

Damascus Parish Bulletin

23rd August 2026
21st Sunday of Ordinary Time

A vibrant community, journeying with Jesus

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Damascus Parish is a welcoming and inclusive community that 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
Friday 9.30am Mass
followed by prayers of adoration

Nazareth Church

Sunday 10.30am Rosary
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



Synodality and trust

Trust grows when people know their voices matter. Synodality helps rebuild trust within the Church and between the Church and society.



Dear Parishioners,

I thought I'd share with you some of what was presented at the Melbourne Clergy Conference that I attended the other week. It was a nice few days away with some interesting talks and presentations. These events are always a good chance to catch up with brother priests from around the diocese. With our accommodation being the RACV Club at Cape Schanck, it was also a good chance to squeeze in a round of golf...or two.

The title of the conference was "Becoming a Catechumenal Church" and the keynote speaker was Bishop Etienne Veto of Reims, France. He spoke on a number of things but especially reflected on some findings the church there had made after recent studies. Those studies were conducted to determine exactly what it was that was drawing people to the Catholic faith. And young people especially.

Of course, his first credit went to God. He could see the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of these people, and they spoke themselves of a stirring in their heart that they couldn't fully explain. We might think it's our own efforts, but it's Him that is truly at work. *"The Lord has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace."* (2 Timothy 1:9) That said, there were some more tangible influences that encouraged these souls towards the Catholic church.

The number one influence on these young people turning to faith was being confronted with a crisis. Going through a difficult time in life. Loneliness and isolation was something experienced by many, especially during the years of the pandemic. The bishop relayed one testimony from a young man, who said that his heart was "full of hate" and he wanted free of that affliction. The church was truly a place of refuge and healing for these people.

The beauty and peace of the church buildings was a significant factor. Art has a way of moving hearts and minds, and the Catholic Church does this better than anyone. Our buildings, artwork and music should always strive to reflect the beauty of God because these things can offer consolation and hope in what is an increasingly banal and ugly world.

The other major influence was Christian witness. Seeing other people live out their faith with joy. Grandparents often played a big role in these kid's conversion. I hope this is an encouragement to many of you, who perhaps haven't seen the faith taken up very well by your children and grandchildren. Never give up: you are likely a bigger influence than you think.

In Christ,

Fr Joel.



The 2026 Archbishop's Campaign Thank you to everyone who has so generously already made a pledge or gift to the 2026 Archbishop's Campaign. Every gift, large or small, is greatly appreciated! If you are yet to make a gift, you can still do so. This campaign supports the vital ministries of the Church in our Archdiocese. Online (direct debit or credit card) donations are the most secure and preferred method of donating, or you can use the campaign envelopes with tear-off pledge cards which are still available in the foyer.

On behalf of the **Anglesea Association of Christian Churches** St Christopher's Catholic Church, 72 Bingley Pde Anglesea, is hosting the Anglican, Baptist and Uniting congregations at our Saturday evening mass on 29th August 2026 at 6pm. Please come along to share our common faith and belief at our Eucharistic celebration. A light meal will be available to share afterwards in our church community room. We look forward to welcoming and gathering with you.

ACACIA Passionist Family Group Grovedale

Next activity is a luncheon at the Waurin Ponds Hotel. Date Wednesday 26th August Time 12 Noon RSVP for catering purposes 24/8 contact Bob Bowker 0407569747 or Jenny Shanahan 0447280067 Friends and /or new members invited.

Faith and Light Geelong

Geelong Christian community for people with a disability, family and friends. This month's theme is: The wonder of Light. Tuesday August 25th at St. Mary's Hibernian Hall, 1.30 to 4.30pm. Shared news, Gospel, prayer, music, friendship & afternoon tea. RSVP essential by 24th. Tricia O'Keeffe-Coordinator : 0414 672 267

Online information session on the permanent diaconate

The permanent diaconate is open to single and married men, aged from 30 into their 50's, who want to serve God and the Church as ordained ministers. The information session is open to everyone interested in knowing more about the permanent diaconate.

Online Diaconate information meeting

Tuesday, 22 September 2026 beginning 19:00 – 20:00 Location: via ZOOM

Attendance will be by invitation. Express your interest by emailing Deacon Kevin Pattison Kevin.Pattison@cam.org.au

In the week before the session the ZOOM link will be sent to those who have expressed interest.

First Reading:

Isaiah 22:19-23

Responsorial

Psalm:

Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.

Second Reading:

Romans 11:33-36

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are Peter, the rock on which I will build the Church; the gates of hell will not hold out against it.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20



Daily Readings

PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

Recent deaths: Bryan Murphy
Anniversaries who are at this time: Jean Phillips, Brian Carty, Marian Scarrabelotti, Jack Baker

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.

Bulletin Notices

Please submit them by Thursday mornings.

Sign up to receive the weekly bulletin via email by visiting our website damascusparish.com.au