Advent Reflection Week 1

Advent is pointing us to the birth of Jesus, our hope and joy in troubled times. There is so much to take from the readings we hear each week so here are some ideas for each week of Advent which will hopefully lead to further reflection. As you reflect, look at the environment of the church which will also engage our senses so we can immerse ourselves in this happy and hopeful season.

God is like a potter who shapes us to be people of faith.

We can trust God for ‘God is faithful’

What struck me most about this year’s reading’s was the emphasis on waiting, a theme that seems particularly poignant given our world’s and our community’s experience this year of the pandemic. We have all been waiting, waiting for the daily numbers, for the easing of restrictions, for a vaccine. Depending on our circumstances and our personalities, we have experienced this in different ways and with varying degrees of hardship. The readings reflect upon exactly this. The tone is sometimes angry and despairing, pleading or joyful. We can all find our experience mirrored in the words of the scripture. Just how this might be expressed in the church environment is another matter! That I will have to “ponder in my heart”, but a few ideas are churning.

EXPLORING THE WORD

During Advent, in each year of the three-year cycle, the theme of the first week looks to the end times—the eschaton—with an emphasis on the second coming of Jesus and the need to be ready. In the early church, there was an expectation that Jesus would return quickly. In their post-Easter faith, believers knew that Jesus had been taken up to heaven at the ascension (a man travelling abroad, as mentioned in this gospel?) and that he was remaining with God until the time came for him to return in triumph. For Mark, it is now the church that waits and must always be ready to greet the master on his return. The ‘waiting’ theme of Advent is established: we await the birth of the child and we await the fulfillment of human history at the end times when Jesus comes again.

- What must you do to be fully prepared for the coming of Christ into your life as a Christian?
- What is your greatest expectation at this point in your life?
- In what ways does Jesus give you a glimpse of God?

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FIRST EUCHARIST CANDIDATES

VIGIL MASS 5.30PM
Melissa Faller
Cathal Finn
Isabella Pesce
MACLEOD NEWS!!!!

CALENDAR OF MASSES
All Masses are capped at 75 people

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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 30</td>
<td>9.15am Mass</td>
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<td>Tuesday 1</td>
<td>No Mass</td>
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<td>Wednesday 2</td>
<td>No Mass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 3</td>
<td>9.15am Mass</td>
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<td>Friday 4</td>
<td>9.15am Mass</td>
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<td>Saturday 5 Dec</td>
<td>5.30pm Vigil Mass - Trybooking link [<a href="https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBQ">https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBQ</a>]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 6 Dec</td>
<td>8.00am Mass (English) - Trybooking link [<a href="https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBL">https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBL</a>] 10.00am Mass - Trybooking link [<a href="https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBQ">https://www.trybooking.com/BNFBQ</a>]</td>
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BOOKING FOR WEEKEND MASS VIA TRYBOOKING OPEN AT 3PM ON MONDAY

It is no longer necessary to book for weekday Masses. However, you must still sign in with your name and contact number as per the government guidelines when you attend.

Returning to Mass will be different compared to what we are used to. We are still required to collect a list of attendees and contact details to enable contact tracing should it be needed. There will also need to be extensive cleaning after each service with a 1 hour gap between services.

Please be patient while we continue to steer our path through the easing of restrictions whilst adhering also to the government guidelines. If you are attending Mass you must wear a mask. Hand sanitiser is available and must be used, and any further directions, such as seating arrangements, given by Fr Michael must be adhered to. Please only attend if you are well.

TRYBOOKING

To simplify the booking process as we move to larger numbers, we have decided to introduce Trybooking. PLEASE BOOK EACH PERSON COMING TO MASS SEPARATELY SO WE HAVE CONTACT TRACING DETAILS.

Children over 12 months must also have a ticket for the weekend and are included in the count.

Please note an 8am Sunday Mass (English) has also commenced. We have a limited number of spaces set aside for parishioners that do not have a computer to access Trybooking. Please phone the office if you need to book in this way during office hours only.

Please note: the capacity of our Church as per the DHHS Government guidelines is 75 people (1 person per 4sq mtrs).

THIS WEEK’S READINGS: Is 63:16–17,64:1–3; Ps 79: 2–3. 15–16. 18–19; 1 Cor 1:3–9; Mk 13:33–37

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS: Is 40:1–5, 9–11; Ps 84: 9–14. 2 Pet 3:8–14; Mk 1:1–8

RECENTLY DECEASED

Pauline Howe, Giovanna Tomasiello

ANNIVERSARIES - THOSE WE REMEMBER FONDLY AT THIS TIME:

Isabelle Toll, Bernadette Williams,
Daniel McCormack, Bernadette Turner, Florence Fitzgerald, Kristina Niko, Daniel Zanella, Elizabeth Arnold, Angelus Noonan, Caterina Messina, Sr Genevieve Fitzpatrick, Jenifer Barclay, Giuseppe Callea,

LORD THAT I MAY BE WELL AGAIN - PRAY FOR THE SICK—

Bernie Herridge, Kate Mulholland, Sr. Mary Fan- khauzer, Cheryl Parker, Patricia Valente, Robyn Atherton, Philomena & Leo Boek, Fr Kevin Mogg, Danilo Mikac, Anne-Marie Silfo, Michael Nicholls, Elizabeth Martin, Tony Ryan, Sr Margaret McHugh, Michael Burgess, Annette Lewis, Richard Mc Alliee, Katrina Jackman, Brian Flynn, Maria George, Maureen Miller, Brigid Harding, Joanne McKeehan, Terry Walsh, Harry O’Connell, Noel Murray, Judith Price, Vivienne Fernandez (mother of Marguerite Partridge & Janet D’Souza), Sophie Nathan, Bishop Peter Elliot, Merle Fernandez, Noel Murray (nephew of Kay Ford), Janice Brandon, Sr Joyce Shillito, Sr Brigid Maloney, Helen (sister of Fr Barry Moran)

LEGION OF MARY

The Legion of Mary invites you to join in our weekly Wednesday meetings held at 11am via Zoom. The meeting includes the Rosary and Tessera Prayers. Come as you can, leave when you must. Please sms / text or contact Philomena on 0403910446 to receive an email invitation link to join. If you are able to join only via phone; I will make arrangements for the same.

REFLECTION FROM FR MICHAEL

“There are wonderful people all around us. They are around us in our streets… and often they may have no faith!”

These words come from an elderly parishioner who told me recently how one of his neighbours rang him to tell him, “I’ve just made an apple pie for you and I’m about to drop it over!” He was very touched by this gesture. And he reminded me that this neighbour, who’s not of our faith, maybe had no faith. Yes, it is true our God is at work in/thru so many people. And, like this elderly parishioner, it is good to receive this truth and publicise it with THANKS.

BIBLE REFLECTION GROUP ....We will meet again online in Zoom, from 7:30-8:30pm this Tuesday night 1 December. To join, click on this zoom link: [https://latrobe.zoom.us/j/92296803601] If you have any questions, or want help setting up your Zoom, contact Dennis Wollersheim on dewoller@gmail.com or 0414529454.

GARDENING: TIM O’HANLON 0433 952 705 GENERAL HOME MAINTENANCE: Bernie Power 0409 936 860
ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Unfortunately due to the Covid19 restrictions we cannot have our usual Christmas collection of toys for the children of families we have helped during the year. Macleod Conference will still provide our usual Christmas food gift cards for those families with a bit extra to enable the families to provide some toys for the children.

Vinnies is holding its Christmas Appeal and this will provide funds to assist families and people who are in need over the Christmas period. With the problems of Covid19 we expect there will be a greater need than ever in this very difficult year. St Martin’s parishioners have been very generous in the past and we are very grateful for your wonderful help. It would be much appreciated if you can help again.

As we will probably have a limited number of Masses for collections, Vinnies have provided a way of making donations:

1. By phone using a credit card and calling 13 18 12. Donors can allocate donations by giving the name of the conference (eg Macleod Conference M915) over the phone. Receipts will be issued by the Fundraising Team.

2. By an online donation to vinnies.org.au allocating the donation to a specific conference (eg Macleod Conference M915). Receipts will be automatically emailed to donors. Donations of $2 or more are tax deductible.

LOOKING FORWARD WITH HOPE

I noticed a beautiful nativity scene in the middle of a walkway in a shopping centre recently. It drew my attention partly because of its surprisingly prominent position in such a public space, and because it hadn’t been there in previous years. It was also striking because this reminder of hope—that we have a God who is truly with us—is so sorely needed in what has been such a difficult year.

At the heart of the Christian story is an abiding truth: that though we might be called to endure times of darkness, we have a God who can enter into our situation, who can surprise us, and who longs to remind us that we are loved, that we are not alone, and that all will be well.

We have gone without much in 2020. This strange year has taken a toll on so many people in so many ways. So how are we to look towards the coming weeks, months, years?

We look with hope. We look forward, mindful of what this past year has revealed, mindful of what we have gone without, what we have lost, what we must not take for granted, what we must remember to hold as precious. As we begin the season of Advent and this new liturgical year, we enter a time of renewal—a time to see things anew. Perhaps we can look forward by considering what this past year has revealed and the possibilities that may be presented in the coming months.

Many leaders in our parishes have had to scramble to keep up with changing restrictions—booking systems, different forms of communication, so much hand sanitiser! At times things changed very quickly; much of it has been difficult, and sometimes discouraging. But is it not possible that things can also change dramatically for the good, if we are open to that possibility?

This time has revealed the importance of community, and that strong community doesn’t just happen. We’ve recognised the need to keep connected, and many have done a wonderful job of reaching out to the lonely and vulnerable. We’ve also realised that small gestures (a phone call or a card) can make a huge difference and open up the possibility of new relationships. As we move forward, is it not possible that our communities might find themselves stronger and more caring than they were before?

For our Catholic community, separation from the ‘source and summit’ of our lives—the Eucharist—has been a great sadness. Worship of our God is an essential part of our lives—let us not be convinced otherwise. Witnessing the joy of parishioners returning to receive Jesus again in the Eucharist after so long has been humbling. For those of us who are priests, this has been a gentle reminder of how important the sacrament is for our people. And this renewed reverence may help us all to see what truly unites us.

Let’s not be discouraged by the difficulties of these past months. We have a remarkable hope: in a God who makes all things new; who surprises us; who enters into our lives with gentleness and humility, and with small gestures achieves great things. May we learn from his example and be open to being surprised.

That’s why the image of the Christ child is so important. It reminds us that through everything we must endure, we have a God who walks with us, a God who loves us, a God who remains with us, a God who will guide us if we put our trust in him.

Fr Dean Mathieson Bayside Catholic Mission

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS DAILY REFLECTIONS 2020 ‘ADORÉ’

This year’s reflection booklet will be available for $5 from this weekend in the foyer. Adore contains rich daily reflections from the beginning of Advent thru to the Baptism of the Lord.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS—If you would like a copy of the 2021 Columban Calendar they are available to purchase from the parish office for $10. Please try to have the correct money on the day. Thank you.
**FIRST SPIRITUAL EXERCISES - GREATER FAITH**

My brothers and sisters, wherever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.

But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Let the believer who is lowly boast in being raised up. James 1:2-9

1. **Touch**
   - I touch the Heart of Increasing Faith.
   - I hold an object that symbolises the gift of increasing faith for me.
   - I remember a small story of receiving greater faith when I needed it. If praying alone I stalk that memory. If I am praying in a group, I share it with them, listening in turn to their stories, feeling touched by the Spirit of Greater Faith.
   - I begin to understand how important a greater faith is to my recovery in this time of great distress.

2. **Desire**
   - I desire the gift of Greater Faith.
   - I consider three things, taking a few minutes exploring each, I ask myself:
     - Where is faith increasing in my life?
     - Where is faith decreasing in my life?
     - What diminishes faith in me?
   - I ask the Spirit for an increasing, confident faith, to ground me in this time of recovery.

3. **Choice**
   - Today I choose the Way of Greater Faith.
   - I slowly and prayerfully read the prayer text above. I choose three thoughtful steps, the direction I wish to take:
     - I choose the faithful way, led by greater faith and the good spirit toward God’s love.
     - I reject the unbelieving way, distrust and doubt fuelled by the bad spirit.
   - I walk towards the gift and the Giver, from belief to greater faith, to peace in God.

4. **Faithful**
   - I live in the Spirit of Greater Faith.
   - I imagine that the Spirit addresses me by name, saying: All things can be done for the one who believes.
   - So I test now, and reflectively through the whole day, in the Spirit’s gentle faith, trust and healing. I feel a stronger foundation under the feet of my faith.
   - I conclude in thanks, considering two questions. Firstly, if possible, how might I make contact and reconnect with the one who gave me greater faith? Secondly, to whom and how do I pass on this exercise – who urgently needs greater faith now?

**PRAYER TIME:** Gently using the generous time you have put aside for this prayer.
- The three dots indicate the places to pause.
- If you are especially moved at any of the steps, remain there for the rest of the prayer.

**FSE FIELD HOSPITAL © Michael Hansen SJ**
Contact: field-hospital@fsecloud.life • www.fsecloud.life • JIS ministries www.jsa.org.au

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**CARITAS GLOBAL GIFTS APPEAL**
Advent prepares us for the birth of Jesus Christ, a cause of great hope and joy. It is in this spirit that we partner with schools and parishes nationally in the collective effort to act and pray for a fairer, more just world. Many communities are grappling with ongoing poverty and injustice, without proper access to sanitation, healthcare and education. A lack of infrastructure and support services can make life very challenging, particularly this year with the new threats posed by Covid19. Global Gift Christmas Cards can be ordered online at www.globalgifts.org.au or by calling 1800 024 413. Flyers in the church foyer.

**JUST RELEASED:** *The Place of the Kyriale: The Ordinary of the Mass in Catholic History, Liturgy and Music* by Marie Therese Levey SJ. The work is full of stories of “saints and sinners … very human figures (who) come alive in these pages”. Available for $30 + P&P from Congregational Administration Centre, PO Box 1508, North Sydney NSW 2059. Enquiries (02) 8912 4853 email CAC.reception@sosj.org.au

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**ROSTERS FOR THE NEXT FORTNIGHT—More Government changes expected 6th December**

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<tr>
<th>28/29 November</th>
<th>5.30pm Vigil</th>
<th>8am Sunday</th>
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<td>John O’Connell</td>
<td>Marie D’Souza</td>
<td>Christopher Webb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacristans</td>
<td>Patrick Kenneally</td>
<td>Anthony Fernandez</td>
<td>John Power</td>
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<td>Marg O’Leary</td>
<td>Rob Di G</td>
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<td>Eucharistic Minister</td>
<td>Ron Webster</td>
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<td>Readers</td>
<td>Mariella Di Fabio</td>
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