



St Kevin's Catholic Parish

26-44 Herlihys Road, Templestowe Lower



Mass Times

St Kevin's: 5.30pm Saturdays

9.15am Sundays

St Gregory the Great: 6.00pm Saturdays

9.00am, 10.30am and 5.00pm Sundays

Reconciliation at St Gregory the Great every

Saturday morning at 9.30am

Parish Priest: Fr Charles Balnaves

Assistant Priest: Fr Anton Aseervathampillai

Business Manager: Mr David Hii

Pastoral Worker: Mrs Ana Saro

Postal Address:

PO Box 985, Templestowe 3106

Telephone: 9850 5983

Email: templestowe@cam.org.au

Website: stkevinsparish.org.au

Facebook: St Kevin's Parish

VISION STATEMENT

St Kevin's Templestowe Parish is a Catholic community called by God and trusting in Jesus. We aspire to care for and connect with the wide world and to be hospitable and generous so that all may live life to the full.

Year A

Feast of the Holy Family

27/28th December, 2025

Baptism and Baptism Presentation Weekend

Our Presider today is: Fr Anton Aseervathampillai

From the desk of the PP...

More words—it seems as though I just finished the Christmas words—oh, of course, I did, now, I am casting my mind, my thoughts, my heart to the future—the time after Jesus' birth. As with Christmas Day, I don't have a lot of parish news—the doings of the year have wound down and will pick up again in late January or in February. Parish life is slowing. Perhaps time for a few breaths. Maybe a few moments for reflection will be given. A couple of thoughts / reflections: Untitled Poem 2, by Joyce Balnaves (yes, my mother).

There sprung from day to night
A lightling star which, shining bright
Drew from some shepherds gasps of fear
For something unknown called them near
A stable, poor but warm with love—
A babe lit by that star above.
What grace was this that made them kneel
In wonder at the power to feel
This moment fixed for all of time
No matter where or what the clime?
Now is the hour for joy to reign
For hope can conquer all our pain.
New life to come and others spared
Are part of fifty years we shared.
We're blessed because we have each other,
Kith and kin, sister and brother.
And therefore let the bells bright mirth
Proclaim to all our saviour's birth.

Every so often I go back to a slim blue volume of poems penned by my mother. In part, to remember her. In part to seek, and often find, inspiration. As is the want of poets she was able to create an image beautifully and sometimes found words, such as 'lightling' that don't exist except that they do exist for this particular scansion that is needed, and works. And to weave personal life into the story of salvation (50 years shared are my parents lives together, to choose just one weaving). I read this poem and marvel at the way my mother had the reality of the birth of Christ and the truth of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph intertwined into the fabric of her existence. And I am reminded of how much this influenced my growing up and my life ever since. It is this 'making personal' of our life with Christ that will lead us to deeper and deeper intimacy with God. St John of the Cross says that only love can make the soul pleasing to God:

My soul is occupied,
And all my substance is at his service;
Now I guard no flock,
Nor have I any other employment:
My sole occupation is love.

Each of us is called to embark upon the journey my mother speaks of in poetry. Each of us is called to seek that our sole occupation is love. This is a journey for each of us. Similar to everyone else in that we follow Christ so that we can enter into the Father's love. But at the same time utterly unique because your journey is ... YOUR journey, and mine is mine. Let us join the shepherd in praise and join Mary in pondering in our hearts.

God bless, Fr Charles.

What's happening in our Parish this week?...

Saturday	5.30pm	Mass
Sunday	9.15am	Mass with Baptism and Bap Presentation
Tuesday	8.15am	Adoration
	9.15am	Mass
	1.00pm	Needlecraft Group
Thursday	9.15am	Mass
Friday	9.30am	Adoration at St Gregory the Great Church
Saturday	5.30pm	Mass
Sunday	9.15am	Mass with Baptism



We pray for Better Health:

Alexandra Bateman, Alan Benn, Federico Aspromonte, Peter Ryan, Eugenia Pozzebon, Aileen Kent, Ruth Shiel, Rachel Hally, Vin Natoli, Bob Ulehla, Dot Sharkey, Shirley Loo, Lianny Susanto, Jewly Wylie, David Cullen, Peter Ryan, Julie-Anne Oldfield, Dylan, Shane, Lyn Murphy, Marie Cameron, Peter Zeantti and Tony Whelan.

Anniversaries:

John Rowland, Nina Luca, Dorothy Childers and Albert Oates

Recently Deceased: John Francis de Oliveira

Fr Charles' Prayer Intention for this Week: For all who are travelling and holidaying: that they will journey safely and relax into the arms of a loving God and family.



Feast Days this week:...

1st January

Mary, the Holy Mother of God Celebrates Mary's role in the mystery of the incarnation, enriches the octave of Christmas with a Marian perspective and provides a solemn beginning to the New Year.

2nd January Ss Basil and Gregory

Basil and Gregory are commemorated together because of their friendship in life and their enduring influence on the Church, especially in the East.

4th January The Epiphany of the Lord

The mystery of the incarnation is now revealed to everyone in the world, represented by the wise men from foreign lands.

LITURGY ROSTER

Feast of the Holy Family – 27/28th December 2025

1st Read: Eccl 3: 2-6, 12-14 2nd Read: Col 3: 12-21 Gos: Matthew 2: 13-15, 19-23

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
5.30pm	Pauline Erickson	Bredenia Raquel	Lawrence Cecconello Maryanne McNamara
9.15am	Vianney Shiel	Marie Arbogast	Liz Polidano Lyn Robinson Carmel Purdey

Epiphany of the Lord – 3rd/4th January 2026

1st Read: Isaiah 60: 1-6 2nd Read: Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6 Gos: Matthew 2: 1-12

Time	Commentator	Lector	Special Ministers
5.30pm	Margaret Turner	Kathy Pearce	Anne Maguire Lynne O'Brien
9.15am	Miriam Ayoub	Bernard Butler	Mary Waddick Penny Teo Tony Robinson



Thank you

two small words to reflect our appreciation for the HUGE amount of work our hard-working volunteers undertook to make our Christmas celebrations the wonderful successes that that were. St Kevin's Parish is truly blessed. Thank you.



Days of Solemnity... (important Feast Days)

Thursday, 1st January (New Year's Day)– Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Mass will be celebrated @ 9.15am

Weekend of 3rd/4th January – The Epiphany of the Lord

Masses will be celebrated @ 5.30pm on Saturday and 9.15am on Sunday morning.

January: The parish offices (at both St Greg's and St Kevin's) will remain open over the Christmas/ New Year period and over January 😊. Fr Charles? He will be around – catching up on things, thinking, and taking things a little easier but still available. So if there is something you are thinking about doing over this time – you need to let us know so we can plan it – and I know what is happening.

Fr Charles



Our Alpha program is returning in January next year.

Are you or anyone you know searching for life's big questions? Do you wonder: is there more to life than this? Why am I here? Who is Jesus? If you have questions about life, faith and meaning, join our Alpha program in January. There's a seat for you at the table. Alpha is friendly, fun and relaxed. We ran the program this year. It was great, so we are running it again next year. If you would like to find out more, please grab one of the leaflets with the details near the entrance or contact the parish office.

Building a Synodal Church in Melbourne

In recent years, we have been gently encouraged to take the practice of synodality into our hearts as a way of being Church, and the Archdiocese of Melbourne 2026 diocesan synod provides another opportunity.

The concept of synodality can be traced to the earliest days of the Church, where members of the Christian community collaborated closely in decision-making through prayerful discernment. Acts 15 is drawn upon as an example of this—a gathering of apostles and elders was held to discern whether Gentile converts needed to follow Mosaic Law. The process involved conversation and prayer, illustrating the foundational role of dialogue and discernment in Church decision-making. Throughout its history, the Catholic Church has continued this practice, as bishops have met regularly to prayerfully discern doctrinal, pastoral and disciplinary issues through Synod of Bishops meetings.

In 2018, the International Theological Commission (ITC) published *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, referring to synodality as an ‘essential dimension of the Church.’ It offered an invitation for all the baptised to walk together in communion, ensuring participation of all to enhance the work of mission. It is a further deepening of our understanding of the shared responsibility of all the baptised:

The ecclesiology of the People of God stresses the common dignity and mission of all the baptised, in exercising the variety and ordered richness of their charisms, their vocations and their ministries. (ITC, §6)

Earlier this year, during a meeting with the members of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, Pope Leo reflected on the legacy of the late Pope Francis. He observed that ‘synodality is a style, an attitude that helps us to be Church by promoting authentic experiences of participation and communion.’

The universal Church has called for new synodal practices and structures to strengthen Church life ... This phase calls for synodality to become part of the *ordinary life of the churches* and to *inspire daily practice*.

A key component of participation is the consultation process. This is not new to Australian Catholics! Since the Fifth Australian Plenary Council (2021–2022) and then the work towards the recent XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (2021–2024)—with the theme ‘For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission’—rich data have been gathered about the hopes of people for a missionary Church. Consistent themes emerged regarding young people, how we are to form people for mission and how we can enhance participation in mission. Consultation regarding these themes will assist in shaping the pastoral priorities for the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Synods serve a canonical purpose and are convened by the Archbishop to assist in diocesan governance. Following the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference committed to each diocese holding a diocesan synod. The universal Church has also called for new synodal practices and structures to strengthen Church life. This work builds on the recent global synod, in which the universal Church continues to participate through the implementation phase. This phase calls for synodality to become part of the *ordinary life of the churches* and to *inspire daily practice*.

Some questions we might reflect on as we embark on the Melbourne Synod include:

- When have we experienced walking together in our community?
- What helps us think and discern together?
- How have I heard the Holy Spirit speak through the diverse voices in my context?
- What does shared responsibility for mission look like in our context?

More information about the synod and the consultation process will be available in early 2026.

St Kevin’s Parish warmly welcomes through the Sacrament of Baptism...

Charlie James Clarke
Son of
Cameron and Charlene
Brother of Lacey



Philippines School Collection
Loyo Elementary School

We are working to improve the lives of children and families in the Philippines through our Friendship School program.

The community of Loyo Elementary is grateful for our donations. If you would like to make a difference you have the option to use this QR code to make a donation. We thank you in anticipation of your generosity.



Baptism Welcome

This weekend we welcome:

Rasika and Dinekshi

who will be introducing

Kiara Madison Fernando

to our Parish Community in preparation for her Baptism next weekend.

Celebration
of the
Sacrament of Baptism



Let us not tire of preaching love, for this is the force that will overcome the world.

Even if we see waves of violence coming to drown out the fire of Christian love, love must win out. It is the only thing that can. – Ocsar Romero

For information on our Parish School please contact:

St Kevin's Primary School
Phone: 9273 9999

Responsorial Psalm

Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord.

Response to Prayers of the Faithful
Lord, hear our prayer.

REFLECTIONS ON THE READINGS OF THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

First Reading	Second Reading
<p><u>Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14</u></p> <p>A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus <i>Whoever fears the Lord honours his parents.</i></p> <p>This book is also called Sirach after its author. He has written Hebrew poetry arranged in couplets (such as we see in the psalms). He presents here a series of practical sayings or proverbs elaborating the fourth commandment: 'Honour your father and mother'.</p> <p>The first section sets out the mutual responsibilities of parents and children. Children who honour their parents will be happy with children of their own and will be blessed with a long life.</p> <p>The second section is especially poignant today when parents are living longer, sometimes with dementia or other ailments. They deserve our selfless kindness and care. Any form of elder abuse should be scrupulously avoided.</p>	<p><u>Colossians 3:12-21</u></p> <p>A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians <i>Concerning the Christian life in the world.</i></p> <p>The third paragraph of this passage specifically addresses family relationships: wives and husbands, parents and children. The teaching presumes a mutual love and respect which is set out in the first two paragraphs. These paragraphs, of course, have a general application to the whole Christian community but, on the feast of the Holy Family, it is worth considering how these ideas operate in a family context.</p> <p>Paul proposes and recommends a long list of qualities and behaviours. They should be read in such a way that they inspire and encourage. We can aspire to live like this because God has chosen us and loves us. It is the rich message of Christ and his peace reigning in our hearts which flows out to others.</p> <p>As we consider our families and our love for one another, are we able to sing psalms and inspired songs of thanksgiving?</p> <p><i>Taken from 'Break Open the Word'</i></p>

Social Justice Action
St Kevin's Parish, Templestowe

Social Justice Action Committee launches trial 'working used phone & computer' donation scheme for 2026

Among other matters, the final Social Justice Action Committee meeting for 2025 on 11 December launched, on a **trial basis**, a Parish Collection scheme for **operational** used mobile phones and Computers/Laptops/Tablets, for those in need who can't afford to purchase such devices. The provisos for prospective donors include i) that offered devices are operational as provided, ii) do not need any repair or technical support from the Parish, and iii) have personal data removed. Phones may be unlocked or locked to a particular network provider, but if locked - with the provider identified. Offered Mobile phones must also include an associated power adapter. It's trial scheme because the Parish does not have resources to check or repair faulty or unserviceable devices.

We've based this project on recognised need for such devices by those with particular needs. These include, for example, private mobile phones for abused women who are under surveillance by abusive partners or former partners, or other people in need who are unable to afford a PC or laptop. There is already a waiting list from such people. We have in the past collected used PCs/laptops for the Brigidine Asylum Seeker's Project, and have prompted the Archdiocese to provide a replacement PC for a previous antiquated device for the Catholic Aboriginal Ministry. Prospective donors may contact SJA Members (John Costa, Carmel Purdey, Lawrence Ceconello, Tony Robinson) or the Parish office.

As a final positive note for this year, and truly in the spirit of Christmas, we have received a deeply appreciative letter from Mackillop Family Services to all in the Parish, for our recent 2nd Collection donation of \$1,309.05 - **John Costa SJA**



Blank burnable CDs

If you or any of your family, friends, or acquaintances still burn CDs, then you might be interested in some free burnable CDs. If so, please ring Vianney on 0414 466 596.