



The Carpenter

**Building our Parish Community
No. 8 November – December 2026**

A Family Mass - Saturday evening, 12th September What a very special occasion!

The church was filled with families, teen-agers, little girls in their best fairy dresses and regular parishioners. Students from St. Joseph's Primary School and FCJ College read the readings and prayers of the people and took up the gifts.

Fr. DJ had arranged for some Melbourne friends to come and be involved in the service. Their beautiful choir singing was much appreciated. Thanks to the work in planning by Fr. DJ, the Principals and Catholic Identity teachers from both schools and the students who took part, the Family Mass was a joyous time of participation, encouragement and prayer.

Following the family worship, sausages in bread, cupcakes and snack food were on offer, however with the generosity of the Filipino community the spread included many Filipino dishes and other delicious sweet treats. Thanks especially to Christian & Maria and all those who contributed to offering wonderful hospitality to the large crowd which spilled out into the passageway of 31, and out the front door (with plates in hand!)



The choir from Melbourne



Fr DJ Suguitan expressing words of encouragement and thanks.



FCJ student participants



Christian & Maria in their St. J's logo aprons



ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH BENALLA

Parish Priest:

Fr Vijay Bandanadam

Email - frbasuoss@gmail.com

Mobile - 0435 006 171

Parish House & Office:

42 Arundel Street , Benalla 3672

Phone 03 5762 2060

benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9am to 4 pm

Office Staff

Parish Secretary - Jane Salud

Admin Officer - Cath Donehue

FCJ Sister

Sr. Liz

Mobile 0448 933 581

Safeguarding Officers

Xavier O'Kane

Cath Duncombe

Parish Pastoral Council

Chair - Cath Duncombe

Parish Finance Committee

Chair - James Flynn

Mass Times Benalla

Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 9.30 am.

Weekdays Tuesday - Friday 9.15 am

Thoona

3rd Sunday of each month at 12 noon

Cooinda 3rd Wednesday of month

Estia 2nd Wednesday of month

Morrie Evans 2nd Tuesday of month

Reconciliation by appointment

Baptism Information Session

Contact the Parish Office to register or for more information.

What's Coming Up in November - December

Here are all the important dates for the following two months.

NOVEMBER

Sunday 1 st	All Saints Day (Solemnity)
Monday 2 nd	All Souls / Faithful Departed
Friday 6 th	Rosary & Benediction 6 pm
Saturday 7 th	Mass of Remembrance at Benalla Cemetery
Sunday 8 th	Cuppa in the '31' building after Mass
Tuesday 10 th	Fr. Vijay's birthday
Sunday 15 th	Thoona Mass 12 noon, followed by lunch
Sunday 22 nd	Christ the King (Solemnity)
Sunday 29 th	First Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER

Wednesday 2 nd	Fr. Vijay's Anniversary of Ordination (17 yrs)
Friday 4 th	Rosary & Benediction 6 pm
Sunday 6 th	Parish Christmas Party with Mass at 5 pm
Tuesday 8 th	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
Thursday 10 th	Service of Reconciliation 6 pm
Sunday 13 th	Cuppa after Mass in '31'
Tuesday 15 th	'The Carpenter' out
Wednesday 16 th	1 st day of the Christmas Novena, Mass 7 pm
Thursday 17 th	Novena Mass 7 pm
Friday 18 th	Novena Mass 7 pm
Saturday 19 th	Vigil Mass 6 pm
Sunday 20 th	Thoona Mass at 12 noon followed by lunch
Monday 21 st	Novena Mass 7 pm
Tuesday 22 nd	Novena Mass 7 pm
Wednesday 23 rd	Novena Mass 7 pm
Thursday 24 th	Children's Mass 6 pm Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 9 pm
Friday 25 th	The Nativity of the Lord – Christmas Day Mass at 9.30 am.
Sunday 27 th	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

We, the Parish of St. Joseph's are working towards being a welcoming, supportive community, which encourages active participation in our life.



Commemorative Souvenirs available -

Fine China Coffee Mugs	\$10
Stemless Wine / Tumbler Glasses 2 for	\$15
Stemmed Wine Glasses	\$15
150 Years of Faith and Community - A Pictorial History of St. Joseph's Parish - booklet	\$15
Tarzali Commemorative Wine - Riesling	\$15
Tarzali Commemorative Wine - Shiraz	\$15

* Liquor licence number 90190852

* Payment by EFTPOS or cash accepted

The 'Cuppa'

After Mass on the 2nd Sunday of the month, in the 31 building.
All welcome



Rosary & Benediction every 1st Friday of the month at 6 pm

Come along for this short but special time of Prayer.



Low Impact Tai Chi Exercises

Every Wednesday at 9.30 am in the 31 building.
All Welcome.

St. Joseph's Parish



Sunday 6th December

Outdoor Mass on Parish House lawn at 5 pm

followed by carols, barbecue, Filipino food, soft drinks, ice creams & Santa - until 8 pm.
BYO alcohol

Don't Miss It – All Welcome

'150 Years of Faith and Community'

- A Pictorial History booklet

Lyn Tanner & Maree Hanlon have put together a new pictorial history booklet showcasing 150 years of St. Joseph's Parish Benalla.

This beautiful souvenir booklet will update our history and be a wonderful reminder of all that St. Joseph's Parish has meant to so many families and the community.

Get a copy - \$15, available at the Parish Office.

A Mass of Remembrance

Saturday 7th November at 10 am.

At the Benalla Cemetery

All Welcome

St. VINCENT de PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Collections at Mass on
21st / 22nd & 28th / 29th November

See details of requests on page 10



CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Eve Children's Mass	6 pm
Christmas Eve Vigil Mass	9 pm
Christmas Day Mass	9.30 am

CHRISTMAS NOVENA MASSES

16th – 24th December

The Filipino community invite you to join them for the Novena Mass on week-days from Wednesday 16th to Friday 18th December at 7 pm and Monday 21st to Wednesday 23rd at 7 pm
(Week-end times as per usual)

See more details later in The Carpenter

The Past Two Months...

FCJ Founders Day - On 14th August the students and staff at FCJ College held their annual celebration of FCJ College's heritage and the legacy of the FCJ Sisters. It was a day of celebration, things spiritual, fun, food, music, competition between staff & students, fundraising and much more.

Fr. DJ and Sr. Liz were present for the Student Mass - photos courtesy of the FCJ Facebook page.



In late August the ladies in the Parish Office, **Jane & Cath**, attended a two-day administration seminar in Bendigo. These occasions give them the opportunity to network with other parish admin ladies, to refresh some parts of their job and learn what is new.



Congratulations to **Fr. Vijay** who, at the end of August successfully completed his three-month summer school in Alaska, gaining his Clinical Pastoral Education certificate at Providence Alaska Medical Centre.

Bishop Rene has asked us to adopt a simple prayer for vocations.

'The harvest is abundant, but the labourers are few.

Send, O Lord, holy Apostles into your Church!'

Fr. DJ and the Year 12 students from FCJ College worked together on a liturgy, aiming to provide a Mass that more suited their thoughts, vocabulary and music. The theme was 'Gentleness' and the service included acknowledgement of country and significant symbols within the school community. Included was a mandala painting that reflects the FCJ charism of Companionship. The FCJ mandala is circular, symbolising God's ever-embracing and never-ending love, a circle of life.



It isn't often that groups gather after Mass to discuss points from the homily! But that is what happened after **Fr. Joe's** Assumption homily with the reading from Revelation / Apocalypse 11: 19; 12:1-6, 10.

Fr. Joe's explanations of biblical symbolism, the struggles between the emerging Christian community and Roman paganism, and the revelation that the purpose of this passage is to assure the faithful of victory, despite the threats... sure gave new insights, comfort and confidence.



Living Water - Season of Creation 2026

Sr. Liz's week 1 'Living Water' display at the foot of the altar, celebrating Season of Creation 2026 from 1st September to 4th October.

Laudato Si' garden

Have you checked out how the bulbs are growing?

TIME & TALENTS

The request sheet for Time & Talents volunteers & updating of parishioners' personal details for the Parish register were distributed in August. Thanks to all who responded. **It is not too late to collect a form from the narthex and return it to the office or use the QR code which can be found on the church doors. We especially need more Eucharistic Ministers.**



The Past Two Months continued...

The Family Mass on the last Saturday of Fr. DJ's time as Administrator of our Parish was the culmination of much planning and it was a delight to see so many families, students and teachers from the schools present.

The multi-cultural nature of our community added to the worship and to the joy of the occasion.

Well done all who attended and all who contributed to the planning and to the liturgy.

* * *



Fr. Vijay's last stop before coming home from his sabbatical was in the Vatican City. Left: Fr. Vijay beside the bronze sculpture in St. Peter's Square, entitled 'Angels Unawares' this statue is by Timothy Schmalz and was blessed by Pope Francis in 2019. It depicts 140 migrants of different ethnicities and nationalities standing on a boat.

Centre & Right: Fr. Vijay in St. Peter's Square with St. Peter's Basilica behind. The rain obviously kept the crowds away.



Advent is the first season in the Church's Liturgical Calendar and is marked with the change of colour to violet. It is a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus. A time when we should prepare spiritually, not just prepare for visitors, Christmas dinner and gifts.

Parishioners who attended the funeral of Paula McPherson were pleasantly surprised to see **Fr Des Welladsen** and **Fr. Dennis Crameri** officiating at the funeral. Both are past priests of the Parish of Benalla, Fr. Des from 1989 to 1997 and Fr. Dennis from 1997 to 2008.



As we reach the end of the 150th Jubilee celebrations, the banners will no longer be on display, but the St. Joseph's Benalla Catholic Parish logo will remain.

It will continue to be featured on official documentation, advertising, paper-work and online such as the Facebook page.

The Carpenter will continue to use the symbols of St. Joseph the Carpenter in its letterhead and it will also use the parish logo when appropriate.



CHRISTMAS NOVENA MASSES A Beloved Christmas Tradition

We warmly invite everyone to join us for our Christmas Novena Masses. This beautiful nine-day tradition has been cherished for generations by Catholics around the world, especially in Latin America, Puerto Rico, Italy, Spain, France, and the Philippines.

Having continued this tradition in St Joseph's Parish over the past couple of years, we look forward to gathering again in prayer as we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ. All are welcome!

		Dec 16-18	7:00 PM
		Dec 19	6:00 PM
		Dec 20	9.30 AM
		Dec 21-23	7:00 PM
		Dec 24	6.00 PM and 9.00 PM

[From Jane Salud for the Filipino community]

Service of Reconciliation
Thursday 10th December at 6 pm.

- with an opportunity for private confession

I was born at the Queen Victoria Hospital in Lonsdale Street Melbourne on 17th July 1956. The year of the Olympic Games. My sister, Margaret, was born the previous year at Sacred Heart Moreland, which is now Fawkner Hospital. As my parents didn't have any proper accommodation, dad's boss asked his own mother if my parents could live in a prefabricated room at the back of her property which was cold and damp, in Carrum. When I was due to come into the world, it was pouring rain and the ambulance driver thought he might have to deliver me in his vehicle. We arrived just in time! Mum became ill due to the damp conditions after I was born and we both had to return to the Queen Vic. The same ambulance driver took us back and was happy to finally meet me.



From Carrum, my parents applied for low-cost housing and ended up in West Heidelberg. In September, 1957 my brother Malcolm was born. His brain was crushed at birth. He lived at home for 6 months, prior to being hospitalized for the next 26 years. He ended up in Stawell, Victoria for 14 years, having been transferred from the Austin Hospital 3KZ Ward where he had lived for 12 years.



The section where we grew up was famous because the houses were originally built for the athletes from the 1956 Olympic Games. Our part was called the Olympic Village. The local shops were the Official Rooms for the Administrators, the State School was the Dining Hall and the Hall nearby used to be the practice pool for the swimmers. We had the best running track at that time in the whole of Melbourne. Cows frequently entered the properties as there were no fences to begin with! The street we lived in was nick named "Pentridge Street" because quite a few of our neighbours ended up doing time. In those days hotels were closed on a Sunday so we soon learnt the word "SLY GROG", also Waltons Department Store targeted the vulnerable in the area with higher purchases and it was quite common to see the truck filled with the belongings of a family who had been evicted as they fell behind with their payments. Children lived in the gutters while their parents drank.



PART 2: 1968- 1981

Half an hours walk from home was our Parish Primary School of St Pius X, West Heidelberg. There were over 1,000 students in the early sixties. We were taught by a German Order of nuns, Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart, Hilstrup. I finished there in Grade 5 and went with my sister, Margaret, to St John's Clifton Hill which was a Commercial School going up to Form 4 (Yr 10). My parents were told we had too many brains for a Commercial School and should go further with our education. We both won scholarships and we travelled further afield to Vaucluse Convent, Richmond. This was where I met the FCJ Sisters for the first time.



Money was tight so mum made our uniforms, like changing dad's lovely old silk shirts into our school blouses and we received the rest of the uniform from second ones. Fees were high but the nuns kept us on a lower rate.

Our Parish Priest was going to help my parents out but that need never arose. We worked hard because we knew our parents were making great sacrifices to give us an education.



Continued ...

St Joseph's Parish is a Child Safe Parish. We are committed to the wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults. The Diocese of Sandhurst Safeguarding Committee is part of the structure under the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

From Secondary School I passed my HSC (Higher School Certificate) and received a student teaching place at Mercy Teacher's College, Ascot Vale. I graduated after 3 years with a Diploma of Primary Education. After Graduation I was posted to St Raphael's, West Preston for 2 years and then I felt the deep desire to become a nun. I transferred from St Raphael's and taught at Sacred Heart Kew which was run by the FCJ Sisters. I taught there for 1 year and began my training to become a nun in 1981. I made Final Vows in February 1994 whilst overseas in Jersey Channel Islands which is between England and France.



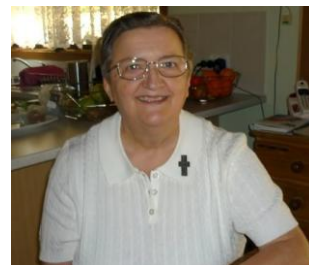
Sr. Liz: Teacher Graduation



A young teacher



Final vows 1994 in Jersey



Arrived in Benalla 2012

Baptism Information Session

Thinking about Baptism for yourself or your child? Or do you know someone who may be interested? We warmly invite you to join our Baptism Information Session, where you'll learn about the meaning of Baptism, the preparation process and can have the opportunity to ask any questions.

We look forward to welcoming you. To register or find out more, please contact the Parish Office on 5762 2060 or email

benalla@sandhurst.catholic.org.au.



Important days in the Liturgical Calendar

are listed as a Solemnity, a Feast or a Memorial, ranked in that order of importance and celebration .

In November we have two Solemnities – All Saints Day on 1st and Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe / Christ the King on 22nd

In December we also have two Solemnities - The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 8th and The Nativity of the Lord on 25th .

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary – 8 December. A solemnity recognizing that the Virgin Mary was free of original sin from the moment of her conception.

Celebrate 150 Years of Benalla Catholic Parish ...

The **Order Forms** have been circulated widely and now is the time to make your purchases. Fill in your order form and prepare your method of payment. You can make a Bank Transfer by using BSB: 083543 Account no. 457724666 and Reference (Your Name), Jubilee or you can pay cash when you submit your order form. Parish Office between 2 and 4 pm Monday to Friday.



Fine china mug \$10

Stemmed wine glass \$15

Stemless wine glass or tumbler 2 for \$15

Tarzali wine: Riesling or Shiraz \$15

Commemorative etching, print or labels on all items. Mug also has logo on reverse side.

Liquor
Licence #
90190852



Let's Learn More about the Bereavement Team

We have had several Requiem Masses in our church recently and I have learnt about the role of the Bereavement Team. There are six ladies in the Bereavement Team and when called upon they offer support to the bereaved family at the time of the loved one's passing and as required afterward. They assist the family with preparation of the funeral liturgy, including choosing readings and music. They can, if appropriate, also offer assistance with post funeral needs such as meals.

As well as assisting the priest with arrangements for the funeral, the Bereavement Team members offer emotional and practical support for the family on behalf of the Parish.

As the special Jubilee
'YEAR OF ST. FRANCIS'

draws to an end, let us also think
like St. Francis and care deeply for,
and about, the environment,
peace, poverty, kindness and
animals.

+ + +



Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon of St. Francis of Assisi (1224-1225)

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord, All praise is Yours, all
glory, all honour and all blessings.

To you alone, Most High, do they belong, and no mortal lips are
worthy to pronounce Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures, especially Sir
Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.

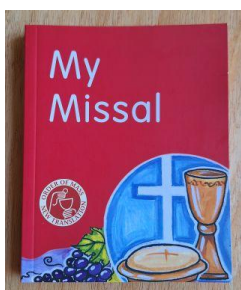
Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night, and he is beautiful and
playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister, Mother Earth
who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.
Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon for love
of You and bear sickness and trial.

Blessed are those who endure in peace, By You Most High,
they will be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape. Woe to those who die in
mortal sin! Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.

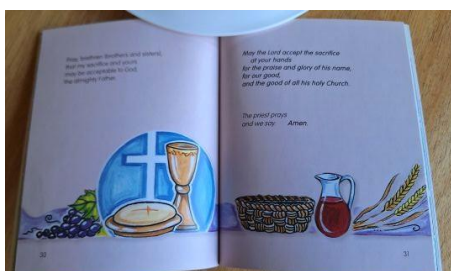
No second death can do them harm. Praise and bless my Lord
and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility. Amen



The Piety Stall
has copies of a
children's
Missal for sale.
Easy reading,
clear print and
attractive
illustrations,

this would be ideal for your
children or grand-children, aged
6 to 10 years. Cost is \$7.50

The Piety Stall is open before and
after Mass, or speak to Louise
Beling or Cath Donehue



Fr. Ted McGrath

Following on from the last edition of The Carpenter, Louise Beling has submitted a small piece on Fr. Ted McGrath and his local connection.

Born Timothy Edward 'Ted' McGrath on 11th April 1881 to Patrick McGrath and Ellen (nee Mackay – pronounced Mackie), they lived near Devenish at Bungeet West, along side the road between Benalla and Yarrawonga. A memorial stands today marking the place of his dwelling. The McGrath children went to school at St. James and then to a new school at Bungeet West in 1884.

Ted's father died when Ted was three, and his mother when he was 6 years old. He moved around family members and his older sister at St. James. None of the McGrath children attended Catholic schools as there were none in the area. His home was only 15 miles (24 kms) from Ned Kelly's family home. He visited Ned's mother, Ellen Kelly, and met two of Ned's sisters.

He left for Randwick in Sydney to join the Sacred Heart Fathers. In 1911 he met Eileen O'Connor, who was nineteen. A number of people, including priests, were convinced that Eileen O'Connor was saintly. Meeting Eileen was life changing for Fr. Ted McGrath.

Biography: A Lonely Road Fr. Ted McGrath by John Hosie

Captions for the photos.

Top: Captain Fr. Ted McGrath, Cheshire Regiment, St. Albans, London 1917

Centre: Military Cross awarded for gallantry and devotion to duty 1918

Bottom: Fr. McGrath, Egyptian guide, Eileen O'Connor & Nurse Dorothy Duffy, Port Said, en-route to Rome 1915.



PRIESTS RETIREMENT FOUNDATION APPEAL

This appeal to support the retired priests of the Sandhurst Diocese was held on 10th /11th October.

If you missed this collection, you may still donate by placing your money in a provided envelope, or your own envelope marked Priests Retirement Foundation. Place it in the second collection basket. Include your name and address if you want a tax-deductible receipt.

This is an opportunity to thank God for the ministry and dedication of our fifteen retired priests.

May the Souls of all the Faithful Departed, through the Mercy of God, Rest in Peace. Amen

We remember those who have passed away since October 2025

Annie Bernice O'BRIEN
Michael John DWYER
Kevin Patrick DONNELLY
Elaine Dawn MURPHY
Alison Olive SAUNDERS
Jean Isabel McKELLAR
Suzanne Ivy Winifred CANE
James Joseph McKENNA
John Thomas DOWNIE
Pasqualina GRIECO
Colleen Luigia BOURKE
Marie Therese RHODES
Carmel Terese WESTON
Elizabeth Mary WATERS

Frances 'Jean' FULEKY
Wilma Caroline McHUGH
John Joseph DALE
Brigid Mary CHALMERS
Christine Mary SMITH
Colleen Mary YOUNG
Jacqueline RYAN
Francis Robert FISHER
Omar SOLEDAD
Patricia Kathleen TODD
Peter Francis TANNER
Jennifer Anne WILLIAMS
Paula Margaret McPHERSON

MEETING ROOM FOR HIRE

A meeting room suitable for groups of up to 8 people is available for hire at Building 31. For further information or to enquire availability please ring the Parish Office at 5762 2060.

We acknowledge the custodians of the land of the Yorta Yorta Nation and the Taungurung clan of the Kulin Nation whose lands are within our parish. We remember their ancestors with respect.

Welcome to the Catholic Faith
through the Sacrament of Baptism to ...

Louis Clarke Tweed
Ayla Arabella Figuracion

A Plenary Indulgence

As part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations, the faithful have been given the opportunity to receive a Plenary Indulgence.

An indulgence is a special gift of God's mercy, offered through the ministry of the Church, by which the temporal effects of sins already forgiven are remitted.

Those wishing to receive the Indulgence are invited to fulfil the usual conditions: sacramental Confession, reception of Holy Communion, prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and a sincere desire to turn away from sin.

It is a beautiful reminder that our anniversary is not simply about looking back with gratitude, but also about renewing our faith and allowing God's grace to lead us into the future.

- from Fr. DJ

Eternal Rest grant unto them, O Lord

Colleen Luigia Bourke

5 September 1943 – 19 August 2026 – 82 years

Peter Francis Tanner

28 March 1949 – 27 August 2026 – 77 years

Marion Empey

7 June 1935 – 29 August 2026 – 91 years

Marie Therese Rhodes

28 September 1933 - 31 August 2026 – 92 years

Jennifer Anne Williams

12 December 1943 - 5 September 2026 - 82 years

Carmel Terese Weston

14 March 1944 -14 September 2026 - 82 years

Paula Margaret McPherson

28 July 1930 - 23 September 2026 – 96 years

Elizabeth Mary Waters

12 March 1956 – 26 September 2026 - 70 years

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal

The SVDP, Benalla Conference will be holding its annual Christmas Appeal on November 21st, 22nd, 28th and 29th. On either of these weekends we invite you bring **SportsPower gift cards, Toyworld gift cards or cash donations.**

The companions we support at the Benalla SVDP Assistance Centre are already filling in Hamper requests with information concerning the ages and interests of their children. During the first week in December, we will begin selecting and wrapping the gifts. We will also be providing our companions with Coles cards and either a Lions Christmas Cake or Christmas biscuits so that they can also enjoy festive foods.

Your donations are very important as we seek to share the joy and blessings of Christmas with those who may otherwise miss out.

Thank you for your ongoing support which is greatly appreciated.

Jane Branigan, Benalla Conference President



Celebrate 150 Years – Sunday 25th October at 2 pm



The Carpenter newsletter comes out every two months and is produced by Eleanor Macnamara, who can be contacted by e-mail on thecarpenter3672@gmail.com