



ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Christmas Meditation



The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men” (*Tit* 2:11). The words of the Apostle Paul reveal the mystery of this holy night: the grace of God has appeared; his gift is free; in the Child given unto us the love of God is made visible.

It is a *night of glory*, that glory proclaimed by the angels in Bethlehem and by us today all over the world. It is a *night of joy*, because from this day forth, and for all times, the infinite and eternal God is *God with us*: he is not far off, we need not search for him

in the heavens or in mystical notions; he is close, he is been made man and will never distance himself from our humanity, which he has made his own. It is a *night of light*: that light, prophesied by Isaiah (cf. *Is* 9:1), which would illumine those who walk in darkness, has appeared and enveloped the shepherds of Bethlehem (cf. *Lk* 2:9).

The shepherds simply discover that “unto us a child is born” (*Is* 9:5) and they understand that all this glory, all this joy, all this light converges to one single point, that *sign* which the angel indicated to them: “you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger” (*Lk* 2:12). This is *the enduring sign* to find Jesus. Not just then, but also today. If we want to celebrate Christmas authentically, we need to contemplate this sign: the fragile simplicity of a small newborn, the meekness of where he lies, the tender affection of the swaddling clothes. God is there.

With this sign the Gospel reveals a paradox: it speaks of the emperor, the governor, the mighty of those times, but God does not make himself present there; he does not appear in the grand hall of a royal palace, but in the poverty of a stable; not in pomp and show, but in the simplicity of life; not in power, but in a smallness which surprises. In order to discover him, we need to go there, where he is: we need to bow down, humble ourselves, make ourselves small. The Child who is born challenges us: he calls us to leave behind fleeting illusions and go to the essence, to renounce our insatiable claims, to abandon our endless dissatisfaction and sadness for something we will never have. It will help us to leave these things behind in order to rediscover in the simplicity of the God-child, peace, joy and the meaning of life.

Let us allow the Child in the manger to challenge us, but let us also allow ourselves to be challenged by the children of today’s world, who are not lying in a cot caressed with the affection of a mother and father, but rather suffer the squalid “mangers that devour dignity”: hiding underground to escape bombardment, on the pavements of a large city, at the bottom of a boat overladen with immigrants. Let us allow ourselves to be challenged by the children who are not

allowed to be born, by those who cry because no one satiates their hunger, by those who do have not toys in their hands, but rather weapons.

The mystery of Christmas, which is light and joy, questions and unsettles us, because it is at once both a *mystery of hope and of sadness*. It bears within itself the *taste of sadness*, because love is not received, and life discarded. This happened to Joseph and Mary, who found the doors closed, and placed Jesus in a manger, “because there was no place for them in the inn” (v. 7). Jesus was born rejected by some and regarded by many others with indifference. Today also the same indifference can exist, when Christmas becomes a feast where the protagonists are ourselves, rather than Jesus; when the lights of commerce cast the light of God into the shadows; when we are concerned for gifts but cold towards those who are marginalized.

Yet Christmas has essentially a *flavor of hope* because, notwithstanding the darker aspects of our lives, God’s light shines out. His gentle light does not make us fear; God who is in love with us, draws us to himself with his tenderness, born poor and fragile among us, as one of us. He is born in Bethlehem, which means “house of bread”. In this way he seems to tell us that he is born as *bread for us*; he enters life to give us his life; he comes into our world to give us his love. He does not come to devour or to command but to nourish and to serve. Thus, there is a direct thread joining the manger and the cross, where Jesus will become *bread that is broken*: it is the direct thread of love which is given, and which saves us, which brings light to our lives, and peace to our hearts.

The shepherds grasped this in that night. They were among the marginalized of those times. But no one is marginalized in the sight of God and it was precisely they who were invited to the Nativity. Those who felt sure of themselves, self-sufficient, were at home with their possessions; the shepherds instead “went with haste” (cf. *Lk 2:16*). Let us allow ourselves also to be challenged and convened tonight by Jesus. Let us go to him with trust, from that area in us we feel to be marginalized, from our own limitations. Let us touch the tenderness which saves. Let us draw close to God who draws close to us, let us pause to look upon the crib, and imagine the birth of Jesus: light, peace, utmost poverty, and rejection. Let us enter the real Nativity with the shepherds, taking to Jesus all that we are, our alienation, our unhealed wounds. Then, in Jesus we will enjoy the flavor of the true spirit of Christmas: the beauty of being loved by God. With Mary and Joseph, we pause before the manger, before Jesus who is born as bread for my life. Contemplating his humble and infinite love, let us say to him: thank you, thank you because you have done all this *for me*.

50th Anniversary Celebrations

Dear parishioners

The evening of the 14th of October which was organized as a recital in honor of Komitas for the founding of the Armenian Catholic Church and its 50th Anniversary was a major calendar event for the community and the Church.

The evening was a huge success, and this was due to Mrs Haigoush Zaitounian and the committee members who all worked tirelessly to make the event unforgettable. The amount of positive feedback posts the event by the community and the honorary guests re enforced our own beliefs.

To ensure that we could thank all the participants who were involved in making the evening a success the Church Ladies Auxiliary held a dinner function. This was on the night of the 1st of December. The Church Council and Ladies Auxiliary were so grateful to all individuals for their

contributions that it was decided to honor them and their partners with a dinner event and personally thank them for all their hard work.

All the food for the evening was prepared by the Ladies which were all tasty and professional done.

As the head of the Armenian Catholic Church of Australia, I wish to personally thank you the community for supporting us over the years and especially this event. A special thankyou to everyone who made the night a success and who worked tirelessly majority being volunteers.

We have more plans over the coming months to continue celebrations and we will keep you informed. We know that you will support us throughout.

Christmas night of prayer and reflection “The Fourth Magos”

Dear parishioners and friend, I want to invite you all for a special night of prayer and meditation with carols on Saturday 23rd December at 7.30PM in our Church.

Let's prepare our self to receive the Lord in our heart ask him peace for the world and prosperity for all people of God.

Baptism

09.04.2017 Ella Nore & John Paul children of Mr & Mrs Rojeh and Reem Madfouni

21.05.2017 Leo Joseph son of Mr & Mrs Philip & Alina Sedmak (Gharibian)

21.05.2017 Zayn Elias son of Mr & Mrs David & Belinda Golossian

21.05.2017 James Peter Nadim son of Mr & Mrs Harout & Jeannie Tatian

27.05.2017 Laura Rose Angel daughter of Mr & Mrs Paul & Jodie Deukmedjian

02.07.2017 Milana Cartier daughter of Mr & Mrs David & Rita Zullo (Arsenian)

08.07.2017 George son of Mr & Mrs Rani & Angeel Adam

23.07.2017 Tamara Sanders daughter of Steve and Joan

30.07.2017 Edwar son of Mr & Mrs Joseph & Mrs Mary Tobjian

12.08.2017 Zachary son of Mr John & Lolita Boyajian

01.10.2017 Kashlin Therese Comins daughter of Steven & Sant Ram

21.10.2017 Arianna daughter of Mr & Mrs Peter & Diana Bozanic

28.10.2017 Grace daughter of Mr & Mrs Daniel & Lucy Chisari (Ohanessian)

18.11.2017 Angela Rita & Daniel Charbel John children of Mr & Mrs Eddy & Marlene Srabian

Congratulation to the all proud parents and we pray these children may grow in the Christian faith and they become invaluable members within the Armenian Catholic Community

Wedding

08.01.2017 Harout Bassil & Carlina Manousha Monti

29.04.2017 Vicken Michael Opoyan & Alexandria Dawn Suty

07.05.2017 Paul Azadian & Ilham Mawoujoud

19.08.2017 George Giragos Said & Sara Rose Anne Sharma

14.08.2017 Hovsep Ohan Gharibian & Pauline Abajian

03.09.2017 Sami Kisso & Hiyam Karam

17.09.2017 Aleksander Akopyan & Vineta Lopaticka

11.11.2017 Krikor Tobjian & Comins Kashlin

26.11.2017 John Sevag Manoukian & Mary Nathalie Espinosa

17.12.2017 Tass Kordi & Tamara Sanders

Our heartfelt congratulations to the newly-wed and may the Lord grant them a long and a happy life together, and may they also be blessed with many healthy children.

Christmas Program

Monday 25 th December 2017	Christmas Mass 11.00 am	ՏՄԵ Ծննդեան Տ.Մ.Ց.Բ.Ի: ժամը 11 :00	عيد ميلاد سيدنا يسوع المسيح القداس الساعة 11 صباحا
Sunday 7 th January 2018	Mass 11.00 am (Baptism of Christ) and First Holy Communion	Աստուածայայտնութիւն եւ Մկրտութիւն Տ.Մ.Ց. Քրիստոսի ժամը 11 :00	عيد الغطاس (عماد سيدنا يسوع المسيح) الساعة 11 صباحا واعطاء المناولة الاولى لاطفالنا
Monday 8 th January 2018	Day of the Dead - 9.30 am Blessing of the tombs at Rookwood followed by Holy Mass at the Church as usual.	Օր Մեռելոց: Գերեզմանտան Օրնիութիւն ժամը 9:30 ապա Սուրբ Պատարաքը ժամը 11:00 Լիտաւոյ Եկեղիցի	تذكار الأموات بركة القبور الساعة 9.30 صباحا في المقبرة يليها القداس الإلهي الساعة 11 صباحا في الكنيسة



The Armenian Catholic Church
Under the auspices of Rev
Mgr Basil Sousanian

Invite you to a

Christmas meditation night
“The Fourth Magos”

Saturday 23.12.2017
At 7.30 PM

5 John Street. Lidcombe

Our sincere gratitude to ROMAN PRINTING for the printing of this Bulletin since its inception