Risen Christ

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A

24 & 25 October 2026

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: Matthew 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'



Reflection: Break Open the Word 2026

The Great Commandment of love is very well-known. With total engagement of our person (heart, soul and mind), we are called to love God and one another. It is beautiful, inspiring but, in this form, also rather abstract.

We need to take the lead of the first reading and make it concrete. The stranger, the widow, the orphan, the poor person: they give the commandment some traction. To translate it into our own culture, we bring to mind the unemployed, those living with a disability or domestic violence, those who encounter prejudice or discrimination. This is where the commandment to love plays out.

The text should be read warmly and with fresh enthusiasm.



Independent MP Helen Haines is in a stable condition. Photograph: Mick Tsikas/Reuters

Our thoughts and prayers are with Helen Haines and family during this difficult time.

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

Parish Priest

Michael F. Sierakowski - **Moderator**
michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au

Parish Office *- all correspondence to:*
Risen Christ Parish Office
86 Mayona Road, Montmorency Vic 3094
(03) 9435 4742
risenchrist.parish@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler **- Parish Secretary -** Tue-Fri 9am-3pm

Peter Williams - **Safeguarding Officer**
risenchrist.childsafety@cam.org.au

Volunteers
Marisa Capuana - Various Hours
Kerry Mash - Wed & Fri 10am-3pm

website: www.melbcatholic.org/risenchristparish

Please send bulletin items to: risenchrist.parish@cam.org.au

Schools

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

St Francis Xavier Primary School
Principal: Jo Nolen: 9435 8474
principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au
www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

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

Collections: 11 & 18 October 2026		
Thanksgiving	Cash Electronic	$1,377.00 $8,781.17
Presbytery	Cash Electronic	$1,524.25 $230.00
Catholic Mission		$1,000.00

Thanksgiving Offering	
Month	**Total**
July	$19,824.17
August	$21,312.57
September	$19,589.17

Risen Christ Parish Calendar of Events

Saturday	**24th**	
6:00pm	*Mass*	Montmorency
Sunday	**25th**	
8:30am	*Mass*	*Montmorency*
10:00am	*Mass*	*Eltham*
Monday	**26th**	
7:00pm	RCIA Class	Eltham
Tuesday	**27th**	
9:30am	*Mass & SFX Yr 3 & 4*	*Montmorency*
10:00am	Marian Month of October Rosary	Montmorency
7:00pm	Jordan Small Church Community	Montmorency
Wednesday	**28th**	
6:30am	Meditation	Montmorency
9:30am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion	Eltham
7:30pm	Marian Month of October Rosary	Eltham
Thursday	**29th**	
9:30am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion	Montmorency
2:30pm	Meditation	Eltham
Friday	**30th**	
9:30am	*Mass*	*Eltham*
Saturday	**31st**	
6:00pm	*Mass*	*Montmorency*
Sunday	**1st November**	
8:30am	*Mass*	*Montmorency*
10:00am	*Mass*	*Eltham*
12:00pm	Baptisms: Sophia & Amelia	Eltham

Thanksgiving

Dear Parishioners,

Following is a list of ways in which you can give towards the running of our Parish:

- A) EFTPOS terminals
- B) scan the QR code (https://bit.ly/45ifhRp) and donate to any Parish finance campaign including Thanksgiving, Presbytery Offerings, baptisms etc
- C) cash/coins in the collection baskets at each church
- D) thanksgiving envelopes
- E) set up payments from credit/debit cards/bank account

Thank you for your generous support, *Michael*








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

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:

Baby Liam & Natalia Park, Baby Margot Brady, Chiara Sansonsetti (7 years old), Kiera Taylor (9 years old), Peter, Stephen Andrew, Des Arneson, Bill Boyce, Penny boyce, Maria Bredle, Vincent Cipolletta, Nora Edmond, Monivic fanlo, Michelle Hogan, Pat Hosmer, Siobhan Lappin, Georgina Lynch, Mary Luttick, Cindy & Ed Morrissey, Bernard Murray, Beth Scott, Audrey Tunks, Nicholas Turnbull, Jeanne Vanderwert, Noel Vincent

For those whose **anniversaries** are at this time:

Salvatore Cantone, Anne Haslam, Petronella Kandelaars, Frank Salmic Snr, Ivan Skender, Bill Tapley

To include an anniversary, please contact the Parish Office on 9435 4742 or risenchrist.parish@cam.org.au

The Marian Month of October

Pray the Rosary

During the month of October,

the Rosary will be said at

Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham

every Wednesday evening at 7:30pm.

Prayer for peace is what Our Lady requested and I think it is sorely needed in our world today!



The Month of October is the Rosary Month,

and in Honouring our Mother,

the Rosary will be said at

St Francis Xavier, Montmorency

on Tuesday after Mass

at approximately 10:10am.

Roster for week ending 25 Oct 2026	
Bacani, Brian	W6:00
Bowyer, Darrell	ASRC
Bowyer, Rosemary	ASRC
Boyd, Mary	PRYR
Capuana, Marisa	W6:00
Drljo, Frank	CLNR
Dunell, Linda	H10:00
Dunell, Rick	H10:00
Haines, Geoff	E10:00
Hall, Vali	ASE
Iliffe, Yvonne	E10:00
McKinley, Michael	W8:30
Nolan, Kathleen	R10:00
Northrop, Greg	E10:00
Ramsdale, John	W8:30
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Rigg Family	PRSE
Scully, Greg	C10:00
Skipper, Patsy	CLNR
Smith, Neil	E10:00
Volunteer please	H10:00
Volunteer please	H10:00
Roster for week ending 1 Nov 2026	
Clark, Helen	H10:00
Cotter, Anne	CLNR
Cseh, Ferenc	E10:00
Dunell, Linda	ASE
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
Kenny, Michael	W6:00
Kulkens, Mark	W6:00
Mallia, Anthony	E10:00
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Reardon, Peter	C10:00
Reardon, Peter	E10:00
Rough Family	PRSE
Rygala, Ella	H10:00
Sullivan, Frances	W8:30
Volunteer please	H10:00
Volunteer please	H10:00
Williams, Anne	PRYR
Williams, Peter	PRYR
Wood, Gerard	CLNR
Wood, Marie	W8:30
Zylstra, Diane	R10:00

ASE=Altar Society, Eltham; C=Commentator;
CLNR=Cleaner; R=Reader;
E=Eucharistic Minister; H=Hospitality;
PRSE=Pilgrim Rosary Statue, Eltham;
W=Minister of the Word

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

Thank you for your continued prayerful support of the work leading to our Synod Gathering in December. This letter provides an update on the progress of the Melbourne Synod and outlines the next stages of preparation as we continue this important journey together.

MELBOURNE SYNOD
TAKE THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL

1. Consultation Phase

We are grateful to all those who contributed to the consultation phase of the Melbourne synod.

A total of 224 submissions were receied from parishes, individuals and groups across the Archdiocese. As participation in group consultations was not recorded separately, this figure also represents the many people who gathered in groups to participate in a *Conversation in the Spirit.*

We also extend our thanks to representatives from 106 parishes who attended the regional consultation meetings held throughout the Archdiocese. Responses from these gatherings were recorded at a regional level under each of the Synod themes.

2. Data Analysis

During the first two weeks of August, data from the online survey platform, together with reports and submissions from consultations across the Archdiocese, were analysed using thematic content analysis in Non-Versioned Information, versatile outcomes. National Centre for Pastoral Research prepared a report around the Synod's three themes:

- Young Discipleship
- Formation and Participation
- Missionary Leadership

For each theme, the report outlined the consultation questions, provided a thematic analysis of responses, and summarised the major themes identified. The analysis highlighted recurring hopes, concerns, priorities and insights that emerged throughout the consultation process.

The Synod Commission reviewed the report and has drawn on its findings as the foundation for preparing the Working Document.

3. Working Document

The Working Document plays an important role in the process of synodal discernment. It brings together the fruits of the consultation, presents them for prayerful reflection, and provides a framework for the Synod Assembly to listen together for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and discern the path forward for our Archdiocese.

The first draft of the Working Document has now been received. Once finalised, it will be made available for broader review and feedback.

The Working Document is organised around the three consultation themes, reflecting complementary movements at the heart of Christian life:

- **Listening to God:** Young Discipleship asks, *Who are we becoming as God's pilgrim people?* It focuses on helping young people encounter Christ, grow as disciples and discover their place in the life and mission of the Church.
- **Growing Together:** Formation and Participation asks, *How do we grow as the Body of Christ?* It explores lifelong formation, Eucharistic renewal, participation in community, and the develoment of the gifts and charisms of all the baptised.
- **Sent into the World:** Missionary Leadership asks, *How do we live and act in the Spirit?* It considers how the Church can exercise leadership, stewardship and shared responsibility in service of God's mission.

Together, these themes invite us to reflect on how we listen to God, grow in communion and respond faithfully to the call to mission.

4. Working Document Writers

We are sincerely grateful to the writers who have generously contributed their expertise, insight and time to the preparation of the working Document. Their collective experience across education, theology, discipleship and mission has been invaluable to this process.

Young Discipleship

- **Emma Bakker** is the Discipleship Coordinator for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, leading teams across youth, young adult, university, marriage and family ministries.
- **James O'Brien** is a Religious Education Curriculum Writer (Secondary) within Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools and a member of the Christian Life Community. He brings extensive experience in education, faith formation and Ignatian spirituality.
- **Professor Richard Rymarz** is Professor of Education at the University of Notre Dame Australia and Manager of the KWL Religious Education Resources Project withing the Archdiocese. He has had a distinguished career in Catholic education spanning several decades.

Formation Participation

- **Christian Bergmann** is a writer, a graduate of Campion College and a member of the Catholic Mission and Identity team at Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools.
- **Rev Dr Kevin Lenehan,** a priest of the Diocese of Ballarat, is Master and Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Catholic Theological College. His teaching and research encompass sacramental theology, religious education and formation for mission.
- **Josephine Plazzer** is a Discipleship Specialist for university ministry. Having undertaken formation in Rome, she brings extensive experience in evangelisation, campus ministry and spiritual formation.

Missionary Leadership

- **Amerall Blom** is a Mission Partner within the Catholic Mission and Identity team at Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools. She brings extensive experience in educational leadership, formation and mission renewal.
- **Associate Professor Joel Hodge** is National Head of the School of Theology at Australian Catholic University and President of the Australian Catholic Theological Association. His scholarship focuses on religion, violence, modernity and Christian responses to conflict.

We thank each of these contributors for their commitment to supporting the Synod and helping shape the conversations that will guide its work.

5. Synod Directory

The Synod Directory is attached for your reference and is also available online. The Directory provides the principal framework for the preparation and celebration of the Melbourne Synod. It outlines the nature and purpose of a diocesan synod, its canonical foundations, governance structures, membership, consultation and formation processes, and the arrangements governing the Synod's work.

Detailed procedural norms for the formal sessions of the Synod are contained in the *Modus procedendi* (Appendix 6) of the Synod Directory.

We encourage you to familiarise yourselves with the Directory as we prepare for the ynod Gathering in December.

6. Synod Members

I extend my sincere thanks to all those who have assisted with the nomination process for Synod membership.

Over the past few days, Synod Members have received invitations from the Archbishop to participate in the Melbourne Synod. We now look forward to gethering with them for our first formation event on Saturday, 31 October. This retreat-style morning will be led by Br Ian Cribb SJ and will provide an opportunity for prayer, reflection and formation as Members prepare for the Synod Assembly.

Together, members will deepen their understanding of synodality, engage in *Conversation in the Spirit*, and discern how the Holy Spirit is calling them to participate in this important moment in the life of our Archdiocese.

We ask you to continue supporting the Members through your prayers as they prepare for this responsibility.

7. Prayer for the Synod

Every session of the Second Vatican Council began with the prayer *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus (We Stand Before You, Holy Spirit)*. For centuries, this prayer has been used at councils, synods and other gatherings of the Church. It is traditionally attributed to Saint Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636).

As we continue preparing for our Synod Gathering, we are invited to make this prayer our own, asking the Holy Spirit to guide our conversations, strengthen our unity and lead us in discerning God's will for our Archdiocese.

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.
Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.
All this we ask of You, who are at work in everyplace and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.

Thank you for your continued prayers, support and commitment as we prepare for the Synod Gathering, to be held from Friday, 4 December, to Sunday, 6 December.

I encourage you to continue inviting your parish communities to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout this important journey for our Archdiocese. May we approach the Synod with open hearts, a willingness to listen to one another, and a shared desire to discern faithfully where the Lord is leading us.

With gratitude to you all. Yours sincerely in Christ, *Bishop Martin Ashe* Synod Commission Chair

IDF conduct in Gaza - The Tablet

https://reader.exacteditions.com/issues/158730/page/2

History, inevitably, will judge Israel through the lens of Gaza. The large-scale loss of life and destruction of buildings, coupled with the callous ill-treatment of a civilian population of around two million, is a stain on the conscience of Israel and its citizens, who - with notable exceptions - supported it. Now there is a new lens through which to view this horrific episode, which further magnifies the image. It is the explosive documentary film *NAZA*, which is causing an international sensation for the way it reveals some of the tecnological methodology behind the military operation. Yet the profound moral questions it raises are not unique to events in Gaza. There have been other stained consciences in the world.

The basic allegation against the Israeli military is that it employed software, including artificial intelligence, to authorise attacks on suspected Hamas operatives knowing they would also kill civilians, including children. The principle of proportionality is at the heart of international law. It uses the moral theory of "double effect", which says, that an action may be morally and legally justified even if its foreseeable but unintended consequences are harmful, if the good end to be gained by that action is proportionate to that bad consequence. Thus the police may shoot at a terrorist about to set off a bomb, even if there is a high risk of hitting innocent civilians nearby. But how certain do they need to be that their suspect is a terrorist? How certain does the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) have to be that an individual Palestinian is a member of Hamas? Based purely on phone records? Beyond reasonable doubt, or justt suspected?

The IDF, in a detailed 4,000-word rebuttal of *NAZA*, denies that it uses AI algorithms to decide which suspected Hamas members to attack - and this usually meant an air strike on the building the alleed Hamas member was in at the time. The anonymous military and intelligence sources interviewed by the film-makers claim that a ratio of one Hamas member killed to 20 civilian deaths is acceptable, and on occasion the ratio has been 200 or even 500 if the target was of "high value". The IDF denies that this ever happens, but implies there is a lower, figure, without saying what it is. It insists no such decisions are ever made purely by computer. There is always human judgement at the end of the chain of command, and human judgement is always involved applying the principle of proportionality under international law. Contrary to the documentary, it claims that priority is given to avoiding civilian deaths.

Maybe the IDF account is more about what ought to have happened than what actually did, but even at face value it raises more questions than it answers. It says, understandably, that the campaign against Hamas in Gaza has to be seen in the light of the 7 October atrocity, when more than 1,000 innocent young Israelis were massacred and many more taken as hostages. But if that is the moral framework in which the principle of proportionality operates, then every Hamas member is part of a threat to the very existence of Israel and to the lives of all its citizens. How can Palestinian civilian deaths be weighed proportionately on such a scale? It is impossible to answer.

This is a not a new question, and the British in particular need to be aware that it has awkward historical precedents. When fighting for its survival against Nazi Germany in the Second world War, nothing was off the table for the RAF, including the systematic destruction of German cities one by one, regardless of the huge civilian casualties that resulted If the common wartime assumption on the British street was that "the only good German is a dead one", is it surprising if most ordinary Israelis take a similar view of Palestinians in Gaza? Is it then surprising if that infects Israeli military doctrine? That would be deplorable and reprehensible, certainly, but also entirely credible.

Parishioner Morning Tea 9:30am at St Francis Xavier,Montmorency

Tuesday 27th October

The Year Four students from SFX have been learning about the important people of the Church and how they have helped shape our Church throughout history. Our students have also explored the important role the parishioners play in our parish, through their prayers, volunteering, celebrations and support for others.

Our students recognised that they too can contribute to our Church by helping others, showing kindness, sharing their faith and being part of the community. As a thank you to the parishioners in our SX parish, our Year Four students will deliver some morning tea gift bags to parishioners at the parish mass on Tuesday 27th October, 9:30am in the SFX Church.

We thank our parishioners for all that they do for our parish! Your time, care and commitment to your faith helps our students to understand what it means to follow Jesus and live out His message.

Megan Bird (Faith Leader) & *Daniela Overton* & *Bridgeen Bourke* (Year Four Teachers)

Children's Liturgy

Fill in the missing words to complete the story.

love
second
God
answered
yourself
teacher
heart
first
test
commandment

An expert in the Jewish law tried to _ _ _ _ Jesus. He asked,
"_ _ _ _ _ _ _ , what is the most important _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ? "



Jesus _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : "Love the Lord your _ _ _ with all your _ _ _ _ _ , soul and mind." This is the _ _ _ _ _ and most important commandment. The _ _ _ _ _ _ is like it : " _ _ _ _ your neighbor as much as you love _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ".





Prayers of the Faithful for 25th October 2026 - Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leader: We offer our prayers to you, loving and compassionate Lord.

"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind." May we open our hearts to be aware of God's presence, and pause to listen to His message.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself." May we be always aware of the enormous privilege of home and country. May we treasure and care for these gifts, and may we exteend warmth, welcome and assistance to all seeking refuge and safety in our land.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

"The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." We pray to keep this in mind constantly - love, generosity, and empathy with our neighbours are the foundation of our faith.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

Jesus led a life of justice and compassion. May we live His example daily in our considertion and treatment of others, and may we be advocates for justice in our society. We pray that Jesus' spirit of justice may influence world leaders, as they seek solutions for global conflicts.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

The Lord provides strength and refuge. we pray for the sick, their families and carers. May they receive strength and comfort in the knowledge of the Lord's presence.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

For those who have died recently, and for those whose anniversaires occur around this time, including *Salvatore Cantone*, *Anne Haslam*, *Petronella Kandelaars*, *Frank Salmic Snr*, *Ivan Skender & Bill Tapley*: we pray that they rest peacefully in the love of the Lord.
Let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

Leader: The Lord hears and is compassionate. May we feel that listening presence as a constant in our lives. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All: ***Amen***

Melbourne Synod 2026

What is the link between Vatican II and Synodality?

2. Renewal of Collegiality

A major achievement of Vatican II was its teaching on episcopal collegiality - that bishops share responsibility for the universal Church together*, always with and under the Pope.*

Synodal link:

- *Collegiality among bishops animates of synodal processes.*
- *In 1965, Paul VI created the* Synod of Bishops *specifically to enact this Vatican II insight.*



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Melbourne Catholic Digest

Speaking up for our common humanity

Raising our voices

In the face of rapid, often destabilising social and technological change, we are called to raise our voices in defence of our humanity - a condition that embraces an extraordinarily rich array of experiences, traditions and cultures while uniting us in our common dignity as creatures made in the image of God.



In an opinion piece published today in the *Herald Sun*, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli asks: who will stand for the least among us? Pointing to the horror felt by many at a recent failed execution in the United States, he contends that 'the termination of the unborn at one end of life and the terminally ill at the other end is just as brutal and should be just as shocking'. As we approach the upcoming state election, he prays that our elected leaders 'will govern wisely and prudently, upholding the good of all, especially the least among us'.
https://melbournecatholic.org/news/who-will-stand-for-the-least-among-us



On Sunday, at the annual Mass of All Nations, the cultural diversity of Melbourne's Catholic migrant communities was on vibrant , joyful display as those gathered at St Patrick's Cathedral were reminded that no matter where we have come from, we find 'our true homeland' together in God's kingdom.
https://melbournecatholic.org/news/homeward-bound-migrant-communities-walk-and-pray-together-at-mass-for-all-nations



Last Friday, as the Kinghts of the Southern Cross once again hosted the annual Archbishop's Dinner to raise funds for the education of seminarians, guest speaker and Walkley Award-winning journalist Peta Credlin AO called on her audience to speak up in defence of Catholic values and human dignity. 'We cannot just leave it to our clergy to raise their voices on issues that belong to all of us as members of a decent society,' she said. 'How we treat our most vulnerable is the great test of our humanity.'
https://melbournecatholic.org/news/peta-credlin-ao-calls-on-crowd-do-whats-right-not-whats-easy

https://melbournecatholic.org/news