

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
61:1-2. 10-11

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. 'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. 'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

R./ My soul rejoices in my God.

SECOND READING

A reading from the First Letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians
5:16-24

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Alleluia!

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
He sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL READING

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
1:6-8. 19-28

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.' Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE 2023

Sunday 24th December – Christmas Eve

6pm Mass St Agnes' Church, Highett

8pm Mass OLA Church Cheltenham

[Carols from 7.30pm]

Monday 25th December - Christmas Day

9am Mass OLA Church Cheltenham

11am Mass OLA Church Cheltenham

PLEASE NOTE that Masses for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, on the 23rd/24th December, remain as scheduled: Saturday evening: 6pm at St Agnes', and Sunday morning: 9 & 11 at OLA.

Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Cheltenham

Parish Office: 9583 6161

9 Centre Dandenong Road, Cheltenham. 3192

Email: Cheltenham@cam.org.au

Website: www.olacheltenham.org.au



Parish Priest: Fr Alan Fox

Psychologist: AnneMaree Eddy

St Agnes' Parish Highett

Parish Office: 9532 1794

1 Locinda Street, Highett. 3190

Email: Highett@cam.org.au

Website: www.sahighett.org.au



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B - 16th / 17th DECEMBER, 2023



Traditionally, the third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday of Joy. The joy of this Sunday comes both from the message of the readings and from the anticipation that Christmas is nearing. As described in the Isaian passage, the Messiah is the one imbued with the spirit and with the power of the prophet, the one who will fulfill the promises of God. It becomes obvious in the Gospel that the Messiah is the one proclaimed by the Baptist. John cleared a path for the coming of the anointed one, and from that time on the lives of believers have been the pathway through which the Messiah has entered the world.

Dianne Bergant CSA

PARISH PRIEST: CHELTENHAM / HIGHETT
Fr Alan Fox BH: 9583 6161 / AH: 9555 3557
Email: Alan.Fox@cam.org.au

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: 9583 6161
Monday - Friday 9am – 3pm
Secretary: Vino Krishnan
Accountant: Maureen Ryan

OUR SCHOOLS:
Our Lady of the Assumption 9584 9488
Principal: Mr Richard Jacques
Email: principal@olacheltenham.catholic.edu.au
St Agnes' Primary School 9532 0344
Principal: Mr Lachlan Foott
Email: tfoot@sahighett.catholic.edu.au

MASS TIMES – CHELTENHAM & HIGHETT
SATURDAY VIGIL & SUNDAY MASSES:
Saturday [St Agnes Church] 6:00 pm
Sunday [OLA] 9:00 am, 11:00 am

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES:
Tuesday [St Agnes Church] 9.00 am
Tuesday [OLA Church] 6.00 pm
Wednesday [OLA Church] 9.15 am
Thursday [OLA Church] 9.15 am
Friday [St Agnes Church] 9.00 am
Saturday [OLA Church] 9.00 am

COMMUNION SERVICE (except Public Holidays)
Monday [OLA Church] 9.15 am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:
Wednesday 9:45 am
Saturday 9.30 am
i.e. following Mass (COVID-safe protocols apply)

BAPTISMS: Contact Parish Office: 9583 6161.

WEDDINGS: By appointment, 6 months' notice required. Saturdays or weekdays (not Sundays).

The clergy, employees and volunteers of our two parishes are committed to upholding a duty of care to all children, young people and vulnerable adults, taking all reasonable steps to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse and harm and commit to safeguard their health and well-being.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR B
16th / 17th December, 2023

PRAYING FOR:

Br Christian Moe FSC, Bridie Lennihan,
His Hon. Francis Dyett, Hayley Salvosa,

... and all those who died recently.

WE ALSO REMEMBER:

Michele Ansapelo, Lee They Wong,
Serge Dada, Claudia Dada, John Lynch,
Laleine Sevilla, Joan Stackpole,
John Griggs, Alice Larkins, Noel Larkins,
Robert Jellef, Antoinette Nime, Craig Blair,
Gerard Chadwick,

...and all whose anniversaries occur about
this time.

...and we keep in our prayers all who are
currently unwell.

**Readings for this liturgical year from Advent
2023 to Christ the King 2024 are taken from**

Year B in the Lectionary cycle

Should you wish to view the Scripture
Readings for Daily Mass (Australian Liturgical
Calendar) please visit:

universalis.com/australia.melbourne/1000/Mass

VOLUNTEERS: Please make sure that your
WWCC/POLICE CHECK documents are
current, that is, have not expired, and copies
made available to the Parish Office.

PARISH STEWARDSHIP: Thank you to all
parishioners who continue to support both the
Thanksgiving and Presbytery collections through
your generous contributions. Both OLA & St
Agnes are now registered for online contributions.

The **CDF Pay** link for **OLA, Cheltenham** is:
<http://bit.ly/CDFpayCheltenham>

The **CDF Pay** link for **St Agnes, Highett** is:
<http://bit.ly/CDFpayHighett>



**Anniversaries of Death – Christmas 2023
through to the end of January 2024:** In

preparation for the Summer Bulletin, covering
Christmas through to the end of January, you
are invited to enter the names of those whose
anniversaries occur during this period, who
you'd like remembered in prayer, into the
Memorial Folders located in the foyers of both
OLA and St Agnes' churches, or alternatively
contact the Parish Office.

OLA PIETY STALL Columban Calendars @
\$10 each and St Vincent De Paul Christmas cards
@ \$3 for a pack of 5 are available for sale.

CATHOLIC MISSION thanks the parishes of
Our Lady of the Assumption and St Agnes' for
your support of this year's World Mission Day
Appeal. Your generosity has empowered
Church workers across 1047 mission dioceses,
allowing them to spread the message of hope and
love within their local communities. Your
contribution of \$2,255.25 has been most
gratefully received. Through your partnership
with Catholic Mission, Sr. Carolina in Timor-
Leste can continue providing life-saving
treatment and essential resources for health,
education and well-being. Your gift not only
transforms individual lives but also fuels mission
programs globally, reaching out to those in dire
need. Many thanks!



OFFICE CLOSURE Please
note: the OLA/St Agnes Office
will close for the Christmas/
Summer holiday period from
12pm on Friday 22nd December.

The office will open only on a limited basis
over the ensuing weeks due to parish staff
taking leave. The regular office hours of 9am –
3pm will resume from Monday 22nd January,
2024. Should you need to get in touch, please
phone the Presbytery on: 9555 3557. This
number connects through to my mobile phone.
Please leave a message and a contact number
if I'm unable to answer your call, and I'll get
back to you as soon as possible.

Thank you, Fr Alan



**UPDATING PARISHIONERS
ON THE RECONFIGURATION
OF PARISHES IN THE
BAYSIDE AREA** Fr Joe Caddy,

the Vicar General of the
Archdiocese of Melbourne, has written to all
parishioners of St Agnes and Our Lady of the
Assumption, to outline the timeline for the
realignment of parish boundaries, as well as the
process for the amalgamation of parishes
within the Bayside area. A copy of his letter is
available for you to pick up from both church
foyers. You'll note in his letter that the
realignment of parish boundaries will, among
other changes, alter the existing northern
boundary of St Agnes' Parish. The area east of
Bluff Road across to the Nepean Highway, and
up to South Road, formerly a section of East
Hampton Parish, is to be incorporated into St
Agnes' prior to proceeding with the
amalgamation of St Agnes' and OLA.
If you would like to read the detailed
'Implementation Plan' including the overall
schedule for the realignment of parish
boundaries, and the further amalgamation of
existing parishes into the new configuration of
the 4 parishes that will make up the Bayside
area, the document is a direct download from
the following link: bit.ly/47JiBHR