** Mass at St John's, Trafalgar

**PILGRIMS OF HOPE:** In 2025 Pope Francis has proclaimed a Year of Jubilee. The theme for the year is 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Join us as we celebrate the opening of this year-long journey of hope and faith at St Mary's Cathedral, Sale, on 1st Jan 2025. This day is also the feast of Mary, Mother of God, patron of our Diocese. The Holy See also commemorates World Day of Peace this day. The Mass, celebrated by Bishop Greg, will begin at 11:00am and all are welcome. Following the Mass, light refreshments will be available. There will be an opportunity for you to pray and reflect on the Diocesan themes for the year as well as considering how we can all be *pilgrims of hope* in 2025.

**DIOCESAN CONSULTATION PROCESS 2024:** The final question parishioners were asked to think about in the Consultation Day process was: What are the specific issues and actions WE would like the Diocesan Assembly in February 2025 to consider looking forward through the next five years?

The response from our group of parishioners follows:

- Acknowledge the passion hope instils in a community and stress the importance of community in finding ways to promote and share faith. Inspire by example.
- Empower individual parishes to engage in community consultation to listen to what the personal/ individual/ collective needs are. How can we strengthen/ improve existing faith groups to promote individual spirituality?
- Attempt to address the role /impact of technology on the human spirit.
- Specific Pastoral Issues: aging population, diminishing mass-going numbers, difficulty of engaging young people in active faith.
- To promote "renewed life and shared mission": -Encourage care of elderly parishioners so that love in action is visible. Promote the "mini Vinnies" movement so that young people may experience the joy of good works. Encourage prayer for peace.
- More emphasis on establishing prayer groups to discuss and deepen our faith. Make more effort to engage young and old together in our communities.
- We would emphasise listening to others and their needs, leading to supporting and affirming actions.
- Prayerfulness, reflection, growth in understanding of the work of God in our lives for the future.
- Using the rituals of today that can be understood by the people of the times – not of the past. Use language that speaks to people today and meets their needs. Such change will not be without cost to some and must be approached with compassion.
- Develop our strengths of mission and discipleship. Look at ways to tap into the goodness and generosity of so many. Help us to find ways to develop in relationship with Jesus .

**OUR DELEGATES TO THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY:** Many thanks indeed to Lucy O'C, Chris L and Genevieve McC who have accepted nomination to represent our parish at the Diocesan Assembly in Feb. We can all be very grateful to them. It became necessary to find another venue for the Assembly, the challenges of staging such an event at Marist Sion College were becoming too great. So, Bishop Greg made the decision that we will assemble at Fed Uni, Churchill instead. It will be a much better facility for such a gathering.

**ON ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS:** Someone commented recently that it would be much easier if Christmas was celebrated on the Sunday, every year! We can understand why. The liturgical calendar is always rather crowded around this time, but it becomes even more complicated when Christmas falls on a Saturday or a Monday because that makes two holy days of obligation in a row.

Scholars have come up with several reasons for 25th December being chosen as the date for the celebration of Christ's birth, but none of these would seem to have any stronger a case than the suggestion of fixing the time for the celebration of Christmas as the last Sunday of the calendar year, say.

But this emphasis on Christmas Day is really not being true to the origins and long traditions of this feast. Since early times Christians celebrated Christmas as a season, not just a day. In the church calendar today Christmas Time is the period from 25th December until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

From the beginning, the readings and prayers for the season expressed the Church's understanding that Christmas is more than a commemoration of Jesus' birthday. It is rather the celebration of the beginnings of the mystery of salvation – of Christ's birth, revelation to the Jewish shepherds and the Gentile magi, baptism by John in the Jordan and first miracle – the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana.

Christmas has its own octave during which the feasts of St Stephen, St John and the Holy Innocents are celebrated. These saints are seen as having a particular relation to the Christmas mystery and are traditionally honoured as 'companions of Christ'.

The Sunday within the Christmas octave is celebrated as the feast of the Holy Family. On that date we celebrate the solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, a feast which highlights the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the incarnation and manifestation of the Saviour.

(With thanks to Liturgy Lines, Brisbane)

**CARITAS' VANUATU EARTHQUAKE APPEAL:** Our neighbour in the Pacific, Vanuatu, has experienced two earthquakes within 24 hours impacting over 116,000 people and causing significant damage to buildings and infrastructure. The main hospital in Port Vila has sustained extensive damage and is overwhelmed by the mass casualties.

There are hundreds of people have been injured or trapped under rubble and at least 14 people deceased with the death toll expected to continue to rise. People remain fearful of further disaster, as Vanuatu is one of the most susceptible countries to natural disasters such as earthquakes, storm damage, flooding, and tsunamis.

This appeal will provide support to our 'on the ground' partners who are ready to respond to the humanitarian requirements by providing emergency shelter, clean water, food and other essentials, psychosocial support, and recovery efforts.

Let's keep the people of Vanuatu in our thoughts and prayers in these difficult days, and as Christmas approaches. You could donate today: <http://www.caritas.org.au/vanuatu>

### **LITURGY ROSTER: GREETER/COMMENTATOR:**

15.12 T Glenys Y Elisabeth

22.12 T Yvonne Y Angela

### **MINISTERS OF THE WORD:**

15.12 T Elio Y Ken

22.12 T Gail Y Sue

Anyone else happy to be on the roster. Let us know. We would be happy to hear from you!!

### **ST JOHN'S CHURCH:** December Roster

Cleaning: Glenda and Ann Altar Linen: Pat Mc D

Special thanks from of us all to those who care so carefully and generously for our beautiful churches and properties.

**FINANCE REPORT:** Last weekend: Planned Giving: \$387.00); House Collection \$400.60;; If there's anyone who'd like to join the planned giving program, either through envelopes or automatic credit card giving, please see Fr Bernard or Julianne at the parish office.

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** *Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.*

**FIRST READING:** (Micah 5:1-4)

The Lord says this: You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel; his origin goes back to the distant past, to the days of old. The Lord is therefore going to abandon them till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth. Then the remnant of his brothers will come back to the sons of Israel. He will stand and feed his flock with the power of the Lord, with the majesty of the name of his God. They will live secure, for from then on he will extend his power to the ends of the land. He himself will be peace.

The Word of the Lord

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** from Ps 79

LEADER: Lord, make us turn to you;  
Let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
shine forth from your cherubim throne.  
O Lord, rouse up your might,  
O Lord, come to our help.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,  
look down from heaven and see.  
Visit this vine and protect it,  
the vine your right hand has planted.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,  
the man you have given your strength.  
And we shall never forsake you again:  
give us life that we may call upon your name.

Lord, make us turn to you;  
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

**SECOND READING:** (Hebrews 10:5-10)

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world: You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation, prepared a body for me. You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin; then I said, just as I was commanded in the scroll of the book, 'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.' Notice that he says first: You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them; and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
I am the servant of the Lord:  
may his will for me be done.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL:** (Luke 1:39-44)

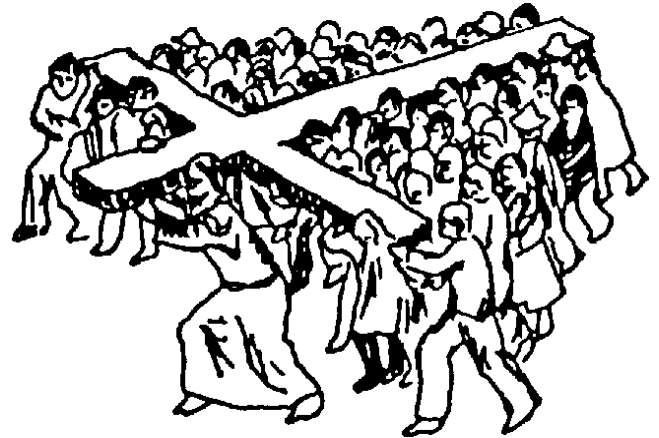
Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord

**MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION:**

We proclaim your death, O Lord,  
and profess your resurrection  
until you come again.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.*



Scripture Readings taken from the Roman Missal Lectionary 1981. Used with permission

