



THE SAVING WORD

MATTHEW

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / A

7 DECEMBER 2025

FIRST READING

Isa 11:1-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

He judges the poor with justice.

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, a scion thrusts from his roots: on him the spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. (The fear of the Lord is his breath.) He does not judge by appearances, he gives no verdict on hearsay, but judges the wretched with integrity, and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land.

His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless; his sentences bring death to the wicked. Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them. The cow and the bear make friends, their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like the ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole; into the viper's lair the young child puts his hand. They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain, for the country is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse shall stand as signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PS

Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17. R. cf. v. 7

R. Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

1. O God, give your judgement to the king, / to a king's son your justice, / that he may judge your people in justice / and your poor in right judgement. **R.**

2. In his days justice shall flourish / and peace till the moon fails. / He shall rule from sea to sea, / from the Great River to earth's bounds. **R.**

3. For he shall save the poor when they cry / and the needy who are helpless. / He will have



pity on the weak / and save the lives of the poor. **R.**

4. May his name be blessed for ever / and endure like the sun. / Every tribe shall be blessed in him, / all nations bless his name. **R.**

SECOND READING

Rom 15:4-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Christ, the hope of all people.

Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. And may he who helps us when we refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you to treat each other in the same friendly way as Christ treated you. The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for his mercy, as scripture says in one place: For this I shall praise you among the pagans and sing your name.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia! / Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. / Alleluia!



PARISH PRIEST: Rev Fr Leenus Neetany SAC

Permanent Deacon: Rev John Lam

Parish Coordinator: Joanna Lam

ST JOSEPH'S, ELSTERNWICK

71 Orrong Road, Elsternwick 3185

Mass

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

Reconciliation

Friday after Mass, Saturday 6:00pm

HOLY CROSS, CAULFIELD SOUTH

707 Glen Huntly Road, Caulfield South 3162

Mass

Thursday 10:00am and Sunday 9:00am

Reconciliation

Thursday after Mass

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-mins before all Masses & Saturday 9:45-10:10am

Thanksgiving & Special Collections

Church: \$TBA Presbytery: \$TBA

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lectors:

Saturday 6:30pm M Ellis

Sunday 9:00am S McMillan 10:30am La Bonne family

Counters: No Counting

Upcoming Week's Liturgical Calendar

Mon 8 Dec: The Immaculate Conception

Fri 13 Dec: St Lucy

Sun 14 Dec: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Thanksgiving



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (cf. Isa 30:19, 30)

O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (Bar 5:5, 4:36)

Jerusalem, arise and stand on the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill*: Tony Messina, Paulette Dobbin, Carol Burgess, Pam O'Reilly, Bernie Smith, Marie Gaudry

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

Recently Deceased: Laura Molino

Death Anniversary: -



Australia Catholic Youth Festival 2025

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival was a wonderful experience for everyone who attended it. Before the Festival, during our formation time, many of our young people expressed their wish to meet other young Catholics and, perhaps thereby, to deepen and feel supported in their faith.

After two and a half days in the company of their peers, the overwhelming response from the group was that their experience was far greater than they had ever imagined it would be.

One of the many Bishops present talked about the noticeable growth of vitality and faith among younger members of the church. Vitality was certainly present, in the singing and dancing at the Praise and Worship plenaries and the general demeanour of everyone present. And the quiet prayer and silence during the times of Adoration and Veneration was beautiful to witness.

With these things in mind let us wait to hear in person from some of the young pilgrims. Let us continue to hold them in prayer, that their experiences will help them to hear the voice of God, to know that they belong and are known; that they are on a journey; that they are sent to witness to Christ's love in the world.

One of the anxieties often expressed by the regular Church-goers is "I wonder what will become of the Catholic Church without young people turning up for Mass!" But the just-concluded ACYF assures us that such fears are no longer applicable, for we are now hopeful of a vibrant and youthful congregation taking the Church forward.

The Parish thanks and appreciates the participants, their parents, leaders, priests, donors, parishioners and all who made it possible for our young people to attend the ACYF. The participants are grateful to the Parish for paying half of the registration fee (\$200 for 10 participants). We hope and pray that they, and very many more people irrespective of their age will be led to follow Jesus more closely and enjoy God's continued blessings!

Fundraising:	Cake Stall #1 + Donations	\$ 581.00
	Cake Stall #2 + Donations	\$ 640.50
	Donations	\$ 100.00
	Total Funds Raised	\$ 1321.50
Expenses:	T-Shirts	\$ 264.00
	Food, Snacks & Drinks	\$ 931.81
	ACYF Souvenir	\$ 25.00
	Total Expenses	\$ 1220.81
NET BALANCE		\$ 100.69



Christmas 2025 & New Year 2026

St Joseph's, Elsternwick
Holy Cross, Caulfield South

1st Rite of Reconciliation * Saturday 20 December

5:30pm Reconciliation - St Joseph's

Christmas Eve * Wednesday 24 December

6:00pm Carols, 6:30pm Vigil Mass - St Joseph's

8:30pm Carols, 9:00pm Vigil Mass - Holy Cross

Christmas Day * Thursday 25 December

9:00am Mass - Holy Cross

10:30am Mass - St Joseph's

New Year's Day * Thursday 1 January

10:00am Mass - Holy Cross

Celebration to honour the Immaculate Conception

Sunday 7 December, 1:30pm at Holy Cross Church.

Adoration, Prayers, Time of Mercy and Holy Mass.

There will be the opportunity to venerate the first-class relic of St Catherine Labouré. A very special life-size image of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be present. This particular image belonging to the Combined Societies of Mary has been associated with various miracles.

Free miraculous medals for all in attendance.



Advent Scripture Reflection Sessions

"Advent Scripture Reflection" sessions will be held on 4 consecutive Fridays, commencing on 28th November 2025 from 7pm to 8pm at St. Anthony's Church. All welcome!

The Christmas Travelling Crib



There are 7 travelling Cribs seeking a stop over for 2 days at family homes in the Parishes and Schools of St Joseph's & Holy Cross and St Anthony's, commencing 1st December until Christmas Eve.

Please register on the clipboards next to the crib. For more info, contact Fr. Pat or the Parish Office.

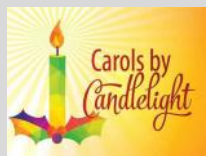
Carols by Candlelight at St Anthony's

Sunday, 14th December at St Anthony's Parish Hall, immediately after the 5pm Mass.

This is a joint event by the Sister Parishes of St Joseph's & Holy Cross and St Anthony's & St Aloysius'.

We are looking for solo/group performances with Christmas themed songs and approximately 5 mins per performance.

To register your participation and choice of performance please contact our Parish Office and for St Anthony's - veronica.blair@cam.org.au or wong.joyceik@gmail.com and Royston Gaga.



Christmas Day Dinner 2025



Thursday 25 December at 12-noon at St Anthony's Church Parish Hall, 164-168 Neerim Road.

This will be the 33rd year St Anthony's has served a traditional meal on Christmas Dinner.

We all know that December can be a difficult time for many and 2025 is no exception. In 2024 we served over 500 meals. In 2025, as always, we ask for your help to reach out to others.

We will again be offering 3 options: a sit down meal; a takeaway meal; or a meal delivered to people who are housebound and who live locally.

What sort of help is needed?

1. Please pray that those who need the Dinner will hear about it and be able to attend.
2. Reach out to anyone you think might like a Dinner, or some company and give them a yellow invitation.
3. Think about practical help, especially volunteering and complete a green form accordingly.

Both yellow and green forms can be collected from the church foyers and returned to the box provided.

Donations to the Dinner can also be made to:

Account name: St Anthony's Parish Tony's Café

BSB 083-347 Account number 227-402-447

(Reference Christmas Dinner)

For more info email stanthony.christmasdinner@gmail.com or call 9401-6336. Thank you all for your support.

2nd Sunday of Advent, Year A

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus,

On a bright morning a man went out for a walk. The sun had just come up, brightening up the earth and the sky. He looked up and saw that the moon was still there in the sky. But the moon was so pale and it was barely visible. He remembered that till an hour ago the moon was so bright and beautiful and had dominated the sky. Now it had lost its attraction and had been pushed into the background. But as the man looked at it again, it occurred to him that it was the same moon, whose light had seen many people through the darkness of the night.

The moon reminds us of John the Baptist. He was always conscious of the fact that a greater light like the sun was coming and he himself like the moon had the role of reflecting that light in the lives of the people. How did John reflect the light of Christ to the life of the people? He made the people aware of their sinfulness and made them aware of the Mercy of God. Thus he led the people to repentance and forgiveness.

First of all John himself lived in righteousness and in austerity. Eating and drinking almost nothing. When he preached, he spoke with full conviction, and courage. He did not hesitate to rebuke even the ruler of the land. He knew he was risking his own life. Even then fearlessly he did every bit of his duty of preaching in order to make them repent over their sinful lives.

John's words and voice may have sounded fierce, rough and stern. Sometimes his words might have been hurting. He called some of them hypocrites and a brood of vipers. Some people may have taken offence at him; but in fact his words were full of concern and love. His voice was as cooling as the moonlight; after all he was announcing the Good News of the coming of our Saviour. Many people also took his words to be the Word of God and were led to the true Light.

Today's Gospel invites us also to take the role of John the Baptist. Like him, each one of us has a mission to reflect the Light of Christ to others, to lead people from darkness to the true Light and help people mend their lives. Thus, we are all called to be little moons, reflecting the Light of Christ to one another. Wishing everyone a fruitful Advent.

Fr Leenus.

Abraham bought himself a new computer. He said to Isaac, "Look at the wonderful programs and the things it can do." Isaac replied, "But Dad, I don't think your computer has enough memory." Abraham said, "Don't worry son, the Lord will provide the RAM."



Fr Pat's Birthday Celebration

Fr Pat's 90th birthday is on 30th January 2026.

We, together with our Sister Parish, will celebrate the occasion on Sunday, 1st February

at St Anthony's Parish Hall after the 11:00am Mass.

We seek expressions of interest in forming an organising team. Please contact the Parish Office.



St Vincent de Paul Society
CAULFIELD SOUTH & ELSTERNWICK *good works*

Christmas Appeal

Columban Calendars and Vinnies Christmas Cards

- Calendars \$10.00 each
- Christmas Cards \$5.00 per pack of 5 cards

Donations for Christmas Hampers

We are looking to supplement the food parcels for our Conference's Companions this year some specific items for Christmas. If you are interested in assisting, please check the list at the church foyer and only bring in what is requested. As always, thank you for helping those in need.

GOSPEL

Mt 3:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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Breaking Open the Word

CHANGE ONE'S THINKING

Today, John the Baptist arrives to assist us in our Advent preparation. Matthew presents him as a figure from Israel's wilderness. From this setting John invites Matthew's audience, and us, to repentance. There are three things about the Gospel's opening verses that are important to note. First, the 'wilderness' was a place of nothingness. Israel encountered God in its forty year's desert wanderings. Often our own lives are filled with desert wanderings and nothingness. We sometimes feel the loneliness of our lives and perhaps, at times, directionless. Contemplating our personal wilderness can be a fruitful place to begin our Advent preparation.

Second, from the wilderness comes the call to repentance. John says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This is a powerful message. The word, 'repent' comes from the Greek, 'metanoia', a combination of two Greek words, 'meta' + 'noia'. 'Meta' is the basic root word in English linked to 'change' (metamorphosis, metabolism). 'Noia' is the root for the English 'knowledge'. In other words, John's first call to 'repent' literally means (from the Greek) to 'change one's thinking', to be open minded and not hard hearted. It is a challenging call to us as we enter into this new time of the year.

Third, John reminds us to be aware that 'the kingdom of heaven has come near'. It is not distant but close and present; it is among us, a repetitive theme throughout the Gospel, flagged in two Sunday's time, in the birth of the child called 'Emmanuel', 'God with us'. We need today, more than ever, this God to be with us.

Fr Michael Trainor