

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

Seek the Lord
all you, the humble of the earth,
who obey his commands.
Seek integrity,
seek humility:
you may perhaps find shelter
on the day of the anger of the Lord.

In your midst I will leave
a humble and lowly people,
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in
the name of the Lord.
They will do no wrong,
will tell no lies;
and the perjured tongue will no longer
be found in their mouths.
But they will be able to graze and rest
with no one to disturb them.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*(R.) Happy the poor in spirit;
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!*

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith forever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. *(R.)*
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. *(R.)*
3. It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. *(R.)*

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the
Corinthians 1 Cor 1:26-31

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when you
were called: how many of you were wise in the
ordinary sense of the word, how many were
influential people, or came from noble families? No,
it was to shame the wise that God chose what is
foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is
strong that he chose what is weak by human
reckoning; those whom the world thinks common
and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen –

those who are nothing at all to show up those who are
everything. The human race has nothing to boast about
to God, but you, God has made members of Christ
Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom,
and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As
scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast
about the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
Rejoice and be glad;
Your reward will be great in heaven.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL READING

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat
down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to
speak. This is what he taught them:
'How happy are the poor in spirit:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.
Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.
Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.
Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.
Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.
Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.
Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute
you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my
account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be
great in heaven.'

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

Website: www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au



4th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A
31st Jan / 1st February 2026 - Word of God Sunday

*Dear Jesus Christ,
You are our teacher
From stable to cross,
You walked with the lowly and poor,
Give us Your Grace, to answer Your call,
May we take Your Love to the world.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



FOCUS ON THE WORD Today's readings define our Christian goal of eternal happiness and explain the attitudes and actions necessary to reach it. **They form the outline for Christ-like living, noting the personal qualities expected of a disciple of Jesus** and pointing out the way of life to be lived by a disciple. They show us the values that Christ cares about. In essence, **the Beatitudes both fulfill and complete the Ten Commandments** which stress the "Thou shalt nots." But Jesus presents the Beatitudes in a positive sense, as the virtues in life which will ultimately lead to the rewards of salvation – not in this world, but in the next. **Life messages:** 1) We need to respond to the challenge of the Beatitudes in daily life. The Beatitudes propose to us a way of life inviting us to identify with the poor, those who mourn, the meek, and those who hunger and thirst after justice. **They challenge us to be compassionate people**, to be men and women who are pure in heart, and to become the peacemakers in our dealings with one another, in our families, and in the society at large, even when this approach to things exposes us to ridicule and persecution. Let us remember that each time we reach out to help the needy, the sick, and the oppressed, we share with them a foretaste of the promises of the Beatitudes here and now.. © Fr Anthony Kadavil

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 **SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONES RESPONSIBILITY. Please send a copy of any renewed cards to the Parish Office for updating.**

FEAST DAYS Sun 1st February **WORD OF GOD SUNDAY**

Mon 2nd Feb The Presentation of the Lord Tues 3rd Feb St Blaise & St Ansgar

Thurs 5th Feb St Agatha Fri 6th Feb St Paul Miki and companions, martyrs

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full

(John 10:10)

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

ASSISTANT PRIEST:
Fr Peter Nguyen 9758 1029
Email: Peter.Nguyen@cam.org.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 & Tuesday 10am-4pm
Wednesday 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: Please see changes for 3-12 Feb
Saturday Vigil Emerald and FTG 6:00 pm
Sunday Belgrave 8.30am FTG 10.30 am
Gembrook 9am Monbulk 11.00am
Tuesday Belgrave 9am FTG 7:00pm
Wednesday Belgrave 9am FTG 9:15am
& Thurs Belgrave 9am FTG 9:15am
Friday Belgrave 9am FTG 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.

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Yr A
31st January /1st Feb 2026 - Year of St Francis
WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

PRAYING FOR...

All who have died recently:

Those who we remember at this time:

Tirburcio Lobo, Nikhil Lobo, John Dunlop, Jim Dale.

The sick: Donna-Marie Chapman, Bonnie Hoefler, Ann Jayawardena



ROSARY the Rosary will be recited 30 minutes prior to **all weekday Masses** in the Church. All welcome to join in the recitation.

GROUP ROSARY SESSION FOR PEACE

When: **First Saturday of the Month** Please contact Joan Ryan on 0408 411 096 for details. All welcome.

CHILDREN' LITURGY Our children's liturgy sessions will recommence this weekend, in the room at the back of the church.



ST. JOHN'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP will have a break and be resuming on **Tues 3rd February 2026**. find out more at <https://www.ccr.org.au/>

FRIENDSHIP GATHERING Come and join us each **Thursday Morning at 10am in the Parish Community Centre** for a chat, a game of cards, may just a cuppa and to sit and knit. **All welcome.**

PARENTS AND KIDS GROUP will meet after the 10.30am Mass **Sunday 8th February 2026** in the Parish Community Centre. email jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com Don't miss this last meeting for this year. Come and join us! For fun, craft and fellowship.



YOUTH GROUP meet in the Parish Community Centre for more information contact Vicente.

LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY. Would you like to prayerfully journey through Lent with inspiring and meaningful reflections on the daily Mass readings? We are going to order booklets called **The Journey Home**, by Archbishop Emeritus Mark Coleridge. Cost is



\$5 per book + postage. or you can by an electronic download. <https://shop.archdiocesanministries.org.au/products/lent-2026-the-journey-home>

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full' John 10:10. If you would like to speak to a Spiritual Director, please call the Parish Office on 9758 1029 or phone Beth Duffy on 0423 759 850



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST SCHOOL
90TH ANNIVERSARY



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. Join us on **Sunday 1st February** for a special Mass at 10.30am followed by light refreshments in the hall. We are asking that you please bring a plate of finger food to share, something that does not require heating please. All Welcome to celebrate!

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SACRAMENTAL Program 2026 The Sacramental program for children who do not attend a catholic school, will begin on **11th Feb, 2026. You must register now!** For further details please contact the parish office of Ferntree Gully on: Phone: 9758 1029 or email marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

CHANGES TO WEEKDAY MASS TIMES From **Tues 3rd February** until **Thursday 5th February** there will be **No weekday Mass at St John the Baptist Parish**. Parishioners are encouraged to attend Mass in Belgrave at 9am during this time. **The following week, 10th -12th Feb, there will be no weekday Masses at St Thomas More Belgrave**, please come to St Johns Ferntree Gully. Thank you for your understanding.

SAFEGUARDING NEWS If you are a volunteer in

any of our positions here at St John the Baptist Parish and you have not done the **Safeguarding Essentials online training** yet, we encourage you to do it asap as it is a **compulsory requirement to comply** with the Safeguarding policies and procedures. You can access it at <https://safeguarding.melbournecatholic.org/s/login/> Also, **please check that your WWCC card details** are up to date, and notify the office of your valid card.

LITURGY † NEWS † EVENTS

FEBRUARY	MONTH	
Sunday	1 st Feb	SJB School 90 Years Anniversary
Wednesday	11 th Feb	Reconciliation classes begin 4.30pm
Thursday	12 th Feb	Beginning of school year Mass & Staff Commissioning
Thurs 7pm	12 th Feb	First Reconciliation Family night
Wed 9.15 And 7pm	18 th Feb	ASH WEDNESDAY



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2026
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST FERNTREE GULLY
World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice.

Every year we join with our local Christian communities to pray for a country in need. *This year our very own parish, Saint John the Baptist, will host World day of Prayer.*

Inviting our local ecumenical parishes to join us. Our focus will be on Nigeria on the theme of **"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."** Matthew 11:28-30 *Please join in welcoming our local Christian Communities*

Friday 6th March 2026
St John the Parish, Forest Road Ferntree Gully
Parish Community Centre at 7pm
Please feel free to bring a plate
Joining us will be our own parish family from Nigeria; Chinwe, Dozie, Chizara & Zikora

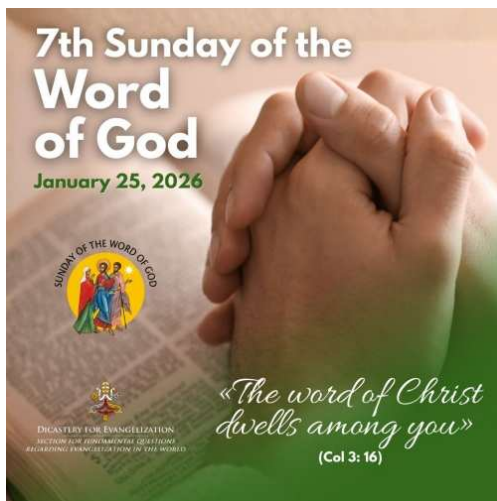
MARY MAGDALENE THE MUSICAL A bold new

musical about rebellion, ruin, and resurrection. Staged by the COG Theatre Group, the musical will take place at the Renaissance Theatre, 826 High Street Kew East on:
March 13, 2026 at 7pm
March 14, 2026 at 1pm & 7pm
March 15 2026 at 1pm
Enquiries: cogtheatregroup@gmail.com
Tickets: <https://www.trybooking.com/DHZPPD>



ROSTERS: Mon 2nd Feb to Sun 8th Feb 2026

Flowers	Genevieve & Tess
Linen	Sue O'H
Welcomers	6pm Rosina L, Myra N, Lyn K 10.30am Shamindri & Chamal
Lectors	6pm Phoung B 10.30m Pamela E
Counters	Bryon M, Ruby S, Guil W
Gardening	Roger K & Henner T



What is the Sunday of the Word of God?

“I greatly desire that God’s word be increasingly celebrated, known and disseminated...(Misericordia et misera, 7). With these words at the end of the Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis encouraged the Church to put Sacred Scripture ever more at the centre of her life and its pastoral activity. Moreover, the Word of God possesses that “dynamism” and is “unpredictable in its power” (Evangelii gaudium, 20:22), able to speak to the heart of man to help him discover and encounter the merciful love of God (Evangelii gaudium, 128). For this reason, in his Apostolic Letter at the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy, **the Holy Father hoped that “every Christian community, on one Sunday of the liturgical year, could renew its efforts to make the Sacred Scriptures better known and more widely diffused.** It would be a Sunday given over entirely to the Word of God, so as to appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people” (Misericordia e misera, 7). Throughout the world, for years now and with great response from the faithful, a Sunday or a certain time of the year has been dedicated to the Bible: “It is now common for the Christian community to set aside moments to reflect on the What is the Sunday of the Word of God? SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD is of 8 9 great importance for everyday living. The various local Churches have undertaken a wealth of initiatives to make the Sacred Scripture more accessible to believers, to increase their gratitude for so great a gift, and to help them to strive daily to embody and bear witness to its teachings” (Aperuit illis, 2). Responding to the many requests he received, so that the whole Church, with its great wealth of traditions and local initiatives, can walk together and in “unity of

purpose”, Pope Francis, with the Apostolic Letter *Aperuit illis*, established a Sunday of the liturgical year dedicated to Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church: the Sunday of the Word of God. Each year the third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted “to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God” (*Aperuit illis*, 3). It is no coincidence that the Holy Father chose to sign the Letter on September 30, 2019, the liturgical memorial of St. Jerome, which marks the 1600th anniversary of the death of this important translator and commentator of Scripture, to which we owe the expression: “Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”. Sacred Scripture has always been a bridge for dialogue and an important bond with other Christian denominations and with other religions. It is significant, from this point of view, that the Sunday of the Word of God has been chosen to take place at a time in which the Church celebrates the Day of dialogue between Jews and Catholics and the Week of Christian Unity, giving it great ecumenical value and communion (*Aperuit illis*, 3). Among other things, the Gospels for this Sunday, in all three the liturgical cycles, speak of the beginning of the ministry and preaching of Jesus, the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14). In every local situation, the most suitable and effective ways can be planned to live this Sunday in the best way possible, helping “The People of God grow in religious and intimate familiarity with the Sacred Scriptures. For as the sacred author taught of old: ‘This word is very near to you: it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance’ (Dt 30:14)” (*Aperuit illis*, 15