

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 22:19-23

Thus says the Lord of hosts to Shebna, the master of the palace:

I dismiss you from your office,
I remove you from your post,
and the same day I call on my servant
Eliakim son of Hilkiah.

I invest him with your robe,
gird him with your sash,
entrust him with your authority;
and he shall be a father
to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
and to the House of Judah.
I place the key of the House of David
on his shoulder;
should he open, no one shall close,
should he close, no one shall open.
I drive him like a peg
into a firm place;
he will become a throne of glory
for his father's house.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) **Lord, your love is eternal;
do not forsake the work
of your hands.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 11:33-36

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him and for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

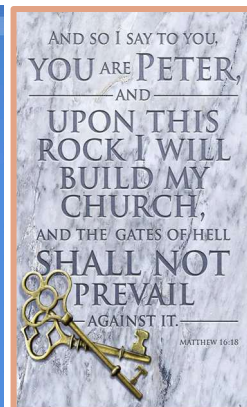
You are Peter, the rock on which
I will build my Church;
the gates of hell will not hold out against it.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 16: 13-20

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said, 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

The Gospel of the Lord.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PARISH

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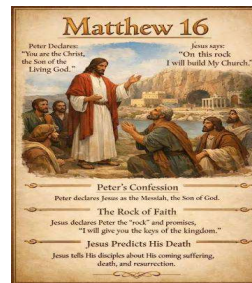
Website: www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time- YRA - Year of St Francis

22nd /23rd August 2026.

FOCUS ON THE WORD: A furore broke out in a country diocese some years ago about the retreat style of priest who was taking Catholic students in their last year of high school or who were attending university away for weekend retreats. On the Friday night of the retreat this priest would tell the young people that **by the end of the weekend they should make a decision about their Christian faith.**



Some parents were shocked that their young people were given an ultimatum that included the possibility of rejecting their faith. **The priest replied that Catholic youth have to make all sorts of decisions regarding career, lifestyle, residence, studies and relationships. Religion, he contended, often fell by the wayside, either not important enough on which to make a decision, or relegated to the personal shelf of neglect to be possibly taken down and dusted off years later for a hatching, matching or dispatching.**

The priest argued that this wasn't good enough. After 12 years of Catholic education or many years of catechetics the Church had to take the risk of calling for a personal decision for faith. **Some of the young people consciously chose membership in the Church.**

In making such a profession of faith many reported having a deep encounter with God and an experience of their faith in Christ. Other students made decisions against belonging to the Church, *which is, of course, never irrevocable.* **The entire retreat process was based on the question in today's Gospel: 'Who do you say that I am?'** The disciples, reflecting on their experiences with Jesus, offer various possibilities, but it is Peter who says that Jesus is the revelation of God for the world. This is the great profession of faith and the basis on which the Church comes into being. And what was true then, is true now. **At some point, if we want our faith to move from being a code of law, a concept, or some excellent ideas to something we can experience, we must take the faith of the Church, which has nurtured us up to now, and make it our own. In doing so, when we encounter Christ, we contribute to the re-founding of the Church in our generation.** © Richard Leonard SJ

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 everyone.** You can find out more about the church's work in this area at: www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.



25. Synodality is demanding

Walking together takes patience, time and effort. But the Gospel has never promised an easy path – only a fruitful one.

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

We pray for the Melbourne Synod: That our preparations will be marked by wisdom in decision-making, courage in leadership, and humility in listening to one another.

May the Spirit guide our every conversation and action. Amen.

MEMORIALS/FEASTS VOCATIONS AWARENESS WEEK

Tues 25th Aug St Louis & St Joseph Calasanz

Fri 28th Aug St Augustine

Mon 24th Aug St Bartholomew

Thur 27th Aug St Monica

Sat 29th Aug The Passion of St John the Baptist

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

(John 10:10)

The Archbishop's Campaign invites us to proclaim the Good News by supporting ministries that serve those in need across our Archdiocese. Your generous gift helps bring this mission to life – not only in word, but in action. Thank you.



THE ARCHBISHOP'S CAMPAIGN
2026



melbournecatholic.org/archbishopscampaign

PARISH PRIEST:
Fr Thomas Kuruvila 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 10.00am-4.00pm
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@sjferntreegully.catholic.edu.au

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

Mater Christi College 9754 6611
Principal: Maria Haggett

REGULAR MASS TIMES: Week day Temporarily Changed

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: are celebrated either during the weekend Masses on the second Sunday at any of the Mass center's, or at 12:00 pm on the second Sunday of the month at St John's, Ferntree Gully. A six weeks' notice is required. Please refer to our Guidelines for Infant Baptism on the Parish website. Contact the Parish Office on 97581029 or via email at marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au.

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

GROWING GOOD MEN, FATHER SON WEEKEND. To encourage and equip fathers and sons to strengthen their relationship all while exploring important topics. **Fri 11-13th Sept, 2026** Neerim East. This site is the perfect setting for adventures in bushwalking, river sledding, soaring down the dual flying fox, climbing the high ropes course, and many more camp favourites! Cost: \$280 . Find more [here](#)

21st Sunday in Ordinary - Yr A
22nd / 23rd August 2026 - Year of St Francis

PRAYING FOR...
All who have died recently:

Those who we remember at this time Michael Solanga, Chris Smolders, Noel McNamara, Audrey Uber, Yvonne Petrova, Margaret Felicetti, Caterina Mazzone, Pelegrina Rossi, Celeste Lizza.

The sick: Peter Lane, Angela Lorusso, Rosa Lisle, Lyle & Bonnie Hofer, Barbara Kenny, Lucy Hosemans.

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

GROUP ROSARY SESSION FOR PEACE

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

 **CHILDREN' LITURGY** Our children's liturgy sessions are held in the room at the rear of the church. All welcome

ST. JOHN'S CHARISMATIC PRAYER on Tuesday Mornings in the Parish Community Centre, 10.15am for a 10.30am start. Praise & Worship, intercessory prayer and a shared lunch. All welcome

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 **Every First & Third Sunday of the Month of school term** in the Parish Community Centre. Email jacquiandcarlos@gmail.com. See you on 30th August, 2026.

YOUTH GROUP We're only one year away from **World Youth Day 2027** If you are interested in becoming a World Youth Day Pilgrim please let us know: Instagram @sjtb.youth or email us at sjtb youth@gmail.com if you have any questions.

KINGS PARK PUBLIC ART EOI Artists are invited to submit an expression of interest for a new public artwork in Kings Park UFTG The successful applicant will receive \$50,000 (+GST) for the design..Entries close 1.09.26. at 2pm. More info at Knox Council [eTenderBox:: Details](#)

TEMP CHANGES TO WEEKDAY MASS TIMES			
24Aug	-	28th Aug	Weekday Masses At St John the Baptist FTG
28Aug	Fri	9am St Thomas' Belgrave 11am St John's Ferntree Gully	
29th Aug	Sat	9am St Thomas Belgrave -Fr Peter 6pm Emerald -Fr Peter 6pm FTG - Salesians	
30th Aug	Sun	8.30 Belgrave Salesians 10.30am FTG Salesians 9am Gembrook - Fr Peter 11am Monbulk - Fr Peter	

ARCHBISHOPS CAMPAIGN 2026 FOLLOW-UP WEEKEND:22nd/23rd Aug. Thank you to everyone who has so generously already made a pledge or gift to the 2026 Archbishop's Campaign. **Every gift, large or small, is greatly appreciated!** If you are yet to make a gift, you can still do so. This campaign supports the vital ministries of the Church in our Archdiocese. Online (direct debit or credit card donations are the most secure and preferred method of donating, or you can use the campaign envelopes.

BIBLE STUDY SHORT COURSE Led by Carlos Escobar (Master of Education and Theology,) this course will run across six evening sessions to take a deeper dive into the themes of the Bible. The theme for this year's course is the Sabbath Rest, which links across many books of the Bible and has great wisdom to offer about how we think about the rhythms of our own lives. Whether you are a beginner at understanding the Bible, or a studied hand, this course offers an opportunity for everyone to learn and make new friendships. Starting **Monday 7th September in the Parish Community Centre 6.30pm-8pm.** Come at 6pm with a plate of food to share for conversation and hospitality. More information please email : Escobar.carlos.juan@gmail.com

POPE LEO XIV PLEDGES SOLIDARITY WITH CHURCH IN INDONESIA ADTER DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKE Pope Leo XIV has conveyed his solidarity with the people of Indonesia after a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck the country's east near the island of Flores, triggering a tsunami warning and leaving thousands displaced in the aftermath. Vatican secretary of state Cardinal Pietro Parolin said the pontiff "was deeply saddened upon learning of the earthquake on 15th August. Pope Leo offered "the assurance of his spiritual solidarity and closeness of those suffering the continuing effects of this disaster, particularly for the many displaced and injured." An estimated 5,488 have been displaced since the earthquake. You can read [more here](#) .

THANK YOU KNITTERS Two bags of lovely knits have gone to K.O.G.O charity. Please place more in the striped bag in the church foyer. Donations of Yam welcome.

Are You Interested In Becoming Catholic or Learning More About the Catholic Faith?

RCIA 2026
RITE OF CHRISITAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Ferntree Gully and Belgrave Parish
RCIA program 2026 Starting Mon 7th September.
RCIA is a formation program open to those considering becoming a Catholic. . Our course is starting soon, if you are thinking of joining, you must contact the Parish Office now to register A.S.A.P please. Contact: marymakarucha@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

2026 SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT: Living the Gospel in times of Social Division. – "The cost of our Living: Economic & social justice for the common good. **Next weekend is Social Justice Sunday** – You can find out more [Here](#)
ACBC- Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

CONGRATULATIONS! Parishioners would like to extend sincere congratulations to:
Viviane Stringfellow on the occasion of her 90th birthday. She is being faithfully cared for by Deacon Peter Stringfellow.

A PLEASANT AFTERNOON THANK YOU. Fine weather on August 16th, a beautiful venue, a band that was just right and tables laden with delicious food...what more could we have asked for? Willing helpers from both of our parishes and bargains galore in the Silent Auction made for a successful function. We extended friendships, were delightfully entertained, **raised just over \$2000 and increased our awareness** of those in our midst, who need our help. **Thank you to everyone who worked and participated.** It was indeed a very pleasant Sunday Afternoon. - Erica Kurec and Marilyn Huber.

INFORMATION SESSION FOR TEACHERS AND LEADERS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Catholic Theological College is holding an **online information session** and learn about the **professional development opportunities** for teachers and leaders at CTC. We offer tertiary awards and professional learning programs to enable teachers to gain and maintain Accreditation to Teach in Catholic Schools, Accreditation to Teach Religious Education and Lead in Catholic Schools. Sponsorships may be available. Registration is essential by 31 August. For more information go to: ctc.edu.au/future-students/for-teachers-and-leaders/
When: Tues 1st September 4pm -5pm

ALPHA MASTERCLASS (Catholic Context)
Sat 5 September, 10am–4.30pm, Cardinal Knox Centre, East Melbourne Hosted by Alpha Australia in partnership with Proclaim, this one-day training will equip new and existing Alpha teams in hospitality, small-group facilitation, handling big questions and prayer ministry. If you have an Alpha team or are looking to form one, we ask you to please encourage your leaders to join us for this value packed day of practical learning. \$25 covers morning tea and lunch. Register here: <https://events.humanitix.com/alpha-masterclass-melbourne>

ROSTERS: Mon 24 Aug to Sun 30 Aug 2026	
Flowers	As per roster.
Linen	Laurel S
Welcomers	6.00pm Myra / Kathryn C 10.30am Terry S, Joanna C, Anna M, Thelma B
Lectors	6.00pm Collette B 10.30am Gordon V
Counters	Tony B, Setphanie H, Peter F, Rosina L
Gardening	Patrick S, Harry R