



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
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Dear Parishioners and Visitors,

Happy New Year! On this first Sunday of the New Year, though I am not with you to celebrate together, I send my warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. May the Lord fill your hearts with His grace, bless you with good health, and guide you with His love throughout this year.

Looking back at the past year, we have accomplished so much together in building our community in faith, love, and hope. I want to express my gratitude to each one of you: our parish staff, the Parish Leadership Team, the Hope Team, the Liturgy Ministry, the Holy Angels Sisters, Sister Anne, our choirs, and all those who quietly serve our parish.

Thank you for making our parish a true home of faith.
Happy New Year and God bless,
Fr Minh Tran



AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

RECENT DEATHS: Rosa Valentina
ANNIVERSARIES: Rose & Alojz Seljak; Ljubica Mikin; Rosa Negro; Bronislaw Kakol; Lydia De Angelis; Tony Langerano (10 year anniversary)
PRAY FOR THE SICK: Hugo Riedl; Noella Duggan; Fay Sullivan; Gayla Sullivan; Fr Prakash Cutinha; Zofi Rudzki; Elizabeth Hoffmann

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, please contact the parish office on 5278 1343.

**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
(Year C)— 5 January 2025**

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion..



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!

TODAY'S READINGS

1st: Isaiah 60:1-6
2nd: Eph 3:2-3, 5-6
Gospel: Matt 2:1-12

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

1st: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11
2nd: Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7
Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

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.

Reflection by Richard Leonard

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.
But no longer at ease here, in the old
dispensation,
With an alien people clutching the 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.

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ROSTER FOR NEXT SUNDAY

(2nd Sunday of the Month)



Ss PETER & PAUL'S—5.00PM

Commentators M Carson
Lectors R Perera
Special Ministers P McGlinchey
Welcomers
Projectionist B Middleton
Co-Ordinator M Gifford, 5229 1656

HOLY SPIRIT—11AM

L Strzelecki
M Martin
L Fossey
L Fossey
R Martin

HOLY FAMILY

9.00AM

Commentator K Saunders
Lectors D Lunn, A Negro
Special Ministers J Genova, C Marcantonio; H Verdnik
Welcomers C Marcantonio; V O'Malley
Projectionist C Resciniti
Co-Ordinators C Simpson; B Kline

St Michael's Parish at Prayer

WEEKEND MASSES:

Holy Family, Bell Park:

English...9.00am Sunday
Croatian 5.00pm Sunday

Holy Spirit, Manifold Heights:

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)