

Gospel

2:1-14

from the holy Gospel according to Luke

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.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

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Jesus reminds us,

'Come to me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest.'

(Gospel of Matthew 11:28)

Gospel thoughts

by Dianne Bergant CSA

The Gospel situates the birth of Jesus within Roman rule of the first century. Through the Incarnation, the ordinary becomes transparent and reveals the extraordinary; the divine is known in the child. Only those of humble heart experience this wonder. They behold it and they come to embrace it. In fact, it is the nature of this child, born in history, to reverse the orders of power.

God is portrayed as a valiant liberator who champions the cause of justice and who brings a liberation that reverses history and the ways of war, power and oppression. This reversal is made more shocking by the fact that the one who is the mighty warrior and conqueror of the nations is a child. This child is the weak and voiceless one, the one who has neither power nor legal rights. God's reversal of the long-standing realities of this world is accomplished through the apparently insignificant, through the gift of this child who is given to us in the middle of the night.

Something new has happened: the age of God's fulfilment has arrived. The age of grace and fresh hope, made available to all people of good will, is an era of redemptive presence. Now all people can walk in the newness of life and grace. Yet, while this new age has begun, it is not yet fully realised. We live believing in its presence and awaiting its fulfilment. Although we are celebrating Christmas, we still await the final coming of the Lord.

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New Life!

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

The Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ



Every Christmas the Christ Child in the manger at Bethlehem invites us to stop and to pay attention to the things that are especially important in our lives: our loved ones, our family and friends - and our loving God who holds us in existence, in the palm of his hand.

When Christmas is over, an excellent way to grow in faith and to develop one's relationship with God is to join in the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays, here in our local community.

You will be most welcome!

If you would like to speak with a priest or a member of the parish staff, please call the Parish Office on (02) 4423 1712.

We would love to hear from you!

Wishing you and your family a happy and a holy Christmas!

Christmas & Holy Family Sunday

www.nowraparish.org.au

24-27 December 2009

Welcome to Christmas at St Michael's!

At the Masses on Christmas Day we welcome with open arms many whom we do not see regularly at Church.

- The Readings of Midnight Mass

First Reading 9:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
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...

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.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 95

R/ Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Second Reading 2:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

Gospel Acclamation Lk 2:10-11

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



St Michael's Parish, Nowra – Tel: 4423 1712 E-mail: office@nowraparish.org.au

Website: nowraparish.org.au Incorporates the Church Communities of St Michael, Nowra; St Patrick, Berry

Sacred Heart, Bomaderry; Mary, Help of Christians, Culburra; St Joseph, Kangaroo Valley; Holy Spirit, Vincentia

Christmas – Holy Family

25 and 27 Dec 2009



“The Word was made flesh. He lived among us.” – John 1.14

To all parishioners and visitors, a very holy, joyful and peaceful Christmas! Welcome home to all who are visiting their families for Christmas.

NOTE: There will be **NO** evening Mass in the Parish on Christmas Day

Thank You! As an expression of appreciation and gratitude for the support and generosity of so many parishioners throughout the year, and especially at Christmas time, a **Triduum of Masses** will be offered for your intentions and needs over the Christmas season. **Our prayer is that you and your families will have a blessed, peaceful and joyful Christmas.** (Fathers Pat, Richard, Ronan and Leo).

CHRISTMAS - 2ND COLLECTION –: As has been our parish practice for many years, the greater proportion of Christmas Day second collections will be donated to Aged care facilities in the Shoalhaven and to the Shoalhaven Linear Accelerator appeal

Sunday Holiday Masses:

NOWRA:..... 6pm Vigil; 8am, 9.30am & 6pm
BERRY:..... 8.00am
BOMADERRY:..... 9.30am
CULBURRA BEACH:..... 6pm Vigil & 8.00am
VINCENTIA: 6pm Vigil, 8.00am & 9.30am
KANGAROO VALLEY: 11.00am
SHOALHAVEN HEADS: Vigil 6.00pm on the 26th Dec, 2nd & 9th Jan 2010 only (Community Centre)

Feastdays:

Sat 26 - Stephen, first martyr: **Mass Nowra** 9am
Sun 27 Dec - The Holy Family
Fri 1 January - Mary Mother of God

Masses during the week:

Nowra: Mon 28 - Holy Innocents – 8.00am
Tues, Wed, Thurs 8.15am
Fri 8.00am and 11.30am; Sat 9.00am
Berry Tues: 5.30pm **Culburra:** Thurs: 5.30pm
Vincentia: Mon/Fri: 8.00am; Tues/Wed. 5.30pm
Kangaroo Valley: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 8.00am
Wed: 6.20am

Sunday 3 January - The Epiphany of the Lord

CHRISTMAS TELEVISION –. The Papal Vigil Mass for Christmas will still be broadcast by the ABC (ABC1) on Christmas Day from 11am - 1pm

A special thank you to all of our Organists and musicians who are helping to provide music for the Christmas Masses throughout the parish. Your support is greatly appreciated.

HOLY SPIRIT VINCENTIA Christmas raffle fund-raiser (in conjunction with the Triathlon to be held in Feb 2010) – tickets will be on sale at all Masses from this w/end. Proceeds will go towards funding of new Hall (plans progressing well).

Pope Benedict: Friday afternoon at sunset, Pope Benedict flipped a switch to turn on the Christmas lights adorning the 27 meter tall tree in St Peter's Square. "The Tree becomes the carrier of a light that is no longer its own but bears witness to the true Light that comes to the world," said the Pontiff, Pope Benedict added that the tree's presence could be compared to our existence in the world, "we are also called to bear good fruits to show that the world has truly been visited and redeemed by the Lord." In its own way, said the Holy Father, this tree "proclaims the coming of the Son of God, to all who see it; He who has come to make all things new and to call all creatures, from the humblest to the highest, to enter into the mystery of the Redemption and to be included in it." Pope Benedict invites us to look to Bethlehem, the city-symbol of peace, where peace has not yet been reached. Christians must become instruments and messengers of peace "with the sentiments of Jesus."



Catholics Come Home founder returns to Australia (18 Dec 09) The architect of one of the world's most successful TV outreach programs to non-practising Catholics, Mr Tom Peterson, of the US-based Catholics Come Home, has been in Australia this week, sharing his experiences in a series of workshops. Mr Peterson first came to Australia in May to address the National Catholic Media Congress. Surveys have shown that more than 100,000 Catholics have returned to Mass in the last year thanks in large part to the groundbreaking Catholics Come Home television advertising campaign. "These statistics show us that we have to try something different to encourage these people to return to the practice of their faith," Mr Peterson said.



We prayerfully remember **Yvonne Fraser and Peter Ryder** who died this past week; and our relatives, friends and parishioners at Christmas. *Mass will also be offered over the Christmas period for all parishioners who have died over the past 12 months. May they rest in eternal peace.*