

The Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah was a prophet who lived in the 8th century before the Birth of our Lord. He was both a politician and a poet, and his encouraging words would have the power to lift us out of our own world to a life that God is preparing for us. Isaiah's images tumble over one another in their exuberance. Last week we had an image of a joyful pilgrimage to high mountains where nations streamed into it, a place where pilgrims will be instructed in the ways of God.

Isaiah is the most frequently heard voice of the Advent season, not only on Sundays but on many of the weekdays. We are given Isaiah as a companion who turns us toward the future, that blank slate beyond our sight that can fill us with fear and anxiety.

Isaiah voices the hope and longing of God's people in exile as they await the time of their release. They dream of the days when God's rule will prevail and wars will cease, the days when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks (Is 2:4)." We long for the time when all hatred and prejudice will cease, when the streets will be safe, and the elderly will not live in fear, when "the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the young lion shall browse together (11:6)."

In a world where there is so much violence, so much injustice of all kinds and so many disasters, we are called to remember Isaiah's image of dead stump sprouting a shoot that will bud and blossom into new life. Isaiah summons us to wait for joy.

St John the Baptist

John the Baptist appears on the second and third Sundays. This Sunday, we are introduced to John's familiar features: a lone figure in the desert, dressed with camel skin, eating bugs and honey. His messages are blunt and direct: personal conversion, make our paths straight to prepare of the ways of the Lord. This is the John who does not have a moment of self-doubt or questioning, hurling his words at the local leaders. "Bunch of snakes," he shouts, "give me proof you are going to change." Not exactly someone we would want to run into while we were out pre-Christmas shopping.

And if we thought he was tough, it didn't take long for him to tell us he was only the warm-up for the main act. The One who is coming would sweep with a very big broom, and all who got caught in the bristles would be thrown into the fire. That's our John the Baptist!

On the third Sunday, we are presented with a very different John. Some time has passed in the gospel, and he has been put prison because of his critical sayings about the King Herod and his wife. He is assailed by doubt: "Are you really the Messiah who we await – you who are non-violent, forbearing and forgiving?" We can hear the desperation in his words.

This John is our companion when we are desperately waiting for something to make things dear in our life. When we sit in the silence of our prisons, feeling vulnerable, wondering if it has been worth it; whether the "it" is a job, a relationship, a marriage, or life itself, John joins us in our uncertainty, our doubts, and sits with us. He is a companion to us in the darkness of depression while we wait for the light to pierce what seems impenetrable.

Sources: Glenstal Bible Missal, For Sundays and Sacraments, 1983.

James Wallace CSsR, Three Companions for the Advent Journey, www.catholicireland.net/three-companions-for-the-advent-journey

HAPPENINGS ACROSS THE PARISH

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|------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Saturday 7 Dec | 10.00am | Reconciliation | Mary Immaculate Church |
| Tuesday 10 Dec | 9.15am | Mass & Mother of God P.S. JG, JW & Prep | Mother of God Church |
| Wednesday 11 Dec | 12.00 noon | Outreach Christmas Lunch | see newsletter item |
| Friday 13 Dec | 9.15am | Mass & St Bernadette's P.S. Seniors | St Bernadette's Church |
| Saturday 14 Dec | 10.00am | Reconciliation – Advent Service | Mother of God Church |

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICES: Second Rite:

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|----------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Saturday 14 December | 10.00am | Mother of God Church |
| Friday 20 December | 7.30pm | Mary Immaculate |
| Saturday 21 December | 10.00am | St Bernadette's Church |

Schools Graduation / Carols Services:

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|---------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------|
| Monday 16 December | 6.00pm | St Bernadette's School at St Bernadette's |
| Monday 16 December | 6.00pm | Mother of God School at Mother of God |
| Tuesday 17 December | 6.30pm | Mary Immaculate School at Mary Immaculate |

Parish Leaving Collections 30 November – 1 December: Last weekend leaving collections were held for those in the Philippines affected by Typhoon Haiyan. Total amount given was \$1,740.50. Thank you to all concerned for your generosity. (Please see below in reference to tax deductions) - **Fr Thang**

Caritas Australia Typhoon Haiyan Appeal:

Those who wish to donate and receive tax deductions are advised to give directly via Caritas Australia.
- Melbourne Office (03) 9926 5706 or 1800 024 413, donate online at www.caritas.org.au or send to Cardinal Knox Centre, 383 Albert St, East Melbourne 3002 or GPO Box 9830 in your Capital City.

Welcome: We welcome Abbey Hines who is reading at Mother of God Church on Sunday 8 December

Melbourne Overseas Mission Appeal 7 - 8 December 2013:

This weekend there are Leaving Collections for the Melbourne Overseas Mission as advised by the Archdiocese. Melbourne priests, parishes and parishioners have supported Melbourne Overseas Mission for over forty years. Major projects have focussed on Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone; and other projects include Peru, Pakistan and Botswana. Each year half a million dollars of donated goods which include medical, educational and clothing supplies are shipped to 90 locations situated around the Pacific and Africa.



Outreach News: **Christmas lunch Wednesday 11 December** – 12 noon at Yarra Valley Country Club. Bookings are essential & needed as soon as possible. Transport can be arranged if needed. **Cost:** \$26 per person. Contact: Sue 9499 1485, Helen 9499 7793 or Eileen 9499 7120

Sunday, 8th December, 5.00pm in the courtyard at the Parish Office: **Everyone most welcome!!**
How fortunate to be gathering on such a special feast day. Please make a note of the date now. To keep organization to a minimum it's **BYO everything.** A promise - Not an **agenda** in sight, nor **minutes** to write!

Christmas Lunch at Mother of God Church, Sunday 15th December:

Christmas Lunch and drinks will be available after 10.30am Mass on Sunday 15th December at Mother of God Church. All are invited and all are welcome. Please bring a plate of food to share.

Christmas Hamper Appeal 2013:

The local Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society will be preparing hampers for delivery to deserving families in our area. We invite parishioners to join us in this activity by placing donations of non-perishable food, gifts and funds in the box provided in each church. Boxes collected 15 December. Assistance in delivering hampers welcomed. Contact: 0419 798 120

Working Bee at St Bernadette's Community Centre – Saturday 14 December:

Together with the Koreans we are having a working bee and clean out at the St Bernadette's Community Centre on **Saturday, 14th December, between 10am and 2pm.** All contents need to be identified and claimed; otherwise they will be thrown out. This particularly applies to what is on top of and in the cupboards.

- If you still need to use storage at the community centre that can be discussed. If you think you have anything in the building that should be kept, please let me know on 0418 595 249 before 14th December, or come to the working bee (although I won't be there the *whole* time). – Sue Moorhen

Thanksgiving Envelopes 5 January – 29 June 2014 are available for collection in each church.

Mary Immaculate, Mother of God & St Bernadette's are now all in alphabetical order.

So that your contributions can be recorded accurately please use these envelopes only.

New numbers were allocated last year and it is recommended that older envelopes are not used.

Statements for Thanksgiving contributions for the period 1 January – 1 December 2013 are included with envelopes. Please feel free to deliver envelopes to those nearby or unable to collect them personally. Statements for those giving by **Credit Card or Direct Debit** are also available in each church.

There are three options for Thanksgiving contributions: Envelopes, Credit Card or Direct Debit. Please contact the Parish Office: **Mail:** 4 Waverley Ave, Ivanhoe 3079 **Phone:** 9499 1515 **fax:** 9499 9959; or **email:** catholicparishofivanhoe@bigpond.com

If you are unable or no longer wish to contribute as part of Thanksgiving contributions please contact the Parish Office **as soon as possible** so that envelopes are not sent when they are no longer required. - Ruth

INCLUSIVENESS

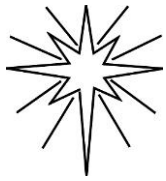
HOSPITALITY

SERVICE

MISSION

Mother of God Church Roster 2014:

Anyone who wishes to volunteer assistance at 10.30 Sunday Masses in the role of Sacristan, Lector, Special Minister, helping out with the flowers, assisting with the choir or and/or preparing power point presentations for Mass and running this at Sunday Masses please ring Helen Taylor: 9499 3041. Volunteers are most welcome. Alternatively, if any person on the roster wishes to make changes, please contact Helen as soon as possible. Thank you to all concerned for volunteering in the various roles in the church. – Helen 9499 3041



Christmas Cards and Calendars:

Cards and calendars are available in each church. Containers are provided for purchase **costs**.

- Christmas Cards are purchased from St Vincent de Paul Society.
Cost: **\$3.50** for a packet of 8 cards (plain cards) & **\$5** for a packet of 8 card (with pictures)
- Columban Calendars 2014 Cost: **\$9** each. *Graphics: www.Free-graphics.com*

Mother of God School Primary School 50th Anniversary - History Book: Orders are now available

If interested in ordering a book please contact office at Mother of God School 9497 1094. Books need to be pre-ordered and pre-paid before they are printed. To preview a copy of the book please go to office at Mother of God School, 66 Wilfred Rd, Ivanhoe East. Cost of the book is \$45.00. First delivery will be before the end of term if ordered by Friday 6th Dec. After this date delivery will be early in the New Year.

Fundraiser – MIPPS Sustainability Garden:

Mary Immaculate School is planning to develop a Sustainability Garden which includes vegetable garden, Frog Bog and a paved area. A fundraiser has been organised and you are invited to purchase paving bricks which will create a memorial in the school yard. Forms available at Mary Immaculate Church and from Mary Immaculate School, 9 Rockbeare Gve, Ivanhoe; phone: 9497 1827. **Please contact Sue as soon as possible:** Sue Pesavento: sue.den@optusnet.com.au

Heidelberg Choral Society - Brahms: Ein Deutsches Requiem & Dvořak: Te Deum

Under the direction of Peter Bandy, the choir will stage only one performance on **Saturday 14 December at 7.30pm**, at Ivanhoe Girls Grammar School Performing Arts Centre, Noel Street, Ivanhoe. Soloists: Teresa Duddy (Soprano) & Nathan Lay (Baritone). **Tickets:** \$35 adult or \$30 conc. **Bookings:** 9489 0806 or 9458 1727; online www.hcs.asn.au. **Information:** publicity@hcs.asn.au or www.hcs.asn.au - Ruth

Sacred Heart Parish, Preston Centenary:

Sacred Heart, Preston will celebrate 100 years in 2014. The parish's Centenary Committee is looking for old photos, articles and general memorabilia for their centenary publication. Email: preston@cam.org.au; post to Secretary, PO Box 1614, Preston South, 3072.

Recent Parliamentary Inquiry - links:

- Retired County Court Judge (and parishioner) David Jones talks about restorative justice:
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=st-mpwd-xew&feature=c4-overview&list=UUUP9TKG5Y8TKgXl5X4dDhOw>
- Melbourne Response - Archbishop Denis Hart welcomes Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry report 13 Nov: <http://www.cam.org.au/News-and-Events/News-and-Events/Melbourne-News/Article/15871/Archbishop-Denis-Hart-welcomes-Victorian-Parliamentary-Inquiry-report#.UpZ5ZsQW2SoTruth>
- Truth, Justice and Healing Council: www.tjhcouncil.org.au (Francis Sullivan, Chief Exec. Officer)
- Facing the Truth: www.cam.org.au/facingthetruth

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND: 14 – 15 December 2013

ST. BERNADETTE'S:

Saturday 6.30pm

Lector

K. Gillespie

Special Ministers

E. Crawley, J. Gray

MARY IMMACULATE: Leader

Sunday 9.00am

S. Valentino

Reader

E. Valentino

Mass Coordinators

S. & P. Kelly

Counters

J. & H. Pidutti

R. Wickremesinghe

MOTHER OF GOD:

Sunday 10.30am

Sacristan

A. Patterson

Lector

A. Tosolini

Special Ministers

C. Bellio, R. Katerelos, I. Chiera

Altar Society:

I. Chiera

Choir Coordinator: I. Chiera

First Collection – Thanksgiving: Envelopes: \$1,046.90 Loose cash: \$662.55 **Total: \$1,709.05**

Second Collection – Presbytery: **\$ 863.75**