



Newsletter for the Parishes of St Clare and St Francis Xavier

*In the care of the
Franciscan Friars*

3rd Sunday of Advent December 14th, 2008—Year B

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

Our responses today are:

Entrance Antiphon

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I
say, rejoice! The Lord is near.

Psalm Response

My soul rejoices in my God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord
is upon me; he sent me to bring Good
News to the poor. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

Say to the anxious: be strong and fear
not, our God will come to save us.

This week

Bring a light to someone's life this
week by a visit, a phone call, a
gesture.....

POINTS TO PONDER

"Will another Christmas have come and
gone, and the manger of my heart still lie
empty? Will I be out in the open, minding
and counting sheep, and not going
anywhere? Today is a wonderful moment
of grace and like any moment in my life, it
can be grasped and embraced, or ignored
and let slip by."

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.

WHO ARE YOU?

Who are you? What would your response be
to this question? In this Sunday's gospel John
the Baptist was posed with this same question
by priests and Levites sent by the Pharisees.

They questioned him further, why was he
baptising if he was not Christ, not Elijah and
not the prophet?

I think this is a very important question that all
of us must answer. As baptised people, what is
our identity and as people who believe Jesus is
the Christ, the Son of God, what is the role that
we play in salvation history?

John the Baptist is a challenge for me; every
time I hear about John I am confronted by this
man's life and mission. For me John's life was
all about Jesus, from the moment of his
conception. When Jesus began his public
ministry John somehow disappears into the
background. As a priest I would like to think
that my ministry and role should be like that
of John the Baptist. But like everyone else I fall
into the same temptations, it is neither about
me nor about you. It is about us!

We too are called to be witnesses to Christ. It
was sad to read in Wednesday's Sun- Herald
that Christmas is losing its significance, because

Christian values are being eroded by
consumerism, indifference and competition
from other religions. According to the brand
expert, the core Christian message of self-
discipline, helping the less fortunate, and
simple living has been swept away by
consumerism. This has contributed to the
denouncing of "Christ" in Christmas.

We are not the centre of the universe; it is not
all about us. It is about Christ, the anointed
one who proclaims liberty, freedom and
favour from the Lord. He brought goodness to
the poor and bound up hearts that were
broken. In theory it makes sense, but in reality
and day to day living we can forget this. How
often do we take things too personally and get
offended easily, or we seek recognition or
wonder whether our good works are
appreciated? Sometimes we are too sensitive
to our needs and feelings while disregarding
the opinions and suggestions of others.
Mary's Magnificat, "My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my saviour. He looks
on his servant in her nothingness." Our
nothingness can only be filled by God and we
can then find joy. Through God we discover
who we truly are!

Fr Anthony ofm

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This newsletter also available
at: www.scsfx.org.au

READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Is 61:1-2, 10-11

I exult for joy in the Lord.

1 Thess 5:16-24

*May you all be kept blameless,
spirit, soul & body, for the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

*There stands among you,
unknown to you, the one who is
coming after me.*

Monday

Num 24:2-7, 15-17; Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday

Zeph 3:1-2, 9-13; Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday

Gen 49:2, 8-10; Mt 1:1-17

Thursday

Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-24

Friday

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25; Lk 1:5-25

Saturday

Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38

NEXT SUNDAY

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2 Sam 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

Rom 16:25-27

Lk 1:26-38

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

SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 11.30AM	COLLECTION FOR MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION MORNING TEA AFTER 10AM MASS, IN SFX RESOURCE AREA 3 BAPTISMS AT ST CLARE'S
MONDAY 15 DECEMBER 8.30AM	SENIOR MIXED SOCIAL TENNIS GROUP @ SFX (CALL JUDY REID 9878 4212 OR JUST TURN UP) ALL WELCOME.
TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 12.45PM 7.00PM	LEGION OF MARY @ SFX ITALIAN CHOIR PRACTICE AT SFX
WEDNESDAY 17 DECEMBER 8.30AM 12.30PM 7.30PM	TENNIS GROUP (AS MONDAY) FOOD AT THE BARN RECONCILIATION AT SFX
THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 10.00AM 1.30PM	RECONCILIATION AT ST CLARE'S SCHOOL ASSEMBLY IN SFX CHURCH—END TERM 4
FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER	
SATURDAY 20 DECEMBER 9.00AM	PARISH WALKING GROUP —Last walk for 2008 and we will stop for coffee along the way.
SUNDAY 21 DECEMBER FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 12.30PM	3 BAPTISMS AT ST SFX

ROSTERS AT SFX

I need to make up a roster for Christmas Masses for Ministers of the Word & Eucharist. Please let me know of your availability for all Masses on Christmas Eve & Christmas Day. **Liz Clark**

Do any of our senior parishioners need help putting up decorations? There are a number of 'elves' who would love to help you - & we can arrange to take them down in January. Please phone the Parish House if you would like some help.

PARISH WALKING GROUP

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

Cash found last week on Whitehorse Rd nature strip outside the Parish Office. Please contact Parish Office 9890 2231.

"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 2009. Please prayerfully consider your own personal gifts and talents, and offer to share them with others next year.

Forms are available in the church. Please complete & return them at Mass or to the Parish Office.



From Fr Ben

Lucy: I'm thinking of starting a discussion group.

Charlie Brown: that could be very interesting.

Lucy: People would come from all over town to listen to me...

RECONCILIATION

As part of your preparation for the birth of Jesus, you are invited to attend our parish **Reconciliation Service on Wednesday December 17 at 7.30pm at SFX or Thursday December 18 at 10.00am at St Clare's**. Please take this opportunity for a few quiet moments, and some time to reflect on your journey throughout the year.

Those who were received into the Church at Easter will be receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time on Wednesday evening. The friars will be available after the service for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

SFX Parish Office will close on Monday December 22 at 4.30pm & reopen on Wednesday January 14. *Urgent messages can be left on the answering machine & one of the friars will respond as soon as possible.*



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. Only a few packs left!

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: Julian Nguyen, Jhannel De Vera & Madaleine McKergow; 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.

Our meetings for the year have come to an end and this being our last meeting till the New Year we talked of the gospels over Christmas. Wonder and awe filled our hearts as we spoke of Mary's story, the visitation from the angel announcing that she among women had been blessed and her simple acceptance of this. No questions or doubts, she just put her faith in God and his will and said "Yes".

Fr. Anthoni joined us and pointed out the importance of the nativity scene in the church each year as the Franciscan symbol of Christmas, the crib in the manger awaiting the birth of Jesus. He asked us to take the time to contemplate the nativity scene in the church and think on the many aspects/symbols of it, just one being the hay, as food for the animals; as Jesus is the food for our life.

All of us thank you for your prayers and support through out the year. ~ Lisa Norton

My corner

Kids are such fun, and have an amazing perspective on life.

My 4 year old grand daughter is very excited—she tells me she is growing an adult tooth and she will have to keep cleaning and cleaning it, because it has to last. (I think it's a 4 year old molar, myself).

Then she tells me that she is pleased that kinder is now finished and she can get on with being a schoolgirl. Our Grade 6 class at the school celebrated their graduation on Thursday night. There were few tears for what is over, but an amazing buzz of excitement for what it is to come. They have been pouring concrete at the school building site this week. The noise is stunning at times, and the teachers are bemoaning the presence of so many huge trucks, and the dust and constant interruptions. But the children love watching and guessing what's happening, and what will be next and what it will be like when they come back to school next year.

It's like a land of adventure outside their classrooms. A 10 year old told me she has achieved her year's ambition—a red belt in karate—she was so proud of herself. Our young helpers at the Senior's Christmas lunch last Sunday brought such a sense of joy and fun with them.

I read this week that adults should observe children as they stand or kneel in front of the crib at Christmas—faces shine, true wonder and awe are displayed, joy abounds. Let's take some lessons from our youngsters and find how much there really is to life.

*Liz Clark,
Pastoral Associate*

SPECIAL COLLECTION TODAY

Melbourne Overseas Missions (MOM) is a humanitarian organisation founded in 1968 by Cardinal James Knox to provide assistance to developing countries as an outreach of the Catholic Church community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. MOM programs are based on a Christian motivation of commitment to the poor with strong objectives to encourage self-help and self-reliance, respect human rights and enhance gender equality.

MOM development projects are available to all sectors of the recipient community. MOM provides funding, material goods and volunteer personnel to partner Catholic dioceses and parishes in Papua New Guinea and to some other countries for programs in education, training, literacy, health, village development, water supply, emergency relief and other activities.



The Society of St Vincent de Paul welcomes donations to the Giving Tree, which is on the wall in the west transept of SFX church & also at St Clare's, for needy families in our community. Gifts should be labelled 'man/woman/child/baby/age from?-to? Please do not indicate what the gift is on the card.

THANK YOU!

What a wonderful celebration we had with Seniors' Dinner last Sunday. It was such a happy day, and there have been glowing reports from many people. Thank you to the Social Committee and all the volunteers who worked so willingly and efficiently to ensure that our Seniors were comfortable, happy and well-fed. This day will be remembered as filled with fun, joy and a warm sense of community.

WORLD MISSION DAY APPEAL

Catholic Mission thanks you for your response to the World Mission Day Appeal (19th October). Your generosity empowers us to witness Christ's love in 160 countries of the world. By your generous donations you have joined fellow Catholics throughout the world, contributing to "One World, One Family, One Mission of Love."

Kevin Meese, Executive Officer

Memory Awakens Hope.

"Advent is concerned with that very connection between memory and hope which is so necessary to man. Advent's intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church's year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart's memory so that it can discern the star of hope...."

It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope."

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Seek That Which Is Above, 1986

ROSTERS

ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S-DECEMBER 21

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion

- 6.00pm M Rossely, V Bellis, A&M O'Connor, J Wells
 - 8.00am F Neyland
 - 10.00am M Can, V&K Fazio, E Kimmet, C Hangan, M Blundy, M Sinclair, L Soulsby
- Ministers of the Word**
- 6.00pm R Meyers, E Colafella
 - 8.00am F Neyland
 - 10.00am M Nitz, M Robotham
 - 5.00pm M Waring, J O'Brien

Welcomers

- 6.00pm
 - 10.00am
- PLEASE VOLUNTEER**

Children's Liturgy

December 21-4th Sunday of Advent-Group A

Altar Linen

- December 14 Lucia Chin
- December 21 Irene Balchin

Counters

- December 14 B&C Parsons
- December 21 P McLaughlin, G Kitch

Collectors 5pm

- December 14 I Mahlstedt
- December 21 P Aldag

Rosary Statue

- December 14—M Scarfe, 12 Clota Ave
- December 21—La family, 4/1095 W'horse Rd

ITALIAN MASS

Commentator

- December 14 P Grech
- December 21 G Amato

Lettori

- December 14 A Lanza, L Ferola
- December 21 M Salamone, C Chessari

Ministri dell'Eucarista

- December 14 M Salamone, D Amato
- December 21 G Massarotti, D Amato

ST CLARE'S—DECEMBER 21

Ministers of the Word

- 9.00am P Fitzgerald, K McMahon, M Farry

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion

- 9.00am J Easdown, F Fitzgerald, T Nicholson, H Keown, I D'Amato, D Tan

Piety Stall—December 21

- 9.00am P Green

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.