

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

55:6-9

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 144:2-3, 8-9, 17-18. R. v.18

The Lord is near to all who call him.

1. I will bless you day after day and praise your name for ever. the Lord is great, highly to be praised, his greatness cannot be measured. (R.)
2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in love. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all his creatures. (R.)
3. The Lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds. He is close to all who call him, who call on him from their hearts. (R.)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

1:20-24, 27

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake. Avoid anything in your

everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

18:21-35

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, “You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage.” So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, “Why have you been standing here idle all day?” “Because no one has hired us” they answered. He said to them, “You go into my vineyard too.” In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, “Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first.” So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. “The men who came last” they said “have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day’s work in all the heat.” He answered one of them and said, “My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?” Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.’

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PARISH



The Catholic Church in the Dandenong Ranges
P.O. Box 100, Belgrave, Victoria 3160 Phone: 97542141
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TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A 19th/ 20th SEPTEMBER 2026, YEAR OF ST. FRANCIS

Our Parish Vision Statement: We are called to be a welcoming, compassionate community, empowered for our faith journey for active service...

... In today's Gospel, in which the first labourers are paid the same wage as the afternoon workers, what the early birds didn't reckon on was that they could have come much later and got the same deal. We would cynically call the afternoon workers, 'Johnny-come-latelies' and chances are if we were confronted with the same situation we would be with the complainers. This story was important to the early Church because generations of Jews waited and longed for the Messiah and, like the first workers, they were the first to respond to the call of Jesus and to work in the field of his Kingdom. For some of the early Jewish-Christians, including St Peter, it came as a surprise that the Lord was calling Gentiles to the life and work of Jesus' Kingdom as well. We can imagine that it rankled some of the early birds to see these Johnny-come-latelies taking charge of the Christian mission. This wasn't how it was supposed to be! This story, then, is a wonderful commentary on how fickle we are and, luckily for us, how extraordinarily generous God is. What we see in ourselves, and others is only a glimpse of what God is like. God is so much more: more loving; more forgiving; more compassionate; and more just. And because God is so much greater than anything we could ask or imagine, we are constantly surprised at how he turns our expectations, our fears, and predictions upside down. We constantly look for God in the big and spectacular and he comes to us poor, naked, sick, in prison and hungry. God speaks through the most surprising people at the most surprising times. That's why those people who have decided that God can only work in certain ways, places, people, institutions, and times so often end up at the end of the line when it comes to religious wisdom. Michael McGirr in his excellent book, Things You Get for Free, argues that there is a crisis of belief today, but that it's not the way we often think. In a brilliant turning of the tables, McGirr says that the crisis of belief is that people inside the Church sometimes cannot believe that people outside its traditional structures can experience the love of Jesus. God loves and guides the Church but is not bound by it. God is busy about making sure those who might be last have a chance to come in first. Rather than resent this, however, let's thank God for being bigger than we are and for being just to all of us, no matter when, or how, we get the Word.

Richard Leonard SJ

PARISH PRAYER: Loving God, we ask you to pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your kingdom, a deeper faithfulness to your word, and a renewed dedication to your service. Help us to grow as a community of disciples, bringing peace to our families, communities, and the world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. *Sacred heart of Jesus, Have mercy on us. St. Joseph, Pray for us... St. Paul, Pray for us... St. Clare, Pray for us... St. Thomas More, Pray for us...*

The Parish of St Thomas More 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.

WE ARE A CHILD SAFETY PARISH AND WE BELIEVE IN CHILD SAFETY.

MEMORIALS/FEASTS: 21st/9-St Matthew, 23rd/9-St Pius of Pietrelcina,

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

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Sacraments : belgrave@cam.org.au
Child Safety Contacts : Jeanette Wicks

Parish pastoral Group:
Email: belgraveparishpastoralgroup@gmail.com
Chairperson: David Paton
 Bill Farrell, Patrick Coyne, Sue Luxford, Evie Czarnecki, Louise Jans and Rhonda Soans

SCHOOLS:

St. Thomas More's Primary, Belgrave
Principal: Declan McDermott **Phone:** 9754-4444
Email: principal@smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au

St. Paul's primary school, Monbulk
Principal: Nick Frederiksen **Phone:** 9756 7201
Email: nfrederiksen@spmonbulk.catholic.edu.au

Mater Christi College - Belgrave
Principal: Ms. Maria Haggett **Phone:** 9754 6611
Email: mcc@materchristi.edu.au

St Joseph's College - Ferntree Gully
Principal: Ms. Cathy Livingston **Phone:** 9758 2000
Email: info@stjosephs.com.au

Mount Lilydale Mercy College - Lilydale
Principal: Philip Morison **Phone:** (03) 9735 4022
E mail: pmorison@mlmc.vic.edu.au

REGULAR MASS TIMES

	Emerald and FTG	6:00 pm
Saturday Vigil		
Sunday	Belgrave 8.30am	FTG 10:30 am
	Gembrook 9am	Monbulk 11:00 am
Tuesday	Belgrave 9am	FTG 7:00 pm
Wednesday	Belgrave 9am	FTG 9:15am
Thursday	Belgrave 9am	FTG 9:15am
Friday	Belgrave 9am	FTG 11:00 am
Saturday	Belgrave 9am	FTG NO MASS

RECONCILIATION: Saturdays BLG: 9:45am FT :5.15 pm

BAPTISMS: 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 9754 2141 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 9754 2141.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A
 19th/20th Sept 2026 - Year of St Francis

PRAYING FOR...

Anniversaries: Jacqueline de Ferranti
We pray for all who are sick, especially: Asher Froelich, Cathy Sheehan, Brendan Lacey, Kathleen Lacey, Anita Mahoney, Fay Ryan, Nada Cargo, Betty Firestone, Verity Loke, Elisabeth Drake, Patricia Gilchrist, John Kuyper, Peter Hicks, Ruth Hicks, Lucy Hosemans. Mei Ling Chu.

Adoration and Devotions

Rosary is recited half an hour before Holy Mass on weekdays at St. Thomas More, Belgrave and St. John the Baptist, Ferntree Gully. All are welcome to join in the recitation.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena is recited on Wednesdays after Mass at St. Thomas More, Belgrave. All are welcome to join.

Divine Mercy Novena is recited on Saturday after Mass at St. Thomas More, Belgrave and concluded with Benediction. All are welcome.

Anointing of the Sick is celebrated on First Fridays within the Mass at St. Thomas More, Belgrave. All are welcome.

Holy Hour of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament is held on First Fridays at St. John the Baptist, Ferntree Gully, at 10:00 a.m., followed by Mass at 11:00 a.m. All welcome!

ADDRESS OF THE CHURCHES

St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave
 Corner of Reynolds Lane, Belgrave.

St. Joseph's Church, Emerald
 13 Emerald-Monbulk Road, Emerald.

Sacred Heart Church, Gembrook
 93 Main Street, Gembrook.

St. Paul's Church, Monbulk
 59 Moores Road, Monbulk.

St John the Baptist Church, Ferntree Gully
 19 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully.



SYNOD 2026:

29. Synodality is not uniformity: Different cultures, communities, and parishes will live synodality in different ways. Unity does not require sameness.

YOUTH GROUP/ YOUNG ADULTS If you are interested in becoming a World Youth Day Pilgrim please let us know: Instagram@stjb.youth or email us at stjbyouth@gmail.com if you have any questions. World youth day 2027 <https://melbournecatholic.org/wyd27>

WEEKLY THANKSGIVING 13th September

Presbytery: \$711.00- Thanksgiving: \$ \$902.60

1st Collection is for the Presbytery – Priest's (car capital, food expenses etc.) retired priests of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

2nd Collection is for Thanksgiving for the Parish Churches running expenses.

If you would like to support our Parish by making an online contribution, our bank details are below:

Acct Name:	Acct Name:
St. Thomas More's Parish Church Account	St. Thomas More's Parish Presbytery Account
BSB 083347	BSB 083347
Acct No: 672146192	Acct No: 669831148

COMMUNITY PARISH WALK



Parishes Of Belgrave & Ferntree Gully.

Theme: "CARE FOR CREATION"

Date: saturday, 26 september 2026.

Time: 10:00am (after morning mass).

GATHERING POINT: Birdsland Reserve (271 Mount Morton Road, Melbourne VIC).

What to Bring & Do Comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. A reusable water bottle. Join us for morning coffee and fellowship after the walk. All parishioners, families, and friends are warmly welcome! Come walk, pray, and care for creation together. **Reflection And Prayer:** Let us ponder how we can care for our common home together, strengthening our community spirit and shared responsibility. Through reflection and action, may our care for Creation express our faith and respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

BAPTISMS

Congratulations to Hugo RICHARDSON, son of Matthew & Deanna, who are to be baptised this weekend. The Church of God welcomes you with great joy!

SPRING HOLIDAYS FOR SCHOOLS

We wish the principals, staff, students and families a happy and restful school holiday Spring break.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED— FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

The parish office is closed on Friday 25th September for AFL Grand Final Eve public holiday.

SOCIAL SERVICES SUNDAY



Social Services Sunday is an opportunity to recognise and

thank the staff, volunteers and organisations who support people experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation. Catholic social service organisations in Victoria support more than 300,000 Victorians across over 388 sites, drawing on the expertise and commitment of over 7,510 staff and more than 15,000 volunteers. Catholic social service organisations accompany people through many different circumstances, including homelessness and housing insecurity, family and domestic violence, disability, poverty, displacement, and challenges experienced by young people and families.

WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES, 27 September 2026.

112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees with the theme "Even Just One of These Children," Pope Leo XIV reminds us that the cry of displaced children rises to God. Each child has infinite dignity and must never be reduced to a statistic. This World Day calls us to open our eyes and hearts, protect vulnerable children, welcome migrants and refugees, and recognise Christ in each person we encounter.

CHOSEN PROGRAM

Four day Catholic conference for young Australians (16-35yrs) seeking a deeper encounter with Christ. Hosted by Jesus Youth Australia, Chosen brings together hundreds of young people from across the nation for inspiring talks, powerful worship, daily Mass, Eucharistic adoration, practical workshops and authentic community. 19th Nov-22nd Nov 2026 at La Trobe University Bundoora.