

Risen Christ



Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 & 2 March 2025 - Year C

The Catholic Communities of
Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham & St Francis Xavier, Montmorency



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respect to the elders past, present and emerging.



Gospel: Luke 6:39-45

Jesus told a parable to his disciples, 'Can one blind man guide another? Surely both will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior to his teacher; the fully trained disciple will always be like his teacher. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the splinter that is in your eye," when you cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your brother's eye.

'There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. For every tree can be told by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from brambles. A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart; a bad man draws what is bad from the store of badness. For a man's words flow out of what fills his heart.'

Reflection - Break Open the Word 2025

Jesus' teaching in this passage begins with two shorter sayings and ends with two more developed parables. The blind leading the blind and the disciple and the teacher are both evocative images which bear meditation.

The parable of the splinter and the plank takes up the theme from last week's reading: do not judge; do not condemn. As is often the case with Jesus' parables, he uses extreme exaggeration to draw his contrast strongly and make his point. We should not take literally the prospect of finding a plank in our own eye!

The final images come from fruit trees. Every tree can be identified by the fruit it bears. First is the image of good tree/rotten fruit and rotten tree/good fruit. Then there is the image of harvesting figs from thorns or grapes from brambles. Both sets of images head in the same direction. A good person draws from a good heart and speaks good words.

The imagery may not originate with Jesus, but he uses the parables effectively to call the disciple to integrity.

Parish Pastoral Leadership Team - Parish Pastoral Plan

Following our January meeting, the Parish Pastoral Leadership Community met again recently to further develop our thoughts on formation of our Pastoral Plan. The plan is likely to centre on the five major themes that emerged from our survey in late 2024, namely **Hospitality, Social Justice, Liturgy, Family and Safeguarding**. Work will continue over coming months with the aim to present it to the Parish at all the Masses of Pentecost (7 & 8 June 2025).

Peter Reardon

LENT

The Sacred journey of 100 days begins on Ash Wednesday

2024

From Ash Wednesday (5 March) to Pentecost Sunday (8 June)

In the middle of this journey we have 'Holy Week' which begins with Palm Sunday on 13 April and builds to Easter Sunday, 20 April. 'Fire' is the sacred symbol linking the seasons of Lent & Easter together culminating in the sacred Fire of the Easter Vigil and the lighting of the Easter Candle - Christ our Light. This sacred time concludes with a final second 'Holy Week', starting with the Ascension of the Lord, 1 June and ending with Pentecost, 8 June.



Ash Wednesday Masses

Eltham - 9:30am at Our Lady Help of Christians Church

Montmorency - 7:00pm at St Francis Xavier Church

This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community. We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priest

Michael Sierakowski - **Moderator**

Michael.Sierakowski@cam.org.au

Parish Office

all correspondence to:

86 Mayona Road,

Montmorency Vic 3094

9435 4742

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

Tue-Fri 9am-3pm

Peter Williams:

Safeguarding Officer

RisenChrist.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Kerry Mash:

Volunteer

Wed & Fri 10am-3pm

New Website:

www.melbcatholic.org/risenchristparish

Facebook:

[Risen Christ Parish](#)

Risen Christ Parish Bulletin items:

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Rudy Vail: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION

available half an hour before
any weekday or weekend Parish Mass.

Collections: 9 & 16 Feb 2025

		OLHC	SFX
Thanksgiving	Cash Electronic	\$267.00 \$4,368.67	\$547.00 \$4,163.50
Presbytery	Cash Electronic	\$597.05	\$910.75 \$245.00

Thanksgiving / Stewardship Offering

Month	OLHC	SFX	Total
November	\$6,538.34	\$8,768.75	\$15,307.09
December	\$9,129.67	\$10,865.50	\$19,995.17
January	\$6,878.43	\$8,984.50	\$15,862.93

Risen Christ Parish Calendar of Events

Saturday 1 March

12:00pm Baptisms: Ella, Molly

Montmorency

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 2

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms: Nicholas, Charli

Eltham

Monday 3

2:00pm Mass

St Vincent's Aged Care

Tuesday 4

9:30am Mass & SFX Yr 6

Montmorency

10:00am Rosary

Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group

Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry

Eltham

2:00pm Bethany Small Church Community

Montmorency

Wednesday 5 - Ash Wednesday

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

9:30am Mass - Ash Wednesday

Eltham

1:00pm Kairos Small Church Community

Montmorency

7:00pm Mass - Ash Wednesday

Montmorency

Thursday 6

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

Montmorency

Friday 7

9:30am Mass

Eltham

Saturday 8

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 9

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

Tuesday 11

9:30am Mass & SFX Yr 4

Montmorency

10:00am Rosary

Montmorency

7:00pm Jordan Small Church Community

Montmorency

Wednesday 12

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Eltham

Thursday 13

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:00am Emmaus Small Church Community

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

Montmorency

Friday 14

9:30am Mass

Eltham

Saturday 15

12:00pm Baptisms: Mietta, Aria,
Lottie, Lucas & August

Montmorency

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

7:00pm St Francis Xavier School Trivia Night

Montmorency

Sunday 16

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms: Edward & Evelyn

Eltham

Tuesday 18

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:00am Rosary

Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group

Montmorency



*Let us pray for all those who have gone
before us marked with the sign of faith ...*

Montmorency

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:
*Regina Roszczenko (mother of Liz Gray), Siobhan Lappin,
Cindy & Ed Morrissey, Barney Steward, Skye Stojanov*

For the recently **deceased**:
James Barwick (aged 57, son of Anne Barwick)

For those whose **anniversaries** are at this time:
*Val Carrigg, Terry Dearsley, Jim Deehan,
Maree Hall, William Maloney*

Eltham

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:
Barbara Bibby, Penny Boyce, Ruth Decker, Bernard Murray

For those whose **anniversaries** are at this time:
Josephine Marie Landy

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office
9435 4742 or RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au.



**Congratulations to all who celebrate
their sacraments this weekend:**

Saturday, 1st March, 2025

St Francis Xavier, Montmorency, 12:00pm

Ella Grace Clark-Roche

Molly June Finnegan

Baptism

Baptism

Sunday, 2nd March, 2025

Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham, 12:00pm

Charli Jordan Alanna Harrison

Nicholas Hoi Yeung Mun

Baptism

Baptism

PRESENTED BY R & S AUTO:

**SO YOU
THINK
YOU
KNOW
TRIVIA**

**TRIVIA NIGHT AT
SFX MONTY HALL**

**SAT 15 MAR
7PM - 11PM**

**SFX MONTY HALL
90 MAYONA RD**

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\$320 TABLE OF 10**



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ASSOCIATION**

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BRONZE SPONSOR

WHITEFRIARS



Roster for week ending 2 Mar 2025

Armstrong, Miranda	E10:00
Armstrong, Miranda	R10:00
Bacani, Brian	W6:00
Bowyer, Darrell	ASRC
Bowyer, Rosemary	ASRC
Cseh, Ferenc	E10:00
Davidson, John	PRYR
Dopheide, Marlis	C10:00
Dunell, Linda	ASE
Edwards, Elisabeth	E10:00
Gerritsen, Jenine	H10:00
Goodison, Pauline	CLNR
Haines, Jan-Marie	E10:00
Love, Kathleen	H10:00
Lyons, Maria	H10:00
Maynes, Phil	W6:00
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Ryan Family	PRSE
Sullivan, Frances	W8:30
Witten, Janine	LoW-01 Thu
Wood, Marie	CLNR
Wood, Marie	W8:30

Roster for week ending 9 Mar 2025

Beckford, Peter	PRYR
Capuana, Marisa	CLNR
Capuana, Marisa	W6:00
Cotter, Anne	W8:30
Davidson, John	W8:30
Donnellan, Denice	E10:00
Dopheide, Marlis	E10:00
Dunell, Linda	H10:00
Dunell, Rick	H10:00
Edwards, Elisabeth	E10:00
Hannon, Genni	ASRC
Hannon, Kevin	ASRC
Kenny, Michael	W6:00
Mallia, Anthony	E10:00
McKenna, John	CLNR
Nolan, Kathleen	C10:00
Reardon, Kathy	ASE
Scannell Family	PRSE
Scully, Greg	E10:00
Taylor, Trish	R10:00
Turnbull, Mark	H10:00
Turnbull, Pauline	H10:00
Wood, Marie	LoW-01 Thu

ASE = Altar Society @ Eltham;
C = Commentator;

CLKR = Powerpoint Clicker @ SFX;
CLNR = Cleaner @ SFX; **R** = Reader;
E = Eucharistic Minister;

H = Hospitality;

LoW-01 = Liturgy of the Word with
Communion @ SFX;

PRSE = Pilgrim Rosary Statue @ Eltham;
M = Music; **W** = Minister of the Word

John Wijngaards, whose views on the ordination of women were to lead him out of the priesthood, always regarded himself as a faithful, orthodox Catholic / **by Margaret Hebblethwaite**

The long view

The funeral of the Dutch theologian Johannes Wijngaards - known to his friends as Hans, but choosing the name John for his many books and articles (in order to avoid confusion with Hans Küng, he explained) - was celebrated on 14 February, St Valentine's Day, in the Catholic Church of the Most Holy Name in Denham, Buckinghamshire. This was the parish he regularly attended in his later years with his wife Jackie Clackson. They had married in 2000, a couple of years after Wijngaards had resigned from the priesthood over the issue of free speech on topics such as contraception, clerical celibacy, women's ordination, same-sex relationships and divorce.

Wijngaards, who died on 2 January, had lived in Britain since 1982 when he and Jackie founded the Housetop centre in London, which originally focused on adult faith formation in a progressive context and in due time morphed into the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research. He was a careful scholar, a deeply committed Catholic and a prolific writer. He ran in all 18 websites on different aspect of faith and church history. As many as a million people in one year logged on to his website which presented his research materials on women priests (womenpriests.org). His many books included *The Ordination of Women in the Catholic Church: Unmasking a Cuckoo's Egg Tradition* (Continuum, 2001) and *No Women in Holy Orders? The women deacons of the Early Church* (Canterbury Press, 2002).

His funeral Mass began with a hymn written jointly by Wijngaards and Jackie Clackson, which reflected his very open approach to religion: "Womb of all beginnings - I long for you ... Tao of Heaven and Earth - I hold to you ... You sent our Lord Jesus Christ - I'm touched by you." He chose the readings himself - the New Jerusalem (from Revelation 21), and "I am going now to prepare a place for you" (from John 14). His approach was "wide, welcoming and all-encompassing", said the homilist (who asked not to be named for fear of placing his bishop in an awkward position). "His vision was of a Church of inclusivity", reflecting "the



PHOTO: MIRIAM DUGNAN

John Wijngaards: 'resignation was unavoidable'

responsibility we have as Christians to 'proclaim liberty to captives'. Someone so prolific as well as "so knowledgeable and yet so humble" would never "just sit there", even in Heaven. "his work, our work, will continue, and one day we will celebrate the full equality of women in the Catholic Church." One of Wijngaards' nieces from the Netherlands, who spoke at the crematorium, said that his last book, *Why Christ Rejects All Church Prejudice Against Women: Meditations*, was published just one day before his death, and that one of his last requests to his friends and family, made in a weak and failing voice, was for them to post reviews on Amazon.

Wijngaards was born in Surabaya in the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia, on 30 September 1935 to Dutch parents. His father, a high school teacher, was drafted into the Dutch army to fight against the Japanese. He became a prisoner of war and was forced to work on the railway lines in Thailand; his wife and their children were interned in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Java. For four years they suffered severe hardship and hunger, which left lasting effects. After the war, the family were repatriated to the Netherlands, where they faced poverty and deprivation. Hans was

the second of five brothers, and when his elder brother - who had planned to become a priest - died in his teenage years, Hans felt that the vocation was passing to him.

Wijngaards studied at the seminary of Roosendaal in the Netherlands and at Mill Hill in England. He joined the Mill Hill Missionary Society in 1958 and was ordained a priest in 1959. He completed a doctorate at the Gregorian University in Rome and taught as a professor at St John's College, Hyderabad, India for 14 years. He was elected vicar general of the Mill Hill Missionaries in 1976, a post he held for six years, during which he helped to start missionary projects around the world. Coming to London in 1982, he became professor of sacred scripture at the Missionary Institute and established Housetop. In the words of the priest giving the homily at his funeral, he was "born to be a teacher" because "he loved sharing".

But in the 1970s and 1980s Wijngaards found himself increasingly in conflict with the positions that were coming out of Rome. "As a Dutchman I also watched with anger and disbelief how Rome broke down the Church in the Netherlands," he recounted, "No other part of the Catholic Church had so enthusiastically responded to Vatican II." He wrote a short book, *Did Christ Rule out Women Priests?*, in 1977 in response to the declaration by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith excluding women from the priesthood. In the 1990s, Pope John Paul II increased the pressure to conform with the teaching that women could not be priests, and, as he wrote later, "when Rome, in 1998, declared that those defending the ordination of women were not 'in full communion with the Church', I came into an acute conflict of conscience. My resignation from the active priestly ministry was unavoidable." Rome, he said, was "forcing on all a complicity of silence" and "the question of the ordination of women is the breaking point for me".

"All my life I have been a conscientious and orthodox Catholic," he added. "And I intend to remain so until I die."

Margaret Hebblethwaite is writing a book about women in the gospels.

As Catholics around the world pray for the recovery of Pope Francis, one of his biographers reflects on his Franciscan streak and Jesuit formation / by **Michael W. Higgins**

The caress of mercy

There has been no Pope like him in centuries. His pontificate marks a series of firsts: the first Jesuit, the first Latin American, the first to take the name Francis, the first for many centuries to opt out of palatial digs and to live among others. His election as Pope nearly 12 years ago was a shock, and his papacy has been a rollercoaster of shocks.

Many of those praying for him outside the Gemelli hospital where he is being treated believe he is in many critical ways irreplaceable. But Jorge Mario Bergoglio himself would be the last to think so.

One key portal through which to view his pontificate is his intellectual attachments, his spiritual antecedents, his personal faith models. And they are surprising in their range, their rich catholicity of charism and witness. Although papal documents are frequently the result of many hands, they bear the personal stamp and signature of the pontiff and reflect, at their best and most personal, his tone and timbre. So we can read them as a point of entry into the mind and spirituality of Pope Francis.

Francis' apostolic letter of 19 June 2023, *Sublimitas et Misericordia Hominis* ("The Grandeur and Misery of Man"), issued on the fourth centenary of the birth of Blaise Pascal, is not a major work in the Bergoglio canon but it is significant in what it tells us about its principal creator. Pascal's "evangelical radicalism" appeals to Francis. The French scientist, mystic and lay apologist taught the Argentinian pontiff that ecclesiastical rules and regulations have their limitations, that works of mercy are primary because the "sole object of Scripture is charity", that attention to the suffering of the poor is critical to a life of faith, that understanding the limits of reason does not diminish the dignity of reasoning itself, and that the existential and the personal take priority over the abstract, as - in the phrase that often recurs in Francis' teaching - "reality is superior to ideas". In Pascal Francis found a kindred spirit who lived in the "now", recognised humanity's innate grandeur and its unavoidable misery, and placed himself in the service of the Infinite Mercy. Like Pascal, whose God is not the God of the

philosophers, Francis understands that an encounter with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is not an encounter circumscribed by the strictures of reason. And "that only one who has encountered mercy, who has been caressed by the tenderness of mercy, is right with the Lord ... and the privileged place of that encounter is the caress of the mercy of Jesus Christ."

That emphasis on the caress of mercy has been present from the outset, when he chose the name "Francis". Bergoglio is not quite the romantic figure of the legend of Francis, but he is, like his namesake, an ecclesial pioneer of arresting originality. Similarities between the two Francis - Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires and Giovanni de Pietro di Bernardone (*il poverello*) of Assisi - deserve scrutiny.

G.K. Chesterton's *Saint Francis of Assisi* makes much of the paradoxical qualities to be found in the first Franciscan. Not surprising, given GK's fondness for paradox as a conceit and as a concept. The quirks and genius of paradox rightly applied make sense of the peculiar capacity of the Bergoglian mind to hold in tension the contradictions that define Christian life: the juxtaposition of agony with ecstasy, doubt with certitude, the mundane with the sublime, a life of service with a life of solitary prayer, leadership from below with leadership from above.

Akin to the troubadours of medieval times, Francis the Umbrian mendicant and Francis the Argentinian pope are *jongleurs de Dieu*, God's tumblers or jugglers, special performers for the divinity - poetic, beatific, subversive. Just the way God likes them.

Bergoglio's Franciscan streak, however, is not the dominant definer of his spirituality and his intellectual disposition. That is reserved for the Society of Jesus and the rigorous formation of their Companions in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius Loyola. There is a strong evangelistic component in Bergoglio's temperament and spirituality that is linked to the Ignatian notion of the *magis* or "more", compelling the disciple to move beyond the sufficient or *statim*. It is a summons to the spiritual heroism - unknown,

ennobling, terrifying - that awaits the temerarious pilgrim of the spirit. It is not for the timid.

From the outset of his papacy Francis has set his eyes on reinvigorating the synod as an ecclesial instrument of relevance and efficacy. He insisted that it be more faithfully representative of the Catholic demographic - preponderantly lay, disproportionately female in terms of actual religious practice, no longer Euro-centric, more inclusive of other ecclesial communities in union with Rome - but also outward-looking, enjoining Catholics to attend to the greater challenges facing humankind, most especially the continuing desecration of the planet.

In 2023 he went further still: extending the right to vote to synod delegates drawn from the larger pool of Catholics outside the episcopacy. The laity - men and women - joined the club as equal members. The Jesuit disruptor pope is making a paradigm shift by being *faithful* to the organic tradition, not by abandoning it. He is an authentic conservative, not an obscurantist or a reactionary, and that conservative grounding *allows* him to be radical.

Although he has disrupted the established pattern of doing things as the premier occupant of the Vatican, the protocols that are the mainstay of institutional life on the Tiber, and the way that the Church works in the world by readjusting ecclesial priorities privileging the outliers, the poor, and the migrants, he has also managed to hold to the tradition he was sworn to protect as Peter by refusing to alter church teaching by papal fiat or by parliamentary consensus, by refusing to disregard traditional forms of devotion or popular piety, and by refusing to dismiss the work of his predecessors - instead, building on their scaffolding. Bergoglio, the disruptor pope, disrupts our spiritual and intellectual complacency, our foreclosure through fear of fresh ways of seeing the Gospel as the leaven of society, and our ahistorical sense of the Church that blinds us to the reforming gusts of the Spirit.

I wish the Pope a speedy recovery. He has made Rome, once the centre of an ecclesiastical empire, a treasured seat on the periphery, a beacon of human and spiritual harmony in a sea of dark turmoil.

Michael W. Higgins is the author of many books and radio documentaries, including *The Jesuit Mystique* and *The Jesuit Disruptor*: a personal portrait of Pope Francis.

Prayers of the Faithful for 1 & 2 March 2025 - Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leader: We are reminded today how powerful our words are, and thus of their need to be carefully chosen.

For the Church: that we, the baptised, who proclaim the Gospel by our lives, will speak words of compassion, love and healing. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For Pope Francis in his time of need: that with patience and hope he will embrace the will of God. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the leaders of nations: that they will not mislead people with empty words but will use their powerful positions to build up the human family, to speak for the powerless and enact programs that enable a better world. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the renewal of the ceasefire in Gaza and an end to the violence now engulfing the Occupied West Bank. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For justice for the people of Ukraine and an end to war between Ukraine and Russia, that peace will come to all. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who receive the sacrament of Baptism this weekend: Ella, Molly, Charli & Nichola. May they grow in the grace of God. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who have died in Palestine, Lebanon and Isreal, Ukraine and Russia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For those recently deceased, especially *James Barwick*, and for those whose anniversaries are at this time, including *Val Carrigg, Terry Dearsley, Jim Deehan, Maree Hall, Josephine Marie Landy and William Maloney.*

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord God, by the grace of your Son give us hearts that are pure and sincere, open to your will and guidance, filled with hope as we pray for all in need. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen**

Imagine experiencing the real Timor-Leste and Samoa – not as a tourist, but as a welcomed guest in local communities making real change happen.

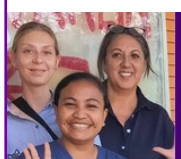
Palms International Volunteering formerly known as Palms Australia, invites you to join an intimate group of just eight to twelve travellers for an extraordinary journey that goes far beyond typical tourism.

Our Encounters program: *Timor-Leste (8-19 July 2025)* and *Samoa (27 Sep to 4 Oct 2025)* offers you:

- Authentic connections with local communities and Palms Australia partners
- Unique insights into sustainable development initiatives
- Cultural immersion experiences you won't find anywhere else
- Expert local guides sharing hidden historical sites and natural wonders
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At \$3,500, your Encounter includes accommodation, meals, activities, expert guides, visas, and in-country transportation.

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REACH BEYOND



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Lent & Easter

No sooner than one season ends and another starts.

The Montmorency conference of SVDP has some booklets that may be of interest to parishioners that may assist them in their preparations for Lent and Easter season. Pamphlets are in the front foyer near the entrance doors. Some of the pamphlets include:

- Station of the Cross for Married Couples
- Family Meal Prayers for Lent
- Calvary - a Lenten Rosary Reflection
- Lenten Family Graces - A Treasury of Prayers for Lenten Meals

We hope that you enjoy the selection. Please feel free to browse all the pamphlets. A gold coin donation in the poor boxes located at the front and side entrances will help defray costs.

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer with St Vincent de Paul through our conference? If so, please contact John on 0410 128 821 or the Parish Office.

Thank you all for the support you give to our local St Vincent de Paul conference.

If you need assistance call 1800 305 330 Monday to Friday between 10am and 3pm.



Lenten Reflection Books are now available - first in first served!
Please *only* take one if you will use it,
these books are fabulous to help with your Lenten journey.

Project Compassion donation boxes
are now available please take one!



REFUGEE / ASYLUM SEEKER UPDATE

Over the last 2 weeks Marlis and I have travelled to South Australia, NSW and Northern Victoria on a quest to catch up with refugees, asylum seekers, family and friends.

OUR MALAYSIAN FAMILY

On Friday 14 Feb we were finally reunited with Khayla (now 23 months), Ridz and Nor. We visited their home, which is an old unused farm-house on a fruit/veg/nut/olive farm. Ridz is the farm hand. The house and utilities costs are part of his income. We spent Saturday with them and Khayla was reassuringly healthy, happy, sociable, adventurous and simply adorable. We couldn't have been happier with their situation.

OUR AFGHAN SON JAVID AND WIFE SHAH-GUL

On Saturday 15 Feb, at 5.30am, Shah Gul (carrying her first child due 14 March) unexpectedly broke her waters, but did NOT go into labour. Miranda was the designated birthing coach but was in NSW!! A quick dash back to Eltham on Sunday (after Mass) allowed Miranda to be at the hospital Monday morning. Shah Gul was induced 5.45pm that day and at 1.45am Tuesday 18 Feb, she delivered a healthy 2.61kg baby boy. No name yet so we call him Froggie (because his legs are bunched up like a frog). He is having trouble feeding and Shah Gul hasn't produced milk yet, but there is a good team watching over them, and it is early days.

ETHIOPIAN ABRHAM, BEZAR AND TWINS

Bezar is an astonishing woman. She continues to require fortnightly chemo, but because her hands and feet have become itchy (a side effect of chemo) and because her blood results have improved, she has been given a 1 month reprieve. She does volunteer work 2 mornings a week, and English classes on another 2 mornings. On 1 Feb, the twins turned 11 years of age and have entered Year 5.



We ask for continued prayers for our extended refugee family. God Bless. *Miranda and Marlis*



**PROJECT
COMPASSION**

Project Compassion Sunday 1st and 2nd of March 2025

This Lent, we are called to *Unite Against Poverty* through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. By taking home a Project Compassion donation box or envelope, you'll be answering the Gospels' call to care for our global family and walk alongside the most vulnerable.

Your generous support this Lenten season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life-changing support to communities facing poverty, food insecurity, lack of education, and water shortages, while building resilience against future challenges. Together, through faith and action, we can bring compassion and opportunity to those most in need.



**UNITE  AGAINST
POVERTY**
this Lent

Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code above.

Or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we
Unite Against Poverty this Lent.

Parish Pastoral Leadership Team Member Profile

Introducing: Ferenc (Fez) Cseh

My wife Nika, our two girls, Arielle (6yo) and Parisa (4yo) and I joined the Risen Christ Parish in late 2023. You'll find my family and I at the OLHC Sunday 10am mass.

Why did you join the Parish Leadership Team and what do you hope to achieve?

Our welcoming experience to this Parish was really heart-warming and full of love. I joined the Parish leadership committee to ensure this continues to be experienced by all. I also aim to help our wonderful Parish draw in new families and the next generation.

What's one thing you think would surprise people about yourself?

I have a Hungarian and Maltese background. In the 16th century, my Hungarian ancestors were advisors to the monarchy. I'm also Ferenc Cseh III.

What do you do with yourself?

I help run our family business, Chameleon Displays, where we produce display panels for our clients i.e. builders and their suppliers. My second religion is soccer (Man Utd!). I also enjoy the art of films and reading fantasy books, as well as faith related.



POPE NAMES NEW BISHOP OF ARMIDALE



The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has welcomed the appointment by Pope Francis last night of a new Bishop of Armidale.

Source: *ACBC Media Blog*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/pope-names-new-bishop-of-armidale/>

TESTS SHOW POPE'S 'FURTHER SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT'



Pope Francis has shown "further slight improvement" in his battle with double pneumonia and earlier concerns over possible kidney failure have been resolved. Source: *NCR Online*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/tests-show-popes-further-slight-improvement/>

PROVIDING PATIENTS WITH LETHAL CHEMICALS TO END THEIR LIFE IS NOT HEALTH CARE



The Victorian Government's announcement of reforms to euthanasia and assisted suicide laws is deeply distressing, with the protection and care of

vulnerable and dying people further marginalised, writes Archbishop Peter A. Comensoli.

Source: *Melbourne Catholic*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/providing-patients-with-lethal-chemicals-to-end-their-life-is-not-health-care/>

HOUSE OF CORRECTION BECOMES HOUSE OF EDUCATION



A partnership between Sydney's Parklea Correctional Centre and Australian Catholic University has ignited a thirst for learning in inmates who are discovering new possibilities for their lives outside prison.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/house-of-correction-becomes-house-of-education/>

ST JOHN OF GOD OPENS TRAUMA SERVICE IN VICTORIA



With an unprecedented demand for mental health care across the country, St John of God Health Care has opened a specialised psychological trauma recovery unit for emergency services workers and defence force personnel in Victoria.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/st-john-of-god-opens-trauma-service-in-victoria/>

ALBANESE AND DUTTON URGED TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT CONGO 'BLOODBATH'



Brisbane Catholic Simon Chibalonza fears for his family and the lives of millions of innocent people after M23 rebels launched a new offensive in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Source: *The Catholic Leader*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/02/27/albanese-and-dutton-urged-to-speak-out-about-congo-bloodbath/>



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

Every moment



As we join people around the world in praying for Pope Francis this week, we remember that Jesus calls us to trust every part of our lives to him, the most ordinary moments as well as the extraordinary times of great joy or intense struggle. It's

a call the Holy Father continues to model and remind us of, even from his hospital bed.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/rest-part-of-therapy-pope-francis-sends-cheerful-angelus-message-from-hospital-bed>



Last week, we celebrated the Jubilee of Deacons, men who devote all of their 'ordinary' lives to an extraordinary ministry in service of the Gospel. We hear from two of our local permanent deacons about the unique joys and challenges of their vocation, and their mission to 'let people know that God is very close to us'.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/a-ministry-of-service-permanent-deacons-celebrate-their-jubilee>



As we continue our journey as 'Pilgrims of Hope' this Jubilee Year, we visit St Mary MacKillop Church in Keilor Downs, another of the Archdiocese's official Pilgrim Places, and hear how much this beautiful church owes to the grace of God and the intercession of the saints.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/st-mary-mckillop-church-the-jubilee-pilgrim-place-built-by-the-grace-of-the-saints>



And as part of our 'Hope does not disappoint' series, Dr Robyn Miller AM - who was recognised last month in the Australia Day honours - shares how her Catholic upbringing has inspired and sustained her work with shattered families

and others on the margins.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/how-robyn-millers-faith-based-commitment-to-social-justice-mends-shattered-families>

Let us continue to pray for Pope Francis, that God will be with him in every moment, bringing him healing, strength and courage.

Blessed Carlo Acutis gains more fans as relic and Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition arrive in Melbourne...

Last week, St Thomas More Parish in Mount Eliza hosted a remarkable week-long parish mission, welcoming a first-class relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis alongside his renowned International Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition. This event marked the first time both the relic and exhibition had been displayed in Melbourne, drawing parishioners and visitors alike into a deeper reflection on the mystery of the Eucharist.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/blessed-carlo-acutis-gains-more-fans-as-relic-and-eucharistic-miracles-exhibition-arrive-in-melbourne>

New Faith and Culture Sessions aim to bring faith to life....The Truth Goodness Beauty Project is launching its inaugural Faith and Culture Sessions, a six-week series designed to explore how faith shapes daily life. Hosted at St Peter's Toorak on Saturday mornings during Lent, the sessions will feature livestreamed presentations from globally renowned Catholic speakers, offering participants the chance to deepen their faith and engage in meaningful discussions.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/new-faith-and-culture-sessions-aim-to-bring-faith-to-life>

<https://melbournecatholic.org/events>

For more information: www.melbournecatholic.org or www.facebook.com/CatholicArchdioceseofMelbourne