



St John's Wood/The Gap Parish Bulletin

Vol 6, Issue 05

15 February 2026



6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: [Sir 15:15-20](#)

He never commanded anyone to be godless.

Second Reading: [1 Cor 2:6-10](#)

God in his wisdom predestined our glory before the ages began.

Gospel: [Matthew 5:17-37](#)

Such was said to your ancestors; but I am speaking to you.



[Readings and Commentaries](#)



TWO-MINUTE HOMILY

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr Fadi Salame



Fr Fadi reflects on how Jesus shows us that holiness is not just about keeping rules but about living with integrity, compassion and love. [Watch now.](#)

Deceased

Anniversary

Sick

Beth Kloza, Lameka Eketi, Peter Maher, Peter Townson, Suzanne Black, Val Bonney, Carmel Foster, Baby Paddy Marquart, Julie Allen, Philomena (Nellie's mum), Trish Crawshaw, Fiona Russell, Luz Stella Lopez, Carmel Herbert, Christy Murphy, Jim Johnson, Robert Minns, Tim chen chen zuo Zu, Mary Thomas, Antonio Ferrante, Carol Black, Moira De Silva, Margaret Sullivan, Ryan Ferguson, Toni Bennett, Deiana Martin, Lorraine Stevens

WCCM (Christian Meditation)

Monday at 9.30am Parish Office.

Will resume early February.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Mater Dei: Monday & Friday 6 - 7pm

This week's Gospel reflection:

Australians have long grumbled about the “nanny state.” We roll our eyes at tobacco excises, plain packaging laws, bicycle helmet requirements, and bans on advertising to kids. Yet, if we're honest, no one lying in a hospital bed with lung cancer, managing type 2 diabetes, or recovering from a head fracture, ever mutters, “This wouldn't have happened if the government had just stayed out of my business.”



Deep down, we know that some laws exist not to stifle us but to save us. They're less about control and more about keeping us alive and well. This weekend's readings invite us to see God's law in that same light; not as divine overreach but as wisdom designed for *human flourishing*.

Sirach reminds us just how much God respects human freedom: “If you choose, you can keep the commandments” (Sir 15:15). God does not impose the divine will upon us. Like public health policies, the commandments are set before us as a path of life, not as a compliance regime. Sirach's image of choosing between “life and death” (Sir 15:17) is less about punishment and more about recognising that our decisions shape who we become.

The psalmist sees the “wonders” of God's law (Ps 119:18). This isn't the awe of a bureaucrat admiring a perfectly filled-out form; it is the delight of someone who recognises that God's ways lead to peace, integrity, and deep contentment. The psalmist isn't one who revels in rules; but one who wonders at the simple and self-evident wisdom inherent in God's law.

Paul speaks of a hidden wisdom that the world doesn't easily recognise—wisdom rooted in love rather than self-interest, in the Cross rather than cleverness. God's wisdom does not operate like the shifting advice of “this age,” which prioritises individual success over communal wellbeing. Divine wisdom seeks communion, justice, and healing: all the things that help humanity to flourish. It is revealed, Paul says, by the Spirit who searches “the depths of God” (1 Cor 2:10) and leads us into those depths ourselves.

Matthew's Jesus insists he has not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it (Matt 5:17). But fulfilment doesn't mean tightening the rules; it means *deepening* them. Jesus directs our attention away from external actions to the dispositions of the heart. He's not adding more red tape. He's revealing that true obedience is not about external regulation but internal transformation – a radical change of heart and mind. The law's purpose is to form a people capable of love.

Which brings us back to our Australian examples. Just as no one on a hospital ward complains about the nanny state, so no one who has contemplated the “depths of God” complains that divine law is restrictive. God's law, like the best human laws, is given so we might flourish; not in fear, but in freedom shaped by sure wisdom and self-sacrificing love.

And that, ultimately, is the kind of “plain-packaged” law worth a moment or two of wonder.

Ian J Elmer © Majellan Media 2026

EVER YOUNG GROUP



Welcome back to the Ever Young Group. This year we hope to grow and we hope you will spread the word to anyone who may like an outing to enjoy some good company and a laugh over a cuppa. The morning commences at 10am in the Parish Hall on Thursday 26th February. So bring your friends and join us for a fun filled morning. You can contact Lyn on 0423 096 654 for more details.

Day/Date	Liturgy	Mass Times	Venue
Monday 16/02/2026	Weekday Ordinary Time 6	9am	Mater Dei
Wednesday 18/02/2026	Ash Wednesday	9am 7pm	SPC MD
Thursday 19/02/2026	Thursday after Ash Wednesday	9am	SPC
Friday 20/02/2026	Friday after Ash Wednesday	9am	Mater Dei
Saturday 21/02/2026	Saturday after Ash Wednesday	5.30pm	Mater Dei
Sunday 22/02/2026	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT	8am 10am 5pm	SPC Mater Dei SPC

menCONNECT

Gentlemen, our "main course" event of 2026 will be a **half-day Gathering on**

Saturday 28 February. The speaker will be **Deacon Gary Stone, OAM**, who is returning to facilitate reflections and discussions on **Living life to the full** (John 10:10).

Gary will provide three inputs which we will then discuss in turn and workshop for our **individual life planning**: a stocktake on my relationships with **myself and others**, a stocktake on my relationship with **God** and writing an **aspirational eulogy** - how I would like to be remembered.

The morning starts at 7am with the traditional cooked breakfast and coffee and concludes at 1pm.

The location of the Gathering is the Parish Hall at St Peter Chanel, 41 Chaprowe Rd, The Gap.



The cost is \$25 and please **RSVP Mike** on 0459 992 228 before 25 February for catering purposes.

ST JOHN'S WOOD / THE GAP PARISH

Office Hours

Mon, Wed, Fri:- 8:30am - 3:30pm

Tue, Thurs: - 8:30am - 12:30pm

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PARISH TEAM

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Majella Deegan

Sacramental Program Coordinator

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CHURCHES

Mater Dei

16 Philomene Drive, Ashgrove, 4060

St. Peter Chanel

41 Chaprowe Road, The Gap, 4061

SCHOOLS

[Mater Dei Primary School](#)

T: 3514 4100

[St Peter Chanel Primary School](#)

T: 3300 1202



YOUTH LED MASS

The next Parish YLM is next **Sunday 22 February** at 5pm Mass at St Peter Chanel Church. **If you're a high schooler or young adult** from Mater Dei or SPC, **we'd love for you to join us at this Mass and, if you're able, to serve too.** We need **readers, singers, musicians, altar servers, computer operator** and people to take up the gifts at the **Offertory**. Before the YLM begins, there are practices, so don't be afraid to try something new! If you, or someone you know, want to be involved, please contact Sam Mead at samuel.mead@outlook.com or 0491 149 607. **All parishioners are invited to join too.**

See you there!



POTLUCK DINNER

The next Parish Potluck Dinner is **next Sunday 22 February** after the 5pm Youth-Led Mass in the Parish Hall. **All are welcome – come to share dinner together** and catch up with friends new and old over a meal. Please bring a main or dessert to share and your own drinks. (Meals can be dropped off at the Hall right before 5pm Mass or when Potluck begins.)

More helpers (for setting up beforehand, putting out food and packing up afterwards) **are desperately needed** for Potlucks to continue to run. If you can help, please contact Michelle Mead at themeads@gmail.com. See you there!



HOME ROSARY

This week's rosary will be said at the home of Pushpa on Monday 16th February. Contact the parish office for further details.

Please check out our [Parish Webpage](#) and [Facebook Page](#) for regular updates.



YOUNG ADULTS LENT GROUP

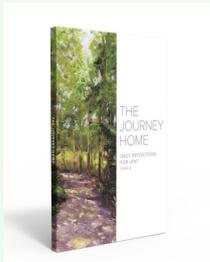
We're pleased to announce that a Young Adults Lent Group will be launching in the Parish very soon! Come along to get to know other young Catholics, to explore and reflect on the topics of Lent and to deepen – or explore – your faith. Every night includes dinner! If you're a young adult (finished school and older), you're invited – we want to see you there!

Mondays during Lent 6:00-7:30pm | Launching 23 February 2026 | St Peter Chanel Church, The Gap

For more info and to join our new Young Adults WhatsApp group, contact Lauren on 0487 635 721. If you're not a YA but you know a YA who might be interested, pass this invite onto them or pass their details onto Lauren! (Co-ordinated by Lauren Deegan and Sam Mead)

LENTEN RESOURCES

Our two Lenten resources this year have arrived and are available from the Parish office. **Archdiocese of Wollongong**



called **"COM PAS-SIO"**. Cost \$10

Or

Archdiocese of Brisbane
book called
"THE JOURNEY HOME". Cost \$5



LENT RESOURCES FOR KIDS Are you looking for creative, fun and faith-filled ways to invite children into the liturgical season of Lent? The Children & Families Team from Archdiocesan Ministries has created a webpage with a variety of resources created to support you as you engage our youngest disciples in this Lenten season. Check it out at [tinyurl.com /Lent 4Kids](https://tinyurl.com/Lent4Kids)

St John Wood The Gap Parish
Ash Wednesday

As we look ahead, the season of Lent begins next week with Ash Wednesday.

The forty days of Lent invite us into a special time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Ash Wednesday Mass times:

St Peter Chanel: 9:00am

Mater Dei: 7:00pm

May this sacred season draw us ever closer to Christ and to one another.

PARISH WOMEN'S GROUP

We have a Parish Women's Group who meet fortnightly on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am at the home of Robyn Locke.

Our aim is to look at the Sunday mass readings for discussion, prayer and reflection with a view to deepening our understanding of the Sunday scripture readings and thus enriching our Sunday worship. We will be re-commencing for 2026 on Wednesday 11th February and are currently welcoming new members.

During Lent, we do the Lenten program and so meet weekly from Ash Wednesday until Easter. If any ladies would like to join with us to do the Lenten program, they would be very welcome. If you interested or would like further information, please contact Robyn Locke at

robyn@opuscons.com.au.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY LEADERS HELP NEEDED



Children's Liturgy is offered at the 10am Mass on the first Sunday of each month. We need to hear from another 1-2 more people who can volunteer as either as a session leader or assistant to ensure it is possible to continue.

All volunteers need to complete the parish safeguarding requirements prior to commencing. Support is available to learn how it all works, including shadowing an existing session leader. Easy to follow materials are provided through the Archdiocese for each Sunday.

Please contact the parish office, or Donna Lynn at donna.lynn@live.com.au if you are interested in finding out more.

In Australia, the rules for fasting during Lent are as follows:

- ♦ **Fasting:** Catholics aged 14 and older are required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, abstaining from meat on these days. Fasting allows for one normal-sized meal and two smaller snacks, totalling no more than one meal a day.
- ♦ **Abstinence:** Catholics are required to abstain from meat on all Fridays of the year, including those during Lent.
- ♦ **Exemptions:** Minors and the elderly (60 and older) are exempt from fasting, and those who cannot fast for health reasons are also exempt.
- ♦ **Voluntary Penance:** Catholics are encouraged to engage in voluntary penance throughout Lent, which may include prayer, fasting, or almsgiving.

And THE WINNER OF OUR RAFFLE IS.....

It is with great pleasure that Father Anthony has drawn the raffle and the winners are:

1st Prize: Weber BBQ—Pierre Geldenhuys

2nd Prize: Hamper—Myolene Carrick

3rd Prize: A whiskey decanter set—Charyn Hall

Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets in the raffle with all proceeds going towards the purchase of our defibrillators.

It was wonderful to celebrate the beginning of school Mass on Thursday morning at 9am Mass with Father Anthony and the school families.

This special Mass marks the start of a new academic year and is a wonderful opportunity to pray for our student, teachers, and families as they embark on the year ahead. During the celebration, student leadership badges were presented, recognising the children who have generously accepted roles of responsibility and service within the school community.

As a parish family, we give thanks for the gifts and talents of our young people and pray that they will lead with courage, kindness, and faith. May this new school year be filled with growth, friendship, learning and God's abundant blessings.

We keep you in our prayers.



- ◆ The Editor retains the right to edit any items that are submitted to the Bulletin.
- ◆ The cut off for the Parish Bulletin is Wednesday 3pm. If you have any queries please contact the Parish Office.
- ◆ Some items in the bulletin are sourced from Majellan Media.

BRINGING THE EUCHARIST TO YOU

Are you or a loved one unable to attend Mass due to illness, infirmity, or age?

Our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are dedicated to bringing the Blessed Sacrament to those who are sick or housebound.

If you would like to receive Holy Communion at home, or if you know a parishioner who would appreciate a visit, please register your details so we can arrange a convenient time.

How to Request a Visit:

Call the Parish Office: 33006099

Email us: thegap@bne.catholic.net.au

"I was sick and you visited me." — Matthew 25:36

SOMETHING FOR A LAUGH



On Ash Wednesday, Father O'Malley stood at the front of the church, pressing ashes onto foreheads and saying, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Such was the crowd; he'd been doing it for more than thirty minutes. His voice was tiring; his thumb was black as a chimney stack.

A well-dressed man stepped forward and asked, "Father... what does the mention of dust really mean?"

Father O'Malley smiled. "It reminds us to be humble. No matter who we are, we all come from dust, and we will return to dust."

The man nodded. "So, even important people?"

"Especially important people," said the priest.

The end of the line was close. Father O'Malley looked up and gulped. His archbishop was next in line.

Flustered, he leaned forward, marked the archbishop's forehead, and blurted, "Remember that you ... are dust... and... ahhh ... nice to see you, Your Grace!"

Father O'Malley went slightly red in the cheeks while the archbishop raised an eyebrow ... then smiled.

"Don't worry, Father. Don't overthink it. Dust is dust. At the end of the day we're all in the same boat!"

😊😊😊😊 Enjoy your week ahead.....

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

A single middle aged working male, non-smoking, no pets, is seeking a granny flat or similar or willing to share with one or two people.

References available—

Please contact Kevin on 0435275728

"Our parish would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Turrbal and Jagera people, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their continued connection to the land, water and community".



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