

Entrance Antiphon Cf Psalm 90:15-16

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

A reading from the book of Genesis

Genesis 9:8-15

I will recall the covenant between myself and you... the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 24:4-9. R.

Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

1 Peter 3:18-22

The water of the flood is a type of the baptism which saves you now.

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still buildg that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits

refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 4:4

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! **Alleluia!**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark Mark 1:12-15

He was tempted by Satan, and the angels looked after him.

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon Cf Psalm 90:4

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will trust.



Next week's readings

First reading	Genesis 22:1-2. 9-13. 15-18
Responsorial psalm	Ps 115:10. 15-19. R. 114:9
Second reading	Romans 8:31-34
Gospel	Mark 9:2-10



St. Thomas More Parish, Belgrave

The Catholic Church in the Dandenong Ranges

P.O. Box 100, Belgrave, Victoria 3160
 Phone: 97542141
 Office Hours: 9.30am–2pm Tuesday to Friday
 Internet: pol.org.au/belgrave

The Parish of St Thomas More and the Archdiocese of Melbourne are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and vulnerable people in our community. May our message be that child protection and the dignity of every person is the responsibility of every adult. You can find out more about the Church's work in this area at: www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention

Our Parish Vision Statement:
We are called to be a welcoming, compassionate community, empowered for our faith journey for active service.....

CHURCH CENTRES		St. Joseph's Church Emerald Cnr. Emerald-Monbulk & Cornish Roads	Sacred Heart Church Gembrook Main Road	St. Thomas More Church Belgrave 17 Terry Avenue, Belgrave	St. Paul's Church Monbulk 59 Moores Road
MASS TIMES	WEEKEND	Vigil Mass 6.00pm	9.00am	9.00am	11.00am
	WEEKDAY			9.00am	

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR B - 17/18TH February, 2024



God's message 'is always one of freedom': Pope Francis for Lent 2024

When our God reveals himself, his message is always one of freedom,' Pope Francis has said in his 2024 Lenten message.

On Thursday 1 February, two weeks out from Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis released his annual message for the Lenten season, reflecting on the gift of Christian freedom and how the desert is a time for maturing in that gift.

'In the desert, [Israel] received the "Ten Words" as a thoroughfare to freedom. We call them "commandments", in order to emphasise the strength of the love by which God shapes his people,' the Pope said. 'It is not answered straightaway; it has to mature as part of a journey.' He encouraged people to see the desert as the place where God leads his people as a 'bridegroom'.

'Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more—in the words of the prophet Hosea—the place of our first love (Hos 2:16–17) ... Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.'

Although in the sacrament of Baptism we have already been given the gift of freedom, 'there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery,' Pope Francis said, much like the Israelites longing to go back to Egypt. For this reason, the Pope encouraged us to welcome Lent 'as the great season in which [God] reminds us: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Exod 20:2). Lent is a season of conversion, a time of freedom.'

Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.

'The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery.' This kind of journey, however, naturally entails great struggle—a struggle against 'the idols we set up for ourselves'. And this gift of freedom we have been given is meant to be a gift for others. Although Lent is a 'time to act,' Pope Francis said, 'to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbour are one. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbour.'

Slow down, then, and pause!

The three pillars of Lent—prayer, almsgiving, and fasting—are 'a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause!' 'The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey,' Pope Francis said. It means having to 'open our eyes to reality', to hear the cry of the poor as God heard the cry of his enslaved people. 'Let us ask ourselves: Do we hear that cry? Does it trouble us? Does it move us?'

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/gods-message-is-always-one-of-freedom-pope-francis-for-lent-2024>

WE ARE A CHILD SAFETY PARISH AND WE BELIEVE IN CHILD SAFETY.

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Belgrave: David Bhoynz
Gembrook:
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REMEMBRANCE IN OUR PRAYERS:

Recent deaths:

Many people across the world who have died due to natural calamities and ongoing Wars. May their souls rest in peace.

Anniversaries: Donald James Cox, Fr. Rod Pitts, John Scott, Katryna Hanigan, Barry Steen, Jim Dawson, Barrie Hood, Rosemary Hogan.

Prayers for the Sick: We pray for all who are ill, but especially the following people: Vinesh Prasad, Flynn Kroeger, Verity Loke, Helen Bye, Stephen Billington, Anne Radocaj, Simon Kuyper John Barber, Dimuthu, Glen Butler, Juhyeon Kim, Peter Hicks, Margaret Campion, Cameron DiCasio, Jack Weir, Ewa Wallis, Jane Schellenbach, Rebecca Jane Atkinson, Daniel, Mason, Hero, Helen Smith, Irene, Debbie Owens, Don Kempster, Pat McCarrick, Justin, Tom Fergus, Josie Walsh, B. O'Connor, Maureen Lyons, Ingvyn Collins, David Bourke, Eileen Banyard, Brendan, Martin Fergus, Margaret, Maureen, Patricia Gilchrist, Stephen Mc., Cheryl McInnes, Kate Arnott, Julian Neesham, Fa Perisipi, John Reid, Dieter Farmer, Margaret Sheanon, Dianne Zidek, Mark Pickthall, Terry Schubert, Neil Weatherill, Margaret Herbert, Rob Zwagerman, Joshua McQuade, Lanie Brereton, Sandra Dowling, Francesca, Neil Holland, Maureen Hughes, Marilyn Ward, Isabelle Henry, Phillis Willoughby.

- **Sick List: If you are aware that any names on the sick list need to be removed, please contact the Parish Office on 97542141.**

Reading Roster - 18th February, 2024

Eileen Collins & David Atkinson

For details relating to Baptisms, Marriages & Anointing of the Sick, please contact the parish office.

Please see below an update to current vacant roles listed on our Melbourne Catholic website.

Further details of the above positions can be found on the Archdiocese website at: [Job vacancies | Melbourne Catholic](#)

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact Human Resources at hradmin@cam.org.au



Please make your Thanksgiving contributions to your church via church account or scanning the QR code.

St Thomas Mores Parish Church or
Account

BSB: 083 347



Holy Week Timeline



14th February	Ash Wednesday
24th March	Palm Sunday of the passion of the Lord
28th March	Holy Thursday
29th March	Good Friday / Passion of the Lord
31st March	Easter Sunday / Resurrection
7th April	Divine Mercy Sunday

The Stations of the Cross

Every Friday at 7pm at St. Thomas More Church Belgrave. **(From 16th February).**



First Sunday of Lent 17 & 18 February

This year, Project Compassion brings you the stories of three resilient women: Ronita from the Philippines, Leaia from Samoa and Memory from Malawi. While from three different corners of the world and facing vastly different challenges, they are all united by one dream: to create a better world for all future generations.

Please donate to Project Compassion.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413.



St Paul's Primary School - 59 Moores Rd Monbulk

2024 OPEN DAYS

Wednesday 13 March 9:30 tour
Tuesday 30 April 9:30 tour
Thursday 23 May 9:30 tour
Tuesday 4 June 9:30 tour

School Tours are also available by appointment

Call the office today on 9756 7201 to register for one of our Open Days



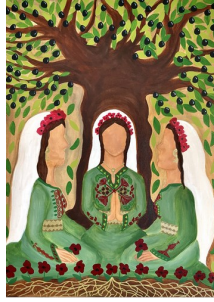
St Paul's Primary School Monbulk

Ph.9756 7201 www.spmonbulk.catholic.edu.au



World Day of Prayer, 2024

The World Day of Prayer service for the Dandenong Ranges will be held this year at St Mark's Anglican Church, Emerald, on Friday, 1st March, at 10:30am. The service will focus on World Peace and will be followed by Morning Tea. Everyone is invited to join in prayer and friendship with people of faith from our area.



Sacrament of Confirmation - May 18th at St. Thomas More Church, Belgrave

Sacrament of Confirmation for students attending Non-Catholic Schools. To enroll, please contact the parish office during office hours on or before 21st March.

Telephone: 97542141

Email: belgrave@cam.org.au



Fasting and Abstinence during Lent



Lent is the time before Easter during which the faithful abstain and fast in remembrance of the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made on Calvary. It is a 40-day time of preparation before Easter, the memorial of the death and resurrection of Jesus. There are two main ways that Catholics use to focus on growing closer to God during the Lenten season: abstinence and fasting.

Abstinence

Abstinence is the act of "doing without" or avoiding something. For example, someone may abstain from chocolate or alcohol by not consuming them. Particular days of abstinence during Lent are Fridays, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. As canon law states, Catholics over the age of 14 are expected to abstain from the eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays throughout the Lenten Season (Canon 1250 -1253).

During Lent, Catholics are also encouraged to undertake some sort of personal penance or abstinence. Examples

include giving up sweets, a favorite TV show or not listening to the radio in the car on the way to work. Giving up these things isn't some sort of endurance test, but these acts are done to draw the faithful closer to Christ.

For example, a person may give up his favorite TV show, but if he simply turns the television to another channel, the Lenten penance really does not mean as much. Instead, the person should consider devoting the spare time to prayer or perhaps his family.

As always, when considering acts of penance that are stricter than the norm, it is important that the Catholic would speak with a priest or spiritual director. Any act of penance that would seriously hinder one's health or the health of others would be contrary to the will of God.

Fasting

Fasting is the act of doing with less. In the Catholic Church, those ages 18 - 59 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (Canon 97). On such days, those fasting may eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength. However, together, the smaller meals should not equal a full meal.

Eating between meals is not encouraged, but liquids are allowed.

It is important to understand that the Church excuses certain people from these obligations. Examples include those who are frail, pregnant or manual laborers. The Church understands that certain people are not able to commit to the Lenten fast.

The time of Lent, through fasting and abstaining, may be an important reminder of what it means to suffer. This small suffering should not be met with misery but with great joy as we better understand the incredible sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for humanity.

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resource/56337/fasting-and-abstinence-during-lent>

Southern Stars Social Club

" without God we labour in vain"

Southern Stars Social Club Over 28's Party for Single

Catholics in 28 to 60 age group.

Saturday 24th February 2024

Starting Time:8.00pm

Location: School Hall at St. Scholastica's Parish Corner of Burwood Highway and Stirling St. East Burwood Melways Map 61 D6

Cost : \$13 includes lucky door prizes and supper.

Enquiries: Peter 9885 2167