



ONE MISSION, TWO CHURCHES



Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C - 24th August 2025

Parish Priest

Fr Alex Chow

Parish Secretary

Sonya O'Farrell
Wednesdays,
Thursdays & Fridays
10am – 2pm

SUNDAY MASS

Saturday Vigil: 5pm (SL)

Sunday: 8:30am (SL),
10:30am (ST),
5pm (ST, Vietnamese)

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tues. 6:30pm (SL)

Wed. 9.15am (ST*)

1st Wed Mass of Anointing
@10am

Thurs. 9.15am (ST)

Fri. 9.15am(SL*)/6.30pm (ST)

Sat. 9.15am (SL*)

*Rosary after Mass

RECONCILIATION

SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:10pm

Sat 9:45 - 10:15am

Sat 4:30 - 4:50pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:10pm

**EXPOSITION OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT &
EVENING PRAYER**

SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:30pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:30pm

**HOSPITALITY AFTER MASS
AT ST. LUKE'S**

Second weekend of each
month - bring a plate to
share (optional)

YAM GROUP - 1st & 3rd Wed.
each month at 7pm
at St Luke's Presbytery

Isaiah 66 :18-21; Ps 116: Hebrew 12: 05-13.

Gospel Reflection on Luke 13: 22-30.

Meditation: *What does the image of a door say to us about the kingdom of God? Jesus' story about the door being shut to those who come too late suggests they had offended their host and deserved to be excluded. It was customary for teachers in Jesus' time to close the door on tardy students and not allow them back for a whole week in order to teach them a lesson in discipline and faithfulness.*

Who will be invited to enter God's kingdom? Jesus told this story in response to the question of who will make it to heaven - to God's kingdom of everlasting peace and eternal life. Many rabbis held that all Israel would be saved and gain entry into God's kingdom, except for a few blatant sinners who excluded themselves! After all, they were specially chosen by God when he established a covenant relationship with them. Jesus surprised his listeners by saying that one's membership as a people who have entered into a covenant relationship with God does not automatically mean entry into the everlasting kingdom of God. Second, Jesus asserts that many from the Gentile (non-Jewish) nations would enter God's kingdom. God's invitation is open to Jew and Gentile alike.

Jesus is the door to the kingdom of heaven: But Jesus warns that we can be excluded if we do not strive to enter by the narrow door. What did Jesus mean by this expression? The door which Jesus had in mind was himself. I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved (John 10:9). God sent his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to open the way for us to have full access to the throne of God's grace (favor and blessing) and mercy (pardon for our sins). Through Jesus' victory on the cross he has freed us from slavery to sin and hurtful desires and addictions, and he has made us sons and daughters of God and citizens of his heavenly kingdom. We are free now to choose which kingdom we will serve - the kingdom of truth and light ruled by God's wisdom or the kingdom of falsehood and darkness ruled by Satan and the world system or society of people who are opposed to God and his laws.

Following the Lord requires effort and commitment on our part: If we want to enter God's kingdom and receive our full inheritance which is stored up for us in heaven, then we must follow the Lord Jesus in his way of the cross through a willing renunciation of our own will for his will - our own life for his life - our own way for his way. Why did Jesus say we must strive to enter his kingdom of righteousness and peace? The word strive can also be translated as agony. To enter the kingdom of God we must struggle against every force or power of opposition - even the temptation to remain indifferent, apathetic, or compromising in our faith and personal trust in Jesus, our hope in holding firm to the promises of Jesus, and our uncompromising love for God above all else. Paul the Apostle reminds us that our hope in God does not disappoint us because "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom 5:5).

The Lord is with us to strengthen us in our trials and struggles: The Lord reminds us that when we face difficulties, trials, temptations, and even failures, we do not struggle alone. He knows our weaknesses even better than we know them, and he is always ready to help us in our struggle to overcome sin and wrong-doing. God's grace is sufficient! As we strive side by side for the faith of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27) Jesus assures us of complete victory! Do you trust in God's grace and help, especially in times of testing and temptation?

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Next Week's Daily Readings 25 Aug - 31

Aug

MONDAY, Aug 25 1 Thess 1:1-5, 8-10
Ps 149:1-6, 9 Mt 23:13-22

TUESDAY, Aug 26 1 Thess 2:1-8
Ps 138:1-3, 4-6 Mt 23:23-26

WEDNESDAY, Aug 27 1 Thess 2:9-13
Ps 138:7-12 Mt 23:27-32
St Monica

THURSDAY, Aug 28 1 Thess 3:7-13
Ps 89:3-4, 12-14, 17 Mt 24:42-51
St Augustine, bishop, doctor

FRIDAY, Aug 29 Jer 1:17-19
Ps 70:1-6, 15, 17 Mk 6:17-29
The Passion of St John the Baptist, martyr

SATURDAY, Aug 30 1 Thess 4:9-11
Ps 97:1, 7-9 Mt 25:14-30

SUNDAY, Aug 31 Sirach 3:17-20, 28-29
Ps 67:4-7, 10-11 Heb 12:18-19, 22-24
Lk 14:1, 7-14

22nd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

*(Taken from
ORDO 2025, Liturgy Brisbane, ACBC 2024)*

The Jubilee Prayer



Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

SOME USEFUL CATHOLIC RESOURCES:

PRAY AS YOU GO (<https://pray-as-you-go.org/daily-meditation>)

HALLOW (<https://hallow.com>):#1 prayer Catholic App

UNIVERSALIS website and App. (<https://universalis.com/index.htm>)

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

Saturday 5pm SL
Sunday 8:30am SL
10:30am ST
5pm ST

23 and 24 August

Marg Yore
10.30AM First Communion
8.30AM Ryan Yee
Hung Nguyen, Doan Pham
& Chi Nguyen

30 and 31 August

Olive Hammill
Peter McKeown
Joelle Rousetty
Youth Group

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday 5pm SL
Sunday 8:30am SL
10:30am ST
5pm ST

Lucy Ferris
10.30AM First Communion
8.30AM Anico Yee
Hoang Nguyen

Godfrey Thong
Melina Barcellona
Pat Kawalevski
Youth Group

SLIDE OPERATORS

Saturday 5pm SL
Sunday 8:30am SL
10:30am ST
5pm ST

Choir
10.30AM First Communion
8.30AM Manny Gonzalez
Toan Tran

Choir
David Prabha
Lee Min Yee
Toan Tran

SL WELCOMERS 23/24 AUG

5pm Edna Lee
8.30am Volunteer (at S.T.)
10.30am Janette Clark

SL CHURCH CLEANING

30th August - Bianca's team
Bianca Broccio, Shirley Prabha,
Libby Theodore & Franca Leo

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

23rd Aug: Jenny & Vanessa Marino
30th Aug: Kate Skowronska

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

Flowers: Parishioners

SL WELCOMERS 30/31 AUG

5:00pm Catherine Koh
8.30am Marie Pekish
10.30am Volunteer

ST CHURCH CLEANING

13th Sept @ 8am
Toan Tran, Dao Dinh,
Hieu Nguyen & Dieu Nguyen

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 1:
Owen Grealy & Anthony Yeo
Next week Team 2:
Raj & Violet Fonn

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

All who are sick, especially Kevin Ryan, Agatha Wink, Ronda Smith, Chris Leach, Dora Leung, Hazel Grealy, Josephine Alexander, Grace Dimattina, Margaret Hogg, Bernadine O'Meara, Kit Bing Fan, Kathryn Holmes, Stewart Davis, Mark, Margaret Hayes, Charmaine Bancroft, Marilene Japour, Paciencia Cabral and all those parishioners unable to be among us this weekend.

All who have died, especially those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially John Patrick, Maria Nguyenthisam, Winston Wan, Theresa Nga Nguyen, Marie Joseph Dung Nguyen, Melencio Salta, Bill Hurley, Annie McLoney, Gordon Owen, Francisco S. Quimbo, Sheila Bacon, Joseph Gerard Borg, John Patrick, Daniel Justin O'Carroll, Carmel Azzopardi, Donald Roy Beaton, Muriel Teresa Ellis, Patricia Bourke, John Riggs, Cayetano Rarela, Caterina & Tom Bonica, John Arelette, Agnes Ryan and Therese Monica Byrne. May they rest in peace.

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR AUGUST:

For mutual coexistence. Let us pray that societies where coexistence seems more difficult might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious, or ideological reasons.

ST TIMOTHY'S 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS: Thank you to everyone who helped with the celebrations last Sunday. We were blessed with the weather and it was a wonderful occasion. Special thanks to Mary Italiano who co-ordinated the event and to the Emmaus College bands who entertained us.

ARCHBISHOP'S CAMPAIGN: The Archbishop's Campaign is now underway and we ask everyone to consider a one time or monthly pledge to support the vital ministries of our Archdiocese. Brochures can be found at both churches. Donations can be made via the QR code, via the supplied envelopes or anonymously via cash into the collection during the campaign weekends.

ROSTERS AT ST LUKE'S: Sign-up sheets are in the foyer at St Luke's for those who can volunteer from Sept. to Dec. this year. Thanks for your support.

ROSTERS AT ST TIMOTHY'S: We would like to create a roster for Welcomers and for people to assist with the cuppa after the Sunday Mass at St Timothy's so we share the responsibility. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer at St Tim's.

ST LUKE'S SCHOOL ENROLMENTS OPEN: Enrolments for all year levels in 2026 are open NOW! Please contact the school on 9877 4023 or visit the new website <https://www.slblackburnsth.catholic.edu.au/>

CARLO ACUTIS REFLECTIONS: All are warmly invited to send their feedback and reflections on the Blessed Carlo Acutis First Class Relic and Exhibition of the Eucharistic miracles to the parish office via email or directly by speaking to Fr Alex. These can be anonymous if you prefer.

Resources

MELBOURNE CATHOLIC: [Proclaim the Good News to all creation](#)

MAJELLAN MEDIA: [Spring is in the air](#)

STEWARDSHIP CORNER:

The First collection is for the priest and retired priests.

The Second collection is for parish expenses.

ST: Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Total Collection: \$539.30

Last week's Church Stewardship Total Collection: \$356.75

Vietnamese Donation: \$204.40

SL: Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Total Collection: \$473.95

Last week's Church Stewardship Total Collection: \$450.15

Parish Groups & Contacts

Volunteers and Rosters

ST: Corrie Quimbo

SL: Margaret Gearon

Baptism Preparation

ST: Mary Italiano

Vietnamese Community

Hoang Nguyen

Andy Tran

Vietnamese Youth

Theresa Nguyen

Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalevski

Stewardship Counters

SL: Dale Dixon

Steve Kilroe-Smith

Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Theresa Nguyen, Mary Italiano,

Darren McLean

Janette Clark

Parish history

SL: Margaret Gearon

Parish Accountant

Bernard Negline

SL: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ the

Parish Office – 9877 2292

Church Sacristan

ST: Margaret King & Hoang Nguyen

SL: Greg Grant

Church Housekeeping

ST: Margaret King

Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean

Church Linen

SL: Beryl Chelliah

Parish Garden Maintenance

ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,

Anico Yee & Vietnamese Community

SL: Darren McLean

Parish Choirs

ST: Miguel Ilagan & Theresa Nguyen

SL: Lina & Maria Mafi

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

Parish Contacts:

ST: John McCoy

SL: Tony Lobo &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

Entrance Antiphon: Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

Response to the Psalm: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. Alleluia!

Eucharistic Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: The earth is replete with the fruits of your work, O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart.



Merdeka Celebration Mass
30th Aug Saturday, 6:30pm
St Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church
46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South 3130

You are warmly invited to join us for an evening mass at **6:30 PM** marking Malaysia's Independence Day, followed by a **potluck dinner** as we come together in faith and celebrate our rich culture. We look forward to this meaningful occasion with you!

Xavier Ng (yhee.nxg@gmail.com)
Fr Alex Chow (alexander.chow@cam.org.au)
Fr Collin Nunis (cnunis@melbcdf.org.au)

Youth and Young Adult Ministry Training and Formation - Saturday 30 August 2025.

This session will focus on formation resources for ACYF pilgrims and small groups. ACYF Group Leaders are highly encouraged to attend.

REGISTER HERE:

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1394384>



Pilgrims of Hope
A JOURNEY WITH THE LORD JESUS

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Saturday 6 September
9am to 4pm
Led by Fr Nicholas Pearce
Holy Mass celebrated by
Archbishop Peter A Comensoli

St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne
Talks, Adoration, Confession
Includes morning tea and lunch

To book visit: www.trybooking.com/DCBKR

The LukeTim YAM (18-35 Yrs) is an outreach program of St Luke the Evangelist, Blackburn South and St Timothy's, Forest Hill.



WHEN: Wed. 3rd Sept @ 7pm

WHERE: St Luke's Presbytery, 46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South

**TOPIC: The Holy Spirit & the Church
How the Spirit changes lives; signs, sacraments & community.**

An evening of nibbles, praise & worship, talk, sharing & games to deepen our relationship with Christ in a fun, safe and inclusive environment. Further enquiries to Jersey or Sarah at luktimyam@gmail.com

Your generous gift supports ministries across the Archdiocese —bringing the Good News to life not only in word, but in action.

Thank you.



DONATE ONLINE

THE ARCHBISHOP'S CAMPAIGN
2025



melbournecatholic.org/archbishopscampaign



Those who are least will be the most important



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Write or draw someone who is not considered an important person. Then fill in the missing letters.

Write or draw someone who considers themselves more important than others. Then fill in the missing letters.

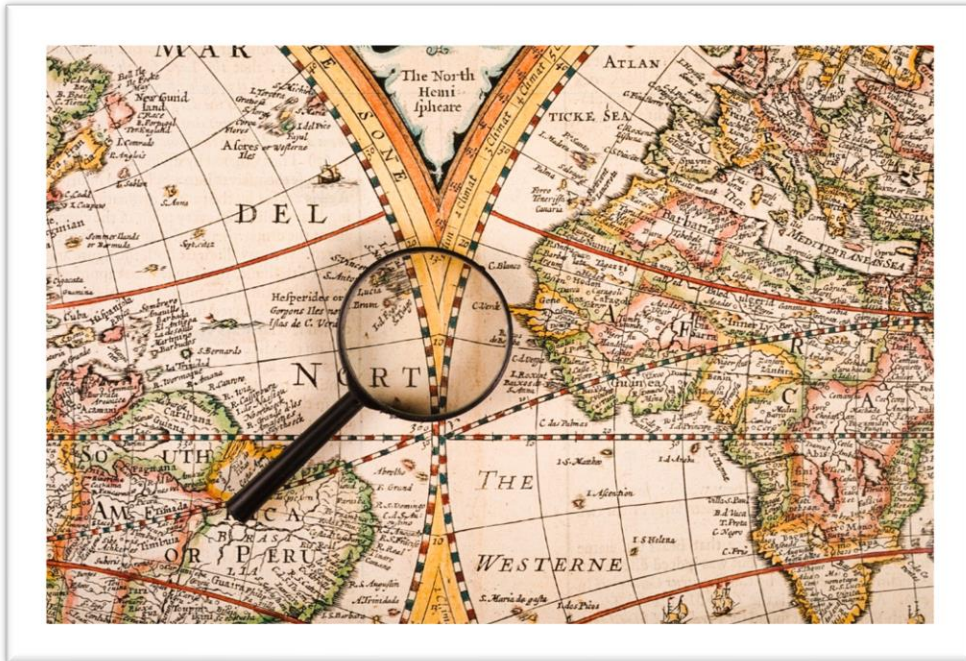
The o_es wh_ are _ow
le_t im__rt_nt wi__
be th_ mo_t i_po_tan_.

Th_se w_o a__ now
m_st i_po__nt _ill b_
the _e_st _m__rt_nt.

Draw some people from many different lands, sitting at the feast in God's kingdom.



21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 24 AUGUST 2025



COLLECT

O God, who cause the minds of the faithful
to unite in a single purpose,
grant your people to love what you command
and to desire what you promise,
that, amid the uncertainties of this world,
our hearts may be fixed on that place
where true gladness is found.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

The Hare and the Tortoise

A Hare was making fun of the Tortoise one day for being so slow. "Do you ever get anywhere?" he asked with a mocking laugh. "Yes," replied the Tortoise, "and I get there sooner than you think. I'll run you a race and prove it."

The Hare was much amused at the idea of running a race with the Tortoise, but for the fun of it he agreed. The Hare was soon far out of sight, and to make the Tortoise see how ridiculous it was for him to try a race with a Hare, he lay down beside the course to take a nap until the Tortoise should catch up. The Tortoise meanwhile kept going slowly but steadily, and, after a time, passed the place where the Hare was sleeping. But the Hare slept peacefully; and when at last he did wake up, the Tortoise was almost at the finish line. The Hare now ran his swiftest, but he could not overtake the Tortoise in time.

This fable of Aesop challenges complacency. The moral of the story is: *The last will be first, and the first last!*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 66:18–21

The Lord says this: I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put, Lud, Moshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant islands that have never heard of me or seen my glory.

They will proclaim my glory to the nations. As an offering to the Lord they will bring all your brothers, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, says the Lord, like Israelites

bringing oblations in clean vessels to the Temple of the Lord. And of some of them I will make priests and Levites, says the Lord.

First Reading

Jerusalem is a symbol of God's new kingdom. Here, at the end of his book, Isaiah sets out a vision of people from all over the known world streaming to Jerusalem where God's glory will be revealed. Some will be sent on mission by the Lord to proclaim God's glory and to gather everyone in.

It is a startling message for those who thought of themselves as specially chosen and favoured by God. Isaiah's vision is radically inclusive. Even the priesthood and the sacred mysteries of the Temple will be opened to some of those who come.

The variety of modes of transport makes a colourful list for the reader. Reading the list of symbolic names from the known world will need practice. (Check the pronunciation guide at the end of the book.) The NRSV uses 'kindred' instead of 'brothers'.

Responsorial Psalm

R. Go out to all the world
and tell the Good News.
or

R: Alleluia!

O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim him all you peoples! **R.**

Strong is his love for us;
he is faithful for ever. **R.**

Ps 116

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 116/117 is very short indeed. It picks up the theme of 'all nations' coming to praise God which we saw in the first reading. The response is taken from the end of Mark's Gospel (Mk 15:16) and reinforces the gospel mission which draws in the whole world.

All this is based on God's doing. God takes the initiative, loves us strongly and is faithful to us forever. In response, we joyously praise and acclaim the Lord, and sing Alleluia!

The psalm's brevity makes space for its solemn proclamation by the cantor/reader.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 12:5–7, 11–13

Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons? My son, when the Lord corrects you, do not treat it lightly; but do not get discouraged when he reprimands you. For the Lord trains the ones that he loves and he punishes all those that he acknowledges as his sons. Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons. Has there ever been any son whose father did not train him? Of course, any punishment is most painful at the time, and far from pleasant; but later, in those on whom it has been used, it bears fruit in peace and goodness. So hold up your limp arms and steady your trembling knees and smooth out the path you tread; then the injured limb will not be wrenched, it will grow strong again.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 13:22–30

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them, 'Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed.

'Once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, "Lord, open to us" but he will answer, "I do not know where you come from." Then you will find yourself saying, "We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets" but he will reply, "I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men!"

'Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from the east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

'Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.'

Second Reading

This passage from Hebrews uses a challenging metaphor that many today would not accept – that of a father training and disciplining his son. The NRSV translation uses 'child' and 'parent' throughout, but there is a case for maintaining the masculine metaphor of father and son throughout.

As a sign of his love, the father corrects and reprimands his son, he trains him with punishment. For the son, this experience is painful and unpleasant, but he takes it seriously and does not get discouraged. Ultimately the practice bears fruit in peace and goodness.

The question is whether people today accept the reality upon which the metaphor is based. This will make it difficult for them to receive the message. Within this world view, it is intended to make sense of the trials one encounters in everyday life: God has not abandoned us, but is actually working to help us.

Gospel

This gospel text is a strong challenge to our complacency. Those who think they have got it made will find themselves turned outside. No more privileged access for them – people from every direction will come and take their places at the feast, while the complacent are left on the outside looking in. *Thus, the first will be last and the last will be first.*

So the first dimension of Jesus' teaching is that God's kingdom is inclusive of all. This is the teaching opened up for us by Isaiah and the psalm and which is expressed clearly in the gospel by the final image of the banquet of heaven.

But the second dimension of the teaching is that we can take nothing for granted. God's invitation requires a response. It will require some effort (the narrow door) and a ready and prompt response (lest we find ourselves knocking on a locked door).

Jesus' teaching here is profoundly unsettling. Often, we find his parables and teaching present a reversal of fortunes which is meant to spur us on to do better. The first sentence reminds us that Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem. We interpret these teachings in light of the cross of Christ.

The two instances of 'men' should be read as 'people'.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Solemn Blessing (Ordinary Time III)

May almighty God bless us in his kindness
and pour out saving wisdom upon us.

Amen.

May he nourish us always with the teachings of the faith
and make us persevere in holy deeds.

Amen.

May he turn our steps towards himself
and show us the path of charity and peace.

Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come down on us and remain with us for ever.

Amen.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for Ordinary Time III, Roman Missal p. 715)



ST. LUKES SCHOOL
BLACKBURN SOUTH



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We are Taking Enrolments for All Year Levels

Book in for an Open Morning or a Personal Tour

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BOOK A
TOUR



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9877 4023 | www.slblackburnsth.catholic.edu.au



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST PAUL

TO GREECE & TURKEY (WITH ROME OPTION)



20TH APRIL –
3RD MAY 2026

LED BY
FR ALEX CHOW

14
DAYS

PACKAGE PRICE: AU\$ 8,490*
per person (twin share)

OPTIONAL SINGLE
ROOM SUPPLEMENT:

AU\$ 1,150

FULLY
ESCORTED

*Conditions apply. Subject to change.
Price estimated based on group
size of 20 pilgrims. Actual pricing
will be known in late May 2025.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



'Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres'. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

'For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love'

(Ephesians 4:2)

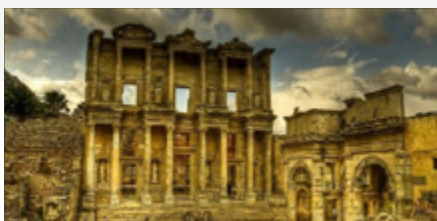
Such passionate, life giving, encouraging and hopeful words written by St Paul the Apostle. Come and join us for an extraordinary pilgrimage of Greece and Turkey and (optional Rome extension) as we follow the footsteps of St Paul and experience the contexts in which these passionate letters were written. It will be an opportunity of spiritual renewal, deepen our relationship with God as we reflect and experience the incredible journey of Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

REGISTER FOR AN INFORMATION SESSION at 7pm ON THURSDAY, 5th JUNE

* Enjoy full travel briefing * Meet your fellow Pilgrims * Have your questions answered

CONTACT FR ALEX OR OLIVE TREE TRAVEL TO REGISTER & GET THE DETAILS



NEXT STEPS

1. Register your interest and obtain a booking form from Fr Alex or Olive Tree Travel or by [CLICKING HERE.](#)
2. To secure your place, a deposit of \$500 per person is payable by 16th June 2025 (unless sold out prior)
3. Final balances will be due by late February 2026.



Ph. 1300 550 830 or 03 8488 9696
info@olivetretravel.com.au www.olivetretravel.com.au
103A Gardenvale Road, Gardenvale Victoria 3185



DAY 1 MONDAY 20TH APRIL

DEPART AUSTRALIA

Depart Melbourne this evening on your Emirates flight to Dubai. On arrival, transfer to your connecting flight to Athens.

DAY 2 TUESDAY 21ST APRIL

ARRIVE ATHENS

Arrive in Athens today. Athens is the thriving capital of Greece but more importantly, we have entered into the world of the New Testament where St Paul and his companions established the first Christian communities throughout his four missionary journeys. On arrival in **Athens** we will be met and transferred to our centrally located hotel for the remainder of the day at leisure. Athens overnight (D)

DAY 3 WEDNESDAY 22ND APRIL

ATHENS - CORINTH – ATHENS

Journey out to **Ancient Corinth** where the Apostle Paul lived for almost two years, teaching the people the Word of God and converting many. We visit the ancient ruins and see the site where he preached the Gospel from the **Rostrum**. Also visit the Peirene fountain, and the 6th century BC **Temple of Apollo** before an outdoor Mass in this stunning pilgrimage setting. Finally we come to **Cenchreae**, the ancient port from where Paul said farewell to the believers and departed for Ephesus (Acts 18:18). Return to Athens in the late afternoon for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 4 THURSDAY 23RD APRIL

ATHENS

When St Paul first came to Athens it was predominantly a city that worshipped pagan gods. St Paul was taken before the city council at the Areopagus Hill, a rough outcrop of limestone rock from which he preached the Gospel message to the Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:16-21). We begin our day with a tour of **Christian Athens** including the **Acropolis**, the **Areopagus** where St Paul delivered his famous sermon about the identity of "the Unknown God" (Acts 17:15-34) and the **Parthenon**. Continue for a visit the **Ancient Agora** and a bus tour to see the highlights of the city including the Kallimarmaro Stadium, dating back to 330 B.C. and restored for the first modern Olympic Games held here in 1896. Visit to the New Acropolis museum. Enjoy dinner and overnight in Athens. (BD)

DAY 5 FRIDAY 24TH APRIL

ATHENS – METEORA – KALAMBAKA

Depart this morning and travel north to the small town of **Kalambaka** built at the foot of the majestic grey rocks of **Meteora**. Marvel at this unique phenomenon of nature – 24 perpendicular rocks where 600 years ago Byzantine monks chose to worship God and build their Monastic community of Meteora. We visit two of the Byzantine Meteora monasteries. Among striking scenery and perched on top of huge rocks, the ageless monasteries of Meteora seem to be suspended in mid-air. The monasteries contain beautiful Byzantine art and offer an insight to the mystic world of the monks still residing there. Mass this evening, will be held in a private room at the hotel before dinner and overnight in Kalambaka (BD)

DAY 6 SATURDAY 25TH APRIL

KALAMBAKA – VERGINA – VERIA – THESSALONIKI

Depart this morning to **Vergina**, the first capital of the Macedonian Kingdom. Here we visit the "Vergina findings", treasures of Ancient Macedonia and the tomb of King Philip II of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. A few minutes away is Veria, located on the ruins of **Ancient Beroea**, is one of Apostle Paul's stops. Here we see the Byzantine mosaic in the monument commemorating his preaching. Continue our drive to Thessaloniki. Dinner & overnight in Thessaloniki. (BD)

DAY 7 SUNDAY 26TH APRIL

THESSALONIKI

Today is for Thessaloniki exploration. Welcome to Greece's second city, founded in 315 BC, and where St Paul preached during the winters of 49-50AD and wrote the two epistles to the ancient Thessalonians. See the ramparts of the city, the triumphal Arch of Galerius and the Roman Agora where St Paul once preached. We shall visit St Demetrios' Church with its valuable mosaics and frescoes and will drive up to the upper town, which offers a marvellous view of the city. We will also have the chance to celebrate Mass at the Catholic Church. Dinner & overnight in Thessaloniki. (BD)

DAY 8 MONDAY 27TH APRIL

PHILIPPI – KAVALA – THESSALONIKI

Arise and journey along the ancient route of the Apostle Paul to nearby Philippi, named after Philip II, father of Alexander the Great. It was here that St Paul won his first European convert, a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira (Acts 16:12-40). Visit the Baptistery of Lydia for a beautiful outdoor Mass on the River Zygaktis, and renew

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our Baptismal vows. Visit the market place (where St Paul and St Silas were brought before the rulers) and the cistern which tradition identifies as the place where St Paul was imprisoned. We will also see the famous Acropolis, Basilica and the theatre. It was here that he established the first Christian Church in Europe. Visit the Octagonal church, an early Christian monument thought to be built on the site where St. Paul had established a house of prayer. Finally, we drive to the port in Kavala (Neapolis in New Testament times), where Paul landed with Timothy, Silas, and Luke. Return to your hotel in Thessaloniki for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 9 TUESDAY 28TH APRIL **THESSALONIKI – IZMIR (SMYRNA) - KUSADASI** This morning, we depart Thessaloniki Airport for our flight to Izmir (via Istanbul or Athens). Upon arrival we will be met by our Turkish guide and commence our touring programme by visiting the Ruins of Ancient Smyrna, one of the 7 Churches. After the Agora visit we will drive to the coastal city of Kusadasi. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. (D)

DAY 10 WEDNESDAY 29TH APRIL **EPHESUS PILGRIMAGE** Today we visit the famous city of Ephesus. Ephesus, as we will see, is in a very good state of preservation and the overall existing view of this ancient city will make it evident that she was a wealthy, cultural, and commercial centre in the 1st century. Paul's preaching in the area resulted with the uproar of the Guild of Silversmiths and the evangelisation of the whole province of Asia. Highlights include the ancient temple to the Roman Emperor, the 'slope' houses, the Library of Celsus, the Temple of Hadrian, the Fountain of Trajan, the brothel, and the large theatre in which the riot of Acts 19 took place. Not far from the theatre, we visit the Church of St Mary, where it is said that Mary spent the later years of her life. Celebrate Mass. Finally you will visit the restored remains of the 6th century Basilica of St John at Celcuk where a small church was originally built over the tomb of St John the Evangelist. Return to your hotel in Kusadasi for dinner and overnight (BD)

DAY 11 THURSDAY 30TH APRIL **KUSADASI - ISTANBUL** After breakfast at the hotel, we will depart for Izmir Airport to catch our flight at 10:00AM. On arrival, we will be met and transferred to old city to visit Basilica Cistern, the largest of several hundred ancient cisterns that lie beneath the city. We'll also get to see one of the Eastern Orthodox Churches. This afternoon visit the Byzantine Hippodrome, the Blue Mosque and nearby Hagia Sophia (meaning 'Holy Wisdom'). Built in 548 AD, Hagia Sophia was the greatest Church in Christendom until 1453 when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire. Onwards then to the Grand Bazaar, with over 4000 exotic tiny shops. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight (BD)

DAY 12 FRIDAY 01ST MAY **ISTANBUL** Commence the day with a special morning cruise along the Bosphorus River, where you will sail past the Ottoman Palaces, Byzantine fortresses, Beylerbeyi Palace and Suleiman's Mosque. An opportunity to celebrate Mass at a Catholic Church. Enjoy a brief visit to Topkapi Palace. After the visit, transfer to our hotel for dinner and overnight (BD)

DAY 13 SATURDAY 02ND MAY **ISTANBUL - AUSTRALIA** End your pilgrimage with a transfer to Istanbul Airport for your departure flight to Dubai. Transfer to your connecting flight back to Melbourne. (B)

DAY 14 SUNDAY 03RD MAY **ARRIVE AUSTRALIA** Arrive back to Melbourne this evening with wonderful memories from your pilgrimage!

**

Itinerary subject to change **

Interested in continuing the Footsteps of St Paul and visiting other amazing sites in Rome?

Instead of flying straight home from Istanbul, we will hold a limited number of seats out of Rome, allowing pilgrims to enjoy an independently arranged Rome Pilgrimage in the Eternal city and surroundings as organized with/by Fr Alex Chow.

Fr Alex has lived in Rome as a seminarian for 4 years. Fr. Alex has offered to assist pilgrims in finding

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modest but clean and comfortable accommodation. The Roman stay will consist of the following (depending on time availability):

1. Sites of St Paul: Basilica of St Paul Outside the Wall, Tre Fontana (where St Paul was imprisoned and executed), via Ostiense (where St Peter and St Paul met in Rome)
2. 3 major Pontifical Basilica: Basilica of St Peter, Basilica of Mary Major, Basilica of John Lateran
3. Churches of Saints of the Roman Canon: St Cosmos and Damian, St Clement, St Agnes in Agony, St Cecilia, St Bartholomew
4. Beautiful Rome: Colosseum, Rome Forum, Pantheon, Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, Piazza di Popolo, etc...
5. Churches of the Passion of Jesus Christ: Church of the Holy Steps, Basilica of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, Basilica di Santa Prassede (Column of the Flagellation)
6. Elegant Churches: San Luigi dei Francesi (Caravaggio - calling of Matthew), Basilica of Saint Mary of Minerva (the tomb of St Catherine of Siena), Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria (Bernini's dramatic carving "The Ecstasy of Teresa."), Chiesa del Gesu.

****Olive Tree Travel will arrange your flight from Istanbul – Rome****

PRICE INCLUSIONS:

- Emirates Flight from Melbourne to Athens via Dubai and then return Istanbul to Melbourne via Dubai
- One way flight from Thessaloniki to Izmir
- One way flight from Izmir to Istanbul
- 11 nights in total: 7 nights in Greece and 4 nights in Turkey in hotel accommodation in twin share rooms.
- Breakfast and Dinner daily. Breakfasts and Dinners at hotels unless otherwise specified.
- All tips, gratuities and portorage (where available)
- Whisperer headsets
- All guiding and entrance fees as per the itinerary.
- Air-conditioned coach

NOT INCLUDED:

- Drinks with meals
- Travel insurance
- Incidentals, laundry
- Lunches
- Turkey Visa – currently US\$66 and obtained privately before departure

HOTELS (OR SIMILAR):

• Hotel Luwian	Athens	3 nights
• Hotel Amalia	Kalambaka	1 night
• Hotel Imperial Plus	Thessaloniki	3 nights
• Korumar Hotel	Kusadasi	2 nights
• Port Bosphorous Hotel	Istanbul	2 nights

NEXT STEPS

1. Register your interest and obtain a booking form from Fr Alex or Olive Tree Travel or by [CLICKING HERE.](#)
2. To secure your place, a deposit of \$500 per person is payable by 16th June 2025 (unless sold out prior)
3. Final balances will be due by late February 2026.

WHO TO CONTACT:

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 South and St Timothy Forest Hill
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Be GOOD SHEPHERD THE

2025



Year
of
hope

By
Olivia
Dawson