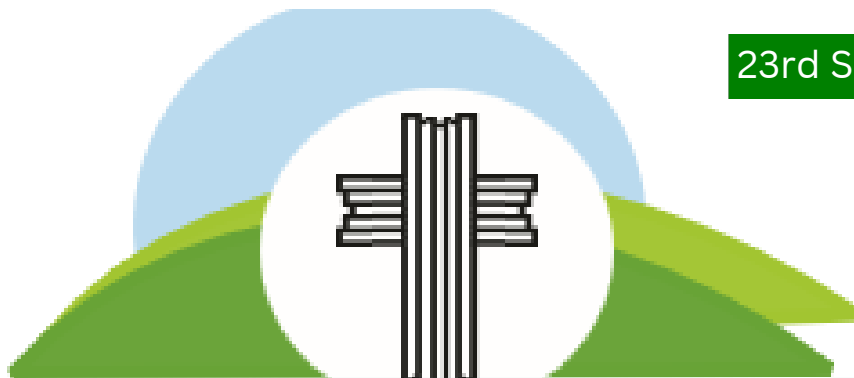




23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

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

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

5th/6th September 2026

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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Cathie Oswald
Pastoral Coordinator
Custodian of Parish hall
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St Catherine's Catholic School:
John Low
Principal:
Telephone: (08) 8238 8238
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Safeguarding Officer
Mark McGeough
mcgeough@internode.on.net

WHS Parish Officer
Marianne Berry
marianne3079@gmail.com

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

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

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

St Matthew's Bridgewater
6pm Saturday Evening
10.30am Sunday

Our Lady of the Rosary East Stirling
5.30pm Sunday

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

When someone offends us we can say, "It's a big world, I'll just go my own way and ignore him or her." The teaching in this Sunday's gospel sets out a rather elaborate and specific process for how forgiveness and reconciliation are to happen. At first, just two people are involved, "If your brother [or sisters] sins against you go and tell...." Notice that the one sinned against must attempt a personal exchange with the offending party. At this stage of the process, the privacy of the two is being respected. The directions don't include explicit formulas or directions on how the conversation is to go. It is hoped the parties can converse reasonably, and members can be trusted to know how to behave and what to say. But life doesn't always work out according to ideals.

Where shall we find the true presence of Christ? In today's example, He is in our midst when we work together to right wrongs. Forgiveness and justice should characterise the community; if it does, others will recognise something unique about the church and might even recognise Christ alive and active in our midst doing what isn't "do-able" without Him. We believe He is truly with us at this Eucharistic celebration. We reflect on divisions in our local and universal church, as well as the between churches, resulting from offenses and misunderstandings done over the centuries.

We invite Christ to be with us as we consciously and deliberately set about righting both large and small wrongs. Jesus' instructions continue. If the offender is hardened and refuses to acknowledge the wrong, the process moves to another level. "If he/she refuses to listen to them, tell the church." Here, the whole community is given the power to "bind and loosen"; the power to welcome back a repentant member, but also to discipline an unrepentant offender. The latter is an unfortunate but, it seems, necessary move. Actually, it isn't so much that the church excludes someone from the community, but that the person guilty of sin against a member has turned his/her back on the community.

Since they are obstinate in their sin, they have sentenced themselves to exclusion. If they won't mend the breach they have caused, the community is forced to state the obvious. The offender must be treated as "a Gentile or a tax collector"—a catch-all phrase used at that time by the Jewish community to mean anyone considered unclean and outside the faith. But remember that Jesus welcomed Gentiles and tax collectors into His company and offered them God's forgiveness and acceptance. I think that leaves His comment ambiguous.

But what's the spirit of today's gospel? Is Jesus just talking about individual offenses and sins? Suppose a race is sinned against, what are we to do? Suppose the poor on the other side of town are being ignored or deprived of their needs and rights? Suppose a group in our parish is treated as second class members just because they are new arrivals? Suppose women's voices are ignored? Or the elderly patronised? Suppose young people never hear their lives or issues mentioned in the preaching and public worship? Well...you get the idea.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS ...

For those recovering from surgery, illness and the sick: Margaret Carroll, Betty White, June Harvey, Mirla Mills, Judy McPhee, Krystina Rowland.

September Anniversaries: Marg Grant, Shirley Forester, Betty Gebert, Paul Farrugia, Veronica Davey, Mabel Phillips, Glenda Le Gallant, Fred Nixon, Jan Evans, Tony Bellem, John Rutherford Smerdon, William Cramond, Dennis MacFarlane, Betty Schipp, Maria Dunaiki, Kaye McCarthy, Joyce O'Driscoll, Anna Versteeg, Francis McEvoy

Recently deceased: Geoff Oliver, Philip Glynn.

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday 7th	Our Lady of the Rosary	9.00am
Tuesday 8th	Mass at St Catherine's	9.00am
	Rosary at the OLOR	4.00pm
Wednesday 9th	St Matthew's Bridgewater	11.30am
Friday 28th	St Matthew's Bridgewater	11.00am
Saturday 29th	Reconciliation	12.00pm

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES

Sunday 6th	Father's Day	
Tuesday 8th	Birth of Virgin Mary	
Wednesday 9th	Community Activity	11.30am
Thursday 10th	Parish Finance Council	4.00pm
Saturday 12th	Contemplative Walk	9.00am
Sunday 13th	Feast of St Matthew	
Tuesday 15th	Baptism Team Meeting	11.00am
	Faith & Formation Team	6.00pm
Thursday 17th	Parish/Team Meeting	10.00am
Sunday 20th	Safeguarding Sunday	
Tuesday 22nd	Parish/School Meeting	9.45am
	Ministers of the Sick	11.00am
	OLOR Community Meeting	6.00p.m.
Tuesday 29th	Liturgy meeting	11.00am

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

The Catholic Church in Australia marks Safeguarding Sunday on Sunday 13th September, a day on which we pray for those who have been abused, their families and supporters. We recognise and apologise for the harm done by priests, religious and lay people in Church settings. Rebuilding trust and confidence in the Church requires constant work and vigilance. We recommit to cultural change that will help the Church be a place that builds and supports safe communities for all people. As a parish in conjunction with the Children's Mass at Bridgewater, we celebrate it on Sunday 20th September.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

This feast was instituted by Pope St Pius V in thanksgiving for the great naval victory over the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto on the 7th October 1570, a favour due to the recitation of the Rosary. Our church at East Stirling is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. We will celebrate the feast on Sunday 11th October. We will recite the Rosary at 5.15pm and Benediction, Solemn Mass at 5.30pm will follow, after which there will be a sausage sizzle.

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Next PFC meeting will be held next Thursday 10th September at 4.00pm in the OLAH Parish Hall at Bridgewater.

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND MASSES

NORTHERN END	LOBETHAL Sunday 13th September 8.30am	BIRDWOOD Sunday 20th September 8.30am
Welcoming 1st Reader 2nd Reader Euch. Minister Cleaning	Gayle Raven Liz O'Flynn Gayle Raven Eric Toome	Mary Nyeboer Simon Murphy Lea Crosby Margaret Smitherman

BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 12th September 6.00pm	Sunday 13th September 10.30am
Sacristan Welcoming Reader 1 Reader 2 Euch.Ministers	Mark McGeough Ann Teteris Alan Miller Mark McGeough Kathy Lloyd	John Leeton Di Golding Paul Somers Phil Schultz Nolan Parodi John Leeton Jenny Porter Damien Mansfield A.Miller/B.Robertson R.Dimasi/D.De Fazio Cantwell Family Jane McCaffrey
Musicians Counters Cleaning Our Lady Flowers	Stephan & Jordan A.Miller/B.Robertson R.Dimasi/D.De Fazio Cantwell Family Jane McCaffrey	

OLOR	Sunday 13th September 5.30pm	Sunday 20th September 5.30pm
Welcoming Cleaning	Annette Lamont Sue Manchip	John Rodella Sue Manchip

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

To receive forgiveness can be joyful for us.
We can be glad and at peace,
like walking out of jail.
But forgiving others: not so easy.
Jesus,
please help us break the bonds
of our refusal to forgive!
Please let us use your strength
to remove our shackles.
Teach us how to forgive others
in the same way you forgive us.
To forgive, and then to forget.
No strings attached.
Amen.

CWL STIRLING FATHER'S DAY RAFFLE

The CWL will be holding its usual Father's Day Raffle. Tickets are \$2 each and available before or after Mass. Thanks to OFFE Jewellers for kindly including a gift. Thanks to all parishioners for supporting the raffle.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Children's Liturgy is run at this stage at Bridgewater during the 10.30am Mass by parents and parishioners in the parish who volunteer their time and provide assistance. Children's Liturgy provides an opportunity for children and parents to be able to share, after Mass, the Word of God they have heard. The parents and the children can thus make the link between faith and life in the following week. If you are interested in getting involved, please approach Jane van Mierle.

FATHER'S DAY

Although we don't need a specific date to celebrate the most important man in our life, the annual celebration of Father's Day gives us the chance to show appreciation for the important father figures in our lives. Father's Day has been celebrated on the first Sunday of September in Australia. It is a day when families get together to honour and pamper their fathers with gifts, cards and special meals. The day is a reminder of the selfless love and support that fathers provide to their children and the sacrifices they make to ensure their happiness and wellbeing.

THE NATIVITY OF MARY - COMMUNITY EVENT

The Social Justice Team invites all parishioners and their friends to join with them to celebrate Our Lady's birthday on 9th September. Fr Fred will celebrate Mass at 11.30 am, followed by lunch in the Our Lady of the Adelaide Hills Hall. Jack Snelling from Bright Futures will be our guest speaker. Bright Futures is an Australian-based Christian aid and development agency which works to provide education and development opportunities for children and communities in poverty. All funds raised by the lunch will be donated to Bright Futures. For only \$25, you will enjoy a delicious two-course meal, learn about the work done by Bright Futures and enjoy the company of other parishioners and their friends. If you wish to attend, please write your name on the sheet at the back of the church or email Cathie Oswald: catherine@adelaidehillsparish.com.au.

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF MARY

The Catholic Church celebrates the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on its traditional fixed date of 8th September, nine months after the 8th December celebration of her Immaculate Conception as the child of Saints Joachim and Anne. We will celebrate the vigil of the feast on Monday 7th September during the 9.00am Mass at OLOR.

FEAST OF ST MATTHEW

The feast of St Matthew falls on the 21st September but for pastoral advantage we will celebrate the feast on Sunday 13th September at 10.30am at Bridgewater. At this celebration, we remember especially all our past and present benefactors whose generosity helps to strengthen the identity of our parish in a day and time when more and more people are looking for an identity as members of our parish. Preceding the Mass of the parish patron saint, we will hold an anointing of the sick on Friday 11th September during the 11am Mass and, after Mass on Sunday 13th September, everyone is invited to a sausage sizzle.

PRAYER TO ST MICHAEL

In September, we remember St Michael the Archangel, whose feast is on the 29th of this month. With so much evil around, let us recite this prayer for protection:

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

SECOND COLLECTION COMMITMENT

In our parish every weekend, we have two collections. The first collection goes to maintain the clergy of the Archdiocese. The second collection goes towards covering the expenses of our four churches. During the second collection, only those who use the weekly envelopes put in their donation. Others use either direct debit or credit card. Parishioners that leave the parish or go to heaven stop their commitment of the Second collection. We are seeking new givers, even if it's just \$5 a week or \$20 a month. This would have a significant impact on our weekly collection. If you would like to start contributing to our Planned Giving Program via weekly envelopes or direct credit/debit, please speak to Fr Fred.

SEASON OF CREATION - POPE LEO XIV

Pope Leo XIV is asking Catholics around the world to recognise access to clean water not simply as an environmental concern, but as a matter of human dignity, Christian responsibility and care for God's creation. For his September 2026 prayer intention, the Holy Father is inviting the faithful to pray "for the care of water," as the Church enters the annual Season of Creation. The Pope prayed that water may remain a "source of fruitfulness, freshness, and hope". Water carries particular meaning for Christians because it points beyond physical necessity to the life of grace. In Baptism, water becomes a visible sign of spiritual rebirth and God's saving love. His prayer also confronted the suffering experienced by people who do not have reliable access to safe drinking water, turning it into a commodity, forgetting that it is a universal gift, a right without borders, meant for all your children, and the pain so many brothers and sisters who lack clean water, who walk for miles to find it, who become ill due to its scarcity."

The concern is especially significant as Catholics and other Christians observe the Season of Creation, which began on 1st September with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. It continues until 4th October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

CONTEMPLATIVE WALK FOR ADULTS

This is a 15-minute guided contemplative walk focusing on Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* and selected scripture. It is inspired by St Francis' Prayer of Creation and designed to be a guided walk for a group prayer experience. Our parish will be organising this contemplative walk on Saturday 12th September at the grounds around Our Lady of the Rosary Church, commencing at 9.30am. This is another of the Ecology Group's activities to celebrate the Season of Creation.

STILL LOOKING FOR A BELL

I have been trying all possible means to find a suitable bell for our new belfry at Bridgewater. The size of the bell is around 16kg, 295mm. I have asked other Christian denominations but without any success. Maybe you know someone who has a hidden bell in his or her shed. At this stage, I am looking at the possibility of buying a new bell if I don't succeed in getting a second hand one. Thanks for those who are doing their utmost to look for a bell.

KINDLY REMINDER

The Most Reverend Archbishop Patrick O'Regan DD has the pleasure of inviting the parishioners of the Adelaide Hills Parish to join him on the occasion of Fr Alfred Farrugia's 40 Anniversary of his priestly ordination at the Mass for Jubilarian Priests, on Wednesday 16th September at 5:45pm at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, 39 Wakefield Street, Adelaide. We continue to pray for Fr Fred that God will continue to journey with him in his priesthood.

The Parish Pastoral Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 15th September at the OLAH parish hall at 6.00pm

WEEKLY INCOME 29TH/30TH AUGUST 2026

THANK YOU

First Collection:	\$543.40
Planned Giving Received:	\$1,885.00
Loose Plate:	\$65.00

If you would like to donate by direct debit, use the parish account below:

**BSB 066 782
Account: 100000277
Refer payment as "Donation"**

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows, 'Son of man, I have appointed you as sentry to the House of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, warn them in my name. If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*O that today you would listen to his voice!
Harden not your hearts.*

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord R.

Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us,
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. R.

O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on
that day at Massah in the desert when your
fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me,
though they saw my work.'

R.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your fellow men, you have carried out your obligations. All the commandments: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and so on, are summed up in this single command: You must love your neighbour as yourself. Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

NEXT WEEK READINGS

24th SUNDAY YEAR A

FIRST READING	Sirach 27:30 - 28:7
SECOND READING	Romans 14: 7-9
GOSPEL	Matthew: 18: 21-35

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

God was in Christ,
to reconcile the world to himself;
and the Good News of reconciliation
he has entrusted to us.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector. 'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven. 'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

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



Caritas teams are on the ground assessing the scale of the disastrous Nepalese floods and how to respond. It is expected that the needs will most likely include emergency shelter and essential items, access to clean water and sanitation, access to food and immediate and long-term recovery. If you are able to support Caritas Australia's Nepal Floods Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/nepal.

Loving God,

Be close to all those caught in the devastation of the floods in Nepal and Tibet.

Comfort those who have lost loved ones, strengthen those waiting anxiously for news, and guide rescuers and emergency workers as they search for survivors.

Give courage to displaced families and compassion to communities offering shelter, food and care.

May those who are missing be found, and may those who mourn know they are not alone.

God of mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.