



THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT / C

23 MARCH 2025

FIRST READING

Ex 3: 1-8, 13-15

A reading from the book of Exodus

*This is what you must say to the children of Israel:
I Am has sent me to you.*

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. 'I must go and look at this strange sight,' Moses said 'and see why the bush is not burnt.' Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. 'Moses, Moses!' he said. 'Here I am' he answered. 'Come no nearer' he said. 'Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father,' he said 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God.

And the Lord said, 'I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.'

Then Moses said to God, 'I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you." But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?' And God said to Moses, 'I Am who I Am. This' he added 'is what you must say to the sons of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 102: 1-4, 6-8, 11. 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 does deeds of justice, / gives judgement for all who are oppressed. / He made known his ways to Moses / and his deeds to Israel's sons. **R.**

4. The Lord is compassion and love, / slow to anger and rich in mercy. / For as the heavens are high above the earth / so strong is his love for those who fear him. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Cor 10: 1-6, 10-12

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

All this that happened to the people of Moses in the desert was written for our benefit.

I want to remind you, brothers, how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert.

These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer.

All this happened to them as a warning and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall.

■ The word of the Lord.

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

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ST JOSEPH'S, ELSTERNWICK

71 Orrong Road, Elsternwick 3185

www.melbcatholic.org/elsternwick

Facebook



Mass

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

Reconciliation

Friday after Mass, Saturday 6:00pm

Thanksgiving & Special Collections

Church: \$1020.00 Presbytery: \$1035.00

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lector - Saturday: R Rodrigues

Lector - Sunday:

Counters: M Beaumont & B Leong

Thanksgiving



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

Church: \$696.75 Presbytery: \$716.30

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lector: S Samy

Thanksgiving



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

Tue 25 Mar: The Annunciation of the Lord

Sun 30 Mar: 4th Sunday of Lent

Lenten Scripture Reflection - 5 Faces of Mercy

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

Australia's Treatment of Refugees

What needs to happen? A talk by David Manne, renowned Human Rights lawyer and CEO of Refugee Legal.

Sunday 30 March, 2pm at St John's Uniting Church, 567 Glen Huntly Road, Elsternwick. Afternoon tea provided. Your gold coin donation will help needy refugees.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (cf. Ps 24:15-16)

My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (cf. Ps 83:4-5)

The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young; by your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill*: **Paulette Dobbin, Tony Messina, Steve Genge & family, Ian and Sue Besomo, Stella Bai, Pope Francis**

** Names will be published for a month, unless otherwise requested.*

Recently Deceased: -

Death Anniversary: -

Extra Weekday Masses at Holy Cross

Repair works at St Anthony's Church is still ongoing. There will be no 9:15am weekday morning Masses at St Anthony's Church. Instead, weekday Masses will be as follows **until Friday, 4th April 2025.**

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

St Joseph's - Fri: 10:00am

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

Stations of the Cross in Lent

Holy Cross: Thursdays after 9:15am* Mass

St Joseph's: Fridays after 10:00am Mass

St Anthony's: Fridays after 7:00pm Mass

** Until 4th April 2025*

Petition to Defend the Honour of Our Lady

Please consider signing this petition which is asking for a name change to the "Ave Maria Family Planning Clinic" in Seaford - a sacrilegious contraception clinic in Victoria fli.org.au/a-sacreligious-contraception-clinic-in-melbourne/

Young Adults Hosting Mass: Saturday 22 March



We thank the young people from our 3 parishes who have come together to host Saturday's 6:30pm Mass at St Joseph's.

Please encourage the young adults of all our parishes to participate in this initiative on the 4th Saturday of each month. 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

Pallottine Cenacle Prayer

This month's Cenacle Prayer gathering takes place as part of the 6:30pm Vigil Mass at St Joseph's, Elsternwick on Saturday, 22nd March, followed by light supper.

Easter Raffle Tickets on Sale

Tickets are \$5 each or \$10 for three tickets. There will be a total of 4 prizes. Proceeds go to St Anthony's Church. Please email glenhuntly@cam.org.au to organise tickets.



Australia Catholic Youth Festival 2025

- * Who: Year 9 - 25 years plus Leaders
- * When: Commencing on Sunday 30 November and finishing on Tuesday 2 December.
- * Where: Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
- * How: Registration for the Festival will officially open in early May 2025. Cost \$390 - 410 per person.

Many dioceses, schools and communities are well into planning their pilgrimage to the Festival to join 10,000 other young Catholics from across the country.

For the young people of our parishes who may be discerning attending the Festival, please contact the Parish Office so we can coordinate a 'contingent' from our 3 parishes.

Walk With Mary 2025

Archbishop Peter Comensoli will lead us in Holy Mass and a street procession in honour of Our Lady. Please come and be part of Her Victory. It will be a beautiful opportunity to witness to your love of our Heavenly Mother, and we can be confident of receiving so many blessings. 2pm, Sunday 23rd March St Patrick's Cathedral East Melbourne.



The Combined Societies of Mary.
www.combinedsocietiesofmary.com
 Enquiries: Joy Hunt 9509 2207



Events at St Anthony's Parish - All Welcome

Fiat: Saturday 29 March

A time of Adoration and Prayer for children and young people from 10:30 - 11:30 am at St Anthony's Church.

It will include the opportunity for Confession, quiet prayer and instruction, followed by fellowship and refreshments. Parents are encouraged to attend.

The Annual Pilgrimage Walk: Sunday 30 March

Meet at the front of St Anthony's Church, 12:30pm.

In this Jubilee year, various churches have been designated by the Archdiocese as local pilgrim places, to be visited for prayer. Our walk this year will take us to 3 of the 4 churches designated for the southern region of Melbourne. These are St Patrick's Mentone, St Bridget's Mordialloc, The Divine Mercy and Our Lady of La Vang Shrines, Keysborough.

We will cover a distance of about 50km. Some will be on foot and some by bus or car, so we need to know how many people will be travelling with us.

Please register using the clipboards at the Church foyer, giving your name, email, phone number and whether you are willing to drive and take a passenger, indicating how many. You can also email glenhuntly@cam.org.au no later than Wednesday 26 March or ring 9401 6336.

Pilgrimages such as these attract a plenary indulgence.

Tea and coffee will be provided at St Anthony's after 11 am Mass. Feel free to bring your own lunch. Please bring water, a hat and wear comfortable shoes.

3rd Sunday of Lent, Year C

Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

Dear friends

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us a parable of the fig tree planted in a vineyard. Through this parable Jesus reminds us of the patience of God, who is willing to give us chance after chance to reform our lives for the better.

Even when we waste or refuse those chances, God, in his mercy, allows us more opportunities to repent. Just as the farmer took a good care of the barren fig tree so that it would start to yield, so also, God affords us graces to leave our sinful ways and return to God's love and begin to live better lives. God does not tolerate "spiritual barrenness."

1) We need to live lives of repentance. Let us repent while we have the chance. Let us turn to Christ, acknowledge our faults and failings and receive from him mercy, forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. There is no better way to take these words of Jesus to heart than to go to sacramental confession; and there is no better time to go to confession than during Lent.

2) Lent is an ideal time "to dig around and manure" the tree of our life, so that, it may bear fruits. The fruits God expects from us are repentance, renewal of life and the resulting virtues of love, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, selfless and humble service

3) We need to make the best use of the "second chance" God gives us. Our merciful Father always gives us a second chance. The prodigal son, returning to the father, was welcomed as a son, not treated as a slave. The repentant Peter was made the head of the Church. The persecutor Saul was made Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

During Lent, we, too, are given another chance to repent and return to our heavenly Father's love. We are also expected to give others a second chance when they ask our forgiveness. Grace is everywhere. Let us always cooperate with God's grace, especially during this Lent. Have a fruitful Lent.

Fr Leenus.

Ten ladies tried to fit under a small umbrella, none of them got wet. How did they do it?

It wasn't raining.



Journey Through The Gospels

Reading the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with Bishop David Walker.

Studying Scripture and exploring how they guide Christian discipleship, whether you're seeking inspiration or a deeper connection with the Word, this offers a space for contemplation, prayer, and growth in your spiritual journey.

What to Expect:

- Weekly Gospel video access – FREE
- Live online discussions every Saturday (4–5pm AEDT)
- Ask questions, share reflections, seek clarification
- Connect with like-minded Catholics

Ideal for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of Scripture.

Sign up & stay notified! Get weekly reminders and video access before each session.

For more info and registration: lectiodivina.com.au

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 4: 17

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Repent, says the Lord;
the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

Lk 13: 1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Unless you repent you will all perish as they did.

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down." '

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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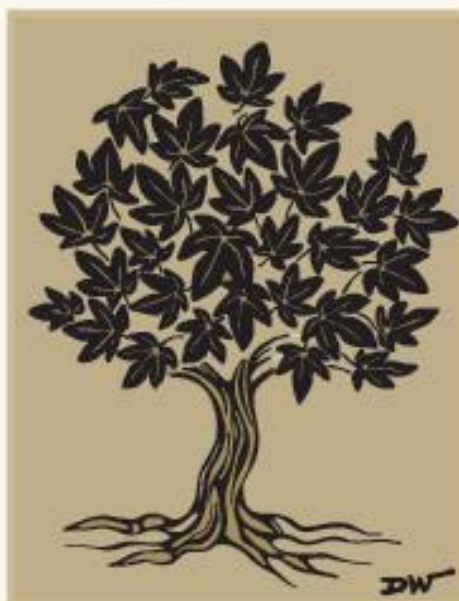
Breaking Open the Word

A CHANGE OF HEART

Last week our Lenten focus was on prayer. This Sunday is about conversion and a change of heart. In the first part of today's reading, Jesus reminds his audience that suffering or persecution is not the result of guilt or sin. Terrible events remind us to have a spirit of repentance. "Repentance" is more of an openness of heart and mind to God, the essential and primary quality of a disciple, and less the codified legalistic need to address one's infringement of ethical or moral standards.

The second part of today's Gospel moves in an ecological direction. Repentance implies ecological conversion. The parable of the fig tree and its owner highlights the attitude of its owner to what is grown on his property. He sees the tree as unproductive and therefore unable to provide a cash return. The owner is greedy. Earth's gift, the tree, is seen as a commodity whose lack of fruitfulness means for the landowner that it is to be "cut down" because it is "taking up the ground" (literally in the Greek, "using up Earth").

What appears as ecological sensitivity is rather an economic or materialistic agenda. But the one who cares for the Earth and the tree, its gardener, offers a more viable and environmental friendlier solution. Leave the tree, offer it fertiliser, and it may bear fruit in the future. He pleads for patience for Earth's fruitfulness. This is instructive for contemporary disciples: tender horticultural practice that cares for Earth is preferred to pragmatic, utilitarian destruction.



Fr Michael Trainor