

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the book of Samuel*

16:1,6-7,10-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R./ The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.*

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians*  
5:8-14

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said: Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Glory to You, Word of God,  
Lord Jesus Christ.*

*I am the light of the world, says the Lord;  
whoever follows me will have the light of life.*

*Glory to You, Word of God,  
Lord Jesus Christ.*

## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

*Shorter form: 9:1, 6-9 13-17, 34-38*

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

*Jesus heals  
the man  
born blind.*



## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH



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Email: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au Website: www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - 14/ 15 MARCH 2026 - YEAR A



**FOCUS ON THE WORD:** The Fourth Sunday of Lent is known as "*Laetare (Rejoice)*

*Sunday*," expressing the Church's joy in anticipation of the Resurrection of our Lord. Today's readings remind us that it is God Who both gives us proper vision in body as well as in soul and instructs us that we should be **constantly on our guard against spiritual blindness**. Presenting the

miracle of Jesus' giving of sight to a man born blind, today's Gospel teaches us *the necessity of being willing to have our eyes opened by Faith*, and warns us that those who assume they see the truth are often blind, while those who acknowledge their blindness are given clear vision. **In this episode, the most unlikely person, namely the beggar born blind, receives the light of Faith in Jesus, while the religion-oriented, law-educated Pharisees remain spiritually blind.** To live as a Christian is to see and to grow continually, gaining clearer vision about God, about ourselves and about others. Our Lenten prayers and sacrifices should help to heal our spiritual blindness so that we can look at others, see them as children of God, and love them as our own brothers and sisters, saved by the death and Resurrection of Jesus. **We all have blind-spots — in our marriages, our parenting, our work habits, and our personalities.** We are often blind to the presence of the Triune God dwelling within us and fail to appreciate His presence in others. **Even practicing Christians can be blind to the poverty, injustice, and pain around them. Let us remember, however, that Jesus wants to heal our blindness.** We need to ask him to remove from us the root causes of our blindness: self-centeredness, greed, anger, hatred, prejudice, jealousy, addiction to evil habits, hardness of heart, and the like. © <https://ftrtonyshomilies.com/>

## PARISH SYNOD

### 1. What is a Synod?

A Synod is a moment when the Church deliberately pauses to listen, pray, and discern together. It is not simply a meeting or a conference, but a spiritual process rooted in faith that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church today. In a Synod, we ask not only "What do we think?" but more importantly, "What is God asking of us at this moment in our mission?"

The synod assembly will be held across the weekend of 4-6 December 2026, more information is available at [melbournecatholic.org/synod2026](http://melbournecatholic.org/synod2026)



## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Heavenly Father,

We lift up all those affected by the ongoing war.

Please protect the innocent, comfort the grieving, and give strength to those living in fear. Soften the hearts of leaders and guide them towards peace, wisdom and understanding.

May violence cease, may healing begin, and may hope rise even in the darkest places. Grant safety, unity and lasting peace to all. Amen.



**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** Tue 17<sup>th</sup> Mar *St Patrick (Solemnity)* Wed 18<sup>th</sup> *Collect of St Cyril of Jerusalem*  
Thur 19<sup>th</sup> Mar *St Joseph spouse of the blessed Virgin Mary (Solemnity)*

**Week 4: 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  
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@sifemtreegully.catholic.edu.au](mailto:kjohnston@sifemtreegully.catholic.edu.au)  
**St. Joseph's College** 9758 2000  
Principal: Catherine Livingston  
**Mater Christi College** 9754 6611  
Principal: Maria Haggett

**MASS TIMES: Please note changes in body of Bulletin**  
**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](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)**

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

**WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND.**  
24-26 April, 2026 – Live-in Weekend, St Paul's Retreat Centre, Wantirna South Mercy & James Bvirakare Ph: 0409 183 676 Email: [vicbookings@wme.org.au](mailto:vicbookings@wme.org.au)

**Happy St Patrick's Day**  
17th March 2026.

**4th Sunday of Lent - Yr A**  
**14 / 15 March 2026 - Year of St Francis**

**PRAYING FOR...**  
**All who have died recently:**  
Kuruvila Kumbuckal (India)



**Those who we remember at this time:**  
Anita Rech, Basil Lorimer, Molly Brewin, Peter Trevena, Michael Atkinson, Peter Kelly, Mary Maguire, Maureen Hayman, Ellen Wallace, Patricia Alexander

**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 11.00 am. All are invited!

**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. 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.

**PARENTS AND KIDS GROUP** will meet after the 10.30am Mass **Sunday 15th March 2026** in the Parish Community Centre. Email [jacquandcarlos@gmail.com](mailto:jacquandcarlos@gmail.com).

**YOUTH GROUP** Please dm us on Instagram @stjb.youth or email us at [stjbyouth@gmail.com](mailto:stjbyouth@gmail.com) if you would like to know more or if you have any questions!

**LENT PRAYER GROUP** –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 DIRECTION – A PLACE to explore for a connection & union with the divine.**  
'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



**CONDOLENCES TO FR THOMAS** Our deepest sympathies go out to Fr Thomas, on the Passing of his beloved father, **Kuruvila Kumbuckal aged 90yrs, in India.** May he rest in peace. Please keep Fr Thomas and his family in your prayers



**CHANGES TO WEEK-DAY MASS TIMES** during Fr Thomas return to India to be with his family  
**Tues 17th – Thurs 19th March NO WEEKDAY MASS** at St John's Ferntree Gully.  
**Tues 24th -Thurs 26th March NO WEEKDAY MASS** at Belgrave. Thank you for your understanding.

**CARITAS AUSTRALIA PROJECT COMPASSION**  
In the fourth week of Lent, the Project Compassion story features Manaini from Fiji. The project totally changed the life of my family and even the community;  
**Watch Manaini's story here:**  
<https://vimeo.com/1128089408>  
[www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate)  
Thank you for standing with us, as we Unite Against Poverty this Lent.

**RCIA - Newly Elect** This weekend our catechumens will be attending mass to take part in the scrutinies. Please make them feel welcome and keep **Justin, Macaulay, Shannon and Brodie** in your prayers.

**THE PATRICK ORATION 2026** **Tues 17 March 2026 7.15pm–8.30pm** Join us on the feast day of St Patrick, the patron saint of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne! All are welcome to a special feast day Mass followed by the annual Patrick Oration, to be delivered by the Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne. 6pm Mass, 7.15pm Oration. Watch live on the Archdiocesan YouTube Channel ([www.youtube.com/archmelb](http://www.youtube.com/archmelb)).

**MARY MAGDALENE THE MUSICAL** Staged by the COG Theatre Group, the musical is on **THIS WEEKEND!!!**  
**Mar 13** at 7pm,  
**Mar 14** at 1pm & 7pm, and  
**Mar 15** 1pm to get your Tickets, go to: Try booking at: <https://www.trybooking.com/DHZPPD>



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

**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](mailto:marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au)  
Thank you for your continued service in this ministry.

**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**



**HOLY WEEK SIGN UP SHEETS – on glass wall.** Please let us know if you can help out, by adding your name and contact information to the sheet. **With Grateful thanks...**

**AUSTRALIANS JOIN CELEBRATIONS IN INDIA AS MARY GLOWREY DECLARED VENERABLE** In 1943, Mary (Australian Born medical missionary) founded the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI), which is now India's largest non-government healthcare network. She conducted healthcare and nurse training, supporting its development across the country. And worked for decades towards the establishment of a Catholic Medical College in India, which opened 6yrs after her death.

**St John the Baptist Sacramental classes for the sacrament of Confirmation** will take place in second term 2026. If your child is due to take part in the celebration for Confirmation please contact the parish office on: 9758 1029 or [office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au](mailto:office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au) The sacrament of confirmation is for children who have celebrated their First Reconciliation and First Eucharist and are in Grade 6 or upwards.

**The Social Reign of Christ the King** We are pleased to announce that Fr Brendan Arthur will be speaking at our next God and Beer evening. Inspiration, ideas and a hot meal. Drawing on the truth, beauty and goodness of Christian faith in the Catholic tradition. John 0406 747 123



**ROSTERS: Mon 16 Mar to Sun 22 March 2026**

Flowers	NO Flowers Lent
Linen	Susan O'H
Welcomers	6pm Lia U, Help needed 10.30am Florence Johnston, help needed
Lectors	6pm Tess D 10.30am Peter F
Counters	Bryon, Ruby, Guil
Gardening	Carlos E