



Catholic Communities of:
 St Matthew's, Bridgewater.
 Our Lady of the Rosary, Stirling East
 St Joseph the Worker, Lobethal.
 St Matthew's, Birdwood.
 St Catherine's Catholic School, Stirling.

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

18th/19th July 2026

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

The weeds seem to get into everything, even the landscape of our own spiritual field. Now there are definitely times when we must make decisions about what is right and wrong. We do try to maintain standards, especially for our children. But this parable is addressed to our church and personal lives where, in our fervor, we are quick to judge and act, pull up and cast aside, does suggest all the evidence isn't in yet. The parable also warns that, in some cases, even though we are pretty sure, we may not be in the position to cast a deciding judgment. The owner, after all, does introduce a note of caution and a plea for patience. In effect he is saying, "You do not really know enough. You do not have grounds to judge. All the evidence isn't in yet."

Jesus, the teller of the parable, knew this from his own experience. He chose servants to do God's work who, if you looked at the early signs, didn't turn out as expected. Judas, who was the keeper of the purse, a mover and shaker, showed early signs of promise. What about Peter's failures, Thomas the doubter and the other men and women who kept coming up with the wrong answers to Jesus' questions? They showed little initial promise, yet Jesus gave them a chance to grow and yield a rich harvest. "You just never know."

Today's parable is an encouraging one for each of us. It is a story of grace, patience and hope. Aren't we, who frequently look back on mistakes we have made, glad we had time to change and make amends? Aren't we grateful for the chance and help God gave us to work things out? What used to be a weed, we were sure, turned out to be wheat. Suppose we had been judged on the spot back then? Today, as we look at our present situation, we can still detect weeds in ourselves and others – we are sure. Rather than being overcome by discouragement, the parable proposes a note of hope. After all, good seed has been planted in us and is growing. The burden of the struggle isn't ours alone. We trust the owner, who knows what is happening, to help us sort things out. All this is summarized in a familiar, but often under-appreciated word – Grace.

Even as we feel dismayed at how much there is still left to do and how many questions we have ("Who's winning?"), the parable gives us confidence. God is in charge. God is not indifferent to our doubts. God is not unaware of what still needs doing. God is guiding us in our struggle to bring about good. So, we will play the parable back in our imaginations, especially when things around us dismay and discourage us. We will look out at the field and think we know what needs doing. But we will hear this cautionary parable, and the voice that says, "Not so fast. You just never know."

LET THEM GROW TOGETHER



WEEKEND MASS TIMES

St Matthew's Birdwood
 8.30 am: 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month

St Joseph's Lobethal
 8.30 am: 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays of the month

St Matthew's Bridgewater
 6pm Saturday Evenings
 10.30 am Sunday
 Our Lady of the Rosary East Stirling
 5.30 pm Sunday

WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS ...

For those recovering from surgery, illness and the sick: Margaret Carroll, Betty White, Anne MacDonald, June Harvey, Jeff Oliver, Mirla Mills, Judy McPhee, Krystina Rowland, Carolyn Whitfield, Margaret Surguy, Damon Currow, Frank Berra.

July Anniversaries: Linda Golding, Lew Brickhill, Joanne McFarlane, Gertrude Meyer, Dorothy Adkins, Sheila Chabrel, Noel Wilckens, Von Arthurson, Paul & Frederick Forster, Joan Somers, Bob Hill, Isabel Sykes, Geneveive Bellim, Jim White, Garry D. Phillips, Colleen M. Overton, Albin Wohlfart, Francis McAuliffe, Frank Wolff, Keith Messinger, Vera Marek, Elwyn Muldoon, Reginald Hewish, Christina Wicks, Neil Osborne

Recently deceased: Jim Rooney, Freddie Aquilina

WEEKEND MASSES

Monday 20th Tuesday 21st Wednesday 22nd Friday 24th Saturday 25th	Our Lady of the Rosary Rosary at the OLOR St Matthew's Birdwood St Matthew's Bridgewater Reconciliation	9.00a.m. 4.00p.m. 9.00a.m. 11.00a.m. 12.00p.m.
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UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES JULY

Wednesday 22nd Sunday 26th Tuesday 28th Saturday 1st Sunday 2nd Tuesday 4th Wednesday 5th Thursday 6th Friday 7th Saturday 15th Sunday 16th	Feast of Mary Magdalene Grandparents Day Liturgy Group Meeting Sacramental Workshop Ecology Meeting Parish/school Meeting Northern End Meeting Parish Finance Council Feast of St Dominic Yr3/4 First Friday of the Month The Assumption of Mary Holy Communion Children's Mass	9.00a.m. 10.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 1.00p.m. 11.45a.m. 9.45a.m. 9.45a.m. 4.00p.m. 9.00a.m. 11.00a.m. 10.30a.m.
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BAPTISMS

From 1 September 2026, there will be a modification to the times when the Sacrament of Baptism is offered within the Adelaide Hills Parish. The current system is somewhat unwieldy and places undue pressure on both Father Fred and the members of the Baptism Teams. Bookings for Baptism may be made at the following times:

St Matthew's Bridgewater	1ST and 3RD Sunday of the month during the 10.30a.m. Mass or 1ST and 3RD Sunday of the month at 12.15p.m.
St Matthew's Birdwood	1ST & 3RD Sunday of the month during 8.30a.m. Mass or 1ST & 3RD Saturday of the month at 11.30a.m.
St Joseph Lobethal	5TH Sunday of the month during 8.30a.m. mass OR 1ST & 3RD Saturday of the month at 11.30a.m.
Our Lady of the Rosary Stirling East	1ST & 3RD Sunday of the month at 12.15p.m.

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND MASSES

NORTHERN END	LOBETHAL Sunday 26 July 8.30am	BIRDWOOD Sunday 2nd August 8.30a.m.
Welcoming 1st Reader 2nd Reader Euch. Minister Cleaning	Gayle Raven M. Smitherman Michelle Chua Anne Moore Janet Harrison	MaryNyerboer Jo Brickhill Roz Crossing Lea Crosby M/R Russell
BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 25th July 6.00pm	Sunday 26th July 10.30am
Sacristan Welcoming Reader 1 Reader 2 Euch.Ministers	Joan Davey Kathy Lloyd Joan Davey Mary Homann Ann Teteris	John Leeton Di Golding Paul Robinson Ric Sachse Colleen Sim Deb Stapleton Nathalie Irons
Musicians Counters Our Lady Cleaning Flowers Tea & Coffee	Helen Cantwell Kathrine Johnson Marianne Berry Collene Sim Gina Kelly	Youth Group Ric Sachse Karen Dutton
OLOR	Sunday 26th July 5.30p.m.	Sunday 2nd August 5.30p.m.
Welcoming Cleaning	John Rodella Debbie Somers	Tom Keeyon Paula Kulas

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Show favour,
O Lord,
to your servants
and mercifully
increase the gifts
of your grace, that,
made fervent in hope,
faith and charity,
they may be ever watchful
in keeping your commands.
Amen.

NATIONAL CENSUS Tuesday 11th August 2026

Every five years, the Australian Bureau of Statistics counts every person and household in Australia. The next Census is on Tuesday 11th August 2026. From an Archdiocesan perspective, it is important that you identify yourself as Catholic in the Census. This information contributes to the Parish Social Profiles and assists with Pastoral Planning for the future.

APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA APPEAL

Last weekend we conducted an appeal for Stella Maris, Apostleship of the Sea, the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church. The total collection was \$657. Funds collected will be used to provide practical and spiritual support to seafarers visiting our ports. Thanks for your generosity.

ECOLOGY MEETING

The group is inviting everyone to attend this meeting on Sunday 2nd August after the 10.30a.m. Mass at Bridgewater. This is an important group which came about after one of the proposals of the Parish Assembly. The group at this stage is organising Working Bees every month at Bridgewater, recycling leaves into compost and plans to create a reflection garden. Please encourage the group with your presence.

FIRST WITNESS TO THE LIGHT

Mary Magdalene's experience with darkness and desolation helped her seek out the new dawn of the Resurrection. The Gospels portray Mary Magdalene, whose feast day is 22nd July, as close friend of Jesus and first witness to the light of the Resurrection. Mass to celebrate the feast of St Mary Magdalene will be celebrated on Monday 20th July during the morning Mass at OLOR, and on its feast day at Birdwood.

WELCOME INTO THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

It was an amazing experience for Thomas and Connor that after going through the RCIA in our parish they were accepted into the full communion into the Catholic Church. The celebration of their baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion was held last Sunday 12th July during the 5.30p.m. Mass at the OLOR. Although the weather was terrible, everyone joined in for a small celebration to congratulate Thomas, Connor and their families and friends at the back of the church. I wish to thank the OLOR community for the preparations involved.

ST DOMINIC FEAST

As our school is founded in the Dominican tradition, this term we celebrate the Feast Day of St Dominic, which falls on Tuesday 8th August. On Friday 7th August at 9.15am as part of St Dominic's Week celebrations, the Years 3/4 will be coming over to Bridgewater for Mass followed by morning tea at the OLAH Parish Hall. With this Friday being the First Friday of the month, there will still be the usual 11.00a.m. Mass.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

A kindly reminder to parents and children of our next workshop on the Eucharist that it is vitally important to attend this workshop as preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The workshop will be held at OLAH Parish Hall at Bridgewater from 1.00p.m. on Saturday 1st August.

EUCCHARIST 28

The International Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in 2028 ('Eucharist28') will be a global gathering of the Church centered on the Eucharist, the source and summit of our Christian lives, culminating in a Papal Mass with Pope Leo XIV. It will be a festival of faith, rich with worship, prayer, testimonies, art, music – a truly 'once in a lifetime' experience, and a transformative moment for our nation. The theme for Eucharist28 is 'This is My Body, Given For You', which invites us to reflect on the words that Christ spoke as he instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

NATIONAL VOCATIONS AWARENESS WEEK

Throughout the Church in Australia, we celebrate National Vocations Awareness Week from 1/2 August until 8/9 August. The theme of the first weekend is that every baptized Christian has a vocation and is called to holiness of life and to participate in the life and mission of the Church. On the second weekend, we specify this baptismal call further and celebrate and pray for an increase in the Vocations of the Priesthood, Diaconate and the Consecrated Life.

Tuesday, 4th August, Adoration for Vocations, Cathedral, 6.30pm

Friday, 7 August - "Beyond the Collar & Veil", a panel discussion with Fr. Anthony Beltrame and Sr. Olivia Lukaszewicz at The Wakefield Hotel, 76 Wakefield St, Adelaide.

FEAST OF ST MARY MCKILLOP

The Feast of St Mary of the Cross McKillop will be celebrated at our parish on the weekend of the 8th/9th August during all our weekend Masses. After Mass, we will say special prayers in front of the image of St Mary of the Cross.

THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

The Virgin Mary's entrance into heaven by God after her death is observed in Christian faith on the Feast of the Assumption on 15th August. This year, the feast falls on a Saturday. It's a Holy Day of Obligation. To make things easier, a Vigil Mass will be held on Friday 14th August at OLOR at 6.00 p.m. and a Feast of the Assumption Mass on Saturday 15th August at Bridgewater at 9.00 a.m.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

On Sunday 16th August, the children in the Sacramental Programme will be receiving Holy Communion for the first time. Parishioners are invited to join the children, their families and friends to celebrate this important occasion by being present at the 10.30 a.m. Mass and to participate in the celebration after Mass in the Parish Hall. Please remember the children in your prayers as they prepare to receive the Eucharist for the first time.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

At the last meeting held on Wednesday 15th July, we welcomed Tristan Barnes as a new member of the PPC. We had a long discussion about the new PPC Chairperson; hopefully, someone will accept the role by our next meeting. Part of the agenda was about how things are going regarding the use of the cup during Mass, the prayer of thanksgiving, and the way we conduct the special collections. We are waiting for the IT technician to set up the SMS system on the office computer. Fr Fred gave his usual finance report and John Low gave his report about the school.

CARITAS AUSTRALIA EMERGENCY APPEAL

Venezuela: Reacting to the earthquakes, our partner, Caritas Venezuela, has begun mobilising relief efforts, including the delivery of vital support such as water, food, sanitation and shelter. Funds raised through the appeal will support Caritas Venezuela's emergency response, delivered in partnership with local communities and the Church.

Ukraine: As violence escalates in other parts of the world, Ukraine is slipping from headlines. But for millions of people, the suffering has not stopped, and more than 10.8 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

If you would like to donate to any emergency, you can do so by ringing 1800 024 413.

WEEKLY INCOME 11TH/12TH July 2026

THANK YOU!

First Collection:	\$581.50
Planned Giving Received:	\$1725.00
Loose Plate:	\$262.10

If you would like to donate by Direct Debit, use the parish account below:
BSB 066 782
Account: 100000277
Refer payment as "Donation"

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Wisdom

There is no god, other than you, who cares for everything, to whom you might have to prove that you never judged unjustly. Your justice has its source in strength, your sovereignty over all makes you lenient to all. You show your strength when your sovereign power is questioned and you expose the insolence of those who know it; but, disposing of such strength, you are mild in judgement, you govern us with great lenience, for you have only to will, and your power is there. By acting thus you have taught a lesson to your people how the virtuous man must be kindly to his fellow men, and you have given your sons the good hope that after sin you will grant repentance.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

RESPONSE

Lord, you are good and forgiving.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call.
Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer
and attend to the sound of my voice. R.

All the nations shall come to adore you
and glorify your name, O Lord:
for you are great and do marvellous deeds,
you who alone are God. R.

But you, God of mercy and compassion,
slow to anger, O Lord,
abounding in love and truth,
turn and take pity on me. R



The famed 1960s Stanford University marshmallow experiment aimed to see how children could exercise discipline and delayed gratification when placed in a room with marshmallows on the table. A longitudinal study proved that those who were able to refrain from gobbling up the sweet treats were more likely to have positive life outcomes compared to those who did not have the capacity to deny themselves the immediate satisfaction of eating them.

Delaying something is not necessarily denial but often a fruitful experience that provides rich dispositional and spiritual change.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessed are you, Father, Lord of
heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the
mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus put a parable before the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?" "Some enemy has done this" he answered. And the servants said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

READINGS NEXT WEEK 17th Sunday - Year A

FIRST READING	Kings 3:5, 7-12
SECOND READING	Romans 8:28-39
GOSPEL	Matthew 13:44-52