



*We proclaim a crucified Christ*

1Cor1.23

**HIS GRACE  
MOST REVEREND PETER ANDREW COMENSOLI  
By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See  
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE**

**DECREE RE-NAMING  
NAZARETH CATHOLIC PARISH GROVEDALE  
TO  
DAMASCUS PARISH**

1. A parish is a certain community of Christ's faithful stably established within a diocese, whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan bishop, is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor<sup>1</sup>. Each diocese must be divided into parishes, which are distinct parts of the whole diocese. It is the responsibility and authority of the diocesan bishop, and he alone, to erect, alter or suppress parishes, after considering the advice of his presbyteral council.<sup>2</sup> The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand of 1937 also decreed that consultation must be had with the College of Consultors.<sup>3</sup>
2. In 1980, **Nazareth Catholic Parish Grovedale** was erected with territory comprising St Therese Torquay and the suburb of Grovedale, previously part of St Bernard's Parish Belmont.
3. In 1998, the territory of **Nazareth Catholic Parish Grovedale** was expanded to include the community of St Christopher's, Angelsea.
4. In 2025, the Parish Priest and Parish Leadership Team initiated a process to rename the Parish to better reflect its diversity. Following a consultation process involving the three church and four school communities in the Parish, the Parish Priest and Parish Leadership Team petitioned for **Nazareth Catholic Parish Grovedale** to be re-named **Damascus Parish**.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 515#1

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid*, can. 515#2

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Concilium plenarium IV Australiae et Novae Zelandiae habitum apud Sydney anno Domini 1937*, decretum 148(d).

5. After carefully considering the motivations and observations presented to me, and after the required formal canonical consultation of the Archbishop's Council of Priests given on 26 November 2025 (cf. Canon 515 §2), and the College of Consultors of the Archdiocese of Melbourne given on 12 December 2025, I hereby decree the following:

**That Nazareth Catholic Parish Grovedale be re-named Damascus Parish.**

6. I declare all civil registrations and ensuing contractual obligations of Nazareth Catholic Parish Grovedale, such as the ABN, ACNC, ATO, utilities etc. will endure and be re-named as Damascus Parish, and the civil registrations and contractual obligations will be transferred into the newly named enduring registrations.
7. The churches of Nazareth, Grovedale, St Therese, Torquay and St Christopher's, Anglesea remain under their present titles in conformity with Canon 1218.
8. This decree will take effect from **22 February 2026**. I order that this decree be published by copies of it being displayed on the noticeboards of Nazareth Church, Grovedale, St Therese Church, Torquay and St Christopher's Church, Anglesea for one calendar month, beginning on the 17 January 2026 and by the decree being drawn to the attention of the faithful by the celebrant of Mass at all parochial Masses in those churches on **Saturday evening, 14 February 2026 and Sunday, 15 February 2026**.
9. I order that copies of this decree be carefully preserved in the parochial archives of Damascus Parish as well as the archives of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
10. The Second Vatican Council proclaimed that "the parish offers an outstanding example of community apostolate, for it gathers into a unity all the human diversities that are found there and inserts them into the universality of the Church."<sup>4</sup> I pray that these arrangements that I have decreed will be a rich opportunity for the parishioners of Damascus Parish to renew their commitment to the Lord, and to the building up of his Church. I invoke the blessings of Almighty God on the priests and parishioners of this Parish.

Given at St Patrick's Centre, East Melbourne, Victoria on this twenty-third day of the month of December in the year of Our Lord, 2025.

Most Reverend Peter A Comensoli  
Archbishop of Melbourne



*Anna Lewin*  
NOTARY CHANCERY

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 18 November 1965, n. 10 (Vatican Council II, Austin Flannery O.P. (ed). p. 777)