TO BE ON EARTH THE HEART OF GOD

KIT

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART PARISH

St John the Apostle - Kippax ACT

St Thomas Aquinas - Charnwood ACT

MARCH 2026

Time for Reflection

Handed Over

In the light of Easter, we are invited to see our lives not only through the lens of loss, but through the mystery of transformation. The Resurrection does not erase suffering—it transfigures it. It reveals that even in the places where life seems diminished, something new is quietly being born.

There comes a time for many—through illness, frailty, or the gentle unravelling of age—when life changes in ways we did not choose. A once active, capable, outward-facing life becomes more confined. The body no longer cooperates as it once did. The mind may tire more easily. The rhythm of giving is replaced by the unfamiliar and often uncomfortable experience of receiving.

This transition can cut deeply. When we have understood ourselves through what we do—our service, our usefulness, our care for others—it can feel like a loss of identity to depend on others for the simplest things. To wait for a cup of tea. To be helped out of a chair. To be cared for rather than to care.

There is a quiet suffering here, often hidden, but very real.

And yet, Easter speaks into precisely this place.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Christ enters a profound turning point. The Gospels tell us that he is “handed over” (Mark 14:10). His life, once filled with movement and initiative—teaching, healing, leading—suddenly shifts. From that moment on, things are done to him. He is arrested, led, judged, mocked, and crucified. He becomes, in a very real sense, dependent, vulnerable, acted upon.

This is the mystery of the Passion: not only what Jesus does, but what he allows to be done to him.

And this is not separate from his mission—it is the fulfillment of it.

Easter reveals that the path to new life runs through this place of surrender. The risen life of Christ is born not only from action, but from this profound “being given over.” What seemed like powerlessness becomes the doorway to resurrection.

For those who find themselves in seasons of dependence, this offers a deeply consoling truth: your life has not lost its meaning. It has changed its form.

There is a sacred work in this “being.”
A hidden vocation in receiving.

A quiet participation in the life of Christ that is no less real than the most active years of service.

To be cared for, to wait, to receive—these can become places of deep encounter. When we allow ourselves to feel the vulnerability, rather than resist it, we may begin to sense something unexpected: that love is still flowing, still being given and received, just in a different way.

In being tended to by others, we are drawn into a deeper communion—one that mirrors the very heart of the Gospel. For at its core, Christianity is not about self-sufficiency, but about relationship, about love given and received.

Easter teaches us that even in our “being acted upon,” we are not passive in the eyes of God. We are participating in the mystery of Christ, who waits, receives, and trusts.

And perhaps this is the quiet invitation of the Easter season:

To discover that our worth has never been in what we do, but in who we are—beloved of God.

To trust that even now, in this slower, more dependent space, new life is unfolding.

To believe that in the waiting, in the surrender, in the receiving—resurrection is already at work.

EDITOR'S NOTES

We began March with welcome rain—transforming our wide brown landscape into rolling green fields almost overnight. A quiet reminder of renewal, so fitting as we entered the season of Lent.

During the month, we were blessed to welcome several MSC priests—Fr Michael Stephan msc, Fr Carroll Martin msc, Fr Kimi Vunivesilevu msc and Fr. Partha Paniyadimai msc . We thank them and Fr. Jim Monaghan for their generosity in assisting Fr Tru as we await the arrival of our assistant priest. Fr Vince Carroll msc will be with us for the month of April, assisting Fr. Tru with weekend masses. May our welcome be warm and his time among us a blessed one.

March held the fullness of five weeks of our Lenten journey. Our Lenten Prayer Group gathered faithfully each Friday following the 9:30am Mass in the St John's Library. The Stations of the Cross were prayed every Friday evening in the courtyard at St Thomas Aquinas, offering a reflective close to each week. In addition, an hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament was held each Thursday evening—5:30pm at St Thomas Aquinas and 7:30pm at St John the Apostle—creating sacred spaces of stillness and encounter.

We warmly congratulate the 35 children of our parish who received the Sacrament of Penance on 18 and 19 March at St John the Apostle and St Thomas Aquinas. This is a significant step in their faith journey, and we celebrate with them and their families (photos can be found on page 12). We look forward to them receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist later this year.

We also ask you to keep in your prayers the six RCIA candidates who will be baptised at the Easter Vigil. May their encounter with God draw them ever closer to the heart of Christ. May they be guided by the Holy Spirit all the days of their lives, and may they always know they belong within our parish community.

The month concluded with the celebration of Palm Sunday, ushering us into the sacred days of Holy Week. Our Liturgy Team has been working diligently to prepare the Easter Triduum liturgies—details of times and venues can be found on page 5.

This Easter, may the risen Christ gently unsettle and renew us—so that, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we too may return changed.

Blessings
Marian

Easter 2026

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish
West Belconnen ACT
St John the Apostle Kippax ACT
St Thomas Aquinas Charnwood ACT
Ph 6254 3236
https://olsh.org.au/
belconnenwest@cg.org.au

Holy Thursday
2 April

Mass of the Last Supper
St John the Apostle
7:00pm

Good Friday:
3 April

Stations of the Cross
10:00am
St Thomas Aquinas

The Lord's Passion
3:00pm
St John the Apostle

HOLY SATURDAY:
4 APRIL

Easter Vigil
St John the Apostle
7:00pm

Easter Sunday:
5 April

Mass of the Resurrection
St John the Apostle
8:30am, 10:00am

St Thomas Aquinas
9:00am

NO 6:00pm Mass Sunday night

FUNERALS

ANNIE LEACH
18.01.930 – 03.03.2026

BARBARA MACGREGOR
21.09.1935-27.02.2026

DERMID MCGRATH
11.09.1946-14.03.2026

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Would you please hold our RCIA Candidates in your prayers.
They will be rerceived into full Communion with the Catholic Church
at the Easter Vigil mass on Saturday 4 April.

Alistair
Erica
Jacob
Roberto
Nicole
Guirlyn

Spirit of hope

At sunrise, all of nature
starts to glow with warmth
and the promise of new life.

The birds welcome its coming
with music and songs of praise
to the Maker of all things great.

And we are wrested from our
slumbers to face each challenge
with joyful purpose born of love.

For He who made the morning
seals each day with gladness
and the true spirit of hope.

Eamonn Murtagh

The Living Water

As the Samaritan woman
spoke with Jesus by Jacob's well,
she realised there were
two types of water:
one for the body
and one for the soul.

The first, like money, was temporary;
only the second, like love,
her thirst could quell.

It was the Spirit,
the living water,
the spring bright and pure as sunlight
gushing up to eternal life,
ever refreshing,
ever cleansing.

So much so the woman left
her water jar behind;
she had asked and received
from the man who'd told her
everything she'd ever done,
the man who'd told her
he was the Messiah,
the man who is God's Son.

Shane Murtagh

Take time to smell the roses

The small rose garden in front of the Church of St John the Apostle was planted in 2004. The garden commemorates the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. When each bush was planted a short prayer was said, asking God to bless each person who looked at the roses in the years ahead. Each rose is a named variety

· *The Archbishop*- Interesting colour of unusual rich dusky pink with paler reverse petals.
· *Sacred Heart*- Cream lemon coloured, long-stemmed blooms of perfect with spicy-lemon fragrance.
· *St Patrick*- Unusual green buds which turn golden yellow in the summer or retain a chartreuse green in cold weather.
· *St Cecilia*- Very fragrant, pale pink blooms with a myrrh fragrance.
· *Bridal Pink*- Delicate lightly scented soft pink double blooms.
· *First Love*- A fragrant soft pink rose with slender petals.
· *Peace*- Probably the most popular of roses, has blooms of yellow, flushed pink and a pleasant fragrance.
· *Jubilee 150*- A multi-coloured rose of rust, lemon yellow, orange and red.
· *Black Madonna*- The deep velvet-red that does not fade. One of the early blooms each season.

The autumn flush of roses is beautiful this year. Take a moment. Have a look and receive a blessing.

By Maryanne Ferguson

St. Patrick

The Archbishop

Sacred Heart

Peace

What is the significance in citing a Baptism?

Jesus had left home, Nazareth, where he had grown up and spent thirty years of his life. Thirty years of going through infancy, childhood, adulthood in a nation dominated by a ruthless, vicious occupation of Roman might and rule. As an infant, when Jesus was around 3-4 years old, the town of Sepphoris, some 5kms from Nazareth was razed to the ground, inhabitants put to the sword or taken into slavery by superior Roman forces to repress the main hub of a rebellion. Some local villages were also pillaged. How did surviving villages react: fear and apprehension, did they take in survivors, support them with food? Terrorised peasants do not easily forget such things. The memories of the accounts must have terrorised the vulnerable villagers, especially the children, Jesus being one of them. As he grew up how did the talk that went on as the memory of the events were recounted, expanded, argued about over the years and possibly used as fodder to hamper the occupiers' movements, affect him?

Later as a young man, the town of Sepphoris was being rebuilt as the capital of Galilee. Then, along with Tiberias, they became the taxation and administration centres. The peasants could not avoid paying rents or fees. Did Jesus, along with Josepth and other artisans of Nazareth, do the daily return trip there for work or stay overnight? What was Jesus noticing, questioning, processing as he lived his life as one of those about him who were all in a struggling existence for survival?

What was he processing? What was his prayer? Then, contrary to tradition and social expectation he did not marry.

And then, he left home.

Did he spend time with John the Baptist observing his fruitful apostolate among the contrite folk who flocked to him? Did he notice that John's message was one of obedience, of God's judgement, about cleaning up? Whereas as his own message as the Prophet of the Reign of God, was one of love; that is waking up to a welcoming God, not so much as a saving God but one who is present within, reigns within, gracing all. His energy came from his drive to be a seeker in the venture of awareness for all and also as a dweller holding on to the essence of what is truth. This was his drive to raise the latent gift of Yahweh's presence, love and mercy, in and for each and everyone.

"Jesus' Divinity is his intimate connection with God, a Divinity that he invites us to share.

Michael Fallon msc, 2021

Submitted by Brian Mahony.
Continued from February's KIT

The woman of Samaria, a personal reflection.

Elizabeth McDonald

On the 3rd Sunday of Lent, we're presented with a selection from the Gospel according to John where we hear the story of Jesus with the woman of Samaria. Those of us who took part in the recent retreat took time with this Gospel passage on the first evening.

I would like to walk back to the woman as she goes to the well outside her town and meets a strange man. I wonder if, as she left her village and began her walk towards the well, she spied Jesus in the distance, a strange man alone at the well. Did she scan the horizon for a reason why this man would be sitting at the well? Did she note there were no animals around to explain his presence? Did she realise by his posture that this man was tired, but wonder why he was alone? I strongly suspect she was wary.

In the early 1980s, as I planned my first trip to a country where English was not the main language, I was full of expectation as I was about to go to the ancient land of Egypt. I arrived with the warnings of my male friends in Australia loudly ringing in my ears – "beware of Arab men". Did the animosity between the Jews and Samaritans result in similar warnings to the Samarian woman when she was growing up?

Although I was to join a tour, I had two days to spare in my simple hotel, which I quickly spotted would not have met Australian fire standards by any stretch of the imagination. A simple breakfast of boiled egg and bread, in what had once been a grandiose room, brought many stares from the men who were staying at the hotel. I was not in the typical tourist zone.

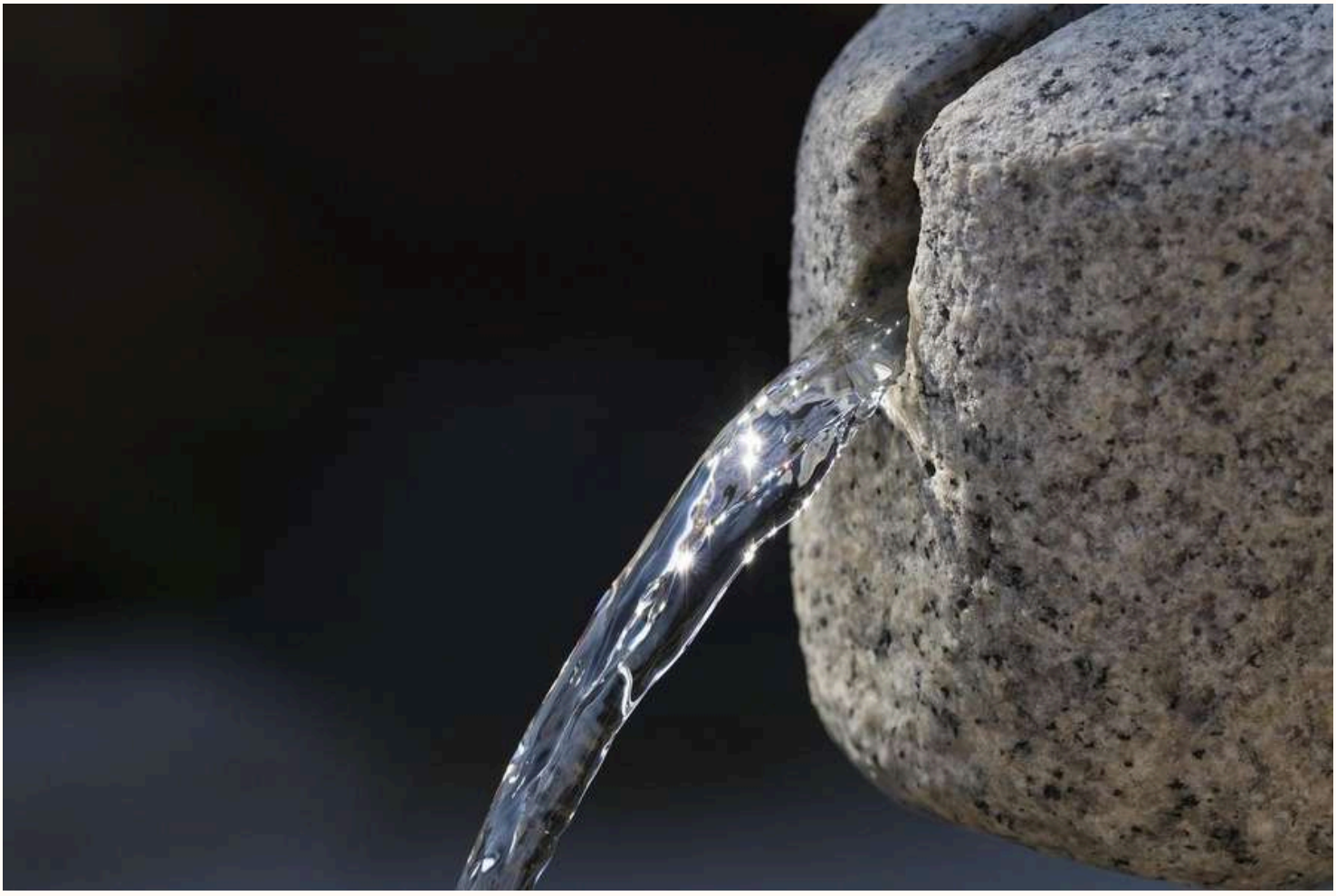
On the second day, I set out to go to the Islamic Museum. After a number of deviations, and one serious miscalculation, skipping across the constant traffic and noise of horns, I found the museum and the sign that informed me it was closed for renovations. Fortunately, as I was tired there was a low wall outside the museum, so I sat with my tourist guide in the hope of finding somewhere worth visiting nearby. Remember, this was long before internet and mobile phones. Soon three lads in their early twenties came by. One must have noticed the English on the guide as he asked me what I was looking for. I explained my situation and he suggested I visit the Red Mosque. After a quick conversation with his mates, they left. At that point, he explained he was a student who was home from Germany on holidays. The young man was keen for me to go with him to see how the poor of Cairo lived.

Now, like the woman of Samaria, no doubt, I began to assess my safety around a man on my own. Did the woman of Samaria begin to look around to see if there were other people who might provide some safety as she continued to approach the well?

Jesus was led to the well by the Holy Spirit to an encounter with this woman who was both a stranger and a person from a people the Jews avoided. I like to think that the woman too was led by the Holy Spirit to this encounter. Despite any misgivings she may have had, the woman continued to the well. I also accepted the invitation as foolhardy as it might have seemed.

It was during this exploration of the living of the people of Cairo that I had the first of three encounters in Egypt that taught me about hospitality and its core value to the people. Despite, being very much poorer than the visitor they invited in, the women immediately offered food and drink. I wonder how conflicted the Samaritan woman felt as she realised that the tired traveller was a Jew who she may have feared, but also a visitor in what was part of her territory. Jesus made the approach, he asked the woman for a drink. I think in that way, Jesus acknowledged the woman's unease or even fear in this situation alone with a strange man.

I like this woman! She took a risk. She opened her mind and her heart. I see the Holy Spirit very much at work in this story, facilitating this meeting between Jesus and the first apostle to the Samarians.



Sacrament of Reconciliation *at* Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish Easter Triduum 2026:

This year is the first time that we are having Easter Triduum at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, so we needed to choose times and locations that would allow as many parishioners as possible.
St John the Apostle Church was selected to provide sufficient space for the larger congregation.

Our intention is to foster a stronger sense of unity between St Thomas Aquinas Church and St John the Apostle Church, while ensuring we can comfortably accommodate everyone who wishes to participate in these solemn liturgies.

I understand that this is a change from what we have done in the past, and I would like to ask you to keep us all in your prayers as we take this step together as one parish, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, West Belconnen.

Fr Tru Nguyen

The Easter Wish I Send

May all the days of
all the years
That God has still
in store,
Be filled with every
joy and grace
To bless you more
and more;
May hope of heart and
peace of mind
Beside you ever
stay;
And that's the Easter
wish I send
With all goodwill to-day.

Brian O'Higgins

Submitted by Louise Niven

MENTAL HEALTH • MINISTRY

The Body Reveals What the Heart Knows

“The heart knows when something is misaligned.”
It’s a simple sentence, but it carries a quiet kind of truth many of us recognize before we can explain it.

Long before we have the words for anxiety, burnout, grief, or loneliness, our bodies start speaking. The heaviness in your chest when you wake up dreading the day. The tightness in your stomach when you say yes to something you don’t want. The restlessness that follows you into the night. These are not random sensations — they’re signals. Your heart is tapping on the inside, trying to get your attention.

In mental health, misalignment often looks like living out of sync with your needs, values, or limits. You might be doing what you’re “supposed” to do — performing well at work, showing up for others, keeping it together on the surface — while quietly unravelling inside. The world sees productivity; your heart feels exhaustion. The world hears laughter; your heart carries grief. This gap between outer life and inner truth is where distress grows.

Many of us are taught to override these signals. Push through. Be strong. Don’t complain. But ignoring misalignment doesn’t make it disappear — it just forces it deeper into the body and mind. Over time, that can show up as chronic stress, anxiety, numbness, or depression. The heart doesn’t stop knowing; we just stop listening.

Listening to your heart doesn’t mean abandoning responsibility or chasing every emotion. It means becoming curious about what your inner world is trying to tell you. When something feels off, instead of asking, “What’s wrong with me?” you can ask, “What is this feeling protecting me from?” or “What need isn’t being met right now?” That shift — from judgment to curiosity — is a powerful act of self-compassion.

Realignment often begins with small, honest choices. Saying no when your body tenses at yes. Resting before you are completely depleted. Naming your feelings instead of burying them. Seeking support instead of pretending you're fine. These moments may seem minor, but they rebuild trust between you and your inner world. They tell your heart, "I'm listening now."

Mental health is not about being happy all the time. It's about being honest with yourself. Sadness, fear, and anger aren't signs of failure — they're information. They show you where you're hurting, what matters to you, and what might need to change. When you allow yourself to feel instead of perform, alignment slowly returns.

"The heart knows when something is misaligned", is not a warning meant to scare you — it's an invitation. An invitation to pause. To notice. To treat your inner signals as wisdom rather than weakness. When you start listening, you don't suddenly fix everything. But you begin walking back toward yourself — and that is where healing quietly starts.

Loving God, may I have the courage to listen
when my heart whispers that something is misaligned.
Guide me back to wholeness with
honesty, compassion, and rest.
Amen

Heart Spirituality

The heart is the whole person

People have always believed that if we think with our head, we love with our heart. Love is the life of the heart, says St. Thomas. If a heart wants to be alive, it is impossible for it to be without love.

Well, our love is ourself.

Our soul is less in the body it animates, than with the object of its affections (Augustine). And thus one attributes to the heart, all that belongs to the soul for the heart is an expression of the soul.

And so our heart is ourself.

God wants us only because of our soul; and he wants the soul because of its love, because of its heart. “My child, give me your heart” (Proverbs 23:26).

What value have words that the lips alone speak, or lavish gifts in which only the hand plays a part? It is by the heart that we are something.

It is the heart that gives value, good or bad, to our thoughts, actions, intentions. Good comes from the good treasure of our heart (Luke 6:45).

Jules Chevalier msc. Le Sacré-Coeur de Jésus. Quatrième ed. P. 105*f*, Paris 1900.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved……forever!

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR APRIL

For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

https://www.popesprayer.va/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ING-PRAYER-INTENTIONS-OF-THE-HOLY-FATHER-2026-1.pdf

Praying for Pope Leo

supporting him in his ministry

Pope Leo needs the prayers and sacrifices of the people of God to help sustain him in his ministry. The fruitfulness of ministry is often born from the private, secret prayers of others.

A Prayer for Pope Leo XIV

God of mercy and peace, we pray for Pope Leo XIV.
You have called him to shepherd your Church
in a time of great suffering and uncertainty.
Grant him wisdom to guide your people,
courage to speak for justice and peace,
and compassion for all who are wounded by war and division.
Strengthen him in his mission of reconciliation,
that he may be a faithful instrument of your love
in a world longing for healing.
May your Spirit sustain him, your truth guide him,
and your peace flow through his words and actions.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish – SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart parish is committed to safeguarding and upholding the dignity and rights of all our children and vulnerable people.
We seek to empower children, their families and carers, and vulnerable people, to have a say, to be listened to, and to be protected. This approach is at the centre of all of our thinking and action.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING VOLUNTEERS
The role of the Parish Safeguarding Volunteer is to be an additional point of contact in the Parish on matters relating to the safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people, complementing the roles of the Parish Priest and Parish Secretary. They can provide advice on how complaints can be made, and forward concerns, relating to the protection safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people within the Parish to the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager.

Carl Madsen, and Marg Hourigan –
belconnenwest.safeguarding@cg.org.au

Safeguarding and care is everyone's responsibility.

KIT CONTRIBUTIONS

KIT is your newsletter, and it comes to life through your stories, reflections, and photos. We especially love receiving photos for the front cover—they help capture the spirit of our parish in a beautiful and personal way.
To keep things running smoothly (and to save us all from the last-minute scramble!), we'd really appreciate receiving your contributions by the 15th of each month.
So if you've taken a great photo, have something to share, or feel inspired to contribute—please send it through to the email address below. We can't wait to see what you send in!

KIT

KIT is produced for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Community from contributions submitted by parishioners. Send submissions to **belconnenwest@cg.org.au**
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JOIN US AT OLSH!

BOOK CLUB
4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

FRIENDSHIP GROUP
LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

MENS GROUP
3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

MOVIE NIGHT
4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

PINS & NEEDLES
3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST
4TH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

YCS BELCONNEN
AFTER SUNDAY MASS 7PM-8PM
2026

KIT APRIL 2026

1	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
2	**Thursday**	**Holy Thursday - Mass of the Lord's Supper**
3	**Friday**	**Good Friday see page 5 for times and venues**
4	**Saturday**	**The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night**
5	**Sunday**	**Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord**
6	Monday	
7	Tuesday	
8	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
9	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Parish Pastoral Council meeting 7:00pm Parish Library
10	Friday	Prayer Group at Kippax - after 9:30am Mass - Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library
11	Saturday	
12	**Sunday**	**2nd Sunday of Easter**
13	Monday	
14	Tuesday	Community Connections - 2:00pm Coffee Ichi Cafe KIppax
15	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
16	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
17	Friday	Prayer Group at Kippax - after 9:30am Mass - Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library Men's Group 6:00pm Parish Centre
18	Saturday	
19	Sunday	**3rd Sunday of Easter - Community Connections 3:30pm Parish Library**
20	Monday	Pins & Needles 7:15pm - Parish Library
21	Tuesday	
22	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
23	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
24	Friday	Prayer Group at Kippax - after 9:30am Mass Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library
25	Saturday	ANZAC DAY
26	**Sunday**	**4th Sunday of Easter - Sunday Afternoon Book Club - 3:00pm Parish Library**
27	Monday	Public Holiday - ANZAC Day
28	Tuesday	Women's Breakfast 7:30am Bean Origin Cafe Belconnen
29	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Friendship Group - 10:15am Parish Centre
30	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Gethsemane Thursday - prayer before the Blessed Sacrament