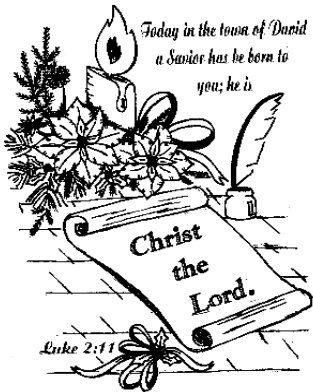


SEASONS

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

Christmas

25th December, 2011



The Celebration Of Christmas

I often hear people say that Christmas is “all about the children”. I think I know what they mean. We all love seeing the anticipation and sheer excitement the children bring to this day.

perfect, but no better place for raising children has been devised.

May you all have a wonderful Christmas and may God’s joy and peace be with you.

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Mary Cameron
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A Christmas Thought

If I trim the tree with shimmering angels, attend a myriad of parties and sing in the choir but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband. Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn’t yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn’t give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can’t.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.



Masses

Please note there will be no weekday Masses until the 3rd January 2012.

See opposite for weekend Mass times for the remainder of the Christmas Season.

Reconciliation

Saturday

Baptisms

are held on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month at 11:30 am or at any of the Parish Masses on the 2nd, 4th or 5th Sundays. A **compulsory** preparation night for parents takes place on the first Tuesday of each month in the **Parish Community Centre** at 7:30 pm.



CHRISTMAS MASSES 2011

6pm, Saturday, 31st December.....Mary Mother of God (Vigil)

8 & 10am, Sunday, 1st January.....Mary Mother of God (Mass)

6pm, Saturday, 7th January.....Epiphany (Vigil)

8 & 10am, Sunday, 8th January.....Epiphany (Mass)

We pray for...

Those whose anniversaries fall at this time
 Lucy Dole, Carmel Bainbridge, Margaret Rutherford-Smith, Marianna Landman, Margaret Bourke, John Mitchell

and the Sick
 Ria Wilson, Pauline Esler, Andy Gray, Chris Malone, Marcia Fiume, Little 8yr old Bonnie, Dee Rorke, John Nuttney, Samantha, and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre and Ranelagh Gardens Nursing Home.



Liturgy - Christmas

First Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5
The Lord takes delight in you.

Responsorial Psalm:
 For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading: Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
Paul spoke of Christ, the son of David.

Gospel Acclamation:
 Alleluia, alleluia! Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed: the Saviour of the World will be our King. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25
A genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David.

Next week's readings:
 Numbers 6:22-27,
 Galatians 4:4-7,
 Luke 2:16-21



Financial Matters...

Thanksgiving

Amount received last week.....	\$2443
Average 2011	\$3088
Pledged per week	\$3345

Presbytery

Amount received last week..... \$1177
Thanks to all of you who give so generously to support our parish.

Morning Tea



There will be no morning tea this week, we we're sure many of you will want to get away quickly for Christmas festivities.

Your hosts next week will be Beatrice Rodriguez and Irene Owsianka.

Parish Group Activities



St Vincent de Paul Society
Good Works

Christmas Appeal

There will be leaving collections taken up at each of the Masses celebrated in Mt Eliza this weekend. We would like to thank Fr. Laurie for giving us this opportunity, and for the support he has given us throughout the year.

We would also like to thank the parishioners at St Thomas More for their continued generosity, and to wish you a safe and Happy Christmas and a very prosperous 2012.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Morning Star Conference will be held in the Undercroft on Monday, 16th January, 2012 commencing at 9.30am.

Any St Thomas More Parishioner interested in learning about the work of the Society is welcome to attend this meeting.

Rosters for 2012

As we go to press, our rosters for 2012 have still not been finalised, because we've made a very significant last minute change to the system. For the first 4 months of the year, we will be trialling **weekly rosters** for **Lectors, Commentators and Ministers of the Eucharist**, but retaining **monthly rosters for our Counting Teams**.

Within the next 24 hours, we will be distributing via email and mailing hard copies of both rosters, and contacting anyone who is required for the first week of January. We've made every effort to avoid months which we were asked to keep free. Unfortunately, this means those who are available in the first 4 months have been spread very thinly. However in that time, we'll ask for more people to come forward in light of the new weekly arrangement (which may be more attractive to newcomers). If at the end of the trial period we decide to continue weekly, we'll be asking people to nominate specific **dates** to avoid, rather than months, and hopefully this will result in a more even distribution. So please bear with us...

We're also looking into using an SMS reminder system to send messages to parishioners' mobile phones on the Friday afternoon before their rostered turn. More on that later...

Thanks again for your endless patience and generosity.

Irene

A Word from Maria



However 2011 may have played out for you, I hope this Christmas you experience joy in your life, happiness with those you love and the peace of the Christ Child in your heart. May 2012 bring you

health, happiness and prosperity, and may God guide you in all your endeavours. As you travel, near or far, over the holiday period may you always return safe and unharmed.

I also want to say thank you to all who have been so supportive and over the year and put in so much time and effort to bring about the various Parish activities and events. It is hard to believe I have been here two years! I am looking forward to what the coming year brings to the life of the parish and how that will all play out. My hope is to have the opportunity to come to know more of you, and to know you all better, so that together we can continue to develop a strong and active faith community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria".

STM Social Club

The **Welfare Officers** for December are Fred and Margaret Purcell.

Christmas Prayer



Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger.

We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder.

We kneel before you with the shepherds, innkeepers, wise men. Help us to rise bigger than we are.

Amen.

What's Happening Elsewhere

Letters From Sr. Carolina in East Timor

Dear Fr. Laurie, Mr Les (Harper) and the Parishioners in St Thomas More Parish, Mount Eliza,

Merry Christmas 2011 and a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2012.

Thanks for the love and support you have given to the mothers and babies through Maria Auxiliadora Clinic at Venilale - Baucau, Timor Leste.



On behalf of our people, these babies are twins, both male, and the father looks very happy.

Also from Sr. Carolina

Dear friends,

I would like to share a little story about the 8 months old baby boy and his mother.

In September 2010 this mother, still a young girl, came to me in the clinic to complain about abdomen pain. I took a pregnancy test and the result was positive, and this young girl did not accept it because it was unplanned and she did not yet have a husband. So she was afraid to go home and asked me for an abortion. Finally I told her that if she did not want to go home I would look after her and when the baby was born she could give the baby to us (the orphanage) and she agreed to that. On that day also I went to the house of her uncle and told him to

look after her as she was pregnant. But she ran away to live with people in Ossu, far away from Venilale. I pushed her uncle always to go and tell her parents.

One day I met her in the market. She was very happy and told me the baby was already 8 months old. The baby was born in March 2011 at home without a midwife. I asked her to come to the clinic to collect a baby box, even though the child was already 8 months old. This baby is now alive and looks pretty !

With love and gratitude now and always.

Sr. Carolina FMA

He wants to greet you: **Merry Christmas.....**



Are You (Fairly) New To Our Parish?



Are you new to our Parish? We would love to invite you to a meal at Fr. Laurie's house to enjoy the company of other parishioners, both old and new.

Just fill in the form in the folder at the Church porch and we will be in touch.