



Third Sunday of Lent - Year A

7 & 8 March 2026

The Catholic Communities of
Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham & St Francis Xavier, Montmorency



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respect to the elders past, present and emerging.

War in the Middle East

Leo pleads for peace after Iran's leader killed

**PATRICK HUDSON
and BRIAN FRAGA**

The Pope warned of "the possibility of a tragedy of immense proportions" in a plea for peace after US and Israeli attacks on Iran. "Stability and peace are not achieved through mutual threats, nor through the use of weapons, which sow destruction, suffering and death, but only through sincere and responsible dialogue," Pope Leo said in his address after the Angelus on Sunday.

He was speaking the day after strikes on Tehran killed Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other senior figures in the Islamic regime, while retaliatory strikes hit targets across the Middle East and fighting continued the following days.

Pope Leo urged "all the parties involved to assume the moral responsibility of halting the spiral of violence before it becomes an unbridgeable chasm".

Bishop Aldo Berardi, the apostolic vicar of Northern Arabia, said the attacks had "unleashed even more hatred and vengeance".

"When such great violence is accumulated, when the dignity and self-respect of peoples are struck and attacks are carried out violently, the response is equally violent," he told Vatican News.

The bishop reported that he had asked all clergy in his vicariate, which spans Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain, to follow local security requirements including church closures.

"Of course, we enter into an abyss and a spiral, and we do not know where it may lead us," he said. "There is a risk that we will be drawn into a spiral of vengeance and reciprocal violence that can sweep us away."

The president of the US bishops' conference Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City echoed Pope Leo's appeal,

emphasising the need for all parties to take steps to end the conflict, work for peace and protect innocent lives. "The growing conflict risks spiralling into a wider regional war," Coakley said. "My brother bishops and I unite our voice with our Holy Father and make the heartfelt appeal to all parties involved for diplomacy to regain its proper role." He continued: "All nations, international bodies and partners committed to peace must exert every effort to prevent further escalation." Among please for peace from across the Church, the co-presidents of Justice and Peace Europe issued a statement on Monday expressing "profound concern over the ongoing spiral of violence". "No country, however powerful, should place itself above the core principles of international law and the Charter of the UN," said Archbishop Antoine Hérouard of Dijon and Caritas Denmark's Maria Hammershøj.

Parish Ministry Gatherings You're invited to join!

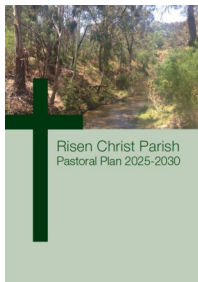
We invite you to join us at 7pm for a cuppa, followed by a 7:30pm meeting start.

Prayer and Worship - Thursday 12 March at OLHC: RCIA, Communion to the Sick, Welcomers, Commentators and Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Church Cleaning, Meditation Group, Small Church Communities, Liturgy Committee, Children's Liturgy, Youth Ministry, Faith Development Group and Bereavement Ministry.

Hospitality - Thursday 19 March at OLHC: Transport to Ministry, After Mass Hospitality - Eltham and Montmorency, Gardening and Funeral Hospitality.

Social Justice - Thursday 19 March at Risen Christ Parish Office: St Vincent de Paul, Kadasig, Refugee Assistance, Parkview Retirement Village, ASRC Food Collection, Days for Girls and Social Justice Committee.

We look forward to coming together as a community in service and mission.



*Dear Parishioners,
for the
3rd, 4th & 5th
weeks of Lent,
the Sacrament of
Anointing
will be offered
to everyone
at the conclusion
of our Parish
Celebrations
of the Eucharist.*

*This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.
We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.*



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priest

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

Michael.Sierakowski@cam.org.au

Parish Office

all correspondence to:

86 Mayona Road,
Montmorency Vic 3094
9435 4742

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

Tue-Fri 9am-3pm

Peter Williams:

Safeguarding Officer

RisenChrist.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Volunteers

Marisa Capuana: Various

Kerry Mash: Wed & Fri 10am-3pm

www.melbcatholic.org/risenchristparish

Facebook: [Risen Christ Parish](https://www.facebook.com/RisenChristParish)

Risen Christ Parish Bulletin items:

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Schools

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Rudy Vail: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Jo Nolen: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION

available half an hour before
any weekday or weekend Parish Mass.

Collections: 15 & 22 Feb 2026

Thanksgiving	Cash	\$1,545.70
	Electronic	\$6,800.17
Presbytery	Cash	\$1,392.85
	Electronic	\$300.00

Thanksgiving Offering

Month	Total
December	\$18,205.17
January	\$20,974.17
February	\$20,922.62

Risen Christ Parish Calendar of Events

Saturday 7

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 8

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

Monday 9

7:30pm RCIA Class

Eltham

Tuesday 10

9:30am Mass & SFX Yr 4

Montmorency

10:00am Rosary

Montmorency

7:00pm Jordan Small Church Community

Montmorency

Wednesday 11

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Eltham

Thursday 12

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

Montmorency

10:30am Emmaus Small Church Community

Montmorency

2:30pm Meditation

Eltham

7:00pm Parish Ministry Gathering

Prayer and Worship

Eltham

Friday 13

9:30am Mass

Eltham

Saturday 14

12:00pm Baptisms: Harry, Felicity

Montmorency

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 15

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms: Hudson, Mae, Alfred

Isla, Damien

Eltham

Monday 16

2:00pm Mass

St Vincent's Care

7:30pm RCIA Class

Eltham

Tuesday 17

9:30am Mass & SFX Yr 6

Montmorency

10:00am Rosary

Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group

Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry

Eltham

2:00pm Bethany Small Church Community

Montmorency

Wednesday 18

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

Thanksgiving

Dear Parishioners,

Following is a list of ways in which you can give towards the running of our Parish (left to right):

A) EFTPOS terminals

B) scan the QR code (<https://bit.ly/45ifhRp>) & donate to any Parish finance campaign including Thanksgiving, Presbytery Offerings, baptisms etc

C) cash/coins in the collection baskets at each church

D) thanksgiving envelopes

E) set up payments from credit/debit cards/bank account

Thank you for your generous support,

Michael



Gospel: John 4:5-42

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' - Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied:

'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?' Jesus replied:

'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life.'

'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water.' 'Go and call your husband' said Jesus to her 'and come back here.' The woman answered, 'I have no husband.' He said to her, 'You are right to say, "I have no husband"; for although you have had five, the one you have now is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.' 'I see you are a prophet, sir' said the woman. 'Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus said:

'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come - in fact it is here already - when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah - that is, Christ - is coming; and when he comes he will tell us everything.' 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am he.'

At this point his disciples returned, and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, though none of them asked, 'What do you want from her?' or, 'Why are you talking to her?' The woman put down her water jar and hurried back to the town to tell the people, 'Come and see a man who has told me everything I ever did; I wonder if he is the Christ?' This brought people out of the town and they started walking towards him.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have something to eat'; but he said, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples asked one another, 'Has someone been bringing him food?' But Jesus said:

'My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to complete his work. Have you not got a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you: Look around you, look at the fields; already they are white, ready for harvest! Already the reaper is being paid his wages, already he is bringing in the grain for eternal life, and thus sower and reaper rejoice together. For here the proverb holds good: one sows, another reaps; I sent you to reap a harvest you had not worked for. Others worked for it; and you have come into the rewards of their trouble.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done', so, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.'



Reflection: Break Open the Word 2026

As he does on other occasions, John unfolds his narrative by means of a series of deliberate misunderstandings. Jesus is speaking about 'living water' - an interior spring, the Spirit, which brings eternal life. But the woman takes it at a concrete level: *You have no bucket and the well is deep; Give me some of that water so that I won't get thirsty and won't have to make these trips to the well.*

John is able to use the location of Jacob's well, the dialogue and the symbol of water to unfold the sacramental mystery of God's life-giving gift of the Holy Spirit. Here we find grace and true worship and Jesus is revealed as the prophet who introduces the messianic age.

In its final section the story moves to mission as the woman goes to the town to tell the peoples of her encounter with Christ. Then at the woman's urging and seeing her faith, the villagers come to Jesus and persuade him to stay for a couple of days. May of them also come to believe in him. The passage ends with a triumphant assertion that Jesus is "the saviour of the world".

For us in Lent, the woman's journey to faith is our journey. The sacrament of water speaks of our baptism. This magnificent passage puts our baptism firmly into the realm of God's grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit, our mission and our participation in the reign of God.



A gift and summons: diocesan delegation witnesses ‘a spiritual awakening’ in France

A recent and timely diocesan delegation to Marseille, Lyon and Paris - undertaken just before Melbourne saw a record number of candidates and catechumens gather at this year's Rite of Election - has revealed what Archbishop Peter A Comensoli describes as ‘a profound moment of spiritual awakening’ within the Church in France.

The Archbishop was accompanied on the week-long visit by director of mission Teresa Rhynehart, parish priest of Caroline Springs and fluent French-speaker Fr Richard Rosse, and the Archdiocese's chancellor and chief of staff Annie Carrett.

Across the dioceses visited, there has been a striking rise in the number of catechumens - predominantly young adults aged 18-35, often with little or no prior formation in the faith beyond Baptism.

‘What we witnessed is not a programmatic success,’ the Archbishop said. ‘It is a movement of the Holy Spirit. Young adults are not returning out of nostalgia or ideology; they are responding to a deeply personal encounter with Christ.’

The growth, which has accelerated since COVID, is widely understood by French Church leaders as a response to cultural fragmentation, isolation, marked life experiences such as illness and death, and a renewed search for identity and meaning.

Mrs Rhynehart observed that ‘people have been talking for a while about what's going on in France,’ noting that more than 10,000 adults were baptised last Easter and more than 7,400 adolescents (11-17 year olds), ‘which was an increase of 45 per cent on 2023, which was also a 50 per cent increase on 2023’. It is estimated that at Easter in 2026, more than 20,000 individuals will be baptised into the Church.

This surge has been observed, she said, in about 13 dioceses (about 10 per cent of all the dioceses in France), ‘so it's not the entire country, but it is a significant portion. They've seen more than a doubling of their number of catechumens, year on year, basically since about 2021.’ If you go back to 2019-20 and the years before that, she said, ‘it was basically a straight line for 20 or 30 years.’

This sudden upturn has taken many in the French Church by surprise, prompting questions about what might be driving it.

She admits that when she set off on the delegation, she thought perhaps there had been ‘this whole intentional, incredible renewal process’ happening in France and was surprised to learn that wasn't necessarily the case.

Speaking with bishops, parish priests, lay people on RCIA teams, and some of the catechumens and neophytes (people who'd been catechised the year before), the delegation identified a number of drivers.

Read more at : <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/diocesan-delegation-witnesses-a-spiritual-awakening-in-france>

Reasons to hope: zoologist Prof Michael Clarke on the call to care for wildlife

Emeritus Prof Michael Clarke has always loved the natural world. After a minor digression at the age of six - when he wanted to be a bulldozer driver - he followed his fascination for wildlife into a career in zoology, devoting more than 30 years at La Trobe University to teaching and research, conservation efforts, and engagement with landowners and policy-makers.

‘I've loved this profession,’ he says. ‘I've had the privilege to study animals in all sorts of places all around the world, and to explore that fascination of what animals are like, what habitats they need, and how to preserve them.’

Supposedly retired, Prof Clarke has just returned from a field trip to Wilson's Promontory, where he was teaching 40 enthusiastic young people about conservation. ‘I'm not very good at retirement,’ he admits.

Over the years, Prof Clarke's Christian faith has merged strongly with his love of the natural world. ‘The youth group in my family's church had a profound influence on me,’ he explains. As a university student, he wondered if perhaps all religions were talking about the same God. ‘But the more I matured in my faith, I realised that the kind of gods those religions envisaged were actually very, very different. My Christian faith has rung true to me as I've explored it more deeply as an adult. Over about 30 years, I've discovered that God is faithful.’

Reflecting on how an engagement with wildlife and the natural world, including a specifically scientific engagement, can deepen our relationship with God, Prof Clarke says, ‘The more I've studied nature, the more I'm struck by the wonder of it all, the interrelatedness of it all, and how little we understand it.’

As we celebrate this World Wildlife Day, he says, ‘we live in this weird period in history where collectively we probably know more about nature and wildlife than at any point in time. But *experientially*, we are probably more *disconnected* from nature, particularly in the West, than we have ever been. That lack makes conserving wildlife more challenging. The less connected we are with nature, the harder it is to be motivated to care about it.

‘This year is also the 800th anniversary of St Francis of Assisi's death,’ Prof Clarke notes, pointing to the 13th-century saint's ‘admirable emphasis on reverence for nature, and being part of nature, not separate from it.’

‘That strong element of his teaching is what we seem to have forgotten or lost,’ he says. ‘For me, there's a humility that comes from being made of the same stuff as the rest of nature: dust. We are just dust when it comes down to it.’

Read more at : <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/reasons-to-hope-zoologist-prof-michael-clarke-on-the-call-to-care-for-wildlife>



The love of a friend comes always with a lantern in hand

Friendship colours the very air we breathe. It is everywhere around us. We can see it in the eyes of old women in the kitchens of the women they love. We can hear it in the voice of a young woman giggling to another over the phone. We can feel it beating in our own hearts on lonely rainy days in far away places when, most alone, we touch the memory of those who have walked through life with us, and walk with us still. Friendship binds past and present and makes bearable the uncertainty of the future.

What exactly is a friend? Is friendship really possible? Is friendship a necessary good or simply a social filler? Is friendship spiritual? Isn't God alone enough? What, if anything, does friendship have to do with living life forever on the brink of becoming?

There is a long answer and a short one to the question of what friendship has to do with personal development and spiritual growth. The short answer is, "Everything," - if, that is, we are to believe the thinkings of the philosophers, the findings of modern social scientists, as well as the witness of history. The long answer comes in the slowly dawning awareness that once we are loved, we have an obligation to live as best we can. Once we have discovered the love that doubles life but does not consume it, we must live so that the other, who walks by the light within us as well as the light within herself, may not proceed befuddled by our own failure to illuminate the way. The love of a friend comes always with a lantern in hand.

The desert monastics understood the role of spiritual friendship and considered it an essential part of the spiritual life even when they exalted apathia - passionlessness - and warned against the distractions of human attachments. The mandate of hospitality brought these women and men to attend to the physical as well as the spiritual needs of those whom they saw as their spiritual disciples.

Saint Ambrose saw human friendship as a necessary part of the outpouring of God's friendship. "Because God is true," Ambrose argued, "friends can be true ... Because God offers friendship, we can be each other's friends."

Saint Augustine assumed community and human relationships as the ground of growth. "The more friends I shall have," he wrote, "the more we can love wisdom in common."

And Saint Benedict considered the manifestation of the self to another as a fundamental step on the path to full human development. It may, in fact, be the friends we make who most accurately measure the depth of our own souls. For that we are each responsible.

"My friends are my estate," wrote Emily Dickinson. Friends are, in other words, the only wealth I will have at the end. My friends will be the treasure I accrue in life. It is surely, then, of the highest spiritual order to celebrate the Sacrament of Friendship.

From the March issue of *The Monastic Way*, by Joan Chittister.

https://www.joanchittister.org/?mc_cid=779df4380f&mc_eid=d51ff5d762



Prayers of the Faithful for 8 March - Third Sunday of Lent

Leader: The psalmist assures us that we are people whom God leads. Full of faith, we turn towards God our Father with our petitions.

For the Church: we pray that the Church will have the blessings of the wise leadership of Pope Leo, as it navigates the tensions and difficulties of international relationships. We recall that blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our parish community: as we move through the Lenten season, let us continue in our many individual ways to reflect on our needs as a community, listen with discernment to the words, and to serve the will of the Lord.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the world: like the psalmist, we pray for a world in which evil-doers will not exult. For you will not forsake your people, and justice will return to the righteous. We pray for our loved ones in the Middle East and other places of conflict. Lord, keep them safe until the time of reunion and peace.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the faithful: we give thanks for the free gift of your grace. We need only to look for it, springing like fresh water in the dry desert.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the sick: Dear Lord, we pray for all those who are unwell, named in our bulletin. Let your living water flow into them to comfort and reassure them in anxious times. Bless their family members, carers and professionals for their love, service and diligent care.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died: we remember with love those who have died recently, and those whose anniversaries we recall today, including *Angelina & Antonio Cassonato, Terry Dearsley, Josephine Marie Landy and Remi Vulich*. May angels and saints come to greet them. May they rest in peace.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: God, our Father, you know how much we thirst for life and love. We ask you to grant our prayers. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Roster for week ending 8 Mar 2026	
Beckford, Peter	C10:00
Beckford, Peter	PRYR
Cseh, Ferenc	H10:00
Cseh, Nika	H10:00
Donnellan, Denice	E10:00
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
French, Jossie	W8:30
Goodison, Pauline	CLNR
Hall, Vali	ASE
Hannon, Genni	ASRC
Hannon, Kevin	ASRC
Love, Philip	W8:30
Mallia, Anthony	E10:00
Maloney, Nigel	W6:00
Perera, Brian	H10:00
Perera, Sharmaine	H10:00
Roy, Yvonne	CLNR
Roy, Yvonne	E10:00
Stone, Nan	W6:00
Taylor, Trish	R10:00
Williams, Peter	E10:00
Wood, Marie	CLNR
Wood, Marie	LoW-01 Thu

Roster for week ending 15 Mar 2026	
Bacani, Brian	W6:00
Bucknell Family	H10:00
Capuana, Marisa	CLNR
Capuana, Marisa	W6:00
Cseh, Nika	C10:00
Dunell, Linda	ASE
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
Haines, Jan-Marie	E10:00
Mallia, Anthony	E10:00
McKenna, John	CLNR
McKinley, Michael	W8:30
Ramsdale, John	W8:30
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Rigg Family	PRSE
Said, Marie	ASRC
Said, Mike	ASRC
Scully, Greg	R10:00
Skipper, Patsy	LoW-01 Thu
Smith, Neil	E10:00
Williams, Anne	PRYR
Williams, Peter	PRYR

ASE = Altar Society @ Eltham;
C = Commentator;
CLKR = PowerPoint Clicker @ SFX;
CLNR = Cleaner @ SFX; **R** = Reader;
E = Eucharistic Minister;
H = Hospitality;
LoW-01 = Liturgy of the Word with Communion @ SFX;
PRSE = Pilgrim Rosary Statue @ Eltham;
M = Music; **W** = Minister of the Word



Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:

Darby (13 years old),

Stephen Andrew, Des Arneson, Bill Boyce, Penny Boyce, Ruth Decker, Nora Edmond, Pat Hosmer, Siobhan Lappin, Alice Ley, Mary Luttick, Jarrod Mizzi, Cindy & Ed Morrissey, Bernard Murray, Regina Roszczenko (mother of Liz Gray), Phil Rovtar, Audrey Tunks, Jeanne Vanderwert, Brian Witten

For those whose **anniversaries** are at this time:

Angelina & Antonio Cassonato, Terry Dearsley, Josephine Marie Landy, Remi Vulich

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office
9435 4742 or RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au.

After Mass Hospitality Sign Up sheets for the period from April to September will be in the Gathering Area at OLHC over the next few weeks.



The regular rostered groups of people are already listed, but we are looking for more people to fill in the blanks. Please consider helping with this, as it is a most appreciated and rewarding experience.

Thank you, Kathleen Nolan

Cabrini chair honoured: 'If you've been given a gift, you have a responsibility to use it



Sylvia Falzon's story is a modern example of Catholic Social Teaching in action. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in this year's Australia Day Honours for her 'significant service to community health, to corporate governance, and to the museums and finance sectors.' Among her impressive corporate and community achievements, this daughter of Maltese migrants has been on the

board of Cabrini Health for 16 years and chair since 2018, overseeing its strategic direction.

Ms Falzon says she was approached to join as a director in 2010, and accepted at least partly because of Cabrini's mission. 'Mother Cabrini [St Frances Xavier Cabrini] is the patron saint of immigrants,' she says. 'She was the first saint canonised in the United States, having left Italy to go to New York to look after many of the immigrants that were leaving Italy and setting up life in America. So, for me, that resonated strongly.'

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/cabrini-chair-recognised-with-top-honour>

Australians join celebrations in India as Mary Glowrey declared Venerable



Eight Australians joined a joyful congregation of more than 1,500 for celebrations in the grounds of St Joseph's High School in Guntur, India, on 11 February to mark the declaration of Venerable Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey. This followed Pope Leo XIV's recognition of Mary Glowrey's heroic virtues on 21 November 2025, advancing her cause and according her the title Venerable.

The festivities in Guntur, in present-day Andhra Pradesh, were organised by the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph (JMJ) - the religious order that the Australian-born medical missionary joined upon her arrival in Guntur in 1920 - and coincided with the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Numerous other lively commemorations of the progress of Mary Glowrey's cause took place at other locations in India, where her impact continues to benefit the lives of millions.

The visitors included six descendants of Mary Glowrey's siblings, and representatives of the Mary Glowrey Museum in Melbourne.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/australians-join-celebrations-in-india-as-mary-glowrey-declared-venerable>

Financial Letter - Risen Christ Parish - March 2026

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Risen Christ Parish,
The Catholic Communities of St Francis Xavier, Montmorency, Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham
This weekend in Lent seems an ideal opportunity to share with you the financial figures from the parish over the past 12 months. It is the right time, in the circle of our year, to touch base on these important issues. Thus the figures below comply with our Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne AFS (Annual Financial Statement) as require by CAM for reporting to the Federal Government.

Obviously, I'm very grateful to our Parish Financial Team who oversee the big picture and constantly ask questions and seek value for our resources, and to our Parish Manager/Secretary in Kate Kogler who daily runs and monitors this financial process and banking requirements for parishioners.

In November 2025 we underwent a 'Parish First' stewardship program run by Stephen Littleton after some 10 years of not doing a regular Thanksgiving Program. The results are now available to view from Stephen's thorough process and accountability audit via our Risen Christ Parish website (link). The full report is now available if you are interested. The results are outstanding from so many parishioners who have jumped onboard our new direction as Risen Christ Parish. We did need to lift some 30% and we did! So a huge THANK YOU to all.

It is my intention to call an open financial meeting in the near future with the Parish Financial Team to answer any questions that you might have with regard to these financial figures present for 2025. Otherwise, if you have any questions regarding these financial figures or something to add, please don't hesitate to contact Kate in the parish office, or leave a message, or send an email (risenchrist.parish@cam.org.au).

Warmest thanks for your ongoing support and love to our Parish.

Michael

	2025	2024	2023
	\$	\$	\$
Income			
Thanksgiving	200,000	182,424	189,607
Other Income	2,000	29,427	66,119
Total Income	202,000	211,851	255,726
Expenses			
Pastoral & Administration	59,514	58,519	54,369
Church Requirements	11,000	11,334	10,496
Property Costs	25,500	23,334	24,158
Church Repairs	25,000	15,451	11,515
Insurance	31,000	42,740	44,881
Salary: Parish Staff & Consultants	79,200	64,149	58,000
Archdiocese Levies	27,104	24,552	98,863
Total Expenses	258,318	240,072	302,282
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(56,318)	(28,221)	(46,556)

Communal Rite of Forgiveness (Reconciliation)

- Monday 23rd March, 7pm at Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham
- Tuesday 24th March, 7pm at St Francis Xavier, Montmorency



Dear Parishioners and Friends of Risen Christ Parish,

As part of our Lenten Journey for 2026 - we are offering two opportunities for this Communal Rite of Forgiveness along with our grade 4 students and their families for a prayerful time of reconciliation together in preparation for Holy Week and our Easter celebrations.

PASTORAL LETTER

Weekend 7-8 March 2026

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus,
My prayerful greetings to you in the Lord.

In recent years, the Church throughout the world has entered a time of attentive listening, discernment and renewal through what we have come to call a synodal way of being. Many of you have taken part in important moments of consultation and reflection: for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, for the Synod of Bishops on Synodality, and within our own Archdiocesan journey of renewal, *Take the Way of the Gospel*. Through these experiences you have generously embraced the call to walk more faithfully with Christ and with one another.

From the earliest times of the Church, gatherings of the faithful - which became known as synods (from the Greek *synodos*, meaning “journeying together” or “walking the same path”) - have met to discern important questions in the light of the Word of God and through attentive listening to the Holy Spirit. “Synodality” therefore, describes the way in which this journeying together takes place: the shared participation of the whole People of God in the life and mission of the Church.

Such a journey requires patience, humility and trust in the guidance of the Spirit. At its heart is a simple but profound discipline: to listen - to the Gospel, to the lived experience of our communities, and to the Spirit who speaks through God’s faithful people.

Across our Archdiocese there is a rich diversity of gifts and a deep desire for renewal. Many have expressed hopes for stronger communion, renewed missionary purpose, deeper formation, and a Church in which every person knows they belong. These are signs of the Spirit at work among us. As your Archbishop, I carry these hopes with you. I am deeply grateful for the generosity and faith you have shown in walking this path together.

In light of these reasons, today, Sunday 8 March, I formally convoke a Synod for the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

The purpose of this Synod is to help shape our evangelical and missionary priorities for the years ahead. It will be a time for our local Church to listen attentively to the Holy Spirit and to discern how we are called to proclaim the Gospel more faithfully in our time and place.

I invite every parish, community, ministry and Catholic organisation across the Archdiocese to take part in this journey.

In the months ahead, you will be asked to gather in prayer, to listen to one another, and to reflect together on how the Lord is calling our Church to a renewed faith and fruitfulness.

This synodal journey will focus particularly on three themes I shared with you at the end of last year: **Young Discipleship; Missionary Leadership; and Formation and Participation.** As you reflect on these themes, I encourage you to ask some simple but important questions: *Where is the Holy Spirit leading our Archdiocese at this time? To whom are we being called to accompany in faith more intentionally? How might we reflect the face of Christ more clearly in our local Church?*

As we begin this journey, I entrust our Archdiocese to Mary, Mother of the Church. She pondered the mysteries of God in her heart and remained steadfast among the first disciples. May she guide us to be a Church that listens with faith, loves with generosity, and follows Christ with renewed confidence and hope.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,
Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,



Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne



We proclaim a crucified Christ
1Cor123

<https://melbournecatholic.org/synod2026>

St Patrick’s Centre, PO Box 146, East Melbourne VIC 8002 Australia
Tel: +61 3 9926 5612 Email: archbishop@cam.org.au