

FIRST READING

*A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus
Sirach 27:30-28:7*
Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

The Word of the Lord.

*R/. The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.*

SECOND READING

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Romans 14:7-9*

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The Word of the Lord.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL READING

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew 18:21-35**
Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times. 'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me", he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said. "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH
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**24th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Yr A
16th /17th September 2023
SOCIAL SERVICES SUNDAY**

*Dear Jesus,
Please help us to break the bonds
of our refusal to forgive!
Let us use Your strength,
to remove our shackles.
Teach us Lord, how to forgive others
in the same way You forgive us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen*



FOCUS ON THE WORD This gospel passage follows directly from last week's passage. It concludes the whole of Matthew Chapter 18 that deals with sin, forgiveness and reconciliation. Peter's question to Jesus and suggested answer is a reflection of the view that there is a limit to the number of times we should forgive someone. The story of the unforgiving servant is a familiar one **of forgiveness and mercy being shown but not passed on.** The sting in the tail of this parable is Jesus' final warning that, **'So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.'** This is an unsettling statement, as we believe God's forgiveness to be without measure and without end. Jesus warns that unless we seek to imitate God's forgiveness and forgive others 'from our heart' (with compassion) then we are not going to recognise the forgiveness of God and will cut ourselves off from it. Seven is a significant number in scripture and implies a 'perfect' amount. Peter probably thought that he was being pretty generous. The religious law of his time required people to forgive three times, so by suggesting seven times, Peter would have thought that he was really going the extra mile. Even though by his use of seven, Peter is suggesting that he should forgive someone many, many times, **Jesus quickly corrects Peter and says not seven, but seventy-seven times (or seventy times seven).** Jesus plays on the use of the number seven and multiplies it to indicate that one should forgive as many times as is required – without keeping count; without keeping score.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: The Parish of St John the Baptist, and the Archdiocese of Melbourne are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and vulnerable people in our community. May our message be that child protection and the dignity of every person is the responsibility of every adult. You can find out more about the church's work in this area at: www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention

FEAST DAY Tue 19th Sept St Januarius,
Wed 20th Sept Sts Andrew Kim Tae-gon, & Paul Chong Ha-sang & companions.
Thurs 21st Sept St Matthew Sat 23rd Sept St Pius of Pietrelcina

*I have come that you may have life and have it to the full
(John 10:10)*

PARISH PRIEST:
Fr Thomas Kuruvila 9758 1029
Email: thomas@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

DEACON:
Rev. Peter Stringfellow 9758 1029
Email: Peter.Stringfellow@cam.org.au

FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR
Mary Makarucha 9758 1029
Tuesdays and Wednesdays. 10.00am -2.00pm
Email: marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

PARISH OFFICE: 9758 1029
Monday 9.45am – 3.45pm
Tuesday to Friday 9.00am -3.00pm
Secretaries: Charmaine Premaratne & Maree Wilson
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SCHOOLS:
St John the Baptist 9758 1013
Principal: Kelli Johnston
Email: kjohnston@siferntreegully.catholic.edu.au
St. Joseph's College 9758 2000
Principal: Catherine Livingston
Mater Christi College 9754 6611
Principal: Maria Haggett

MASS TIMES:
Saturday 6:00 pm
Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am
Tuesday 7.00pm
Wed & Thurs 9.15 am
Friday 11.00 am

RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 5.15 pm

GLENGOLLAN VILLAGE MASS 1st Friday 2pm
WILLOWBROOK MASS 3rd Thursday 11am

BAPTISMS: Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.30pm on the 2nd Sunday of the month. 6 weeks' notice required. Please refer to our Guidelines for Infant Baptism on our Parish Website.
Contact the Parish Office on: 9758 1029 or via email at: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

WEDDINGS:
By appointment, 6 months' notice required. Saturdays or weekdays (not Sundays). Contact the Parish Office: on 9758 1029.

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Yr A
16th / 17th September 2023
Social Services Sunday.

PRAYING FOR...

All who have died recently:

Those who we remember at this time:

Faustino Cadavona, Valentina Parente, Margaret Hill, Francis Power, Maria Scardillo, Robyn Elliott, James Foster.

The sick:

Eamon Smith, Fame Pelgrim, Barry Beavis, Elsie Johnson, Peggy Spencer, Alan Alcock, Ann Good, Ben Mc Laey, Don Roberts, Maureen Wilson, Lucy Denzin, Gabby Sundstrom, Kathryn Kircos, Ruby Samtoy, Barbara Kenny, Anne Jayawardena, Lea Hatley, Patricia Quinn, David Merton, Michael Byrne, Bev McNamara, Anthony McNamara, Victoria Lewis, Nicole Moore, Peter Fairhurst, Hans Whitaker, Edward Osborne



ROSARY is recited prior to Morning Weekday Mass on Wed, Thurs, Friday, in the Church. All welcome to join in the recitation.

GROUP ROSARY SESSION FOR PEACE

When: First Saturday of the Month at 10.30 am.
Where: 37 Lane Road, FTG. All are welcome.
Contact: Pauline Barlow on 9758 5106.

FRIENDSHIP GATHERING The group meets informally every **Thursday, at 10am** in the Parish Hall. Please drop in for a cuppa, a chat, or to borrow a book from our library, or perhaps a have a game of cards, All welcome.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP in the Parish Hall from **10.15am – 12.30pm Tuesdays.** discover a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit. All Welcome.

MOTHERS' PRAYER GROUP will have a break over the school holidays, and resume 3rd October, 2023.

ATTENTION PLEASE re Office access. As a result of tree damage, you may have noticed that the access path to the office needs replacement. Over the holidays, work will commence. If access via front is unavailable, please use the rear entry during repairs.

KNOX DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES LAUNCH to coincide with Dementia Action Week, the Knox Dementia Advisory Group is hosting a mini expo and information session to **raise awareness, and highlight the various services and supports available** for people living with dementia and their carers in Knox. **When:** Tues 19th Sept 10.30am-1.30pm **Where?** Knox Community Arts Centre Cm Scoresby Rd & Mountain Hwy Bayswater. **More Info:** Linda Ph 9289 8000

17 September 2023 Catholic Social Services Victoria

Social Services Sunday
A day to reflect and give thanks

Sunday 17th Sept, marks Social Services Sunday. On this day, we give thanks for the dedicated work of thousands of staff and volunteers who stand with, and serve the poor, disadvantaged and marginalised and to reflect on how you might be more involved in work to achieve justice in your own community. Catholic Social Services Victoria (CSSV) 40 member organisations provide critical services. Preliminary findings from a report to be released later this year show that their 8,000 staff, 17,000 volunteers are building a more compassionate society by supporting at least 211,000 people in need.

Fr Paddy Duggan will be joining us on **Saturday 16th September** for the **6pm Mass**, as we acknowledge and **celebrate His 70 years of Ordination to the Priesthood.** He was ordained on 7th June 1953. Fr Paddy has always been a wonderful support to St John's. Please come and join us on this special occasion. A cuppa and time for a chat will follow after Mass.

HELP NEEDED. The Parish/School Hall will be used as a venue for the Referendum Voting on Saturday 14th Oct 2023. We would like to have a **Parish Fund -raising cake stall** on this day. If you are able to help with the baking of cakes, slices etc, or on the day, we would appreciate your support. Please contact the Parish Office this week or see Sue at Mass this weekend, and we will be able to start the preparations. Many thanks... 😊

THE SEASON OF CREATION Week 4 We began the Season of Creation on the 1st September to 4th October) on Friday with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. 'Let Justice and Peace Flow' is this year's theme, inspired by the words of the prophet Amos: 'Let justice flow on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream' (5:24). **It's important not to just read this notice, but to actually use this time to reflect, and really think about how we have become desensitised to happenings around us.** Perhaps, we should have a suggested action to celebrate the Season at home or with friends. Might I suggest, this week's action is to **watch the uplifting documentary film 'The Letter to You on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rps9bs85BII>**. The Letter includes the personal stories and perspectives of four people from Senegal, the Amazon, India, and Hawai'i on our planet's crisis.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S SURVEY WEEKEND. A **sincere thanks** to all children and young adults from our parish who completed and submitted the hard copy survey forms. The parish continues to act on your behalf and welcomes your feedback on: safeguarding. (Your comments are welcomed at any time!) Many of you still have the opportunity to return the hard copies to the back of the church; or the electronic copies to the parish office. We shall prepare a summary of the survey and try to give some feedback.

BAPTISMS Our Congratulations go out to **Mason Fry** child of Damien Fry & Rebecca Crivellaro who is to be Baptised this weekend. The Church of God welcomes you with great joy.

COMBINED CATHOLIC PARISH RAFFLE – 2023
Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation Permit No 10175/23
Raffle Tickets are still available. **Tickets \$2.00ea, or \$20.00 for a book Sale ends** Sun 12th Nov 2023. Please support this fundraiser, see our friendly ticket sellers after Mass. Thank you. 😊

CHILDREN'S LITURGY NEWS Dear Parents the Children's Liturgy will have a break during the school holidays for three weeks from weekend 16/ 17 September to 30Sept/ 1 October. I wish you all a pleasant break with lots of blessings.

Pope appeals to international community to help Libya Caritas agencies are responding to flooding in Libya where at least 5300 lives have been lost and more than 10,000 people are missing, as Pope Francis appealed for the international community to come to the aid of the hard-hit nation. After his general audience at the Vatican on 13th September, the Pope **invited all the faithful to join him in praying** for those who have lost their lives, their families and those who have been displaced in Libya.

EMERGENCY APPEALS
Morocco Earthquake and Libya Floods
www.caritas.org.au

CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S EMERGENCY APPEALS – Morocco / Libya Caritas Australia needs your support to respond to the devastating earthquake in Morocco and floods in Libya. Thousands of people have died and others have been injured. Communities need shelter, food, water and medical assistance. Please support Caritas Australia's emergency appeals. **Donate at: www.caritas.org.au or call 1800 024 413**

ROSTERS: Mon 18th Sep to Sun 24th Sept 2023	
Flowers	Marg H & Ange C
Linen	Sue N
Welcomers	6pm Lia U & Kathryn C 9am Rosa L & Florence J 11am: Shamindri & Chamal A
Lectors	6pm Tess D 9am: Peter F 11am: Bonnie H
Counters	Tony B, Steph H, Peter F, Rosina L
Gardening	Theresa N & Help needed please