2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT—YEAR C
9th December, 2012

First Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

Responsorial Psalm
The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11

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

YEAR OF GRACE—PRAYER
Gracious God,
You have blessed this ancient land with many gifts, especially its people.
We thank you for the Year of Grace, a time to start afresh from Christ.
You invite us to contemplate the face of Jesus your Son, that we may experience a new wave of grace, and that the light of Christ may burn more brightly in our lives.
Attune our hearts and minds to the presence of your Holy Spirit, that our Church may be transformed, our relationship be healed, and our nation grow in compassion and justice.
We make our prayer through the intercession of St Mary MacKillop, who showed us new ways of living the Gospel.
Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us.

www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au/

Parish Priest
Fr Martin Fleming
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[PO Box 397]
Woodend 3442.
Ph: 5427 2690
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Parish Email
woodend@cam.org.au

Parish Secretary
Bernadette Petruccelli
Secretary Hours: Mon & Fri
9.00am—3.30pm.

School Principal
Robert Macklin
principal@sawoodend.
catholic.edu.au
54271285
School Website
www.sawoodend.catholic.
edu.au

Hall Caretaker & Bookings
Gillian
0402884450

Archdiocese Mass Times
www.cam.org.au/parishes

Welcome
St Ambrose Parish community warmly welcomes visitors and new parishioners. We invite new parishioners to fill in a card found on the table at the church entrance and place it on the collection plate. A member of the Parish will visit you as soon as possible.

Northern Deanery
Archdiocese of Melbourne

Mass Times & Services this Week

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Mass</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Mass, including Children’s Liturgy</td>
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Baptisms
Are arranged by appointment and are held on the first Sunday of the month.

Marriages
(6 months notice)
Arranged by appointment.
[Enquiries and information brochure available from Parish Office]

Reconciliation
Celebrated at 5.30pm on Saturday or by appointment with the Priest.
COMMUNION TO THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

This service is available to sick, elderly and housebound members of our parish community and there are many special ministers of the Eucharist who would deem it an honour to provide this service to such people. If you know of any parishioners who would like someone to call for this purpose contact the office on 5427 2690 and we will make the necessary arrangements.

WE PRAY FOR...

Please keep in your prayers all the members of this community who are sick, especially Vincent Kelly, Shannon Hanah-Merrit, Margaret Holgate and Sam Barker and all the sick of the Parish. God bring them peace of mind and a recovery to good health and guide those who care for them. We pray today for all those who have died recently, and for all whose anniversaries are at this time especially Maurice King, and for all those who have gone before us from this world to the fullness of life with God. May God have mercy on them all and help us to be faithful to their memory.

PRIVACY LEGISLATION

In 2001, the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments introduced legislation that deals with the manner in which public and private sector organisations may record, use, store and disclose information, including health information, collected from individuals. The Parish of St. Ambrose is committed to upholding and implementing the Privacy Principles set out in the legislation. A copy of the Parish’s Privacy Policy is available to any Parishioner by contacting Bernadette at the Parish Office.

CHURCH ROSTERS

Readers
- Dec 8th: John Keating
- Dec 9th: Julian Fraser & Allan Hebb
- Dec 15th: Elaine Dugdale Walker
- Dec 16th: Ted Bartels

Special Ministers
- Dec 8th: Pat McHenry or Angela Grinton
- Dec 9th: Mary Welch, Mary Larnach Jones & Bruna Bombig
- Dec 15th: Pat McHenry or Angela Grinton
- Dec 16th: Vicky Carrick, Bruna Bombig & Rhonda Loret

Church Cleaning
- Dec 10th: Michael & Karen O’Loughlin
- Dec 17th: Bernadette Petruccelli

Church Flowers
- Dec 14th: Anne Wright
- Dec 21st: Parish Office

COLLECTIONS

Presbytery Collection (1st collection)
[This collection covers running costs of Presbytery and Priest’s stipend.] $336

Church (envelopes) collection
[This collection covers the Church capital costs, and on going maintenance.] $833

ST MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP QUOTES

These quotes explore the spirituality and personality of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. She had much wisdom and insight and her words will help us to live the Gospel in TODAY’S world.

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

Glittery holiday ads can blind us to our stewardship values and distort our needs and wants. It is important that during this season of endless buying we remember that each of us also has the need to give back to God.

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

The One foretold by Isaiah is about to emerge in the here and now. God will remove the obstacles to his being seen and heard. Whether we choose to look and listen depends upon us, so John calls us to repent so that the obstacles to clear vision will be removed. God’s purpose is that everyone may see salvation.

MONDAY AT THE MANOR

Monday at the Manor will be finishing for the year this week 10th Dec and returning Feb 4th 2013. Everyone welcome. Anyone needing transport can call Judy and John on 54272827.
PARISH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM 2013—MASS CENSUS
There will be census cards available at Mass today. Could all parishioners please complete the card and leave in the marked box in the church foyer or return to the Parish Office or at Mass next weekend. The census will enable us to update our Parishioner details and ensure our records are current.

ST AMBROSE CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE
On Sunday December 16th at 5.30pm there will be a combine Parish/School Christmas Carol Service in the church. There will be school children singing, the school choir, Beata Lumina and congregational singing. This service will be followed by a free BBQ in the school grounds. For catering purposes we would like to know if you will be attending this service and staying for the BBQ.
Please fill out the notice in the Church Foyer.

ST AMBROSE CHRISTMAS RAFFLE
St Ambrose School Parents & Friends have organised a Christmas Raffle with tickets selling now.
Books are available in the Church foyer if you are able to sell them to friends or family or just buy a ticket.

AMBROSE CARE CHRISTMAS APPEAL
It is that time of the year again! Ambrose Care has started its Christmas Appeal. In the front of the church you will find a small Christmas Wishing Tree, under the tree are stars, with the age and gender of a child, that needs a little extra care in our community, at Christmas time. You may choose to buy a toy for this child, re-attach the star and return it to the school or church or presbytery as soon as possible. If you would like to make a donation to Ambrose Care there are small envelopes under the tree for that purpose.
We are very grateful for your generous support.
Thank you on behalf of the children, Rita Hamilton.

CALENDARS & CARDS
2013 Columban Calendars and Magellan Christmas Cards will be available to purchase after the 10.00am Mass on most Sundays. Calendars $6, Cards $5

THE MELBOURNE CHAMBER CHOIR
Sunday 16 December, 2:30pm
Celebrate Christmas with music from across the centuries, inspired by the prayer of Mary. The Gregorian Magnificat is followed by works of Schutz, Arvo Part, Vaughan Williams, Raminsh and others.
Cost: Adults $35, Concession $32. Student rush at the door $10
Where: Trinity College Chapel, Royal Parade, Parkville
Contact: 9410 0165
Bookings: http://www.trybooking.com/BZUK

MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSION APPEAL—DEC 8TH & 9TH
There will be a special collection this weekend for our mission fund to help developing nations. Currently the major beneficiaries are Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Ghana, Pakistan, Botswana, Nigeria & Peru.

CHRISTMAS SQUARE IN THE CITY CENTRE
Monday 3 December, 10am — Wednesday 3 January, 10pm
Melbourne’s City Square has been transformed into a Christmas wonderland, ‘Christmas Square’, full of traditional and fun Christmas instalments for enjoyment by all. The outdoor square features a life-size 3D pop-up Nativity scene, an interactive digital story book on the birth of Jesus, as well as a large Nativity word wall. There’s a large Christmas tree, a hedge maze, and children can visit Santa and his helpers during the day. An initiative of the City of Melbourne and Melbourne City Churches in Action (MCCIA).
Cost: Free open to all, and accessible from
Where: Cnr of Swanston and Collins Streets
More info: www.thatsmelbourne.com.au

KIMBERLEY CATHOLIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE
The Diocese of Broome, WA, require volunteers to assist with the work of the local Church on Aboriginal Missions. There are various important voluntary tasks: administration, building maintenance, gardening, shop staffing, cooking, cleaning etc. Placements are preferred for a period of 12 months plus, but a reduced time would be considered. For further details, and an application form, please contact
Volunteer Coordinator: 08 91921060 or 0415526142
Email: volunteers@broomediocese.org Web:www.broomediocese.org
Mail: PO Box 76, Broome WA 6725
First Reading  Bar 5:1-9

A reading from the prophet Baruch
Jerusalem – God will show you splendour.

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever, wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you, put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, ‘Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness’.

Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them. Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory. For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God.

And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 125. R. v.3

(R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

1. When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, it seemed like a dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, on our lips there were songs. (R.)

2. The heathens themselves said: ‘What marvels the Lord worked for them!’ What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad. (R.)

3. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage, as streams in dry land. Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap. (R.)

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seed for the sowing; they come back, they come back, full of song, carrying their sheaves. (R.)

Second Reading  Phil 1:3-6, 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians
Show yourselves sinless and without blame in the day of Christ.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation  Lk 3:4. 6

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

Gospel  Lk 3:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
All people shall see the salvation of God.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar’s reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection
by Greg Sunter

The second and third weeks of Advent this year focus particularly on the role of John the Baptist as the one who prepared the way for Jesus and announced his coming. It continues the theme of preparation that was begun last week, but still, rather than preparing for the birth of Jesus, we are exploring the wider theme of preparation. The gospel writer includes a quote from Isaiah in which the prophet says, ‘Prepare a way for the Lord.’ (Often translated as ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’) The application of this passage to John the Baptist is a logical one. This gospel emphasises that John was preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Throughout the gospel of Luke, the recognition of sinfulness and the desire to repent and seek forgiveness is the prelude to receiving God’s favour.

This gospel makes it clear that one way in which we can prepare a way for the Lord is to recognise our faults and failings and to seek forgiveness. It is only through such repentance that we can make ourselves receptive to the love of God. The only preparation of the way that is necessary for the Lord is a personal preparation to be receptive. We are absolutely assured of God’s love. The problem is that we often feel that we are undeserving of that love or are unable to receive it. When we are called to ‘Prepare a way for the Lord’ it is a call to prepare a way in our own hearts – to break down the barriers that we have put up to clear the obstacles that we have placed in the path.

God’s love will find a way! We simply make the way easier for ourselves to recognise God’s love if we ‘Prepare a way’.
St John of the Cross was born into a poor Spanish family in 1542. After attending a Jesuit college, he joined the Carmelite Order, studied theology and was ordained a priest at the age of 25. St Teresa of Avila encouraged him to join the Discalced Carmelite Reform, which provided two houses for friars. But after several years he was seized and imprisoned by the Calced Carmelite friars, who rejected the reform. St John of the Cross was a mystic and poet, and it was during his captivity that he wrote some of his finest work. He eventually escaped and founded a college at Baeza. St John is regarded as a Doctor of Mystical Theology, and was officially declared a Doctor of the Church in 1926.