

As we come and worship, we remember the wurundjeri people, the original custodians of this land

FIRST READING *Isaiah 7:10-14*

The virgin will conceive.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

SALMO RESPONSORIALE

Ecco, viene il Signore, re della gloria.

SECOND READING *Romans 1:1-7*

Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.

Alleluia!

CANTO AL VANGELO

Alleluia, alleluia!

Ecco la vergine concepirà e darà alla luce un figli: a lui sarà dato il nome di

Emmanuele: Dio con noi. Alleluia!

GOSPEL *Matthew 1:18-24*

Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO GAVE LAST WEEK

1st Collection - Thanksgiving Offering.....\$855.00

- Loose Money.....\$314.00

2nd Collection - Presbytery.....\$347.00

LECTORS - THIS WEEK 19/12/2010

6.00pm (SAT) – E Krygger

9.00am (SUN) – G Tempone & T Forte

10.30am (SUN) – A De Cata & G Canavan

SPECIAL MINISTERS

N Ziino

L Catena, M Crupi & A DiRico

J & J Kearney & J Tanti

LECTORS – NEXT WEEK 26/12/2010

6.00pm (SAT) – (Selected)

9.00am (SUN) –

10.30am (SUN) -

SPECIAL MINISTERS

(Selected)

CHURCH CLEANERS

25/12/2010 P Sparano, R Bango & R Fato

MONEY COUNTERS

20/12/2010 A Sinopoli, L Cavedon, F Nardoza & R Comito

27/12/2010 E Claridge, F Carabott & G Canavan

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING

RECENTLY DECEASED

Fr William DONEGAN, Dr Tom BOLAND, Salvatore PACELLA (d.rec. USA)

ANNIVERSARIES

Mariangela, Giuseppe & Salvatore SCOPACASA, Nicola GIAMPIETRO,

Agata, Francesco & Luigi DE RANGO, Lena MONARCA, Caterina CURRA, Gennaro & Teresa

FALVO, Angela PUCCIO, Felice, Antonio & Maria CARUSO, Severio & Rosina NICOLAZZO

Antono PASCUIZZI, Giovanni & Antonia TABACCO, Frank SPARANO, Antonio PISTONE,

Franco NICOLAZZO, Carmela LA SPINA, Vito, Rosaria & Santina BARBAGALLO,

Adelina ALICATA, Giovanni & Angelina VILLELLA, Angelina & Felice BRUNO

Lorenzo PACELLA (60yrs), Rachele PACELLA (30yrs) Pasquale & Laura MARIANI

Mariarosa LAMBRAIA, Bambina GUGLIELMI, Giuseppe TARANTO, Felice TARANTO

ST JOSEPH THE WORKER

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SUNDAY MASS TIMES:

Sat 6.00pm - English

Sun. 9.00am - Italian

Sun. 10.30am - English

Fr Emmanuel Bonello – Parish Priest

Sr Doreen Bentley – Pastoral Associate

Mr Peter Chowne - School Principal

Mrs Liz Pistoni – Parish Secretary

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES:

Mon. 9.10am Comm. Service

Tue. 10.00am Italian

Wed. 9.10am - English

Thur. 9.10am - English

Fri. 9.10am - English

Sat. 8.30am - English

Maltese Mass

1st Saturday of the Month 6.00pm

Baptisms – Sunday 12.00pm

Marriages - By Appointment



Reconciliation: Sat. 10.30am

4th Sunday of Advent Year A

19 December 2010

Virgin Birth

As Christmas approaches, the malls are filled with the strains of Christmas carollers singing of “round yon virgin”, and “virgin unspotted...whom prophets foretold”. Some find such references embarrassing, vestigial remains of our uncritical past when we accepted Nativity narratives in Matthew and Luke as historical. Many today dismiss the stories of Jesus’ miraculous conception and birth as fictional anecdotes drawn from other ancient myths about semi-divine heroes, like Mithras, Dionysus or Hercules.

The virginal conception of Jesus is a key aspect of the Nativity story, deriving from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke – the earliest of which is Matthew, part of which forms the Gospel for today. Unlike Luke, Matthew’s nativity narrative focuses on Joseph and his dreams where Joseph learns of Mary’s pregnancy and is reassured that such was a fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy that “a virgin will conceive and bear a son” (Is 7:14). In his very influential book, *Jesus for the Non-Religious* (2009), John Shelby Spong dismisses the virgin birth as a “legend” created by the evangelist Matthew. The way Spong sees it, Mary’s virginity and even the role of her loyal and loving betrothed, Joseph, are parts of a “contrived tale” intended to perpetuate what he argues is a much later belief in Jesus’ divinity. The reality is that the belief in Jesus’ divinity emerged very early in the life of the Church. Larry Hurtado in his excellent book, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (2003), argues that the notion of Jesus’ divinity is already clearly present in the earliest Christian hymns found in Paul’s letters. Moreover the Gospel genre is fundamentally different from that of the genre of ancient myth. While the Evangelists may have employed some legendary and mythic elements, their stories are about historical people, places and events. The uniqueness of Christianity is that Jesus’ story points to genuinely human and physical “here-and-now” realities. Unlike pagan myths that served to “veil” (GK. Muthos) reality, the Christian myth “unveils” the reality that lies at the heart of the world. – it “unveils” the unseen. God is made visible in the created being of Jesus of Nazareth – which is what the Virgin birth story is all about. The Incarnation, unlike, for example, the births of Mithras or Hercules, is for Christians a historical event; otherwise it would be meaningless in terms of Christian theology, morality and pastoral outreach. Jesus isn’t a fairy tale character whose story functions only to point to spiritual realities. If God did not become human, so as to be born of a virgin and to rise from the dead, then there is no substance to Christian faith. So when you hear those carols being belted out from loud speakers across shopping malls everywhere this Christmas, join in, sing along: proclaim afresh the message that goes right back to the origins of our faith in a child born of a “Virgin unspotted.”

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S DAY TIME TABLE

TUESDAY 21 DECEMBER 2010

7.30pm General Reconciliation Ceremony

FRIDAY 24 DECEMBER - 2010 CHRISTMAS EVE

7.00pm Christmas Eve Family Mass

11.30pm Carols singing followed by the Midnight Mass

SATURDAY 25 DECEMBER 2010 CHRISTMAS DAY

9.00am Mass in Italian

10.30am Mass in English

SUNDAY 26 DECEMBER (BOXING DAY) FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Mass times as normal Sunday: 9.00am (Italian), 10.30am (English).

SATURDAY 1ST JANUARY 2010 – NEW YEAR'S DAY

Mass times: 10.00am in Italian, 11.00am in English

SUNDAY 2ND JANUARY FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Mass times as normal Sunday: 9.00am (Italian) 10.30am (English)

Please note that Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on a Saturday

Please remember that there **will not** be a Saturday 6.00pm Mass

on Saturday 25th December 2010

and Saturday 1st January 2011

Special times for Individual Confessions during the week before Christmas

(Orario speciale per le Confessioni individuali durante la settimana prima del Natale)

Tuesday (Martedì) 21.12.2010, 9.30am

Wednesday (Mercoledì) 22.12.2010, 9.30am

Thursday (Giovedì) 23.12.2010, 9.30am

Friday (Venerdì) 24.12.2010, 9.30am & 6.30pm

CUPPA



This weekend after the 10.30am Mass there will be a cuppa in the Narthex. Please stop and enjoy the hospitality of the parish as it will be the last one for the year.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

On this fourth Sunday of Advent Year A, we are reminded that God-is-with-us, "Emmanuel". God has promised not only to visit, but to remain with us. Because God is with us, we can trust that there is greatness in our smallness and, like Joseph, we can dream impossible dreams.

As we approach Christmas let us be grateful for all our parishioners and friends who through their faith are doing their best to see goodness in our community. Thanks to the Presbytery and Parish Office people (Secretary and Pastoral Associate) for their great work of coordination in the Parish. Thanks to the School Principal and Teachers, the School Board, the School Fund raising. Thanks to all the groups of people for their good work in the parish: the Parish Leadership Team, Liturgy Team, Finance Committee, Maintenance Committee, the Working Bee Helpers, the Italian Ladies and Men's Committees, the Italian Prayer Group, the ministers of communion at Mass and to the sick, the Readers, those who Welcome people, the Music people and the Singers at Mass, those at the Overhead Projector, the Money Collectors, the Counters, the Altar Servers, and those who prepare for Mass. Thanks to those who use the Hall regularly: the Italian Pensioners Club, the Acquaro Club, and the Maltese Stella Maris Club.

Thanks also to anyone else who has been involved in the parish ministry and activities during the year. Thank you all for your dedication and your great help in our Parish living our motto:

"Let us work together"

To everyone, Parishioners and Friends

Happy Christmas and Happy New Year

Buon Natale e Buon Anno Nuovo

II-Milied it-Tajjeb u s.Sena t-Tajba

Manny Bonello

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

There are Christmas offering envelopes in the seats. Please be generous to the parish during this Christmas season.

PLEASE NOTE

Please note this is the last Parish Bulletin for the year. The next Bulletin will be available on 30 January 2011.