

DAMASCUS PARISH BULLETIN

22nd February 2026
1st Sunday of Lent

A vibrant community, journeying with Jesus

Parish Priest

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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



Dear Parishioners,

The season of Lent is all about conversion, a change for the better. So in the season of Lent we ought to do a few things differently: what we eat, how we spend our time and money and especially how we pray. As the saying goes, *"If you change nothing, nothing changes"*.

The way in which the church prays the mass certainly changes. The vestments are purple and the sanctuary and church are less decorative. The Gloria is omitted and the Gospel acclamation is changed to not include the forbidden "A" word. It's suggested in the missal that the congregation might recite the more simple Apostles Creed instead of the usual Nicene Creed after the Gospel and sermon.

As we enter more deeply into the season the church would traditionally veil any statues and remove the holy water from the fonts at the church entrance. Though it might not be a factor for most contemporary couples planning their big day, the church still discourages weddings during Lent and other sacraments like baptism and confirmation, except where necessary or if the soul is in danger of death. This time of minimalism and leanness only helps us to appreciate and realise how great is the glory of Christ's victory, and how blessed we are to receive all that is given to us because of God's saving love for us.

One more way our parish will change the way it prays on Sundays during Lent is with the replacement of an opening hymn with the entrance antiphon of the mass. An antiphon is a short verse taken from the scriptures - often the psalms - and reflects the season, prayers and readings of the mass of that day. They are typically chanted and are more simple and subtle than your usual church hymn. It's for this reason that I and the liturgy group thought it fitting, just for this season. You might recall that we did something similar last year. By not letting people know however, a few approached me last time asking what was going on and why we're not singing! Hopefully this helps.

If you don't particularly like them or their style, that's okay. You could offer it up as a Lenten penance. And then imagine at how happy you will be at Easter when all of us will be singing our hearts out!

In Christ,

Fr Joel.

Celebrating Damascus Parish

Join us as our Parish proudly becomes **Damascus Parish**. Celebrate at **9am** at St Therese, Torquay (Fr Joel & Fr Linh) or **11am** at Nazareth, Grovedale (Bishop Martin Ashe & Fr Joel). Morning tea follows each Mass, please bring a small treat to share if you can. Let's celebrate this milestone together.

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

POPE LEO

For children with incurable diseases

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

Part-Time Bookkeeper / Finance Officer - Nazareth Parish

Nazareth Parish is looking for a part-time Bookkeeper/Finance Officer (10–12 hours per week) to manage day-to-day parish finances, including accounts, invoicing, and reporting. The ideal candidate will have experience with Xero and Excel, strong attention to detail, and a commitment to supporting the Parish community. A Working with Children Check and Police Check are required. For a copy of the job description or more information, contact Tracy in the parish office, grovedale@cam.org.au or 9412 8444. If interested in applying send through your resume and a cover letter, applications close Monday 23rd February.

Mannagum Family Group Planning Meeting Date Change

The planning meeting for the Mannagum Family group has been moved to Sunday 1st of March at 2 pm at 58 Centreside Drive Torquay. Please re-confirm your attendance. Contact Rosemary on 0400 044 387 for more information. New members welcome.



World Day of Prayer

The *World Day of Prayer* is an annual international Christian observance when people around the world unite in prayer and action. Each year, the service focuses on a different country, highlighting its experiences, concerns, and faith stories. In 2026, the focus country is Nigeria. A special collection will be taken up during the service to support the women of Nigeria. This year's local service will be held at **Torquay Uniting Church**, 27 Anderson Street, Torquay, on **Friday 6th March 2026 at 1.00 pm**. All are warmly invited to attend.

In Paragraph 60 of the Final Document from the Synod it states, "By virtue of Baptism, women and men have equal dignity as members of the People of God.....There is no reason or impediment that should prevent women from carrying out leadership roles in the church: what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped." Garratt Publishing are offering us another formation opportunity with a webinar on Thursday, March 5th at 7.00p.m. WOMEN IN THE CHURCH. Go to their website for further information and to register.



First Sunday of Lent

21-22 February 2026

Please donate 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*.



First Reading:

Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7

Responsorial

Psalm:

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Second Reading:

Romans 5:12-19

Gospel Acclamation:

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!

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11



Daily Readings

PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

Recent deaths:

Anniversaries who are at this time: Kevin McMahon, Veronica Rogers & Thomas Carmody

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 03 9412 8443

Office Hours

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

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

Office is Closed on Public Holidays

Bulletin Notices

Please submit them by Thursday mornings.

Email: grovedale@cam.org.au

Sign up to receive the weekly bulletin via email by visiting our website tagparish.com.au or scan the QR code.

