



## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2007

Christmas is celebration; and celebration is instinct in the heart. With gift and feast, with scarlet ribbon and fresh green bough, with merriment and the sound of music, we commend the day, oasis in the long, long landscape of the commonplace. Through how many centuries, through how many threatening circumstances, has Christmas been celebrated, since that cry came ringing down the ages, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

Christmas is celebration, but the traditions that cluster sweetly around the day have significance only if they translate the heart's intention -- the yearning of the human spirit -- to compass and express faith and hope and love. Without this intention, the gift is bare, and the celebration a touch of tinsel, and the time without meaning. As these attributes, exemplifying the divine spark in mankind, informed the first Christmas and have survived the onslaughts of relentless time, so do they shine untarnished in this present year of our Lord?

Faith and hope and love, which cannot be bought or sold or bartered, but only given away are the wellsprings, firm and deep of Christmas celebration. These are the gifts without price, the ornaments incapable of imitation, discovered only within oneself and therefore unique. They are not always easy to come by, but they are in unlimited supply ever in the province of all.

This Christmas, mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Find the time. Forgo a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologise if you were wrong. Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Appreciate. Be kind; be gentle. Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice.

Weekend masses: **SATURDAY 5 pm** and **SUNDAY 10.30 am**  
Confessions: **SATURDAY 4.30 pm** or by appointment  
Weekday masses: **TUESDAY 9 am** and **WEDNESDAY 7.30 pm**  
First Friday of the month: **ADORATION 6.15 pm** and **MASS 7.30 pm**

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of **LENASIA CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Website: <http://www.stthomaslenz.org>

For **Mass intentions** and **appointment** with Father, please contact Shantha by phone at the office on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9.30 to 12.30  
OR leave a message on the mailbox OR send an email.  
For **Sick calls**, please contact  
**Clive Padayachee** on 011.854.5060 or 072.493.4773  
For **Funerals**, please contact **Vivian Patel** on 011.854.8523 or **Cynthia Thomas** on 011.854.5490  
In case of emergency only, **Fr. Philippe's** cell is 082.729.3758

### Join in the following activities...

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP** : every Monday 7.30 pm in the Hall.  
Contact Edgar 011 852 4960  
**INTERCESSION PRAYER GROUP**: every Friday 10 am - 24 Opaal Street - Extension 5. Contact Vivian 011 854 8523  
**PRAYER GROUP**: every Saturday 3.30 pm in the Hall.  
**STOP**: every Wednesday @ 7.30pm in the Hall. Contact: Sebastian 078.111.9991 or Gregory 082.902.6721

Decry complacency. Express your gratitude. Go to church. Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still once again.

These are but inklings of a vast category, a mere scratching of the surface. They are simple things; you have heard them all before; but their influence has never been measured.

Christmas is celebration, and there is no celebration that compares with the realization of its true meaning with the sudden stirring of the heart that has extended itself toward the core of life.

Then, only then, is it possible to grasp the significance of Christmas, to savor in the inward ear the wild, sweet music of the angel choir; to envision the star-struck sky, and glimpse, behind the eyelids the ray of light that feel athwart a darkened path and changed the world.

The year draws to a close once again and the world celebrates the advent of a child born 2000 years ago; it is in that spirit of hope, faith, and love that I write you today. As is ever the case the passing year has seen us lifted in joyous triumphs, as well as sunken in trials and tribulations. God willing we are the wiser from our mistakes, stronger from our losses, and more compassionate from our heartaches.

The time to make resolutions draws near, but if I might suggest we all resolve, if nothing else, that we will each strive to humbly live out 2007 in peace, compassion and charity as much with strangers as with our loved ones. Our time together, even should it last many decades, is but a brief shining star among billions. Let us make it something good, for ourselves, our children and the many generations who will in their own way and time proclaim: Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

God bless you all!

**Gregory Lazarus**  
for St. Thomas' Parish Pastoral Council

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

### Altar Servers Roster

**Tue 24<sup>th</sup>** Midnight mass: Steven, Tiffany, Jacklyn M. Kewan, Tesania, Shadé, Mitchell, Bradley  
**Wed 25<sup>th</sup>** 10.30am: Adrian, Bongani, Claudene, Claudette, Janine P., Kylin

**Sat 29<sup>th</sup>** : Tiffany, Steven, Kewan, Shadé, Jason.  
**Sun 30<sup>th</sup>** : Jacklyn, Janine P., Kylin, Bradley, Andrew

### Flower List

Wilfred Bob, Amelda Chetty, Norman & Josephine Dass, Mandy David

### MASS INTENTIONS

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> : Indira Singh RIP  
Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> : Thanksgiving  
Mon 24<sup>th</sup> : For the Parish  
Tue 25<sup>th</sup> : For the Parish

## TIME-TABLE

### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> December:

Carols Service and transfer of OL statue to the Anglican Church, followed by a Bring and Share. We start at St. Thomas' @ 5pm

### Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December:

Carols Vigil @ 11.30pm  
Christmas Vigil Mass @ 12pm

### Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> December:

Mass @ 10.30am

No Mass on Wednesday evening!

## SOUTHERN CROSS

## SPECIAL EDITION

For sale at R8



# St. Thomas Lenasia