



# Pastoral Cluster

Incorporating the Parishes of Holy Family Bell Park, Ss Peter & Paul's Geelong West & Holy Spirit Manifold Hts.

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## Reflection by Richard Leonard SJ

Recently some Christian scientists got to work trying to explain the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem. They came up with a complicated, and no doubt plausible, astronomical theory about how a certain brilliant star may have appeared around the time of the birth of Jesus. Though I was intrigued by their methods, I wondered why they bothered. Matthew's wandering star is not about astronomy. It's religious shorthand for describing how the heavens preside over and guide the events of the world. The image of a star is used in similar ways in the Books of Deuteronomy, Numbers, Isaiah and the Psalms. This entire feast is all about symbols, not science. Reported by Hippolytus as early as the third century, it is celebrated twelve days after Christmas, the number itself echoing God's goodness in

creating and recreating us.

The wise men's star is on a par with the other images Matthew uses. At the centre of each of the first three chapters of his Gospel there is an extraordinary event. In chapter one Joseph hears the message of an angel in a dream. In chapter two the wise men find Jesus by following a star. And by chapter three the heavens open and God speaks at the baptism of the Lord. By any standards that's quite an opening to a biography! It's all about the manifestation, or epiphany, of God's glory in the world.

And let's look carefully at where and for whom this glory is revealed. The first instance is to Joseph while he's in bed asleep. The second is to gentile astrologers who, by reporting their news to Herod, set up an immediate threat to Jesus. The third instance is to all those Jews who were coming to hear John the Baptist. Within

three chapters of Matthew's Gospel the circles of God's glory revealed in Jesus become more public and change lives. The lives of Joseph, the star gazers, John the Baptist and those who heard Jesus preach will never be the same again.

The Feast of the Epiphany is not an ancient version of Halley's comet. It is about how God's glory changes human hearts. T.S. Eliot got this point in his poem 'The journey of the Magi'.

'Birth or death? There was a Birth, certainly,  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death,  
our death.

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## - The Epiphany of the Lord -

(Year A/1 - Jan 8, 2017)

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Arise, Jerusalem, and look to the East  
and see your children gathered from the rising  
to the setting of the sun.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Lord, every nation on earth will adore  
you.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
We have seen his star in the East;  
and have come to adore the Lord.  
**Alleluia!**

### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

**2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
1st Reading: Is 49:3,5-6  
2nd Reading: 1Cor 1:1-3  
Gospel: Jn 1:29-34



### PARISH PRAYER:

God our Father, bless this parish so that we may love you more. Help the parents to be a good example to the children and our youth to grow in strength as good Christians.

Encircle our families with your loving care. To the sick grant health, to the aged bring serenity and to those in sorrow, joy. May we grow stronger in faith and may our love for one another become deeper in our daily living. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS:

Heavenly Father, help us to respond to and live out our mission in the Church, and in the world.

Help all your people to know their vocation in life and assist them to live it well. For your greater glory and for the service of your people, call many to be priests and religious.

Give those whom you call the grace to respond generously and to persevere faithfully.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

RECENT DEATHS:	Marijan Benic and Frank McCarthy
ANNIVERSARIES:	Tony Langerano, Patricia Dickinson, Lidya DeAngelis, Nell McFarlane and 1 year anniversary of Johanna Kolotelo
BAPTISMS:	Patience Koul, Quin Blake, Raegan Carr and Judd Jennings
PRAY FOR THE SICK:	Anita Capicchiano, Robert Hayes, Helen Lacy, Theo DaCosta, Geraldine Fay, June Smith, Cheryl Lambert, Ana Siketa

## Cluster News:

**OFFICE HOURS:** Please note that the Pastoral Cluster Office hours are now back to normal.



### HEARTFELT THANKS:

To all those who played a particular role in our Christmas Liturgies - our musicians and choirs, lectors, commentators, special ministers, collectors. Thankyou very kindly for a job well done! Your efforts enable the whole community to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas - God so loved the world that He gave us His only Son.

### AMALGAMATION OF THE THREE PARISHES OF THE PASTORAL CLUSTER INTO ONE PARISH WITH THREE CHURCHES:

The proposal for Amalgamation was forwarded to the Archbishop and his consultants for their consideration. The Archbishop has accepted the request for Amalgamation. The Archbishop's extensive note on this matter is on the noticeboard at the back of each Church.

As part of the process the Archbishop required that there had to be a designated locality of the new parish and a new Patron. Each of the three Churches and Schools retain their names but the new parish would be named after this Patron.

**Our new Patron is St Michael the Archangel and our locality is Bell Park. Hence the Amalgamated Parish is known as St Michael's, Bell Park.**

The Archbishop has asked that I speak about the Amalgamation on the weekend of 21/22 January 2017. If there are any questions or concerns please let me know so that they are incorporated into the presentation. *(Fr Gerard)*

### THANKYOU:

St Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank those generous parishioners from Holy Family and Ss Peter & Paul's for their gifts to the Jessie Tree Appeal. We distributed over 70 hampers to the people in need for Christmas.

We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.

I should be glad of another death.  
And so may this feast change our hearts and enable us to die to self so as to be born to God's glory that can and does shine through us. And may we remember that this epiphany

is not meant for us alone, but that we are called to go public with it and demonstrate our belief in today's feast by the way we live, the world we help create, and the one we strive to recreate.

## Roster for Next Sunday, January 15, 2017

(3rd Sunday of the Month)

### HOLY FAMILY

Commentators	8.00AM	K Saunders
Lectors		B Rainbow
Special Ministers		A Vanjek, P Ruggeri, R Culo
Welcomers		L Allum, P Ruggeri, R Culo
Projectionist		R Allum

### HOLY SPIRIT:

Commentators	6.00PM	M Carson
Lectors		J McKenzie
Special Ministers		G Wright,
Welcomers		I Cleary, L Coles, S Norris, T Stefek
Projectionist		P Eastman (even months) S Eland (odd)

### Ss PETER & PAUL'S:

Commentators	5.00PM	L Middleton
Lectors		K Maddalena, A Beachell
Special Ministers		K Maddalena
Welcomers		T McNair
Projectionist		D Whelan

### 9.30AM

A Scaddan
H Verdnik, T McMahan
C&J Taylor, M Fiorillo, I Raj, T Herath
E Dalton
C Resciniti

### 11.00AM

G Brown, M Kroger
L Fossey, L Stalio, L Sells
L Fossey
D Brown (even months)