

Looking at the Readings

The readings leading up to the Gospel speak on how sin and death entered into the world and had plunged humankind into a gloomy state that seemed inescapable. Between the two readings, however, is the classic penitential Psalm: "Be merciful, O Lord for we have sinned" (Ps 50). For with sin comes mercy.

The first Sunday of Lent each year presents the gospel of the Temptation of Jesus in the wilderness according to Matthew (this year), Mark or Luke.

Each Evangelist gives their own take of Jesus encounter with temptation. One of the common elements to all three is that "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness," (Matt 4:1, Mark 1:12, and Luke 4:1). Yet "being led" has overtones of free choice and invitational gesture. Yet again being led into the wilderness to be tempted is evocative of the sentence in the Lord's Prayer where we entreat God "Lead us not into temptation." (Matt 6:13). Jesus overcame the wiles of the evil one. Our forty days of Lent in following Christ are days of fasting, prayer and almsgiving.



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PARISH MASS TIMES

Weekend Masses: 21st & 22nd February 2026

Saturday: 6.00pm Mass

Sunday : 9:30am Mass

Weekday Masses: 23rd - 27th February 2026

Wednesday: 12.00pm Mass

Reconciliation: Approach Fr Novie before Mass

Baptism: Every Second weekend of the Month

Weddings: By Appointment with the Parish Priest

Sophia Sisters: Every Monday 1:30pm (Parish Centre)

Men's Group: Every Saturday 9am (Parish Centre)

Playgroup: Every Friday 9am (Parish Centre)

Children's Liturgy: G'day Sunday

Sunday School: G'day Sunday

Ladies Drinks: 4th Wednesday 5:30pm (Parish Centre)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Yorta Yorta Nation. This land is sacred, this land is gift, this land is thousands of years old. We acknowledge the immense beauty of this land and the dreams of the Yorta-Yorta People. We pay our respects to elders past and present and acknowledge the lessons the Yorta-Yorta people teach us about care, respect and justice for mother earth.

If you wish to assist in "further supporting the Parish" we offer different ways of giving... direct debit, credit card or planned giving envelopes. Please ring the office for more details.

PARISH BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS:

St Mary's Echuca: BSB Number: 083-543

Account Number: 45-782-9206

Child Safety: Through our policies and practices, we protect the right of children to feel safe and to be safe. We promote the well-being and inclusion of all children. For more information, contact the parish office and look for the Child Safety Officer Mel Slattery.

PARISH CALENDAR

24th February:	10.00am Deanery Meeting White Hills
25th February:	4.30pm Social Justice Meeting (Upstairs) *5:30pm Ladies Drinks
28th February:	9.30am Ladies Breakfast
5th March:	12.30pm Year 6 Liturgy Brigidine Centre
6th March:	9.00am Mary's Maker * 11.30am Adoration 12.00pm 1st Friday Mass
10th March:	7.30pm Community Reconciliation
11th March:	12.00pm Mass with Year 2



**PROJECT
COMPASSION**

FIRST SUNDAY of LENT – 22 February

This Lent, our parish community is called to *Unite Against Poverty* with Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. Each year, Project Compassion invites us to encounter stories of courage and hope from people around the world who are striving for a brighter future. In 2026, Project Compassion shares four stories of resilience and strength. We'll meet Sisilia, a young student from Tanzania, whose education was being disrupted by long daily walks to collect water for her family. With the support of Caritas Australia and people like you, Sisilia now has access to clean water from taps installed in her school and village.

We'll get to know Monoranjon from Bangladesh, where communities are heavily impacted by natural disasters and climate change. Caritas Australia, together with supporters across Australia, has helped Monoranjon to learn climate-resilient farming skills.

We'll be introduced to Manaini from Fiji, who struggled with poverty and food insecurity. With support, she gained training in food processing and gardening, improving nutrition and creating income to support her children's education. And we'll hear the story of Ahmad, a Caritas Jerusalem worker from Gaza who was displaced many times due to ongoing conflict. Despite this hardship, he continues to serve families in need through Caritas' emergency response.

Please donate Via our Parish QR Code below, all donations will be attributed to our own parish.



'Seek peace and pursue it'

Our Diocesan theme across all Sandhurst schools this year is

'To seek peace and pursue it'.

On Thursday we celebrated our beginning of the year with Mass in the Brigidine Centre.

Every learner was asked to consider what peace looks like, sounds like and feels like to them. They have drawn a picture, symbol or written words on a piece of calico to reflect peace.

This 'piece of peace' will be sewn together for each Year level and will be used on their Year level Prayer table for the duration of the year as a reminder to 'seek peace and pursue it'.



Parish Hall Renovation Update

After the Finance Committee meeting held last Monday (16th February), the committee decided that we are obliged to report to the parish community regarding the update on the Parish Hall renovations. We are truly grateful to everyone who contributed and joined our Cash for a Cause campaign last November and December. Your generosity and support are deeply appreciated.

After careful discussion and planning, the committee has decided to begin the renovation process — though not yet with the carpets. Before the carpet installation, several important renovations need to be completed. Plastering works will begin first in the Hall, Kitchen, and the Ladies' Toilets. While many areas of the Hall require attention, we have identified these three areas as needing major work at this stage. Following the plastering, painting will commence, and then the installation of the carpets will take place. All these plans are underway and have been made after careful consideration, as the project involves a significant amount of funds. We assure you that the money you contributed is safe and will be spent accordingly and responsibly.

Thank you very much for your cooperation, understanding, and patience.

Fr. Novie and the Finance Committee

Join us to celebrate 140 years
of St Joseph's College and the
Brigidine Sisters in Echuca



Friday 27 March 2026

Foundation Day Liturgy: 12pm
(St Joseph's College - 21 Dickson St, Echuca)

Saturday 28 March 2026

Campus Tours: 10am, 11.30am & 1pm
(St Joseph's College - 21 Dickson St, Echuca)

Unveiling of Brigidine Courtyard: 12pm
(St Joseph's College - 21 Dickson St, Echuca)

Brigidine Remembrance Ritual led by Sr Cecilia Merrigan:
2.30pm at Echuca Cemetery (Homan St, Echuca)

Gala Dinner: 6pm - 11pm
St Joseph's College - 21 Dickson St, Echuca

Sunday 29 March 2026

Mass at St Mary's Parish: 11am
258 Hare St, Echuca

*Multiple events to enjoy across
three days of celebration!*

RSVP: to Maree McNamara by Friday 27 February 2026
Email: principal@sjc.vic.edu.au
Phone: 03 5469 0204

Lent
PRAY. FAST. SERVE.

ROSTERS THIS WEEK

21st & 22nd February 2026

Commentators/Lectors:

6.00pm: Chris Lee, Rose Quinn, Nick Lee

9.30am: Noela Boyer, Win Lavery, Barb Green

Ministers of the Eucharist:

6.00pm: Sarah Byrne, Kim Wallace

9.30am: Kate Bruty, Bebber Mitchell

Prayers of the Faithful: Rose Quinn

St Anne's Church Cleaners: 20th

Kay Westblade, Yvonne Costello, Bev Stapleton

Setting up the Church: 21st Tania Dixon

Setting up the Church: 22nd Noela Boyer

Baptism Preparation: Bec Lloyd

Counters: 24th Pat Whyte, Adrian Costello

Hospital Visiting: 23rd John and Julie Moyle

Gardening: Michael Delahuntly, Fr Des

ROSTERS NEXT WEEK

28th February & 1st March 2026

Commentators/Lectors:

6.00pm: Christine Sebire, Kristy Serpell, Carol Purdon

9.30am: Rachel McAsey, Judi O'Farrell,
Michelle Shingles

Ministers of the Eucharist:

6.00pm: Bob Cooper, Rose Quinn

9.30am: Matt Butler, John Moyle

Prayers of the Faithful: Mary Atkins

St Anne's Church Cleaners: 27th

Lee Pethybridge, Cindy & Jonas Narvasa

Setting up the Church: 28th Christine Sebire

Setting up the Church: 1st Bernie Oliver

Baptism Preparation: Mary Byrne

Counters: 3rd Eileen Pineo & Lois Williams

Hospital Visiting: 2nd Noela Boyer

Gardening: Bernie Oliver, Tom Oliver, David Baker

YOUR PRAYERS PLEASE

Sick: Patricia Vogeale, Bruno Barbera, Monica Beckwith, Dan Carey, Howard Clark Jnr, Pat Davey, Chloris Dignan, Caroline Farley, Fred Molluso, Murray Perrett, Meredith Ryan (Maddick), Maureen McKenner, Lenny Reid, Alistair Corman, Elizabeth Kyne (Weekly), Meaghan Broom (Byrne), Maurice O'Connor, Antonia Molluso, Carmel Murphy, Judy Cooling (Dwyer), Dominga Cabantac, John & Elaine Farley, Margaret McMahon, Veronica Brown

Anniversaries: Claire Sutton, Allan Pollock, Betty Hession, Jacob Symmons, Bill Blance, Charlie Pellegrino, Reece Lamb, Joe Westblade, Matthew Roberts, Sr Athanasius Griffiths and Jack O'Mullane.

Recently Deceased: John Egan, Maisy Walsh

***If you have an addition to our overall prayer list or require someone to be removed from our sick list please email admin.*

Ladies' Breakfast

28TH FEBRUARY 2026
9:30AM – SATURDAY
ST. MARY'S PARISH CENTRE

\$15

Join us in celebrating 140 years of
shared history between St Mary's
Parish and St Joseph's College, as
we honour the women who
journeyed in faith and the legacy of
the Brigidine Sisters.

First Reading*Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7***A reading from the book of Genesis**

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden. The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm*Ps 50:3-6, 12-14, 17***R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin. **R.**

My offences truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done. **R.**

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **R.**

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise. **R.**

Next Week: 2nd Sunday of Lent, Year A**28th February & 1st March 2026****1st Reading:** Genesis 12:1-4**Responsorial Psalm:** 32:4-5, 18-20, 22**2nd Reading:** 2 Timothy 1:8-10**Gospel:** Matthew 17:1-9**Second Reading***Romans 5:12, 17-19***A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans**

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation*Matthew 4:4***Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**

No one lives on bread alone,
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**Gospel***Matthew 4:1-11***A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says: He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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