

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus*  
15:15-20

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.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

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

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*  
2:6-10

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.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.*

*Alleluia!*

## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew*  
5:20-22. 27-28. 33-34. 37

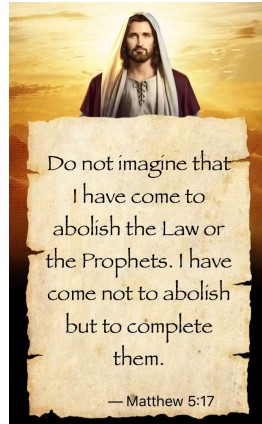
Jesus said to his disciples: I tell you, if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

'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 this 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.*



2026

World Day of Prayer  
AUSTRALIA

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST FERNTREE GULLY**

*This year our very own parish,  
Saint John the Baptist,  
will host World day of Prayer.*

**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;*

*Chimwe, Dozie, Chizara & Zikora*



**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**



**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A**  
**14<sup>th</sup> /15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 – Year of St Francis**

*Father God,*

*Jesus, Your Son showed us,  
just what it means to be holy.*

*By Your grace, teach us to turn,  
all of our law-keeping into love,*

*and make our lives worthy of Your presence.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen*



**FOCUS ON THE WORD** Today's First Reading, Psalm and Gospel all relate to the way in which we are called to live in right relationship with God and with one another. What is referred to as the 'Law' is generally used as shorthand for the Torah – the first five books of the Bible – which first of all establishes the history of relationship between God and humanity through the books of Genesis and Exodus and then provides detailed instructions about how that relationship should be honoured and observed. When Jesus speaks about the Law and the Prophets, he is deliberately including the extensive collection of prophetic writings that interpret the Law in terms of justice and right relationships with others as being a reflection of the right relationship with God. By declaring that he has come not to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to complete – or fulfil – them, Jesus is making it perfectly clear that his ministry and teaching is in alignment with and in accordance with the historical tradition and he is not setting out to overthrow the Jewish tradition. Rather, throughout his ministry, **Jesus repeatedly calls the people to be true to the teachings of old and to live them with integrity and dedication.** His constant complaint is against those who live by the letter of the Law and ignore what we would call the spirit or intention of the Law. This is the root of his swipe at the shallow virtue of the scribes and Pharisees in today's gospel. The criticism that Jesus levelled at these two groups was that their adherence to the Law made no room for the compassionate heart that the writings of the Prophets demanded. Jesus reinterprets the teachings on killing, adultery, divorce and oath-breaking. When there is an attitude of observing the very literal meaning of law, there is a tendency to look for loopholes wherever possible. This attitude had become the norm in Jesus' day. **His reinterpretations are designed to challenge people to think about the law in a broader context and to take the law into their heart rather than looking for ways to get around it.** © Greg Sunter.

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

**MEMORIAL DAYS** Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Feb *The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order (optional)*  
Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Feb **ASH WEDNESDAY (Fast & Abstinence)** Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Feb *Collect of St Peter Damian (optional)*

**PROJECT COMPASSION BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY-** Donation boxes available in the Church

***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](mailto:thomas@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)

**ASSISTANT PRIEST:**  
Fr Peter Nguyen 9758 1029  
Email: [Peter.Nguyen@cam.org.au](mailto:Peter.Nguyen@cam.org.au)

**DEACON:**  
Rev. Peter Stringfellow 9758 1029  
Email: [Peter.Stringfellow@cam.org.au](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)  
**PPG CHAIR** Carolyn Sombekke  
Email: [csombekkesjb@gmail.com](mailto:csombekkesjb@gmail.com)

**SCHOOLS:**  
**St John the Baptist** 9758 1013  
Principal: Kelli Johnston  
Email: [kjohnston@sjferntreegully.catholic.edu.au](mailto: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 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** 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.

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time - Yr A  
14<sup>th</sup> / 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2026 - Year of St Francis

**PRAYING FOR...**

*All who have died recently:*

**Those who we remember at this time:**

Clare Rea, Aniceto Judit, Rita White, Pellegrino Di Brino, Basil Lorimer, Joseph Edmunds, Joyce Howell.

**The sick:** Rosa Lisle, 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.

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY** Our children's liturgy sessions are back on, Meet in the room at the back of the church.



**ST. JOHN'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** meet every Tuesday Morning at 10.20am in the Parish Community Centre for Praise & Worship, Prayer and Fellowship, ending with a shared lunch from 12pm.

**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 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026 in the Parish Community Centre. email [jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com](mailto:jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com). Come and join us!

**YOUTH GROUP PICNIC Meet Up - Next Saturday**  
Join us for a relaxing youth group catch-up on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb at the Tim Neville Arboretum. We will be meeting up for a picnic from 3pm. Please dm us on Instagram @sjtb.youth or email us at [sjbyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sjbyouth@gmail.com) if you are interested in coming along, or if you have any questions!

**LENT PRAYER GROUP - The Journey Home**  
Please join us on Mondays at 7:00 pm, starting 16 February, in the meeting room in the Parish Office for a time of Lenten prayer and reflection. We will be reflecting on The Journey Home by Archbishop Emeritus Mark Coleridge. If you do not have a copy of the book, it can be downloaded electronically at: <http://shop.archdiocesanministre.org.au/products/len-2026-the-journey-home>

**#CDF** Help fund projects across Catholic organisations, including parishes, hospital wings and classrooms, with a CDF Community Fund savings account.

With competitive interest rates, it's a greater reward than money alone.

Save for a Greater Reward

Visit [www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au/communityfund](http://www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au/communityfund) or call our team on 1800 154 155 for more information



**LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY MASS** on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026 **Mass will be celebrated at 9.15am and 7.00pm.** We receive ashes on our forehead as a sign of repentance and reflection, **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence.** The law of fasting binds those who have completed their 18<sup>th</sup> year until the beginning of their 60<sup>th</sup> year; the law of abstinence binds those who have completed their 14<sup>th</sup> year. Lent is a penitential season of prayer, self-denial and a time for lending a hand to others e.g. attending to the sick, the lonely or the over-burdened. Lent is also an appropriate time to prepare for and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this way, the whole Church prepares for Easter.



**PASTORAL HOME VISITS** Fr. Peter, who has been appointed as Assistant Priest in our parish, is available for home visits as an opportunity to get to know members of our parish community. Parishioners who would like to arrange a visit are invited to contact the parish office."

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST OPEN DAYS FOR 2027 PREP CHILDREN** Let your neighbours, friends and relatives know St John's School Open Days are set for March. **School Open Days will be held on:**  
**Wednesday 11th March**  
**Tuesday 17th March**  
**Thursday 26th March**  
**Thursday 7th May**  
**Saturday 9th May - morning**  
**Tuesday 2nd June**



Every day is Open Day at St John the Baptist School!! Please come and see us in action. **We request that parents already with children in the school enrol as early as possible.**

**YOU'RE INVITED!** At Alpha, you can ask anything! Alpha is a safe space where you can ask questions about **Life, Faith and Meaning.** And the great news is that Alpha runs right HERE. **Right now, a seat at the table has been prepared for you, all you have to do is come.** We start on **Tues 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026, from 10.30am -12.30pm** and we enjoy a shared lunch after the meeting. It's in **St John the Baptist Parish Community Centre, which is just behind the Parish Office at 19 Forest Road Ferntree Gully. All are welcome. Please invite your friends, who might be interested.**

**PROJECT COMPASSION BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY** donation boxes will be available for collection in the church for all those who like to use them. **Unite against poverty this lent.** **You can make a difference!!**



**WANTED ON BEHALF OF: ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE**  
Temporary Accommodation for a single male. Please contact the: Parish Office if you can help.: Ph: 9758 1029



**A NOTE FROM OUR SVDP PIETY STALL** We have a small number of gifts suitable for Childrens' Sacraments and our prices are very modest. Specific requests may be placed on order – subject to availability. We do our best to save Parents and Grandparents the hassle of what to buy.



**PREPARING FOR THE MELBOURNE SYNOD 2026** In late December 2025, Archbishop Peter Comensoli wrote to the faithful of Melbourne, inviting them to journey towards Synod for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. He called it 'an important moment in the life of our local Church in Melbourne', one that is part of 'an unfolding journey'. Learn more about this here: <https://melbournecatholic.org/synod2026>

**MARY MAGDALENE THE MUSICAL** Staged by the COG Theatre Group, the musical will take place at the Renaissance Theatre, 826 High St Kew Est on Mar 13 at 7pm, Mar 14 1pm & 7pm, Mar 15 1pm  
Enquiries: [cogtheatregroup@gmail.com](mailto:cogtheatregroup@gmail.com)  
Tickets: <https://www.trybooking.com/DHZPPD>



**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

**LECTORS ROSTERS** A new roster is being prepared, and we would be most grateful if you would kindly advise the Parish Office of your availability for the coming weeks.

**LENT 2026 with THE CATHOLIC GUY BRUCE DOWNES.** Lent is a time when we can grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the true meaning of Easter. Be renewed! For 40 days you will receive a short, practical and inspiring video in your inbox prayerful. **This program is FREE** and you can sign up here: <https://brucedownes.org/len-2026-sign-up/>

ROSTERS: Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb to Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2026	
Flowers	NO Flowers (Lent from 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb)
Linen	Laurel S
Welcomers	6pm Lia U & Help wanted 10.30am Florence J & Help wanted
Lectors	6pm Alvi M 10.30am Gordon V
Counters	George & Genevieve, Bindu
Gardening	Roger K & Henner T