



*Welcome to
Eastern Hills Anglicans
11 December 2011
Third Sunday of Advent
Gaudete (Rejoicing) Sunday
Web Page Edition*

"I am the voice of one crying out
in the desert,
make straight the way of the Lord,

Welcome

The Bible we read were written centuries ago and for people very different to ourselves. However, the content and message is eternal. We hear John the Baptist telling us to prepare the way of the Lord – in our heart, in our mind and in our daily life. Ancient words but true today as we use the Advent to prepare for Christ – because he is always present to us.

***CANCELLED "Christmas in Camp Hill"
Due to the rain saturating the Perth St Park***



***Celebrating Christmas 2011
Saturday 17 December Children's Service***

4.00pm 'The Story of Christmas'

Help your children to know
the true joy and meaning of Christmas

4.30pm Barbecue

Christmas Eve 24 December

6.00pm Family Mass, Camp Hill - PowerPoint Service

8.30pm Carols before

9pm Traditional Christmas Night Mass

Christmas Day

8.00am Christmas Family Mass, Camp Hill

***Martyn's Mutterings – Teaching & Comments by Fr Martyn
Considering John the Baptist***

In the Gospel readings for the Second and Third Sundays of Advent, we have the fearless John the Baptist. He was an uncomfortable figure to the corrupt leaders of Israel. In today's Gospel, we notice their concern as an official investigation team is sent to find out more about him. John deals with them in a blunt and curt manner. Not long after Herod of Galilee (son of Herod the Great) imprisons John in one of his dad's desert fortresses and has him executed. A non-Christian historian, Josephus gives us information, not contained in the Gospels, and states that John's execution was Herod's fear of a revolution against him. All of which means that John was loved by the ordinary people and though John was fearless he was gentle with these people giving them sound practical advice towards holiness – yet he did want them to repent and transform their lives for the sake of the coming Messiah.

All of this is a reminder to us of the need for radical change – always and ever again. It is so easy to follow the natural disposition to put ourselves first – to evaluate everything of the Kingdom to our own likes and dislikes. We judge the Gospel and the teaching of Christ to our own poor standards. So, we need John and we need Mary, the examples of Christian discipleship and the radical choice to put Christ first – to open the eyes of our spirit and change our outlook. We need to do this because Christian values are constantly undermined through huge advertising boards on our streets and highways, radio and television broadcasts with brainless commentators who know set themselves up as authorities on worthless values. The television reality shows like *The Apprentice*, *Australia's Next Top Model*, *The Block*, *Australian Idol* teach a society how to humiliate and degrade fellow human beings to the whole nation with the OK given to the values of betrayal, back-stabbing and seeking to have yourself above all others at any cost. We see it in the politicians who abandon themselves to achieve good results in the polls as they redefine the values of society for their own ambition and power. How different from John and Mary who place themselves to the service of the totality of humanity by placing the Christ before all else. We need the clarity of John the Baptist to understand what is essential for this life and the next.

Readings for Next Sunday, 18 December

Fourth Sunday of Advent

So far, in our following of Advent, we have been looking at the end of time (Advent 1). Then we have seen the life and witness of John the Baptist – the Herald of the Lord’s ministry (Advent 2 & 3). Now for Advent 4 we shift towards the birth of the Messiah and the announcing to Mary that she is to be the Mother of the long-awaited Christ.

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16.

King David, now that he has defeated his enemies, secured his kingdom and built a very nice palace wants to build a House of the Lord – a Temple. The word ‘house’ is used in a play of words. David wants to build a house-temple for the Lord. However, the Lord will build David a house-dynasty. The key phrase is, “*And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.*” This covenant with David becomes the basis for a hope of a future Messiah, which is fulfilled in Christ our Lord.

Romans 16:25-27.

In ancient times the secret plans of a king or a prince was called a *mysterion*, from which we obviously derive the word ‘mystery’. Paul declares that God too has his *mysterion* about the salvation of creation. However, this mystery is now fully revealed and disclosed in Christ Jesus our Lord. You can see this line of thinking in Hebrews 1:1-4

Luke 1:26-38.

The first two readings find their culmination and meaning in the announcing to Mary of her election to be the Mother of the Messiah. One of the ancient titles of Mary is *Sedes Sapientia*, Seat of Wisdom. The *mysterion*, the mystery of God is found as a child seated in her lap. For Christ is the mystery and wisdom of God made flesh, of our flesh and a teenage village girl has the insight and wisdom to say “Yes” to God – and our salvation begins.

***Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I say rejoice!***

The Lord is near.

Philemon 4:4, 5

Saint of the Week: Ambrose, Bishop of Milan

Born in Trier in 339, Ambrose was of an aristocratic family and in the year 374 was governor of northern Italy, with his headquarters in Milan. Ambrose’s government career came to an abrupt end when he tried to preside at a meeting to elect a new bishop for Milan. A division between the heretical faction that denied the divinity of Christ (Arianism) and the faithful Christians were each trying to gain the election for their candidate. Ambrose known and respected by all suddenly found himself being urged to accept the role of bishop. However, though he was a Christian he was not baptised because aristocratic families involved in government work delayed this because their duties involved passing capital punishment – a task considered incompatible with Baptism. Anyway, a child cried out, “Ambrose for bishop”, and then everyone joined in! Ambrose tried to avoid the responsibility but within the week was baptised and consecrated. Ambrose proved his great worth, becoming a teacher and preacher of great renown, promoting the essential divinity of Christ as being at the centre of Christian faith. He was a great scholar of the Scriptures and introduced to the Western Church the contemplative reading of the bible called *Lectio Divina*. He played an important part in converting the great Saint Augustine to Christianity. Augustine noted with surprise that Ambrose read without reading the text out aloud, which was the accepted way of reading at that time. Ambrose was a composer of hymns, which gave a clear and comprehensible understanding of orthodox teaching, ensuring that what the people prayed was what they believed. He was fearless when he had to confront the imperial powers and, with the support of the whole community, stood firm against the interference of the state in Church and faith matters. When the Emperor Theodosius the Great ordered a massacre of the citizens of Thessalonica because of a rebellion against the local governor, whom they killed - Ambrose refused the Emperor entry to the Cathedral and denied him Holy Communion until he repented. The Emperor took this rebuke seriously and did public penance. Bishop Wand, Archbishop of Brisbane and later Bishop of London said Ambrose is to be considered one of the great teachers and bishops of the early Latin Church from which Anglicanism receives its heritage. Ambrose died on 7 December in 397.

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Regular Sunday Services.

8am PowerPoint Mass. 9.30am Sung Mass

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check the *Hall Bookings Calendar for availability and then*
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