



The Carpenter

Building our Parish Community

No. 6 July - August 2026

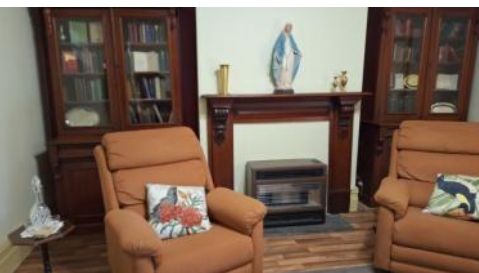
Victorian Heritage Festival Open Days at the St. Joseph's Precinct

As part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations, the Parish participated in the Victorian Heritage Festival, opening its historic properties to the public. On Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd May the crowds, though not huge, were extremely appreciative of the opportunity to see inside these wonderful buildings. They also appreciated the guided tours, the friendly welcome and the delicious afternoon tea.

Lyn Tanner and Maree Hanlon had put a great amount of work into preparing guide notes for all three buildings and special appreciation goes to Peta Cromie who did an amazing job setting up the rooms in the Parish House to display them at their period best. Some comments from people who visited - 'Finally got to see inside. I've been walking past for ten years and wondering', 'Parish house - just glorious to look into the past', 'Great friendly folk who talked about the church' and 'So much thought and work has gone into this event. Amazing and quite wonderful'.

The 150th Anniversary Social Committee and all other volunteers on the days are to be congratulated on a really splendid occasion.

The Presbytery - Parish House built in 1889



L: Cath Duncombe, Maree Hanlon & Lyn Tanner guides & committee members.

R: Jane Rushworth (Heritage Festival convenor), and volunteer guides Charlie Campbell - Arifin & Cath Duncombe.



Continued on page 6

ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH BENALLA

Parish Priest:

Fr Vijay Bandanadam (on leave)

Email - frbasuoss@gmail.com

Mobile - 0435 006 171

Parish House & Office:

42 Arundel Street , Benalla 3672

Phone 03 5762 2060

benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 am to 4 pm

Office Staff

Parish Secretary - Jane Salud

Admin Officer - Cath Donehue

FCJ Sister

Sr. Liz

Mobile 0448 933 581

Safeguarding Officers

Xavier O'Kane

Cath Duncombe

Parish Pastoral Council

Chair - Cath Duncombe

Parish Finance Committee

Chair - James Flynn

Mass Times

Benalla

Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 9.30 am.

Week days Tuesday - Friday 9.15 am

Thoona

3rd Sunday of each month at 12 noon

Cooinda 3rd Wednesday of month

Estia 2nd Wednesday of month

Morrie Evans 2nd Tuesday of month

Reconciliation by appointment

Baptism Preparation dates

Contact the Parish Office

What's Coming Up in May & June

In this section we hope to give you all the important dates for the following two months, with details as they become available.

JULY

Friday 3rd Exposition & the Rosary

Sunday 12th Cuppa after Mass - Sr. Liz's birthday morning tea in '31'

Friday 17th Birthday lunch for Sr. Liz at the Golf Club

Sunday 19th Thoona Mass

AUGUST

Friday 7th Exposition & the Rosary

Thursday 6th Transfiguration of the Lord

Saturday 8th Solemnity of St. Mary of the Cross (MacKillop)

Sunday 9th Cuppa after Mass in '31'

Saturday 15th The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Sunday 16th Mass at Thoona

Tuesday 18th 'The Carpenter' out

Fr. Vijay is on sabbatical leave until 17th September. During that time Fr. D.J from Euroa will be the priest on call for special needs. Please ring the Parish Office who will contact Fr. D.J.

Fr. D.J will be in Benalla on Wednesdays & Fridays.

Sr. Liz is in charge of the Communion to the Sick group and also the Communion to Cooinda, Estia and Maurie Evans if Fr. D J is not available.

Week-day services in the Parish House (Tues - Thurs.) conducted by Sr. Liz. and Fridays with Fr. D.J.



We, the Parish of St. Joseph's are working towards being a welcoming, supportive community, which encourages active participation in our life.



The 150th Jubilee Celebrations committee will have souvenirs available to purchase. Order forms are available now.

Fine China Coffee Mugs	\$10
Stemless Wine Glasses	\$15
Stemmed Wine Glasses	\$15
150 Years of Faith and Community - A Pictorial History of St. Joseph's Parish - booklet	\$15

Closer to the Jubilee Mass & Celebration there will be Commemorative Wine available for sale

* Payment by EFTPOS or cash accepted



We welcome Fr D J Suguitan Fr. Joe Taylor & Fr. Michael Morley as our priests for the months of June & July .

Fr. Joe & Fr. Michael will be in Benalla for Saturday & Sunday Masses only, for any other matters please ring the Parish Office for contact with Fr. D.J.



During Fr. Vijay's leave we will continue with the Rosary & Exposition only.

Come along on the 1st Friday of the month for this short but special time of Prayer

The 'Cuppa'



On the 2nd Sunday of the month only during the colder weather.

Sunday 12th July will be a special morning tea for Sr. Liz's birthday. Do come and help her celebrate.

The Cuppa will be in the 31 building. All welcome.

Save the Date



Jubilee Concelebrated Mass

Sunday 25th October

at 2 pm

**Followed by afternoon tea
& refreshments**



Sr. Liz is having a Special Birthday on Friday 17th July.

To help her celebrate we are planning two events.

1. On **Sunday 12th July** there will be a special morning tea for Sr. Liz in the old 31 building after Mass. All welcome.
2. On **Friday 17th July** you are invited to join Sr. Liz for lunch at the Golf Club at 12.00. Please put your names on the list in the narthex if you would like to come. We will need to book seats by Monday 13th.

Low Impact Tai Chi Exercises



Every Wednesday at **9.30 am** in the 31 building.

Note the new starting time.

Let's sing for Joy!

We asked for singers for special occasions, especially the Jubilee Mass on 25th October.

We are delighted that a group has formed, and thanks to Glenys McDonald who has agreed to lead this group. They plan to sing at Mass once a month, please join in with the group when they are singing.

Working bee? Altar server? Committee member?

Have you been involved with the church as an altar server, committee member, or helping at a working bee? We would love to include photos that capture these special moments in our parish history.

Photos with parishioners past and present are especially sought after.

If you have any photos or memories to share, please drop them off at the Parish Office. Thank you for helping us celebrate our Jubilee!

The Past Two Months...

The **North Eastern Deanery Forum** in Wangaratta was attended by Fr Vijay, Cath Duncombe & Max Rankin. The gathering began with Individual Parish Reflections where those parishes attending listed what they were Hopeful About and their Concerns for their Parish.

Interparish Discussions followed on the topics Patterns and Pathways noted in individual Parish Reflections, and Responses to Updates: Mission & Pastoral Life Team + Finance/Admin Team.

One clearly mutual comment was that parishes wanted simpler instructions, clearer language and visual resources from the Diocese / Chancery.

The Forum Report mentions the SWEFTY framework which looks to be a very useful strategy.

S - Service

W - Worship & Liturgy

E - Education

F - Finance (distinct from Parish Finance Committee)

T - Temporalities

Y - Youth

A word that caught my attention was 'temporalities'. Not being a word that I knew I researched and found that it is the opposite of 'spiritualities', and refers to secular properties and possessions of the Catholic Church. So, in a Benalla Parish sense it refers to things like maintenance of the Parish House and grounds, preservation of historic buildings and the '31' building.

Recent work on St. Joseph's Parish 'Temporalities'

Work continues on the restoration of heritage aspects of our church building. In the towers at the front of the church, work has commenced on guttering issues and old doors have been replaced. In the process signatures were found on some doors, presumably from the original and early building labourers. Large amounts of pigeon excrement have also been removed. In fact, 1800 kgs of pigeon poo has been removed so far, a massive job!



Several months ago the fountain in the front garden of the Parish House was brought back into full working order.



Some external painting of the Parish House was also carried out recently.

Prior to the Heritage Festival a working bee in the church and around the grounds produced great results and thanks are extended to all who worked so hard for the love of our church (and Church).

ANZAC DAY

At the 11 am ANZAC Day service at the cenotaph, **Susie Bukyx** laid a wreath on behalf of the St. Joseph's Catholic Parish.



Both **St. Joseph's Primary School & FCJ College students** marched in the parade and laid wreaths at the cenotaph.

In late April each of the **Foundation classes at St. Joseph's School** visited the church to learn a little about both the inside and outside of a church. They were introduced to the main features such as the altar, and together they said a prayer.

The Children's Sacramental Programme commenced in April, preparing 16 children for their Confirmation and First Eucharist.

In weeks following, at Mass the children have handed out their prayer cards to parishioners and also received the Our Father & Creed cards, which they read with the congregation.



The 'Cuppa' in 31 has been well attended recently, on this occasion the farewell for Michelle. This was also Fr. Vijay's last day before going on sabbatical leave.



Combined Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Benalla Catholic Schools Representatives Meeting held on Thursday 14th May at 2.30 pm.

This meeting was attended by PPC members Fr. Vijay, Cath Duncombe, Tricia Schipp, Eleanor Macnamara, Susie Bukyx & Oliver Rasche, Joseph Mount (FCJ Principal), David Keenan (St. Joseph's Primary School Principal) & Peta Steen (Catholic Identity co-ordinator at St. Joseph's).

The aim of the meeting was to build an active relationship with the schools, working with the schools to consolidate and expand Faith opportunities for the students and the parishioners, and to work with the Bishop's recommendations as set out in the Parish Review.

PPC members were able to express their hopes for a closer connection with the schools and also their desire that the students have ample opportunities to grow their Catholic faith, especially with visits to the church building.

The school representatives were able to explain how faith education is taught / practised in their schools and also explained the very different structures and limitations on what and how schools are managed today.

The schools use the **Source of Life** Religious Education Curriculum which is the mandated religious education curriculum framework for all Catholic schools and parishes in the Diocese of Sandhurst. This programme has a structured series of units by class and runs from Years Foundation to 12.

This was a constructive meeting where a closer bond was formed, the beginnings of a yearly plan was instigated and many ideas were put forward.

* * *



With a celebration of Mothers and mother figures on May 8th-9th came prayer cards and chocolates at Mass and a special morning tea on Sunday. Delicious home made slices and pretty serviettes made the day special.



Fr. D. J. Saguitan from Euroa was the celebrant on the Mothers Day week-end.

He introduced himself to the Parish as he will be our main assistant priest during Fr. Vijay's absence, and will be the contact priest for special needs.

WELCOME

We welcome **Fr. D.J.**, the assistant priest at Euroa who will have an assistant priest role at Benalla also, and will share the supply with Fr. Joe & Fr. Michael during June & July. He will at some stage be residing in the Parish House whilst Fr. Vijay is away and whilst renovations are being done on the Euroa Presbytery.

In August we will welcome **Fr. Doroteo Bravi** from the Monastic Community of the Sons and Daughters of God in the Parish of Dookie.

FAREWELL

At the end of May we farewelled **Michelle Cooke** who has been the Parish Secretary for more than 11 years.

At morning tea on 31st May she was thanked for all she has done for the Parish in that time, and best wishes are extended to her in her new role with the



Congratulations to the staff at FCJ College who not only made up two teams at the Rotary Trivia Night supporting the local CFA group, but were placed 1st & 2nd amongst a strong field.

Pictured is the winning team with their trophy and prize. Photo courtesy of Rotary

The Past Two Months continues More from Heritage Week -



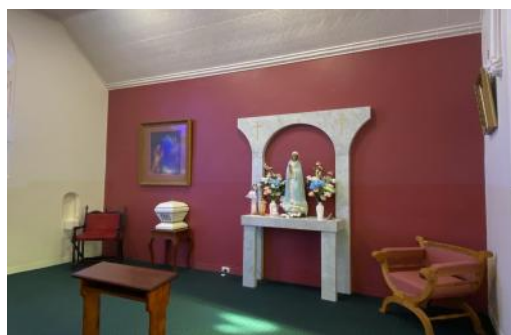
R: The stairs down to the cellar under the kitchen dining area in the Parish House



St. Joseph's Church built 1908



Tour guide Charlie



Guides Eleanor Macnamara & Louise Beling

The Old No. 31 School was built in 1874, replacing the original school built in 1851. The building was sold to the Catholic Church in about 2013.

Below: Fr. Vijay, 150th Anniv. Committee chair Marg Daw & Jane Rushworth



Left: Bernadette Verlin, Joan Berry, Michelle Cooke & Sr. Liz in recovery mode - afternoon tea at '31' after a busy day.

Left lower: Michael & Denise O'Brien, Joan Berry & Cath Donehue - guides and afternoon tea hosts.



Photos by Cath Duncombe, Marg Daw, Fr Vijay, Eleanor Macnamara & Lyn Tanner



After lots of planning and a busy week of preparation, the team celebrated a successful Heritage Week opening and a great team effort.

The Committee thanks all who helped, especially those who provided cakes & slices for afternoon tea in 31.

* * *



Sr Liz & Laudato Si 2026

We've just celebrated globally, Laudato Si Week for 2026. Pope Francis left us a legacy through Laudato Si which means- PRAISE BE TO YOU. In His Encyclical, he states "All is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start." Pope Francis urged us to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor and to place ourselves in communion with our common home.

Within the Parish, my dream was to bring Pope Francis' words to life, not through reading what the experts say but to be active, by doing. I decided to send an invitation to all of you to donate BULBS (not light bulbs!!!) and the response was brilliant. I initially didn't use the word Laudato Si. I wanted all of you to experience those two words.

We've taken the stretch of land in front of No.31 State School. The soil has been prepared by two Parishioners who volunteered their time and expertise. The flowering bulbs have now been sorted and are ready to be planted. As St Francis says, "Praise Be to you, Mother Earth."

That's what Laudato Si is all about. Coming together, working for a common cause. Who knows where this Parish Garden will take us!

* * *

Footnote: The bulbs were planted on Corpus Christi Sunday and now we wait until spring to see the glorious results



Laudato Si



Thanks to all who donated bulbs, prepared the soil, planted the bulbs, to the curious and eager children, the photographers and Sr. Liz.



Solemnity of St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop
- 8th August

'Never see a need without doing something about it'





Let's Meet the new Parish Secretary Jane Salud

Welcome to Jane Salud who is the new Parish Secretary at St. Joseph's, and also a parishioner.

She was born in the Philippines and arrived in Australia in 2015, and came to Benalla in 2021. She is married to Philip Murphy and they have a daughter Sara.

Jane is a qualified accountant, an experienced book-keeper and highly skilled in computers. In her leisure time she likes to sing.

You will find Jane in the Parish Office from 9 am Monday to Friday.

NAIDOC WEEK - 5th - 12th July

In simple terms NAIDOC Week is a time to celebrate the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It's a celebration for all Australians, not just Indigenous communities.



In St. Joseph's church we have a message stick, a traditional tool used for communication, placed in front of the ambo to signify the coming together of aboriginal and Christian cultures, a symbol of reconciliation and of welcome and inclusion.

Excerpt from a Facebook post on The Little Rose Shop

How many holy miles are walked during Mass? Soothing babies, coaxing toddlers, catching breath.



'These are missionary steps. Not in foreign lands, but in the domestic church. We are carrying the Gospel not across oceans but across carpeted floors, forming little hearts to know that Jesus is worth showing up for, even when it's hard.

We're not missing Mass when we're pacing that hallway - we're living it. Like the first disciples who walked dusty roads to share the Good News, we walk with purpose, even if it's just ten steps at a time. Every step matters. Every cry comforted. Every tired Sunday morning you show up again and again, you're planting seeds, just like any missionary would'.

The Transfiguration - 6th August

In the Transfiguration Jesus revealed his divine glory to Peter, James, and John. He transformed atop a mountain, appearing with Moses and Elijah, while God the Father declared, "This is my beloved Son".

The Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, Israel



The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - 15th August

In Catholic dogma the Assumption refers to Mary, the mother of Jesus, being taken body and soul into heaven at the end of her earthly life.

The Assumption appears in literature from the 3rd - 4th centuries. It is a very common subject in art from the 12th century. The dogma of the Assumption was not declared until 1950.

Fr Vijay in Alaska

Fr. Vijay is doing a 12 week Chaplaincy Summer School in Anchorage, Alaska. He arrived safely and the people welcomed him to a town of the Midnight Sun. The weather was beautiful & sunny.



Right: A visit to the Providence Alaska Medical Centre

St Joseph's Parish is a Child Safe Parish. 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.

Confirmation and First Eucharist On the week-end of Pentecost the Parish celebrated with the candidates and their families as sixteen children were confirmed by Fr. Vijay and received their First Eucharist. There were four boys at the Saturday evening Vigil Mass and another twelve children at the Sunday Mass.

We congratulate and pray for Michael, Edward, Samuel, Kade, Milla, Stella, Sully, Tess, Patrick, John , Sara, Mitchell, Emma, Rhett, Saira and Darcy.



10 cents Refund on Cans & Bottles

Do you recycle your aluminium soft drink cans and plastic drink bottles? Did you know that these can be recycled for cash?

James Flynn, chair of the Parish Finance Committee collects containers that have the 10 cent logo on them and exchanges them for \$\$ for St. Joseph's Church at Foott CDS Depot .

Look for the 10c sign on your drink containers. You could help.



Participating cans and plastic bottles can be left in the YELLOW lid bin beside the Parish House

OR the Parish Financial Committee have set up a partnership with Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme. Now you can take eligible cans & bottles to the FOOTT depot at 22 Irwin St, Benalla

to receive 10 cents per can or bottle.

If you choose to donate the funds to St. Joseph's Parish you can use a bar code which will automatically credit the parish account. In the narthex we have copies of the bar code available for you to use. Contact James or Eleanor on thecarpenter3672@gmail.com, or look for the barcode in the narthex.

Emergency Meals

We are looking for Parishioners who might be willing to prepare some food for a family in need of an occasional meal.

We plan to make a list of parishioners happy to help, and then if and when a need arises, we would make contact with a person on that list who could then prepare a meal appropriate to the circumstances of the family in need. We consider that this approach will take into account any particular dietary requirements, or number of people to be fed, rather than keeping a store of frozen meals which may or may not be suitable for a particular situation.

If anyone is willing to help, please contact Jane or Cath in the Parish office, 57622060, or Cath Duncombe, 0423203154.



Congratulations to the **Miguel family; Ryan, Marianne, Louiz and Karlo** who have been granted Permanent Residency in Australia.

Congratulations to **Oliver & Lisa Raschke** who have become first time grandparents to a little girl named Claudia Francesca.

Michael O'Brien celebrated his 80th birthday in early May, Happy 'Big O' Birthday Michael.

A Happy Special Birthday to **Sr. Liz** who will celebrate in July.

Let the editor know if you or a family member is celebrating something special. Email to thecarpenter3672@gmail.com or speak to Eleanor or Cath D (either one!)

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord

Jacqueline Ryan

23 February 1935 - 10 April 2026 - 91 years

James Joseph 'Jim' McKenna

6 August 1937 - 1 May 2026 - 88 years

Francis Robert 'Frank' Fisher

28 November 1952 - May 2026 - 74 years

The **Catholic Church National Count of Attendance** is conducted across Australia every five years, on the first four week-ends in May. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference collects the attendance data.

Thank you for your patience and help on the 4th week-end.

Farewell to Richard Rubira - On Saturday 2nd May Richard Rubira was farewelled by Fr. Vijay on behalf of the Parish as he has moved to Brisbane to be closer to his family. Over a long period of time Richard has filled many roles within the St. Joseph's community. Notable are his roles on the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Financial Committee, the land development and sales and his multi-tasking at the Sunday morning Mass. He will be missed and we wish him well in his new parish.



Two weeks earlier Richard was presented with a Paul Harris Fellow with One Sapphire for his services to the Rotary Club of Benalla and the community. As was said on that occasion, Richard was always one of the first to put his hand up for almost any project. At the Rotary shed, he carried out many little tasks that would have gone un-noticed by others.

* * *

On May 25th Fr. Vijay joined others priests and seminarians of the Diocese at a casual gathering in Avenel to meet **Bishop Rene Ramirez**. The day included an address by the Bishop and a luncheon.



Have you collected your book mark / prayer card Celebrating 150 Years of the Benalla Catholic Parish 1876 - 2026?



We acknowledge the custodians of the land of the Yorta Yorta Nation and the Taungurung clan of the Kulin Nation whose lands are within our parish. We remember their ancestors with respect.