



THE SAVING WORD

BAPTISM OF THE LORD (FEAST) / A

11 JANUARY 2026

FIRST READING

Isa 42:1–4, 6–7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Here is my servant, my chosen one in whom I am well pleased.

Thus says the Lord:

Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom my soul delights.
I have endowed him with my spirit
that he may bring true justice to the nations.

He does not cry out or shout aloud,
or make his voice heard in the streets.
He does not break the crushed reed,
nor quench the wavering flame.

Faithfully he brings true justice;
he will neither waver, nor be crushed
until true justice is established on earth,
for the islands are awaiting his law.

I, the Lord, have called you to serve the cause
of right;

I have taken you by the hand and
formed you;

I have appointed you as covenant of the
people and light of the nations,

to open the eyes of the blind,

to free captives from prison,

and those who live in darkness from the
dungeon.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 28:1–4, 9–10. R.v.11

R. The Lord will bless his people with
peace.

1. O give the Lord you sons of God,
give the Lord glory and power;
give the Lord the glory of his name.
Adore the Lord in his holy court. **R.**



2. The Lord's voice resounding on the waters,
the Lord on the immensity of waters;
the voice of the Lord, full of power,
the voice of the Lord, full of splendour. **R.**

3. The God of glory thunders.
In his temple they all cry: 'Glory!'
The Lord sat enthroned over the flood;
the Lord sits as king for ever. **R.**

SECOND READING

Acts 10:34–38

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power.

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household:

'The truth I have now come to realise' he said
'is that God does not have favourites, but that
anybody of any nationality who fears God and
does what is right is acceptable to him.

'It is true, God sent his word to the people of
Israel, and it was to them that the good news of
peace was brought by Jesus Christ – but Jesus
Christ is Lord of all men. You must have heard



The Parish of St Joseph's, Elsternwick & Holy Cross, Caulfield South
Parish Office: 707 Glen Huntly Road, Caulfield South 3162 ☎ 95238407 ✉ elsternwick@cam.org.au
P.O.Box 664, Elsternwick 3185 🌐 www.melbcatholic.org/stjosephholycross

PARISH PRIEST: Rev Fr Leenus Neetany SAC

Permanent Deacon: Rev John Lam
Parish Coordinator: Joanna Lam

ST JOSEPH'S, ELSTERNWICK

71 Orrong Road, Elsternwick 3185

Mass

Friday 10:00am, Saturday 6:30pm and Sunday 10:30am

Reconciliation

Friday after Mass, Saturday 6:00pm

HOLY CROSS, CAULFIELD SOUTH

707 Glen Huntly Road, Caulfield South 3162

Mass

Thursday 10:00am and Sunday 9:00am

Reconciliation

Thursday after Mass

ST ANTHONY'S, GLEN HUNTLY

74, Grange Road, Glen Huntly 3163

In Residence: Fr Pat Jackson SAC, Br Lindsay Rust SAC

Mass

Monday - Saturday 9:15am

Saturday 6:00pm

Sunday 9:00am, 11:00am, 5:00pm

Reconciliation

30-mins before all Masses & Saturday 9:45-10:10am

Thanksgiving & Special Collections

Church: \$TBA Presbytery: \$TBA

Special Collection: -

Next Week's Roster

Lectors:

Saturday 6:30pm M Ellis

Sunday 9:00am D Duffy 10:30am M Dinh

Counters: M Beaumont & B Leong

Upcoming Week's Liturgical Calendar

Sat 17 Jan: St Anthony

Sun 18 Jan: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Thanksgiving



Perpetual Adoration Chapel

The Adoration Chapel was built in 2018 to commemorate the Centenary Celebration of St Joseph's Church.

The Chapel can be accessed 24/7 using a security tag. Contact the Parish Office to apply for one.

Fr Pat's Birthday Celebration

Fr Pat's 90th birthday is on 30th January 2026. We, together with our sister Parish of St Anthony's, will celebrate the occasion on **Sunday, 1st February** at St Anthony's Parish Hall after the 11am Mass.

1. Planning Meeting: The organising team will meet soon to discuss further details.
2. Birthday Card for Fr Pat: A card has been placed in the church foyer for everyone to sign. Thank you.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The RCIA Sessions resumes on Thursday, 15th January at 6.30pm.

The sessions are held at St Joseph's Presbytery, 71 Orrong Road, Elsternwick.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (cf. Mt 3:16-17)

After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (Jn 1:32, 34)

Behold the One of whom John said: I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those who are ill*: Thanh Ninh

**Names are published for a month, unless further requested.*

Recently Deceased: -

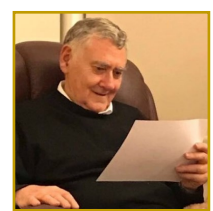
Death Anniversary: Tom Sheehy, Fr Varghese Kattikattu, Msgr Gerard Diamond

Reverend Father Varghese Kattikattu MC



Fr Varghese's 1st death anniversary falls on Friday 9 January 2026. A Mass for the repose of his soul was offered at St Joseph's, Elsternwick on the day. He will also be remembered at this weekend's Masses at both St Joseph's and Holy Cross. May His Soul Rest In Peace!

Reverend Monsignor Gerard Diamond

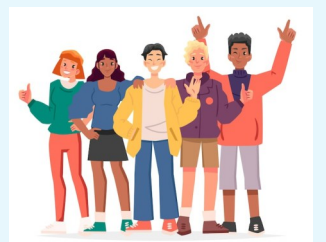


Msgr Diamond's 2nd death anniversary falls on Saturday 10 January. He will be remembered at all the Masses at St Anthony's Church this weekend. May His Soul Rest In Peace!

Young Adults & Youth Mass - 25 January 2026

This is an initiative from the Young Adults' Group to host the 6:30pm Saturday evening Vigil Mass on the 4th Saturday of every month at St Joseph's Church.

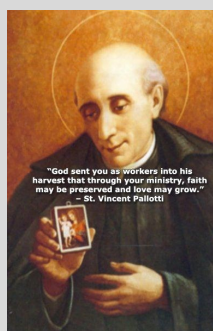
Our Young Adults are aged 18-35 and our Youth are those aged 7-17. For the slightly older but still young-at-heart, you are most welcome to join the group as Youth Coordinators; to support the Young Adults and also to guide our Youth at Mass and during fellowship.



Safeguarding Children and Young People

Our parishes are committed to Safeguarding Children and Young People. All children and young people who come to our parish have a right to feel and be safe.

Feast of St Vincent Pallotti



Thursday, 22 January at St Joseph's Church. Mass at 11:30am, followed by light lunch at the Presbytery.

There will be an update on The Flame of Love Orphanage at Keshero in Congo along with an opportunity to donate to it.

Spread the word and bring along your friends and family. Kindly RSVP a.s.a.p. by contacting Brother Lindsay, Fr Pat or Fr Leenus.

Your presence will help make it memorable. If possible, please bring a plate to share.

Pope Leo XIV on concluding the Jubilee Year

Pope Leo XIV presided over the rite of the closing of the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica on 6 January 2026, officially ending the Jubilee of Hope, which began on Christmas Eve 2024. He also presided over the Mass for the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord in the Basilica.



The following is an excerpt from his homily:

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Holy Door of this Basilica, which today is the last to be closed, has seen a stream of innumerable men and women, pilgrims of hope, journeying toward the new Jerusalem, the city whose doors are always open (cf. Rev 21:25). Who were these men and women, and what motivated them?

At the end of this Jubilee year, the spiritual searching of our contemporaries, much richer than perhaps we can comprehend, invites us to earnest reflection. Millions of them crossed the threshold of the Church.

What did they find? What was in their hearts, their questions, their feelings? Yes, the Magi still exist today. They are the people who sense the need to go out and search, accepting the risks associated with their journey, especially in a troubled world like ours that may be unpleasant and dangerous in many ways. ...

How important it is that those who pass through the doors of the Church perceive therein that the Messiah has just been born, that a community gathers in which hope springs forth, and that a story of life is unfolding! ...

After this year, will we be better able to recognise a pilgrim in the visitor, a seeker in the stranger, a neighbour in the foreigner, and fellow travellers in those who are different? ...

Let us ask ourselves: has the Jubilee taught us to flee from this type of efficiency that reduces everything to a product and human beings to consumers? After this year, will we be better able to recognise a pilgrim in the visitor, a seeker in the stranger, a neighbour in the foreigner, and fellow travellers in those who are different?

The way in which Jesus encountered and allowed himself to be approached by all people teaches us to value the heart's secrets, which only he can read. The child whom the Magi adore is a priceless and immeasurable Good. It is the Epiphany of a gift. It does not occur in a prestigious location, but in a humble place. 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah' (Mt 2:6)...

How many cities, how many communities need to hear it said, 'You are by no means least.' Yes, the Lord still surprises us! He reveals himself and lets himself be found. His ways are not our ways, and the violent do not succeed in controlling them, nor can the powers of the world block them. This is the great joy of the Magi, who left palace and temple behind in setting out for Bethlehem; it is only at that moment that they see the star once again! ...

Dear brothers and sisters, it is wonderful to become pilgrims of hope. It is wonderful for us to continue to be pilgrims together!

The faithfulness of God continues to amaze us. If we do not reduce our churches to monuments, if our communities are homes, if we stand united and resist the flattery and seduction of those in power, then we will be the generation of a new dawn.

Mary, Star of the Morning, will always walk before us! In her Son we will contemplate and serve an extraordinary humanity, transformed not by the delusions of the all-powerful, but by God who became flesh out of love. ...

The Baptism of the Lord

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus,

A frequent question asked about baptism is 'Why do we get baptised?' One of the main answers is 'in order to be washed of our sins; personal sins as well as original sin'. Immediately then another question follows, 'If so, why did Jesus get baptised; for he had neither original sin nor personal sins?'



In fact, we could ask similar questions not only about his baptism, but we could also ask, 'Why at all did Jesus incarnate? Why at all did he live in poverty? Why at all did he face the temptations? Why at all did he have to suffer and die? Couldn't he save us without going through all these and more?'

John the Baptist too had a similar question and was refusing to baptise Jesus, for John did not understand the reason for Jesus to receive the 'baptism of repentance' We read, "In everything Jesus identified himself with the humanity, except in sin." It was not necessary for God to become a human person; yet he chose to. It was not necessary for him to face temptations; yet he chose to, it was not necessary for him to live in poverty, suffer humiliations and die; yet he chose to. In the same way, his reception of baptism was not necessary; yet he chose to. It was a voluntary act purely out of love for us.

The baptism of Jesus marked his solidarity with all humanity. By this act, Jesus was already taking upon himself the guilt of our sinfulness. The significance of the baptism of Jesus is explained by Paul: "He who knew no sin became sin for us, so that, in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21).

The reason for Jesus' baptism was:

- a) to fulfil all righteousness
- b) to set us an example that we should follow and
- c) to reveal himself as belonging to God and being the Christ, the Lamb who takes away our sins. In presenting himself for his baptism, Jesus was preparing himself for his death, for the sake of all the people.

Now, if Jesus who was without any sin, insisted on being baptised, then we, who are his sinful followers must be baptised as well. If there was anyone who did not need baptism, that was Jesus alone. But Jesus himself submitted to baptism; so, should we. God bless!

Fr Leenus.

Why did the man stand on one leg at midnight on New Year's? He wanted to start the year on the right foot.

Pope Leo expresses concern for Venezuela

Pope Leo XIV has expressed 'deep concern' following the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, by the United States...

... the Pope said the 'wellbeing of the beloved Venezuelan people must prevail over all other considerations and lead to overcoming violence and pursuing paths of justice and peace.' ...

Entrusting Venezuela to its patroness, Our Lady of Coromoto, as well as the country's recently canonised saints, Sts José Gregorio Hernández and Carmen Rendiles, Pope Leo called on Catholics to pray and highlighted the need to respect Venezuela's right to autonomy and self-determination. ...

The country's bishops... urged for 'prayer for the unity of our people'. 'In light of the events that our country is experiencing today, let us ask God to grant all Venezuelans serenity, wisdom and strength,' the bishops said. 'We express our solidarity with those who were wounded and the families of those who died.' (An excerpt from Melbourne Catholic)

about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.'

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Mk 9:8

Alleluia, alleluia!

The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard:

this is my beloved Son, hear him.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 3:13-17

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus was baptised, the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. 'It is I who need baptism from you,' he said 'and yet you come to me!' But Jesus replied, 'Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.' At this, John gave in to him.

As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



Unauthorised reproduction of this bulletin prohibited.
Published with ecclesiastical approval by ST PAULS PUBLICATIONS, PO Box 906, Strathfield NSW 2135.
Tel 02 9394 3400 Email: sales@stpauls.com.au Scripture readings taken from The Jerusalem Bible, © 1966 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. All rights reserved. Psalm text from The Psalms, A New Translation, © 1963, The Grail (England), HarperCollins. New translation of the Order of Mass from The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Artwork by Sr Dorothy Woodward rsj. Layout, commentaries and illustrations © St Pauls Publications, 2026. No 2125. Website: www.stpauls.com.au

Breaking Open the Word

THE BELOVED

Today's feast that celebrates the baptism of Jesus with the story of his baptism from Matthew's Gospel. The story, written in the mid-80s, is slightly different to what our ears would usually hear. It begins with John the Baptist's humble unwillingness to baptise Jesus. 'It is I who need baptism from you... and yet you come to me!' (3:14) While John's conviction is appropriate, Jesus encourages John to baptise him.

Perhaps Matthew's story reflects a historical memory of some who might have believed that perhaps John was the Messiah. This lingering memory is addressed in the dialogue between John and Jesus. Matthew's version, nevertheless, accentuates Jesus' humility in undergoing the baptismal ritual, very familiar to the Gospel's audience of Jewish followers of Jesus. Ritual bathing was part of a Jewish purification process before they entered places of holiness. Every Jewish house had its own *mikveh*, the ritual purification bath.

In today's Gospel, Jesus becomes that place of holiness in his baptism, in the *mikveh* of the Jordan River. God's Spirit descends upon him and God's voice attests, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him' (3:17). These words about Jesus' belovedness will be heard again as he is transfigured on the mountain (17:5) *en route* to Jerusalem where death awaits. God's attestation of Jesus, of God's delight in him, despite everything that will unfold in the remaining chapters of the Gospel, never leaves him. This divine conviction about Jesus and God's words are also God's conviction and words that the evangelist wants the Gospel audience, including us, to hear. All people, female and male, are God's beloved ones. God's delight and favour rests upon us. It is a Gospel conviction that we need to remember especially when life's struggles come our way.

Fr Michael Trainor