



ONE MISSION, TWO CHURCHES



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A - 1st Feb. 2026

Zephaniah 2:3,3:12-13, Ps 145:6-10, 1 Cor 1:26-31

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:1-12a

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.



Meditation: *What is the good life which God intends for us? And how is it related with the ultimate end or purpose of life? Is it not our desire and longing for true happiness, which is none other than the complete good, the sum of all goods, leaving nothing more to be desired? Jesus addresses this question in his sermon on the mount. The heart of Jesus' message is that we can live a very happy life. The call to holiness, to be saints who joyfully pursue God's will for their lives, can be found in these eight beatitudes. Jesus' beatitudes sum up our calling or vocation - to live a life of the beatitudes. The word beatitude literally means "happiness" or "blessedness".*

God gives us everything that leads to true happiness: What is the significance of Jesus' beatitudes, and why are they so central to his teaching? The beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness that God has placed in every heart. They teach us the final end to which God calls us, namely the coming of God's kingdom (Matthew 4:17), the vision of God (Matthew 5:8; 1 John 2:1), entering into the joy of the Lord (Matthew 25:21-23) and into his rest (Hebrews 4:7-11). Jesus' beatitudes also confront us with decisive choices concerning the life we pursue here on earth and the use we make of the goods he puts at our disposal. Jesus tells us that God alone can satisfy the deepest need and longing of our heart. Teresa of Avila's (1515-1582) prayer book contained a bookmark on which she wrote: Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass - God never changes. Patience achieves all it strives for. Whoever has God lacks nothing - God alone suffices.

Is God enough for you? God offers us the greatest good possible - abundant life in Jesus Christ (John 10:10) and the promise of unending joy and happiness with God forever. Do you seek the highest good, the total good, which is above all else?

The beatitudes are a sign of contradiction to the world's way of happiness: The beatitudes which Jesus offers us are a sign of contradiction to the world's understanding of happiness and joy. How can one possibly find happiness in poverty, hunger, mourning, and persecution? Poverty of spirit finds ample room and joy in possessing God as the greatest treasure possible. Hunger of the spirit seeks nourishment and strength in God's word and Spirit. Sorrow and mourning over wasted life and sin leads to joyful freedom from the burden of guilt and spiritual oppression. God reveals to the humble of heart the true source of abundant life and happiness. Jesus promises his disciples that the joys of heaven will more than compensate for the troubles and hardships they can expect in this world. Thomas Aquinas said: "No one can live without joy. That is why a person deprived of spiritual joy goes after carnal pleasures." Do you know the happiness of hungering and thirsting for God alone?

Perfect blessedness is humility of spirit, by Hilary of Poitiers (315-367 AD) "'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' The Lord taught by way of example that the glory of human ambition must be left behind when he said, 'The Lord your God shall you adore and him only shall you serve' (Matthew 4:10). And when he announced through the prophets that he would choose a people humble and in awe of his words [Isaiah 66:2], he introduced the perfect Beatitude as humility of spirit. Therefore he defines those who are inspired as people aware that they are in possession of the heavenly kingdom... Nothing belongs to anyone as being properly one's own, but all have the same things by the gift of a single parent. They have been given the first things needed to come into life and have been supplied with the means to use them."

The Sermon on the Mount, by Jan Brueghel the Elder (1598) © The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. Text © 2025 *Servants of the Word, Don Schwager.*

Office (for both Churches): 17 Stevens Road Forest Hill Vic 3133 (St Timothy's)

Parish Office tel: 03 9412 8499; Presbytery tel: 03 9877 2292

St Luke the Evangelist, 46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South

Email: foresthill@cam.org.au | Web: sttimothys.org.au / Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au | Web: blackburnsouth.org.au

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)

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**

In recess for the month of
February

Young Adult Group - in
recess until Wed. 4th Feb
2026, at 7pm,
at St Luke's Presbytery



COMING SOON: 23 APRIL 2026

*Thinking about life, purpose, and what
really matters.* If you're asking

big questions about faith or simply
curious — you are very welcome. **ALPHA**
(adults) and **ALPHA Youth** (ages 13–17)
offer a relaxed, no-pressure space to
connect with others, enjoy a free dinner,
watch engaging short videos, and have
honest conversations about life and faith.
Come as you are, bring your questions,
and see where the conversation leads.
No pressure, no strings attached.

Email us at Alphastlukesbbs@gmail.com

We'd love to see you at Alpha!

Next Week's Daily Readings 2 Feb - 8 Feb

MONDAY Feb 2 Mal 3:1-4

Ps 23:7-10 Lk 2:22-40

The Presentation of the Lord

TUESDAY Feb 3 2 Sam 18:9-10, 14,
24-25,30 - 19:3 Ps 85:1-6 Mk 5:21-43

WEDNESDAY, Feb 4 2 Sam 24:2, 9-17

Ps 31:1-2, 5-7 Mk 6:1-6

THURSDAY Feb 5 1 Kg 2:1-4, 10-12

1 Chr 29:10-12 Mk 6:7-13

St Agatha, virgin, martyr

FRIDAY Feb 6 Sirach 47:2-11

Ps 17:31, 47, 50-51 Mk 6:14-29

St Paul Miki and companions, martyrs

SATURDAY Feb 7 1Kg 3:4-13

Ps 118:9-14 Mk 6:30-34

SUNDAY Feb 8 Is 58:7-10

Ps 111:4-9: 1 Cor 2:1-5

Mt 5:13-16

5th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

ALTAR SERVING MINISTRY

Are you interested in assisting as an altar server? If so, or if you have any questions
about this ministry, please contact Chris Lim on 0419 470 267

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

Saturday 5pm SL

Sunday 8:30am SL

10:30am ST

31 JAN and 1 FEB

Lucy Ferris

Liliana Restrepo

Joelle Rousetty

7 and 8 FEB

Volunteer

Volunteer

Volunteer

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday 5pm SL

Sunday 8:30am SL

10:30am ST

Edna Lee

Megan McLean

Chin L Tay

Volunteer

Volunteer

Volunteer

SLIDE OPERATORS

Saturday 5pm SL

Sunday 8:30am SL

10:30am ST

Choir

Volunteer

Manny Gonzalez

Choir

Volunteer

Lee Min Yee

SL WELCOMERS 31 JAN-1 FEB

5pm Volunteer

8.30am Volunteer

10.30am Volunteer

SL CHURCH CLEANING

31st Jan - Kellie's team

Kellie McCarthy, Emma Brodawka,
Toni Wynne & Daniella Manolopoulos

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

7th Feb - Kate Skowronska
14th Feb - Jenny & Vanessa

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

Flowers: Parishioners

SL WELCOMERS 7 - 8 FEB

5:00pm Volunteer

8.30am Volunteer

10.30am Volunteer

ST CHURCH CLEANING

6th Feb

Susan Chen & Isaac Cheng

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 8:

Sarah Ahmed & Ann Abrero

Next week Team 1:

Raj Fonn & Harin Perera

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

All who are sick, especially Brian McHugh, Suzy Bookluck, Sr June Dunford, Emilio Moreno Garcia, Kevin Ryan, Agatha Wink, Ronda Smith, Chris Leach, Dora Leung, Hazel Grealy, Josephine Alexander, Grace Dimattina, 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 Patricia (Pat) Miller who died recently and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially Bridget O'Carroll, Nella Macedo, Audrey Baker, Joseph Leo Kerin, Rose Butcher, Frederick Johnson, Diana Richards, Fr Peter Collins, Peter & Paul Hilliard, Mary Grealy, Jack Odlum, Greg Arelette, Ken Atkins, Maria Cassano, Eloide Leonardi, Minetta, Vita & Felicetta Boccacci, Roche Mariadasan & Kate Taunt. May they rest in peace.

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY:

For children with incurable diseases. Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

THANK YOU DINNER FOR PARISH VOLUNTEERS: All volunteers at St Luke's and St Timothy's are invited to a pizza and salad dinner on Saturday 7th February at 6.30pm at St Luke's parish hall. Drinks will be provided. Please bring dessert and snacks to share. RSVP for catering purposes on the clipboards in the foyer of both churches or by email to the parish office.

SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS TRAINING: All church volunteers must complete this training which can be done online via this link: [Safeguarding Essentials training module | Melbourne Catholic](#) Please email your certificate to the parish office when you receive it.

BAPTISM: We warmly welcome Amy and James Carpenter who are presenting their children Edward and Georgia for baptism this Sunday morning at St Luke's.

FUNERAL: A funeral for Patricia (Pat) Miller will be held on Thursday 5th February at 11am at St Luke's.

OLD SPECTACLES: If you have any unused spectacles (prescription, reading or sunglasses) laying around the house, we would be happy to take them from you for donation to orphanages and seniors' homes in Thailand. Please place your donation in the box in the foyer of both churches before 22 Feb 2026. Many thanks and God bless you.

[Resources](#)

MELBOURNE CATHOLIC: [With gratitude and purpose](#)

MAJELLAN MEDIA: [Respecting all religions](#)

STEWARDSHIP CORNER:

The First collection is for the priest and retired priests.

The Second collection is for parish expenses.

Please note that collection totals will no longer be published each week in the newsletter. Presbytery and Church donations will be reported on a monthly basis at all weekend Masses. To donate regularly via envelope, credit card or bank account, please contact the parish office.

Parish Groups & Contacts

Volunteers and Rosters:

Kelvin & Susan Chen (ST),

Margaret Gearon (SL)

Baptism Preparation: Fr Alex

Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalewski

Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Fr Alex, Sonya O'Farrell,

Darren McLean & Janette Clark

Parish History

SL: Margaret Gearon

Parish Accountant

Bernard Negline

SL & ST: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ 9877 2292

Church Sacristan

ST: Roster of Parishioners

SL: Greg Grant

Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean

ST: Susan Chen

Church Linen: *SL: Beryl Chelliah*

Parish Garden Maintenance

*ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,
& Anico Yee*

SL: Darren McLean

Parish Choirs

ST: Miguel Ilagan

SL: Fr Alex

Bible Timeline: *Chris Lim*

ALPHA: *Lynda Kilroe-Smith*

Young Adult Ministry:

Sarah Santilli & Jersy Soesanto

RCIA: *David West*

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

ST: John McCoy

SL: Margaret Gearon &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

Entrance Antiphon: Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

Response to the Psalm: Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Rejoice and be glad; Your reward will be great in heaven. Alleluia!

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

Communion Antiphon: Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

ST TIMOTHY'S: Sunday 8th February at the 10.30am Mass at St Timothy's. This will run on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.

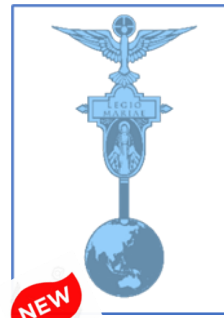


ST LUKE'S: Saturday 14th February at the 5pm Mass at St Luke's. This will run on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

Parents are welcome to accompany their children. No prior registration required. Please contact the parish office if you have any questions.

BIBLE TIMELINE RESUMES

Our Bible Timeline sessions continue on Thursday 12th February at St Timothy's Church. Tea & coffee are available from 6.45pm ahead of a 7pm start. Please ensure you are prepared for the session so the momentum continues.



LEGION OF MARY

We are planning to start a Legion of Mary praesidium at St Luke the Evangelist and St Timothy's Parish. We plan weekly meetings which include saying the rosary, prayers, allocution by the Spiritual Director, and planning apostolate work such as home and aged care visits by members, under the guidance of the Parish Priest, Fr Alex. If you are interested to join or find out more, please contact Lucy Ferris at lucyfe1112@gmail.com or 0419591423

SOME USEFUL CATHOLIC RESOURCES:

PRAY AS YOU GO

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

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

UNIVERSALIS website and App

(<https://universalis.com/index.htm>)

The LukTim YAM

(18-35 Yrs)

NEXT MEETING

WHEN: Wed. 4 Feb. @ 7pm

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



TOPIC: The Light of Christ? *Have you ever felt the presence of God in your life? What does God mean to you? Ideas and images of God. Where did you learn about Jesus?*

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

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

RCIA is a 5 month program for those who are interested and would like to know more about

the Catholic faith as well as the possibility to encounter Jesus Christ in a personal way. It is a journey together with other enquirers as well as parishioners. The RCIA program will continue on Tuesday, February 3rd @ 7pm at St Luke's Presbytery, 46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South. It will run until March 2026 with weekly meetings (1.5hrs) both in person and via Zoom. For more information or to join in please contact the parish office.





Blessed are the Poor in spirit

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A



Draw a line from the first half of each beatitude to its correct ending.



Blessed are those who grieve...

...they will be treated with mercy.

Blessed are the merciful...

...they will be called God's children.

Blessed are those who make peace...

...they will see God.

Blessed are those with pure hearts...

...they will find comfort.



Jesus told his disciples that even though people may be mean to you, as a follower of Christ you will have a great reward in heaven. What are some of the ways we can follow Christ?

Four large empty rectangular boxes with rounded corners, intended for writing answers to the question above.

Complete the Text Maze

"Blessed are the humble, the earth will belong to them."

B	L	E	A	C	M	I	C	E	B
E	R	S	E	B	H	E	N	P	J
Q	E	S	H	E	T	E	A	R	D
A	D	O	A	L	K	I	N	T	H
R	P	F	M	B	D	E	L	K	W
E	T	H	U	Q	L	D	E	L	I
M	H	E	H	A	L	E	B	L	J
U	C	V	D	F	O	W	I	F	A
X	D	G	D	J	N	G	T	O	E
H	A	I	A	B	V	O	G	T	P
M	F	H	R	G	O	C	A	H	E
A	S	C	L	H	D	E	N	J	M

4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 1 FEBRUARY 2026



COLLECT

Grant us, Lord our God,
that we may honour you with all our mind,
and love everyone in truth of heart.
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

One of the ways of understanding the Incarnation is as a 'self-emptying'. Jesus Christ did not count equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave and, born in human likeness, humbled himself even to the point of accepting death on a cross (see Phil 2:6-8). Paul, writing to the Philippians, encourages us to have the same mindset as Christ.

Today's readings invite us to explore the theme of humility, detachment from worldly possessions, and our solidarity with the poor and disadvantaged. It is from this starting point that we can begin our mission as peacemakers, seeking justice for those who are poor or persecuted. And it is ultimately this which brings us the happiness of being blessed by God.

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

Seek the Lord
all you, the humble of the earth,
who obey his commands.
Seek integrity,
seek humility:
you may perhaps find shelter
on the day of the anger of the Lord.
In your midst I will leave
a humble and lowly people,
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in
the name of the Lord.
They will do no wrong,
will tell no lies;
and the perjured tongue will no longer
be found in their mouths.
But they will be able to graze and rest
with no one to disturb them.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 145:7–10

R. Happy the poor in spirit;
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!
or
R. Alleluia!

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R.**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. **R.**

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **R.**

First Reading

Dies irae, dies illa... (*The day of wrath, that dreadful day...*). This fearsome medieval poem was once sung at funerals and Masses for the dead. The short prophesy of Zephaniah describes the terrible destruction of this “day of the anger of the Lord”. God’s judgement will make an end of evil, purge the nation and purify the people, leaving a small remnant of the faithful, “humble and lowly”, who seek refuge in God.

The prophet urges the people to avoid destruction by seeking the Lord in integrity and humility – be part of the humble and faithful remnant, he says. It is from this small group that God’s reign will grow and flourish.

Zephaniah presents a cosmic and apocalyptic vision within which we hear Jesus’ revolutionary teaching of the beatitudes.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 145/146 prepares for the Gospel beatitudes by championing the oppressed, the disadvantaged and the poor. God liberates, protects and provides for those in need. In keeping with this perspective, the antiphon is taken not from the psalm itself but from the gospel.

There is an echo of Zephaniah’s purifying ‘day of wrath’ in the final stanza: the path of the wicked is thwarted. But overall, the tone is more positive, lauding God’s care for us (each stanza begins “It is the Lord who...”). The cantor/reader should be able to proclaim this text with warm compassion and with conviction.

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians**

1:26–31

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen - those who are nothing at all to show those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

**A reading from the holy Gospel
according to Matthew**

5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

Second Reading

For once, the second reading – normally independent of the other texts – takes up a theme in harmony with the gospel. The Christian community is meant to live by values opposite to those commonly accepted in society. In the Gospel, Jesus will advocate humility and turn people's expectations upside-down. Paul does the same thing here. We need to make space for God's grace in our lives – we do not achieve anything by our own efforts. Our only boast is the Lord and what God does in and for us. Christ is our wisdom, virtue, holiness and freedom!

The reader should work hard to draw the contrasts clearly:

- Wise/influential/noble – foolish
- Strong – weak
- Chosen – common/contemptible
- Everything – nothing.

“Brothers’ should be read as “brothers and sisters”

Gospel

Matthew's gospel presents Jesus as a teacher. These famous beatitudes are the beginning of the first slab of his teaching in Matthew and set the tone for the rest. Jesus is beginning something new. In God's kingdom, it is not the powerful or proud who have the first place; it is the poor, the gentle, the merciful, the peacemakers, the persecuted.

Like so many of Jesus' parables, this teaching is not what people expected. Jesus made the heroes of his stories a poor widow, a Samaritan, a pagan centurion... He spent his time dining with tax collectors and sinners. Our honest humility leaves space in our lives for God.

Like Christ, we are called to stand with the oppressed and disadvantaged. It is from this perspective that we are able to advocate for justice and right.

The reader would best not stress “happy” at the beginning of each beatitude, but rather the second part of the line.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

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



St Luke the Evangelist Blackburn South

We are Taking Enrolments for All Year Levels

Book in for an Open Morning or a Personal Tour

SCAN TO
BOOK A
TOUR





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:
per person (twin share)

AUD\$ 8,490*

OPTIONAL SINGLE
ROOM SUPPLEMENT:

AUD\$ 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)

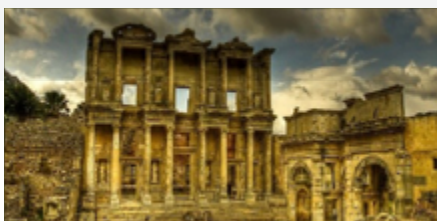
Such passionate, life giving, encouraging and hopeful words written by St Paul the Apostle. Come and join us for an extraordinary pilgrimage of Greece and Turkey and (optional Rome extension) as we follow the footsteps of St Paul and experience the contexts in which these passionate letters were written. 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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By
Olivia
Dawson