

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.

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.



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Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

Fourth Sunday of Advent / C

20 December 2015

LEAPING FOR JOY

In his infancy narratives, Luke, both physician and artist, uses a style called *diptych*, where two stories are presented in parallel frames or panels for easier comparison. Two birth narratives are being contrasted: that of John the Baptist and that of Jesus. A cursory look at the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke reveals parallel stories of annunciation, birth, circumcision and naming, witnesses of birth, and growth.

The visitation story in today's Gospel is unique in the sense that it is not presented in *diptych*. Again, this is due to the creativity of Luke who breaks the pattern. After focusing on parallel events as they develop in separate scenes, Luke now brings the most important characters together in one setting. We have Mary meeting Elizabeth (and Zechariah); but more importantly, the main protagonists – Jesus and John – meet even while both are still in the womb. They are presented together in one stage (setting).

Underlined in today's Gospel is the spirit of joy that sweeps through the atmosphere like a December breeze. It is joy that comes with the coming or visitation of the Lord. This "Lord" now comes in the person of the baby yet to be born; thus, Elizabeth feels privileged to be visited by Mary, the "mother of my Lord". Even John the Baptist leaps for joy, Luke's way of anticipating and expressing an image we find in John: the joy of the *shushben* or "friend of the bridegroom" is made complete when he hears the voice of the bridegroom (Jn 3:29).

Joy and gladness because of the Lord's visitation: we are reminded of it by the Preface of John the Baptist in the Mass: "His birth brought great rejoicing; even in the womb he leapt for joy, so near was man's salvation". In the ancient world, the coming of a great ruler brought rejoicing to the populace. Rome grandiosely proclaimed September 23, the birthday of Emperor Augustus: "the birthday of the god marked the beginning of the good news for the world". Luke contradicts this propaganda by saying that it is the coming of Jesus that is the real good news and the cause of true joy. The Baptist feels it while still in the womb. The herald angel will announce it on the night Jesus is born.

FIRST READING Mic 5:1-4

A reading from the prophet Micah.

Out of you will be born the one who is to rule over Israel.

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.

RESP PS Ps 79:2-3, 15-16, 18-19. R. v. 4

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

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

2. 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. R.

3. 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. R.



SECOND READING Heb 10:5-10

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

I am coming to do your will.

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.

St Clement of Rome Church

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Office Hours: Monday—Friday 9:00am-3:00pm



PARISH DIARY

Mon 21st Dec @ 7.30pm—Open Parish Meeting in the Clifton Centre
 Thurs 24th @ 5.30pm—Christmas Family Mass
 Thurs 24th @ 8pm—Italian Vigil
 Thurs 24th @ 11.30pm—Carols
 Thurs 24th @ 12—Midnight Mass
 Fri 25th @ 9am—Christmas day Mass
 Fri 25th @ 11am—Mass in Italian
 Sat 26th & Sun 27th—Baptisms

Feast Days
 Monday—St Peter Canisius—W
 Wednesday—St John of Kanty—W
 Friday—The Nativity of the Lord
 Saturday—St Stephen, The First Martyr

Collections Last Weekend
 1st Collection (Thanksgiving)
 Actual — 2,401
 2nd Collection (Presbytery)
 Actual — 982
Many thanks & every Blessing!

Parish Priest : Monsignor Franco Cavarra (Parish Office 9850 3262) or (Presbytery 9850 6073)
Italian Chaplain: Fr Vito Pegolo (0419 736 890), **School Principal:** Mr Michael Heenan (9850 1216)
Pastoral Associate: Cecilia Tan (9850 3262), **Parish Secretary:** Bernadine De Silva (9850 3262)
Communion to the Sick: Trish Atherton (9850 2746), **Clifton Centre:** Mary Hansen (9850 1860)
St Vincent de Paul Helpline (1300 305 330)

Christmas Vigil Mass 2015: Thursday 24 December @ 5.30pm

Plans are truly in place for our Vigil Mass. We encourage all children to come dressed as shepherds/angels/inn keepers/stable animals etc. We have at least 30 children participating and the excitement is building! Thanks to Susan Russo, Barbara McNeair and Jo Millette for their leadership in this project. If you have any concerns or ideas, please contact Susan Russo @ 0411436925 or email: suzperry@hotmail.com or Cecilia.Tan@cam.org.au

Special Collection—this weekend

Melbourne Overseas Mission collection will be taking place this weekend. Thank you for your contribution.

Christmas Mass Time Table - 2015

Thursday 24th December
 5.30pm Family Mass, 8.00pm Italian Vigil, 11.30pm Carols and 12.00 Midnight Mass
Friday 25th December
 9.00am Mass & 11.00am Mass in Italian
 Weekend Masses as per usual



Baptism Welcoming

This weekend we welcome:
Amelia Westein, Oliver Gazzola, Adam & Riley Boyd and their families. Let us remember them in our prayers.



OPEN PARISH MEETING

Monday 21st December 2015

7.30pm

Clifton Centre

Early next year St Clement of Rome School will be undertaking a major building project here on site which will take up the whole year. Therefore, we invite all Parishioners to attend a special open meeting on Monday the 21st of December at 7.30pm in the Clifton Centre, where your questions and concerns can be addressed and if possible followed up.

Mgr Franco Cavarra

&

The Parish Finance Committee



As the year draws to a close and a new one begins, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their tireless giving of their time and gifts in the general upkeep and running of the parish, including those who are involved in the many different ministries. It is often too easy to take for granted, the beautiful surrounds that add significantly to our worship and celebrations. Much of the work remains unseen and often unnoticed. It is timely and right that we express a big and sincere 'Thank You' to every volunteer for their dedicated service. May the Peace, love, hope and joy of Christ be upon all.

Mgr Franco Cavarra PP, Cecilia Tan & Bernadine De Silva

MASS TIMES, RECONCILIATION & OTHER SACRAMENTS

Mass Times: Sat 5:30pm (Vigil), Sun - 9am, 11am (Italian) & 5.30pm.

Tues 9:15am (Italian) & 7.30pm (English), Wed-Sat 9:15am. Eucharistic Adoration: Tues-Sat 8-9am.

Reconciliation: Sat 10am & 6:30pm, Sun 10am (and on request). Marian Devotions: Sat 8.40am.

Baptisms: Welcoming (3rd weekend) & Baptism (4th weekend) every month. Weddings: By Appointment.

Recently Deceased : Amedeo Bragagnolo (Italy)

Death Anniversaries : Mirco & Teresa Carletti, Maria Macri, Carmen Attard
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

RCIA: There are pamphlets available for distribution to anyone you may know who may wish to find out more about the Catholic faith. Please take some home and invite others to come to know the beauty that is the Catholic faith. This program is not only for those who wish to become Catholics. Our sessions are run to benefit anyone who wish to deepen their understanding of the Sacraments and what the Catholic Church is about. We have already received inquiries for next year. Sessions will begin in February 2016.

YOUTH GROUP: We would like to build a team to begin discussion and planning for a Parish Youth Group to begin in 2016. If you are keen to be part of the team, please contact Linda Cultrera @ tel: 0412411731 or email: cultrera@bigpond.net.au

CHILDREN'S SACRAMENTS :

Enrolments for 2016 : We have started taking enrolments for 2016. Please contact the Parish Office or email Cecilia.Tan@cam.org.au. The dates are now available on the website.

The sequence for the sacraments for 2016 are as follows :
 Term one : Reconciliation, Term two : Eucharist, Term Three : Confirmation.

Duration of preparation of each sacrament : 10 weeks
 Classes will be held every Tuesday after school from 4pm—5pm.

Children's Liturgy : Every 2nd and 4th weekend of each month except during school holidays.

Catechists : If you would like to share your faith with young children, do consider becoming a catechist to help our children grow in their faith through the Sacramental Program.

Email : Cecilia.Tan@cam.org.au

Important Information

Following services & Masses will not operate in January and will resume in February 2016.

- * Morning Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- * Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena (Sat 8.45am)
- * Sunday 5.30pm Mass

Parish Office Hours : After the 19th/20th weekend, office will be opened only From Wed to Fri from 10.30am to 4pm until second week of January. Please leave emergency messages on 9850 3262 (Parish Office) or 9850 6073 (Presbytery). Thank you.

LITURGY ROSTERS

Sat 5.30pm Sun 9am Sun 5.30pm

19 th /20 th Dec	Sacristan	John Bruce	Francis & Gloria Ng	Jan McQueen
Advent 4	COMMENTATOR	May Teh	Rocco Gagliardi	Jan McQueen
	Reader	John Bruce	Fulvia erasolimo	Maria Papalia
	Special Ministers	Warwick Wright	Elsa Waters	Jan McQueen
		Loretta Galante	Chris Zordan	May Teh
		Reg Lecordier	Trish Atherton	
			Anne Fusca	
			Rita Gagliardi	
			Gabriella Grande	
			Silvia Mascitti	

Christmas Roster

		Vigil Mass 5.30pm Christmas Eve	Midnight Mass	9am Christmas Morning
24 th /25 th Dec	Sacristan	Francis/Rita/Corinne	Francis/Rita/Corinne	Francis
	COMMENTATOR	John Bruce	Mark Gregor	Tim Landsberg
	Readers	Grace Canatelli John Bruce	Rocco Gagliardi May Teh	Christine Landsberg
	Special Ministers	Warwick Wright	Donna Hoyne	Trish Atherton
		Reg Lecordier	Rita Gagliardi	Anne Fusca
		Loretta Galante	Gloria Ng	Eleanora Mascitti
			Gabriella Grande	David Mitchell
			Maria Papalia	Pam Mitchell
			Martin Teh	Gloria Ng
			Chris Zordan	Elsa Waters