



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF IVANHOE

St Bernadette's Church, West Ivanhoe

Mary Immaculate Church, Ivanhoe

Mother of God Church, East Ivanhoe

No. 52

24 – 25 December 2011

CHRISTMAS: YEAR B



Reflection:

If you were to give just a cursory glance at a collection of 'religious' Christmas cards, or even the local nativity scene, you would undoubtedly see a varied assortment of shepherds, wise men, livestock and angels gathered around the holy family in a timber structure of some sort. Even the most casual reading of Luke's account of the birth of Christ would reveal that most of the nativity figurines are missing! Our retelling of the birth of Christ tends to be an amalgamation of the Luke and Matthew versions with a bit of creative tradition thrown in for good measure.

The Luke account of the nativity carries a very specific theology that runs throughout the rest of that gospel. It is a theology that places the outcast and downtrodden at the centre of Jesus' mission. In this account, Jesus is born outside the town because there is no room for Joseph and Mary within the safety of the inn. Like those he will minister to later in life, Jesus is born 'on the edge' – even outside the boundaries. Rather than the impressive 'Wise Men' of the Matthew infancy account, the witnesses to Jesus' birth in the Luke account are lowly shepherds. Unlike the somewhat romantic notion we may have of shepherds, in Jesus' time they were regarded as little better than thieves and cut-throats. All they could be trusted to do was tend sheep outside of townships and away from 'civilised' society. They held one of the lowest positions in Jewish society. The gospel writer's choice of these witnesses to the birth of Jesus is a very deliberate one that clearly announces the purpose and direction of Jesus' mission.

Historical Context – The Nativity scene:

St Francis of Assisi is credited with setting up the first nativity scene and thus establishing a tradition that is carried on today in homes, churches and public spaces in Christian communities everywhere. In 1223, in the town of Greccio he created a life size tableau of the nativity scene to heighten the awareness of the celebration of the birth of Christ. It included statues of the holy family and a live ox and donkey. The inclusion of the livestock has no scriptural support and it is to Francis that we owe the array of sheep, oxen and donkeys that have become standard inclusions in our nativity scenes.

Graphics: © Liturgical Commission, Brisbane 2012 © Gregory Sunter, Liturgical Commission, Brisbane 2011



Welcome to all who have come to celebrate Christmas in the Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe:

We wish all parishioners, friends and visitors a very happy and a holy Christmas, as well as a safe and peaceful New Year. *Best wishes - Fr Thang, Leadership Teams & Parish Office Staff*

THE WORD

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Saviour is born to the world. True peace has descended from heaven.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-7

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt and consumed by fire.

For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

V. 1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless his name. **R.**

V. 2. Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory & his wonders among all the peoples. **R.**

V. 3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise,
Let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord
for he comes, he comes to rule the earth. **R.**

V. 4. With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. **R.**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good. **Thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, alleluia! Good News and great joy to all the world: today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census - the first - took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn. In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour'.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL: We pray: Christ, be our light

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: The Word of God became man; we have seen his glory.

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY:

We remember all in need of prayer at this time including Tony Nibali, Barbara Ballek, Joy Meacham, Phoebe Chiera Hone, Sheila Ryan, Beryl O'Keefe, Bev Horne, Sidney Delaney, Cathy Lengyel and Jill Brophy. We remember all who provide care and support for those in need.

We remember Pat Foster and Dr Frank Stevens who have died recently. We remember Daphne Cattanach, Ester and John Zahra, Doug Arch, Liliana Basile, Alice O'Dea and George Grasso whose anniversaries occur at this time. May they rest in peace.

This Week's Readings: Christmas Day: Year B

Isaiah 9:1-7

Psalms 95:1-3, 11-13

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

Saint and Feast Days:

Mon 26th December: St Stephen

Wed 28th December: The Holy Innocents

Fri. 30th December: The Holy Family

Tues 27th December: St John the Evangelist

Thurs 29th December: St Thomas à Becket

Sat. 31st December: St Sylvester

Next Week's Readings: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: Year B

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalms 66:2-3, 5-6, 8

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:16-21

HAPPENINGS ACROSS THE PARISH

Saturday 24 Dec

10.00am

Reconciliation

St Bernadette's Church

Saturday 31 Dec

10.00am

Reconciliation

Mary Immaculate Church

INCLUSIVENESS

HOSPITALITY

SERVICE

MISSION

From Fr John Cunningham:

I would like to thank Father Thang and the Pastoral Leadership Team of the Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe for their kind invitation to attend Fr. Thang's Installation as Parish Priest on Saturday 26 November. It was a very meaningful and inspiring evening for me.

My thoughts go out in thanking Fr. John Rogan, the first Parish Priest of the Ivanhoe Cluster, who died all too soon. I never had the pleasure of meeting John, but in my time in Ivanhoe, I got a sense of his vision and the plans he had for the future, of the new parish for Ivanhoe. His spirit helped me greatly.

I acknowledge and thank the office staff for their commitment over the years - secretaries Georgette and Ruth, and Helen O'Brien, our book-keeper, under the direction of Kevin Bricknell our accountant. The parish benefitted greatly over the years from the vision and hard work of Pastoral Associates, Sr. Joy Hanrahan, Leanne Earl and Amanda Smith, as well as Pat Jones as Parish Liaison & Outreach representative.

The Parishes of Mary Immaculate, Mother of God and St. Bernadette's became the Ivanhoe Cluster which in turn came together under one banner, the Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe. The Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe has continually received great support from former Parish Priests, Fathers Maurie Cooney, Des Magennis and Paul Gurry.

I would also like to thank Bishop Hilton Deakin for his ongoing support, as well as assisting the Korean community with their presence within the parish of Ivanhoe. Hilton was crucial in bringing about this development to our parish. Father Len Thomas was vital to our parish during my time and his insights and advice were critical to the development of the Ivanhoe parish, especially through his presence in the parish over the years and his inclusiveness towards to the Korean community.

The Encouragement I felt in seeing all the Parishioners from the three Churches coming together as One Church, One Parish, gave me a great sense of Hope, for the future of the Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe. No one likes change; it takes away our sense of the familiar, our sense of security; but without change we can become stagnant and the life of our parish will not develop or grow.

I congratulate the parishioners of the Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe who have taken up the challenge, stepping away from the familiar and having the courage to join together as one community by supporting each other with the new Parish Priest, Fr. Thang and the Leadership Team. May the journey you have started continue to build upon the foundations that have been laid, encouraging and supporting each other in the development of your Parish through service and support of one another.

I have always struggled with my faith - the faith of the Catholic Church of my childhood and latter years. For me Jesus is God with us. In his living, he shows us what living can be about. **It is about dying** - dying to our darker side which in turn gives hope to those around us. It is about dying to our selfishness, blindness and thoughtlessness so that we can give life to our families and communities. It is what makes us truly human.

At Ivanhoe, we have faced many changes that challenge us to be open to others, to reach out to our friends, family, congregations and to our world. We are working towards a united Parish, where we can be as one. Just two final comments, one from Pope Benedict: "Each of us is truly called, together with Jesus, to be bread broken for the life of the world." The second is from Susan Florence: "Change is a place of seeing beyond the life you planned into New possibilities of what life can be." **- Fr John Cunningham**

Thank you from Fr Thang: I would like to thank parishioners for their best wishes, cards and gifts over recent weeks. I would like to sincerely thank all parishioners and schools in the parish community for their sense of welcome, assistance and support since the beginning of the year.

Thank you: We sincerely thank Fr Len Thomas for celebrating Mass on Christmas Eve at Mother of God and Fr John Cunningham for celebrating Mass on Christmas Day at Mary Immaculate. We are grateful for their support and assistance to our parish, as well as their generosity of time and spirit. – **Fr Thang**

From Father Len: Fr Len Thomas offers Christmas greetings to all parishioners and friends in Ivanhoe.

Supporting the Exodus community - our neighbours in West Heidelberg: For several years, we have elected to help Exodus by having a collection at all Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. However, there have been a number of collections recently - all for worthy causes - so the Leadership Team has decided that, this year, a donation will be forwarded from parish funds. – Pastoral Leadership Team

St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal:

The local Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank all concerned for their generous contributions to the Christmas Hamper Appeal which will assist and support many of our neighbours in need.

Change of location of Weekday Masses:

From the beginning of January 2012, there will be a direct swap between Mother of God and St. Bernadette's: Tuesday Mass will be at Mother of God and Friday Mass will be at St. Bernadette's - the time, 9.15 am, remains the same. This means will assist in providing First Friday Mass at St. Bernadette's.

Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions:

In your Christmas prayer, you may remember to pray in *Thanksgiving* for the Congregation of *Our Lady of the Missions*, who begin celebrating the 150th Anniversary of their Foundation in Lyon – France on Christmas Day 1861. Christmas Blessings to you all – Sister Marie Crosbie RNDM

Mother of God Church Rosters 2012: The rosters for 2012 have been emailed to those with email addresses. If you have not received a copy via email, please pick up your named copy from the church foyer.

Parish Office:

The Parish Office will be attended as usual from 28 December 2011 – 6 January 2012. The Office will be attended at different intervals whilst I am on leave from 9 – 27 January, and brief newsletters containing Mass items will be prepared in advance. Fr Thang will be available for Masses during the week and at weekends.

Items for the newsletter, notices of deaths and anniversaries need to be given to the Parish Office **no later than 5.00pm, Wednesday each week**. Notices received after this time will be placed in the following week's newsletter. Notices and items can be left in locked letterbox near front door of the Parish Office at 4 Waverley Ave, Ivanhoe. Phone 9499 1515, fax 9499 9959; or email: catholicparisfofivanhoe@bigpond.com - Ruth

Parish of Ivanhoe Playgroup:



The Parish of Ivanhoe Playgroup offers a welcoming and supportive environment where parents and children can play, learn and have fun together.

Ages: The playgroup suits children aged between 0- 4 years

Venue: Mary Immaculate Church Hall, 4 Waverley Ave. Ivanhoe

Session Times: Wednesday 9 - 11am or Thursday 9 - 11am

Activities: Coordinated weekly art/craft activities, educational toys to explore, books, shared singing time, large sandpit and bikes for outdoor play and so much more.

For more details, please contact Liz Shearer: Phone 0411 345 664 or Email: liz.shearer1@gmail.com

MASSES NEW YEAR 2012

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|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| New Year's Eve | Saturday 31st December: | 6.30pm | St Bernadette's |
| New Year's Day | Sunday 1st January: | 9.00am | Mary Immaculate |
| | | 10.30am | Mother of God |
| | | 11.00am | St Bernadette's - Korean |

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| Parish Office: | 4 Waverley Ave, Ivanhoe 3079 | | |
| Phone: | 9499 1515 | Fax: | 9499 9959 |
| Website: | www.ivanhoecatholics.com | Email: | catholicparishofivanhoe@bigpond.com |
| Parish Priest: | Fr. Thang Vu | 63 Wilfred Rd, East Ivanhoe | 9499 5440 |
| Secretary: | Mrs. Ruth Villani | Office hours 9.00am – 5.00pm | 9499 1515 |

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND 31 December 2011 – 1 January 2012

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|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>ST. BERNADETTE'S:</u> Saturday 6.30pm | Lector E. Jowett | Special Ministers B. Jowett, Sister Carmel | |
| <u>MARY IMMACULATE:</u> Leader Sunday 9.00am | Reader | Coordinators M. Gilbo | Counters L. McInerney, M. Rocco |
| <u>MOTHER OF GOD:</u> Sunday 10.30am | Sacristan As available Altar Society: | Lector As available P. Mendes | Special Ministers As available Choir Coordinators: School holidays |

First Collection – Thanksgiving: Envelopes: \$2,757.05 Loose cash: \$469.55 **Total: \$3,226.60**

Second Collection – Presbytery: **\$ 648.60**