



25TH 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

19TH/20TH SEPTEMBER 2026

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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Safeguarding Officer
 Mark McGeough
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WHS Parish Officer
 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

What rule of measurement does God use with us? According to this parable, God is guided by grace. Grace is a free, undeserved, unearned gift. It can seem unfair, unsettling, illogical and completely unexpected.

But for those of us who come here week after week to hear the Scriptures, God's ways should not come as a complete surprise. We have heard other stories in which God acts in the same way. A shepherd leaves the ninety-nine sheep in the wilderness to search for the one who is lost. A woman who has ten coins loses one, searches all day until she finds it, and then calls her friends and neighbors to celebrate. A father welcomes home a son who has squandered his inheritance in dissolute living. He embraces him, barely gives him time to apologise, and throws a party for him.

What kind of behavior is that? It doesn't make sense – not according to ordinary human calculations.

A priest in North Carolina visited a prison's death row. He became friends with a man named Henry. When he was younger, Henry had lived a very dissolute life. But during his later years, he began reading the Bible and praying. Cynics sometimes suspect such "prison conversions." A couple of years before he died, Henry became Catholic.

The priest heard his confession on the day he was executed. So many years of his life had been wasted, unlike the lives of those who had worked faithfully and responsibly. Yet at the end of his life, Henry was offered mercy – and he seized it.

In a manner of speaking, he was one of those hired at the last hour. But he got in. Who knows what the next life is like? Use your imagination. Jesus is there. Peter is there. Mary is there. Catherine and all the well-known saints are there. And perhaps, among them, is Henry.

How do we know? We don't. But this parable invites us to trust in the incalculable mercy of God. It reminds us that we cannot measure God's grace in terms of wages, merit or our human notions of justice. God's generosity colours every divine thought, word and deed.

Lest we get the impression that we can simply sit back, do the minimum and expect a generous reward at the end, the parable calls us to something more. We were created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, our lives should reflect that image to the world: persevering in goodness, welcoming the least and being generous beyond measure, often in unexpected ways.

That is the God who created us. That is the God who shines through these parables. And that is the God who invites us into the kingdom and says:

"Have a good look around. See how I treat the least. Observe how I act with generosity in unexpected ways. Now go and do likewise – whether you think they deserve it or not."

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

SAFEGUARDING
 IS
 EVERYONE'S
 RESPONSIBILITY



WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS ...

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

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday 21st	Our Lady of the Rosary	9.00am
Tuesday 22nd	Liturgy at St Catherine's	9.00am
	Rosary at the OLOR	4.00pm
Wednesday 23rd	St Matthew's, Bridgewater	9.00am
Friday 25th	St Matthew's, Bridgewater	11.00am
Saturday 26th	Reconciliation	12.00pm

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES

Sunday 20th	Safeguarding Sunday	
Tuesday 22nd	Parish/School Meeting	9.45am
	Ministers of the Sick	11.00am
Friday 25th	Mass/burial Gabriele Morgan	11.00am
	OLOR Community Meeting	6.00pm
Sunday 27th	Bridgewater Comm Meeting	12.15pm
Tuesday 29th	Liturgy Meeting	11.00am
	Faith & Formation Team	6.00pm
Friday 2nd	First Friday of the Month	11.00am
Sunday 4th	Feast of St Francis	
Thursday 8th	Parish Finance Council	4.00p.m.

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

This weekend, we will remember Safeguarding Sunday, when 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 7th and 8th 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	LOBETHAL Sunday 27th September 8.30am	BIRDWOOD Sunday 4th October 8.30am
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Welcoming 1st Reader 2nd Reader Euch. Minister Cleaning	Gayle Raven M. Smitherman Eric Toome Anne Moore	Mary Nyeboer Jo Brickhill Lea Crosby Eric Toome A.Moore/E.Toome
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BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 26th September 6.00pm	Sunday 27th September 10.30am
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Sacristan Welcoming Reader 1 Reader 2 Euch.Ministers	Joan Davey Kathy Lloyd Mark McGeough Joan Davey Mary Homann	John Leeton Sue Arthurson Paul Somers Nathalie Irons Deb Stapleton John Leeton Di Golding
Musicians Counters Cleaning Our Lady Flowers	Helen Cantwell C.Golding/J.Harrison Dwyer Family Cantwell Family Jane McCaffrey	Youth Group C.Godng/J.Harrison Dwyer Family Cantwell Family Jane McCaffrey

OLOR	Sunday 27th September 5.30pm	Sunday 4th October 5.30pm
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Welcoming Cleaning	Tom Kenyon Sue Manchip	Debbie Somers Kathy Decosta
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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Christ,
 you know everyone:
 each one's, wants, and needs.
 What will be your call to the vineyard,
 to the place of grace,
 where you heap the fortune
 of everlasting life and love on us?
 Thank you for your wonderfully
 constant call to each of us to work
 and live among your vines.
 Amen

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.

THE BRIDGE

The September edition of The Bridge is available at the back of the church. Please take your copy and give it to someone else once you have finished reading it.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

On the feast of our patron saint, we had a third collection for the Catholic Charities during the 10.30am Mass. St Matthew in person collected "taxes", not for the Romans but Catholic Charities. He collected \$130. Thanks for your generosity.

GABRIELLE MORGAN

The final farewell for Gabrielle and her husband Michael will be held on Friday 25th September. Mass will commence at the OLOR church at 11.00am (instead of Bridgewater), followed by the interment of their ashes in the OLOR Memorial Garden.

SECOND COLLECTION COMMITMENT PLEASE CONSIDER!

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. Recently we lost a couple of parishioners who used to contribute around \$4,500 annually between them. 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 Programme via weekly envelopes or direct credit/debit, please speak to Fr Fred.

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL FEAST

Tuesday 29th September is the feast of St Michael, one of the three archangels — the only angels named in the Bible. Michael is the “Prince of the Heavenly Host,” whose forces cast down Lucifer and the evil spirits into hell. He is invoked for protection against Satan and all evil. Pope Leo XIII, in 1899, having had a prophetic vision of the evil that would be inflicted upon the Church and the world in the 20th century, instituted a prayer asking for St Michael's protection. Mass will be said on Monday 28th at 9.00am at the OLOR. We will recite the prayer of St Michael.

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.

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>

MINISTERS OF THE SICK MEETING

Our six-monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday 22nd September at 11.00am in the Parish Office meeting room.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We extend our heartfelt prayers and condolences to the Rowland family who are grieving the loss of their beloved Krystina. She is the third loss for our parish community this month. While her health permitted, she rarely missed Mass on a Sunday morning at Bridgewater. May the Lord's comfort and peace surround her family, and may they find strength in His promise of eternal life. Krystina's funeral Mass is planned for Wednesday 30th September at St Matthew's Church, Bridgewater at 2.00pm. May God give her eternal rest. FR FRED

APRCC

On Tuesday 6th October, a half-hour gathering at 9.00am on the corner of Victoria Square and Flinders Street in the Adelaide CBD is planned to highlight to the mainstream media the faith community's solidarity with our Pacific neighbours currently suffering damage and possible loss of their homes due to the wrongful use of resources by the world's rich nations.

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 towards 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 to enter the river of life and participate in God's life-giving work in the world.

FR FRED

BRIDGEWATER PROJECT

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 been in contact with the representative here in South Australia for Taylor Bells in the UK. Hopefully, we get somewhere. Thanks once again for those who are doing their utmost to look for a bell. Finally, the engineering report has arrived, and the next step is to obtain an estimate for the project. The final hurdle is to have the project approved by the Archbishop. FR FRED

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 PASTORAL COUNCIL

Last Tuesday during the PPC meeting, we discussed who will be the new Chairperson of the Council. Inge Parodi has accepted the role and Mark McGeough will serve as the new secretary. We thank Inge and Mark for accepting these important roles. During the meeting, we also discussed the information about parish boundaries sent by the Archdiocese and Fr Fred presented the Social Profile of our parish from the 2021 national census. This profile was formulated to each Catholic parish in Australia by the Australian Bishop's Conference. The next step is to compare this profile with that of the 2016 census.

THANK YOU

I wish to thank those who attended the Mass for the Jubilarians at the Cathedral on 16th September. Your presence sincerely filled me with joy and thanksgiving to God for your support in this 40th Anniversary of my ordination. FR FRED

WEEKLY INCOME 5/6TH SEPTEMBER 2026

First Collection:	\$539.05
Planned Giving Received:	\$2,070.00
Loose Plate:	\$249.85

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

**BSB 066 782
Account: 100000277
Refer payment as “Donation”**

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The Lord is near to all who call him.

I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever.
The Lord is great, highly to be praised,
his greatness cannot be measured. R.

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures. R.

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts R

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Philippians

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results - I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake. Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the Gospel of Christ.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Open our hearts, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING	Ezekiel 18:25-28
SECOND READING	Phillipians 2:1-11
GOSPEL	Matthew: 21:28-32

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then, at about the eleventh hour, he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us," they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last," they said, "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.

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



Safeguarding Sunday (formerly Child Protection Sunday) is dedicated to making the world safe for children and to identifying and responding to any abuse that occurs. It emphasises preventing, noticing, remembering and acting in response to abuse.

We are called to be a community that follows Jesus and by our generous following of his way, attracts people to recognise God's love. It is to be a place of love, generosity, respect, forgiveness, prayer and hospitality, one that reflects all the qualities found in Jesus' life. And we once took it for granted that the lives of all those called to teach, preach and represent the Church would reflect those values.