

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.**

In the Profession of Faith, all kneel at the words, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate.

Communion Antiphon: The Word became flesh, and we have seen His glory.

Scripture readings from the Jerusalem Bible



CHRISTMAS DAY

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

First Reading Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, 'Your God is king!' Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as He returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling His people, redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

◆ **The word of the Lord.**

Responsorial Psalm Ps 97:1-6

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

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for He has worked wonders. His right hand and His holy arm have brought salvation. **R.**
2. The Lord has made known His salvation; has shown His justice to the nations. He has remembered His truth and love for the house of Israel. **R.**
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. **R.**
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. **R.**

Second Reading Hebrew 1:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, He has spoken to us through His

Son, the Son that He has appointed to inherit everything and through Whom He made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of His nature, sustaining the universe by His powerful command; and now that He has destroyed the defilement of sin, He has gone to take His place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So He is now as far above the angels as the title which He has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are My Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to Me. Again, when He brings the First-born into the world, He says: Let all the angels of God worship Him.

◆ **The word of the Lord.**

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 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

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.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

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.

John appears as His witness. He proclaims: 'This is the One of Whom I said: He Who comes after me ranks before me because He existed before me.'

Indeed, from His fullness we have, all of us, received - yes, grace in return for grace, since, though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, Who is nearest to the Father's heart, Who has made Him known.

◆ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

In the Profession of Faith, all kneel at the words, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate.

Communion Antiphon: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Scripture readings from the Jerusalem Bible



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

25 DECEMBER 2024

THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025 OFFICIALLY BEGINS ON 24 DEC 2024 WITH THE OPENING OF THE HOLY DOOR OF THE PAPAL BASILICA OF ST PETER BY POPE FRANCIS



"Let us celebrate Christmas, not merely by exchanging gifts and worldly pleasures, but by bringing the love of Christ into our hearts and spreading it to all those we meet."
- St Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

Christ Candle: The fifth and final candle, is the Christ candle. The centre white candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, celebrating the arrival of He Whom we have been anticipating. Jesus is born and our season of waiting is at an end. With the lighting of the Christ candle, we remember the Light which shines in the darkness - the source of our hope, champion for peace, reason for our joy, and giver of love.

CHRISTMAS VIGIL

Entrance Antiphon: The Lord said to Me: You are My Son. It is I Who have begotten You this day.

First Reading Isaiah 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. You have made their gladness greater, You have made their joy increase; they rejoice in Your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt and consumed by fire. 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. Wide is His dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which He establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of hosts will do this.

◆ **The word of the Lord.**

Responsorial Psalm Ps 95:1-3, 11-13

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

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless His name. **R.**

2. Proclaim His help day by day, tell among the nations His glory and His wonders among all the peoples. **R.**

3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for He comes, He comes to rule the earth. **R.**

4. With justice He will rule the world, He will judge the peoples with His truth. **R.**

Second Reading Titus 2:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed Himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be His very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

◆ **The word of the Lord.**

Gospel Acclamation Luke 2:10-11

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

A reading 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 Judea, 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



Sacred Heart Parish

(Canonically Erected 1868)

Roman Catholic Diocese of Armidale

The Nativity of the Lord

December 25, 2024

81 Vivian St. Inverell, NSW 2360

(P. O. Box 107)

Phone 67221103

Email: inverellparish@armidale.catholic.org.au or

frpchandler@armidale.catholic.org.au

Website: www.sacredheartinverell.org.au

Facebook: Sacred Heart Catholic Church Inverell

Holy Trinity School Ph: 02 6722 4066

Parish Office Hours:

Monday 23 Dec & Friday 27 Dec - Closed

Tuesday 24 Dec - 8am to 12pm

Administrator: Fr Paul Chandler

PPC Chair: Mr David McMahon

Holy Trinity Principal: Mrs Jillian Rainger

Parish Secretary: Peter Turner



MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

We pray for: Repose of all those whose death anniversary occurs at this time, especially Geoff Dodd, Peter & Michael Monie, and Wilson, Joan & Michael Bull; Repose of all souls in Purgatory.

the Recently Deceased:

Danny Dickins, John Pianko, Rita Slattery, Jennifer O'Hara, Pamela Veness.

the sick:

Tony King, Shirley Thom, Maureen Rolfe, Sue O'Brien, Julie Daley, Pat Gurr, Jim Hanlon, Peter Moroney, Christopher Pay, Neville Barwick, Fr Barry Leech, Lara Bentley, Elizabeth Albany, Fr David Crabb, Rebecca Lane, Brian Barker, **and all the sick members of our parish.**

Please contact the priest on 67221103 for home visits to the homebound and the sick.

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CLERGY AND THE PARISH

1st Collection: Presbytery (for support of priest)

BSB 082105 Account No. 001023550

Account Name: Sacred Heart Presbytery Inverell Savings Ac.

2nd Collection: Church upkeep, maintenance, expenses

BSB 082105 Account No. 001013072

Account Name: Sacred Heart Parish Inverell

For those on the Planned Giving Program could you please quote your surname and envelope number for the reference.

Planned Giving Program: If you wish to join the planned giving program, please contact the parish office.

DECEMBER - THE MONTH OF THE DIVINE INFANCY

WEDNESDAY 25th

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Rosary - 8.30am

Holy Mass - 9.00am

THURSDAY 26th

Feast Day of St Stephen, the first martyr

Rosary - 11.30am

Holy Mass - 12 Noon

Adoration - 12.30pm to 1.30pm

FRIDAY 27th

Feast Day of St John, apostle, evangelist

Rosary - 8.30am

Holy Mass - 9.00am

No Holy Hour

SATURDAY 28th

Feast Day of The Holy Innocents, martyrs

Holy Mass of Sunday - 3.30pm at Tingha

Rosary - 5.30pm

Holy Mass of Sunday - 6.00pm

SUNDAY 29th

Solemnity of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Rosary - 8.30am

Holy Mass - 9.00am

Sacrament of Confession

Sunday: 8.00am to 8.30am

Thursday: 1.00pm to 1.30pm

Saturday: 5.15pm to 5.45pm

(and at any time upon request)

OTHER MASSES:

McLean Village Each 4th Thursday - 10.00am

2nd Saturday - *Bundarra*, St Mary of the Angels - 3.30pm

3rd Saturday - *Ashford*, St Patrick's Church - 3.30pm

4th Saturday - *Tingha*, St. Francis' Church - 3.30pm

5th Saturday - *Yetman*, St Joseph the Worker - 3.00pm

Baptism - Saturdays & Sundays at 10.30am

Marriages and Funerals by Appointment

Christmas Dues Envelopes have been placed at the entrances to the Church. This collection supports the clergy. Please give generously.

Poor Boxes: You can help our local St Vincent de Paul ministry by making a donation to the Poor Boxes in the Church. Christmas is an especially difficult time for the poor in our community. All donations will be used to assist them.

Sick Visit / Last Rites: A reminder that if you have a Catholic relative in hospital or aged care who is in need of a priest, please inform the parish office or Fr Paul so he may visit them.

Have A Blessed And Holy Christmas

Fr Paul and the parish team wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas. Thank you to everyone who has assisted in the running of the parish this year. Thank you to the Members of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Finance Committee, the Liturgy Committee, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, all those involved in the parish ministry roster, the Altar Society, Parish Staff, Staff and Pupils at Holy Trinity School, Members of the McLean Ministry, Members of the Music Ministry, and all our Catechist volunteers. May you all have a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Octave of Christmas

Octaves in the liturgy mean every day within the octave is the feast all over again. There are subtleties, so unlike the Easter Octave it is more of a "little" Christmas rather than the actual Solemnity, but technically days in the octave is Christmas all over again. The Octave of Christmas is celebrated as an eight-day feast in the liturgical calendar which begins on the Nativity of Christ, 25 December, and continues to 1 January, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. The Church recognises that the days of the Christmas Octave are repeating the solemn nature of Christmas for eight days, concluding on a high note with another Solemnity that echoes the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord. While Christmas is considered primarily a feast of our Lord, the Church both adores the Saviour and venerates His glorious Mother. The Octave gives us time to impress upon our souls the mysteries, joys and graces of Christmas.

The Holy Innocents, 28 December

During the Octave of Christmas the Church celebrates the memory the small children of the neighbourhood of Bethlehem put to death by Herod. Sacrificed by a wicked monarch, these innocent lives bear witness to Christ who was persecuted from the time of His birth by a world which would not receive Him. It is Christ Himself Who is at stake in this mass-murder of the children; already the choice, for or against Him, is put clearly before men. But the persecutors are powerless, for Christ came to perform a work of salvation that nothing can prevent; when He fell into the hands of His enemies at the time chosen by God it was to redeem the world by His Own Blood. Our Christmas joy is tempered by a feeling of sadness. But the Church looks principally to the glory of the children, of these innocent victims, whom she shows us in heaven following the Lamb wherever He goes. The feast of the Holy Innocents is an excellent time for parents to inaugurate the custom of blessing their children. From the Ritual comes the form which we use on solemn occasions, such as First Communion. But parents can simply sign a cross on the child's forehead with the right thumb dipped in holy water and say: "May God bless you, and may He be the Guardian of your heart and mind—the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen."

A reflection by the Venerable Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton J Sheen

This Babe Who is named Jesus, which means Saviour, is not a man who made himself a God ... rather He is true God and true Man, for He did not cease being God when He became Man. There was no conversion of His Godhead into flesh, but the taking up of manhood unto God. When we say that God became Man, we do not mean that the Godhead was cut down to human dimensions; it means, on the contrary, that a human nature was taken up into the Person of God and made One with Him. This union is called the Incarnation, which literally means an 'enfleshment,' or 'made flesh.'

Of every other child born into the world, friends might say that it resembles its mother. This is the first instance in time that anyone could say that the Mother resembles the Child. Here is the beautiful paradox of the Child Who made His Mother; therefore the Mother is only a child – a creature of God. It was also the first time in the history of this earth of ours that anyone could ever think of Heaven being anywhere else than 'way up there,' but Mary, with the Divine Child in her arms, now looks down to Heaven.

The human nature which God assumed, was taken out of the world of freedom by a free act on the part of Mary His Mother. God's way with man is not dictatorship but cooperation. He would redeem humanity with human consent, and not against it. Christmas is not something that happened such as the Battle of Waterloo; it is something that is happening. What happened to the human nature which Christ took from Mary by her consent, can happen, in a lesser manner, to our human nature, by our free consent. On our part, there must be the free response of man to the Divine initiative, but this implies dying to the lower existence of sin and selfishness, pride and lust. To become a Christian does not mean reading religious books, or singing hymns or being kind to neighbours; it means sharing the Divinity that first came to us at Bethlehem. We can conceive of our manhood being taken up into God, since God has humbled Himself to take our nature. When this Christ-life gets inside of us, it affects our intellect, by giving us a truth which reason itself cannot know; it affects our will, by giving us an impetus and an energy for good which we could not produce of and by ourselves. It is, in the truest sense of the term, a rebirth except this time we are born not of the flesh, but of the Spirit. As someone has said, 'We are all eggs at present, but we just cannot go on being ordinarily "decent eggs"'. Either we have to get hatched to the Divine or else we rot.'

The descent of God to man, and eternity into time, makes a tremendous difference to all people whether they ever heard of Him or not, or whether they respect Him or not. From that point on, it is possible for man to divinise himself, not by his own efforts, but by response to Divine Life. Just as our modern world is bathed in radio and television waves but only those who are turned in to them receive their messages of knowledge and enjoyment, so too, there is a radiation through history of this Divine Life, but only those who freely appropriate it ever enjoy its peace and blessing.

(The True Meaning of Christmas)

A Christmas Prayer

Glory to God in the highest!

My precious Lord, Jesus, I adore you with profound love and rejoice in the celebration of Your birth. Your love for us is unfathomable, it is glorious, transforming, awe-inspiring, and deeply personal. You chose to come and dwell among us, being born into poverty, rejection, and humility. Yet Your mother knew whom she bore. Her heart was filled with the tenderest love as she adored her Child and her God. Help me, dear Lord, to come to love You with the heart of Your Mother. Invite me to adore You with St Joseph and the poor shepherds. Reveal to me the glorious power of Your birth and change my life on account of this perfect gift of Yourself. I love You, dear Lord Jesus. Help me to love You with all my heart. Newborn Saviour of the World, I trust in You. Mother Mary and St Joseph, Pray for me and for all. Amen.