



# Newsletter for the Parishes of St Clare and St Francis Xavier

*In the care of the  
Franciscan Friars*

## 2nd Sunday of Advent December 7th, 2008—Year B

**We warmly welcome all  
parishioners and visitors to  
today's Eucharist.**

Our responses today are:

Entrance Antiphon

People of Zion, the Lord will come to save all nations, and your hearts will exult to hear his majestic voice.

Psalm Response

Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

Rise up, Jerusalem, stand on the heights, and see the joy that is coming to you from God.

**This week**

Make time this week to spend a while in the wilderness within, listening to the voice that is there.

**POINTS TO PONDER.**

At Mass, as we leave the church, are we better equipped to go out into our week? Have we been strengthened by God's word? Have we been nourished by the food of communion? Has it made any difference?

**MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the people of St Francis Xavier's & St Clare's parishes, seek to live Christ-centred lives, celebrating God's presence & our faith values through worship, outreach, service, justice & hospitality.

**MAKE STRAIGHT HIS PATHS**

Advent is not a preparation time for Christmas celebrations; but a time when we allow Jesus to draw closer to us by making the path smooth for God to have access to us and by being open to God. The closer we allow His birth in us, the straighter and smoother our way becomes. We hear today the passage from the prophet Isaiah which is very comforting. This is the beginning of a sixteen-chapter section of this book, known as The Book of Consolation. The people of Israel have been exiled in Babylon for a long time, because of their sins. The chapter opens with a poetic call from God to the prophet. The entire book of Consolation is a preparation of the people, through the words of the prophet, to be ready for their return trip home.

The prophet receives his call to mission. He is to speak tenderly to the exiles of Jerusalem that their time of punishment is soon to be over. We can read this whole section as a "new exodus". They will be forgiven as God passes beyond remembering their sin, guilt and shame. They will pass beyond the mountains which will be levelled and the valleys which will be filled-in. They are to be readied to go beyond what they fear from God and beyond what they remember of their pasts, to begin again. The image that is presented to us is God as a shepherd who will feed them, gather and carry them and lead his people home. This is a wonderful pastoral image of a loving God who will lead us home. This prophecy of hope changes their attitude towards God and gives them hope, even though they are still in exile. Nothing has changed, but they are listening to the message of God whom they failed in the past. They are beginning to learn again, starting with the story of the Great Exodus, from Egypt to the Promised Land and how they entered into a covenant with God and became God's people. This applies to us also as baptised people who are being called by God to draw closer to Him. It is not just about our sins, but all that alienates us from God and others. It is about God reaching out to us.

*Fr Anthony ofm*

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North Box Hill, 3129  
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This newsletter also available  
at: [www.scsfx.org.au](http://www.scsfx.org.au)

**READINGS FOR  
THIS WEEK**

**2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Is 40:1-5, 9-11**

*Prepare the way for the Lord.*

**2Pet 3:8-14**

*We wait for new heavens and a new earth.*

**Mk 1:1-8**

*Make straight the paths of the Lord.*

**Monday—Immaculate  
Conception of the Virgin Mary**

Gen 3:9-15, 20; Eph 1:3-6,  
11-12; Lk 1:26-38

**Tuesday**

Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14

**Wednesday**

Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30

**Thursday**

Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15

**Friday**

Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19

**Saturday**

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Mt 17:10-13

**NEXT SUNDAY**

**3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Is 61:1-2, 10-11**

**1 Thess 5:16-24**

**Jn 1:6-8, 19-28**

**2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## Friars of the Parishes

Fr Anthony Selvaraj ofm  
Parish Priest  
Fr Benignus Clowes ofm  
Assistant Priest  
Fr Bob Matthews ofm  
Assistant Priest

**Pastoral Associate**—Liz Clark

**SFX Parish Office Hours are 9.30 am to 4.30 pm**  
**Monday, Wed, Thurs, Friday**  
**Parish Secretary**— Monique Waring

**St Clare's Parish Office Hours are as follows:**  
**Wednesday & Friday**  
**9.00 am—10.30 am**  
**Parish Secretary**—Dianna Hardy

**In the event of needing a priest urgently, please telephone 9890 2231 at any time of the day.**

## Parish Pastoral Council

Liz Allan *Liz Clark*  
Veronika Bellis *Dianna Hardy*  
Vince Fazio *Carmel Purdey*  
Anthony Kennedy *Monique Waring*  
Peter Leonard  
Trish Nicholson (Chair)

**Next meeting : 5 February 2009**

## Liturgy Times—

***PLEASE NOTE NEW TIMES***

### St Clare's

**Sunday 9.00am**

**Weekdays:**

**Wed, Fri & Sat 9.00 am**

**Confessions Sat 9.30—10 am**

### St Francis Xavier's

**Saturday Vigil 6.00 pm**

**Sunday 8.00 am**

**10.00am**

**(Italian) 11.30 am**

**5.00 pm**

**Weekdays: Mon—Fri - 12 noon**

**Confessions:**

**Saturday 4.00—5 .00 pm**

**other times by appointment in either Parish**

## Marriages and Baptisms

Bookings can be made with the St FX Parish Office for each Parish, and celebrated in the church requested. This is to avoid double bookings. Anyone wishing to have a child baptised should give four to six weeks notice, so that the family can be visited & parents can attend a preparation course.

## Baptisms

St Francis Xavier's—

1st and 3rd Sundays of month only,  
12.30 pm

St Clare's—2nd Sunday, 11.30 am

<b>SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER</b> SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10.00AM 12.30PM	<b>MORNING TEA AFTER 9.30AM MASS, IN SFX RESOURCE AREA</b> <b>1 BAPTISM DURING MASS @ SFX</b> <b>2 BAPTISMS @ SFX</b>
<b>MONDAY 8 DECEMBER</b> IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 8.30AM 10.00AM	<b>SENIOR MIXED SOCIAL TENNIS GROUP @ SFX</b> (CALL JUDY REID 9878 4212 OR JUST TURN UP) ALL WELCOME. <b>FRANCIS/CLARE CHARISMATIC PRAYER COMMUNITY @</b> ST CLARE'S PARISH HALL (ENQUIRIES: OLIVE 9878 4103, THERESE 9878 3706)
<b>TUESDAY 9 DECEMBER</b> 12.45PM 7.30PM	<b>LEGION OF MARY @ SFX</b> <b>RCIA ENQUIRY</b> —SFX PARISH HOUSE MEETING ROOM
<b>WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER</b> 8.30AM 9.00AM 12.30PM 4.30PM	<b>TENNIS GROUP (AS MONDAY)</b> <b>PLAYGROUP AT ST CLARE'S SCHOOL.</b> (ENTER VIA HARRISON ST) FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: LYNNE FOGALE 9898 2516 <b>ST CLARE'S SENIORS @ SC PARISH HOUSE</b> <b>CHOIR PRACTICE IN SFX CHURCH</b>
<b>THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER</b> 12 NOON 6.00PM	<b>AUTUMN FRIENDSHIP CLUB</b> —NOON MASS & ANOINTING followed by lunch at Doncaster Inn Hotel, cnr Victoria St & Doncaster Rd. 1 course \$12, 2 courses \$13.50, 3 courses \$15. Bookings essential: Marg 9803 4973, Pat 9887 6790. <b>GRADE 6 GRADUATION MASS &amp; DINER</b>
<b>FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER</b> 5-6.30PM 7.30-9PM	<b>LADIES DRINKS AT THE BLACKBURN HOTEL</b> <b>BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP @ SFX PARISH HOUSE</b>
<b>SATURDAY 13 DECEMBER</b> 9.00AM	<b>PARISH WALKING GROUP</b> —MEET AT SFX PARISH HOUSE.
<b>SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER</b> THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 11.30AM	<b>SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION</b> <b>3 BAPTISMS AT ST CLARE'S</b>

## CHOIR PRACTICE FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS AT SFX

Wednesday 10th December—4.30pm  
All well-wishers & singers please attend these choir practices, as we would appreciate your presence for a good quality choir. Thank you.

## CHOIR PRACTICE AT ST CLARE'S

Monday 8th December—7.30pm



### "MY CHRISTMAS GIFT"

In preparation for the birth of Christ, this Advent you are invited to consider what form your gift to the Christ-child will be in the way of service and ministry in the parish during 2008. Please prayerfully consider your own personal gifts and talents, and offer to share them with others next year.

*Forms are available in the church for the next 2 Sundays. Please complete & return them at Mass or to the Parish Office.*

**COMMUNITY CLUB** for everyone. 12 years of age & upwards. See you all: Mums, Dads, Grandparents & Friends. Sunday 14th December 2.30pm in the SFX Resource Area.  
*Myrna Hengeveld*

*From Fr Ben*

*Mahatma Gandhi's seven social sins: politics without principle, wealth without work, commerce without morality, pleasure without conscience, education without character, science without humanity, and worship without sacrifice.*

## PARISH WALKING GROUP

The last walk for 2008 will be on Saturday 20th December and we will stop for coffee along the way.

Walks will resume for 2009 on Saturday 17 January - with an earlier starting time. We will meet at the SFX Parish House at 8.30am.

## PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICE

**Wednesday 17th December**  
**at 7.30pm at SFX**

**Thursday 18th December**  
**at 10.00am at St Clare's**

**FRANCISCAN CALENDARS ARE ON SALE AT SFX PARISH HOUSE—**

**\$6 ea—**

**A GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT. St Vincent de Paul Christmas Cards \$3 for a pack of 5 cards.**



**EAST TIMOR ECO-PASTORAL PROJECT CHRISTMAS GIFT CARDS**



**a thoughtful gift for that person who already has "everything"!**

to support the people of Dotik in East Timor. Cards may be purchased through: Val Mooney 9898 2602, Helen Miller 9877 5760 or through Monique at the Parish House 9890 2231.



As members of this parish community, we pray for those who are baptized this week: Olivia & Siena Geddes Paris Mulligan-Lipton; the sick: Sr Dorothy Renton; those who have died; our RCIA candidates: Diana, Olivia, & Garry. We continue to pray for rain.

**R.C.I.A.**

With Christmas just around the corner and a break of four weeks imminent, the group this week discussed how the lead up to Christmas takes a lot of time and preparation; running around for gifts, food, catching up with family and friends. But we all agreed it was important to make time to reflect on how we are preparing for the celebration of Jesus' coming birth and we asked three questions, reflecting the three themes of the next gospel readings leading up to Christmas:

~ Where do you see Jesus in yourself?  
~ What has changed for you since attending RCIA?

~ How do you accept Jesus into your day to day life?

All questions made us reflect on what the real meaning of Christmas is.

*Please continue to pray for our R.C.I.A. members ~ Lisa Norton*

**My corner**

During the Parish Pastoral Council's Reflection Day in November, we had long and fruitful discussions about our Parish Mission Statement. What particularly brings this to mind this week is the opening statement: "We seek to live Christ-centred lives". This is what Advent is all about. In the midst of the rush, the finishing of shopping and work-related activities, of the school year and of preparations for Christmas, somehow we need to keep Jesus at the centre of all that we are doing. It was inspiring to walk into the school foyer this week and see their beautiful new crib set up, at kid's eye level, reminding each person who walked into the school that this is what Advent is about. We have placed the Christmas gift sheets at the front of each church so that you can think about the gift you will be giving to Jesus through your commitment to the parish next year. Please take a sheet and return it in the next few weeks. I am blessed that it's fairly easy for me to have Christ at the centre of my thoughts at this time, as I am involved in plans for the Reconciliation evening, ongoing discussions with our RCIA group about the meaning of Christmas, preparing prayers of the faithful each week, taking communion to the sick.....a whole range of God based activities. For you, it may be more difficult. I hope that for at least 5 minutes a day you can take time to straighten out your priorities and put God first. Maybe say grace before dinner, offer a prayer at each traffic light, call in to the church, or view the night sky and thank God for this marvelous creation.

*Liz Clark, Pastoral Associate*

**A St. Nicholas' Note** . . . . .  
Edward Hays, *A Pilgrim's Almanac* (adapted)

"It is fitting that the feast of St. Nicholas comes at the beginning of Advent and the beginning of the shopper's season. As the patron saint of shoppers he proclaims, 'Keep it simple!' Keep it simple enough to fit in a shoe or a stocking.

"One gift that could fit in a...shoe, or in a stocking hanging on the fireplace, is a note that speaks of one of our most precious gifts, the gift of time. Such a St. Nicholas note might read: 'The gift I give to you is half an hour of quality conversation each night right after the dishes are done.' Or, 'The gift I give to you is one Saturday a month to be with you and do whatever you want to do.' We can appreciate the value of such a gift if we keep in mind that according to a recent survey, the average married couple in America has only 30 minutes a week of communication outside of exchanges that take place at the dinner table, and between parent and child is only 14 minutes. As you can see, the possibilities are almost unlimited for these St. Nicholas shoe gifts.

"Come, St. Nicholas, patron of shoppers and gift-seekers, and make Christmas this year fun, creative and love-filled."

**It isn't just John the Baptist who points the way, is it, living God? It isn't only the cry of a strange-looking man in a remote wilderness a long time ago, that speaks of the light coming into the world.**

**You surround us with signs of the presence of Christ among us. Scriptures and people, events in our lives, art and science, song and story, birth and death, mountain and mustard seed are all icons—pointing beyond themselves to a great light, inviting us into divine encounter and transformation.**

**Let us never take for granted the signposts that you give, nor despise the lone voice of sacrificial life. But forgive us, in this age of instant access, when we fail to look beyond the pointer or go further. Give us imagination to seek that which is still hidden, patience to wait, the will to travel on, courage to reach towards the things we cannot grasp, humility to be led and met and taught and loved by you.**

**May we thank, yet never idolize messengers you send, but rather hear the message, and hunger for the light.**

*Advent Readings from IONA*

**ROSTERS**

**ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S-DECEMBER 14**  
**Extraordinary Ministers of Communion**  
6.00pm J Morison, J&S Arcuri, R Meyers, E Kimmet  
8.00am C Chin  
10.00am V&G Mooney, P&R Cussen, V&K Fazio, W Tan  
5.00pm P Aldag  
**Ministers of the Word**  
6.00pm M Rossely, H Miller  
8.00am C Gately  
10.00am M Kirwan, K Kirwan  
5.00pm T Parker, L Sanelli

**Wellcomers**

6.00pm  
10.00am **PLEASE VOLUNTEER**

**Children's Liturgy**

December 14-3rd Sunday Advent-Group C  
December 21-4th Sunday of Advent-Group A

**Altar Linen**

December 7 Pat Fitzgerald  
December 14 Lucia Chin

**Counters**

December 7 H Kerwin, M O'Connor  
December 14 B&C Parsons

**Collectors 5pm**

December 7 L Soulsby  
December 14 I Mahlstedt

**Rosary Statue**

December 7—M&S Hengeveld, 25 Heathfield Rise  
December 14—M Scarfe, 12 Clota Ave

**ITALIAN MASS**

**Commentator**

December 7 J Adamo  
December 14 P Grech

**Lettori**

December 7 G Tabacchiera, G Amato  
December 14 A Lanza, L Ferola

**Ministri dell'Eucarista**

December 7 M Casamento, R Bidinost  
December 14 M Salamone, D Amato

**ST CLARE'S—DECEMBER 14**

**Ministers of the Word**

9.00am M Clark, D Hayes, M Hardy

**Extraordinary Ministers of Communion**

9.00am J Murphy, D Hardy, D Tan, T Nicholson, P Ciccotosto, T Shallvey

**Piety Stall—December 14**

9.00am

**Ministers to the Sick** call on families during the week. If you or someone in your family is unable to come to Mass, please let us know at the office and we can arrange for a Minister to visit you at home.

Would parishioners please note that it is preferable if Mass intentions are brought to the Parish House and entered into the diary kept for intentions. This will avoid, as much as is possible, any disappointment, when 2 or more intentions are requested for the same Mass.

**We welcome all new parishioners. Please complete one of the blue forms at the back of the church, and place on collection plate/in box provided. A parish rep. will contact you to welcome you and advise you of the activities and organisations at St Francis Xavier's and St Clare's.**