

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah 7:10-14*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign.

It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R.) Let the Lord enter;  
he is king of glory.*

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples. It is he who set it on the seas; on the waters he made it firm. *(R.)*

2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things. *(R.)*

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord and reward from the God who saves him. Such are the men who seek him, seek the face of the God of Jacob. *(R.)*

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 1:1-7*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from

the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*A virgin will give birth to a son;  
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.*

*Alleluia!*

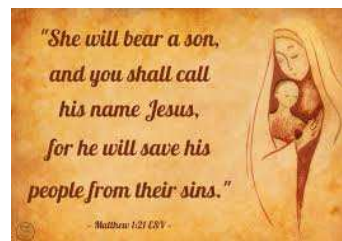
## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 11:18-24*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

*The Gospel of the Lord*



**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**  
**Knox Deanery**  
**19 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully, 3156**  
**Phone: 9758 1029**  
**Email: [office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)**  
**Website: [www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au](http://www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au)**



**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent -Year A**  
**20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> December 2025 -Year of Jubilee**

*Gracious God,  
We give thanks for the gift of Your Son,  
Immanuel: God with us.  
We turn our gaze to the manger,  
where love took the form of a child.  
Let love be the root of all our actions, and  
May we make room for Christ in our hearts.  
Come, Lord Jesus!*

The Fourth Week of Advent



**FOCUS on YEAR OF JUBILEE** Jubilee years happen every 25 years and are times of reconciliation and renewal. This year the theme has been "Pilgrims of Hope." - On 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025, the Closing of the Holy Door of the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls in Rome will occur.



**Prayer:** Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

**FOCUS on the WORD** The story of the Virgin Birth is at the heart of our Christmas celebrations. Hence, today's readings focus on the story of the Virgin Birth. Matthew brings Joseph to the forefront, because Jesus becomes part of David's lineage through Joseph (1:1-17). **We need to experience Emmanuel in our lives and change the world:** God who entered our world through Jesus some 2000 years ago is at work in the world. But the question is, if God has come to be present in our lives and our world, then why are there so many lives which are unhappy and beastly? Why are people so hostile, hating each other, and why do so many love-relationships turn sour? Why is there domestic violence? Why is there child abuse? Why is there war in at least a dozen countries of God's good earth at any given time? Why are so many people homeless and hungry, even in rich countries? **The Good News**, the consoling message of Christmas, is that **the child Jesus still waits today to step into our hearts**—your heart and mine—and **to change us and the world around us by the beauty of God's love, kindness, mercy, and compassion.** Let us take some time to let the Christ Child enter our hearts and lives this week, so that He may change our world of miseries with the beauty of that love **Let us be a Christmas gift to others:** The greatest gift we can give to those we love, is to have faith in them, believe in their good dreams, and try to help them realize them. <https://fitonyshomilies.com/>

**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)

*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

**Assistant Priest:**  
Fr Peter Nguyen 9754 2141  
Email: To be confirmed.

**Deacon:** Rev. Peter Stringfellow  
Email: Peter.Stringfellow@cam.org.au

**FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR**  
Mary Makarucha 9758 1029  
Email: marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**PARISH OFFICE:** 9758 1029  
Monday 10.00am – 4.00pm  
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@siferntreegully.catholic.edu.au

**St. Joseph's College** 9758 2000  
Principal: Catherine Livingston

**Mater Christi College** 9754 6611  
Principal: Maria Haggett

**MASS TIMES**  
**Saturday Vigil** Emerald and FTG 6:00 pm  
**Sunday Belgrave 8.30am** FTG 10.30am  
..... **Gembrook 9.00am** and **Monbulk 11.00am**

**Weekday Mass Times**  
**Tuesday** Belgrave 9am FTG 7.00pm  
**Wed** Belgrave 9am FTG 9.15am  
**Thurs** Belgrave 9am FTG 9.15am  
**Friday** Belgrave 9am FTG 11.00 am  
**Saturday** Belgrave 9am Reconciliation Belg 9.45am

**RECONCILIATION:** FTG Saturdays 5.15 pm

**GLENGOLLAN VILLAGE MASS** 1<sup>st</sup> Friday 2pm  
**WILLOWBROOK MASS** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday 11am

**BAPTISMS:** Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.00pm 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**

**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 Advent – Year A  
20<sup>th</sup> /21<sup>st</sup> December, 2025 -Year of Jubilee.

**PRAYING FOR...**

*All who have died recently:*



*Those who we remember at this time:*

Rosa Saracino, Ryan Castricum, Peter South, Filomena Barbatiello, Josie Jordan, Fredrick Bravington.

*The Sick:* Bonnie Hoefler, Ann Jayawardena.

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



**FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY** the First Saturday Rosary Enquiries: Please contact Joan on 040841 1096 All Welcome.

**The CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** Thank you for another wonderful year. We will break now over Christmas, resuming the 1<sup>st</sup> Tues in February 2026.

**FRIENDSHIP GATHERING** Thank you everyone for a fun filled 2025. See you in the New Year, 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY** will now take a break but we will resume in the new year. **6PM MASS MUSIC MINISTRY** children are invited at our **Saturday night Mass** to come sing with the choir.

**PARENTS AND KIDS GROUP** is now on Christmas break, we look forward to seeing you in the new year.

**YOUTH GROUP** will begin in 2026, Meet Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026 in the Parish Community Centre at 12pm -4pm.

**ADVENT STUDY- THE PROMISE** has concluded, many thanks to all involved.

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**

**CHRISTMAS 2025 ANGEL TREE.** On behalf of our SVDP local conference, we would like to **thank you most sincerely** for your ongoing generosity this year in supporting our angel tree and our work with the disadvantaged  
- Conference of St Vincent de Paul Society

**CHRISTMAS SIGN UP SHEETS -HELP NEEDED** -If you can sing or play an instrument, we are looking for additional people to join us over the Christmas Masses. We also need readers, Eucharistic ministers. **Welcome. Please sign up** on the sheet, thank you.

**CELEBRATING THE CLOSURE OF JUBILEE 2025** Archbishop Peter A Comensoli will be leading Mass at Our Lady of Lavang Shrine Keysborough on **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025 from 10am-12pm.** Mass will also be celebrated in Vietnamese. Tea and Coffee will be served afterwards.

**IMPORTANT DATES**  
**TUES 23<sup>rd</sup> December 7.00pm Extended Penitential Rite within Mass, Sacrament of Reconciliation (Individual) following Mass from 7.30pm.**

**4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT—LOVE** The 4<sup>th</sup> candle is purple, and the Angel candle, or the candle of love. The angles announced the good news of a Saviour. God sent his only Son to earth, because he loves us!



**St John the Baptist Parish**  
**CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY MASS**  
**5:30pm - Christmas Carols**  
**6:00pm:Mass**  
Our special "Nativity play" will be part of our 6pm Christmas Eve Family Mass.  
All children are invited to come dressed as Angels, Shepherds and Wise Men. Costumes, need not be elaborate – a white dress & wings for angels and tea towel headwear for shepherds will do.  
If you have any questions, please contact the Parish Office on 9758 1029.  
**All are Welcome**

**NATIVITY PLAY** The Youth Group will be organising a children's Nativity play during the Family Mass on Christmas Eve at 6pm. Kids can dress up as shepherds or angels to participate (we have a few spare costumes!). **Please meet at the back of the Church at least 15 minutes before the Mass** to get ready. Please contact Vicente (0420450604) if you have any questions.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE 2025**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Dec** – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 6pm  
**Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> Dec** 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 10.30am  
**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve**  
5.30pm Carols 6.00pm Family Mass  
9.00pm Carols 9.30pm Mass of Christmas Night  
**Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day**  
10.30am Mass  
**Please note: No weekday Mass on Fri, 26<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2025**  
**The Solemnity of Mary 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, 2026: Mass at 10am**  
**No Masses from Tues 6<sup>th</sup> Jan – Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026**  
**Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026, Normal Mass Times Resume.**

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTMAS/JANUARY HOLIDAYS.** The Office

**will be closed from 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2025**  
**Normal offices hours resume**  
Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 is a gazetted public holiday,** for Australia Day, so the Parish office will be closed.

*Merry Christmas*  
**...and thank you, from all the Parish Staff**

**BAPTISM** We offer our congratulations to **Ariki Watene**, child of Jordan & Christine who will be baptised this weekend: The Church of God welcomes you with great joy.



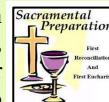
**ARCHBISHOP PETER A COMENSOLI USED A MASS OF RECONCILIATION TO CONDEMN THE BONDI MASSACRE** as a 'wicked' act that came out of broader societal hostility towards Jewish people, calling for collective acknowledgment and a renewed commitment to peace. Drawing on what unites our religious traditions, the Archbishop said 'Christians know of that sacrifice' through God giving his son for the forgiveness of the world. Light unites us, too. The candles on the Advent wreath and in the seven-branched candelabra, representing a menorah, alight in the Cathedral, he said, both banish the darkness of recent events. 'May this be our focus now: that we walk into the light, and our actions dissipate the darkness of evil.' he said ..'May we shine by that light so that we may be God's people together'. Continue reading: [Melbourecatholic.org.au/news](http://Melbourecatholic.org.au/news)

**SAVE THE DATE** This year marks the **90th anniversary** of the founding of the Presentation Sisters in our parish and the opening of St John the Baptist primary school. There will be a special Mass at 10.30am on **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February** followed by light refreshments in the hall. We invite you to save the date and join us on this special occasion.



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2026**

The Sacramental program for children who do not attend a catholic school, will begin early in term 1 2026. First Term is for students who are in grade 3 and upwards to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Second term will be for children, who will be celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation, grade six or upwards and Third Term will be for children who will be celebrating their First Eucharist. For further details please contact the parish office of Femtree Gully E: [marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au) or Ph: 9758 1029.



FTG Uniting Church is providing a **Community BBQ** Wednesdays in January 4.30pm prep, for 5.30pm start, **to help the disadvantaged.** if you can help **Please call** Don Campbell on 0410 413 483 Donations of time, food, finance are welcome.

<b>ROSTERS: Mon 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec - Sun 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025</b>	
Flowers	Ann P & Connie B
Linen	Sue O'H
Welcomers	6pm Lia U & Help wanted 10.30am Florence J & Rosa L
Lectors	6pm Queenie J 10.30am Christopher G
Counters	Tony B, Steph H, Peter F Rosina L
Gardening	Patrick S, Harry R