



December 25th 2020 - The Nativity of The Lord

Christmas Message 2020

Fr Junjun.

Covid-19 is a life changer. It changes our way of life basically, the way we travel and work, the way we shop and interact with others and even the way we worship- we need to book in for Mass now, or sign our names in as we walk in.

The question is: does this change our lives for the better? Or does this 'worst of time' as some may call it, bring the best out of us?

Christmas is a celebration of looking for the best in us and the best for others- the best present, the best time with family and friends, the best place to spend Christmas with, the best Christmas party ever.

Because of Covid, our Christmas do's might be restricted still, yet these limitations should not stop us from making this Christmas a memorable one, even the best one yet.

First of all, we need Christ. Christmas is never complete if we don't include Christ- the birthday celebrant, the reason for this season, the main Character of the Christmas story.

"For God so loved the world" John the Evangelist would say, *"that he sent us his only begotten Son"* to share our struggles, to experience our humanity in order for us to experience God's divinity. At the birth of Jesus, God has made himself lower in order to lift us up higher. Because of Christ Jesus, we the people who were walking in darkness as the Prophet Isaiah would say, have now seen a great light.

In Christ, crisis does not have the final say. Christ does.

Christ **O**vercomes **V**iruses and **I**nfectious **D**iseases (Covid), and with him, our life is not just changed, but changed for the better if not for the best of us. Christ can save us and can keep us safe not only in this life, but for eternal life.

Let us remember Christ then in our Christmas do's. In Christ, God has come to be one like us human beings, not because we are the worst, but because he still sees us as the best and thus worthy of his full attention.

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OFFICE HOURS

9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Monday to Friday

PRESBYTERY

55 High Street Wodonga Vic

PARISH PRIEST

Father Junjun Amaya

0459-356-917

ASSISTANT PRIEST

Father Shibu

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0432 591 551

PASTORAL ASSISTANT

Sister Eileen Reardon

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WEEKEND MASSES

WODONGA

Sacred Heart Church

Saturday 5:00 pm.

Sunday 8:30 am 11.00 am

4th Sunday of each month

Youth Mass 5:00 pm

TANGAMBALANGA

Our Lady Help of Christians

2nd & 4th Sunday 10:30 am

BETHANGA

St Francis No Masses

DEDERANG

St Joseph's

1st, 3rd, Sunday 10.30 Mass

5th Sunday 10:30 am Liturgy

of The Word and Communion

MT BEAUTY

St Joseph's

1st to 4th Sunday 8.30am

5th Sunday 8.30am Liturgy of

The Word and Communion

WEEKDAY MASS:

Sacred Heart Church

Tuesday to Friday 9:15 am

SATURDAY

St Augustine's Church

Saturday 9.30am

RECONCILIATION:

Sacred Heart Church

Saturday 9.00am to 9.30am

Country Churches: Before Mass

Second, we also need to recognize the presence of Christ apart from the beautiful images in the Nativity scene. We need to see Christ, in the last, the least and the lost.

Christ is present in our streets, in our homes, in our workplaces, and in the people, who like the child in the manger are weak, helpless, vulnerable, simple, and hungry for our love, our care, our support, our time and our compassion.

I'm thinking particularly of the many people affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. My thoughts and prayers go to the many families being separated by distances and border restrictions, those who have lost their jobs, those who can't even have their friends visit them because of the lockdown, those victims of tragedy and natural disasters, those in the world experiencing famine, injustice, political conflicts, neglect of leaders and lacking directions.

Christ too, may be that man being rendered homeless because he could not afford to pay rent. He may be a boy or a girl at home who are surrounded by beautiful toys and all but never listened to, or seldom appreciated. He may be the person with disability next door living on his or her own. He may be the old widow in the neighbourhood who had no one to talk to, or whom nobody bothers to take notice.

Friends, just as this time of COVID-19 is a life changer, our Christmas 2020 should also be a life changer for us- in that we become more aware of the presence of Christ in our lives as well as we see Christ in others and we see others through the eyes of Christ.

Let us pray for this because only in making Christ alive in our lives that change for the better if not for the best is indeed possible. It is only in making Christ personal in our lives that we can also effect change for the best in the lives of others, for Christ is the only Saviour of the world.

What is that one thing or things in our lives, we would like Christ to change?

What is the change that we would like to see in the world?

With peace and the blessings from the Most High, on behalf of Fr Shibu & Dominic, I wish you all a blessed and a solemn Christmas celebration. And may the new year be wonderful year for all of us, with great resilience and hope.

God bless you all.

Fr Junjun

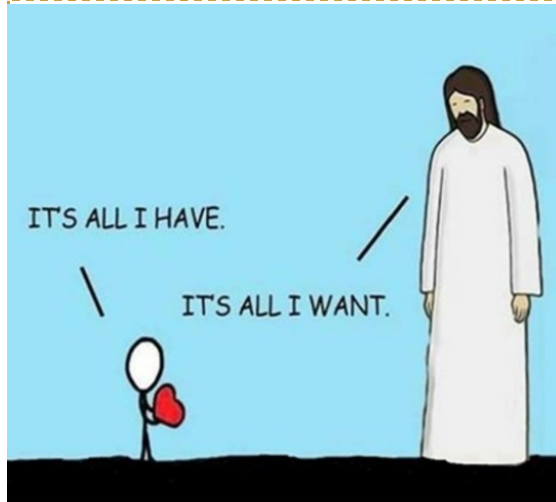
Prayers of the faithful Christmas Eve (day) 2020

Priest: Things have never been the same since the Son of God came down to earth to reveal to us the Father's amazing love for us. In awe of this great love of God, let us offer our prayers with humility inspired by the humility of God. In each prayer we say: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

- 1. Reader:** For the Church: We pray for the whole Church led by Pope Francis, and the College of Bishops, and for our local Church led by Bishop Shane Mackinlay. That Christ's light may be their light in leading the people of God journeying towards the kingdom of Peace and Light. *Lord hear us.*
- 2. Reader:** For our Country: We pray that all countries in the world work together through their leaders and governments, empowered by the Prince of Peace, to promote peace, safety and welfare, justice and care for their people, especially the last, the least and the lost. *Lord hear us.*
- 3. Reader:** For all families and for all of us here celebrating this special **day/night** in our Christian faith: We pray that we and all families in the world may draw strength, example and inspiration from the Holy family of Nazareth, in their simplicity, humility, generosity and hospitality. *Lord, hear us.*
- 4. For all Children:** We pray that all children, who like the child in the manger are vulnerable, innocent, voiceless, even at times considered as threats to one's freedom, rights and choice, authority and power, may be protected accordingly and that they may be given the opportunity to live their lives as God wills them to be. *Lord, hear us.*
- 5. For those who are finding life burdensome:** We pray for those who suffer violence, those who are caught up in the midst of war and conflicts, those who are persecuted, those who are affected by the natural disasters and those affected by Covid-19. We pray for them who are weighed down by life's burdens. May we offer them willing hands, supportive presence and loving hearts. *Lord, hear us.*
- 6. Reader:** For the sick in our community: We pray for those who are sick in mind, body and spirit and those afflicted by the Coronavirus. We also pray for those who are alone and are experiencing loneliness this season of joy, that they may obtain healing, consolation, affirmation and recognition through God's words and Sacraments and through our care for them. *Lord, hear us.*
- 7. Reader:** For all the dead, and for all our relatives and friends who have died: We pray that God realize in them the hope for that special place prepared for them and for us, by Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the resurrection and the life. *Lord, hear us.*

Priest: Father, Christ your Son made this night (day) radiant with his light. May we come to share in his divine life who came on earth to share our human life. We ask this through the same Christ, Emmanuel, our Lord. Amen.

What's Happening in Our Parish



Please Note:

Boxing Day: Mass will take place on December 26th & 27th at 9:15 am at Sacred Heart Church.

28th of December Mass will also be celebrated, at Sacred Heart Church Saturday 9:30am.

New Years Day: Mass will take place on January 1st at 9:15 am at Sacred Heart Church.

The Parish Centre will open December 27th from 9.30am to 12.00pm,

Weekday Masses: Celebrated as usual during the Christmas and New Year season.

Readings Christmas Eve: Mass of the Night

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!

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

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'.

Reading for Christmas Day:

Responsorial Psalm: All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

Gospel: John 1:1-5, 9-14

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God.

He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him.

All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower.

The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world.

He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him.

He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him.

But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself.

The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.