



ADELAIDE HILLS CATHOLIC PARISH

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.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR A

21ST/22ND MARCH 2026

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH

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SUNDAY'S GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus is very much in charge. No one can rush him, not even the urgent pleas of the dying Lazarus' sisters. He risks the appearance of not being their true friend, of seeming unconcerned. Why does he wait so long? (And why are we also left with questions and doubts when a word from him could raise us from our death beds?) One thing is for sure--- after the delay we know Lazarus is really dead! Practical Martha names the reality, "Lord, by now there will be a stench, he has been dead four days." What a scene follows, Lazarus, the dead man emerging from the dark, dank tomb with his burial cloths dangling from his resuscitated body! Soon Jesus will suffer a violent death. They will also wrap him, as was their custom, in burial cloths and place him in a tomb. Another group of family and friends will stand by yet one more grave and peer into its coldness. They too will feel helpless as they huddle to comfort one another. But all is not totally lost. God will visit this grave and speak a word of life over Jesus and God's Spirit will raise him up to a completely new life. Who could have imagined? With his resurrection all of us who suffer death will be given the gift of hope and respond, "We too will rise."

As we interpret this passage, note this about John's gospel. For John, the life God promises in Jesus is already present to the baptized. Our new life does not begin after we have breathed our last breath or when our bodies are surrendered to the grave—it begins now. To call upon another verse from John, "I solemnly assure you, an hour is coming, has indeed come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have heeded it shall live. (5:25) We have new life in us even as we stare at the many grave sites in the course of our lives.

There are the deaths of family and friends, of course. But we also face death if we; lose our jobs; flunk out of college; get a crippling disease; lose our physical or mental strengths in old age; give up plans of being married and having children; have our last child go off to school or get married; etc. Is new life possible beyond these and other graves? In this life? The believer, hearing today's scriptures, is encouraged to believe that God has not abandoned us at our graves and will call out our names, utter a life-giving Word and breathe into us a resurrecting Spirit. "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he/she dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" And we respond with Martha, "Yes, Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

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

UNBIND HIM AND LET HIM GO



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, , Krystina Rowland, Carolyn Whitfield, Margaret Surguy.

March Anniversaries: Eileen McGlasham, Sr Carmel Slattery Op, Zenon Sobacki, Zofie Gregorczyk, Wally Finch, Norm Davey, Kevin O'Grady, Claire Sobels. Tony Arthurson, Steve Sarlay, Stan Greg, Les Way, Karmenu Farrugia, Claire Klavins, Max O'Brien, Noel Fiebiger, Bastiaan Kradolfer, Ava Lynch.

Recently deceased: Gabrielle Morgan,

MASS TIMES DURING THE WEEK

Monday 23rd	OLOR MASS	9.00a.m.
Tuesday 24th	St Catherine's—Liturgy	9.00a.m.
	Rosary at OLOR	4.00p.m.
Wednesday 25th	The Annunciation OLOR	6.30p.m.
Thursday 26th	BIRDWOOD MASS	9.00a.m.
Friday 27th	BRIDGEWATER MASS	11.00a.m.
Saturday 28st	RECONCILIATION	12.00p.m.

UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES March 2026

Sunday 22nd	Fifth Sunday of Lent	
Tuesday 24th	Social Justice meeting	5.00p.m.
Mon/Thur 23/26th	Mission Lenten week	6.30p.m.
Wednesday 25th	Feast of the Annunciation	6.30p.m.
Friday 27th	Way of the Cross at OLOR	6.00p.m.
Saturday 28th	Blessing—Way of the Cross at Birdwood	1.00p.m.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

And Jesus wept.

He had cried "Lazarus, come out of there!" Lazarus did.

"Death, now where is your sting?"

Christ weep with us, and for us, trapped in burial cloths with our hands tied, when we are trafficked, seized at borders, homeless.

Your passion says,

"Untie them. Let them go free."

GABRIELLE MORGAN RIP



The Funeral Mass for Gabrielle will be held on Friday 10th April at 10.00a.m. at the OLOR church. Afterwards her ashes will be interment in the Memorial Garden of the same church. We continue to pray for Gabrielle tha God will give her eternal rest.

INVITATION BY LEON HOLMES

Top of Torrens Gallery, 9 Shannon Street Birdwood invites you for an exhibition of Leon Holmes's art work along with that of his niece, Marie Louise Egar on Sunday 29th March at 2.00pm. by Dr Ken Sieben. The exhibition will continue until 10th May. .

SOCIAL JUSTICE MEETING

The meeting will be held next Tuesday 24th March at the Parish meeting room at 5.00p.m.

ROSTERS FOR WEEKEND MASSES

NORTHERN End	LOBETHAL Sunday 29th Mar 8.30a.m	BIRDWOOD Sunday 5th Apr 8.30a.m
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Welcoming	Gayle Raven	Mary Nyeboeur
1st Reader	Margaret S	Jo Brickhill
2nd Reader	Simon Murphy	Lea Crosby
Euch. Minister	Eric Toome	Eric Toome
Cleaning	Gayle Raven	Connie & Carmel

BRIDGEWATER	Saturday 28th Mar 6.00pm	Sunday 29th Mar 10.30am
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Sacristan	Mary Homann	Di Golding
Welcoming	Lyn Norris	John Leeton
Reader 1	Henry Duszynski	Christian Dumancelu
Reader 2	Alan Miller	Paul Somers
Euch.Ministers	Mary Homann	John Leeton
	Ann Teteris	Karen Dutton
		Pam Broadbridge
Musicians	Helen Cantwell	PowerPoint
Counters	Alan Miller & Bill Robertson	Di Golding
Our Lady	Di Golding	Di Golding
Cleaning	Otta Kovac & Ben Sugars	Gina Kelly
Flowers	Gina Kelly	Gina Kelly

OLOR	Sunday 29th Mar 5.30pm	Sunday 5th Apr 5.30p.m
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Welcoming	Annette Lamont	John Rodella
Cleaning	Kathy Decosta	Jenny Johnston

PASTORAL LETTER FOR LENT By ARCHBISHOP The Promise of Easter

Lent always looks toward Easter, and makes no sense without it. It looks toward the One who conquered death, who rose victorious, who appears to us even now with the greeting "Peace be with you." The peace the Lord Jesus offers is the peace of Easter morning. The peace that comes not from avoiding death but from following Jesus through death to resurrection. Our anxious world needs witnesses to the Risen Christ, people who have encountered him personally, who know that his love is stronger than all that threatens us, who can say with confidence: "I have seen the Lord." This Lent, may we each experience a deeper, more personal encounter with the Lord Jesus. May we hear him speak our names. May we receive his peace. May we breathe in his Spirit. May we go forth as he sends us, bearing witness to the One who is alive, who is present, who makes all things new. The Risen Lord stands among us even now and says: "Peace be with you." Come, let us, together, go to meet him.

+ Archbishop Patrick O'Regan

Weekly Income 14/15th March 2026 THANK YOU

First Collection:	\$633.50
Planned Giving Received:	\$2065.00
Loose Plate:	\$260.25

If you would like to donate by Direct Debit use the parish bank account details below:
BSB: 066-782 Account: 10000277
Account Name CCES ADEL HILLS
Refer payment as "donation"

LENT 2026

Previously called "Passion Sunday," this Fifth Sunday of Lent marks the beginning of Passiontide, a deeper time of Lent. In this, the fifth Sunday of Lent, the Church invites us to turn our attention to the realities that are perhaps the most 'painful' in human experience, the death of a loved one. In this Gospel we see all those who are being supportive of Martha and Mary at the moment of their brother, Lazarus' death.

PRAYER SERVICE

At the Northern End during Lent, Sunday gospel reflection of the coming Sunday in Lent is mediated on Thursday after 9.00 a.m. Mass

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

During Lent, every Friday at 11.00 a.m. followed by Mass.

PALM CROSSES

In preparation for Palm Sunday Gloria Howe is offering an opportunity for everybody to learn how to make Palm Crosses. This will be on Thursday 26th March at 10.00am in St. Matthew's Church. No need to RSVP, please just turn up.

BIRTHING KITS

The collection held last weekend for the Birthing kits amounted to \$1150. Our donation will be sent to the Adelaide High School to continue to pack kits for many women worldwide. Thank you for your generosity.

PALM SUNDAY 29 MARCH

As part of our Palm Sunday tradition, parishioners, with the children dressed as the Jewish people, gather in Fr. Fred's backyard under the oak tree, for the blessing of the palms. The children then process with Father into the church for Mass. All children, especially those in the Sacramental Programme, are invited to participate in the procession on Palm Sunday at the 10.30 am Mass. Children are asked to meet Cathie in the Parish House at 10 am to be dressed in their costumes. For more information contact:
catherine@adelaidehillsparish.com.au

EASTER MINISTRIES:

If you are available for ministry over the Holy Week/Easter period, please write your name in the relevant spot on the sheets at the back of the church.

EASTER SUNDAY 5 APRIL

Please join with other parishioners and Father Fred to celebrate his birthday after 10.30 am Mass on Easter Sunday. There will be a birthday cake, and parishioners are asked to bring a plate of either savoury or sweet food to share. Father's family is in Malta, we his parishioners, are his family in Australia. Please come along to the party.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

The feast of the Annunciation marks the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, during which he told her that she would be the mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is celebrated on 25 March each year. The Annunciation marks the actual incarnation of Jesus Christ the moment that Jesus was conceived and that the Son of God became the son of the Virgin. Mass will be celebrated on Wednesday 25th March at the OLOR at 6.30p.m.

HOLY WEEK PROGRAM

Sunday 29th March: Palm Sunday

8.30a.m. St Joseph the Worker, Lobethal
10.30a.m. St Matthew's Church, Bridgewater.
5.30p.m. OLOR Stirling East

Monday 30th March: Mass of the Oils,

Cathedral at 6.00p.m.
Tuesday 31st March: Passion of Jesus Christ
7.00p.m. at OLOR, Stirling East.

Thursday 2nd April: Holy Thursday

6.30p.m. St Matthew's Church Birdwood.
7.30p.m. St Matthew's Church Bridgewater.

Friday 3rd April Good Friday

11.00a.m. Stations of the Cross at OLOR Church.
11.00a.m. Stations of the Cross at Lobethal.
3.00p.m. **Liturgy of Good Friday** at Bridgewater.
5.00p.m. Liturgy of Good Friday at Lobethal.

Saturday 4th April: Easter Vigil

7.30p.m. St Matthew's Church Bridgewater.

Sunday 5th April: EASTER

8.30a.m. St Matthew's Church, Birdwood.
10.30a.m. St Matthew's Church, Bridgewater.

N.B. There will be no evening mass at Our Lady of the Rosary at Stirling East.

LENTEN MISSION

In the midst of all of this activity, it can be easy for Lent to feel crowded rather than contemplative. Our parish mission is offering to our parishioners a way to pause, refocus, and intentionally invite our parishioners into the heart of the season—calling to deeper conversion, renewed faith, and greater connection to the parish community.

LENTEN MISSION

Join us at 6.30p.m.
Mass and Reflection
at
Our lady of the Rosary Church

Monday 23rd March
Tuesday 24th March
Wednesday 25th March
Thursday 26th March

LENTEN PILGRIMAGE
WAY OF THE CROSS
to the OLOR Church at 6.00p.m.
Friday 27th March

WE ADORE YOU O CHRIST AND WE BLESS YOU.
BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEMED THE WORLD.



THE WAY OF THE CROSS PILGRIMAGE WALK

On Friday 27th March we will do the Way of the Cross like last year. We will stop at the thirteen stations of the cross. It's estimated that the walk and the reciting of prayers in each station will take around one hour. The walk will commenced 6.00p.m. between Gould Rd and Old Mt Barker Rd. Estimate distance walk is around 1.5 kms We will shuttle walkers from the OLOR to Crafers. Expected arrival at OLOR is between 6.45p.m., where the 14th Station is said, followed by Benediction and finally a cuppa. We are hoping to have around at least 40 people joining us in this pilgrimage.

BLESSING OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The blessing of the new Way of the Cross at Birdwood donated by Leon & Leonie Holmes is going to be held on Saturday 28th March at 1.00p.m. We bless and do the Way of the Cross, bless the renovated parish house. This will be followed by lunch. It's an invitation to everyone to this special event.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The Lord says this: I am going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this - it is the Lord who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

R.

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

R.

I wait for the Lord,
my soul waits, and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning.

R.

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

R.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;

whoever believes in me will not die for ever.

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. - It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.' Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' The disciples said,

'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?' Jesus replied: 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling because he has the light of this world to see by; but if he walks at night he stumbles, because there is no light to guide him.' He said that and then added, 'Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.' The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by 'rest' he meant 'sleep', so Jesus put it plainly, 'Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.' Then Thomas - known as the Twin - said to the other disciples, 'Let us go too, and die with him.' On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.' When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, 'The Master is here and wants to see you.' Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: 'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.' When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.' Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus

READINGS FOR PALM SUNDAY
of the PASSION of the LORD

1st Reading
2nd Reading
Gospel

Isiah 50:4-7
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14-27:66: