

SUNDAY MASSES TIMES

Sat. 6 p.m. Vigil St Stephen's
Sun. 8:30 a.m. (It. & Eng.) St Stephen's
8:30 a.m. (It. & Eng.) St Gabriel's
10 a.m. St Gabriel's

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

(Confessions)

St Gabriel's

Sat. at 9:45 a.m.

St Stephen's

Sat. at 5:30 p.m.

BAPTISMS

by prior arrangement

St Gabriel's

1st & 3rd Sundays of the month at 11:30 a.m.

MARRIAGES

by prior arrangement

(at least six months notice is required.)

No Sunday weddings.)

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

(this week)

ST GABRIEL'S: Mon. & Fri. at 9 a.m.
TUES. SEE CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE

ST STEPHEN'S: No Mass Wed. at 9:30 a.m.
No Mass at Keon Park Thurs. at 11a.m.

FERIALS, FEASTS & INTENTIONS—

Orario sante messe feriali

Mon. 4th Week of Advent
Intention: Sr Monica Sparks SGS—Rec. Dec'd.

Tues. **THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**
Intention:

Wed. St Stephen, *the first Martyr* **No Mass**
Intention:

Thurs. St John, *apostle, evangelist* **No Mass**
Intention:

Fri. The Holy Innocents, *martyrs*
Intention:

Sat. 5th Day in the Octave of the Nativity **No Mass**
Intention:



The Partnered Parishes of
St. Gabriel, Reservoir
and
St Stephen of Hungary, East Reservoir
Parish Priest: Fr. Shane Hactor



Fourth Sunday of Advent - 23.12.2018 - 4a Domenica di Avvento

St Gabriel's 1 Viola Street, Reservoir 3073

Ph: 9460 6036
Fax: 9460 4771
Email: reservoir@cam.org.au
Website: www.stgabrielsreservoir.org

Parish Secretaries:

Mrs Gracie Forde
Mr Hung Chau

Office Hours:

Mon. & Tues. 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
Fri: 8 a.m.—3 p.m.

School:

237 Spring Street, Reservoir

Ph: 9469 3513
Email: principal@sgreservoir.catholic.edu.au

Principal: Mr Mark Miatello
Secretary: Mrs Enza Torcasio

St Stephen's 71 Whitelaw Street, Reservoir East, 3073

Ph: 9460 7266
Fax: 9460 7650
Email: reservoir@cam.org.au

Parish Secretary:

Mrs Gracie Forde

Office:

Please contact St Gabriel's Parish Office.

School:

71 Whitelaw Street, Reservoir East

Ph: 9460 3566
Fax: 9462 3404
Email: principal@ssreservoir.catholic.edu.au

Principal: Mr Richard Keele
Secretary: Mrs Gracie Forde

TODAY'S MASS

First Reading: Micah 5:1-4 *Micah, the prophet, looks to a new age, set against the background of King David's birthplace of Bethlehem.*

Psalm Response: Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10 *The author of the letter to the Hebrews focuses on the obedience of Jesus to his Father's will.*

Gospel Acc.: Alleluia, alleluia!
**I am the servant of the Lord:
May his will for me be done.
Alleluia!**

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-44 *Mary and Elizabeth meet, and each proclaim' Mary's child—as does Elizabeth's unborn child. This story, usually called the Visitation, could also be classed as another annunciation.*



NEXT SUNDAY—DOMENICA PROSSIMA

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph—La Famiglia Readings: Year C

1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28; 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24; Luke 2:41-52

The Parishes of St Gabriel, Reservoir and St Stephen, East Reservoir, are committed to upholding and implementing the Privacy Principles set out in the 2001 legislation of the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments. A copy of the Parishes' Privacy Policy is available to any Parishioner by contacting the respective Parish Offices.

Our Advent season draws to a close with a liturgy filled with promise and expectation. Luke's gospel text describes the first meeting of John the Baptist with the Lord he is to herald so selflessly – in a tableau rich in implications, as we shall see. The first reading from the prophet Micah sums up the immense hopes about to be realized with the coming of the New David. The messiah will be born in Bethlehem, the city of David; he will be a mighty leader, gathering God's scattered people and exercising a rule giving expression to God's 'power and majesty'; he will, in fact, be peace personified (cf. Eph 2:14).

The reading from the letter to the Hebrews describes how the Saviour's coming inaugurates a new and final order of things in the plan of God. The old covenant, with its animal sacrifices and burnt offerings, was only a foreshadowing. Many times the prophets, in the name of God, had rebuked the people for relying upon these external observances while their hearts were far from God and God's ways. Jesus himself was to run up against this same attitude. The letter to the Hebrews, we know, was written for people who looked back nostalgically to the rituals of old Israel, inviting them to leave these shadows behind and rejoice in the reality they pointed to. Today's passage takes us to the heart of the matter – the eternal designs of God shaping the mission of the eternal Son made man. True worship, as the psalm quoted reminds us (Ps 40), is giving one's life over to God in fidelity and obedience. The Saviour's becoming one of us, and giving himself – 'once and for all' – into the hands of his Father, through his Paschal Mystery, has realized this pattern in a manner beyond all human expectations. By this self-offering, he has become the true worship of the whole of creation. More than that, he has united us to himself in his act of worship – God's 'will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body'.

But all of this is in the future, as Luke describes the dawn of salvation. Presenting the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, he invites us to recognize how much is involved in the drama that is beginning. It realizes the designs of the eternal Father, whose 'promise made to Mary is fulfilled'; the Old Testament and its time of waiting is coming to an end, as its final and greatest spokesman recognizes the coming of the Son of God; it is through Mary – 'most blessed of all women' – that this dawn of salvation takes place; and it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that Mary has conceived, and Elizabeth with her child are able to enter into the joy that faith in this coming, or advent, brings to the world.

John Thornhill sm

GENERAL MEETINGS, EVENTS, NEWS & HUMOUR

THANK YOU to **Son Ha** for designing the Nativity Scene at St Stephen's and **Moira Mullan** for designing the Nativity Scene at St Gabriel's. This year St Stephen's has a new set of figures for the Crib and those at St Gabriel's have been restored and repainted by Joe Giansiracusa of Sacred Art Studios.

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020 - Listen to what the Spirit is saying. Find out more about the Plenary Council 2020 at the new website, now online:

ST MARGARET'S RETIREMENT VILLAGE—currently has one and two bedroom units available. The prices start from \$222,000. If you are interested or have any queries please call Erin on 8414 6000.

SUMMER SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION: WORLD YOUTH DAY @ HOME - REGISTRATIONS CLOSING SOON! - In 2019, the Melbourne Summer School of Evangelisation in partnership with the Archdiocesan Office for Youth will be offering a special WYD-themed Summer School! The Summer School will include many of WYD features such as Catechesis with bishops, a Stations of the Cross, an expo and a final Mass. Join Bishop Mark Edwards and participants from around Australia for a week of faith and fellowship. Open to young people aged 16-35. Sunday 20 to Sunday 27 January 2019 PGL Campaspe Downs, 1302 Trentham Road, Kyneton. Registrations close December 20. To register visit: www.cam.org.au/wyd/wydhome.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC EUCHARIST - Should you have any friends or family in Melbourne, please extend an invitation to them to join us. Following the Eucharist there will be an opportunity for Prayer Ministry and to be ministered to by those who have spent the week on retreat. Thursday 10 January 2019, 7.30 p.m. Newman College, University of Melbourne, 887 Swanston Street, Melbourne

CHRISTMAS CONCERT—Music to celebrate the Christmastide including Choir Motets, Noëls for Organ Chamber Choir with Fr Nicholas Dillon on the organ. Thursday 27th December 2018, 7.30 p.m. St Philip's Church, 60 Junction Road, Blackburn North. Programmes are available by donation.

CAMPION COLLEGE SUMMER PROGRAM—Experience college life and a taste of the Champion College course, including literature, history, theology, hiking and sports. Monday 7 to Friday 11 January 2019 Enquiries: study@champion.edu.au or (02) 9896 9300 Registrations: www.champion.edu.au/summer



Christmas Mass Times

Monday 24 December—Christmas Eve
St Stephen's 6:00 p.m. Carols 5.30 p.m.
St Gabriel's 8:00 p.m. Carols 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 25 December—Christmas Day
St Stephen's 8:30 a.m.
St Gabriel's 8:30 a.m. & 10 a.m.

A VOCATION VIEW: Can you pray honestly: "I have come to do your will, O God"? Blessed are you who trusts that the Lord's words to you will be fulfilled.



Dates for your Diary

Tues. 1 January 2019
NEW YEARS' DAY

In six days, it will be Christmas. The trees, the decorations and the lights everywhere recall that this year also there will be a celebration. Advertising invites to keep exchanging newer and newer gifts to have surprises. However, is this the celebration that pleases God? What Christmas would He want, what presents and surprises?

We look at the first Christmas of history to discover God's tastes. That Christmas was *full of surprises*. It begins with Mary, who was Joseph's promised bride: the Angel arrives and changes her life. From being a virgin, she will be a mother. It continues with Joseph, called to be the father of a son without generating Him. A son that — in a dramatic turn of events — arrives in the least indicated moment, namely, when Mary and Joseph were betrothed and, according to the Law, could not live together. In face of the scandal, the good sense of the time invited Joseph to repudiate Mary and save his good name, but he, although he had the right, surprises us: not to hurt Mary he thinks of taking leave of her in secret, at the cost of losing his own reputation. Then, another surprise: in a dream, God changes his plans and asks him to take Mary to himself. Jesus having been born, when Joseph had his plans for the family, again in a dream he is told to rise and go to Egypt. To summarize, Christmas brought unexpected life changes. And if we want to live Christmas, we must open our heart and be open to surprises, namely, to an unexpected change of life.

However, it's on Christmas Eve that the greatest surprise arrives: the Most High is a little baby. The divine Word is an infant, which means literally, "incapable of speaking." And the divine Word becomes "incapable of speaking." The Authorities of the time or of the place or the ambassadors were not there to receive the Saviour: no, it was simple shepherds, who, surprised by the Angels while they were working at night, run without delay. Who would have expected it? Christmas is to celebrate the *unheard-of God*, or better, it is to celebrate an *unprecedented God*, who overturns our logics and our expectations.

To celebrate Christmas, then, is to receive on earth Heaven's surprises. One can't live "down to earth," when Heaven has brought its novelties into the world. Christmas inaugurates a new era, where life isn't planned but is given; where one no longer lives for oneself, on the basis of one's tastes, but for God; and with God because since <the first> Christmas, God is God-with-us, who lives with us, who walks with us. To live Christmas is to let oneself be shaken by its surprising novelty. Jesus' Birth doesn't offer the reassuring warmth of a fireplace, but the divine thrill that shakes history. Christmas is the revenge of humility over arrogance, of simplicity over abundance, of silence over noise, of prayer over "my time," of God



A man got home on morning and found his dog lying on the verandah with a dead rabbit in his mouth. The dog wasn't bloody just dirty. Then the man realised that his neighbour bred rabbits for show and many were blue-ribbon winners; instantly he knew that the rabbit belonged to his neighbour. He took the rabbit from the dog, washed off all the dirt and sneaked next door where he put the rabbit into an empty cage. About half an hour later he heard loud screams. He climbed up the back fence and asked the neighbour what was wrong. "It's my rabbit," the neighbour cried, "he died three days ago and

PARISHES' INFORMATION



ROSTERS FOR 29 / 30 DECEMBER Readers & Special Ministers

6 p.m. VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!
8:30 a.m. VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!

ST STEPHEN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS—'Every Day is Open Day'. If you know of any family who has a child ready to start School in 2019 please let them know about us and encourage them to

...cont.

us needy <people>, and to come down to those in need of us. It is to do as Mary did: to *entrust* ourselves, docile to God, even without understanding what He will do. To celebrate Christmas is to do as Joseph did: to *rise* to do what God wants, even if it's not according to our plans. Saint Joseph is surprising: he never speaks in the Gospel: there isn't one word of Joseph in the Gospel; and the Lord speaks to him in silence, He speaks to him in fact in his sleep. Christmas is to prefer God's silent voice to the noises of consumerism. If we are able to be silent before the Crib, Christmas will be a surprise for us also, not something already seen. To be in silence before the Crib: this is the invitation for Christmas. Take a bit of time, go before the Crib and stay in silence. And you will feel, you will see the surprise.

Unfortunately, however, the *celebration can be mistaken* and we can prefer the usual things on earth, to the novelties of Heaven. If Christmas remains only a beautiful traditional feast, where we, and not Him, are at the center, it will be a lost occasion. Please, let us not make Christmas *worldly!* Let us not put the One celebrated aside as <happened> then, when "He came among His own, and His own received Him not" (*John 1:11*). Since the first Gospel of Advent, the Lord has put us on guard, asking us not to be weighed down with "dissipation" and "the cares of life" (*Luke 21:34*). In these days one runs, perhaps more than ever during the year. So, the opposite is done of what Jesus wants. We blame the many things that fill our day, the world that goes fast. Yet Jesus didn't blame the world. He asked us not to let ourselves be dragged, to watch at all times praying (Cf. v. 36).

Behold, it will be Christmas if, like Joseph, we make room for silence; if, like Mary, we say to God "Here I am"; if, like Jesus, we are close to one who is alone; if, like the shepherds, we go out of our enclosures to be with Jesus. It will be Christmas, if we find the light in the poor cave of Bethlehem. *It won't be Christmas* if we seek the shimmering glow of the world, if we fill ourselves with gifts, lunches and dinners, but we don't help at least one poor person, who is like God, because at Christmas God came poor.

Dear brothers and sisters, I wish you a happy Christmas, a Christmas rich in Jesus' surprises! They might seem uncomfortable surprises, but they are God's tastes. If we embrace them, we will have a splendid surprise for ourselves. Each one of us has hidden in the heart the capacity to be surprised.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEK—THANK YOU!

Thanksgiving: \$332
Presbytery: \$316

The Thanksgiving Collection is the 'life-blood' of the parish because it is regular income. Consider joining and showing your support!

CONGRATULATIONS TO Áine Murphy, eldest daughter of Terry and Imelda Murphy, who was married to **Shannon Russell** here at St Gabriel's on Friday 21 Dec.



ADULT FAITH FORMATION will resume in 2019.



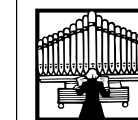
"Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Lk 1:44

May they rest in peace

RECENTLY DECEASED: Sr Monica Sparks SGS, Pietro Scarmozzino

ANNIVERSARIES: Michael Montebello, Joseph Georges



St Gabriel's Music at the 10 a.m. Mass



Entrance:	Sheet F 1
Psalm Response:	CWB 173 (old edition)
Gospel Acclamation:	
Prep. Of Gifts:	Sheet F 10
Communion:	Sheet F 3
	Sheet F 7
Final Hymn:	Sheet F 5
Ordinary:	Freedom

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEK—THANK YOU!

Thanks. Envelopes: \$902

Weekly Average
as at 30.09.17: \$1022

Presbytery: \$446

Loose: \$408

***Join the campaign! Know the joy of giving and spreading the Good News!**