

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the second book of Chronicles*  
*2 Chon 36:14-16, 19-23*

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R/ Let my tongue be silenced, if  
ever I forget you!*

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the  
Ephesians*  
*Eph 2:4-10*

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus. This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*  
*God loved the world so much,*  
*he gave us his only Son,*  
*that all who believe in him might*  
*have eternal life.*  
*Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*

## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
John*  
*3:14-21*

Jesus said to Nicodemus:  
'The Son of Man must be lifted up  
as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,  
so that everyone who believes may have eternal  
life in him.  
Yes, God loved the world so much  
that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not be  
lost but may have eternal life.  
For God sent his Son into the world not to  
condemn the world, but so that through him the  
world might be saved.  
No one who believes in him will be condemned;  
but whoever refuses to believe is condemned  
already, because he has refused to believe  
in the name of God's only Son. On these  
grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the  
light has come into the world men have shown  
they prefer darkness to the light because their  
deeds were evil.  
And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates  
the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should  
be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth  
comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly  
seen that what he does is done in God.'

*The Word of the Lord.*



**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**  
**Knox Deanery**  
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**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – Yr B**  
**9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2024**  
**Year of Prayer.**

*O God, rich in mercy,  
You so loved the world  
You sent Your only Son for our deliverance.  
Raise us up with Christ  
and make us rich in good works,  
that we may walk as children of light  
toward the paschal feast of heaven.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



**FOCUS ON THE WORD** To fully understand this week's gospel passage, it is important to take the first reading into consideration as well. The account from 2 Chronicles describes the way in which the **people began to neglect their relationship with God**. Despite prophets and messengers being sent to them, they turned their backs on God. At about this time the Israelites were conquered, the Temple in Jerusalem destroyed, and the survivors taken into exile in Babylon. For many, this was seen as a punishment from God because of their neglectful and selfish behaviour. But the **reading demonstrates God's infinite patience with humankind. God gives the people another chance** and calls on them to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. God is willing to wipe the slate clean and start afresh. It is in this context that we must understand the gospel passage. **In yet another attempt to demonstrate love and forgiveness, God's only Son – the Word made Flesh – is sent into the world to lead the people from darkness to light**. Despite the many, many attempts by God to demonstrate love and foster a relationship with humankind, the people have repeatedly rejected the relationship with God and preferred to live a life of selfishness and darkness. Yet we see through both of these readings **the unquenchable nature of God who keeps giving humankind one more chance**.

Q. In what ways do we sometimes choose actions that are 'of the darkness'? © Greg Sunter

The 4th Sunday of Lent is also called LAETARE SUNDAY. We are about halfway through Lent. On this day, we consider how Jesus heals us and saves us from our sin. Laetare Sunday has traditionally been viewed as a day of celebration, on which the austerity of Lent is briefly lessened; the organ is played, flowers are allowed on the altar, and the purple vestments of Lent, signifying penance, are set aside and, as on **Gaudete Sunday in Advent**, rose ones are used instead.

**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](http://www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention)

**FEAST DAYS** Wed 13<sup>th</sup> March Anniversary Election of Pope Francis 2013  
**Lenten Program - Living in Harmony - Monday Nights in the Parish Hall - 7.15pm - All welcome.**

*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  
Accountant: Bernard Negline  
Email: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au  
**PPG CHAIR** Carolyn Sombekke  
Email: csombekkesjb@gmail.com

**SCHOOLS:**  
**St John the Baptist** 9758 1013  
Principal: Kelli Johnston  
Email: kjohnston@sjferntreegully.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** 1<sup>st</sup> Friday 2pm  
**WILLOWBROOK MASS** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 11am

**BAPTISMS:** Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)**

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

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – Yr B  
9<sup>th</sup> / 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - Year of Prayer

**PRAYING FOR...**

*All who have died recently:*

Louise Bowler, John Donnelly (UK)

*Those who we remember at this time:*

Tom Donegan, Anita Rech, Silvana Parolin, Lorraine Moore, Mary Brimelow, Peter Berthelot, Molly Brewin, Peter Kelly Patricia Alexander.

**The sick:** Celia Ellis, Eamon Smith, Fame Pelgrim, Elsie Johnson, Peggy Spencer, 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.

**THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step Catholic devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. At each station, the individual recalls and meditates on a specific event from Christ's last day. Specific prayers are recited, then the individual moves to the next station until all 14 are complete. **We will be having the Stations of the Cross on Friday at 10.30 am during lent** followed by mass at 11.00 am. All are invited to join.

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP** Welcoming all students who are in Year 6 to Year 9 (11-15 years old) to our final Youth Group session of Term 1! Please join us at the St Parish Hall for fun activities and dinner! Hoping to see you all there and bring a friend along with you. If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch via email. Where: Parish Hall, St John the Baptist Parish. 19 Forest Rd, Ferntree Gully VIC 3156 When: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024; 5:30-7:30 PM Contact: [E: sjtbvouth@gmail.com](mailto:sjtbvouth@gmail.com) Instagram: @sjtb.youth

**MOTHERS PARYERS** Take heart! Jesus urges us to bring our burdens/problems to him. Join us to pray, **Tues 9am-10am, in the Parish Office. All welcome.**

**ST. JOHN'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** will meet each Tuesday at 10.15 am- 12.15pm in the parish hall. Come and join us - Stay for a shared lunch. Tineke Ph 0478620226, or Maree 9758 1029

**FRIENDSHIP GATHERING** meet in the Parish Hall on Thurs between 10.15 am and 12.30pm drop in for a chat over a cuppa, join a card game, knit or just sit for a while. Come along and join us.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Matthew Sirianni-Duffy & Carley Payne** who were Married on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March.



**BAPTISMS** – We offer our congratulations to **Jordan & Bianca Carmichael** children of **David & Jennifer**, who are to be baptised this weekend: The Church of God welcomes you with great joy.

**WALK WITH MARY** 2024 Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March, St Patrick's Cathedral. 2pm Prayers, Holy Mass, City Street Procession. **Ph Joy Hunt 95092207** or for more info go to: [www.thecombinedsocietiesofmary.com](http://www.thecombinedsocietiesofmary.com)

**PROJECT COMPASSION** The word 'caritas' means love. The work of Caritas Australia is a heartfelt response to the needs of the world, one that gives expression to our shared hope. Caritas always works in partnership with others. [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or ph: 1800 024 413. Please give generously.

**CELEBRATING 170years of St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia 1854-2024** – Fr Gerald Ward arrived in Melbourne in 1850 from England where he was familiar with the work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. After serving a number of Parishes, he was appointed Parish Priest of St Francis's in the city. There he established the first conference in Australia, on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1854. He became our first official 'conference president' and set about addressing problems, such as the devastatingly high numbers of homeless and deserted children roaming the streets- the direct result of parents leaving for the Gold Rush fields, such as Ballarat and Bendigo. In 1855 Fr Ward became responsible for five orphaned children and, after discussions with the government, he witnessed the laying of the foundation stone for the SVDP Orphanage in Sth Melbourne, where the first children were accepted in 1857. This was considered the first "Special work" of the Society in Australia. Fr Ward tragically died in 1858, less than 10yrs of arriving in Australia, and was widely known as "one in whom many a widow and orphan had found a good friend". Fr Ward's enduring legacy is the continuation of his early work through the Society's 242 conferences, 3,632 members, 6,434 volunteers and 113 Vinnies Shops across Victoria. A huge congratulations to the SVDP, for reaching this 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.



**MERCY MELBOURNE** [mercymelbourne.org](http://mercymelbourne.org) **St John the Baptist Parish will be taking part in 'Mercy Melbourne'.** On **Tuesday 19 March (6-7pm)**. Mercy Melbourne is an initiative that invites parishes to **open their doors in welcome for a special evening of prayer and Confessions.** The purpose of this focused event is to highlight the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and make it as easy as possible for all Catholics to experience the grace of the Sacrament.

**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.

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST SCHOOL OPEN DAYS** 14<sup>th</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> May, 9am-5pm. ENROL NOW FOR 2025. Please invite any friends, family or neighbours who have a child eligible to start school in 2025. Please contact with the School office to complete an enrolment form ASAP on PH: 9758 1013

**NO CHILDRENS LITURGY THIS WEEKEND,** owing to the Labour Day Public Holiday.

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE** on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March the Parish Office will be closed owing to the Labour Day Public Holiday.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY FR THOMAS!! every blessing from all the Parishioners for the 13<sup>th</sup> of March! Thank you for all you do for us!**

**FUNERAL MASS** –for the late **Louise Bowler** will be celebrated here at St John's Church on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00am.

**LENTEN RETREAT BY FR ROGAN GEORGE VC**  
Vincian retreats are formed to help the people of God to grow in their faith as to receive the salvation given by Jesus. Our preaching's and teachings are based on the Word of God and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Fr Rogan will speak at Masses **here on the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> March, and run our retreat on 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> March. Mon 18<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Rosary 7pm Mass followed by Talk and Adoration Tues 19<sup>th</sup> 6pm-7pm Reconciliation, 7pm Mass, Followed by Talk, Adoration**

**VATICAN YEAR OF PRAYER RESOURCE** The Vatican has published an English translation of a new resource guide to help Catholics to intensify their prayer lives in preparation for the celebration of the Church's Jubilee in 2025. You can download a copy at: [ENG\\_Sulla\\_preghiera-A5-76P-SITO.pdf](http://ENG_Sulla_preghiera-A5-76P-SITO.pdf) ([tubilaum2025.va](http://tubilaum2025.va))

**MUSICIANS/SINGERS URGENTLY NEEDED TO HELP WITH HOLY WEEK LITURGIES**  
**We need YOU!** Please, join us in the singing or accompanying at Mass, as we prepare for the upcoming Holy Week/ Easter Services. All ages welcome. **Please contact Maree in the Parish office, and record your name on the Sign-up sheets on the glass wall.**

<b>ROSTERS: Mon 11<sup>th</sup> March to Sun 17<sup>th</sup> Mar 2024</b>	
Flowers	No flowers during Lent
Linen	Sue N
Welcomers	6pm Lia U & Kathryn C 9am Rosa L & Florence J 11am Shamindri & Chamal A
Lectors	6pm: Tess D 9am Gordon V 11am: Shami A
Counters	George & Genevieve, Bindu M
Gardening	Carlo E & Help needed.