



ST CHRISTOPHER'S SYNDAL PARISH

5 DOON AVENUE, SYNDAL
IN THE CARE OF THE PALLOTTINES

In partnership with Holy Saviour, Vermont South

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)

13 SEPTEMBER 2026

WELCOME TO ST CHRISTOPHER'S

You are INVITED!

St Christopher's is a Missionary Parish of Intentional Disciples, passionate about being Christ to all, through our witness of God's love in action.

REFLECTIONS...

A distinctive feature of the teachings of Jesus is his exhortation to forgive. Very explicit about this, Jesus left us his own example by forgiving his executioners while he hung dying on the cross. Until recently we thought that forgiveness begins with the offender repenting of the offence and then asking for pardon. Today many maintain that reconciliation must begin with the one offended offering forgiveness. This willingness to forgive transforms a victim into a survivor. Such magnanimity might then touch the heart of the offender, who may thus be transformed from being an offender to becoming a friend. If God has been so generous in forgiving us, surely we should be generous in forgiving others. The process of becoming a forgiving person takes time. For some, it may take a lifetime. Only little by little are our pettiness and indignation reduced and our desire to strike back diminished. Still, as disciples, we are expected to give the forgiveness that we have been given. Such forgiveness does not provide an easy way out for

offenders, for ultimately justice will prevail. If we remain untransformed by God's forgiveness of us, we will be liable to judgment. Our unwillingness to forgive can eat away at us, and we can carry hurts from childhood far into adult years. Forgiving others, as difficult as that may be, is in the long run much easier than bearing the weight of resentfulness, vindictiveness and unresolved frustration. When we forgive we truly begin to be healed.

REGULAR MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil 6.00 pm
Sunday 8.30 am & 10.30 am
Livestream Sunday 9.15 am

Weekday Masses

Tues, Thurs & Sat 9.15 am

Priest available for
Confession on Saturdays
after mass

READINGS THIS WEEK (YEAR A)

1st Reading: Sirach 27:30 – 28:7

Hate and anger lead to death;
love and forgiveness to the kingdom.

Resp Psalm: Ps 102:1-4. 9-12. R. v.8

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.

2nd Reading: Romans 14:7-9

Christ is Lord of the living and the dead.

Gospel Acclamation:

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

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

How precious is your mercy, O God!
The children of men seek shelter in the shadow of
your wings.

READINGS NEXT WEEK: TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)

1st: Isaiah 55:6-9

Resp Psalm: Ps 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R. v.18

2nd: Philippians 1:20-24. 27

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

New to St Christopher's? Connect with Us:

<https://stchristopherssyndal.com.au/welcome-from-our-parish-priest/pages/new-parishioner-registration-form>

PARISH PRIEST: FR JACOB ALVARES SAC
E. jacob.alvares@cam.org.au

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T. 9802 8538
E. syndal@cam.org.au

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: MR PATRICK GREEN
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E. elevatemyouthminister@gmail.com

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T. 9802 8538
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ST CHRISTOPHER'S CHURCH ADDRESS:
184 BLACKBURN RD, SYNDAL

RCIA: Alison Trudgett
E. rcia@stchristopherssyndal.com.au

**Children's Ministry & Sacramental
preparation: Charles, Germaine**
E. childrensministrysyndal@gmail.com

St Vincent dePaul:
T. 1800 305 330 (M-F 10am-3pm)

Parish Office Opening Hours:

Tuesdays & Thursdays 9am - 4pm

Fridays 9am - 4.30pm

5 Doon Ave, Syndal

St Christopher's website

**We welcome you to browse through our new website ...
there is so much to see!**

Link: <https://www.stchristopherssyndal.com.au>

PARISH MINISTRIES AND NOTICES

CHARISMATIC Prayer Group

Wednesday 23 Sept @ 7:30pm Cenacle Room

Rosa: 0447 111 270 / John: 0407 182 916

All are welcome ...

HOME MASS INVITATION

You are warmly invited to join our Home Mass:

Friday, 25 Sep | 7:30pm

Hosts: Gary and Cynthia McGrath

□ Text/WhatsApp: 0402 636123



EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS FEAST

14 SEPTEMBER 2026

Most glorious and triumphant Lord, You gave Your life for the salvation of my soul, using the most horrific act of cruelty as the means of Your redeeming grace. I open myself to that grace today and pray that You bestow it in superabundance. I also

pray that I will have the courage and wisdom to embrace my crosses every day of my life, uniting them to Your Cross, and trusting that You will use these sacrifices as a means of the further bestowal of Your love on the world. Saving Cross of Christ, have mercy on me. Jesus, I trust in You.

PRAYER SERVICE OF LAMENT, 15 SEPTEMBER 2026

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL GROUNDS, EAST MELB: 4:00PM

Parish Leaders and representatives are invited to join Archbishop Peter Comensoli on **Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 4.00pm** in the grounds of **St Patrick's Cathedral** to come before the Lord in prayer to lament. This occasion is to humbly stand alongside those who have suffered abuse, and all who continue to carry its lasting effects. It is for us, as the Body of Christ, to acknowledge and lament sincerely and with humility the failures that have caused such profound harm, and to place before the Lord our prayer for healing, justice and the ongoing conversion of His Church.

This Sunday we celebrate the
Sacrament of Baptism of
Michaela D'Silva

May this sacred occasion mark the
beginning of a beautiful and fulfilling
spiritual journey. God bless you always.



Beyond the Pews From Parishioners To Disciples

By Paulist Evangelistic Ministries

A Faith Formation program:
for those who seek a *true life of discipleship in Christ, beyond the pews!*

By: Fred Choy

For: Catholics

When: **Thursday 7.30pm~9.30pm**

Oct 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov 5, 11, 19, 26;
Dec 3, 10, 17

Where: Presbytery, St. Christopher's, Syndal

Cost: \$20 pp / * 12 pax max *

REGISTRATION MANDATORY

Please register **by 1 October** by submitting your name and contact number to (or for inquiries):

(Pls **TEXT ONLY** – I'll call back) **0431 950090**

e: discipleship@stchristopherssyndal.com.au

WINE & CHEESE EVENING

On Friday 4/9, we had our Wine and Cheese evening for new parishioners, held at the Cenacle. It was an informal gathering of 3 families who are new parishioners to St Christopher's, Fr Jacob, some members of the Parish Leadership team and myself. The new parishioners consisted of Maneka, her husband Navin and son Theo; Sylvia and Philomena, her husband Blaise and two children, Adrian and Amelia. After introductions, there was discussion about our new parishioners' experience to date with our church. The common theme highlighted was the warmth and welcoming atmosphere extended to new parishioners; and our parish's vision of being intentional disciples of Christ resonated with them. We look forward to welcoming more new parishioners in the near future.

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2026

Today is Safeguarding Sunday in the Dioceses of Australia. It is a day to pray for all who have experienced abuse or harm, to support their healing, and to renew our commitment to creating communities where every person is welcomed, respected and safe. In the Gospels, Jesus shows particular care for those who are vulnerable and calls his disciples to do the same. Safeguarding is not simply a policy or procedure; it is a Gospel responsibility that reflects the dignity of every person and our shared commitment to love one another as Christ has loved us. As we celebrate today, let us pray for all who continue to journey towards healing, give thanks for those who serve in safeguarding ministry, and recommit ourselves to building parish communities where trust, compassion and care are evident in all we do.

PARISH / OTHER NOTICES

Reflection ... Fr Jacob

Forgiveness: The Heart of Christian Living

Peter once asked Jesus, "Lord, how often must I forgive my brother or sister if they wrong me? As many as seven times?" Jesus replied, "Not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (Matthew 18:21–22). Jesus was not asking Peter to keep a tally of forgiveness. He was teaching that mercy must become a way of life for his disciples.

This teaching is rooted in the mercy we ourselves have received from God. In the Lord's Prayer, we ask: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Christian forgiveness begins with humility: we recognise that we are not self-sufficient or without fault, but people who continually depend upon God's mercy. Because we have been forgiven, we are called to become forgiving people.

Scripture makes this connection clear. St Paul writes: "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). The standard of Christian forgiveness is therefore not simply what another person deserves, but the mercy God has already shown us in Christ.

The Cross reveals the depth of that mercy. Even as he suffered, Jesus prayed: "Father, forgive them." His words do not deny the reality of sin or remove the need for justice. Rather, they show that hatred and revenge do not have the final word. St John Paul II expressed this demanding freedom in these words: **"Forgiveness is above all a personal decision, a decision to give up the right to revenge."** At the Cross, Christ breaks the cycle of violence by answering sin with self-giving love.

We encounter this mercy personally in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There, Christ does not reduce us to our failures. He meets us with truth and compassion, restores us through grace and calls us to begin again. St Augustine reminds us that **"forgiveness is the remission of sins."** Receiving God's forgiveness also strengthens us to seek reconciliation with others. Forgiveness can coexist with truth, justice, appropriate boundaries and the time needed for healing. Yet even when reconciliation is not immediately possible, Christians are called to resist hatred and to place the desire for revenge into God's hands.

Other spiritual traditions also recognise the courage involved in forgiveness. Mahatma Gandhi said, **"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."** The Dalai Lama has likewise observed, **"Forgiveness does not mean you forget what happened."** These insights can remind us that forgiveness is not weakness or denial, but a courageous decision to refuse the power of resentment. We cannot receive the peace of Christ while deliberately nurturing division.

Perhaps, then, the question is not only, **"How many times must I forgive?"** but also, **"How many times has God forgiven me?"** Remembering the mercy we have received opens our hearts to show mercy to others.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." (Matthew 5:7)

FR JACOB ANNUAL LEAVE DATES

Please note that Fr Jacob will be away for his annual leave from **Monday 12 October to Friday 20 November inclusive**. For any pastoral matters, feel free to contact Fr Jacob prior to him leaving. We wish him a safe and happy journey.

DID YOU KNOW? Points of interest and Catholic lore

- A debt of one hundred denarii was still a hefty sum. The denarius was a commonly used Roman coin made of silver, weighing 3.64 grams. A denarius was the wage paid for one day's casual labour.
- The use of the word *torturers* in this text is problematic. The Greek term is linked to the notion of 'tormentors'. It may be that the debtor's friends and relations would more vigorously try to raise the necessary funds if the culprit is undergoing torment but it may also be an eschatological reference given what follows in the next verse.

NEPAL FLOOD DISASTER

Salesians of Don Bosco Appeal

As emergency relief continues, the Nepal Don Bosco Society emergency response team is working with local communities and officials to assess needs and help guide longer-term recovery efforts. Your support will help local Salesians accompany displaced families and communities as they begin the long process of rebuilding their lives and livelihoods. Please click on the link to donate:

<https://salesianmissionsaus.org.au/emergency-appeal-nepal-floods/>

or scan QR Code located on the Narthex noticeboard.

Acknowledgment of Country -

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respect to them and their cultures.



PARISH MINISTRIES & NOTICES

1ST COLLECTION - PRESBYTERY

August 2026 : \$ 6,457.10

Supports the Parish Priest, Supply Priests, Priests of the Archdiocese and Archbishop's fund

2ND COLLECTION - THANKSGIVING OFFERING

August 2026 : \$ 12,401.70

This collection goes towards the running costs of the Parish and supports all the Ministries

THANKSGIVING CONTRIBUTION TO ST CHRISTOPHER'S PARISH

Your kind donation helps support our community



ROSTER

Week Beginning Monday 14 September 2026

Prayer Leader	Reader	Prayers of the Faithful	Counters
Tuesday 9.15am	John Hackett	Marie Murphy Gladys Hough	Mary & Charles Seong, Justinne & Juan Agapay
Thursday 9.15am	Phil Green		
Saturday 9.15am	Phil Green		
Duty	6.00pm	8:30am	10:30am
Sacristan	Paul Liew	Anastasia Darmawan	Chris De Silva
Altar Server	Volunteer Leader, Klarissa Ryan, Naomi Thomas	Olivia & Cameron Lettice	Vincent Ng, Beatrice Li, Adrian Win
Commentator	2 x Volunteers Required	Jon Chavarria	ELEVATE
Reader	Kevin Widarja	Jack Krohn	ELEVATE
Eucharistic Minister	Tony Hough, Ronnie Poskitt	1 x Volunteer Required Graham Perrin	ELEVATE, Christian Sorbello
Welcome Desk	-	-	ELEVATE
Greeters	Volunteer	Rianny Tjung	ELEVATE
Ushers	Catherine & Kelvin Loo	Volunteer	ELEVATE
Videographer	-	-	Brett Lettice
Music	SHINE FOR CHRIST	Joe & Bernadette Fernandes	ELEVATE
Morning Tea	-	Agnes De Roza	ELEVATE

In Faith, Hope and Love, let us pray for repose of the souls of

Recently Deceased:

Death Anniversaries: Nell Fraser, William Tay, Ted Hallinan, Maude Forrest, Harrison Weymouth, Audrey De Visser, Alejandra Gatab Guillima, Stella Hill, Kevin Altman, Eileen Sorenson, Arturo Piccolo, Pauline Case, Giuseppina (Pinuucia) Hopkins, Teresa Eng, James Igoe, Elaine Carroll, Gary Tan, Violet Brideson, Harry Zickert, Elsie Cook, Antonio D'Angelo, Dixie Wise, Amy Planck, Monico Demeterio III.

St. Christopher's is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults