



## St Michael's Catholic Parish Traralgon

**St Michael's Vision Statement:** Inspired by Jesus Christ, we are a welcoming Catholic Community seeking to enrich lives. Come and join us!

**St Michael's Mission Statement:**

To provide opportunities for parishioners –

- to grow in holiness
- to discover and live out their personal and community call to mission to live as Catholics who effectively transform society.

www.smpt.org.au  
email: sec@smpt.org.au

**Statement of Commitment to the safety of children and adults at risk:** Central to the mission of St Michael's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children, young people and adults at risk and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Please contact our Safeguarding Officers Shane Reid or Sally Darby on 5174 2060 if you have any concerns.

### St Michael's Parish Information

**Fr Aju Varghese** Parish Priest  
Parish Centre 5174 2060  
Priest's Residence: 5174 6765

**Deacon Tony Aspinall**  
Email: deacontony8@gmail.com

**St Michael's Parish Office**  
Telephone: 5174 2060  
Address: 35 Kay Street, Traralgon  
PO Box 103, Traralgon 3844

Office hours –  
Tues to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm  
Parish Secretary: Catherine Hill  
Email: sec@smpt.org.au  
Sacraments / Youth: Jenifer Hanratty  
Email: sacraments@smpt.org.au

**After office hours** - in case of an emergency please call 0499 162 313 and leave a message and your contact details. All non-urgent calls should be made during office hours.

**Baptisms:** Six weeks notice required

**Weddings:** Six months notice required

**Parish Pastoral Council:** Lia Di Corleto, Chairperson, Fr Aju, Steve Kimani, Greg Imhagwe, Watson Gomez, Jenifer Hanratty, Judi McLaughlin, Thomas Mathew, Amanda Reid, Jodie Ware, Michelle Charlton, and Doug Doherty.

### Our Schools:

**St Gabriel's School** 5174 5515

Principal: Mrs Michelle Charlton

**St Michael's School** 5174 3295

Principal: Mrs Jodie Ware

**Lavalla Catholic College** 5174 5272

Principal: Mr Ryan Greer

Kildare Campus 5174 8111

St Paul's Campus 5174 7355



NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY by Mary Coloe PBVM  
**2 Peter 3:8-14**

Because we are more familiar with Mark, this Sunday I want to say more about 2 Peter. This is a later letter, written some time after Peter's death in Rome and we do not know its real author. Like a number of New Testament writings it is attributed to Peter as a way of both honouring the Apostle and also perhaps to ensure the authority of this letter. The epistle seems to be written to a Christian group who were formally Gentiles, thus converts from Greco-Roman religions. It has a strong argumentative tone suggesting that the writer is contending against other teachers who were challenging Christian beliefs (2:1). Because Jesus had not returned, some Christians were beginning to lose faith. The false teachers denied the final 'coming' (Parousia) of Jesus (3:3-4) and promise so called 'freedom' (2:19) amounting to license to do as one wishes. They even denied the power of Jesus (2:1) and any sense of the need to live an ethical life (2:4). Effectively, they dismissed the entire proclamation of Jesus, past, present and future as a myth (1:16), as nonsense. Leaning towards Greek philosophy, they dismiss any concept of God's interest or involvement in the world. To counter these ideas the author of 2 Peter looks back to God's act of creation (3:5-6), then God's continuing action in the story of Israel (2:4-8) and particularly in his Son (1:16-21). In speaking of Jesus the author draws upon eye-witness testimony (1:16), then in the reading today reiterates the promise of the future coming of Jesus (the Parousia).

In many ways the situation of this community is akin to our own. Many in our own world have no sense of any divine power. They may describe themselves as sceptics, or agnostics, or atheists. God simply means nothing to them and Christian faith provides a helpful guide to ethical living, but that's all. Parents may even want their children to be taught within the Christian tradition but for reasons other than firm faith conviction. The letter of Peter offers something that we can overlook and that is the first person testimony – 'we were witnesses' (1:16). People of faith today can still make this bold claim in the present tense, 'I am a living witness to the power of God in my life.' God's presence and power may not be expressed in clear, articulate arguments or dogmas but there can be a certainty of the heart. Something like this certainty of love is enough for two people to commit their lives to one another. It is a certainty of faith, of love that has a substance to it that defies rational analysis. This type of Christian faith has a rock-solid core to it that goes far deeper than a personal ethic.

2 Peter offers this rich expression of hope: 'You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.' As we wait the dawning of our 'day-star,' may we be as bold, as daring in how we live out our faith as those early witnesses.

Sunday Mass Times	
Saturday	5:00pm Mass
Sunday	9:30am Mass 5:00pm Mass
Weekday Mass Times	
Tuesday Dec 12	9:30am Mass
Wednesday Dec 13	11:00am Reconciliation 11:00am Exposition 12:00pm Mass
Thursday Dec 14	9:30am Mass* 11:00am Mass @ Dalkeith
Friday Dec 15	9:30am Mass

**\*Thursday morning mass will return to St Michael's Church until February 2024.**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:** those who have died recently including Bill Harrison, Stan Harris, Edna Charnley, Patricia Lahore, and those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Rogelio (Junior) Trinidad, Mons John Allman, Veronica Barter, and Agostino Damiano. *Lord, let your perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*



**WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:** including Ann-Maree Daly, Gary Donchi, Bernadette Formaran, Fr Frank Freeman, Carolyn Gleeson, Jacqui Granville, Barbara Greaves, Ellen Hammond, Jenny Hansch, Robert Hazelman, Imogen Hillier, Joyce Martin, Ivy May, Deborah McKerchar, Ben Melenhorst, Maree Morris, Henry Polo, Joan Riggall, Theresa Rosello, Jerry Templer, Damiano Tripodi, Sharon Veleff, George Walkan, Roy Ward, Victoria Rohli, Fr John Speekman, James Whitty, John Waanders, Peter Dal Pra, Jane Eric, Rose Xuereb, Manuel Xuereb, Peter Lorinc, Don Barnes and all those we hold dear in our hearts.

*Please let the office know if you, or anyone you know would like a visit from one of our parishioners, Fr Aju or Deacon Tony.*

**PARISH PICNIC:** Thank you to all who came along and supported our parish picnic on Sunday. It was a fantastic day filled with laughter and chatter and a fun time was had by all. Thank you to our PPC team for organising and leading the day, for being there at 7am to set up and start the slushie machine. For our team of workers manning the popcorn and fairy floss, the slushies, the tea and coffee, the BBQ and generally making sure the event ran smoothly. Special thanks to Holly for sharing her talented face-painting skills, to Jim and Bonnie for their festive music and entertainment our CWL Ladies and our J-Walkers for their help and support throughout the day. Thank you!

*Congratulations*

Our first annual Christmas Bake-off was a huge success thanks to our many talented parishioners and their delicious creations. Congratulations to our winner Adriana Costa, and our runner up Jen Hanratty. Well done!



This Week's Events	
Monday December 11	
11:00am	Funeral Prayers for Stan Harris, St Michael's Church
5:00pm	St Gabriel's Grade 6 Graduation Mass, St Michael's Church
Wednesday December 13	
9:30am	Blessing of the Icons, St Michael's Church
11:00am	Reconciliation, St Michael's Church
1:00pm	Finance Committee Meeting, Parish Centre
6:00pm	St Michael's Grade 6 Graduation Mass, St Michael's Church
Thursday December 14	
10:30am	Charismatic Prayer Group, Mary MacKillop Room
11:00am	Mass @ Dalkeith, Dalkeith Gardens
7:30pm	Advent Liturgy, St Michael's Church
Sunday December 17	
10:30am	Morning Tea for Father Aju's Birthday, Mary MacKillop Hall

**BAPTISMS:** This weekend we welcome for Baptism, **Leni Domino Rahui**, son of Samson and Dacil, **Baine Theodore Longin**, son of Matthew and Bernadette and **Madison Leahy Stephens**, daughter of Emily. Congratulations and welcome to our Parish!



**ANNIVERSARY:** Congratulations to Maria and Pino Tortora who are celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary this weekend. Well done and congratulations from us all!

**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS:** St Michael's Parish warmly invites anyone interested in discovering more about the Catholic faith to join our RCIA group. If you, or anyone you know may be interested in learning more, please register your details with the parish office.

**ST MICHAEL'S ICON WRITING GROUP:** For several years now a small group of people from around The Valley have been meeting every second Wednesday of the month to 'write' icons. These are images of Jesus, Mary, the angels and the saints. Each sacred icon is a point of encounter between us and God. It is a window into heaven and reveals some of the glory that is to be. Each year we bring our finished icons to be blessed with holy oil from Bethlehem. All are most welcome to the blessing on **Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 9.30** in the church. If you are interested in joining the group or finding out more please contact the parish office.

**ART COMPETITION:** Congratulations to our 2023 Art Competition Winners- Jasmine Hanratty, Jemima Wilkie, Joran Eldhouse, Chloe Rawson, Eve Hanratty and Lyla Tripodi. Honourable Mentions were awarded to Elijah Sloe, Henley MacGregor, Billie McNulty, Liya Roy, Anna Shine, Rosemaria Thomas, Tofumi Ayeri and Torah Chapman. Congratulations and well done to all our talented entrants. Please take a moment to have a look at their beautiful artwork which has been displayed in the back of the church.



**ADVENT LITURGY**  
**Maranatha: Come Lord**  
**Thursday December 14 730pm**  
**St Michael's Church**

As we enter into a time of preparation for Christmas we call on the God of Hope to be with us and with all those who bear ongoing heartache, pain and deep anxiety, especially in the Ukraine and the Holy Land. Join us for an evening of prayer as we gather together to prepare for the coming of the Christ child. Supper will be provided afterwards in the Mary MacKillop Room, all are welcome.

**MORNING TEA:** Join us for Morning Tea next Sunday **December 17** after the 930am Mass to celebrate Father Aju's Birthday. Please bring along a plate to share.

**NATIVITY PROCESSION:** We invite all our parish children to join in our Nativity Procession at the Family Mass on December 24 at 7pm. There will be a rehearsal on December 17 after the 9:30am mass for anyone who is interested.

**CWL NEWS:** Thank you to all those who attended the Annual General Meeting last week. Current executive positions have been extended into 2024 and the team is thankful for the ongoing support of all members. Their Christmas raffle raised \$321.50 last weekend and congratulations go to the winners who were one of our St Gabriel's families. Well done to the Parish Picnic organisers, it was a lovely day and we were glad the CWL could be a part of it.



**CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE:** St Michael's St Vincent de Paul Conference has again organised the Christmas Giving Tree to be in our Church. Parishioners are asked to take a gift tag and return your gift/voucher to the tree before **December 17**. The conference would like to thank all parishioners for their support throughout the year and wish everyone a happy and Holy Christmas.



**Christmas Mass Times 2023:**

**RECONCILIATION:** Tuesday December 19  
 6:00pm - 7:30pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE:** Sunday December 24  
 7:00 pm Family Mass,  
 with Carols from 6:30pm  
 11:00pm Mass

**CHRISTMAS DAY:** Monday December 25  
 9:30am Mass (*No evening Mass Christmas Day*)



**2023 ADVENT APPEAL FOR UKRAINE:** During Advent 2022, all Australian dioceses were invited to take up a special collection(s) for the people of Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of dollars was raised to support people in the war-torn nation through the work of *Mudra Sprava* (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable

Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; Food packages for people in need; Shelters for internally displaced persons. To read more about how the funds from Australia supported people in Ukraine, go to <https://tinyurl.com/mts7xvch> At the Bishops Conference's November 2023 meeting, bishops were asked to again consider if an appeal could be taken for the people of Ukraine during Advent. The proposal was made by Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR, Eparch of Sts Peter and Paul for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia, and Hobart Archbishop Julian Porteous, who visited Ukraine with an Australian delegation in August. Please donate generously through the parish office.

**POSITION VACANT: Pastoral Care Practitioner- Prison Ministry** CatholicCare Victoria are welcoming applications for a Pastoral Care Practitioner position to service the spiritual and religious needs of the prisoners of Catholic faith, prisoners' families, ex-prisoners and staff within the Prison and Correctional Centres across Victoria. Our current opportunities are: Dame Phyllis Frost Centre in Ravenhall, 7.5 hours a week Thursdays 9am-5pm, Fulham Correctional Centre, Sale, 7.5 hours a week Fridays 9am-5pm, HMP Langi Kal Kal, Beaufort, 3 hours a week Fridays 2-5pm, and Hopkins Correctional Centre, Ararat, 5 hours, Thursdays 12- 5pm. If you relate well with people of all backgrounds and different cultures, please apply via our website- <https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/page/181/current-job-vacancies>

**PIETY STALL:** 2024 Columban Calendars are now available from the Piety Stall for \$10.00 each.

**STEWARDSHIP MATTERS:**  
*"Prepare the way of the Lord..." - Mark 1:3*  
 We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, puts us on the path to holiness and is an example for others to be holy, too. We are responsible not only for our own lives, but for the lives of others as well.

Rosters for December 16 & 17		3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Year B		
	Lector	Commentator	Usher/Welcomer	Musicians
<b>Saturday Dec 16 5:00pm</b>	R Foote & T Larkin	B Purcell	M Giddens	Alison, Jeanne & Amanda
<b>Sunday Dec 17 9:30am</b>	T Denny & C Muvhundu	C McCabe	W Banks-Smith	Charismatic Choir
<b>Sunday Dec 17 5:00pm</b>	S Luscombe	S Grout	T Biancon	Jane & Simon
Church Cleaning:	December 20	Catholic Women's League		
Mick's Kitchen:	December 14	Burns Team	December 21	St Michael's School Staff

**First Reading**     *Is 40:1-5 9-11*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*Prepare the way for the Lord.*

'Console my people, console them' says your God.  
'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

**Responsorial Psalm**   *Ps 84:9-14*   *Rv8*

**(R.) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.**

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,  
a voice that speaks of peace,  
peace for his people.  
His help is near for those who fear him  
and his glory will dwell in our land. **(R.)**
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth  
and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**
3. The Lord will make us prosper  
and our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march before him  
and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

**Second Reading**     *2 Peter 3:8-14*

A reading from the second letter of St Peter

*We wait for new heavens and a new earth.*

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

**Gospel Acclamation**     *Luke 3:4 6*

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God*  
*Alleluia!*

**Gospel**     *Mk 1:1-8*

*Make straight the paths of the Lord.*

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

Next weeks Readings: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Year B	
First Reading:	Isaiah 66:1-2 10-11
Second Reading:	1 Thess 5:16-24
Gospel:	John 1:6-8 19-28