



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.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

15 March 2026



Readings for this week:

1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41



Readings for next Sunday:

Ezekiel 37:12-14
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

First Reading

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

Responsorial Psalm

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you

give me comfort. **R.**

Second Reading

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said: Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. [His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered, 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him. 'As long as the day lasts I must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when no one can work. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.' Having said this,] he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored. His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' [So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.] They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. [However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first



You have prepared
a banquet for me in
the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed

with oil; my cup is overflowing. **R.**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of
my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell

for ever and ever. **R.**

GOSPEL Continue...

sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we don't know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.' So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away. Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him. Jesus said: 'It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see and those with sight turn blind.' Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied: 'Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, "We see", your guilt remains.'

REFLECTION

The first reading from First Book of Samuel reminds us that God sees differently from human beings. When the prophet Samuel looks at Jesse's sons, he assumes the strongest and most impressive must be God's choice. Yet God chooses David, the youngest shepherd. The message is clear: God looks at the heart, not outward appearance. In the second reading from Epistle to the Ephesians, Saint Paul reminds believers that they were once in darkness but are now called to live as children of light. Living in the light means choosing goodness, truth, and righteousness. Lent is a time to step away from what keeps us in darkness and allow God's light to guide our lives. The Gospel from Gospel of John tells the powerful story of Jesus healing the man born blind. While the man gradually comes to see both physically and spiritually, the Pharisees remain blind because they refuse to believe. This story challenges us to ask whether we truly see with the eyes of faith. This Sunday invites us to open our hearts to God's light so that we may truly see, believe, and follow Christ more faithfully.

God Bless always, Fr Vijay

PRAYERS FOR

RECENT DEATHS:

Deb Higgins (niece of Neena Shanks),
Sr Shirley Kimball (FCJ) and Colleen Young

ANNIVERSARIES: Keith Challis, Barry O'Shea,
Bob Kendall, Geoffrey Reilly, Carol Lewis, Stan
Niedzwiezki, Peter Stewart and Bruce Woods

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 Trish McCabe



REGULAR MASS TIMES

Weekends – Saturday 6pm. Sunday 9.30 am, Weekdays – Tues to Fri 9.15 am
Thoon Mass – Third Sunday of each month, 12 noon

NO MASS TUES 17& WED 18 NEXTWEEK



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

WEEKEND VOLUNTEER ROSTER

Date	Times	Laptop	Commentator	Reader	Eucharist	Offertory
14 Mar	6.00pm	Ryan Miguel	Shirley Kearney	Cath Duncombe	Janene Humphries	K Elliott & Volunteer
15 Mar	9.30am	Oliver Raschke	Lisa Raschke	John Smyth	Joan Berry	T & N Pelly
21 Mar	6.00pm	Ryan Miguel	Pat McDonald	Sr Liz	Maureen Murphy	Charlee & Kevin
22 Mar	9.30am	Adrian Daw	Norma Pelly	James Flynn	Denise O'Brien	J Berry & volunteer

SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY MASS

EACH YEAR WE CELEBRATE SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY
ON 19TH MARCH



This is our **SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR!** St Joseph's
Primary School will have a Mass on Thursday 19 at
10.00am at the school and our parish will celebrate
St Joseph's Day on the Sat 21st & Sun 22nd. The Primary School student will be involved in the Sunday Mass also.

Please stay after Mass and have a cuppa. If you would like to supply some food for the cuppa after the Mass, that would be very much appreciated, please write your name on the register in the narthex. **BRING A PLATE – NAME REGISTER...** *thank you!*

BRING A PLATE – NAME REGISTER

SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY MASS	
Saturday 6.00PM – Yes I can bring a plate to share (Drop off at 31 Building before Mass)	Sunday 9.30AM – Yes I can bring a plate to share (Drop off at old Piety Store before Mass)
Name:	Name:

Easter Calendar Dates

MARCH

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 The Passion of the Lord at 3 pm
Saturday 4th	Easter Vigil Mass at 7.30 pm
Sunday 5th	Easter Day Mass at 9.30 am.

Steam It Up
CARPET CLEANING

Jason Blyss
0407438219



Goulburn Murray Credit Union
30—32 Bridge Street
PH 5762 3380



Accountants
Income Tax Returns
Business Advisers
107 Bridge St Benalla
Ph 5762 1588

MAHERS TREE SERVICE

JOHN MAHER

M: 0413 842 525

For all your tree needs, tree tidy up, complete tree removal, tree stump removal, woodchips
Dam cleanouts



HAIR

Alana Robertson

50 Church Street

Benalla 3672

Salon 5762 6006

Manor



Expert Electrical Services in Benalla
Ph 0408 572 766

COOKS

KERB | CONCRETE | EXCAVATION

PHIL & DEBBIE COOK

0409 950 046

N.J. TODD

Funeral directors
Phone: (03) 5762 2461
FEEHAN FAMILY
Est. 1938 - AFDA Member
81 Baddaginnie Road,
Benalla



LENT REFLECTION BOOKLET 2026

Preparing for Easter during Lent, you are invited into the Gospel stories of Lent (Year A) and the words of fellow travelers to reflect on Jesus and those who encountered Him during desert experiences in their lives. This reflection booklet, prepared by the Diocese of Sandhurst, is a resource for prayer and reflection. In 2026 it is offered in a single

booklet covering both Lent and Easter, replacing the traditional weekly Lent leaflets. A couple of printed booklets are available in the narthex or you can read them online at the following link.

<https://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/adult-faith-education/2453-lent-2026-rs/file>

WERE YOU MARRIED AT ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH?

Wonderful! As we prepare to celebrate our Jubilee, we are gathering special memories from the life of our parish. If you have photos from your wedding day at St Joseph's, we would love for you to share them with us so we can celebrate and showcase these beautiful moments with our parish community. Please feel free to drop your photos or memories off at the parish office. We will carefully scan your photos and return the originals to you. Thank you for helping us celebrate the rich history and joyful moments of our parish community.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

14–15 March 2026



Caritas AUSTRALIA

PROJECT COMPASSION

Life was hard for **Manaini** and her children living in rural Fiji. With the support from Caritas Australia's partner, FRIEND, she learnt food processing and gardening skills, improving nutrition and creating new income opportunities to support her children's education. **Please donate today.**

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code. **Or online at:** www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate

Or by calling: 1800 024 413 Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent.*



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



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

FROM FELLOW TRAVELLERS

The man born blind has scarcely begun his journey of faith when he is recognised as a disciple of Jesus and must suffer the persecution of a series of long interrogations, followed by expulsion from the synagogue. We can hear John thus reassuring his people that the similar persecutions they are experiencing are bringing them, too, opportunities for growth in faith.

Francis Moloney, We Have Seen His Glory, 29.

... Light is a most appropriate symbol for God because we don't actually see light; rather it's because of the light that we can see everything else. So, it is not surprising that Jesus tells us that he is the light of the world. It is only when we are in the light that we become aware of shadows; there are no shadows in the dark. In other words, it is only when we have a relationship with Jesus that we become aware of the shadows in our heart ... we don't have a direct vision of Jesus; rather, because of our relationship with him, we can see and experience everything else as it truly is, that is, in its proper context. A person who walks in the light, on account of their relationship with Jesus, has some idea of where they are going, which becomes clearer the closer we get to Jesus. But life is a journey, and we can stumble and fall and bump into things, and maybe temporarily get lost in a shadow. But at least we know that the things we bump into are obstacles, and the shadows are real shadows that shut out the light. And as long as we keep our relationship with Jesus running, we never quite lose our sense of direction.

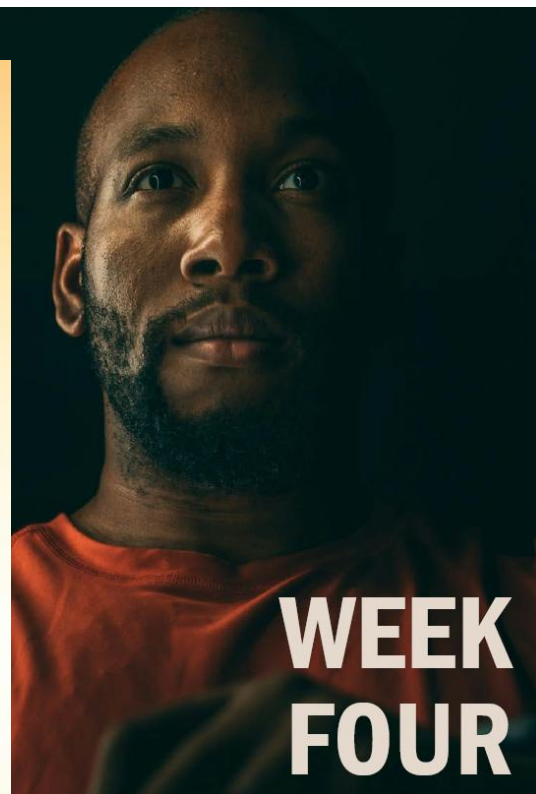
Patrick O'Sullivan, I Call You Friends, 79-80.

In practical terms, what exactly does it mean to have Jesus at the centre of our heart, so that our life is a real partnership with him? It means that, whatever I do, I talk to Jesus about it, on the level of the heart. I tell him, as a real friend, how it affects me – my fears, hopes, anxieties. When I do that, I create space for Jesus in the centre of my heart, so that when my heart, with all its frailties, is engaged in this or that venture or concern, there is space for Jesus right in the middle of it. A good time to practice this conversation would be at the end of the day, if we are in the habit of doing a daily Examen, reflecting on the day to see how our relationship has been going.

Patrick O'Sullivan, I Call You Friends, 83-84.

Because God says 'My power is at its best in weakness', then our knowing where we are vulnerable gives us a way to God. This is the process we've come to call 'healing'. Healing happens when we see ourselves – and our vulnerability – from a different perspective, from God's perspective.

Brian Gallagher, Taking God to Heart, 45.



CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, open our eyes,
that we may see you in our brothers and sisters.
Lord open our ears,
that we may hear the cries of the hungry,
the cold, the frightened, the oppressed.
Lord, open our hearts,
that we may love each other as you love us.
Renew in us your spirit.
Lord, free us and make us one.

Prayer attributed to Mother Teresa, Maurice Ryan Ed., Heartlines, 137.

FOR THINKING AND TALKING

- What is connecting with you from this story?
- With Jesus the blind man gains sight – of the eyes and spirit.
In your life have you experienced a journey from 'blindness' to 'sight', from 'darkness' to 'light'?

REVIEW OF LIFE

A prayerful review of each day or week can help us to grow in closeness to God in Jesus, drawing from the life-giving spring of his life and love. Allow 10-15 minutes for prayer. You may like to light a candle. Become aware of God's loving presence. Ask for help and guidance:

- For what moment, event or person are you most grateful?
For what are you least grateful?
Talk with God in Jesus about what has come to mind.
- Ask for wisdom and guidance for tomorrow.