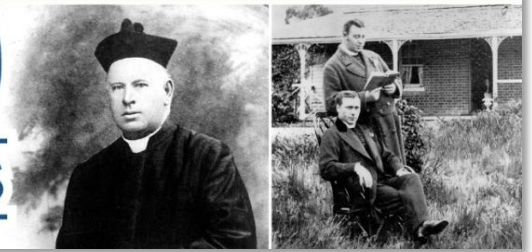




1876 – 2026

150 YEARS



WE THE PARISH OF BENALLA ARE WORKING TOWARDS BEING A WELCOMING, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY, WHICH ENCOURAGES ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN OUR LIFE. RECOGNISING AND RESPECTING THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL, AS WE JOURNEY IN LIVING OUT JESUS' GOSPEL MESSAGE.

We acknowledge the custodians of the land of the Yorta Yorta Nation which, includes the eight clan groups. We also acknowledge the Taungurung clan of the Kulin Nation whose lands are within our parish. We remember their ancestors with respect and commit ourselves to a better future through reconciliation and justice.

First Sunday of Lent

22 February 2026



Readings for this week: Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11



Readings for next Sunday: Genesis 12:1-4
2 Timothy 1:8-10
Matthew 17:1-9

FIRST READING

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.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

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.**

SECOND READING

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. [Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal.] 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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

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.



REGULAR MASS TIMES

Weekends – Saturday 6pm. Sunday 9.30 am, Weekdays – Tues to Fri 9.15 am

Next week - communion service with Sr Liz will be in the Church.

Thoon Mass – Third Sunday of each month, 12 noon



Subscribe and receive Parish Bulletin, Newsletter & updates about upcoming events: Subscribe by using the QR Code.

REFLECTION

The first reading shows Adam and Eve in the garden. God gives them everything they need, yet they listen to the voice of temptation. The serpent makes sin look attractive and harmless. Instead of trusting God, they choose their own way. Sin begins when we doubt God's love and believe that we know better than Him. In the second reading, St. Paul reminds us that through one man, Adam, sin entered the world. But through one man, Jesus Christ, grace and salvation come to all. Where sin increased, God's mercy increased even more. Lent is a time to move from Adam to Christ, from disobedience to trust. In the Gospel, Jesus faces temptation in the desert. He is hungry, alone, and tested. Yet He remains faithful. He answers every temptation with the Word of God. Unlike Adam, Jesus chooses obedience. This Sunday invites us to examine our own temptations. When we are tested, do we trust God? Lent is our desert time — a time to pray, fast, and grow stronger in faith, choosing Christ again and again. God Bless always, Fr Vijay

THANK YOU FATHER JOE TAYLOR

The parish community sincerely thanks you for celebrating Mass with us. We are most grateful for your presence and priestly ministry among our parish family.

Benalla Catholic Parish St Joseph's Church 150 Year Jubilee

Photo Memorabilia Request

This year, **Benalla Catholic Parish** proudly celebrates 150 years of faith and community. As part of our Jubilee celebrations, we will participate in the Heritage Tours on 1–2 May and host a Jubilee Afternoon Tea on 25 October.

To help mark this significant milestone, we are gathering photo memorabilia from across the years and warmly invite parishioners to share their treasured memories. We are seeking photographs of: Weddings, Baptisms and other Sacraments, Altar servers, Parish picnics and events, Pre-fire photos of the church, Any other special parish memories. If you are happy to contribute, please scan and email your photos to the Parish Office. When submitting photos, kindly include: 1 Your name (who the photo belongs to). 2 What the photo is of (event, location, or item). 3 When the photo was taken (an approximate date is fine). 4 Names of people or items shown in the photo

Alternatively, you may bring a copy of your photo to the Parish Office. Please write the above details on the back of the photo or place it in a clearly labelled envelope. Our office staff will make a copy and promptly return your original. Thank you for helping us celebrate and preserve the rich and wonderful history of our parish community as we mark 150 years of **St Joseph's Parish Benalla**.

PRAYERS FOR

RECENT DEATHS:

Christine Smith (nee Ryan),

Esmée Dries-Barnes (Niece of John & Marie Binion)

ANNIVERSARIES: Irene Noonan, Keith Glidden, Emil Kopanica, Joan Fluck, Nina Kolodziejczyk, Kingsley Levy, Peter Turcsak, Joan Goudie, Micheal Brennan, Kathleen Coonan, Geoffrey (Potsy) Harris, Eileen Donohue, Gilbert Cooke and Patrick Maher

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK: Skyler Levy, Susan Fitzgerald, Tracey Welsh, Elizabeth Waters, Anne Ryan, Duncan Carradice, Margaret McCrohan, John Downie, Frank Leveque and Deb Higgins



150 Years of Benalla Catholic Parish Jubilee Prayer

Loving God, we praise and thank You for the gift of 150 years of faith, hope, and love in Benalla Catholic Parish, within the Diocese of Sandhurst.

We remember with gratitude all those who came before us—the pioneers, priests, religious, and faithful people who built this parish through prayer, sacrifice, and trust in You. May their lives inspire us to remain faithful witnesses of the Gospel.

We place our parish under the gentle care of St Joseph, our patron and protector. Teach us, like him, to listen attentively to Your will, to serve with humility, and to live with courage and quiet faith.

As we journey toward our Jubilee celebration, renew our hearts and deepen our unity as one parish family. Strengthen our commitment to prayer, service, and mission, so that we may joyfully pass on the faith to future generations.

Bless our families, our young people, the elderly, and the sick. Guide our leaders and all who serve in this parish.

May this Jubilee be a time of renewal, gratitude, and hope, as we continue to walk together in Your love.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



St Joseph's Parish is a Child Safe Parish, and we are committed to the wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.

The Diocese of Sandhurst Safeguarding Committee is part of the structure under the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, which is designed to be implemented by Catholic entities across Australia. Any questions, queries, comments or suggestions are welcomed by the Safeguarding team who can be contacted through the Parish House by phone or email. St Joseph's Parish Child Safe Officers – Xavier O'Kane and Cath Duncombe 0423 203 154

WEEKEND VOLUNTEER ROSTER

Date	Times	Laptop	Commentator	Reader	Eucharist	Offertory
21 Feb	6.00pm	Ryan Miguel	Pat McDonald	Sr Liz	Maureen Murphy	Charlee & Kevin
22 Feb	9.30am	Oliver Raschke	Brian Higgins	Paddy O'Brien	Susie Buyx	J Berry & volunteer
28 Feb	6.00pm	Sr Liz	Anna Wise	Cath Duncombe	Suleena Chacko	K Elliott & Volunteer
1 Mar	9.30am	Max Rankin	Paddy O'Brien	Anne McLeod	Victor Nduka	M & R Miguel

Parish Priest: Fr Vijay Bandanadam, Parish House: 42 Arundel St, Benalla 3672. Fr Vijay's Mobile: 0435 006 171 Parish House Phone: 5762 2060

www.catholicparish.app>benalla Office Email: benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au, Fr Vijay's Email: frbasuoss@gmail.com

For donations/planned giving bank transfers BSB: 083543 Account No: 457724666 Reference: Your name



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



Sisilia (13) smiles as she stands in the middle of her classroom. Photo: Caritas Australia

Monoranjon lives in a region in southwest Bangladesh that is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Photo: Caritas Australia

Manaini sells fresh fruits and vegetables that she and her community have grown and packaged on their farms, by the roadside in a small village in Fiji. Photo: Caritas Australia

Ahmad, a Caritas Jerusalem staff member in Gaza, sits in the ruins of a building. Photo: Caritas Jerusalem

REFLECTION for FIRST SUNDAY of LENT

Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7 | Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17. R. v.3 | Romans 5:12-19 | Matthew 4:1-11

Nelson Mandela said that education was the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. There are plenty of people who would agree with him. One of them is Oprah Winfrey who said that education was the way to move mountains, build bridges and, yes, to change the world.

Today's readings certainly suggest the value of learning. The story from the Book of Genesis comes from pre-history. It has often been misunderstood to suggest that sin entered the world through one woman. This is not true. On the contrary, the readings tell us that the world is good. When humans try to overstretch their boundaries, trouble follows, and the experience of beauty and harmony is threatened. We need to choose our teachers. Are we going to listen to God or the serpent? In our modern world, the serpent takes many forms. There are countless threats to the harmony of the human race and the beauty of our natural environment.

REFLECTION Cont.

Likewise, today's story of the temptations in the wilderness from Matthew's Gospel shows us that some lessons are difficult. Jesus teaches the devil. He tells the evil one that God is in charge. Jesus must decide which voices he will follow. He must learn that some ideas may not be as good as they sound. All the kingdoms of the world, Jesus learns, are no substitute for an honest and life-giving relationship with God.

Each week during Lent, Caritas Australia asks us to think about the world and learn more about our role in building God's kingdom. Today we start with an introduction to Project Compassion, which allows us to appreciate how much the Catholic community, has been able to achieve across the decades for the most marginalised people of the world. We are all still learning. Pope Leo XIV has reminded us that the vulnerable are great teachers.

In Dilexi Te he writes:

Christians must not abandon almsgiving... It is always better at least to do something rather than nothing. Whatever form it may take, almsgiving will touch and soften our hardened hearts... for our part, we need to give alms as a way of reaching out and touching the suffering flesh of the poor.

The evil spirit will always focus on the negative and convince us that change is too difficult. The spirit of grace and truth will show us what is truly possible and help us sort our priorities.

Our generous support this Lenten season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life changing support to vulnerable communities in need. You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes, or by scanning your parish's QR code.



Caritas Australia Project Compassion The Long Walk for Water

Eleanor Macnamara has signed up to take the challenge of walking 40 minutes every day for 40 days, commencing on Ash Wednesday.

The Long Walk for Water is a fundraiser set up by Caritas where people are encouraged to walk at least 30 minutes a day for all of Lent, and to be financially supported by donations from family, friends & parishioners. Donations can be made on-line to Project Compassion - The Long Walk for Water.

Your support would be greatly appreciated. Cash donations can be handed to Eleanor but it is preferable to make donations on line to guarantee a tax deductible receipt.



Easter Calendar Dates

MARCH

Wednesday 4th	Stations of the Cross at 6 pm.
Friday 6th	Rosary, Adoration & Benediction at 6 pm.
Friday 13th	Stations of the Cross at 6 pm.
Thursday 19th	St. Joseph's Day-Patronal celebration on 21st & 22nd
Friday 20th	Stations of the Cross at 6 pm.
Saturday 21st	St Joseph's Day Celebration for 150th Anniversary
Sunday 22nd	St Joseph's Day Celebration for 150th Anniversary with St. Joseph's School children participating.
Thursday 26th	Reconciliation at 6 pm
Friday 27th	Stations of the Cross at 6 pm.
Sunday 29th	Palm Sunday
Tuesday 31st	Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo

APRIL

Thursday 2nd	Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6.30 pm
Friday 3rd	Good Friday Stations of the Cross 9 am, followed by hot cross buns
Saturday 4th	Easter Vigil Mass at 7.30 pm
Sunday 5th	Easter Day Mass at 9.30 am.

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