



THE SAVING WORD

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

15 FEBRUARY 2026

FIRST READING

Sir 15:15-20

A reading from the book of Sirach

He never commanded anyone to be godless.

If you wish, you can keep the commandments,
to behave faithfully is within your power.
He has set fire and water before you;
put out your hand to whichever you prefer.
Man has life and death before him;
whichever a man likes better will be given him.
For vast is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is almighty and all-seeing.
His eyes are on those who fear him,
he notes every action of man.
He never commanded anyone to be godless,
he has given no one permission to sin.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM Ps 118:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34. R. v. 1

R. Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

1. They are happy whose life is blameless, /
who follow God's law! / They are happy those
who do his will, / seeking him with all their
hearts. **R.**

2. You have laid down your precepts / to be
obeyed with care. / May my footsteps be firm /
to obey your statutes. **R.**

3. Bless your servant and I shall live / and
obey your word. / Open my eyes that I may
consider / the wonders of your law. **R.**

4. Teach me the demands of your statutes /
and I will keep them to the end. / Train me
to observe your law, / to keep it with my
heart. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Cor 2:6-10

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

God in his wisdom predestined our glory before the ages began.

We have a wisdom to offer those who have reached maturity: not a philosophy of our age,



it is true, still less of the masters of our age, which are coming to their end. The hidden wisdom of God which we teach in our mysteries is the wisdom that God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began. It is a wisdom that none of the masters of this age have ever known, or they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory; we teach what scripture calls: the things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things beyond the mind of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him.

These are the very things that God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God.

■ The word of the Lord.



The Parish of St Joseph's, Elsternwick & Holy Cross, Caulfield South
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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 A Powell 10:30am E Galero

Counters: No Counting

Upcoming Week's Liturgical Calendar

Wed 18 Feb: Ash Wednesday

Sun 22 Feb: 1st Sunday of Lent

Thanksgiving



Old Palm Leaves

The Palm leaves and other leaves which were used on last year's Palm Sunday, could be brought back to church for preparing the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

You may leave them in the basket provided in the church.

Ash Wednesday 18 February

St Anthony's Church:

9:15am Mass and 6:40pm Novena followed by 7pm Mass.

St Joseph's Church: 10:00am Mass

Holy Cross Church: 7:00pm Mass

Stations of the Cross in Lent after Mass

Holy Cross on Thursdays after 10:00am Mass.

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

St Anthony's on Fridays after 9:15am & 7:00pm Masses.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (cf. Ps 30:3-4)

Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me.
For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me,
for the sake of your name.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (Jn 3:16)

God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but have eternal life.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill*: -

**Names are published for a month, unless further requested.*

Recently Deceased: -

Death Anniversary: -

Morning Retreat with Mary

Led by Fr Peter Ferwerda at St Anthony's, Glen Huntly on Monday 23 February.

Holy Mass at 9:15am. Confession, Cenacle Rosary, Reflection and Eucharistic Adoration followed by refreshments (tea and coffee).

For more information, email or ring the Parish Office. All welcome!



Lenten Eucharistic Adoration Challenge



31 days of Eucharistic Adoration by visiting any Church where there is Blessed Sacrament Exposition or an Adoration Chapel. The Challenge starts on Ash Wednesday, 18th February and ends on Friday, 20th March 2026.

Suggested locations:

1. Perpetual Adoration Chapel at St Joseph's, Elsternwick.
2. St Francis Church, Melbourne CBD.

"Introduction to Visits" on 17th Feb via Zoom. For more info, email angelica.barrios.au@gmail.com or the Parish Office. Pamphlets available in the Church foyer.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

The Adoration Chapel was built in 2018 to commemorate the Centenary Celebration of St Joseph's Church. The Chapel can be accessed 24/7 with a security tag. Contact the Parish Office to apply. A refundable deposit of \$100 will be required upon application.



Ash Wednesday



FOR YOU ARE DUST,
AND TO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN.
GENESIS 3:19

HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR



Lenten Scripture Reflection

Starting on Monday 23 February, and every Monday thereafter, during Lent from 7-8pm at St Anthony's Church. All welcome!

LENT 2026

109. The Lenten season has a twofold character:

- 1) it recalls baptism or prepares for it;
- 2) it stresses a penitential spirit.

By these means especially, Lent readies the faithful for celebrating the paschal mystery after a period of closer attention to the Word of God, and more ardent prayer. In the liturgy itself and in the liturgy-centred instructions, these baptismal and penitential themes should be more pronounced. Hence:

- a) Wider use is to be made of baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgy.
- b) The same approach holds for the penitential elements.

110. During Lent, penance should not be only internal and individual but also external and social.

In any event, let the paschal fast be kept sacred. It should be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be visited on uplifted and responsive spirits.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican II

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of Fasting and Abstinence from meat.

On all other Fridays, except solemnities, the law of the common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

- (a) Prayer - for example, Mass attendance; family prayer; a visit to a church or chapel; reading the Bible; making the Stations of the Cross; praying the Rosary; or in other ways.
- (b) Self-Denial - for example, not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with the family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one's own country or elsewhere; or in other ways. Project Compassion is a major means of expressing our self-denial in Australia.
- (c) Helping Others - for example, special attention to someone who is poor, sick, elderly, lonely or over-burdened; or in other ways.

- All who have completed their eighteenth year and have not yet begun their sixtieth year are bound to fast. All who have completed their fourteenth year are bound to abstain (Canon 1252).

- The Season of Lent is a time of penance. During this season the faithful are exhorted to devote themselves in a special manner to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, and to deny themselves.

- Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled between Ash Wednesday, 14 February 2024 and Trinity Sunday, 26 May 2024 unless for a good reason it is fulfilled at another time during the year.

- The wonderful gift of the Lord's merciful love is offered in a special way in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lent is a most appropriate time to receive this Sacrament.

All the faithful who have reached the age of discretion are bound to confess their grave sins at least once a year.

FUNERALS – On Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday all Masses for the Dead, including Funeral Masses, **are forbidden**. Funerals on these days are celebrated with the Liturgy of the Word and without the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

WEDDINGS - Weddings are discouraged during the Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday. Should a couple be particularly insistent on a wedding for one of these days, then no decorations (including flowers), no music nor Nuptial Mass will be permitted.

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus,

No one likes to be commanded to do this or to do that; and not to do this and not to do that. Everyone wants to be free to do or not to do anything as and when one pleases. That is why we have the words of request 'please', 'kindly' etc. In other words we do not like to be dictated. We want to do things in our own freedom and personal choice.

In today's Gospel Jesus reminded us of the Ten Commandments. They are not requests but "Commandments". The words 'please', 'kindly', etc. are not in these Commandments; rather we find in them the words 'you shall' and 'you shall not'. As a result, very many people are not happy with these Commandments.

How important are the Ten Commandments to our lives? They are as important as the legs are to a chair or to a table. If the Commandments of God can be compared to a leg of a chair, then what are the other three legs? The four legs can be compared to 1) The Creed we proclaim 2) The Sacraments we celebrate 3) The Devotions & the Prayers we pray 4) The Commandments we practice. All four legs are equally important.

Even so, there are people who say that the Ten Commandments are outdated; they are too old to be valid anymore; or that the Commandments are from the Old Testament times, therefore not applicable to the New Testament times etc. But we know that, the Ten Commandments together with the whole Word of God is true for ever. They can never be outdated or be invalid.

Again, we the humans, are not the ones to decide as to what is right and what is wrong. The creator God himself has decided the right and the wrong. It is good to know also that these Commandments of God do not take away our freedom. In fact, they guide our freedom in the right direction. True freedom is "to be able to do the right and to avoid the evil".

Again, the Ten Commandments are expressions of God's Love for us. Because he loves us, he has given us these Commandments. And because the Commandments are born out of God's love for us, let us practice the commandments out of our love for God. The more we love God, the more we love to follow his Commandments, and love serve one another.

Fr Leenus.

Q: Why didn't Noah go fishing?

A: He only had two worms.

Arguing with your partner is like trying to read the "Terms of Use" on the internet.

Eventually, you just give up and say, "I Agree."



Let us keep in our thoughts and prayers, our RCIA Candidates and Catechumens as they proceed to the Rite of Election at the Cathedral on Sunday, 22nd February 2026.

Let's Go Bowling

All welcome to come along on Sunday 22nd February. Leave from St Anthony's Church at 1:10pm or meet at Zone Bowling, 1866 Princes Highway Service Road, Clayton. We are booking some lanes - first game is at 1:45pm.

Project Compassion

Project Compassion Boxes are now available in the church foyers. Please take one as well as for anyone who is unable to come to church.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Mt 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven
and earth;

you have revealed to little ones the
mysteries of the kingdom.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 5:20-22, 27-28, 33-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Such was said to your ancestors; but I say to you.

Jesus said to his disciples: I tell you, if your
virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes
and Pharisees, you will never get into the
kingdom of heaven.

‘You have learnt how it was said to our
ancestors; You must not kill; and if anyone does
kill he must answer for it before the court. But
I say this to you: anyone who is angry with his
brother will answer for it before the court;

‘You have learnt how it was said: You must
not commit adultery. But I say to you: if a
man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already
committed adultery with her in his heart.

‘Again, you have learnt how it was said to our
ancestors: You must not break your oath, but
must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say
this to you: do not swear at all. All you need say
is “Yes” if you mean yes, “No” if you mean no;
anything more than this comes from the evil
one.’

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Longer form 5:17-37

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Breaking Open the Word

HONOURING THE TORAH

As we continue to hear Jesus’ teaching in
Matthew’s ‘Sermon on the Mount’, we now
move into a very Jewish-oriented section.
Matthew’s audience were Jewish followers
of Jesus. They were very familiar with the
teachings of the Old Testament, from the
Torah (the ‘Law’) and the Prophets. Jesus now
reflects on these teachings stressing that he has
come, not to abolish them, but to ‘complete
them’. In other words, Matthew is not
rejecting the Jewish teaching heritage of the
audience but deepening it. This preservation
and honouring of the Torah is central in Jesus’
teaching.

In fact, the one who keeps and teaches others
the injunctions of the Torah will be regarded as
‘great’ in God’s Kingdom. Matthew moves to
explicate some of the key moral injunctions of
the Torah. Each begins with the same formula:
‘You have learnt how it was said to our
ancestors...’ Then follows Jesus’ interpretation
of the Torah for Matthew’s Jewish listeners.
It is important to note how this teaching is
presented. The usual translation has ‘...But I
say to you...’ This is not what the Greek text
has. There is no contrast, no ‘but’, between
what the ancients said and what Jesus teaches.
There is no contrast between the old (the
Torah) and the new (Jesus’ teaching), and no
rejection of Judaism or its ancient wisdom
summed up on the Torah.

Jesus deepens the meaning behind these
different aspects of Jewish law concerning
murder, adultery and oath-breaking, getting
to the heart of each. Undergirding each is
the invitation to integrity of relationships.
This, too, is the invitation to us, to live with
a wholeness of being to others, God and the
world.

Fr Michael Trainor