

# Monty & Eltham

The Catholic Parishes of  
St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

## A time of Hope...

A message from Most Rev Peter A Comensoli  
Archbishop of Melbourne  
Christmas 2019

Hello friends,

I love Christmas. It is such a beautiful time of hope. Behind the tinsel, the advertising, the stress and frantic energy of the season, we encounter a profound simplicity in the story of God's arrival.

We just need to think about Mary and Joseph. They weren't welcomed into any warm hotel or inn; they weren't able to put themselves down by the fireplace in someone's home. They had come from far away and arrived in a place they did not know.

They could be like us after a long journey when nobody welcomes or acknowledges you. You can become quite despondent: no family around you; far from home; and in Mary and Joseph's case, a child on the way. It can seem like a story of isolation.

And yet, in the midst of a simple stable, a home for working animals, this most precious gift is given to us — a little boy, who against all the odds and in a place of somewhat hopelessness, becomes not merely a symbol of hope but who is hope itself. A hope for us.

He is a real baby, flesh and blood, with all the tears and the smiles of any little baby, and yet he is also the Son of God. *Emmanuel*. God among us.

In the distance, the angels were singing their hymns of hope, and shepherds were learning something about how this hope was coming into their lives. These shepherds — traditionally considered the 'lowly' in society — gifted with Hope itself. So, when we look upon this child, we can sense the stirrings of hope within ourselves — hope for new life, new beginnings, and the promise of peace.

He has brought unimaginable joy — joy into his own family who loved him, but also a joy that the whole world needs.

This is not just a story that we might tell each year at Christmas time. It is not just something of the past. Jesus lives now. Jesus lives in us, and Jesus lives for us today.

In today's world of change and uncertainty, we long for God to step gently into our lives, lovingly and tenderly reaching out to each one of us. So, as we busily prepare our homes for the arrival perhaps of family and friends at Christmas time, I invite you to take the time to prepare your hearts to welcome Him who offers himself to us.

May I wish you a beautiful, joyful and hope-filled Christmas.



### Montmorency

#### Christmas Eve

Holy Trinity Primary School Oval

5:30pm Carols  
6:00pm Mass

St Francis Xavier Church

9:30pm Carols  
10:00pm Mass

#### Christmas Day

St Francis Xavier Church

8:30am Mass  
10:30am Mass

### Christmas Mass Times

#### Parents & Children

**you are very welcome  
to come dressed  
as your favourite  
Nativity character!**

**Love to see lots of creativity  
(within dress code!)**



### Eltham

#### Christmas Eve

Our Lady Help of Christians Church

5:00pm Carols  
5:30pm Mass

Our Lady Help of Christians Church

7:30pm Carols  
8:00pm Mass

#### Christmas Day

Our Lady Help of Christians Church

9:00am Carols  
9:30am Mass

## PARISH TEAMS & INFORMATION

### OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



#### **Parish Priests**

Terry Kean - Pastor in Solidum

[terry.kean@cam.org.au](mailto:terry.kean@cam.org.au)

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

[michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au](mailto:michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au)

Barry Caldwell

#### **Parish Office**

86 Mayona Road

9435 2178

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

[montmorency@cam.org.au](mailto:montmorency@cam.org.au)

Ana Solic

Pastoral Worker & Baptism Co-Ordinator

[ana.solic@cam.org.au](mailto:ana.solic@cam.org.au)

Gina Ang

Pastoral Worker & Caring Group Co-Ord

[gina.ang@cam.org.au](mailto:gina.ang@cam.org.au)

Beth Krolkowski: Secretary

[beth.krolkowski@cam.org.au](mailto:beth.krolkowski@cam.org.au)

Kate Kogler: Secretary & Bulletin

[kate.kogler@cam.org.au](mailto:kate.kogler@cam.org.au)

Peter Williams Child Safety Officer

[montmorency.childsafety@cam.org.au](mailto:montmorency.childsafety@cam.org.au)

Website: [www.sfxmonty.org](http://www.sfxmonty.org)

[www.olhc.info](http://www.olhc.info)

Facebook:

St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

[kate.kogler@cam.org.au](mailto:kate.kogler@cam.org.au)

#### **Schools**

St Francis Xavier Primary School

★ *Principal:* Mr Philip Cachia: 9435 8474  
[principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

Holy Trinity Primary School

★ *Principal:* Mr Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888  
[principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

★ *Principal:* Mr Chris Ray: 9439 7824  
[school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](mailto:school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.olhceltham.edu.au](http://www.olhceltham.edu.au)

Religious Education Co-ordinator:

Ms Marguerite Jones 9439 7824



*Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...*

#### **Montmorency**

For the recently deceased;

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*Vito Capuana, Peter Carbone, Bernie Farrell, Mary Gioules*

For those in need of healing,

remembering especially:

*Baby Kylie, Sriyani Algama, Nikki Attwood, Justine Best, Kristina Brazaitis, Daniel Brewis, Jan Collins, Desmond Deehan, Renee Eastwood, Debbie Edgley, Marilyn Fairbank, Julian Forrester, Danielle Gray, Gennie Hannon, Colleen Hussin, Jim Hussin, Tina Inserra, Adrian Jones, Patsy Leed, Pat Longton, Hasti Momeni, Therese Moore, Patricia Mulholland, Montagna Mustica, Graham Neal, Geoffrey Nyssen, Mercy Oeson, Ron Pfeil, Susan Phelan, Andrew Pighin, Mary Said, Anthony Salvatore, Mary Salvatore, Maria Schroeders, Jeanette Steward, John Tobin, Remi Vulich, Sheryn Zurzolo*

#### **Eltham**

For the recently deceased;

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

For those in need of healing,

remembering especially:

*Ak Callaghan, Ruth Decker, Fay Dobson*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House 9435 2178

## Holiday Office Hours

The Parish office will be open from 9:00am to 12:00pm Monday, Wednesday & Friday throughout January. Office staff will be working through the holidays, so please call and leave a message, and we will get back to you!

The Monty & Eltham bulletin will continue through the holiday period as well, so please feel free to email bulletin items, anniversaries, etc to:

[kate.kogler@cam.org.au](mailto:kate.kogler@cam.org.au).

Have a blessed Christmas  
and a wonderful New Year!

#### **RECONCILIATION**

**Saturday, 10:30am Monty ~ Terry  
1/2 hr prior to any mass said by Michael**

#### **Collections last weekend: 14 & 15 Dec 2019**

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
Eltham	\$376.00	\$979.55
Montmorency	\$1,403.00	\$1,390.35

Please note the above figures are monies banked & do not include visa/mastercard or direct debits.  
Thank you so much for your contributions.



Dear Parishioners and Friends of Montmorency & Eltham Catholic Communities,

Over the past 6 months I have had the privilege of getting to know you and so many other wonderful people that are the backbone and strength of St Francis Xavier and Our Lady Help of Christians Parishes. I have said publicly that so many modern day active Catholics are truly ‘Saints’, this is my experience as I get to know the people who live and work in these lovely local villages! This image of living ‘Saints’ is not a unique idea of mine but comes from St Paul’s letters and vision of ‘town folks’ who hold and share their active faith journey in the spiritual reality that Jesus Christ is truly alive.

To continue to build a strong Catholic Community in this setting of the Diamond Valley is a marvellous reality that I notice you share - by using your gifts and talents, through this, many have obviously become life-long friends. Naturally, I am impressed with these active faith communities and the lovely ‘spirit’ in which each Sunday mass is celebrated.

Thank you for your strong contribution to the life of this Catholic Community!

As we move towards the end of the year and our Christmas celebrations, I just wanted to pen this note and again say a simple ‘Thank you’ to you and our family for your service and love for the Montmorency & Eltham Communities.

On behalf of Terry and our Parish Team,  
I wish you a wonderful Christmas Season with your family and friends,  
Warmest Love,

Michael F. Sierakowski



### Our Lady Help of Christians News & Events



With the threat of a dry, hot summer upon us I chose to make Jim Usher's book the book for December.

*Footsteps in the Ash* by Jim Usher: The story of St Andrews and Strathewen bushfires in 2009. A salutary reminder to be aware.

### St Francis Xavier News & Events

**Liturgy of the Word with Communion** is now over for this year and will recommence in February 2020 at the later time of 9:30am. During the quiet holiday season as you find more time to reflect, you may consider joining those who facilitate these liturgies. It is a very rewarding way of nurturing our own faith and serving each other in community.



“Geoffrey Keaton, 32, and Andrew O’Dwyer, 36, from the Horsley Park brigade, were in a truck convoy near the town of Buxton late on Thursday when a tree fell into their path, causing the vehicle to roll off the road.” (paragraph & photo courtesy of [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com))

These are the faces of two courageous volunteers who gave their lives fighting the bushfires surrounding New South Wales. The human impact on these fires that have been raging for months is painful to see.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those volunteers over these Christmas Days.



**Christmas Marian Magazine is now available for collection in the Gathering Area at both churches.**

**SFX Social Justice Group News**

**ADVANCE NOTICE**  
**EXPLORING CLIMATE CHANGE-SESSION 2**  
**WAYS TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS**

First speaker, Ralf Thesing, formerly President of the Alternative Technology Association & currently on the boards of Environment Victoria & the Macedon Rangers Sustainability Group, will speak on **RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PANELS** and on **ELECTRIC VEHICLES**.

Second speaker, environmental activist Alan Cuthbertson, will explain **FIVE FURTHER WAYS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS IN THE HOME**.

**TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020, 7.30 – 9.30pm**

 St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Parish hall,  
86 Mayona Rd, Montmorency.

**FREE ENTRY** Enquiries: Gloria Lappin:  
[glappin@gmail.com](mailto:glappin@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Kadasig Christmas Hamper Drive**

The Kadasig Christmas Drive is your chance to give a gift that gives and then gives again. Choose a special something this Christmas for someone in need and you’ll also get a gift certificate to give to your own family member/friend for all the goodness of giving twice!

Kadasig Gift Certificates can be used for:

- **Christmas Hamper \$40** (includes 5kg rice, spam, fresh fruit and vegetables, long life milk, milo, fresh meat, towels and more)
- 25kg sack of rice \$35
- Menstrual hygiene kit \$20
- Medical care \$20
- House repairs \$40
- Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner \$10
- Send a child to summer camp \$40



When you purchase one of these gift certificates you can request either a physical printed certificate or an electronic version to gift to your loved one. Please let us know which you would prefer.

For more information or to purchase a certificate contact:  
**Maree:** 0430 549 516 or [mareekulkens@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mareekulkens@yahoo.com.au)  
**Juanita:** 0409 514 565 or [jtroemml@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jtroemml@bigpond.net.au)

Then please transfer to:  
Kadasig No 2 Account; BSB. 083276; A/c No. 172040420  
Transaction Description:  
YOUR SURNAME & ITEM eg SMITH 2HAMPERS

Did you know that 100% of profits raised from the Kadasig Christmas Drive each year goes directly to the cause! Now that is festive!



**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**School Maintenance Manager**

We are seeking to employ a School Maintenance Manager at St. Francis Xavier School for one day a week commencing end of January 2020.

Previous experience with grounds maintenance, general repair and handyman type jobs is essential.

Would ideally suit someone who has recently retired, someone who lives locally and is looking to keep fit and active. Must have a current Working With Children Check (or be prepared to obtain one ASAP).

Please email Philip Cachia, Principal of St. Francis Xavier School at [principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)



**Child Safeguarding Policies**

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who have applied for or included the parishes on your Working with Children Checks/VIT and to everyone who has signed the new Parish Code of Conduct Declaration.

As a faith community, we stand united in embracing compliance with our policies and pursuing best practice in safeguarding children and all vulnerable people, in this way we are respecting the inherent value of everyone.

Signed copies of the Code of Conduct Declaration can be left in the trays provided in the church foyer or at the parish office in Montmorency.

Copies of the Policies and the Code of Conduct Declaration can be found on both parish websites. In addition, printed copies are available in the Church foyer.

If you have not had a chance to apply or amend your Working with Children Checks/VIT or sign the new Parish Code of Conduct Declaration, the links to following Websites may assist:

To apply for a Working with Children Check:  
[https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply#Complete\\_online\\_application](https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply#Complete_online_application)

To renew your Working with Children Check:  
<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/current-cardholders/renew-my-card>

To add the parish to your current Working with Children Check:  
<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/current-cardholders/update-my-details>

To add the parish to your VIT:  
<https://service.vic.gov.au/services/teachers-notifications/>

To access Parish Code of Conduct Declaration:  
<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWVpbnxzZngzMk0fGd4OjQyYTY0ZDNjZDU5MzIIN2Y>



In his apostolic letter, *Admirabile signum*, encouraging Christians to continue the tradition of Christmas cribs, Pope Francis invites us to recover the wonder children feel when they see the nativity scene and let the symbolism of the different characters speak not only to our minds but to our hearts / by Luigi Gioia

# A time for the heart

FIGURINES PROVIDED BY U.S. ARTIST SUZAN LINDH BY WILLIAM THELL SCULPTURES PHOTO: GUY PHOTON, NANCY WEISBERG



Year after year, I am mesmerised by the Christmas lights in central London. Caught in the frenzy of the Christmas shopping, surrounded by busy crowds in some of the busiest streets in the world, I find relief in lifting up my eyes and enjoying the sight of a row of giant and unflustered shimmering angels. They are the only characters in the nativity scene that survive in secular festive iconography and confer a veneer of spirituality to our Christmas celebration. Mary, Joseph and the baby are gone. It is as if, once again, “there is no room for them in the inn”, no room for them in what Christmas has become for most of us.

There is an ambivalence concerning the presence of the angels in the pages of the Gospel that describe the birth of the Messiah. They shine with glory but those who see them are terrified. There is a striking contrast between the thunderous sound of the heavenly hosts singing the glory of God and the subdued scene awaiting the shepherds in the barn where they find a couple hovering over a baby who lays in a manger. The shepherds are not disappointed, however: it is precisely in the helplessness of this infant that they recognise their Lord.

Of course, the angels of our Christmas decorations do not cause us any fear. Just like the shepherds, however, we can struggle to come to terms with God’s chosen way of visiting us in the middle of our restless undertakings. The only way to recognise God in the unimaginable way in which he presents himself to us is embarking on a journey, just as the Magi

and the shepherds did. We will know for sure that we have met the God described in the nativity scene only when instead of fear, guilt and anxiety we will experience joy and peace.

Joy is different from excitement. We love the exhilaration surrounding Christmas: the exchange of wishes and gifts, the meals with families and friends, the playful display of decorated trees and lights. Sometimes, however, this excitement can prevent God from finding a room in our hearts and a place in our homes.

For this reason, in preparation for Christmas, Pope Francis wrote a letter to encourage all Christians to preserve the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene. In Italy, where I come from, this custom is still widely practised. There is even a special name for the nativity scene, *presepe*, which comes from the Latin word *presepium*, which means “manger”. When I was a child, we would spend days building the family’s *presepe* and when it was finally ready and lit up, in the dim light of the living room, it became a world of its own, a presence in our home, and I remember spending long stretches of time watching it in wonder - today I would say “contemplating” it. As Pope Francis says, preparing and contemplating the nativity scene is a time for the heart, it allows us “to feel and touch the poverty that God’s Son took upon himself” and “to feel and believe that God is with us and that we are with him”.

This is a wonderful definition of what Christmas should be: a time for the heart. This is what we need in our busy lives, and especially in the agitation that sadly we associate with Christmas. As long as we do not find time for the heart, God will find no room in us - just as Jesus and his parents found no room in Bethlehem. We have not time for God, we are distracted by our busy lives, afraid of silence and peace, incapable to pray, unable to “contemplate”, to “pay attention”.

This is why Francis decided to remind us that making a Christmas crib is a contemplative exercise: it teaches us to pay attention to God, to visualise the good news, to imagine the scene of the nativity, to welcome salvation in our homes and in our loves. Pope Francis’ letter introduces us to contemplative prayer by inviting us to recover the wonder children feel when they see the nativity scene, take in the surroundings and each of the characters and let their symbolism speak not only to our minds but especially to our hearts.

We are free to be inventive in this exercise. One year, I built a nativity scene using a carriage wheel: the manger with the baby was in the hub and the figurines of all the other characters were on the spokes. This idea came to me when I read a sentence by Dorotheus of Gaza, a sixth-century monk, who said this: “Imagine that the world is a circle, that God is in the centre, and that the radii are the different ways human beings live. When those who wish to come closer to God walk closer to one another at the same time as to God. The closer they come to God, the closer they come to one another. And the closer they come to one another, the closer they come to God.”

By taking this time for the heart, by making a nativity scene with our children in our homes, by contemplating it, we make room for God in our lives - and make room for each other as a result. We cannot see the God who chose the precariousness of a manger without getting the message: if we want to find the baby today we have to reach out to those for whom this time of the year brings no excitement but rather an even more poignant reminder of their loneliness, their failure, their grief.

The brilliance of our festive decorations is dear to us and is a fitting way of celebrating Christmas as long as it does not prevent us from perceiving the star that leads us to the baby in the manger. These symbols are not naïve. Through them, the authors of the Gospels appeal not only to our minds but also to our imagination. Indeed, when we allow ourselves to linger with them a while, symbols have the power to bypass our defences and touch our hearts. They are an invitation to look for God not just figuratively, as in a nativity scene, but really, in the flesh, by overcoming our fears and reaching out to those for whom there is “no room in the inn” today, our sisters and brothers for whom Christmas is not a reason for excitement but for renewed ache and loneliness.

This is contemplation that becomes action. In this way we are given access to the same meaning that led the Magi to make their journey to worship the baby and led the shepherds to feel the urge to spread the news concerning what they had discovered, to share the joy they had experienced.

*Luigi Gioia is a research associate of the Von Jugel Institute in Cambridge. His latest book is Touched by God: The Way to Contemplate.*

# Eltham & Monty Rosters

If you need to make changes, please arrange a swap. Thank you.

<i>Eltham</i>	
<b>Saturday 21 December - 6:00pm</b>	
Commentator	David Scannell
Lector	Kathleen Nolan
Eucharistic Ministers	David Scannell
	Maureen Scannell
	Beverley Gillard
Sacristan	Marianne Hadley
<b>Sunday 22 December - 9:30am</b>	
Commentator	Anne Stevens
Lector	Claire Walker
Eucharistic Ministers	Miranda Armstrong
	Marlis Dopheide
	Linda Dunell
	Peter Rigg
	Trish Taylor
Sacristan	Kathy Reardon
Altar Society	Gabrielle Frediani
Morning Tea	Scully Friday
Pilgrim Rosary Statue	Scannell Family
Counters	Kevin Meehan & Vin McHugh
<b>Saturday 28 December - 6:00pm</b>	
Commentator	David Scannell
Lector	Dianne Zylstra
Eucharistic Ministers	John Gaspersz
	Karen Gaspersz
	Natisha Gaspersz
Sacristan	Marianne Hadley
<b>Sunday 29 December - 9:30am</b>	
Commentator	Linda Dunell
Lector	Terry Fanning
Eucharistic Ministers	Hugh Azzopardi
	Paul Crowle
	Anne Stevens
	John Stevens
	Frans Zylstra
Sacristan	Marian Goss
Altar Society	Kathy Reardon Helen Scully
Morning Tea	Smith Family
Pilgrim Rosary Statue	Stewart Family
Counters	Peter Rigg & Peter Reardon

<i>Monty 28/29 Dec</i>	
Cain, Darrell	CLNR
Cotter, Anne	W8:30
Davidson, John	PRYR
Egan, Tess	E6:00
Emslie, Maureen	E6:00
Farrell, Sue	E6:00
Hannon, Gennie	E8:30
Hannon, Kevin	E8:30
Hayes, Greg	E6:00
Kitch, Loretta	E6:00
Kuppe, Andy	E6:00
Kuppe, Andy	W6:00
Lister, Kerry	E8:30
Longton, Pat	E8:30
McKinna, Jane	W6:00
McShane, Jill	E8:30
Meredith, Jeanette	E6:00
Nailer, Kimberley	CLNR
O'Dowd, Mark	E10:30
Roy, Rob	E10:30
Roy, Yvonne	E10:30
Shirbin, Michael	W10:30
Shirbin, Olesia	E10:30
Siciliano, Ines	E10:30
Siciliano, Pat	E10:30
Skipper, Patsy	E8:30
Solic, Ana	W10:30
Spina, Connie	W10:30
Thornton, Catherine	E10:30
Warrillow, Elizabeth	E8:30
Wood, Marie	W8:30



## Sacred Heart Mission Meals Program

The Meals Program provides hearty, nutritious meals 365 days of the year. It is a program that does far more than feed people. It also provides opportunities for people to reconnect to and develop a sense of community and belonging. Volunteers are still needed for Sunday 27 Dec 2020! To help our volunteers and raise the profile of SHM Meals Program, we will be publishing the Sunday Meal Serving roster here each week.

## Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

### **Saturday 21st**

10:00am	Child Safety Meeting	Montmorency
6:00pm	Mass & Baptism Welcome	Eltham
6:00pm	Mass	Montmorency

### **Sunday 22nd**

8:30am	Mass	Montmorency
9:30am	Mass & Baptism	Eltham
10:30am	Mass, Baptism & Baptism Welcome	Montmorency

### **Monday 23rd**

7:30pm	Rosary	Eltham
--------	--------	--------

### **Tuesday 24th**

9:15am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion (Trish)	Eltham
9:45am	Reflections on the Gospels of Advent	Eltham
5:00pm	Christmas Eve Carols	Eltham
5:30pm	Christmas Eve Family Mass	Eltham
5:30pm	Christmas Eve Carols	Holy Trinity
6:00pm	Christmas Eve Family Mass	Holy Trinity
7:30pm	Christmas Eve Carols	Eltham
8:00pm	Christmas Eve Mass	Eltham
9:30pm	Christmas Eve Carols	Montmorency
10:00pm	Christmas Eve Mass	Montmorency

### **Wednesday 25th - Christmas Day**

8:30am	Christmas Day Mass, Carols prior	Montmorency
9:00am	Christmas Day Carols	Eltham
9:30am	Christmas Day Mass	Eltham
10:30am	Christmas Day Mass, Carols prior	Montmorency

### **Thursday 26th - Boxing Day**

9:15am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion (Barbara)	Eltham
9:15am	Mass	Montmorency

### **Friday 27th**

9:15am	Mass	Eltham
--------	------	--------

### **Saturday 28th**

6:00pm	Mass	Eltham
6:00pm	Mass	Montmorency

### **Sunday 29th**

8:30am	Mass & Baptism Welcome	Montmorency
9:30am	Mass	Eltham
10:30am	Mass, Baptism & Baptism Welcome	Montmorency

### **Tuesday 31st - New Year's Eve**

9:15am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion (Peter)	Eltham
9:15am	Mass	Montmorency

### **Wednesday 1st - New Year's Day**

9:15am	Mass	Eltham
1:00pm	Small Church Community Meeting	Montmorency

### **Thursday 2nd**

9:15am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion (Beverley)	Eltham
9:30am	Mass	Montmorency

## General News & Events



### **Advent Sunday 4 - 22 December**

"God is With Us" St Joseph listened to the call of God, his vocation was to trust. Today let us pray that many young people from our parishes and families will hear the call of God and trust enough to say 'yes' to priesthood and consecrated life.

### **Christmas - 25 December**

"The People that Walked in Darkness have seen a Great Light" The words of the prophet Isaiah encourage us at this time. We all know the darkness in our lives, our Church and our world. Christmas brings us light and hope. May this Christmas inspire many serve Christ in a vocation to bring light and hope into our world.



### **ANY ITALIAN TRAVELLERS?**

In September 2019, a small Italian travel idea began. A group of six Victorians travelled around "off the beaten track" places in the Emilia Romagna region, near Modena and Bologna.

This small group tour will take place again in September 2020. The tour leader, Bruno Ciancio, was born in Echuca but has resided in Italy for thirty years working in nursing and management. His interests in art, food, history and culture have led him to show places in the north of Italy to visitors over many years on a casual basis but now he has formalised his small tour group experience. He finds that a small group travelling in a Mercedes min-bus allows great flexibility and the creation of a new friendship group. His son is a chef and provides the welcome meal on the first evening. Bruno is in Melbourne till late January 2020 so he's able to respond to any enquiries. The tour costs about \$7,500 for ten days touring including accommodation in a local farm stay [agriturismo], meals, daily tours and air fares from Melbourne. His assistant tour guide for 2019 will be Montmorency parishioner, Frances Toscano.

Any enquiries or questions can be directed to:

[bruno.ciancio17@gmail.com](mailto:bruno.ciancio17@gmail.com) or

[ftoscano@netspace.net.au](mailto:ftoscano@netspace.net.au)

## Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

## The Witness of Mary and Joseph

As we enter into the fourth week of Advent, we are given our Blessed Mother and St Joseph to reflect upon. Though our Blessed Mother was perfect, and St Joseph was a deeply virtuous man, they were both still fully human and would have walked through Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' birth with every human emotion and experience.

St Joseph was faced with an extraordinary mystery as he discovered his wife was pregnant. He knew her to be a woman of exceptional virtue and holiness and had to reconcile that with her surprising pregnancy. Even after the angel appeared to him in a dream he would have had questions arise in his mind as he faced this situation.

Our Blessed Mother was also invited by God to face her pregnancy in faith. Her response was perfect, "Let it be done to me according to your word." She could not explain nor understand what was happening but, nonetheless, she knew deep in her soul that God was in charge leading all to His glory.

Both Mary and Joseph are wonderful models of faith and obedience. They were obedient to the will of God despite the fact that the will of God drew them into an incredible and unfathomable mystery. They were first-hand witnesses to the salvation of the world and to the greatest act ever known. And they both embraced this mystery and accepted it in faith.

Reflect, today, upon your own invitations from God to embrace the mysteries of life. God's ways are often more than we can comprehend and figure out. Mary and Joseph give us the witness of how we are to handle every mystery God invites us to participate in. Say yes to the will of God just as this holy couple did.

<https://mycatholic.life/books/catholic-daily-reflections-series/advent-and-christmas-reflections/advent-week-four/>



Catholic Mission thanks you for your response  
to the World Mission Day Appeal.



*Reach out. Give life.*

Your generosity empowers us to witness Christ's love in 160 countries of the world. In contributing, you have joined fellow Catholics throughout the world, even in the poorest areas, in supporting Christ's mission to all people.

### Baptisms

This weekend we welcome to our:

Montmorency Parish Community  
on Sun at 10:30am

**Harrison Maxwell Selleslags**  
son of Vanessa & Kevin

Eltham Parish Community  
on Sun at 9:30am

**Matilda Lisa Frost**  
daughter of Kris & Gemma



### Baptism Welcomes

This weekend we welcome to our:

Montmorency Parish Community  
on Sun at 10:30am Mass

**Elinor Meiling Hughes**  
daughter of Aleksis & Feby

Eltham Parish Community  
on Sat at 6:00pm Mass

**Harrison David Scannell**  
son of Ben & Adele

We pray for *Harrison, Matilda, Elinor & Harrison*,  
their parents & Godparents.

*May God keep them always in His love.*