



The Carpenter

Building our Parish Community
No. 7 September – October 2026

The Outlying Churches of the Catholic Parish of Benalla

Continuing the 150th anniversary celebrations for the Catholic Parish of Benalla, in this edition, we acknowledge the three out-centre churches.

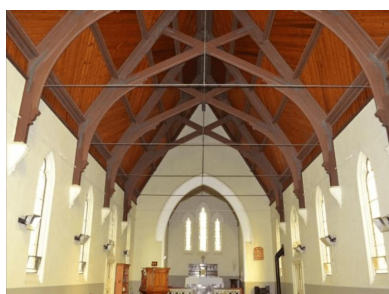
St. Brigid's Catholic Church at Bungeet was built in 1883 on an acre of land donated by Thomas Wall. The wooden construction served the local community for 72 years before it was dismantled in 1955 when the church was closed.

St. Brigid's Church at Thoona was built in the township and was consecrated on 13th February 1955. A brick construction, Mass continues to be celebrated once a month.

Bungeet on left, Thoona on right



St. Mark's Catholic Church at Devenish The first church was a wooden building erected in 1879 on land donated by Mark Trainor. In 1883 a brick church was built. As the population expanded, the last larger church of brick construction was built; the foundation stone laid on 1 September 1912. This church was deconsecrated in 2005, and it was sold and became a private home.



These photos of St. Mark's Catholic Church at Devenish date from 2015 when the property was sold.



St. Patrick's Catholic Church Rothesay started its life in 1872 in Violet Town. In 1899 Violet Town had outgrown the building and it was moved to Rothesay, half-way between Tatong and Swanpool in 1900. From 1900 to 2003 the church served the area well, the last Mass held on 3rd May 2003. The building was sold in 2004 to Kevin Smith and was relocated to **'River View' Tatong** where it has been restored and gained a new life.



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 9am 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.
Weekdays 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 Information Session

coming up soon. Contact the Parish Office to register or for more info.

What's Coming Up in September - October

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

SEPTEMBER

Friday 4th Exposition & the Rosary 6 pm
Tuesday 8th The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Saturday 12th Family Mass 6 pm, followed by light supper
Sunday 13th Cuppa after Mass in '31' building
Thursday 17th Fr. Vijay returns
Sunday 20th Thoona Mass 12 noon

OCTOBER

Friday 2nd Benediction & the Rosary 6 pm
Sunday 11th Cuppa after Mass in '31'
Tuesday 13th 'The Carpenter' out
Sunday 18th Mass at Thoona at 12 noon
Saturday 24th Vigil Mass 6 pm
Sunday 25th NO 9.30 am MASS TODAY
Sunday 25th 150th Jubilee Mass at **2 pm**, followed by afternoon tea & refreshments in St. Joseph's Hall

Father Denib Josette 'DJ' Suguitan continues as the Administrator of St. Joseph's Parish until the return of Fr. Vijay.



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 have **Commemorative Souvenirs** available to purchase. Order forms & sales are available now.

Fine China Coffee Mugs \$10

Stemless Wine / Tumbler Glasses \$15

Stemmed Wine Glasses \$15

150 Years of Faith and Community - A Pictorial History of St. Joseph's Parish - booklet \$15

Tarzali Commemorative Wine - Riesling \$15

Tarzali Commemorative Wine - Shiraz \$15

* Liquor licence number 90190852

* Payment by EFTPOS or cash accepted



Jubilee Concelebrated Mass
Sunday 25th October
at 2 pm

Followed by afternoon tea
& refreshments

NOTE that on that week-end there will be 6.00 pm Mass on Saturday but **NO 9.30 am Mass on Sunday.**

The Jubilee Mass at 2 pm will be the only Mass on Sunday, and all are encouraged to attend this special occasion.

'The Cuppa' after Mass is currently being arranged by Denise O'Brien and Susie Buyks. They would really appreciate some more helpers for set-up, serving and clearing up after. Contact Denise 0439 811 055 or Susie 0448 759 029.



The 'Cuppa'

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

The Cuppa will be in the 31 building.

All welcome.



September: the Rosary & Exposition at 6 pm.

October: the Rosary & Benediction at 6 pm.

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



Low Impact Tai Chi Exercises

Every Wednesday at 9.30 am in the 31 building.

All Welcome.

Let's sing for Joy! We are delighted that a choir group has formed, and thanks to Glenys McDonald who has agreed to lead this group.

They plan to sing at Mass one Sunday a month, please join in with the group when they sing.



OLD PHOTOS Sherileigh is still looking for old photos to add to our 150th Anniversary display. Take your old photos to the Parish Office where they will be copied and returned to you.

'150 Years of Faith and Community' - A Pictorial History booklet

Lyn Tanner & Maree Hanlon have put together a new pictorial history booklet showcasing 150 years of St. Joseph's Parish Benalla.

This beautiful souvenir booklet will update our history and be a wonderful reminder of all that St. Joseph's Parish has meant to so many families and the community.

Don't miss getting your copy when it is becomes available soon. Reserve your copy via the order form for \$15, hand it into the Parish Office.

The Past Two Months...

With the publication of The Carpenter no. 6 in June, we completed the first year of our Parish Newsletter. Thank you for your acceptance and kind words of support ... and thank you to all who have given me items to include, photos and assistance with proof reading, printing and mailing out.

The Carpenter has been prepared using Microsoft Publisher which unfortunately is being discontinued by Microsoft in October ... and not being replaced with an alternative. So, this has left me searching for an alternative that doesn't require this old dog to learn too many new tricks. Our demographic must also be considered. Cloud based and AI programmes don't seem to fit for us, so I am trying to use PowerPoint for this edition. Let's see how we go!



In June the statue of **Our Lady of Fatima** visited Benalla & we had two occasions to say the Rosary and pray for peace in her presence.

Sunday 12th July began **the Celebrations for Sr. Liz's special birthday**, with Fr. Michael Morley offering the Mass for Sr. Liz.

This was followed by morning tea in the warm 31 building where the setting looked beautiful & the morning tea delicious.

A special cake was made by Hector and Sonia, Denise O'Brien said a few words on behalf of the Parish, happy birthday was sung and Sr. Liz responded.

Congratulations to Sr. Liz on her 70th birthday. Thank you to all who helped with the special morning tea.



Sr. Liz acknowledging the occasion.



Sonia holding the cake whilst Sr. Liz blows out the candles



Right: Fr. Michael Morley with the Miguel family, Karlo, Marianne & Ryan



Hector made the cake for the occasion

Friday 17th was the actual birthday, and the day began with Fr. DJ offering the Mass as a thanksgiving for Sister's life and vocation.

This was followed by morning tea with the staff at **FCJ College** where there were gifts, birthday cake and happy times.

The photo (left) is courtesy FCJ College Facebook page, and shows Sr. Liz, Fr. DJ Suguitan, Sr. Liz's sister Margaret and Joe Mount, FCJ Principal ... and Charlie, of course.



The Past Two Months continued

By the time Sr. Liz got to **Lunch at the Golf Club** she was onto her 5th celebration! More cards, flowers and presents, a lovely lunch and Sr. Liz was feeling quite 'celebrated out'.



Sr. Liz says, 'Thanks!'

I've been overwhelmed by all the love that came my way, for my 70th birthday.

I wish to sincerely thank each one of you who made it so! The cards, gifts, words of congratulations, the celebrations and your presence touched my heart deeply. May God bless each one of you, today and always.

"Each time I pray for you, I pray with joy!"

Sr. Liz FcJ



We had a beautiful sung Mass on Sunday 26th July with Fr. Doroteo Bravi and the parish choir.

A children's space was also set up in the chapel.

Installation of the 9th Bishop of Sandhurst, Most Reverend Rene Ramirez RCJ at Sacred Heart Cathedral Bendigo on 30th July

Sr. Liz, Cath Duncombe & Eleanor Macnamara [& also Fr. DJ, Fr. Joe & Fr. Doroteo] travelled to Bendigo to witness the installation of Bishop Rene Ramirez as the 9th Bishop of the Sandhurst Diocese. It was a very special celebration for Bp. Rene and the whole Diocese, with a huge congregation witnessing the joy through the Liturgical Reception and the Eucharist. To quote the Diocesan press release: 'The numinous and historic Sacred Heart Cathedral will come alive with the splendour, colour and transcendent sacred music of a solemn Mass' ... and indeed it did.

Part of the ceremony involves the unfurling of the crest of the new Bishop, and the seating of the Bishop-Designate in the Cathedra (or Bishop's Throne). At this point he formally takes possession of the See of Sandhurst.

It is rare that you get to be in the presence of three Archbishops, 28 Bishops and 1300 invited dignitaries and other guests.

The celebration was followed by a luncheon at St. Kilian's Church Hall.



Ruby has joined the Serving team



Continued: Bishop Rene Ramirez RCJ.

On the previous page is the coat of arms of the Bishop, each item within the crest is of significance to him and the Sandhurst Diocese. His motto 'Zelus et Misericordia' means Zeal and Mercy.

You can see much more about Bishop Ramirez and the Celebration by searching Diocese of Sandhurst. You could also subscribe to Sandpiper e-News or search Facebook for lots of photos.



The new Bishop delivers his first homily.
Photos from Catholic Education Sandhurst Facebook page



FCJ College reps at the Cathedral in Bendigo; Principal Joe Mount, School Captains Bryce & Emily and Director of Catholic Identity Donna Wilcock.

Photo from FCJ Facebook page

Our Laudato Si Garden

There are signs of life in the bulb garden. Sr. Liz and Charlie regularly check progress, and I hear Charlie wanted to snack on the new shoots. There are a variety of foliage styles peeping through and a few snowdrops are flowering.



INQUIRY INTO THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Are you interested in becoming a Catholic? Would you, or someone you know, like to know more about the Catholic Faith? We will be holding a series of inquiry meetings over the coming weeks for anyone who wants to join our Catholic community or learn more about our Catholic faith and traditions. The first meeting will be held in St Joseph's Parish House, 42 Arundel St Benalla on Sunday, August 23rd at 7.00pm.

The focus for the meeting will be 'Concepts of God' and 'What is calling you to the Catholic Faith?' If you know anyone who may be interested, or is enquiring about the Catholic faith, please contact the staff at St Joseph's Parish House by phone on 57622060 or email at benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au, or join us on August 23rd.



The Parish expresses its appreciation for the wonderful care given to us by our four visiting priests, Fr. DJ Suguitan, Fr. Joe Taylor, Fr. Michael Morley & Fr. Doroteo Bravi.

There is still another month before Fr. Vijay returns.

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.

Drink Container Recycling A reminder that the Parish is registered to receive cash back donations from your returned aluminium cans and plastic bottles. Those accepted are marked with a 10cent logo on the side.

You have two options - you can collect a laminated card with the bar code from the narthex/foyer of the church, and take it & your recycling to CDS VIC FOOTT depot at 22 Irwin Road, off Sydney Road. The money will automatically go into the Parish account, so long as you get the bar code scanned.

Alternately you can put your cans and plastic bottles in the bin with the yellow lid situated beside the gate to the back door of the Parish House.

Speak to James Flynn if you would like more information, or if you would like to help him.

Baptism Information Session

Thinking about Baptism for yourself or your child? Or do you know someone who may be interested? We warmly invite you to join our Baptism Information Session, where you'll learn about the meaning of Baptism, the preparation process and can have the opportunity to ask any questions.

We look forward to welcoming you. To register or find out more, please contact the Parish Office on 5762 2060 or email benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au.



Creation Care Thursday is the monthly on-line gathering of Laudato Si Animators in the Asia Pacific region. The gathering is a shared space for prayer, reflection, connection and learning, aimed at deepening understanding on caring for our common home.

Sr. Liz has been invited to present her (& our) story on October 29th when she will speak about our Laudato Si garden and the bulb planting in which we participated. She will also show a visual presentation.

Congratulations Sr. Liz, we look forward to hearing about your Creation Care Thursday experience.



Celebrate 150 Years of Benalla Catholic Parish ...

by purchasing souvenirs produced especially for the occasion. The **Order Forms** have been circulated widely and now is the time to make your purchases.

Fill in your order form and prepare your method of payment. You can make a Bank Transfer by using BSB: 083543 Account no. 457724666 and Reference (Your Name), Jubilee or you can pay cash when you submit your order form.

Take your order form to the Parish Office between 2 and 4 pm Monday to Friday.



Fine china mug	\$10
Stemmed wine glass	\$15
Stemless wine glass or tumbler	\$15
Tarzali wine: Riesling or Shiraz	\$15
Commemorative etching, print or labels on all items. Mug also has logo on reverse side.	

Liquor
Licence #
90190852



Let's Learn More about Sr. Liz Brown...

Born: Elizabeth Brown was born in 1956 at Queen Victoria Hospital in Melbourne, Olympics year in Melbourne.

Grew Up: She grew up in Carrum and West Heidelberg, living in Olympic Village which was the accommodation built for the athletes.

Education: Liz was educated at St. Pius X West Heidelberg up until grade 5 then at St. John's Clifton Hill. Both Liz and her sister Margaret won scholarships to attend Vaucluse Convent in Richmond, and this is where she first met FCJ Sisters.

After HSC she went to Mercy Teachers College in Ascot Vale then taught at St. Raphael's West Preston (where she developed a deep desire to become a nun) and at Sacred Heart Kew. After a year of teaching there she began her training to become a nun in 1981.

She made her final vows in February 1994 in Jersey, Channel Islands.

Sr. Liz has given me a more detailed story of her life which I hope to be able to include in the next editions of The Carpenter.

Eileen Rosaline O'Connor: Servant of God – A Remarkable Life

Eileen Rosaline O'Connor, also known as 'Little Mother' (she was 115 cms tall) was born in Melbourne in 1892. She suffered a traumatic fall from a pram when she was 3 and was mostly bedridden or wheelchair bound, and in constant pain.

On 15th April 1913 she co-founded Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor, 'The Brown Sisters', with Fr. Edward (Ted) McGrath. He was a Missionary of the Sacred Heart priest and born in Bungeet, near Benalla.

Eileen O'Connor died in Sydney on 10 January 1921, aged 28 years. In 1936 Eileen's body was moved from Randwick cemetery to the Mother House in Dudley St, Coogee. Her coffin was opened and her body was found to be incorrupt.

The Brown Nurses order was formally recognised in 1953.

The Cause for Canonization of Eileen O'Connor was launched in February 2020. She had already been accorded the title 'Servant of God' in 2018. Beatification is the first of two major steps towards being officially declared a saint.

Thanks to Louise Beling for drawing to our attention the work of Eileen O'Connor and Fr. McGrath (& his local connection).

More information is available at the Piety Stall.

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary - the mother of Jesus – 8th September

This is an ancient Christian feast, one of only three birthdays celebrated liturgically; the others being Jesus and John the Baptist. The traditional names of the parents of Mary are Joachim and Anne.

EILEEN ROSALINE
O'CONNOR



Looking through a box of 'treasures' recently I found a well-worn little book titled **Everyday Graces**. This book belonged to one of my children and was used daily at evening meal-time for the years of their childhood.

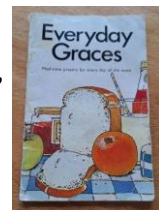
Encouraging children to read or say Grace daily is a fun way to introduce them to daily prayer, gratitude and spirituality.

Judging by the marks in the book these were favourites -

'God is great, God is good,
Thank you, God, for all our food'
and

'For every cup and plateful,
God make us truly grateful'

Although when they were older, I do remember they favoured 'Heavenly Pa, ta! ☺



Peter Holmes walks more of the Camino Frances in Spain.

Back in edition no. 2 of The Carpenter, I reported on Peter Holmes Camino walk from Leon to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and his intention to walk the other half in 2026. Peter has recently returned and here is his update.

The Camino de Santiago has great spirituality, and many pilgrims said the same thing. Peter met a Canadian who was walking his fifth camino and Peter walked much of the way with him. Peter adds, 'Ever since coming home I could still feel the call of the Camino and intended to return to do the other part'. The plan was to walk from St. Jean Pied de Port at the foot of the Pyrenees in France to Leon in Spain.

When he arrived in St. Jean there was snowfall on the Pyrenees and no pilgrims were allowed to go over the top, this meant a bypass lower down, further to walk and another day needed in the plan. In the rush of leaving Benalla Peter forgot to get his phone onto global roaming so he found himself without communication, except for What'sApp. Having decided to do this leg solo & under his own steam, he needed to book ahead daily for accommodation in albergues and luggage transfer. So, there he was, in a foreign country with no language skills and no communication ... and that's where he appreciated the company of the experienced Canadian. Some of the highlights were:



- drinking in the bar that Ernest Hemingway frequented during the Spanish Civil War & WWII
- Seeing the Running of the Bulls in a small village near Pamplona
- The beautiful farming country, the various colours of the crops, like a patchwork quilt. Sensational!
- Meeting many people from many countries, for example a retired colonel in US Army who fought in the Middle East & shared his experiences, a girl working for the ADF in ballistic missiles, 2 vets from London, a young clergyman from a small village in England and many other interesting people.
- He attended two Masses



Peter cut his Camino short in Burgos, mainly because of the lack of communication, homesickness and the incredible summer heat in Spain.

But the spirit of the Camino is still calling and Peter plans to go back next year to link the two walks, about 200 kms between Burgos and Leon.



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.



Congratulations and best wishes to **Sr. Liz** who celebrated her big birthday on 17th July.

Happy 80th birthday to **John Smythe** whose big day is on 1st September. Best wishes, John.

Congratulations to **Kevin** Renzo Sevilla & Ma **Zaira Sevilla** who became Australian Citizens at the ceremony on 7th July. Congratulations and Welcome to you!

Congratulations to **Xavier O'Kane** who has turned 40 recently. Xavier's birthday was more meaningful than most of his age as he decided to run his first marathon, in Kenya. In the process his aim was "to raise funds for One Heart, a charity creating real, lasting change for disadvantaged children living in poverty" [in East Africa]. Whilst the marathon was a huge challenge, Xavier is to be congratulated on his compassion and fundraising efforts as he raised well in excess of \$20,000 for his chosen charity, One Heart.

Census & Time and Talent Forms

We invite all parishioners to complete our Parish Census. Whether you are new to the parish, have been part of our community for many years, or worship with us occasionally, your details will help us to update our data, stay connected, offer pastoral support, and plan for the future.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord

John Thomas Downie

5 July 1959 - 17 June 2026 – 66 years

Omar Soledad

7 Aug 2007 - 13 June 2026 - 18 years

Pasqualina 'Lina' Grieco

26 September 1933 – 27 July 2026 – 92 years

Patricia Kathleen Todd

18 March 1935 - 9 August 2026 – 91 years



'Riposa in Pace'

Two of several beautiful flower arrangements at the Requiem Mass for Lina Grieco

FAMILY MASS

*Saturday 12th September at
6 pm.*

Student participation

Wear your footy scarves

Followed by a light supper with
sausages for the children



The Carpenter newsletter comes out every two months and is produced by Eleanor Macnamara, who can be contacted by e-mail on thecarpenter3672@gmail.com