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

APRIL 2026

Time for Reflection

The Path of the Cross in Everyday Life

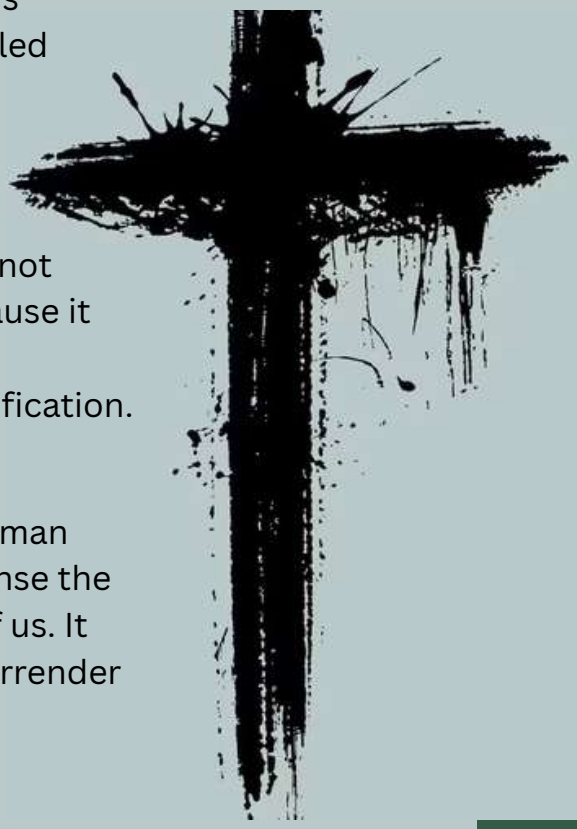
To call ourselves followers of Christ is to accept an invitation that is both beautiful and demanding. Jesus does not simply ask us to admire him or to agree with his teaching. He asks us to follow him—and the path he walks leads to the Cross.

In Matthew's gospel Jesus says, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." The Cross is therefore not merely a symbol of suffering long ago; it becomes the shape of Christian life.

Each of us must discover what the Cross means in our own circumstances. For some it is illness or grief. For others it may be misunderstanding, responsibility, sacrifice for family, or the quiet endurance of daily duties. Often the Cross appears not in dramatic suffering but in the small, hidden acts of faithfulness: choosing patience when we are irritated, forgiveness when we have been hurt, honesty when it costs us something, or perseverance when we would rather walk away.

The Cross is the place where love becomes real.

We sometimes imagine God as pure gentleness, and indeed God is love beyond all measure. Yet divine love is not weak or sentimental. God is 100 percent love and 100 percent justice. The love revealed in Jesus Christ heals, forgives, and restores—but it also exposes what is false within us. Christ comforts the wounded, but he also calls us to conversion.



Like a gardener pruning a vine, Christ cuts away what cannot bear fruit. The sharpness of his truth can be painful, because it confronts our pride, our self-reliance, and our hidden attachments. Yet this pruning is not punishment; it is purification. Through it we become capable of a deeper love.

The love of Christ is not merely the gentle affection of human emotion. It is a burning fire—a love strong enough to cleanse the heart and transform the soul. This love asks something of us. It asks for self-giving, for trust, and for the willingness to surrender ourselves into God's hands.

This is why the Cross stands at the centre of Christian faith. On the Cross we see what love truly costs. Christ does not hold anything back. He pours himself out completely for the life of the world.

And then, astonishingly, he invites us into that same life.

At every Eucharist, Jesus offers himself again. In the mystery of the Eucharist, he says: “Take and eat… take and drink.” He does not offer a philosophy or an inspiring idea. He offers himself.

In The Gospel of John Jesus declares, “My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.” The Christian life therefore is not simply about understanding teachings. It is about receiving life—the very life of Christ—so that his love may live within us.

When we accept this gift, something begins to change.

The Cross we carry is no longer merely our own burden. It becomes united with Christ’s Cross. Our struggles, sacrifices, and hidden acts of love become part of the mystery through which God is bringing life to the world.

The path of the Cross, then, is not a path of despair. It is a path of transformation.

> “My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.”
>
> John 6:55

It teaches us that love is stronger than comfort, forgiveness stronger than resentment, and self-giving stronger than self-protection. In walking this path, we gradually discover that the Cross is not only a place of suffering—it is also the place where resurrection begins.

For wherever love gives itself completely, God is already at work bringing new life.

EDITOR'S NOTES

We began the month of April in the midst of Holy Week, with Easter celebrated on the first weekend. On behalf of all parishioners, we extend our sincere thanks to the Liturgy Team for the care, time, and dedication given to preparing and leading the Easter Triduum. Their commitment to these sacred celebrations is deeply appreciated. Moments from the Holy Saturday Vigil are captured in the photos on pages 9–12.

We also thank Fr Vince Carroll MSC for his generosity in spending the month of April with our parish, assisting Fr Tru with the weekend Masses. We pray his time among us has been both enjoyable and enriching.

During April, we were pleased to welcome Fr Chung and his mother, Khanh, for a week's visit. It was Khanh's first time in Australia, and among the many highlights of her stay, she especially delighted in the colours of the autumn trees.

On ANZAC Day, 25 April, we paused to remember and honour all who have lost their lives in war, and those who continue to suffer its consequences. It is a solemn reminder that peace is fragile and not easily won, but must begin within each of our own hearts.

After forty years of faithful ministry at St Thomas Aquinas, Sr Colleen will move to Goulburn to live in community with her Josephite sisters. Her many years of dedication were recognised at the 9:00am Mass on Sunday 26 April, followed by a morning tea celebration enjoyed in the gentle beauty of the autumn weather.

Looking ahead to May:

- Mother's Day will be celebrated on Sunday 10 May.
- The Alpha program begins on Wednesday 13 May – see page 8 for details.
- Friday 29 May after 9:30am mass - Dedication and naming of the Mary French Library, followed by morning tea.
- The Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart will be celebrated on Friday 29 May and Saturday 30 May - see page 18.

Blessings
Marian

Autumn Leaves

Today I sit beside the lake
and watch the seagulls fly.
The leaves fall down
in bunches
as if plucked
out of the sky.
The scene is rich in colour:
green, mauve, purple and some brown.
No more than gentle breezes
but the leaves keep falling down;
a leaf now in an eddy,
another in a groove,
such wonderful gyrations
like feathers on the move –
but oh! the stillness of the scene,
the beauty and the peace
so quiet and soporific,
why must you
ever cease?

Eamonn Murtagh

Happy Easter

This happened last Friday when I was getting ready to go to the Friday service . My 4 year old grandson asked me where I was going, when I replied that I was going to sing with the choir he asked: what song are you singing? and I replied 'There Are No Words'. He laughed and said 'how are you going to sing a song with NO WORDS'

Adolfo
Member of the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish

BAPTISMS

Zoe Gonsalves	Daughter of Nicholas & Cristabel
Xavier Lou Argento	Son of Jason & Shannon
Aleksander de Reijke	Son of Joshua & Julie
Noah & Jack Rendle	Children of Bradley & Amy
Roselyn Powell	Daughter of Charles & Guirlyn

FUNERALS

Jenny Fisher
11 September 1940 – 9 April 2026

Andrija Martinovic
9 January 1937 - 19 March 2026

Lesley Gorbach

James O'Hare
13 August 1947 - 20 March 2026

Noel Rutherford

HE IS RISEN

With courage,
and with the threads of gentleness
and compassion
stitched into the very
fabric of women,
Mary Magdalene and Mary of Clopas
set out at dawn light.
It was the first day of the week,
the third since his crucifixion.

When they arrived at the tomb of
Jesus,
the earth rocked and shifted
like a boat on a stormy ocean;
amidst the earthquake,
an angel bright as snow and lightning
descended from heaven.

After rolling back the great
tombstone,
he sat on it,
leaving the guards struck mute by
fear,
immobile as dead men.

Then the angel addressed the women:
'Be not afraid; the crucified Christ
is not here. He is risen.
Go quickly and tell his disciples,
for he is going ahead of you
to Galilee; there you will see him.'

At once, they ran to tell the others,
the chambers of their hearts
flooded with fear and joy.
And then, suddenly,
they met the object of their ecstasy.

'Greetings!' Jesus said,
as with open arms he approached
them.

The women took hold of his feet
and worshipped him.

The Lord smiled. 'Fear not, my sisters.
Go and tell my brothers
to travel to Galilee;
there they will see me.'

Shane Murtagh

The Mary French Library

Dedication and naming of the OLSH parish library

Friday 29 May 2026 after the 9:30am Mass

Following the dedication and naming of the library there will be morning tea in the church foyer.

ALPHA – A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS

Do you have questions about life, faith, and meaning?

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish is hosting Alpha, an 8-week series of relaxed and engaging sessions where all are welcome to explore these questions together.

Each evening includes a simple meal, a short video, and open conversation in a friendly setting.

When: Wednesdays from 13 May
Time: 6:00 – 7:30pm
Where: St John the Apostle Church

All are welcome – come as you are.

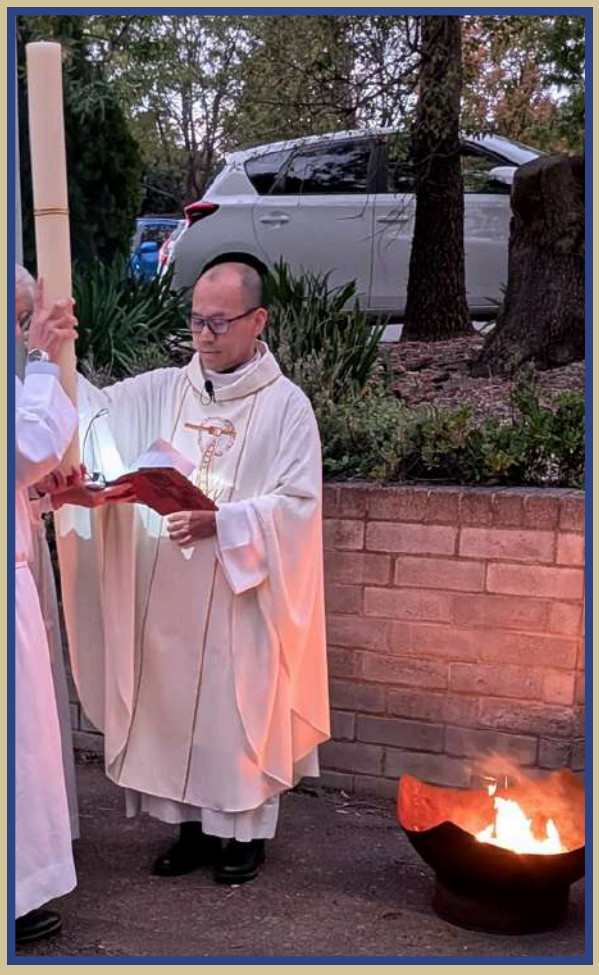
Holy Saturday

We congratulate and welcome into full Communion with the Catholic Church

Guirlyn, Alistair, Roberto, Jacob, Erica, Nicole

Easter Baptism

EXIT



The altar cloth used for the Easter masses was hand made by Elvira McCann. It was Elvira's gift to the SJA parish on its 50th anniversay - 26 February 2022.

The stitch is Hardanger embroidery, and comes from the Hardanger fjord region of southwestern Norway.

Treasures from the Archives 17: Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) is associated with Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd and as the sacrificial lamb. The image of the lamb appears in many places in the Bible. Moses commanded the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb and mark their doors so that death would pass over their families. John the Baptist proclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." The lamb also appears in the last book of the Bible, The Revelation to John, as opening the Book of Judgement. Here it symbolises Christ as judge separating the sheep (the saved) from the goats (the damned) at the Last Judgement. The Agnus Dei is a common image on banners, paintings and vestments. There are two main variants.

The Paschal Lamb 'triumphant' standing on a grassy knoll supporting a banner represents the triumph of the Risen Christ over sin and death. The cruciform halo behind the head indicates that the lamb is Christ, the Lamb of God.

The Lamb of Revelations is depicted lying or standing on a book or scroll with seven seals and is associated with the Final Judgement. The imagery comes from Revelations chapters 5 and 6.
M. Ferguson

Paschal Lamb Triumphant on an early 20th century cope
(St Augustine's Church, Salisbury, SA.)
Image: Author's collection.
Image used with permission.

Lamb of Revelation on a late 19th century chasuble (Bathurst Diocesan Archives, NSW.)
Image: Author's collection.
Image used with permission.

MENTAL HEALTH • MINISTRY

Holding Mother's Day Gently

During the month of May, we are invited into a rich tapestry of devotion. We celebrate Mother's Day, alongside beautiful Marian feasts such as Our Lady of Fatima feast day (13 May) and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart feast day (30 May). In these moments, Mary is often held before us as a model of faith, love, and motherhood.

For many, this is comforting. But for others, it can feel complicated. The Weight of an Ideal.

Mary, honoured as the Theotokos—the "Mother of God"—is often presented as a figure of perfect trust, quiet strength, and unwavering love. While this inspires devotion, it can also create an unspoken pressure, especially for mothers navigating the very real challenges of daily life.

Human motherhood is often marked by exhaustion, uncertainty, financial strain, and emotional complexity. Some mothers carry the hidden weight of postpartum depression. Others juggle competing demands, feeling stretched and unsure. These experiences can feel far removed from the serene images we sometimes associate with Mary.

Even the Gospel portrayal of Mary—so often quiet, reflective, and composed—can unintentionally suggest that suffering should be carried silently. Yet today's world asks much of parents: to advocate, to respond, to problem-solve, often all at once. When the image of "perfect sacrifice" is held too tightly, it can leave mothers feeling guilty for their very human emotions—frustration, anger, or weariness.

Rediscovering the Human Mary

In recent years, there has been a gentle but important shift in how we understand Mary—not as distant and unattainable, but as deeply human and close to our own experience.
Mary knew fear. She fled danger to protect her child. She knew the anxiety of losing Jesus for three days and the relief—and frustration—of finding him again. She knew profound sorrow, standing at the foot of the cross. In this, she is also honoured as the Mother of Sorrows.

Seen this way, Mary becomes not a standard we must live up to, but a companion who walks with us. Her life was not free from struggle; it was shaped by it. And within that, she trusted, loved, and endured—just as many do today.

When Mother's Day Hurts

Alongside these reflections, it is important to acknowledge something often left unsaid: Mother's Day can be a difficult and even painful time.

For some, it brings grief—the loss of a mother, a child, or the longing for motherhood that has not come to be. For others, it stirs memories of relationships marked by absence, conflict, neglect, or hurt. The cultural expectation of celebration—flowers, gratitude, joyful gatherings—can deepen the sense of disconnection or sadness. There can be a quiet but heavy question beneath the day: Why doesn't my experience match what this day seems to say it should be?

For those who have been mistreated, or who carry complicated relationships with their mothers or children, this day can feel particularly fraught. The idealised image of loving, nurturing connection may highlight not what is present, but what is missing.

A More Compassionate Invitation

Perhaps, then, the invitation for us as a parish community is to hold this day more gently. To honour and celebrate mothers—yes—but also to make space for the full range of human experience. To recognise that love is sometimes expressed in imperfect, struggling ways. To allow grief, complexity, and even silence to have a place among us.

Mary, in her humanity, reminds us that God meets us not in perfection, but in reality. In fear, in love, in confusion, in hope.

A Quiet Word of Care

If Mother's Day is difficult for you, you are not alone. It is okay to step back from expectations, to mark the day in your own way, or not at all. It is okay to feel what you feel. And if this day brings joy, may it be received with gratitude and shared with tenderness. In all of it, may we be a community that reflects the heart of God—spacious enough to hold both celebration and sorrow, and gentle enough to honour every story.

May Mary, who knew both joy and sorrow, walk with us this May—
not as a distant ideal, but as a compassionate presence alongside us.

Heart Spirituality

Jesus' emotions touched his heart

At times Our Saviour showed that as a person he was troubled, suddenly disturbed: as no doubt happened when his gaze fell upon some greater distress, some more pitiable misfortune: the widow of Nain behind the coffin of her only son, Mary weeping over the death of Lazarus, the Jewish people's failure to believe.

On such occasions Jesus was deeply moved; waves of tenderness and love invaded his soul. His heart reacted to these impressions, his blood flowed more rapidly; his face, his gestures and his tears betrayed the emotion he felt inside him, and emotion he would not restrain. *Turbavit seipsum.*

Especially in the moving scene when he instituted the Eucharist, Jesus was deeply troubled, moved to the depths of his being.

Only Saint John, whose head in that solemn hour rested on the breast of the divine Master, could tell us how violently his heart was beating, stirred by emotion.

His brain was aware of this emotion, but it was his Heart that experienced it.

Jules Chevalier msc. Le Sacré-Coeur de Jésus. Quatrième ed. p. 129ƒ. Paris 1900.

Jules Chevalier msc

"Jules discovered his charism in a particular angle of looking at Jesus in the Gospels, a special emphasis upon a certain way of following him and a certain way of serving him in other people".

Jules Chevalier's Charism could be expressed as: ***a mission of love; manifesting the kindness of God.***

This mission is carried out in the work of service, and by the way of serving; ***in love and kindness.***

E.J. Cuskelly, msc - Jules Chevalier: man with a mission

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

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MAY

That everyone might have food

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

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

Each of us have a hidden role in Pope Leo's mission, and that role is praying for the Pope every day. Praying for the Pope is a profound way to participate in the Church's mission and to express our communion with the Body of Christ.

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.

Loving God,
source of wisdom and light,
you guide the humble with your loving care.
Grant Pope Leo XIV
the gift of heavenly wisdom,
that he may discern your will
and trust fully in your guidance.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen

Taken from: *When the White Smoke Clears*, p. 142

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

We love to celebrate mass with the children and vulnerable people of our parish.
Safeguarding and care is everyone's responsibility.

Celebrating our inaugural
Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Friday 29 May St John the Apostle 6:30pm
Evening Prayer for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Saturday 30 May - St Thomas Aquinas
Parish Day - Mass 10:00am followed by an early lunch.

KIT Keeping In Touch

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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Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Belconnen West ACT * 25 Blackham Street, HOLT ACT 2615 and Lhotsky Street, CHARNWOOD ACT 2615

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JOIN US AT OLSH!

BOOK CLUB
4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS FOR PEOPLE LIVING ALONE
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

KIT MAY 2026

1	Friday	First Friday Mass of the Sacred Heart 9:30am - Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library
2	Saturday	
3	**Sunday**	**5th Sunday of Easter**
4	Monday	
5	Tuesday	
6	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
7	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
8	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library
9	Saturday	
10	**Sunday**	**6th Sunday of Easter**
11	Monday	
12	Tuesday	Community Connections For People Living Alone- 2:00pm Coffee Ichi Cafe KIppax
13	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass - Week 1 ALPHA 6:00 - 7:00pm Kippax - **See page 8**
14	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Parish Pastoral Council meeting 7:00pm Parish Library
15	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library - Men's Group 6:00pm - Parish Centre
16	Saturday	
17	**Sunday**	**The Ascension of the Lord** **Community Connections For People Living Alone 3:30pm Parish Library**
18	Monday	Pins & Needles 7:15pm - Parish Library
19	Tuesday	
20	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Week 2 ALPHA 6:00 - 7:30pm Kippax - **See page 8**
21	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
22	Friday	African Catholic Women Organisation - Mother's Day Spiritual Activities 5:00pm-7:00pm Prayer Group at Kippax - after 9:30am Mass - Meditation 5:15pm - Parish Library
23	Saturday	
24	**Sunday**	**Pentecost Sunday - Sunday Afternoon Book Club - 3:00pm Parish Library**
25	Monday	
26	Tuesday	Women's Breakfast 7:30am Bean Origin Cafe Belconnen
27	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Friendship Group - 10:15am SJA Parish Centre - Week 3 ALPHA 6:00 - 7:30pm
28	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
29	Friday	Naming of the Mary French Library after 9:30am mass - Morning tea Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library Evening Prayer for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart @ St John the Apostle
30	Saturday	Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Parish Day @ St Thomas Aquinas - Mass followed by lunch
31	**Sunday**	**The Most Holy Trinity**