

A vibrant community, journeying with Jesus

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Parish Office
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Damascus Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Damascus Parish acknowledges the Wadawurrung people as the traditional custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

WEEKLY MASS TIMES

St Christopher's Church

Saturday 6pm Vigil Mass

Tuesday 9.30am Mass

St Therese Church

Sunday 9am Mass

Sunday 5pm Mass

Wednesday 9am Rosary

Wednesday 9.30am Mass

Friday 9am Rosary

9.30am Mass

followed by prayers of adoration

Nazareth Church

Sunday 11am Mass

Thursday 9.30am

CONFESSION

St Christophers Church

Saturday 5.30pm–6pm

Nazareth Church

Sunday 10.30am–11am

St Therese Church

Sunday 4.30 pm–5pm

HOME VISITS

If there are any parishioners who are sick or housebound and would like to receive communion or a home visit please make contact with the parish office: 9412 8444



What is a Synod?

A Synod is a moment when the Church deliberately pauses to listen, pray, and discern together. It is not simply a meeting or a conference, but a spiritual process rooted in faith that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church today. In a Synod, we ask not only "What do we think?" but more importantly, "What is God asking of us at this moment in our mission?"



Dear Parishioners,

"Never discuss religion or politics" is something we were probably all told at one point or another. It's considered a rule of etiquette to be upheld in polite company. Turning things on their head as he often did, G.K. Chesterton once quipped that, "I never discuss anything *besides* religion and politics." The older I get the more I tend to side with Chesterton. But as a priest, one must be wary about wading into the murky waters of politics. And for good reason.

I mentioned in the bulletin a couple of weeks back, that as a parish priest I vow to uphold all ecclesiastical laws. Well, Canon Law states that "*Clerics are forbidden to assume public offices which entail a participation in the exercise of civil power.*" (Can 285). They are also "not to have an active part in political parties and in governing labour unions" (Can 287). These laws reflect what Jesus taught: "*Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*" (Mt 22:21).

The separation between church and state is important in this instance, as there would be a real danger - not so much that religious beliefs would make its way into public policy - but that one's political affiliation and party would start to influence and compromise one's religion. Just as a cleric is not to be bound up in any political ideology or be solely aligned to a certain political party, neither should anyone who professes that God is sovereign and that Christ is King of the Universe.

Our duty is to proclaim the Gospel, which will form people's consciences, that will then have them act in a moral way. The Catechism teaches that each person's conscience is where "*the voice of God echoes*", and that we must "*always obey the judgment of our conscience*". It also adds that each of us has a responsibility to inform that conscience, by way of the ten commandments and the teachings of our faith.

In light of all this, the church (including priests and parishes) ought to refrain from being overly prescriptive about what opinions people should have on political matters. There will be times when, by way of the Holy Father, our Archbishop or one of our parish groups like St Vincent de Paul or the Social Justice committee, something will be put out to draw attention to an issue and where guidance might be required to uphold what is right and just.

But it won't be often and it won't be telling you how to suck eggs.

In Christ,

Fr Joel.

PARISH NEWS



Palm Sunday, 28th/29th March, please consider collecting some olive branches in short manageable lengths to bring along to Mass this weekend.

PALM SUNDAY **28-29 March 2026**

As Project Compassion 2026 comes to a close, we thank you for your generous support throughout Lent. This year, we shared the stories of four inspiring people whose lives are being uplifted through your compassion. Your support is helping them overcome challenges and build stronger futures. There is still time to donate! Together, we can continue nurturing hope and empowering communities facing poverty and injustice.

today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at:

www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate

Or by calling: 1800 024 413. Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.



**PROJECT
COMPASSION**



Please donate
UNITE
AGAINST
POVERTY
this Lent

First Reading:

Isaiah 50:4-7

Responsorial

Psalm:

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Second Reading:

Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Christ became obedient for us even to death dying on the cross.

Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all other names.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel: Matthew 27:11-54 (short version)



PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

Recent deaths: Maureen Scannell

Anniversaries who are at this time: Neil Crooks

PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK IN OUR COMMUNITY

Our thoughts are with those who are unwell at this time.

Please submit a consent form to have a loved one prayed for.



Parish Presbytery

For any urgent pastoral need outside of office hours please call the presbytery on 9412 8443

Office Hours

Our hours are: **Tuesday - Friday, 9am - 3pm. Closed Public Holidays**

Outside of these hours, please leave a message and one of the staff will contact you when they are next in the office.

Damascus Parish **Holy Week Mass Times 2026**

Holy Thursday

2nd April - 7.30pm
The Lord's Supper
St Therese Church, 43a Surfcoast Highway, Torquay

Good Friday

3rd April - 3pm
Passion of the Lord

Easter Saturday

4th April - 8pm
Easter Vigil

Good Friday 10am Stations of the Cross, Nazareth Church

Easter Sunday - April 5th

9am - St Therese Church, Torquay
10.30am - St Christopher's Church, Anglesea
11am - Nazareth Church, Grovedale

**There is no 9.30am Mass on Holy Thursday or 5pm Mass on Easter Sunday*

menALIVE (a national Catholic Ministry for Men)

May 2nd - 3rd, 2026. Cost: \$50 pp - includes workshops, morning & afternoon tea, lunch & dinner on both days. Register by April 27th. For more information and details you can visit: <https://bannockburn.menalivevic.au>

Bulletin Email missing

Some parishioners using @hotmail, @outlook or @live email addresses may not be receiving the Parish Bulletin due to Microsoft blocking bulk emails. If you have suddenly stopped receiving it and would like to receive the bulletin again, please resubscribe by scanning the QR code. We are working with IT on a longer-term solution. Thank you for your understanding.



Thank you to Chris at Palm Life in Lovely Banks for donating the palm fronds you see around our Churches this weekend for mark Palm Sunday. A special thank you to Tony Phillips and Rose Francombe from the Torquay community for travelling and delivering the fronds to all 3 Churches during the week.
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