

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Exodus 17:3-7

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./ If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.*

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God’s glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at His appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Glory to you, Word of God,
Lord Jesus Christ!
Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world;
give me living water,
that I may never thirst again.
Glory to you, Word of God,
Lord Jesus Christ!*

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 4:5-16.19-26.39-42

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, ‘Give me a drink.’ His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to Him, ‘What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?’ – Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied: ‘If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and He would have given you living water. “You have no bucket, sir,” she answered ‘and the well is deep: how could You get this living water? Are You a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?’ Jesus replied: ‘Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life. “Sir,” said the woman ‘give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water.’ ‘I see You are a prophet, sir’ said the woman. ‘Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while You say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.’ Jesus said: ‘Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come – in fact it is here already – when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth’. The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah – that is, Christ – is coming; and when He comes He will tell us everything.’

(Gospel continued overleaf)



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH
19 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully, 3156
Phone: 9758 1029
Email: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au
Website: www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au



3rd Sunday of Lent – Year A
7th / 8th March 2026 – Year of St Francis

*O Merciful God,
so often we feel dry in Spirit!
Come, Lord Jesus, quench our thirst
for life in Your living love.
Be fresh water to our dry-ness, Unseal the living water
of Your Spirit; to become within us
an everlasting spring.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



FOCUS ON THE WORD: Today’s readings are centred on Baptism and new life. **Living Water represents God’s Holy Spirit** Who comes to us in Baptism, penetrating every aspect of our lives and quenching our spiritual thirst. The Holy Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the Sacraments of God in the Church are the primary sources of the living water of Divine Grace. We are assembled here in the Church to drink this water of eternal life and salvation. When he asks the woman for a drink, Jesus breaks two cultural taboos: firstly, for a man to speak directly to an unchaperoned woman was somewhat scandalous; secondly, as the woman points out, Jesus is a Jew and directly addresses a Samaritan – another scandal. Samaritans descended from one of the tribes of Israel. The Samaritan woman’s **personal encounter with Jesus compels her to start spreading the good news** about the amazing man she has met. She meets Jesus face to face and feels compelled to act on what she has felt. **Lent is a time for each of us to again – or for the first time – seek out a face to face encounter with Jesus.** Through prayer, contemplation on scripture or reflection on encountering Jesus in the face of others, we build a one to one relationship with Jesus. When we acknowledge this relationship, like the Samaritan woman, we are compelled to act on it.

POPE CALLS FOR URGENT DIPLOMACY TO AVOID ‘IRREPARABLE ABYSS’ IN IRAN, Middle East. Pope Leo XIV issued a fervent appeal for return of diplomacy in these dramatic hours in the Middle East and Iran. condemning use of weapons that cause ‘destruction, pain and death’. Pope Leo said, **“Let us pray together that harmony may prevail in all the world’s conflicts,”** he said, adding, ‘Only peace, a gift of God, can heal the wounds between peoples.’ Read more here [Pope calls for urgent diplomacy to avoid... | Melbourne Catholic](#)

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.**

MEMORIAL DAYS Mon 9th Mar *Collect of St Frances of Rome (optional)*

Week 3: PROJECT COMPASSION *Unite Against Poverty - 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 Kuruvila 9758 1029
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ASSISTANT PRIEST:
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DEACON:
Rev. Peter Stringfellow 9758 1029
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FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR
Mary Makarucha 9758 1029
Tuesdays and Wednesdays. 10.00am -2.00pm
Email: marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

PARISH OFFICE: 9758 1029
Closed Monday Public Hol & 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
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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 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 2nd 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.

3rd Sunday of Lent - Yr A
7th /8th March 2026 - Year of St Francis

PRAYING FOR...

All who have died recently:

Those who we remember at this time:

Sheila Ho, Henny Niehof, Maria Antonielli, Daniel Cahill, Anna Ashton, Barbara Smith, Esme Davidson, Mary Hilder.

The sick: Rosa Lisle, Bonnie Hoefler, Ann Jayawardena, Barbara Kenny.



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.



THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS: are a 14-step Catholic devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. The 14 devotions, or stations, focus on specific events of His last day, beginning with His condemnation.. 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 10.30am at St John's, and 7pm at St Thomas More Belgrave during lent** followed by mass at 11.00am. All are invited t

CHILDREN' 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. We are currently running the **ALPHA** course All welcome, and share lunch after the talk.

FRIENDSHIP GATHERING Come and join us each **Thurs 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 15th March 2026** in the Parish Community Centre. Email jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com.

YOUTH GROUP Please dm us on Instagram @sjtb.youth or email us at sjtb youth@gmail.com if you would like to know more or if you have any questions!

LENT PRAYER GROUP – Will not meet on the Labour day public Holiday. Please join us on **Mon 17th March at 7:00 pm in the meeting room in the Parish Office** for a time of Lenten prayer and reflection.

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



HAPPY BIRTHDAY FR THOMAS

Best wishes, and every blessing for a very Happy Birthday on the 13th March, from all your church family.



**Third Sunday of Lent
7-8 March 2026**

Monoranjon lives in a village in Bangladesh close to the sea, where floods and storms often damage his crops and his home. With support from Project Compassion, he learnt climate-resilient farming techniques and new ways to diversify his income, helping his family survive and build a safer, more sustainable future.



Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at:

www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent.*

RCIA - Newly Elect Please congratulate our catechumens and candidate who attended the Rite of Election at St Patricks Cathedral, last Sunday. Our catechumens and candidate will be attending mass in the next month to take part in the scrutinies. Please make them feel welcome and please keep **Justin, Macaulay, Shannon and Brodie** in your prayers.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: March 8th
This year's theme: **When we give, we gain.** We can all give our support to gain advancement for women and girls. Give respect, voice, justice, truth, opportunities...

NEW LITURGY ROSTER for April to July 2026 It is time to start looking at updating the liturgy roster, for Lectors and Ministers of the Eucharist, for the months of April to July 2026. Please contact the parish office, by Tuesday, 10th March if you know of any time that you are unavailable during that period. Phone: 9758 1029 or Email marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au
Thank you for your continued service in this ministry.

MARY MAGDALENE THE MUSICAL Staged by the COG Theatre Group, the musical is on Mar 13 at 7pm, Mar 14 at 1pm & 7pm, Mar 15 1pm
Tickets: <https://www.trybooking.com/DHZZPD>
Don't Miss Out - Get your tickets now!!

Next Week is HARMONY WEEK for the elimination of Racial Discrimination. Recognising our diversity. **Wear Orange – to show your support.**

GOSPEL – (Continued from the back page)

'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am He.' Many Samaritans of that town had believed in Him on the strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done,' so, when the Samaritans came up to Him, they begged Him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and when He spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard Him ourselves and we know that He really is the saviour of the world.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

BAPTISMS Congratulations to **Jaxon Hayton son of Taylor & Stephanie Hayton** who will be baptised this weekend. The Church of God welcomes you with great joy.



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 and 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**



MELBOURNE SYNOD 2026 On the third Sunday of Lent,



Archbishop Peter A Comensoli will formally convoke a Synod for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. The synod calls the Melbourne Church to journey together in communion, participation and mission, echoing Pope Francis' vision of a 'listening Church' (Evangelii Gaudium, §31). Informed by Vatican II's teaching, the Church is 'a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (Lumen Gentium, §4). **There are three themes** about which the church of Melbourne is being invited to discern:

1. Young discipleship
 2. Missionary leadership
 3. Formation and participation.
- The synod assembly will be held across the weekend of 4-6 December 2026, more information is available at melbournecatholic.org/synod2026

ROSTERS: Mon 9th Mar to Sun 15th March 2026

Flowers	NO Flowers Lent
Linen	Sabrina M
Welcomers	6pm Myra N, Wilma H 10.30am Terry S, Peter C, Neil R
Lectors	6pm Phuong B 10.30am Pamela E
Counters Tues	Tony B, Steph H, Peter F, Rosina L
Gardening	Carlos E