



THE SAVING WORD

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / C

23 FEBRUARY 2025

FIRST READING 1 Sam 26: 2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

The Lord has put you in my power, but I will not raise my hand against you.

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice.' David answered Abishai, 'Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM Ps 102: 1-4, 8, 10, 12-13. R. v. 8

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, / all my being, bless his holy name. / My soul, give thanks to the Lord / and never forget all his blessings. **R.**



2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, / who heals every one of your ills, / who redeems your life from the grave, / who crowns you with love and compassion. **R.**

3. The Lord is compassion and love, / slow to anger and rich in mercy. / He does not treat us according to our sins / nor repay us according to our faults. **R.**

4. As far as the east is from the west / so far does he remove our sins. / As a father has compassion on his sons, / the Lord has pity on those who fear him. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Cor 15: 45-49

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

Just as we have carried the earthly image, we must carry the heavenly image.

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven. As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 13: 34

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

THE CATHOLIC PARISHES OF ST JOSEPH'S, ELSTERNWICK & HOLY CROSS, CAULFIELD SOUTH

PARISH PRIEST: Rev Fr Leenus Neetany SAC

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ST JOSEPH'S, ELSTERNWICK

71 Orrong Road, Elsternwick, VIC 3185

www.melbcatholic.org/elsternwick

Mass

Friday 10:00am, Saturday 6:30pm and Sunday 10:30am

Reconciliation

Friday after Mass, Saturday 6:00pm

Thanksgiving & Special Collections - 2 weeks

Church: \$TBA Presbytery: \$TBA

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lector - Saturday: S Bettoni

Lector - Sunday: P Donohue

Counters: No Counting

HOLY CROSS, CAULFIELD SOUTH

707 Glen Huntly Road, Caulfield South 3162

www.melbcatholic.org/caulfieldsouth

Mass

Thursday 10:00am and Sunday 9:00am

Reconciliation

Thursday after Mass

Thanksgiving & Special Collections - 2 weeks

Church: \$TBA Presbytery: \$TBA

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lector: A Powell

ST ANTHONY'S, GLEN HUNTLY

74, Grange Road, Glen Huntly 3163

In Residence: Fr Pat Jackson SAC, Br Lindsay Rust SAC

Mass

Monday - Saturday 9:15am

Saturday 6:00pm

Sunday 9:00am, 11:00am, 5:00pm

Reconciliation

30-minutes before all Masses & Saturday 9:45-10:10am

This Week's Liturgical Calendar

Sun 2 Mar: 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (Ps 12:6)

O Lord, I trust in your merciful love. My heart will rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (Jn 11:27)

Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God, who is coming into this world.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill: Paulette Dobbin, Tony Messina, Steve Genge & family, Ian and Sue Besomo, Stella Bai, Josie Lane, Anthony Michael

Recently Deceased: Mary D'Cruz

Death Anniversary: Rosa Tomaselli, Robert Tomaselli, Giovanni Tomaselli

Young Adults Hosting Mass

We thank the young adults from our 3 parishes who have come together to organise and host this weekend's 6:30pm Mass at St Joseph's, Elsternwick.

Please encourage the young adults of all our parishes to participate in this initiative. It is an opportunity for them to meet and socialise among their peers in the safe space of our parish. For info, email elsternwick@cam.org.au



Facebook

St Joseph's Parish now has a Facebook page.

Thanks to @TuNinh. Scan the QR code or search

www.facebook.com/stjosephcatholicchurchelsternwick/

Morning Retreat with Mary

On Monday 24th February at St Anthony's Church there will be Holy Mass at 9:15am. Mass celebrated by Fr Peter Ferwerda, Fr Patrick Jackson and Fr Leenus Neetany.

Program:

- Holy Mass
- Confession
- MMP Cenacle Rosary
- Reflection on Reading from Blue Book
- Eucharistic Adoration



All welcome. If possible, please bring a plate to share. Tea and coffee supplied.

For further information please contact: Thomas Ho, Carol Kelly or Grace Mizzi via the Parish Office.

Holy Communion to the Sick and Elderly

Please let the Parish Office know if you or anyone you know would like to receive Holy Communion at their homes or aged care facilities.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel



The Perpetual Adoration Chapel was built in 2018 to commemorate the centenary celebration of St Joseph's Church.

The Chapel can be accessed 24/7 using a security tag. Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to apply for a tag.

Extra Weekday Masses at Holy Cross

St Anthony's Church will be undergoing some repair works starting Tuesday, 25th February.

During this period, there will be no 9:15am weekday morning Masses at St Anthony's Church.

From Tuesday, 25th February, until further notice:

Holy Cross - Mon to Fri: 9:15am (no Thu 10:00am) Mass

St Joseph's - Fri: 10:00am Mass

No changes to time and place of Saturday and Sunday Masses at all parishes.

Update: Proposed Amalgamation of St Joseph's, Elsternwick and Holy Cross, Caulfield South

On Friday 14 February 2025, we formally submitted our petition for amalgamation to Archbishop Peter Comensoli. The Archbishop will then consult with the Council of Priests and College of Consultors regarding this matter.

Meanwhile, the 'Frequently Asked Questions' document has also been updated and copies can be found on our church notice boards. Extra copies have also been printed for those interested in taking home a copy to read.

As we move through this process, we will continue to engage with all of you and provide important updates once available.

Please feel free to speak with Fr Leenus, the Parish Office or any of our PPC and PFC members if you have any questions. Additionally, you may send us an email or continue to use the 'Questions / Concerns' boxes.

Alpha Masterclass Team Training

What the Masterclass will cover:

- Evangelisation as the Church's central mission
- Responding personally to the Great Commission
- Integrating Alpha into your parish mission
- Tips for hosting engaging small groups
- Skills for engagement and handling big questions
- Alpha hospitality and welcoming strategies
- Prayer ministry training

As we consider starting Alpha at our parishes, we invite anyone who is interested in joining the team to attend this excellent training opportunity on 15th March, 10:00am-4:30pm at Good Shepherd Parish, Gladstone Park. We will also advise if other training opportunities arise at other venues. For more info, contact the parish office.



Old Palm Leaves

The Palm leaves and other leaves which were used on last year's Palm Sunday can be brought back to church for preparing the ashes for Ash Wednesday. You may leave them in the box provided in the church.

Ash Wednesday Masses, 5th March

Holy Cross - Mass 9:15am and 7:00pm

St Joseph's - Mass 10:00am.

St Anthony's - Novena 6:40pm followed by Mass 7:00pm

Stations of the Cross during Lent

Holy Cross: Thursdays after the morning Mass.

St Joseph's: Fridays after the morning Mass.

St Anthony's: Pending completion of Church repairs.

Lenten Scripture Reflection Sessions

Starting on Monday 3rd March and every Monday thereafter during Lent from 7pm - 8pm at St Anthony's. All welcome!

Project Compassion Boxes

Project Compassion Boxes are now available in the Church Foyer for collection. If you would like to take a Project Compassion Box for your family or friend, please do so. Thank you for your generosity.



7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Dear friends

Love your enemies, forgive everyone, be compassionate to all; these are some of the commands Jesus gives us in the Gospel of today. He knew and we know that none of these is easy to practice in our real life. To cherish unforgiving attitudes is not Christian. Even in the Old Testament we read, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against anybody".

Vengeance and grudge are ungodly qualities, quite contrary to the kind of spirit the Lord wants us to cherish. So also, revenge and retaliation even to its slightest degree is not welcome. As followers of Christ we are called to love and pray for those who harm us in any way.

There are more people waiting to hear words of forgiveness than we can possibly imagine. "There's a Spanish story of a father and son who had become estranged. The son ran away, and the father set off to find him. He searched for months to no avail. Finally, in a last desperate effort to find him, the father put an ad in a Madrid newspaper. The ad read: 'Dear Paco, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your Dad.' On Saturday by noon some 800 Pacos showed up, looking for forgiveness and love from their fathers. (Bits & Pieces, October 15, 1992)"

In our own lives, we may not have had such big incidents that we too express our willingness to forgive and be friends once again. But surely in the lives of each and every one there might be at-least some small incidents; may be too small to remember them. Sadly, we may have forgotten them without having forgiven those involved. If only everyone had a heart of flesh!

Even according to medical scientists and psychologists such unforgiven incidents have negative impact on our physical wellbeing and according to Jesus it has negative impact on our spiritual well being as well. This is also true that sometimes, forgiving others is far easier than seeking forgiveness from others. Asking for forgiveness is to admit one's own wrong; you see?

The greatest of the examples of a forgiving person is Jesus, who died for us even when we were still sinners. As followers of Jesus let us follow his example and forgive each and every one who may have hurt us in any way even to the highest degree, and be friends once again.

Fr Leenus

A nun gave little Johnny a long talk on sin, repentance, prayer, and forgiveness. When she finished the lesson, she asked little Johnny, "What do you have to do before you ask the Lord for forgiveness?" Little Johnny confidently said, "I have to sin first."

Safeguarding Children and Young People

All children and young people who come to our parish have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children and young people in our care will always be our first priority and we have a ZERO tolerance for any form of abuse. For more info on Safeguarding, visit melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding

GOSPEL

Lk 6: 27-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Be merciful as your Father is merciful.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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Breaking Open the Word

LOVE THE ENEMY

We are now into the heart of Luke's Sermon on the Plain. We are also presented with the most important Gospel teaching that characterises Jesus' followers: Love and forgiveness of the enemy. But this is also dangerous teaching, for it is easy to misunderstand what Jesus is asking of his disciples. He is not addressing disciples individually, but together. The response to the 'enemy' comes from the total gathering of the Gospel household who support each other as they deal with the enemy. It is not the individual disciple who bears responsibility for enemy love. It is a collective response.

The response is also agential or active, never passive or submissive. Disciples disarm by their attitude of 'love'—a desire that the aggressor comes to know their own self-worth in their relationship to God and others. It is not about feeling affection or warmth towards the enemy, an impossible response in the face of suffering or hurt. 'Turning the other cheek' is a form of passive resistance to the aggressor, rather than responding with tit-for-tat assault, a response culturally expected. Luke's audience who are wealthy are encouraged to be generous. Jesus encourages disciples to act compassionately, like God.

Today's Gospel is challenging, especially in the context of the issues that today's believers are concerned about. Luke offers sage advice. A spirit of kindness and non-aggression towards the assailants of our world can help create a society shaped by peace rather than violence. Such a spirit ideally characterises our faith communities imbued with today's Gospel.

Fr Michael Trainor