

The Catholic Parish of Sacred Heart & St Columba

Our Parish is a Christian community which welcomes all to walk together in a spirit of compassion, justice and hope.

PARISH NEWSLETTER 29 / 30 MARCH 2025 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



St Columba Church

cnr Glenhuntly & Normandy Rds
Elwood 3184

Sacred Heart Church

83 Grey Street, St Kilda West 3182

St Columba Primary School

24 Glenhuntly Road Elwood 3184
9531 6560;
www.stcolumbasprimary.org

Sacred Heart Mission

87 Grey Street, St Kilda West 3182
9537 1166;
www.sacredheartmission.org

PARISH HOUSE

2 Normandy Road, Elwood 3184
03 9531 6120; shsc@shscparish.org.au
www.shscparish.org.au

Parish Priest: Fr John Petrus
john@shscparish.org.au

Pastoral Ministry Leader: Christine Mitchell
christine@shscparish.org.au

Office Manager: Jane Hearnese
jane@shscparish.org.au

SHM Pastoral Care Worker

St Columba Principal / REC:

Daniella Maddalena
dmaddalena@scelwood.catholic.edu.au

Deputy Principal: Bern Bradley
bernb@scelwood.catholic.edu.au

Parish Safeguarding Committee:

Fr John Petrus, Christine Mitchell,
Daniella Maddalena, Jane Hearnese

Parish Visiting Team: Lay Pastoral Care Group; Legion of Mary Groups
Call or email the Parish Office.

St Vincent de Paul President: Dominic Tesoriero
domtess1@gmail.com

Elwood and St Kilda Legion of Mary
Please contact the parish office.

Reflection on the Gospel (an extract)

[Source: Fr Alex Peter Selvaraj MSFS in A Promise of Hope: Lenten Program 2025 Year C, Diocese of Broken Bay.]

"I will get up and go to my Father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you'". Have we ever spoken the words of Lk 15:18 in our

lives? If not, let us begin to say them as often as possible, allowing them to shape our hearts and actions. Most of us have at least a few things worth bringing up! And if you're worried about repetition, don't be, God doesn't get tired of hearing, "Sorry, I messed up,"...

Lent is a sacred season of return, a journey of hope as pilgrims seeking renewal and forgiveness in the loving arms of God. The words of Lk 15:18, spoken by the prodigal son, resonate as an invitation to rise from our imperfections and embrace the abundant mercy of our Heavenly Father. In this

Jubilee Year of Hope, we are called to make the most of this opportunity to experience God's transformative forgiveness.

The parable of the prodigal son embodies the central theme of God's mercy and forgiveness. The son's decision to return to his father after squandering his inheritance mirrors our own spiritual journey. Often, we find ourselves distant from God, burdened by sin and guilt. We often misuse the time and resources that have been generously provided to us. Yet, like the father in the parable, God eagerly awaits our return, ready to forgive and restore us. God is at the window, not watching us but waiting for our return.

In his Apostolic Letter, *Misericordia et Misera*, Pope Francis reminds us: "The mercy of God is not an abstract idea but a concrete reality through which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child".

As Pilgrims of Hope, we journey with trust, knowing that God's mercy opens the door to a brighter future. Lent is a privileged time to rise from the wet cement of our spiritual lethargy. This wet cement, self-possessed selfishness, pride, resentment, anger, lust, fear and attachment to

material things. They eventually harden if we stand on it. It weighs us down, paralyses us, and prevents us from moving forward. Lent is a time not to remain stagnant but to awaken a desire to take action.

Luke 15:18 challenges us to act, "I will get up and go." This decision requires humility, courage, and trust. In Lent, we are invited to reflect on the barriers preventing our return to God and to take concrete steps to overcome them. Begin by acknowledging, just like the prodigal son and the tax collector who said, 'Have mercy on me, a sinner'. Let us not delay, for as Saint Paul urges: "Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor 6:2.).

May this Lent be a season of profound renewal, where we rise as Pilgrims of Hope, embracing God's forgiveness and sharing it with others. Like the Prodigal Son, let us experience the joy of being welcomed home, clothed in grace, and empowered to walk in newness of life. Together, let us journey toward the hope of Easter, confident in God's unending mercy and love.

Grant, O Lord, that this Holy year be the year of the great return and great forgiveness.

WARM WELCOME

Welcome to all who celebrate the Eucharist with us today, to the church communities across our parish and a special welcome to all who happen to be visiting our Parish.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Today we stand in footsteps millennia old. May we acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Kulin Nations, who are the traditional custodians of our parish land, whose cultures and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land since men and women awoke from the great dream.

We acknowledge their continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Our Parish supports the recommendations of the Royal Commission and all endeavours to bring healing to and justice for the victims of abuse. Our Parish Leadership & Development Team and Safeguarding Committee work proactively to ensure the safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults in our community.

There are a range of important and interesting resources on the Church noticeboards and on our website supporting and highlighting Safeguarding. Please feel free to contact a member of the Safeguarding Committee if you have any concerns or ideas.

PALM SUNDAY WALK FOR JUSTICE AND KINDNESS

On Palm Sunday we remember the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the celebration of God's kingdom drawing near – a kingdom in which those who are poor, persecuted and mourning find hope. As we increasingly hear the cries of our refugee neighbours, join the broad and united movement, standing in solidarity with our refugee neighbours and add your voice to advocate for dignity and justice. To mark Palm Sunday, The Refugee Advocacy Network, along with the Faith Communities Council of Victoria and many other organisations invite all to join the walk for justice and kindness towards refugees and those seeking asylum.

- 1.00 p.m: Gather on Princes Bridge with Riff Raff Marching Band.
- 1.45 p.m: Arrive at Tom's Block. (Bring a picnic rug or chair)
- 2 – 3.00 p.m: Program of speakers and music with MC Tom Ballard and guest Gillian Triggs AC. Refugee speakers and musicians, faith representatives. Melbourne Mass Gospel Choir.
- 3 – 3.45 p.m: Music continues, info and activities with refugee community and advocacy groups



PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

God of the lost, the least,
and all who long for home,
when we wander from your ways
and waste the gifts you have given us,
welcome us back, we pray,
so that we may celebrate and rejoice
in your presence forever;
through Jesus Christ your beloved Son. Amen.

EASTER SERVICES 2025

Details of our Easter services from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday are available on flyers at the back of church and on our website. <https://www.shscparish.org.au/>

SIGN UP SIGN UP SIGN UP FOR EASTER SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

We have placed a sign-up sheet calling for volunteers to assist in our Easter Services. These will be out for the next three weeks – **if you wish to support any of the services, please list your details** and Christine, our Pastoral Ministry leader will get back to you in two weeks' time.

FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITY

During May, Catholic Theological College will run another Engaging Your Faith series of eleven individual short, online presentations. These presentations invite participants to reflect on what it means to be people of faith in the contemporary world. Topics include: science and faith issues including AI; Vatican II, Blessed Virgin Mary, Scriptures, Religion and Ethics, and Jubilee of Hope.

For more detailed content information, visit their website <https://ctc.edu.au/news-and-events/engaging-your-faith/>

Workshop Dates run from: Monday 12 May 2025 - Wednesday 28 May. **Cost:** \$25 per session or \$40 for teachers applying for Catholic School accreditation.

To register directly, visit: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1373151>. Once registered, online event access details will be provided by CTC. For those interested, we have left pamphlets at the back of the church.

EXHIBITION: RAW AND UNFRAMED

This powerful exhibition showcases artworks by 18 refugee artists detained in Indonesia. Forced to flee war-torn countries, these artists transform their struggles into extraordinary creativity, choosing hope over despair. These 'Raw and Unframed' artworks are being sent directly from refugees in detention, as an unframed canvas. Supported by Asylum Art Refugee Support, the artworks are a protest against injustice, a gift of beauty, and a message of resilience. Proceeds from sales help the artists move toward freedom and a safe new country. **Drop into Space2b ArtSpace 144 Chapel Street, St Kilda.** Exhibition closes 5 April.

LENT: PROJECT COMPASSION



This Lent, we are called to *Unite Against Poverty* through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. Your generous support this Lenten Season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life-changing support to vulnerable communities in need.



Our second reading today reminds us that we are 'ambassadors for Christ'. St Paul says, 'for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation.' Let us all be part of building that new creation, setting the world to rights as best we can. Our part is to reach out in compassion and love to heal the wounds of the whole human family. Let us all Unite Against Poverty as pilgrims of hope in this Year of Jubilee.

You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes envelopes or by scanning the QR code. Or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion Or by calling: 1800 024 413

CDF QR CODE FOR SERVICE & SUPPORT DONATIONS

CDF have organised for each Parish to have a CDF/PACEM QR code that can take Parishioners directly to our Parish CDF/PACEM site.

There is no Establishment Fee and no Monthly Fee for the parish and each transaction is charged 1.30% + \$0.10 which is charged to Parishes not the giver.

This is a cheaper option than the current Tithely system so we ask parishioners to consider swapping over.

'Planning Giving' supports the upkeep and expenses of our Parish buildings and funds the programs and activities in our Parish. 'Presbytery' supports Fr John and the sick and retired priests throughout the Archdiocese.



INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CATHOLICS WORLD WIDE

[Source: La Croix]

The number of Catholics in the world continues to increase. That is what is reported by the March 20 publication of the 2025 edition of the *Pontifical Yearbook* and the *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae 2023*, which compiles numerical data on Catholicism. The Vatican's official statistics thus indicate that the number of faithful increased by 1.15% between 2022 and 2023, going from 1.39 billion to 1.406 billion. This dynamic, however, varies greatly depending on the continents. Unsurprisingly, the increase in the number of Catholics was most marked in Africa between 2022 and 2023, with 3.31%. The continent counted 281 million Catholics, an increase of 9 million compared to the previous year.

The American continent, which includes nearly half of the world's Catholic population (47.8%), registers a 0.9% increase in baptised. More than half of Catholics born across the Atlantic are originally from South America. Oceania and Asia, for their part, show increases of 1.9% and 0.6%. According to Vatican data, Europe is the continent where the dynamic is weakest in the world, with only a 0.2% increase in the number of faithful.

CALLING VOLUNTEERS FOR A FUNERAL HOSPITALITY TEAM

Many funerals that take place at Sacred Heart or St Columba require a cuppa after the funeral. We are in the process of establishing a parish team that is dedicated to this ministry, whether the funeral is a parish-based one or comes from the Sacred Heart Mission. We have a loose group at the moment comprising members of the Bereavement Team and community visitors who assist irregularly in this role. However, our aim is to increase those numbers in this dedicated ministry and thereby share the workload as we have a lot of funerals in our parish. Women, men, older folk, young are all welcome. Funerals are generally held during the week. Duties would include setting-up, serving, packing-up and cleaning. At Sacred Heart, Anne Dexter will show new people the ropes, and either a current member of the Bereavement Group or Christine will guide new people at St Columba.

Members will require a 'Working With Children's Check', which is free and easily obtained online. It is our collective responsibility to make our parish a safe, welcoming environment for all. Jane, our Office Manager is happy to assist people in getting their check. If you would like to get onto this team, please let Christine/Jane know by either emailing us (our emails are on the front of the newsletter) or call the Parish Office on: 9531 6120.

SR TRISH KELLY: CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF SERVICE

With hearts full of gratitude, we celebrate Sr Trish's 60 years of devoted service to God and His people. Your life has been a testament to faith, love, and unwavering commitment to your sacred vocation with The Presentation Sisters. Through prayer, service, and selfless love, you have touched countless lives, bringing light and hope to those in need.

Thank you for your steadfast witness to Christ's love. May God continue to bless and guide you in the years ahead!

Congratulations and thank you Trish.

CAN YOU HELP ST MARY'S HOUSE OF WELCOME

St Mary's House of Welcome provides support for people who are sleeping rough, experiencing homelessness and those who are isolated. They are currently in urgent need of the following items:

- Sleeping bags and mats,
- Men's underwear (sizes M, L, XL),
- Women's underwear (sizes 10,12),
- Socks, Thongs
- Paper cups
- Long life milk
- Instant coffee
- Soup/dessert spoons

Please note that underwear, socks & sleeping bags must be new (with sleeping bags having a rating of -4 degrees celsius). For more information please contact: operations@smhow.org.au

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Joshua 5: 9-12

Responsorial Psalm:

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21

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: Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

OUR LITURGICAL CALENDAR

MONDAY 31 March - SUNDAY 6 April 2025

MONDAY 11.00am Mass at Sacred Heart Community
101 Grey Street, St Kilda

THURSDAY 11.00am MASS at Sacred Heart Church

FRIDAY 9.00am MASS at Parish House Elwood

SATURDAY 6.00pm MASS at St Columba Church

SUNDAY 9.00am MASS at St Columba Church
11.00am MASS at Sacred Heart Church
(this mass is also live streamed)
Gospel: John 8: 1-11

COLLECTIONS: Last weekend

Church Account Collection		Presbytery Account Collection	
Envelopes	\$57.40	Total	\$200.20
Loose cash	\$428.50		
Total	\$485.50		
Average for 12 weeks	\$364.00	Average for 11 weeks	\$197.07

PARISH SERVICE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

You can contribute to the Service and Support Program in a number of ways. Options include; direct debit, credit card, collections at mass, via Tithe.ly - click this link - [tithe.ly https://tithe.ly/give?c=911524](https://tithe.ly/give?c=911524) or download the tithe.ly app, scanning the new QR code and via our Tap n Go machines at mass.

To find out more about our Service and Support program you can visit our website <https://www.shscparish.org.au/support-us> or contact Jane at the office.

Just a reminder that our First Collection at mass supports the running of the parish, such as pastoral support & various ministries and administration costs - phones, utilities etc. Our Second Collection supports Fr John and covers his stipend and living expenses."

In addition to the second collection, the parish transfers \$4500 to the Presbytery account each quarter to cover the percentage of direct debit donations earmarked to support Fr John.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

"Prayer is what keeps the faith, without it, faith wavers"

Pope Francis

All Recently Deceased: Lisa Jarvis, Phil Williamson

1st Anniversaries: Ellen Kolomanski, Adelina Ranieri, Eugene Munday, Michael Keleher, Ian MacKenzie.

17th Anniversary: Tom Rehill 28.3.2008

30th Anniversary: Sheila Madden

Anniversaries: Christy Leahy, Lorraine Donavan, Rosario Marino, Mavis Heywood 5.3, David James Chieng, Patricia Herkess 11.3, Matilda Foster, John Pratt, Fr Ernie Smith 28.3.18, David Griffin, Thomas Szabo, David Carter, David Rickard, Caterina Pino, Michael Grigorio, John Huggett, Graziella Pesenti, James Rodrigues, Ines Picone, Wally Haire, Michael Hayward, Concettina Schiano Moriello 13.3.2019, Maurice Thomas, John Lawler, Mary Tudor, Peter Brady, Yehia Ragheb, Brian Scanlan, Tom Schepsi, Max Hunter, Ben Tripp 16.3.14, Tony Tripp 8.3, John Muldoon, Donald Everard, Dudley Gomez, Patricia Moore, Bozo Martinov, Jean Curtis 8.3, Roza Pawloska 9.3, Arnold Krumins 11.3, Peter Wilson, David Nightingale, Tom Connelly, Jack Edwards 29.3, Kevin Mooney 19.3.04, Joseph D'Agata, Tom Rehill, John O'Shaughnessy, Patricia McHale 4.3.01, Whippy Peters 13.3.11, Ladislav Mikus 25.3.11, Matthew Beyer 15.3.08, Giuseppina Mazzella 18.3.10, Peter O Connor 5.3.51, Maria Terzita Pittari 15.3.10, Patrick Reade 13.3.10, Andrew Crook 21.3.10, Andrea 7 Raffaele Fraccalanza, Octavia Santini 8.3.98, Muriel Bowes 25.3.02, Nunziata Panettieri, Maria Tesoriero, Max Korber, Caterina Cutelle, Pat Mooney, Maria Alfonse 18.3, Denise Jacoby 18.3

Sick: Lol Patten (UK), Jackie Pyster, Ramon Lopez, Colin Meanwell, Luke Dennis, Eddie, Alison Barry-Jones (Qld), Chail and her husband Callum, Patrick McCaffrey, Sue McLennan, Fr Terry Kean, Peter Nicholson, Mark Weinberg, Sophia, Ned Connors, Jean Cropley, Rose Fonti, Alexander, Felipe and Anne, Pat Ficcaro, Lyn Crossly, Nichole Garnaut, Bernadette Cassar, Arja & Martin Kari, Tony Cogo, Jillian Harrison.

If you have someone you would like on the prayer list please contact Jane at the office.

ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

5 / 6 April: Fifth Sunday of Lent

St Columba Welcomes

6pm Mass:

M: Emer Di Muzio

C / L: Joan Davies, Rica Garcia

Set up: Legion of Mary

9am Mass:

M: Volunteer needed

C / L: Kate Bebejewski, Tony Lopes

Set up: Trevor, Marcelle, Pristille, Priscila

Hospitality Roster: Volunteers needed

Sacred Heart Welcomes

11am Mass:

M: Oswald Fernandes

C / L: Helen Freris, Jane Sims / Daniel O'Connor

Set up: Cecilia Mwangi

Prayer of the Faithful: Liturgy team