

**THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM**

*Matthew 21:1-11*

When they were near Jerusalem and had come in sight of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village facing you, and you will immediately find a tethered donkey and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, "The Master needs them and will send them back directly.'" 'This took place to fulfill the prophesy: Say to the daughter of Zion: Look, your king comes to you: he is humble, he rides on a donkey and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden. So the disciples went out and did as Jesus had told them. They brought the donkey and the colt, and they laid their cloaks on their backs and he sat on them. Great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in his path. The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed were all shouting: 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heavens!' And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil. 'Who is this?' people asked, and the crowds answered, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.



**FIRST READING**

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah 50:4-7 14*  
The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he

wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

*R./ My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?*

**SECOND READING**

*A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 2:6-11*

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!  
Christ became obedient for us even to death, dying on the cross.  
Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all other names.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!  
will not die for ever.  
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*

**GOSPEL**

**Matt 26:14 – 27:66**

Please refer to separate sheet below for **THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW**



**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**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)



**PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION-OF THE LORD 29 MAR 2026 YrA**



**FOCUS ON THE WORD** the first part of today's Gospel (Mt 21:1-11) describes the royal reception which Jesus received from His admirers, who paraded with Him for a distance of two miles: from the Mount of Olives to the city of Jerusalem. Two-and-a-half million people were normally present to celebrate the Jewish feast of Passover. Jesus permitted (and organized), such a royal procession for two reasons: **1) to reveal** to the general public that He was the promised Messiah, and **2) to fulfill** the prophecies of *Zephaniah (3:14-19): "Shout for joy, O daughter Zion, ... The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst, you have no further misfortune to fear;"* and of *Zechariah (9:9): "Say to daughter Zion, 'Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass."* The traditional "Palm Sunday Procession" at Jerusalem began in the fourth century AD when the Bishop of Jerusalem led the procession from the Mount of Olives to the Church of the Ascension.. In the second part of today's gospel, we listen to/participate in the reading of the Passion of Christ according to Matthew. Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection constituted the most important aspect of his life and ours. Taking into account the Jewish heritage as well as the increasingly Gentile complexion of his Church, Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah, foretold in Hebrew Scripture, and as the universal Savior of all peoples. We are challenged to examine our own lives in the light of some of the characters in the story — like Peter who denied Jesus and repented, weeping bitterly, Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus, then, remorseful and in despair and what he had done, hanged himself; Pilate who tried to serve two masters and wound up choosing Caesar, acted regretfully, against his conscience, Herod who ridiculed Jesus, and the political and religious leaders of the people who preserved their position by getting rid of Jesus. God humbled himself for us! All we can do in response is to bow our heads in awe, and present our loving, contrite hearts to God, begging for mercy. God wants a humbled, contrite heart as the sign of our true repentance. © <https://firtonyshomilies.com/>

**PARISH SYNOD**

**3. Synodality is not new**

Synodality is not a modern invention. From the earliest days of the Church, Christians gathered to pray, listen, and discern together. In the Acts of the Apostles, the Church faced difficult questions and resolved them not through power struggles, but through prayer, dialogue, and trust in the Holy Spirit.



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)

**REMINDER – DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS ON EASTER SUNDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**



Clocks go back 1 hour.

**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/responsesandprevention](http://www.catholic.org.au/responsesandprevention) safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

|                  |  |   |                     |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------|
| <b>HOLY WEEK</b> | <b>Reconciliation after Mass: Tues 31st March Extended Penitential rite 7pm Mass</b> |   |                     |
|                  | <b>Thurs 2nd April</b>   | <b>Holy Thursday (the Lord's Supper)</b>              | <b>7.30pm Mass</b>  |
|                  | <b>Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> April</b>  | <b>The Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)</b>          | <b>3.00pm Mass</b>  |
|                  | <b>Sat 4<sup>th</sup> April</b>  | <b>Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Mass</b>                | <b>7.30pm Mass</b>  |
|                  | <b>Sun 5<sup>th</sup> April</b>  | <b>Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord.</b> | <b>10.30am Mass</b> |

*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: [csembekkesjb@gmail.com](mailto:csembekkesjb@gmail.com)

**SCHOOLS:**

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

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

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

**REGULAR MASS TIMES: See website for Holy Week 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** 2<sup>nd</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.

**SLAVERY-FREE EASTER CHOCOLATE** – Look for any of these three certification symbols on the wrappers: More Info: <https://acrath.org.au/slaveryfree-easter>

**REMINDER** Daylight savings will end next **Sunday (Easter) on, 5th April**. Remember to turn your clocks back one hour.



**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord Yr A**  
**28<sup>th</sup> /29<sup>th</sup> 2026 - Year of St Francis**

**PRAYING FOR...**  
**All who have died recently:**



**Those who we remember at this time**  
Elenaida Constanzo, Troy Chapman, Giovanni Cavarra, Pat Smith, Bob Lisle.

**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.

**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 [jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com](mailto:jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com).

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

**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

**St John the Baptist Sacramental classes for the SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION** will take place in 2nd 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.

**CARING FOR OUR CARPETS** please be mindful when carrying Palms, and/or candles over Holy week, to minimize droppage on the carpets. Thank you!

**NEW BISHOP** the Most Rev Mark Freeman was officially **installed last week as the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat**, giving heartfelt thanks for the example of his parents and asking the people Ballarat 'to teach me how to be your bishop'.

**FIRST RECONCILIATION** Congratulations to our School and Parish children of St John the Baptist who celebrated their First Reconciliation on Wednesday 25 March. May they return frequently to this sacrament of healing and mercy as they continue their journey of faith. Thank you to all parishioners for their prayers and crosses for the children they were very much appreciated.



**HOLY WEEK SIGN UP SHEETS** –are on glass wall. Please help us by adding your name and contact information to the sheet. With Grateful thanks.

**TUESDAY, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026: RECONCILIATION**  
**7 pm:** Mass with extended Penitential Rite.  
**7.30 pm-8.30pm** Individual Reconciliation

**GOOD FRIDAY ECUMENICAL WALK** and the **stations of the cross** will be hosted by St John the Baptist this Friday. Beginning on the corner of Dawson and Burwood Hwy Upper Ferntree Gully at **9:15am** making our way to St John the Baptist by **10am** and then praying through the stations of the cross in the church. Please join us on this special day of sorrow as we commemorate our Lord's saving power, on the cross for us. If you are attending please contact Mary, I am looking for readers for the day.  
**GOOD FRIDAY SOLEMN SERVICE – 3PM** at St John's Also 3pm at St Paul's Monbulk.

**EASTER VIGIL Sat: 7.30pm** As you may know, that, our catechumens, Justin, Macaulay and Shannon and our candidate, Brodie receive full reception into the Catholic Church at our Holy Saturday, Easter Vigil mass. Following the mass we intend to celebrate this special occasion with a supper in the hall. Please join us on this very special holy night. You are most welcome to **assist with our supper by bringing a plate to share and the set-up of the hall** before mass. Please contact Mary through the parish office.

**PROJECT COMPASSION** Please remember to **bring your Project Compassion boxes and envelopes for collection** at Holy Thursday's 'Mass of the Lord's Supper'. - *If at all possible, please return them earlier.*



**2026 PALM SUNDAY WALK FOR JUSTICE** join the walk for Justice, Respect and Kindness. Sunday 29 March 2026, at **1.00 pm** – Gather on Princes Bridge (near Flinders Street Station) with banners and placards, **1.30 pm** – Walk to Lower Terrace, Birrarung Marr **2.00 – 3.30 pm** Speakers and music Lwr Terrace Birrarung Mar.

**MASS OF THE HOLY OILS** The Mass of the Holy Oils will be held at St Patrick's Cathedral on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 10am.



**FUNERAL DETAILS OF Vito Larusso, not yet confirmed** at time of printing. Please contact: Le Pine Funeral Directors Ferntree Gully next week.

**PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY PASSION PLAY** The Passion Play will be held at **Catholic Regional College 280 Sydenham Rd Sydenham** on Sun 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 1.30pm and again on Good Friday, at 10am same location. Parking via Gate 5. For more Info, go to: <https://melbournepassionplay.com.au/>

**CATHOLIC ALL SCHOOLS MASS 20<sup>th</sup> MAR 2026** As part of Catholic Education Week, thousands of Catholic school students and staff gathered at St Patrick's Cathedral last week for **the annual All Schools Mass**, where Archbishop Peter A Comensoli encouraged them to walk in the footsteps of St Patrick, finding strength and inspiration in knowing 'Christ beside me', just as Patrick had. You can view the mass on Youtube here: <https://youtu.be/JivalGZLaqQ>

**POSITIONS VACANT ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE**  
Details can be found on the Archdiocese of Melbourne website for various administrative and liturgical positions [Job vacancies | Melbourne Catholic](#)

| ROSTERS: Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> March to Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 |  |
|---|--|
| Flowers   | NO Flowers Lent  |
| Linen   | Carole D'Souza   |
| Welcomers   | 6pm Myra Noth<br>10.30am Terry S, Joanna C, Thelma B   |
| Lectors   | <b>Easter Vigil:</b> Chris G, Pamela E, Gordon Tess & Jerry as per sign up sheets<br><b>10.30am</b> Edwardo M. |
| Counters  | Joan R, Peter C, Ruben P   |
| Gardening   | Patrick S & Harry R  |