



# St Therese's & Our Lady of the Nativity Essendon & Essendon West Parishes



**24 & 25 December 2024: Christmas**



**First Reading:** Isaiah 9: 1-7 A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*A son is given to us.*

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.

**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 2:1-20 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*The birth of Jesus*

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.'

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

## **INTERCESSIONS**

*Friends, gathered here to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the true Light, we pray with thanksgiving for by scattering the darkness of sin, Jesus now makes our world radiant with his love.*

We pray for the Church in every place, that in communion with Pope Francis, our lives may radiate the joy of Jesus' gospel, the light of his love, and the peace of his presence.

We pray for peace in the world. May the presence of God's Son in our world bring peace to the land of his birth and to every place where there is war, violence, and political unrest.

We pray for the tens of millions of people around the world displaced from their homes, that their cry for safety, shelter, food and freedom will be heard and answered.

We pray for our families, that the love and protection of Mary and Joseph for Jesus, will help us all to love and care for one another with sincerity and respect.

We pray for all who struggle with sadness and loneliness at this time of year, that the outreach of neighbours will free them from their isolation.

May the wonder of the shepherds at the sight of Jesus, inspire us to see the presence of Jesus in all other people, especially in the poor and vulnerable.

May Jesus take into the heavenly home all of our departed relatives and friends, along with our parishioners who have died since last Christmas.

*Lord our God, your truth and your love stand forever for you have given your Son to us as our Lord and Saviour. May we live in faith through love and reach our heavenly home where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen*

## FR JOHN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Greetings, friends at Our Lady of the Nativity and St Therese's,

At Christmas it's time to stop and reflect on another year gone by. The Christmas trees are out and the tinsel and glitter brighten up the scene, while the natural beauty of summer flowers, particularly the purple jacarandas, provide a highlight if we stop to look and wonder at nature and the world around us.

It's also time to acknowledge and thank those who have contributed to parish life this year in many diverse ways. Our Senior Friendship Group once again has had a great year with social activities, most recently our annual Christmas lunch. Music, liturgy, office administration, outdoor maintenance, mowing and gardening, St Vincent de Paul service to those in need, the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Group, Tiny Ts Playgroup, our Welcoming groups, Aged Care visitation; our many parish groups all contribute to building a vital and vibrant parish community, aimed at service and inclusion. Then there are our thriving school communities as an integral part of our parish scene. Thanks to families, students and staff for the contribution they make to active involvement and sacramental celebrations.

My Christmas menagerie of singing Santas, reindeer, snow people, trees, flashing coloured lights and the like, keep me entertained at this time of year! It all adds to the spirit of the season.

Our primary focus, however, is on the one who comes among us as one of us, in the person of Jesus, whose message of love, peace and good will, echoes down through the ages, and is to be reflected in the way we live our lives as his followers.

Wishing all a very happy Christmas with family and friends, and a happy, healthy and safe New Year for 2025.



John Hannon, Parish Priest [jbhannon1978@gmail.com](mailto:jbhannon1978@gmail.com)

**MASSES IN EARLY MONTHS OF 2025** While Fr Tony Feeney takes a break for the first three months of 2025, Fr Bernie Lane will share our weekend Mass schedule with Fr John during January, February and March next year.

**PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE** The parish office will close on Tuesday 24 December at 12:00pm, reopening on Monday 20 January 2025. During the office closure Fr John will respond to messages on our after-hours answering service for end-of-life anointing and funeral arrangements. Phone: 0490 956 610

**LOW GLUTEN HOSTS** Are made from wheat starch and water with a gluten content of 6.2 parts per million.

PARISH DATES	Thursday 26 December	Boxing Day	
	Sunday 29 December	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	
	Tuesday 31 December	New Year's Eve	
	Wednesday 1 January	New Year's Day: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Mass at OLN with Fr Bernie Lane Mass at St Therese's with Fr John Hannon	9:00am 10:00am
	Sunday 12 January	The Baptism of the Lord	
	Monday 20 January	Parish office reopens after Christmas/New Year break	9:00am
	Sunday 19 January	Baptism Welcoming Mass at St Therese's	10:30am
	Sunday 26 January	Parish Baptisms at St Therese's	12:00pm
	Monday 27 January	Australia Day Public holiday: Parish office closed	

PARISH CONTACTS	<b>PARISH PRIEST</b> Fr John Hannon
	<b>Office phone:</b> 9401 6330 <b>Office address:</b> 48a Lincoln Rd, Essendon
	<b>Office hours:</b> Office closed until Monday 20 January 2025
	<b>After-Hours phone:</b> 0490 956 610 (answering service)
	To subscribe to our newsletter go to: <a href="https://www.melbcatholic.org/s/subscription?id=0012w00000LOj4wAAD&amp;req=subscribe">https://www.melbcatholic.org/s/subscription?id=0012w00000LOj4wAAD&amp;req=subscribe</a>
	<b>ST THERESE'S CHURCH</b> 48a Lincoln Rd, Essendon
	<b>Office email:</b> <a href="mailto:essendon@cam.org.au">essendon@cam.org.au</a> <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.stthereses.org.au">www.stthereses.org.au</a>
	<b>Weekday Masses:</b> Tuesday to Friday 10:00am
	<b>Weekend Masses:</b> Saturday 6:00pm, Sunday 9:00am, Sunday 10:30am
	<b>Reconciliation:</b> Saturday 5:45pm
	<b>School:</b> email <a href="mailto:info@stessendon.catholic.edu.au">info@stessendon.catholic.edu.au</a> phone 9374 6100
	<b>OUR LADY OF THE NATIVITY CHURCH</b> 31 Fawkner St, Aberfeldie
<b>Weekend Masses:</b> Saturday 5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am	
<b>Reconciliation:</b> Saturday 4:45pm	
<b>School:</b> email <a href="mailto:principal@olnaberfeldie.catholic.edu.au">principal@olnaberfeldie.catholic.edu.au</a> phone 9337 4204	
<i>Our Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country of the land on which our churches stand. We pay our respects to them and to Elders past, present and emerging.</i>	