



24TH 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

12th/13TH SEPTEMBER 2026

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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Safeguarding Officer
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 Marianne Berry
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WEEKEND MASS TIMES

St Matthew's Birdwood
 8.30am: 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month
 St Joseph's Lobethal
 8.30am: 2nd, 4th & 5th Sunday of the month
 St Matthew's Bridgewater
 6pm Saturday Evening
 10.30am Sunday
 Our Lady of the Rosary Stirling East
 5.30pm Sunday

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

Forgiveness isn't easy, especially when offences against us have caused pain not only to ourselves, but to someone we love. A conversation recently with a woman who had a bitter divorce gave evidence of the hurt that accompany almost every divorce. The woman is an unskilled worker with a fourteen-year-old daughter to raise. She wonders how she'll pay her daughter's fees and expenses for this new school year. Her former husband has withheld child support, though he can afford it. The mother is a devout Christian and feels guilty for her anger and resentment toward her former spouse. I wonder how she will hear this parable today in church?

Sometimes when I read scriptures, the sense is rather clear and I can take something with me, a message for reflection. Even if I don't understand an entire passage, I listen for a word, phrase, image or verse I can chew on and pray about till the next time I go to the Bible or hear the scriptures proclaimed in church. For example, last week I was challenged not to let an offence against me fester. Instead, I heard Jesus say I should go to the offending brother or sister and talk over the offence with him/her. I don't have to be a Bible scholar to get something from passages like that.

But then there's today's story! The passage starts simply enough with a question by Peter. His inquiry picks up where we left off last week with Jesus' description of the reconciliation process members of the community should pursue when an offence against them has been committed. By now, who among us doesn't know the centrality and importance of forgiveness in the Christian community? Lest we forget, we are soon reminded of it whenever we say the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Even if we weren't religious people, psychologists have told us of the importance of forgiveness, not only in our relationships with others, but for our own mental wellbeing.

Jesus' response, "seventy-seven times," as if to say, "you must forgive on and on and on." He is telling the community that forgiveness is not counted or measured out like items on a shopping list – a dozen eggs, a six-pack of beer, two pounds of potatoes. Forgiveness, Jesus is saying, has no limits. You can see why he would have to follow up this statement with a parable. Jesus needs to underline the prominence and quality forgiveness must have in his church. I hear the core Gospel message restated in this parable.

There is nothing we have done, or can do, to earn forgiveness. God gives it to us over and over again, "seventy-seven times." First of all, we need to reflect on this truth. Our life with God is a gift, from beginning to end. We pause at today's Eucharist to let that truth sink into our bones. When we asked for forgiveness today, we received it. The Eucharist is our act of thanksgiving for what we realise again we have received from the hands of a gracious God. A sign that we really believe we have been forgiven free of charge is to give similar forgiveness to others, again and again.

ST MATTHEW, PRAY FOR US



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 14th	Our Lady of the Rosary	9.00am
Tuesday 15th	Liturgy at St Catherine's	9.00am
	Rosary at the OLOR	4.00pm
Wednesday 16th	St Matthew's Bridgewater	11.30am
Friday 18th	St Matthew's Bridgewater	11.00am
Saturday 19th	Reconciliation	12.00pm

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES

Sunday 13th	Feast of St Matthew	
Tuesday 15th	Baptism Team Meeting	11.00am
	Parish Pastoral Council	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
	Mass/burial Gabriele Morgan	11.00am
Tuesday 29th	OLOR Community Meeting	6.00pm
	Liturgy meeting	11.00am
	Faith & Formation Team	6.00pm

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

Next weekend, we will remember Safeguarding Sunday, 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.

The Parish of the Adelaide Hills Catholic Parish and the Archdiocese of Adelaide are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our community.

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 Stirling East 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.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Add some sparkle to your marriage - Your marriage relationship is a most precious jewel but after a few years it can need a polish to regain its sparkle. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend has the power to revitalise your relationship and reconnect you with your spouse and with God. Learn new communication skills and simple ways to keep your relationship a priority.

Our next live-out weekend (where you sleep at home) is at Antonio Catholic School on 7 and 8 November 2026. Call Jo and Jon on 049 3747 478 or email: sabookings@wwme.org.au. Alternatively, apply online today by visiting wwme.org.au.

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND MASSES

NORTHERN END	BIRDWOOD Sunday 20th September 8.30am	LOBETHAL Sunday 27th September 8.30am
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Welcoming	Mary Nyeboer	Gayle Raven
1st Reader	Simon Murphy	Margaret Smitherman
2nd Reader	Lea Crosby	Eric Toome
Euch. Minister	M. Smitherman	Anne Moore
Cleaning	A. Moore/E.Toome	

BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 19th September 6.00pm	Sunday 20th September 10.30am
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Sacristan	Mark McGeough	Di Golding
Welcoming	Karen Heusler	John Leeton
Reader 1	Alan Miller	Ric Sachse
Reader 2	Stephan Blanke	Christian Dumancela
Euch.Ministers	Mary Homann	Deb Stapleton
		Nolan Parodi
		Jenny Porter

Musicians	Damien Mansfield	Folk Group
Counters	R.Sachse/K.Johnson	R.Sachse/K.Johnson
Cleaning	B.Sugars/O.Kovac	B.Sugars/O.Kovac
Our Lady	Cantwell Family	Cantwell Family
Flowers	Jane McCaffrey	Jane McCaffrey

OLOR	Sunday 20th September 5.30pm	Sunday 27th September 5.30pm
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Welcoming	John Rodella	Tom Kenyon
Cleaning	Sue Manchip	Sue Manchip

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy Father,
we come before You with humble hearts,
seeking the guidance and wisdom
exemplified by St. Matthew.
May his dedication inspire us
to share the Good News
and serve our communities with love.
Grant us the strength to follow Your path,
as Matthew did,
and to fulfill our calling in Your name.
Illuminate our paths
with clarity and understanding,
that we may discern Your will in our lives.
Amen.

CWL STIRLING FATHER'S DAY RAFFLE

The winner of the Father's Day Raffle is Anne Tullock. Thanks to Offe Jewellers for their gift and parishioners who participated in the raffle. All proceeds will go to a worthy cause.

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

The September edition of The Southern Cross is available in our parish. Each copy costs \$2 and \$1 goes towards the parish.

WORLD PRIEST DAY

(WPD) is a celebration of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter movement's love for our priests and our faithfulness to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Mission Statement.

We want to support the men who live their Sacrament of Holy Orders each day. This celebration and the following ideas help us as a couple, a family, a local marriage encounter community and our Church with ideas on how to affirm our priests.

FEAST OF ST MATTHEW

The feast of St Matthew falls on the 21st September but for pastoral needs, we will celebrate the feast this 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. Afterwards, everyone is invited to a sausage sizzle. We will have a special collection for Catholic Charities in all weekend Masses.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

On the feast of our patron saint, we will have a third collection for the Catholic Charities. At the 10.30am Mass, St Matthew will be there to collect "taxes", not for the Romans but for the charities that will benefit from our generosity. "Never see a need without doing something about it" was one of the sayings of St Mary MacKillop and is what drives us to assist struggling families and individuals in our own community.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all you attended the celebration of the Birth of Mary. Thanks to the Social Justice group who organised the event. This occasion was a moment of fellowship and a community get together which is so important in our parish community.

FR FRED

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, and even if it's just \$5 a week or \$20 a month, it 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.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027

You're invited to World Youth Day Seoul 2027!

Created by St John Paul II in 1985, World Youth Day is the Catholic Church's largest international gathering for young people to celebrate faith, encounter new cultures, and experience the universal Church like never before. Next year, World Youth Day will be held in Seoul, South Korea. The Catholic Office for Youth and Young Adults (COYYA) invites all young people aged 16-35 who are interested in attending, or simply curious to learn more, to complete an Expression of Interest for the Adelaide pilgrimage. The 14-day pilgrimage is planned to take place from 29 July to 11 August 2027 and the estimated cost to be raised is \$7,500, excluding spending money. Complete the Expression of Interest below and join us on the journey to Seoul! <https://shorturl.at/rMEu3>

BAPTISM TEAMS MEETING

Our six-monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday 15th September at 11.00am in the Parish Office meeting room.

SEASON OF CREATION

The 2026 Season of Creation runs from September 1 to October 4, with the theme "Living Water," focusing on ecological restoration, spiritual renewal, and human responsibility toward creation.

Water is a gift we must not take for granted. It meets our basic physical needs and allows biodiversity to thrive. We are, after all, made mainly of water! But water goes much deeper. It has deep emotional resonance and spiritual symbolism. It speaks of God's life-giving, abundant generosity and our complete dependence. I am learning increasingly to be thankful to God for water each day, to value, conserve and celebrate it, and to try and enter the river of life and participate in God's life-giving work in the world.

FR FRED

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

MIGRANT AND REFUGEE SUNDAY

The 112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees will take place on Sunday, 27th September 2026 with the theme, 'Even just one of these children'. Pope Leo XIV in his message says "The Gospel invites us not to calculate: even one. Every child, every human being, possesses an infinite dignity. Each is created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26); each is a presence of the Lord. Before every migrant child, we are called to make an act of humanity and faith, for we are able to welcome and encounter the Lord. This call becomes even more pressing in the light of another of the Lord's affirmations in the Gospel of Matthew: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt 25:35). ..."

PARISH TEAM MEETING

Our next meeting will be held next Thursday 17th September at 10.00am in the Parish Office meeting room at Bridgewater. Members are Fr Fred, Marianne Berry, Paul Robinson and Cathie Oswald.

WEEKLY INCOME 5/6TH SEPTEMBER 2026

First Collection:	\$419.45
Planned Giving Received:	\$1,825.00
Loose Plate:	\$124.70

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

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

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FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Sirach

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.*

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. R.

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. R.

His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. R.

For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. R.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead, we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'

'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said, "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me," he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said, "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger, the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

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

NEXT WEEK READINGS

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING	Isaiah 55:6-9
SECOND READING	Philippians 1:20-24, 27
GOSPEL	Matthew: 20:1-16