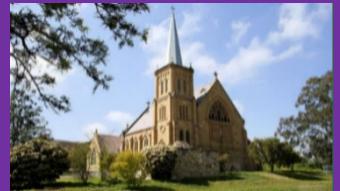


# ST JAMES' PARISH

St James Muswellbrook

St Thomas Aberdeen

We acknowledge the traditional owners who cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who have maintained these spiritual connections and traditions



## PARISH CONTACTS

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**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent – YEAR A**

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**

### Entrance Antiphon Cf Psalm 90:15-16

When he calls on me, I will answer him;  
I will deliver him and give him glory,  
I will grant him length of days.

### First Reading

A reading from the book

*Creation of our first parents, and sin.*

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil.  
Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and  
thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in  
the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned.  
The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every  
kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with  
the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good  
and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts  
that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman,  
'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of  
the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the  
serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the  
garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the  
garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it,  
under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the  
woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that  
on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and  
you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The  
woman saw that the tree was good to eat and  
pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the  
knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its  
fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband  
who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of  
both of them were opened and they realised that they  
were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to  
make themselves loin-cloths.

### The Word of the Lord

### Responsorial Psalm Ps 50:3-6, 12-14, 17. R. see v.3

**(R.)** Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. **(R.)**
2. My offences truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done. **(R.)**
3. A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **(R.)**
4. Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise. **(R.)**

### Second Reading

Romans 5:12-19

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*Where sin increased, there grace abounded all the more.*

Sin entered the world through one man, and through  
sin death, and thus death has spread through the  
whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin  
existed in the world long before the Law was given.  
There was no law and so no one could be accused of  
the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all  
from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike  
that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself  
considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that  
through one man's fall so many died, it is even more  
certain that divine grace, coming through the one  
man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant

free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

## The Word of the Lord

### Gospel Acclamation Matthew 4:4

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

### Gospel Matthew 4:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew Jesus fasted for forty days and nights.

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,  
and they will support you on their hands  
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,  
and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

## The Gospel of the Lord

### Communion Antiphon

Cf Psalm 90:4

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will trust.

### Reflection by Fr Sabu

Dear Friends,

Its first Sunday of Lent. I can't believe that we are already in Lenten season again. The word Lent comes from an old English word meaning "spring time" as it is a season of growth and renewal. But we still in our hot summer season. Lent is primarily the time of intense spiritual preparation for conquering our temptations, using the means Jesus used during his forty days of preparation in the desert for his public life. After fasting for forty days and nights, Jesus faces three significant temptations, in all these temptations, the devil attempts to undermine Jesus' identity as the Son of God by challenging Him to prove it through miraculous acts. But Jesus remains secure in the firm knowledge of who He is and in His relationship with the Father. Similarly, temptation often strikes at the core of our identity, making us doubt our worth, purpose or calling. Lent is an opportune time to return to the truth of who we are in God-His children. In every temptation, Jesus responds with Scripture. "in His temptations, Christ teaches us that we must resist the allure of sin and rely on the Word of God, for it is through His strength that we can overcome our own trials" St Augustine. This shows as the importance of being grounded in God's Word as a way to resist temptation. The period of Lent invites us to spend time in scripture-reading and prayer, allowing God's Word to strengthen us in moments of trial. So, during this season of Lent and beyond, we must prepare ourselves for the ultimate journey and battle. We must be firm in prayer and service so that we do not fall to the temptations of the evil one. May you have a fruitful Lent. God Bless! Fr Sabu Pulimalayil



## LENT

Lenten Programme "Compassio." The booklets have arrived. Cost of booklets will be \$10 each.



### Lenten Groups

There are two Lenten Groups running again this year. Lenten groups started on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**Group 1** – Held in St Thomas Church in Aberdeen, meeting Monday evenings at 6pm.

**Group 2** – Held in the Old Convent in Muswellbrook, meeting Wednesday evenings at 7pm. Contact Colleen Kelly on 0402 242 273 for more information or to join this group.



### Parish Bulletin Notice

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding a High Court decision involving historical abuse within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We recognise this may be distressing for individuals, the broader Catholic community and particularly victims, survivors and their families. Support is available through Zimmerman Service - Healing and Support on 02 4923 0636. Any concerns for the safety of a child or vulnerable adult should be reported to the Office of Safeguarding on 02 4979 1390 or via the Diocese website.

A Statement from the Diocese was released yesterday and can be accessed at this link: [Statement from the Catholic Diocese on the High Court ruling - February 11 2026 - Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle](http://Statement from the Catholic Diocese on the High Court ruling - February 11 2026 - Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle)



**PROJECT  
COMPASSION**

### First Sunday of Lent 21–22 February 2026

Project Compassion 2026 shares four stories from around the world. We'll meet Sisilia from Tanzania, Monoranjon from Bangladesh, Manaini from Fiji and Ahmad from Gaza.

Each of this year's stories highlights unique challenges, yet they are united by the determination to rise above adversity and to build brighter, more hopeful futures for themselves, their families and their communities.



**UNITE  AGAINST POVERTY**  
this Lent

#### Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at: [www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate)  
Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.

**Stations of the Cross** are being held in Church, 15 minutes before weekend Mass times during lent. 5.15 pm Saturday in St James Church, 7.45 am Sunday in St Thomas Church and 9.45 am Sunday in St James Church.



### Prayer for Peace in the Middle East (and other wars)

Lord, Jesus Christ, the Holy Land is once again struck by violence, hatred and death. Lord, look with mercy upon the land that was your earthly home. Receive the deceased into your presence; and comfort those who mourn, are wounded, or forced to flee. Be close to all who are full of fear and despair. You are our peace and light of the nations; put an end to the spiral of terror and suffering in the Holy Land and in the whole Middle East. Let peace and justice flourish at the holy sites. You are our refuge. Let the people be safe in your love. Have mercy on us and on our time. Amen.

## Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> March
		<u>9.00 am</u> <b>Mass</b> St James Church	<u>11.30 am</u> <b>Adoration &amp; Benediction</b>  <u>12.00 pm</u> <b>Mass</b> St James Church	<u>9.00 am</u> <b>Mass</b> St James Church	<u>9.00 am</u> No Mass  <u>5.15 pm</u> <b>Stations of the Cross</b> St James Church  <u>5.30 pm</u> <b>Vigil Mass</b> St James Church	<u>9.45 am</u> <b>Stations of the Cross</b> St James Church  <u>10.00 am</u> <b>Mass</b> St James Church
	<u>5.00 pm</u> <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen	<u>5.30 pm</u> <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen				<u>7.45 am</u> <b>Stations of the Cross</b> St Thomas Aberdeen  <u>8.00 am</u> <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen

### Minister Roster Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Month	Readers	Cantors	Musician	Gifts	Counters	Altar Server	Sacristan
<b>5.30pm Saturday Muswellbrook</b>	R Ross	C Hayes	Sr. Dorothy			Ryan	C. Hayes
<b>8.00 am Sunday Aberdeen</b>	T Hobbs	J Lonergan	C Bowen				M Hamilton
<b>10.00am Sunday Muswellbrook</b>	J Grenfell		K Mason		K & B Mason	Stella Liam	J. Grenfell

### MASS AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: Beate Shanahan, Charles Sadgrove, Rollen Borres, Linda Bates, Josefina Flores, Jenelyn Regala, Florentino Mateo, Rodelio Borress, Paul Carey, Eunice Benn and Vhiel Bobadillah.

**Anniversary:** Myra & Joe Jeans.

**Recently Deceased:** Bernie Callinan

**Baptisms:**

**Privacy Laws.** All parishioners are encouraged to pray for the sick. Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

*St James and St Thomas - Pray for Us*

**BULLETIN** Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email: [muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au). The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: [muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au). or on our Facebook page: [Catholic Parish of St James Muswellbrook](https://www.facebook.com/muswellbrookcatholicparish). Please email [muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au) if you would like the bulletin emailed to you each week. **SAFEGUARDING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY** Please visit our 'Safeguarding' page to access a range of safeguarding resources: [muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au). Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: [officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/](http://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/) Muswellbrook Parish Promotor of Safeguarding: Jane Jacobs (Contact via Parish Office).