

## FIRST READING

*A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus*  
15:15-20

If you wish, you can keep the commandments, to behave faithfully is within your power. He has set fire and water before you; put out your hand to whichever you prefer. Man has life and death before him; whichever a man likes better will be given him. For vast is the wisdom of the Lord; he is almighty and all-seeing. His eyes are on those who fear him, he notes every action of man. He never commanded anyone to be godless, he has given no one permission to sin.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*R/. Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!*

## SECOND READING

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*  
2:6-10

We have a wisdom to offer those who have reached maturity: not a philosophy of our age, it is true, still less of the masters of our age, which are coming to their end. The hidden wisdom of God which we teach in our mysteries is the wisdom that God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began. It is a wisdom that none of the masters of this age have ever known, or they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory; we teach what scripture calls: the things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things beyond the mind of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him.

These are the very things that God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.*

*Alleluia!*

## GOSPEL

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew*  
5:17-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have

come not to abolish them but to complete them. I tell you solemnly, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law until its purpose is achieved. Therefore, the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of heaven.

'For I tell you, if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

'You have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you: anyone who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court; if a man calls his brother "Fool" he will answer for it before the Sanhedrin; and if a man calls him "Renegade" he will answer for it in hell fire. So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. Come to terms with your opponent in good time while you are still on the way to the court with him, or he may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. I tell you solemnly, you will not get out till you have paid the last penny.

'You have learnt how it was said: You must not commit adultery. But I say this to you: if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye should cause you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of you than to have your whole body thrown into hell. And if your right hand should cause you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of you than to have your whole body go to hell.

'It has also been said: Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a writ of dismissal. But I say this to you: everyone who divorces his wife, except for the case of fornication, makes her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

'Again, you have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say this to you: do not swear at all, either by heaven, since that is God's throne; or by the earth, since that is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, since that is the city of the great king. Do not swear by your own head either, since you cannot turn a single hair white or black. All you need say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the evil one.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**



**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**Knox Deanery**

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**Website: www.stjohnthebaptist.net.au**

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A**

**15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2020**

*Father God,  
Jesus, Your Son showed us,  
just what it means to be holy.  
By Your grace,  
Teach us to turn,  
all of our law-keeping into love,  
and make our lives worthy of Your presence.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen*



## FOCUS ON THE WORD

Today's First Reading, Psalm and Gospel all relate to the way in which we are called to live in right relationship with God and with one another. What is referred to as the 'Law' is generally used as shorthand for the Torah – the first five books of the Bible – which first of all establishes the history of relationship between God and humanity through the books of Genesis and Exodus and then provides detailed instructions about how that relationship should be honoured and observed. When Jesus speaks about the Law and the Prophets, he is deliberately including the extensive collection of prophetic writings that interpret the Law in terms of justice and right relationships with others as being a reflection of the right relationship with God. By declaring that he has come not to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to complete – or fulfil – them, Jesus is making it perfectly clear that his ministry and teaching is in alignment with and in accordance with the historical tradition and he is not setting out to overthrow the Jewish tradition. Rather, throughout his ministry, Jesus repeatedly calls the people to be true to the teachings of old and to live them with integrity and dedication. His constant complaint is against those who live by the letter of the Law and ignore what we would call the spirit or intention of the Law. This is the root of his swipe at the shallow virtue of the scribes and Pharisees in today's gospel. The criticism that Jesus levelled at these two groups was that their adherence to the Law made no room for the compassionate heart that the writings of the Prophets demanded. Jesus reinterprets the teachings on killing, adultery, divorce and oath-breaking. When there is an attitude of observing the very literal meaning of law, there is a tendency to look for loopholes wherever possible. This attitude had become the norm in Jesus' day. His reinterpretations are designed to challenge people to think about the law in a broader context and to take the law into their heart rather than looking for ways to get around it. © Greg Sunter.

## FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

21<sup>st</sup> Feb – St Peter Damian

22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – The Chair of St Peter

*I have come that you may have life and have it to the full*

**(John 10:10)**

**PRIEST ADMINISTRATOR :**

Fr Thomas Kuruvila 9758 1029  
 Email: Thomas.Kuruvila@cam.org.au

**DEACON:**

Rev. Peter Stringfellow 9758 1029  
 Email: Peter.Stringfellow@cam.org.au

**FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR**

Carolyn Sombekke 9758 1029  
 Email: csombekkesjb@gmail.com

**PARISH OFFICE:**

**9758 1029**  
 Monday 9.45am – 3.45pm  
 Tuesday to Friday 9.00am -3.00pm  
 Secretaries: Charmaine Premaratne  
 & Maree Wilson

Accountant: Sara Luk  
 Email: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**SCHOOLS:**

**St John the Baptist 9758 1013**  
 Principal: Catherine Mason

**St. Joseph's College 9758 2000**  
 Principal: Catherine Livingston

**Mater Christi College 9754 6611**  
 Principal: Mary Fitz-Gerald

**MASS TIMES:**

**Saturday 6:00 pm**  
**Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am**  
 Tuesday 7.00 pm  
 Wednesday & Thursday 9.15 am  
 Friday 11.00 am

**RECONCILIATION:** Saturdays 5.15 pm

**BAPTISMS:**

Either during a weekend Mass or at 12.30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. 6 weeks' notice required. Please refer to our Guidelines for Infant Baptism on our Parish Website. Contact the Parish Office on: 9758 1029 or via email at: office@stjohnthebaptist.net.au

**WEDDINGS:**

By appointment, 6 months' notice required. Saturdays or weekdays (not Sundays). Contact the Parish Office: on 9758 1029.

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A**

15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2020

**PRAYING FOR...**

*All who have died recently*



*And those who we remember at this time:*

Joseph Edmunds, Chanake Aponso, Joyce Howell, and Pietro Cursaro.

**The sick:** Fame Pelgrim, Lea Hartley, Tom Clynes, Cosimo Petracca, Christopher Windebank, Giuseppina Zarro, Lesina Maio, Peter Dunlop, Catherine Turner, Peter Commons, Wilma Neville, Mary Brimelow, Patricia Quinn, Charlie Kelly, Edward Kitain, Scott Warner, Lilian Luiyf, David Merton, Rosa Jones, Peter Mitchell, Beryl Turner, Michael Byrne, Ann Jayawardena, Mary Edmunds, Anabelyn Malabed, Ethel Arrowsmith, Eillien Patrick, Brendan Kearns, Elsie Johnson, Maria Iaconis, Bev McNamara, Anthony McNamara, Victoria Lewis, Nicole Moore, Peter Fairhurst, Hans Whitaker, Edward Osborne, Allida Serafin, Barbara Kenny, Clive Geach.

**NEW GUIDELINES SICK LIST** – From next week, names will remain on the sick list for 6 weeks, then removed, unless notification to continue is received at the Parish Office on 9758 1029.

**WEEKDAY ROSARY** on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, Rosary will be recited 25 minutes prior to the Weekday Mass. All are welcome to join.

**GROUP ROSARY SESSION FOR PEACE**

When: Each First Saturday of the Month at 10.30am.  
 Where: 37 Lane Road, FTG. All are welcome.  
 Contact: Pauline Barlow on 9758 5106.

**MASS AT WILLOWBROOKE AGED CARE** Will be celebrated on *Thursday, 20th February, at 3pm* all welcome.

**CHARISMATIC PRAYER** meets on *Tuesdays at 10.15 am* in the Parish Hall. Join us for prayer, praise and worship, and shared lunch.

**FRIENDSHIP GATHERING:** is held on Thursdays between 10am and 12.30pm in the Parish Hall. Ladies and Gentlemen welcome anytime to have a cuppa and a chat.

**MOTHERS' PRAYERS:** We meet each Tuesday 9am–10am (during school terms) in the Parish Centre, to pray. Enquiries to the Parish office on 9758 1029.

**ST JOSEPH'S COMMUNITY DAY - SAVE THE DATE** join us on *Sunday 15th March, 2020* from 10.00am – 3.00pm. Come and be a part of this fun day.

**LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY**

**MASS on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2020** Mass will be celebrated at **9.15am and 7.00pm** Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. The law of fasting binds those who have completed their 18<sup>th</sup> year until the beginning of their 60<sup>th</sup> year; the law of abstinence binds those who have completed their 14<sup>th</sup> year. Lent is a penitential season of prayer, self-denial and a time for lending a hand to others e.g. attending to the sick, the lonely or the over-burdened.

Lent is also an appropriate time to prepare for and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation



In this way, the whole Church prepares for Easter.

**THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step Catholic devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. The 14 devotions, or stations, focus on specific events of His last day, beginning with His condemnation. The stations are commonly used as a mini pilgrimage as the individual moves from station to station. At each station, the individual recalls and meditates on a specific event from Christ's last day.



STATIONS of the CROSS

Specific prayers are recited, then the individual moves to the next station until all 14 are complete. **We will be having the Stations of the Cross on Friday at 10.30 am during lent followed by mass at 11.00 am. All are invited to join.**

**BUSHFIRE RECOVERY APPEAL 2020** is a partnership between CatholicCare, the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Diocese of Sale. In response to the devastating bushfires in East Gippsland, **CatholicCare is establishing a Community Recovery Service, to support families and communities for 3yrs.** This project will need compassionate support, **so our parish will be accepting your donations next weekend.** Please bring a little extra to show your support for these communities in the long term.

**THE 2020 COMBINED CATHOLIC CHURCHES PARISH RAFFLE** tickets will go on sale on 29<sup>th</sup> February – 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. This year all proceeds from the sale of these tickets will be for the Parish. We thank all parishioners for your continued support. Volunteers are needed to help cover the sale of tickets at different masses. If you are able to help at any of the masses, kindly please email Connie Bala on c.silva2@bigpond.com your date/s and mass time that you are able to help so that a roster can be drawn up. Your help can be just or one weekend or more.

**SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM-CONFIRMATION**

This year the Sacrament of Confirmation is offered to Year 5 and 6 children who have already been baptised, and who reside within the boundaries of our Parish. Confirmation Mass will be celebrated on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 6.30pm. **Parent Information Evening is on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7pm in the School Hall.** If your child attends a school other than St John's, **please contact the Parish Office on 9758 1029 to register your interest.** Dates for the preparation classes will be advised at this meeting. Information for children attending at St John's will be distributed via Year 5 & 6 teachers. **You will be required to present a copy of your child's Baptismal certificate**



**ST JOHN'S SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP TRIVIA NIGHT** ☺ Come and join the fun. ☺ ☺ Don't need to be an expert. ☺

**Date:** Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February.  
**Venue:** School Hall starting at 7.00pm for 7.30pm. Make up a table or come and join one. Tickets on sale **Cost: \$10 Adults**, after all w/e masses from the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> February or contact Patrick 0434 072 831 (call or text). Proceeds in aid of "Opening the Doors Foundation" (Aboriginal students support), Thornbury and the Alfajiri Street Kids Art, Kenya



**PRACTICAL PARENTING STRATEGIES EVENT** On **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February** at Mater Christi College, Dr Judith Locke, clinical psychologist, researcher and author will be presenting to parents of early teens - 7 Practical parenting strategies to help your child in 2020.

The session will run from 7.00pm - 8.30pm. The presentation will provide strategies to parents/carers to encourage children's confidence, resilience and self-regulation in their schooling in an era where many parents/carers overdo assistance and care for their children. Please RSVP to Jacinta Crocker at crocker\_j@materchristi.edu.au February, if you wish to attend. Please note, this is a parent only event.

<b>ROSTERS: Mon 17<sup>th</sup> Feb to Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</b>	
<b>Flowers</b>	Sue N & Lynne K
<b>Linen</b>	Sue O'H
<b>Welcomers</b>	6pm: Louise D, Peter Greening 9am Sue & David W 11am Kath & Andrew W
<b>Lectors</b>	6pm: Louise D 9am: Peter F 11am: Sarah M
<b>Counters</b>	Tony B & Steph H
<b>Gardening</b>	Barry Blake