

Risen Christ



Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

22 & 23 November 2025 - Year C

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.



Our 2025 Parish Renewal Program

Welcome to the final week of our Parish Renewal Program - the Parish Commitment Weekend.

Last week we considered our **engagement** in our parish life. How our involvement in parish ministries is central to building parish community - and central to actively living our faith through service to others. This week we turn our attention to **parish finances**. Stephen Littleton from Parish First, who has been coordinating the Program for the parish, will speak with us at each Mass, and assist us as we complete our new Stewardship pledges at Mass.

We ask for your pledged financial commitment to support the parish

What is the current state of our pledged Stewardship income?

- Stewardship pledges from parishioners are the major source of parish income and need a significant increase if we are to properly fund parish mission and turn around successive operating deficits.
- It can be done - but we need the support of EVERY parish family. Can we count on you?

What does my Stewardship pledge pay for?

- Supporting our parish mission, pastoral care, and outreach programs
- The operating costs of the parish - professional parish staff, insurance, utilities etc
- Clearing our deficits and providing a "buffer" for future contingencies

How much should I pledge?

- Only you can answer this question. But remember that this is YOUR parish. This is YOUR parish family. Every parishioner has a responsibility to play their part.
- An important reflection is "How do I use my discretionary income?" What is left after paying the essentials of life? How we do is a strong indicator of our priorities in life. We simply ask that your support is a meaningful one in your own individual circumstances.
- We unashamedly ask those with the greatest capacity to contribute the most - with special thanks for those on restricted incomes whose continued support is very much appreciated.

Gospel - Luke 23:35-43

The people stayed there before the cross watching Jesus. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others,' they said, 'let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer him vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.' Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all?' he said. 'You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,' he said, 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied, 'today you will be with me in paradise.'



Dear Parishioners,
for all November
Masses,
weekday & weekend,
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

[c.org/risenchristparish](http://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: 2 & 9 November 2025

		OLHC	SFX
Thanksgiving	Cash	\$412.00	\$921.00
	Electronic	\$1,089.72	\$3,817.00
Presbytery	Cash	\$577.95	\$919.90
	Electronic	\$50.00	\$190.00

Thanksgiving / Stewardship Offering

Month	OLHC	SFX	Total
August	\$6,513.67	\$9,149.50	\$15,663.17
September	\$6,600.67	\$11,649.50	\$18,250.17
October	\$5,901.67	\$10,143.50	\$16,045.17

Risen Christ Parish Calendar of Events

Saturday 22

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 23

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

Monday 24

7:30pm RCIA Class

Eltham

Tuesday 25

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:00am Rosary Montmorency

2:00pm Bethany Small Church Community Montmorency

7:00pm Jordan Small Church Community Montmorency

Wednesday 26

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

Thursday 27

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:00am Emmaus Small Church Community Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

2:30pm Meditation Eltham

Friday 28

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

2:00pm Funeral Sheilah Arneson Eltham

Saturday 29

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 30

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

Tuesday December 2

9:30am School Feast Day Mass Montmorency

10:00am Rosary Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry Eltham

12:00pm Funeral, Joan Billings Montmorency

Wednesday December 3

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

Thanksgiving

Dear Parishioners,

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

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

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

C) EFTPOS terminals

D) thanksgiving envelopes

E) set up payments from credit/debit cards

Thank you for your generous support,
Michael





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

Montmorency

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

*Nora Edmond, Pat Hosmer, Siobhan Lappin, Frances McDonald,
Jarrod Mizzi, Cindy & Ed Morrissey, Michael O'Meara,*

Regina Roszczenko (mother of Liz Gray), Jeanne Vanderwert, Br Doug Walsh

For the recently **deceased**:

Joan Billings, Dr Michael Love (brother of Philip Love)

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

Ellen Bentley, Robin Gauder, Veronica Green, Fr Kelvin Kenny,

Christopher Kenny, Norma Georgina Mannix, Eileen & Albert Nioa

Eltham

For recently deceased *Sheilah Arneson*

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

Stephen Andrew, Des Arneson, Bill Boyce, Penny Boyce,

Ruth Decker, Nora Gorman, Mary Luttick, Bernard Murray, Audrey Tunks

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

Ildiko Kruth

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



November Remembrances...

Lina & Charles; Adrian Aloji; Andrzejewski Family;
Andrew John Azzopardi; Peter Baker; Natalia & Boleslav Baryla;
Ellen Bentley; Matthew Bibby; Joan Billings; Cliff Bredle;
Peter Carbone; Aaron Carter; Antonio Chincarini (jnr);
Ryszard, Teresa & Zbigniew Cichacki; Anthony & Elizabeth Corera;
Desmond Deehan; Neil Patrick Donahoo; Bernard Edmond;
Philip Ferrarotto; Robin Gauder; Bill Gayfer; Veronica Green;
Rudolf Jakubik; Kelvin Kenny; Julian Keogh;
Ryszard Klepacz; Jim Kollaris; Ildiko Kruth;
Melinda Layne; Betty Lord; Dr Michael Love;
Norma Georgina Mannix; Peggy Marmion;
Leo Maynes; Ian McCabe; Joseph McCudden;
Russell Mee; Maria Morabito; Fr Frank Moloney;
Fr Barry Moran; Eileen & Albert Nioa;
Fr Peter O'Rourke; Frank Paoli; Valeria Perosin; Gwen Radcliffe;
Paul Riboni; Derek Rollins; Maria, Janina & Wladyslaw Rygala;
Snopkowski Family; Marie Warden; Damian Williams



Roster for week ending 23 Nov 2025

Bacani, Brian	W6:00
Boyd, Mary	PRYR
Capuana, Marisa	LoW-01
Capuana, Marisa	W6:00
Cotter, Anne	CLNR
Cseh, Nika	R10:00
Dopheide, Marlis	E10:00
Fitzgerald, Susan	H10:00
Haines, Jan-Marie	E10:00
Hall, Vali	ASE
Mallia, Anthony	E10:00
McKinley, Michael	W8:30
Northrop, Greg	E10:00
Ramsdale, John	W8:30
Renny, Teresa	H10:00
Renny, Tom	H10:00
Rigg Family	PRSE
Taylor, Trish	C10:00
Williams, Peter	E10:00
Wood, Gerard	CLNR

Roster for week ending 30 Nov 2025

Bowyer, Darrell	ASRC
Bowyer, Rosemary	ASRC
Castellanos, Sandra	H10:00
Clark, Helen	H10:00
Cseh, Ferenc	E10:00
Davidson, John	PRYR
Dunell, Linda	ASE
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
Edwards, Elisabeth	E10:00
Goodison, Pauline	CLNR
Kenny, Michael	W6:00
Maynes, Phil	W6:00
Northrop, Greg	E10:00
Rough Family	PRSE
Roy, Yvonne	CLNR
Roy, Yvonne	E10:00
Scully, Greg	C10:00
Skipper, Patsy	LoW-01 Tue
Sullivan, Frances	W8:30
Wood, Marie	CLNR
Wood, Marie	LoW-01 Thu
Wood, Marie	W8:30
Zylstra, Diane	R10:00

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

Leo's road map for the Church

Six months after Pope Leo XIV's election, it is clear that the long period when the Catholic Church was rooted in European culture ended with the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Francis and now Pope Leo have opened a new global, postmodern era / **By Austen Ivereigh**

Every time I give a talk in a parish to explain the synod on synodality, I am told, "We never hear anything about this from our priests or bishops". I thought at first this was a complaint about a lack of communication. But the pain goes deeper. There is a lack of direction, of vision. People see shrinking, ageing congregations, parishes merging and closing, and pews empty of young people. They see a death, but struggle to understand why it is happening, and what comes after it. They want to know where God is in it all, what the vision of the future is, because surely it can't just carry on as usual?

This is the *sensus fidei* - the believing people's instinct of faith - in play. They are right to ask, for the Spirit *has* spoken to the Church. A discernment of the signs of the times has happened, and with it a vision: of how the Church must now change in order to evangelise in this new era. That discernment long predated the synod on synodality, but the synod confirmed it. It is the vision that shaped the Francis pontificate, and is now being taken forward by Leo. I call it "the road from Aparecida".

Aparecida means "appeared" in Portuguese, because at the heart of the Brazilian national shrine of Nossa Senhora da Aparecida, about 100 miles north-east of São Paulo, is a little statue of Our Lady that turned up in the nets of poor fishermen on the River Paraíba in 1717. Their next haul was so heavy with fish they were forced back to port. That was the first of many miracles, starting a devotion that led to the building of the world's largest cathedral after St Peter's.

It was at Aparecida that in May 2007 the Latin-American bishops met for a landmark three-week meeting whose conclusions Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires was in charge of drafting. Aparecida set the direction of Francis's pontificate - and it has also set that of Leo. Its achievement was not just to grasp the times we are in - what Aparecida called the "change of era" - but, more importantly, to grasp how the Spirit was calling the Church to reform in order to evangelise in this new context.

It is a vision of the future unlike any



Pope Leo has built on the work of Francis to provide a way forward for tomorrow's Church other in the Church at this time. If such a thing can be said of a road map, it has the air of Pentecost - and so it was seen, both by those who were there and by theologians. Clodovis Boff, for example, said it was not only the best document ever produced by a regional episcopate, but "a surprise of the Spirit, for nothing had led anyone to expect a document of that quality".

There was also - and it was key - a road to Aparecida. This was the fifth so-called General Conference of CELAM, the regional umbrella body of the bishops' conferences of Latin America and the Caribbean, covering a continent where close to half of the world's Catholics live; and it was the first general conference in 15 years. But unlike previous conference, it was prepared by an unprecedented three-year process of consultation and discernment - a process that we now call "synodal". Across the continent at every level - local, national, regional - honest, hard questions were asked, and the ordinary faithful invited to answer. Studies and surveys were commissioned and experts asked to say how the Church was seen by society, the media, young people. I was invited to contribute to one of these meetings in Bogotá, Colombia, back in 2006, and wrote for *The Tablet* about it,

amazed at the humility of the process, which, I said, would have been unthinkable in Europe. It was, at that point, by far the biggest such process ever carried out by a regional Church.

Even before the continent's bishops assembled at the shrine, the expression "change of era (*cambio de época*)" had begun to appear in the documents. It is an expression Francis used regularly - in *Evangelii Gaudium* it is rendered as "epochal change" - as has Leo since his election. It comes from a distinction made by sociologists between *an era of change* - where societal changes occur within an existing, stable cultural framework - and *a change of era*, in which that framework is shattered by rapid social and technological advances that surpass the capacity of human culture to grasp them. Changes of era, usually lasting many decades, are turbulent transitions from one epoch to the next. Institutions fail; elites look helpless and self-serving; feeling powerless, people are tense and anxious.

Aparecida saw that the Church was beginning to fail to evangelise. The transmission belts of faith were fraying and breaking; a gap had grown between the institution and the people. The change of era was affecting "the traditional forms of life, relationship, communication and transmission of faith", the document said, and it highlighted globalisation, individualism, the weakening of institutions, the collapse of grand narratives, the displacement of people, the ecological crisis, as well as the expulsion of Christian values from law and culture. In response Aparecida called for "an ecclesial renewal, involving spiritual, pastoral and institutional reforms".

At one of the daily Masses at the shrine, Cardinal Bergoglio gave a famous homily in which he described the Church as like the bent-over woman in Luke's Gospel, closed in on itself, with the "People of God off over there". It wasn't that people were leaving the Church so much as the Church leaving the people. Bergoglio spoke of the Church needing to "come out of itself", to transcend its existing frameworks and mindset, in order to be

guided by the Spirit to the peripheries. The 200 assembled bishops, convinced after hearing him that he was “anointed” - the word various of them have used to me - stood to applaud. Six years later, in a speech to the cardinals in Rome in March 2013, Bergoglio gave the same diagnosis, using the same images and words. They also clapped. Then they elected him pope.

For his first few months Francis gave visitors copies of *Aparecida*, and told them to read it if they wanted to understand what he was up to. But then came *Evangelii Gaudium* in November 2013. The same team that had helped Bergoglio put together the 200-page *Aparecida* document had helped Francis write his thrilling exhortation, which captured *Aparecida* for the universal Church. And so the Francis election - and in particular, *Evangelii Gaudium* - marks the moment when the Latin-American Church became the dynamic “source” of today’s universal Church, as throughout history regional Churches have been sources that the rest of the Church reflects (think Spain and Italy at the time of the Counter-Reformation, or France and Germany at Vatican II).

The headlines on 8 May 2025 were, rightly, about the election of the first north American pope. But in terms of Leo’s ecclesial vision, the more important news was the cardinals choosing the second Latin-American pope, for Robert Prevost is deeply shaped by his decades as a pastor, missionary and bishop in the Peruvian Church, and by the vision that matured at *Aparecida*. Addressing the cardinals on 10 May, when Leo spoke of continuing on the journey Francis had begun, he pledged himself to a “renewal of the path of Vatican II which Francis set forth in *Evangelii Gaudium*”.

Let’s decode that. “The renewal of Vatican II” is what the Latin-American Church has long spoken of as its continental mission, while “the path of Vatican II which Francis set forth in *Evangelii Gaudium*” is, of course, the reception of Vatican II by the Latin-American Church that matured in *Aparecida*.

Leo listed a number of what he called “fundamental points” from that exhortation, three of which were key to the *Aparecida* discernment of the change of era: the return to the primacy of Christ in proclamation; the missionary conversion of the Church; and synodality, referring to the agency of the People of God and the *sensus fidei*.

The story of the 2025 conclave,

then, is the extension and deepening of the road from *Aparecida*. Leo’s election showed that the Francis era was not a chapter that can now be shelved, as some had hoped, but the opening of a new story that will develop over this next generation. As the Czech priest-prophet Tomáš Halík put it to me: if John Paul II and Benedict XVI brought to a close the long era of the European Church’s dialogue with modernity, Francis is the first pope of a new, global, postmodern era. To which we can add: and Leo is the second.

The most important thing that happened at *Aparecida* was that first, essential step on the path to conversion: the abandonment of illusory self-sufficiency and the embrace of humility. The *Aparecida* document began with a rejection of “those who see only confusion, dangers and threats” in secularisation, and who respond to it with “worn-out ideologies or irresponsible aggression”. The Latin-American bishops essentially asked: “What must we do. How is the Spirit asking us to change in order to carry out our mission in these new circumstances?” Too often the Church had failed to embrace the historical consciousness - discerning the signs of the times - the Second Vatican Council had called for. Instead of discerning and reforming in response to historical shifts, the default was lamentation and condemnation. That’s why Bergoglio used the Lukan image of the bent-over woman to describe a Church doubled down, withdrawn into itself, a prickly island of the pure.

Pope Francis explained this well in an address to bishops, clergy and pastoral workers in Quebec in 2022, when he contrasted the *negative* with the *discerning* response to secularisation. The negative response focussed on the loss of power and influence, and how to recover them: the stance of Christian nationalism or culture-war strategies. This is not a Christian response, said Francis, because it denies the Incarnation, and discloses a worldly attachment to power and social relevance. The discerning response, on the other hand, humbly allows us to see such attachments as unhealthy, while opening us to the gift of conversion. By embracing the loss of power and status in secularisation, the Church can better witness to the mercy of God in humility.

It was clear to the bishops in *Aparecida* that Christianity was no longer *religio*: an inherited identity, passed down through culture and institutions. The era of mass, culturally

mediated Christianity was over; ours is a new apostolic age. Parish, school and family all remained vital - *Aparecida* has many pages dedicated to them - but if they tried simply to carry on as before they would be unable to resist the new culture of globalised individualism and consumerism. Faith would now spread, as in the early Church, by contagion, from person to person, and had to include the experience of encounter with God’s mercy. Without this “primary encounter”, as *Aparecida* called it, liturgy, sacramental preparation and doctrine would make ever less sense.

In a series of talks Cardinal Bergoglio gave back in Buenos Aires, he would continually stress that change had to come. Unless parishes became living communities of faith - places of belonging and communion, not just sacramental service stations - and unless the Church raised up missionary disciples, formed in faith, working for the Kingdom, enable the encounter with Christ, evangelisation would all make less and less sense. *Aparecida* called this transformation a “pastoral and missionary conversion”. Priests must foster ministries and charisms, build participation and communion, help form the responsibility and agency of the People of God. “The building up of citizenship, in the broadest sense, and the building of ecclesial belonging in lay people, is a single, unique movement,” *Aparecida* said.

The greatest obstacle to this was what Francis referred to as “clericalism”, a corruption of the priesthood in which clergy assume all authority and agency and the Church is equated with the ordained. Lay people collude in this two-tier Church in order to chirk their baptismal responsibility. *Evangelii Gaudium* bears the scars of six years’ implementation of *Aparecida*, which had revealed the scale and breadth of the resistance to it: the grey mundanity of the keep-the-show-on-the-road mentality, the nostalgia for the liturgy of the past, the remote, abstract, self-referential “museum” Church, priests preaching a “loveless moralism” (*eticismo sin bondad*), reducing the Kingdom to a series of ethical precepts in trite, bland homilies. Francis took on spiritual worldliness, *acedia*, Pelagian self-reliance and the “sterile pessimism” of those who give in to “an anxious and self-centred lack of trust”. It was a strong tonic.

Yet *Evangelii Gaudium* also bears witness to the joy of embracing the conversion *Aparecida* called for. The most thrilling passages are about the life of the Spirit catching fire in the

People of God, releasing its evangelising energies. Francis returns, over and over, to the primacy of grace, the way God's saving love precedes moral and religious obligation, the presence of Christ in the poorest, the evangelising power of popular piety, and the priority of the proclamation of the Kingdom. It is about what happens when the Church "comes out of itself" to receive the power of the Spirit and put Christ at the centre. It is a Church learning to live not for itself, but for mission, in the change of era. To read about Leo's life in Peru is to be struck by how firmly Prevost operated within this vision. When he spoke on 10 May about *Evangelii Gaudium* as the reinvigoration of Vatican II in our time, he, too, was speaking from his experience implementing it as bishop of Chiclayo after 2014.

During the papal transition I was often asked in interviews about Pope Francis' legacy: was his a reform of style or of substance. But in evangelisation, style *is* substance. The great historian of Vatican II, John O'Malley SJ, said style was the first of the "issues-behind-the-issues" at the Council, the other two being collegiality and historical consciousness. The issue of style was the question of how the Church relates to humanity: whether with a juridical, command-and-control style born of the neo-Christendom paradigm of modernity, or a pastoral one - that is, accompanying, urging, exhorting and so on - which is appropriate for a secular era. The breakthrough at the Council was to recognise that in a post-Christendom context, the Church could better reflect the way in which God relates to us - washing our feet - by abandoning the logic and language of power.

Francis called this "God's style". He captured it in his ear-worm metaphors: the battlefield-hospital, the Church as mother not tollhouse, and so on. And of course he embodied it and performed it all the time in his words, actions, choices and projects, showing forth the God who is close and concrete, tender and merciful, attentive and discerning, humble and hospitable. People felt seen, recognised, and valued by Francis; they came alive in his presence, awakening to their dignity - just like those who met Jesus. He called this the "culture of tenderness", and while it was natural to him, it was conscious: the need for the Church to embrace God's style was also the discernment of Aparecida, which invites the faithful to meditate on Jesus' effect on people. For Francis the Church had to embody this style,

beginning in the Roman Curia. When people come looking for God in this age of transactional, impersonal power, it is this quality of the divine their hearts yearn to find: *ministerium* not *potestas*; the "culture of tenderness", in contrast to the "throwaway culture" of this age.

And here, in this question of style, is where I particularly see the Francis river overflowing into Leo's. The dean of the college of cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, had spoken in his homily at Francis' funeral of how his "charism of welcome and listening", so in tune with "contemporary sensibilities", had "touched hearts, seeking to awaken moral and spiritual energies". The cardinals then chose Robert Prevost, explaining how touched they were by how he was with them: his graciousness, his attentive listening, his capacity to create consensus. Whether or not they would or could articulate it, the cardinals grasped that a pope with God's style is key to evangelising in the change of era. The content of faith, *fides quae* (belief, doctrine), remains vital; but the doorway to it now is *fides qua*, behaviour of faith - the mindset, the way of being.

This makes sense, for in an earlier apostolic age, before the Church was embedded with the state, Christian communities captivated not by wealth or status but by their *habitus* of *patientia*, a willingness to live and to endure in confident expectation of God's action. Theirs was the joyful, hopeful mindset of the Beatitudes, while their actions reflected God's indiscriminate *caritas*.

How much does the Church take on God's style? This is the gift of synodality, which under Francis came to be seen as the essential means of pastoral and missionary conversion. This, too, goes back to Aparecida: a "permanent pastoral conversion" is what happens when the whole People of God - lay, Religious, priests, bishops - listen to and discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church through the signs of the times.

Francis developed that vision in the famous speech he gave on 17 October 2017 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops, and he gave it concrete form in the synod on synodality, so that the whole People of God might discover its agency. The template for the synod on synodality journey - consultation of the people through spiritual conversation, followed by stages of discernment at national and regional level, concluding with the meeting of bishops - was created on the road to Aparecida. And

when you set the synod's Final Document alongside Aparecida/*Evangelii Gaudium* the similarity is striking - further proof that the Spirit has spoken to the Church in our time. No wonder that synodality was the celebrity issue at the conclave.

"Through the synodal process," Pope Leo told the clergy of Rome on 19 September, "the Spirit has inspired the hope of an ecclesial renewal, able to revitalise communities so that they may grow in the Gospel style, in closeness to God and in the presence of service and witness in the world." He went on to describe synodality's fruits - valuing services and charisms of all, enabling the participation of all, creating habits of discernment and co-responsibility - in terms that are straight out of Aparecida. And he made clear that business-as-usual was not going to cut it, that formation was urgent. "We are living through a formative emergency," he said, "and we must not delude ourselves that it is enough to carry on with a few traditional activities to maintain the vitality of our Christian communities."

The synod's Final Document was approved in October last year and became part of papal teaching. In March this year Francis signed off on a three-year process of reception to involve the Church at every level in implementing it. Leo confirmed this process in June, and in July the synod office in Rome issued guidance for its implementation, noting that while many local Churches are "enthusiastically pursuing" synodality, others are hesitant or taking their first steps. Bishops resisting, says *Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod*, need to "open themselves to the action of the Spirit, first, first of all by listening to their own resistance".

After a year of silence, the bishops of England and Wales had synodality on their agenda for their plenary meeting this week. When I think back on all those who asked me, "What is happening? Why do we hear nothing?" I find myself praying that the bishops rise to the challenge of the hour. It means passing on the good news: that under Francis and now Leo, the times have been discerned, and the Spirit has spoken to the Church. There is a road ahead. It began in Brazil, passed through Rome, and is at our shores. And if we open ourselves to what the road has brought us, it will surely carry us forward.

Austen Ivereigh is a fellow in contemporary church history at Campion Hall, Oxford.

Prayers of the Faithful for 23rd November 2025

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Leader: We pray together today, trusting in God's loving presence amongst us.

We pray for the shepherds of our world, for parents, teachers and all those in our community who mentor and guide others. May they be blessed with your love and strength.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God'. Conscious of Jesus' constant, loving presence, may we all seek to mirror God's love to all those we meet. May kindness, compassion and understanding be our guiding lights.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

In Jesus 'all things are held together'. Faith in God forms the foundation stone, the security of our lives. We pray for the strength to have faith and trust, especially in times of trial. We remember those who are sick, those who feel lost, lacking confidence and hope. May God touch and warm their hearts with his support and love.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Jesus brought us the hope of a peace beyond this world, through his death and resurrection. We pray for peace, and for those who are working towards peaceful solutions in our world. We remember those fleeing unsafe homelands and communities. May they find compassion, welcome and security.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

The second man on the cross was able to look beyond himself and recognise the goodness and love of Jesus. He showed integrity and courage. Jesus, in turn, showed compassion and forgiveness, even in his last moments. We pray that our hearts always remain open and forgiving.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died recently, especially *Sheilah Arneson, Marie Warden, Joan Billings & Michael Love*; and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time, including *Ellen Bentley, Robin Gauder, Veronica Green, Kelvin Kenny, Ildiko Kruth, Norma Georgina Mannix and Eileen & Albert Nioa*. May they rest peacefully in the loving presence of the Lord.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: May Jesus' open, loving spirit guide us all. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Advent and Christmas

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

St. Vincent de Paul Society, Montmorency Conference would greatly appreciate donations towards their Christmas Hampers which are distributed to the needy in our local area.

Items that are needed include

- Small gifts for children (0-14 years old)
- Toiletries for teenagers and adults
- Any non-perishable food items, general groceries and or Christmas goodies.
- Collection box will be in the SFX Church until 14 December.
- Your assistance is greatly appreciated.
- Any questions please call the Parish Office (9435 4742)

Again, we will be selling Christmas cards outside the Church each weekend. We hope that you enjoy the selection. Please feel free to browse all the pamphlets. A gold coin donation in the poor boxes located at the front and side entrances will help defray costs.

Thank you all for the support you give to our local St Vincent de Paul Conference.

If you need assistance call 1800 305 330
Monday to Friday between 10am and 3pm.

USE TECHNOLOGY BUT DON'T LET TECHNOLOGY USE YOU: POPE



While calling artificial intelligence a great novelty - "one of the *rerum Novarum*, or 'new things', of our time" - Pope Leo XIV urged students to "not let technology use you". Source: *Crux*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/use-technology-but-dont-let-technology-use-you-pope/>

CATHOLIC SECTOR WELCOMES START OF AGED CARE ACT



Catholic Health Australia has welcomed the commencement of the new Aged Care Act this Saturday, describing it as a historic reform that will help deliver quality care to older Australians.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/catholic-sector-welcomes-start-of-aged-care-act/>

VICTORIA'S LOWER HOUSE PASSES MAJOR REFORMS TO ASSISTED DYING



Major reforms to Victoria's voluntary assisted dying laws - which would allow doctors to openly discuss the end-of-life option with terminally ill

patients - have passed Parliament's lower house. Source: *Herald Sun*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/victorias-lower-house-passes-major-reforms-to-assisted-dying/>

CARITAS UKRAINE WORKERS STAY RESILIENT 'BY LIVING OUR MISSION'



Caritas Ukraine president Tetiana Stawnychy has met with Caritas Australia donors and staff, sharing firsthand insights into the organisation's evolving humanitarian response amid the protracted war in Ukraine.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/caritas-ukraine-workers-stay-resilient-by-living-our-mission/>

WAGGA WAGGA DIOCESE GETS NEW HEAD OF EDUCATION



Bishop Mark Edwards OMI has appointed Sandra Harvey as the new executive director of Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/wagga-wagga-diocese-gets-new-head-of-education/>

BRIGHT FUTURE ON THE HORIZON FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PARENTS



A new facility designed to provide safe housing and support for young parents and their babies who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, has opened in Perth.

Source: *St John of God Health Care*.

<https://cathnews.com/2025/10/31/bright-future-on-the-horizon-for-homeless-young-parents/>

THE POWER OF HUMBLE, LOVING SERVICE Ordinary holiness

In a world distorted by spin and riven by distrust, stories of humble Christian service - of ordinary people reaching out with love and generosity - answer our yearning for authenticity and connection.



Following the recent passing of Prof John Murtugh AO, we pay tribute to 'the grandfather of general practice', whose deep Catholic faith, genuine interest in people, and humble, generous approach to medical practice and education had a profound impact

on countless lives. <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/sincere-and-humble-pioneering-gp-prof-john-murtugh-ao-dies-aged-89>



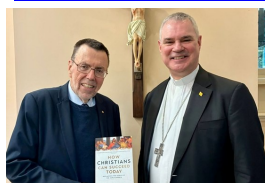
For more than 25 years, a band of volunteer booksellers at Mitcham's House of Books have been quietly reaching out to their community and to each other, offering not just bargains and reading suggestions but hospitality, service and friendship.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/turning-pages-building-community-25-years-of-mitchams-house-of-books>



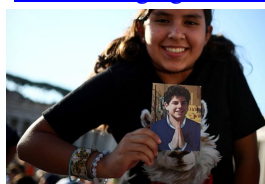
We celebrate with newly ordained transitional deacon Dominic Lawes as he embarks on the next step in his vocation 'to live out the Gospel, especially in the service of others'.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/configured-to-christ-dominic-lawes-ordained-a-deacon-for-melbourne>



At the recent launch of his latest book, Greg Sheridan AO recalled the powerful witness of early Christian communities, who showed us that a life lived well and with integrity remains one of the Church's most powerful forms of evangelization.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/faith-courage-and-conviction-greg-sheridan-on-how-christians-can-succeed-today>



And as we approach All Saints Day, Josephine Plazzer reflects on the 'ordinary holiness' of the saints, those 'quiet witnesses to the beauty of a life lived in Christ'.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/it-is-always-the-era-of-saints>

RUNNING FOR ACYF: ONE YOUTH MINISTER'S FUNDRAISER FOR ALL

Groups around the country have been fundraising to attend this year's Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF), which is now only a month away. Together with her team, Qwayne Guevara, manager of Catholic Youth Parramatta, has been busily preparing their local pilgrims both spiritually and practically. This has included some creative fundraising efforts 'to lessen the load for our young people, because every dollar [raised] is less of an impact on our young people'. Last month, Qwayne completed a personal challenge of running 100km in 30 days, raising more than 45,500 for local pilgrims to attend ACYF. <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/running-for-acyf-one-youth-ministers-fundraiser-for-all>

<https://melbournecatholic.org/events>

For more information: www.melbournecatholic.org or www.facebook.com/CatholicArchdioceseofMelbourne