

Celebrating



1876 – 2026

150 YEARS

of Benalla Catholic Parish



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.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

22 March 2026

 Readings for this week:	St Joseph's Feast Day	 Readings for 5TH week of Lent:	Romans 8:8-11 John 11:1-45 Ezekiel 37:12-14	 Readings for next week:	Isaiah 50:4-7 Philippians 2:6-11 Matthew 26:14-27:66
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SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY MASS

CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF SAINT JOSEPH'S WITH ST JOSEPH'S STUDENTS

ST JOSEPH FEAST DAY – FIRST READING – 2 SAMUEL 7:4-5, 12-14, 16

The word of the Lord came to Nathan: ‘

Go and tell my servant David, “Thus the Lord speaks: When your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body and after you and make his sovereignty secure. (It is he who shall build a house for my name, and I will make his royal throne secure for ever.) I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.”

ST JOSEPH FEAST DAY – RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The son of David will live for ever.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; Through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, That your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **R.**

‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages.’ **R.**

He will say to me: ‘You are my father, My God, the rock who saves me.’ I will keep my love for him always; For him my covenant shall endure. **R.**

ST JOSEPH FEAST DAY – SECOND READING ROMANS – 4:13, 16-18, 22

The promise of inheriting the world was not made to Abraham and his descendants on account of any law but on account of the righteousness which consists in faith. That is why what fulfils the promise depends on faith, so that it may be a free gift and be available to all of Abraham's descendants, not only those who belong to the Law but also those who belong to the faith of Abraham who is the Father of all of us. As scripture says: I have made you the ancestor of many nations – Abraham is our father in the eyes of God, in whom he put his faith, and who brings the dead to life and calls into being what does not exist.

Though it seemed Abraham's hope could not be fulfilled, he hoped and he believed, and through doing so he did become the father of many nations exactly as he had been promised: Your descendants will be as many as the stars. This is the faith that was ‘considered as justifying him.’

ST JOSEPH FEAST DAY – GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory and praise to you. Lord Jesus Christ! How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord; Continually they sing your praise!

Glory and praise to you. Lord Jesus Christ!

ST JOSEPH FEAST DAY – GOSPEL – MATTHEW 1:16, 18-21, 24

Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus who is called Christ.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.’ When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do.



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



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

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

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PRAYERS FOR

RECENT DEATHS: Anne Kerlin,
Deb Higgins (niece of Neena Shanks),
Sr Shirley Kimball (FCJ) and Colleen Young

ANNIVERSARIES:

Marion Murphy, Leo McMahon, Christopher Fischer,
Raymond Becroft, Kevin Saunders, Henry Norris,
Helena Bender, Laurie Webber, Dianna Batten, Lance
Dodemaide Katia Fregon

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,
Trish McCabe, Sari Yoingco, Rebeeca O'Reilly and
Paula McPherson



Were you Baptised at St Joseph's Church?

You were? Wonderful! As we prepare to celebrate our Jubilee, we are gathering special memories from the life of our parish.

If you have any photos from your Baptism (or your children's), we would love for you to share them with us so we can celebrate and showcase these beautiful moments with our parish community. Just drop any memories off at the office please, we will scan your photos and return your original to you.

WEEKEND VOLUNTEER ROSTER

Date	Times	Laptop	Commentator	Reader	Eucharist	Offertory
21 Mar	6.00pm	Ryan Miguel	Pat McDonald	Sr Liz	Maureen Murphy	Charlee & Kevin
22 Mar	9.30am	Peta Steen	Oliver Raschke	Marg Daw	Cath Duncombe	Daw Family
28 Mar	6.00pm	Sr Liz	Anna Wise	Vince Brannigan	Kath Elliot	Dan Brown & Michael
29 Mar	9.30am	Adrian Daw	John Smyth	James Flynn	Denise O'Brien	J Berry & volunteer

Easter Calendar Dates

MARCH

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

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SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Rite of Commitment for our Confirmation and First Eucharist Students will be presented with their workbooks this Sunday Mass. Also, Candidates for RCIA Program Final Weeks and the Presentation of the 'Our Father' this Sunday Mass.

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



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FIRST READING – EZEKIEL – 37:12, 14

The Lord says this: I am going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

SECOND READING – ROMANS – 8:8, 11

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

GOSPEL – JOHN – 11:1, 45

The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' The disciples said, 'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother,' said Jesus to her, 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said: 'I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?'

Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: 'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.' When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.' Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.

REFLECTION

The Fifth Sunday of Lent, gives us a message of hope and new life. In the first reading, God shows dry bones coming back to life. This reminds us that even when we feel tired, empty, or hopeless, God can renew us and give us strength again. In the second reading, St. Paul tells us that if we live with God's Spirit, we have true life. Even though we face struggles, God is always with us, guiding and giving us peace. In the Gospel, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. This shows that Jesus has power over death and brings life where there is sadness and loss. He calls Lazarus out of the tomb, just as He calls each one of us to come out of sin, fear, and doubt. In our daily life, we may feel weak or discouraged. But this Sunday reminds us to trust in Jesus. He can bring new life into our hearts. If we listen to Him and follow Him, we will experience His love, hope, and peace. God Bless always, Fr Vijay

Fr Vijay - Sabbatical

The purpose of my sabbatical is to deepen my spiritual life, renew my priestly identity, and strengthen my pastoral skills so that I may return to my diocese with greater wisdom, maturity, and readiness for ministry. These months are dedicated to ongoing formation, renewal of mind and heart, and acquiring practical skills for compassionate pastoral care. Dates for my sabbatical are starting from 1st June to September 10th. In God's faith, Fr Vijay.

FROM FELLOW TRAVELLERS

To those with a romantic idea of “gentle Jesus, meek and mild,” the image of Jesus in the New Testament will come as something of a shock. Jesus is undoubtedly a disturbing figure ... a challenge to his disciples. Then, having been captivated by his boundary breaking, healing ministry, we may have the courage to put our hand to the plough, and to move forward in his footsteps, to encounter through love, to oppose discrimination, to do justice, and to proclaim the realm of God. If, in so doing, we also become a disturbing presence, we have reason to believe it will also be creative and life-giving. Anthony Gittins, *A Presence That Disturbs*, 91-92.

This Jesus of Nazareth is a distinct historical individual: the one who was totally centred on a gracious God upholding all creation, the one who interpreted God's law in a 'humanising' way, the one who ate scandalous meals with public sinners, who delighted and challenged his hearers with the artistry of his parables, who taught the impossible, like love of the enemy, the one who vigorously confronted those in authority, the one whose presence brought joy and happiness, the one who called his followers to a new family, the one who faced failure and death because of the positions he took, the one who has been raised up and vindicated by God. This very specific Jesus is the symbol and the reality of God's radical commitment to the cosmos. And this same Jesus is the symbol and the reality of the cosmos returning God's embrace with a definitive 'yes'.

Denis Edwards, *Jesus and the Cosmos*, 93.

Mercy comes from a compassionate heart; it comes from a desire to be an equal. Jesus didn't want to look down on us. He wanted to become one of us and feel deeply with us ... Let us look at Jesus when we want to know how to show mercy to our brothers and sisters. Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*, 168.

Jesus focuses attention on his continuing presence among those who are needy: his “I” is ever present among people in need. It is as if Jesus deliberately turns us away from an exclusive focus on himself, challenging us to look elsewhere to find him. In so doing he inspires us to face the pain and loss endured by others, not keep staring at him. He will be found where others suffer. Denis McBride CSsR, “*The Sixth Station – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus*,” Stations of the Cross.

Many things that seemed unaccountable crosses have proved to be hidden blessings ... Let us study the lesson He taught us well and how by our increased fervour and fidelity that it has not been taught in vain. Let us prove ... that our delight and joy will be in trying to do His Will – His holy, adorable Will – and let alone. Desiring then His Holy Will and its accomplishment in all things and fondly hoping that you all seriously do this, I tell you to have courage.

Mary Mackillop quoted in Pauline Wicks RSJ, *God Will Take Care of Us All*, 99.



FOR THINKING AND TALKING

- What is standing out for you here? Any particular words or phrases? What might this mean for your life?
- If you have grieved the loss of someone you love, take a few moments to remember and to imagine Jesus with you in that situation. Imagine him continuing to be with you today. See and hear what he says and does.

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.



**PROJECT
COMPASSION**

Fifth Sunday of Lent 21–22 March 2026



Since October 2023, Caritas Jerusalem staff in Gaza have endured displacement, personal loss, and danger alongside the communities they serve. Despite unimaginable challenges, they remain committed to providing lifesaving support, standing in solidarity with families enduring this conflict.

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Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.