



St Michael's Parish

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

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Minh Tran

OFFICE: 147 Separation St Bell Park 3215. Phone: 5278 1343

OFFICE HOURS: Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm Email: bellpark@cam.org.au

PARISH SECRETARY: Bernadette Bilogrevic Email: bellpark@cam.org.au Phone 5278 1343

PASTORAL WORKER: Sr Anne Lourey Email: anne.lourey@mercy.org.au Phone: 5278 1343

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS:

Holy Family	Peter Brunt	Separation St, Bell Park	Phone 5278 4634
Holy Spirit	Rachel Holdsworth	Minerva Rd Manifold Hts	Phone 5229 8298
St Patrick's	Luke Sheehan	Petrel St, Geelong West	Phone 5229 4412

Web Page Address:

www.stmichaelsbellpark.org.au
www.facebook.com/michaelparish.st

AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

RECENT DEATHS: Katina Cikoratic

ANNIVERSARIES: Charles & Marjorie McShanag; Catherine, Joe & Felix Capicchiano; Tony, Tilly & Lou Past; Ray Gurrie; Nell McFarlane; Peter Bahl; Gabrielle Shanahan, and the 1st Anniversary of Sr Philippa McDonald (RSM) and Cheryl Lambert

PRAY FOR THE SICK: Helen Dean



St Michael's Parish is committed to upholding the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults. Through our behaviour we show we are followers of Jesus who cares for all the children, the vulnerable.... If you have any questions or concerns, the parish safeguarding committee of Louise Iacobaccio; Bernadette Bilogrevic; Marg Gifford or Joan Mann can be contacted on 5278 1343 or 0408 823 274.

A REMINDER: Children must be accompanied to the toilet area by a parent or guardian at all times!

We acknowledge the living culture of the Wathaurong People, the traditional custodians of the land we stand on, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in this region.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

(Year A/1—25 December 2022)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.



RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!

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

TODAY'S READINGS

1st: Isaiah 9:1-7
 2nd: Titus 2:11-14
 Gospel: Lk 2:1-14

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

1st: Numbers 6:22-27
 2nd: Galatians 4:4-7
 Gospel: Luke 2:16-21

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.

St Michael's Parish at Prayer

Mass is at Holy Family Church on Sunday at 9.00am

WEEKEND MASSES:

Holy Family, Bell Park:

English... 9.00am Sunday

Croatian... 5.00pm Sunday

Slovenian... 12.15pm every 2nd Sunday of the month

Holy Spirit, Manifold Hts:

11am Sunday

Ss Peter & Paul's, Geelong West:

Saturday 5.00pm



WEEKDAY MASSES:

Holy Family: 9.15am **Tuesday & Thursday** (Followed by Novena to St Anthony),
8.45am (Rosary before Mass on Tues & Thurs)

Holy Spirit: 9.15am **Wednesday**, 9.15am **Friday**. (Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament)

Reconciliation after Friday Mass each week.

BAPTISMS: Please contact the Parish for new bookings

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Tuesday:.. *Meditation Group* 5.30pm *Parish Community Centre*

Legion of Mary 10.00am *Parish Community Centre*

Friday *Divine Mercy* 3.00pm *Holy Spirit Church*

STATUE OF OUR LADY:

If you are interested in having the statue in your home, please phone Cristita on 0435 780 716 or June on 0432 257 568

ROSTER FOR NEXT SUNDAY

(1st Sunday of the Month)

Ss PETER & PAUL'S -

Commentators M Carson
Lectors P Balkin
Special Ministers N Neeld,
Welcomers
Projectionist B Middleton
Co-Ordinator M Gifford, 5229 1656

5.00PM HOLY SPIRIT - 11AM

C Nielson
M Kroger
G Wright
L Fossey
L Coles

HOLY FAMILY

9.00AM

Commentators J Siketa
Lectors M Bird, P Carvalho
Special Ministers E Karakchi; B Kline; Sr Concepta
Welcomers K McArthur
Projectionist C Resciniti
Co-Ordinator J Mann, 0488 784 802



Wishing our St Michael's Parishioners a safe and Happy Christmas & the best for 2023! The Parish Office will close on December 23 and reopen on Wednesday January 25, 2023.



Christmas Message



Dear Parishioners

A Blessed Christmas and a rich 2023 with health, happiness, and grace to you and your families!

Once again, we celebrate Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He who brings Good News and 'peace on earth!

In the last few months, the tragedy of the war in Ukraine, the threat of war in Taiwan, the tension between South and North Korea, and the increasing struggle of the cost of living for many families and relationships all cause us to ask: 'Where is peace?' And 'why do so many feel an unease and lack inner tranquility?'

Many forget that the way to peace that Jesus teaches is indeed the way to God. The peace that Jesus gives develops within people as he is accepted as the way, the truth and the life. It is a relationship with him, which grows through prayer and good deeds. Meditating before the crib, we see a family with a newborn child, poor people who are first to know the good news, animals and the earth that needs us as we need them.

In this season, we come together again as a community of Faith and a time for family and friends. It is good for us to spend some time reflecting on the "reason for the Christmas season" Jesus Christ brings peace to all of people and nations. However, we are not passive spectators; we all have a role to play as disciples of this one Lord, Jesus Christ.

Significantly, we welcome Jesus as the focus in our parish celebrations and Christmas family gatherings. Christmas in the southern hemisphere coincides with holidays, which adds another layer of meaning to life and the purpose of living.

It is a time to proclaim our Faith that God so loved the world He sent His only Son "Jesus Christ" and that the Word became flesh of the Virgin Mary and dwells among us, journeying with humanity to its end goal-the Glory of God!

With Christmas grace, we, as Catholics, strongly profess our Faith. Christmas is about the Incarnation of the Lord - how history has become salvation history! Christmas is when we send Christmas cards (or text messages!) to one another and reconnecting with each other.

Through Manger scenes, Christmas lights and decorations in front of our homes, churches and streets, we are proud to show we are disciples of Jesus, and we want all to rejoice with us as we celebrate His birth!

To all members of St Michael's parish and your families, I extend Christmas blessings. Be assured you are in my prayers this Christmas season that you may know joy in your hearts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our schools, staff, children, parents and parishioners for their commitment to our parish this past year. The giving of your time, talents, and treasure to the Lord continues to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God. Our community has been able to help the poor and needy because of your generosity and care.

A big "thank you" to all who have worked so hard and diligently to make our Christmas celebrations genuinely remarkable!

I thank all who were involved in decorating our churches and setting up for the different liturgies this season and throughout the liturgical year.

I wish you a Blessed, Holy, safe, and peaceful Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

May the Peace, Joy, and Love of Jesus, born in Bethlehem, be in your hearts and homes.

Fr. Minh Tran

Community News:

- **NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS:** Thank the Almighty God for 2022 and welcome 2023 in the presence of the Lord. There will be Eucharistic Adoration and Holy Mass at **St Mary MacKillop Church, Bannockburn at 11pm on 31st December.** All are welcome! A cuppa and a fellowship will follow.
- **ANNUAL GEELONG SINULOG FIESTA CELEBRATION OF THE INFANT JESUS: STO. NINO**
(also known as the Infant of Prague). You are invited to attend -
 - **9 day novena** at **6pm** on the **5-13 January 2023** at **St Francis Xavier Corio.**
 - **Feast Celebration procession** followed by mass on **14 January** at **10am, St Francis Xavier Corio.** There is Filipino cultural dances, and fellowship with all the different parish communities in Geelong and Melbourne. Please contact Robert/Lina at 0411 839 827 for more info.
- **PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND:** The Parish of Ivanhoe has a couple of vacancies for its Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 11th-28th April 2023. if interested please visit our Parish Website www.melbcatholic.org/ivanhoe and click on the News Page or phone Fr Bill Edebohis 0427 879 733.
- **Journeying Together with Sr Nathalie Becquart XMCJ** Undersecretary of the General Secretariat of the Synod, for a conversation on 'journeying together'. **Tues 31 Jan 2023 10am-12noon. Catholic Leadership Centre, 576 Victoria Pde, East Melbourne, Registration is essential via www.trybooking.com/.CFARB. For Enquiries, contact proclaim@cam.org.au or 9926 5761**



St Michael's News

- **CUPPA & CHAT AFTER THE 9.00am MASS SUNDAY:** Parishioners are welcome to catch up for a cuppa & chat next Sunday after Mass in the Parish Community Centre.
- **SVDP:** A huge thank you to the St Michael's Community for your generosity and support of the Annual Jesse Giving Tree. Your donation of gift cards, toys & food items will definitely bring much joy to families this Christmas.

Reflection by Richard Leonard

A Pentecostal friend of mine tells the story of leaving church one Christmas morning as the preacher was standing at the door, greeting everyone and shaking hands. He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. The pastor said to him, 'You need to join the Army of the Lord!' To which my friend replied, 'I'm already in the Army of the Lord, pastor.' The pastor looked amazed and said, 'How come I don't see you here at church then, except at Christmas and Easter?' My friend whispered back, 'Because I'm in the secret service.'

If you are like my friend and find yourself in the 'secret service', you're in good company at Christmas time. The first hearers of the Christmas story were not much into church-going either. Shepherds in first century Palestine had to watch their flocks around the clock for fear of thieves and wolves. This didn't leave much time for temple attendance. They prayed where they were, as they were. These shepherds, however, were in the right place at the right time to hear the first Christmas message. Maybe they had the right disposition too.

Sometimes, publicly religious people can sound as though they know the mind of God better than God does! It's a trap we need to avoid and Christmas helps us do it. No one predicted the way God would send us a Saviour. No one knew the day or the hour of God's coming. No one foresaw that God would be born a homeless person. No one envisaged that the first witnesses to the birth would be illiterate shepherds from nearby fields. While some waited for a mercenary to overthrow the Romans, others held their breath for the procession of a heavenly king. The love of God, however, took flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone and came to us as a poor, defenseless baby.

That's our God, not bound by our precepts or expectations, but honoring the promises made to our ancestors, in the most surprising of ways. And Christmas provides us with the most tender images of our God, One who needs to be nurtured, suckled and held tight.

It's not a bad metaphor for our Christian faith either. If Christmas means anything to us then it's not an annual religious outing or something to fill in time on a public holiday. It's a moveable feast which we celebrate every time we do something just, loving or peaceful. That's why we gather here for the Eucharist each week: to be nurtured, fed, suckled and held in God's embrace, if only for a while, so that we find the courage and strength to go out from here, confront the wolves and thieves of our own day and be in the right place at the right time for God to find us.

As a result of that first Christmas, Christ wants to nurture a people who by their lives will change the world for the better, for all people everywhere. So this Christmas cash in your secret service card and, 'Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere. Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.'