



# SEASONS

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St. Thomas More, Mount Eliza

Baptism Of The Lord

10th January, 2010

## Let The Mission Begin

Understandably, we might be surprised to see Jesus join the queue of people to be baptised. Why did he do it? He had no need to repent; he had no need to proclaim his belief in his Father with whom he could claim some familiarity; he had no sins to be forgiven. And yet if the baptism was not the kind of empty ritual which Jesus disparaged in his own preaching, we can presume that there must have been a purpose to it.

The baptism of Jesus comes at the opening of his public mission, when Jesus begins the task for which he came into the world. Jesus' baptism was his initiation into his new life of public ministry. That baptism is described in the language of entrances - an initiation, a gateway, an introduction, a beginning, a splash, a start - is important for the understanding of the event. Jesus was *beginning* a new life; he was at the stage of crisis - not in our sense of catastrophe, but in the Greek sense of *krisis*, an important turning-point. And a turning-point is the beginning of a new way.

The baptism of Jesus signals his beginning, his birth into a public life that would lead eventually to his death. His baptism was a public profession that he was now becoming involved in the most important part of his life: his mission to all the people. It was Jesus' gateway, not his port of arrival; it was his official starting-point. Jesus would later speak of his death in terms of baptism when he would have a baptism to be baptised with" (Luke 15:20). Jesus' public life on earth was bounded by his baptism in the Jordan and his baptism on the cross.

Jesus was baptised in the waters of the Jordan. Water, which is a symbol of baptism, has within it its own ambiguity which can speak of death and life, not just the life and death of Jesus, but the experiences of ambiguity which the baptised go through when they become committed to a life lived in a certain community. The symbol speaks of a variation on the theme of crucifixion and resurrection. Water can be a symbol of life and death; answer to a thirst, reason for a chill; it is shallow, it is deep; you can paddle your feet in it, you can be up to your neck in it; you can dive into its embrace, you can fail to escape its clutches; it is the dream of the mirage, it is the dread of the nightmare; it is black, and blue and red, it is colourless; it can be solidified but not diluted. The rich symbolism speaks of a variety of experiences which Jesus was *letting himself in for* with his admission in baptism.

After his baptism, while he is at prayer, Jesus is formally recognised by his Father, and is anointed in his task by the Holy Spirit. At the opening of his public life, Jesus receives the assurance that his Father is pleased with him, and he receives the investiture. All is now ready for the mission.



### Mass Times this Week

Monday no Mass, Tuesday 9.15 am, Wednesday 9:15 am, followed by Holy Hour, Thursday-Friday 9:15 am  
Saturday (Vigil) 6 pm, Sunday 8 am and 10 am, **Reconciliation:** Saturday 5pm - 5:30 pm

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# November Mass Offerings

Mass will be offered during this week for the intentions of Alan & Julie Ryan, Brian & Pam O'Donnell, Gobel & Prowse families.

## Please pray for...

### Those who have died recently

Mons. Tom Galvin, Carmel Levitt, Michael Mayer

### Those whose anniversaries fall at this time

Aubrey Pearson, John Koppenol, Val Pierce, Maurice Carr, Henry Blake

### and the Sick

Martin De Koning (Maree & Tom Shelton's brother-in-law), John Dale, Anne-Marie Corcoran, Baby Peter Kost, John Courtney, Trish Sanders, Barbara Leary, Baby Kate Cameron, Fr. Dan McMahon, Cheryl, Bill Oakes, Linda Watschur, Mary McKenzie, Noeleen Walker, Agnes Hogan, Carmel McKane, Sr. Helen Nichols, Jo Pendlebury, Leonie Bradley, Frank Butler, Anne Horton, Kylie Mazoletti, Gloria Sisson, Margaret Hill, Carolyn Royal, Diana Espino, Edward Riordan, Gillian Richards, Eve Parker, Susan Jones, Pamela Wilson, Rod Van dewert, Judy Linton, Lorraine Curtain, Laurie Pendlebury, Henrique Mendonca, Margaret Beale, Alex Kelly, Mary Lauren, Michaela Baker, Fr. Peter Robinson, Fr. Joe McMahon, Sonia Webb, Nina Lion, Baby Matilda, Robert Fitzgerald, Steven Daniels, Giovanni Lazzaro, Carol Mason and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre and Ranelagh Gardens Nursing Home.

## The News (in brief)



After all the preparation for Christmas the season is at an end. I hope you have had a wonderful experience of renewal of faith and the joy of sharing time with family and loved ones. For those who have been mourning the loss of a loved one I wish you peace and tranquillity as the year progresses.

I will be around during January but not all the hours. Currently I am doing some preparation for 2010.

If you are interested in becoming involved in a parish activity this year, or are looking at a change in your current involvement, please let me know. Maybe you want to do something but are unsure what. Come and speak to me and we will find what is most suitable for you.

### St Thomas More Social Club

The next session of the **Poetry Group** will be the Group's (belated) Christmas Party and will be held at the home of Dorothy & Jim McKane on Monday, 18th January, 2010, commencing at **Noon**. Your hostess is Dorothy McKane, telephone 9787 6970.

**Wine'n'Dine at the Black Angus Restaurant** (cnr Bentons Rd & Nepean Hwy Mt Martha, Melways 145 D5), Wednesday, 13th January at **6.30pm**. BYO wine only. For all enquiries telephone Paul Kost 9787 3759.

### Bushfire Preparedness in Victoria

An audit carried out on behalf of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) has identified our Parish and school facilities as being located in a high to medium risk location with regard to bushfires.

Strategies are in place to protect the school and children in the event of such a happening and parents have been advised accordingly.

Where a Code Red Fire Danger warning is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology for the weather district in which this Parish is located **all** Parish facilities - including the Church - may be closed. This decision will be taken in consultation with and on the advice of the CFA.

In the fairly unlikely event of the cancellation of weekend Masses every effort will be made to notify people on the Parish Website [www.stm-mteliza.org](http://www.stm-mteliza.org)

*Fr. James*