

St Benedict's Parish Arcadia



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR A FEBRUARY 21 & 22 2026



"Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." ~ Matthew 4:10 Image: bible.art

PARISH MASS TIMES

Weekends:

Saturday 7:00pm Vigil
Sunday 9:00am
Sunday 10:30am

Weekdays:

Mondays to Thursdays 9:30am

Fridays 6:30pm Adoration
7:00pm Mass & Confession
(Reconciliation)

Saturdays 9:00am to 10:00am
Adoration & Confession (Reconciliation)

MONASTERY CHAPEL Masses

Sundays 7:00am
Daily 7:00am

Please contact Father Eugene or Parish Office for the following:

Baptisms
Reconciliation
For the Sick
Marriages
Funerals

Contact:
Fr Eugene: 0499 548 521
Paula: 0423 078 282
Parish Office: 9653 2312



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.
Grant, almighty God,
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,
that we may grow in understanding
of the riches hidden in Christ
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

SELF-REFLECTION: RESISTING TEMPTATION

This Sunday's Gospel, Matthew 4:1-11: Jesus faces temptation in the desert and chooses trust in God over comfort and power. In our own struggles, He shows us that strength comes from God's Word and faithful prayer.

I Reflect:

1. Where is my "wilderness" right now?
2. What tempts me most away from God?
3. Do I turn to Scripture when I struggle?
4. Am I seeking comfort or trusting God?
5. How can I grow stronger in prayer and during times of testing?

Trust in God

Prayer:

Lord Jesus,
You faced temptation and remained faithful.
Strengthen me in my moments of weakness.
Help me trust in Your Word, choose what is right, and
worship You alone. Amen.

First Reading: Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7 (JB)

A reading from the book of Genesis
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.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Second Reading: Romans 5:12, 17-19 (JB)

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. 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.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

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 (JB)

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.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



GOSPEL REFLECTION

Readings: *Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7, Romans 5:12, 17-19, Matthew 4:1-11*

First Sunday of Lent – From Fall to Faithfulness

In **Genesis 2:7–9; 3:1–7**, we see the beginning of temptation. Adam and Eve are placed in a garden of abundance, yet they doubt God's goodness. The serpent plants a question, and trust is replaced with suspicion. Sin enters through disobedience.

In **Letter to the Romans 5:12, 17–19**, St Paul explains that through one man sin entered the world — but through one man, Jesus Christ, grace overflows. Where Adam fell, Christ restores. Where sin spread, grace abounds even more.

In **Gospel of Matthew 4:1–11**, Jesus enters not a garden, but a desert. He faces the same ancient tempter. Yet unlike Adam, He does not grasp, doubt, or disobey. Hungry and tested, He chooses trust. He answers every temptation with God's Word. The first Adam gave in; the new Adam stands firm.

Lent reminds us that we live between these two choices: distrust or trust, self-will or obedience, sin or grace.

Key Thought

Jesus succeeds where Adam failed — and in Him, we can succeed too.

Take-Home Challenge

When tempted this week — whether by impatience, pride, gossip, or comfort — pause and respond with a short prayer or Scripture verse instead of reacting. Let God's Word guide your choice.

Short Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the new Adam who brings life and grace. Strengthen me in temptation. Help me choose trust over doubt and obedience over self-will. Lead me from the wilderness of sin into the freedom of Your love. Amen.

Source: chatgpt

WEEKDAY LITURGICAL READINGS

February 2026

- Monday 23: Lev 19:1-2, 11-18. Mt 25:31-46.
R. Your words, Lord, are spirit and life.
St Polycarp, bishop, martyr.
- Tuesday 24: James Is 55:10-11. Mt 6:7-12.
R. From all their afflictions God will deliver the just.
- Wednesday 25: Jonah 3:1-10. Lk 11:29-32.
R. A broken, humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn.
- Thursday 26: Esther 4:17. Mt 7:7-12.
R. Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me.
- Friday 27: Ezek 18:21-28. Mt 5:20-26.
R. If you, O Lord, laid bare our guilt, who would endure it?
St Gregory of Narek, abbot, doctor.
- Saturday 28: Deut 26:16-19. Mt 5:43-48.
R. Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!



ST POLYCARP
Feast Day: February 23

*St. Polycarp,
faithful witness of Christ,
help me remain steadfast in
faith and courageous in love.
Amen.*

Source: Ordo 2026 image: mycatholic.life



Pope Leo XIV prayer intention for February 2026:

For children with incurable diseases.

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

FATHER SHANSANA AWAY

From 8 February until 8 March 2026.

During this time, please contact the
Parish Office on 9653 2312 or
Fr Eugene on 0499 548 521
or Paula on 0423 078 282
for any urgent pastoral needs.

CHILDREN'S MASS

Join us for our Children's Mass on

Sunday, 1st March
at 10:30 am
followed by morning tea for all!

Bring the whole family and celebrate the joy of faith together.

Everyone is welcome!



PROJECT COMPASSION

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.



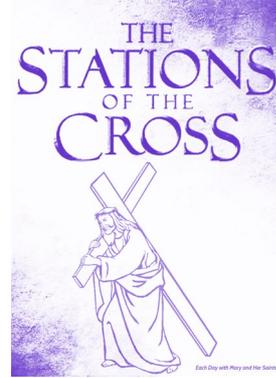
UNITE 
AGAINST
POVERTY
this Lent

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
Or by calling: 1800 024 413

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



During Lent, we invite all parishioners to walk with Jesus on His journey to the Cross.

Every **Wednesday** morning at
9:00am followed by the 9:30am Mass.

Every **Friday** evening at
6:30pm followed by the 7:00pm Mass.

Take this opportunity to reflect, pray, and deepen your Lenten journey with our parish community.

All are welcome to join us!

PIETY SHOP NEWS

Visit Our Parish Piety Shop!

Come and see our small range of "The Beauty of Carmel" products, lovingly made by the Carmelite Nuns of Melbourne.

These beautiful soaps, and lotions are carefully handcrafted within the monastery, reflecting the Carmelite spirit of prayer, simplicity, and devotion.

Your purchase not only brings home a thoughtful and unique gift, but also supports the contemplative life and mission of the Carmelite sisters who faithfully pray for the needs of the Church and the world.

Visit the piety shop to explore the range available.

HEALING MASS

Healing Mass is held on the first Thursday of each month at 9.30am.

Next Mass: Thursday 5th March.



In Our Parish

(please let us know if you would like someone added here)

We welcome into God's family all who were recently baptised.

We pray for the sick of our Parish, especially:

Fr Bernard, Kath Moran, Vincent Bacha, Brother Mario, and Father Alberic.

We remember in our prayers all our dearly beloved who have died:

Robert Wallace, Maria Pappalardo, Shannon Murray, Pellegrino Vaccarella, Najm Azzi, Carmel Russo, Margaret McKinley, Joe Guiana ~ May they rest in Peace.



LENTEN GROUPS

Join us this Lent for our **parish Lenten groups**, a time to grow in faith, reflect on Scripture, and prepare our hearts for Easter. These small groups offer a supportive environment to share, pray, and deepen your relationship with God during this holy season.

Locations and Times:

**WEDNESDAYS
FROM 25TH FEBRUARY 2026**

**St Benedict's Parish Meeting Room – 1:00pm
led by Miriam Brown**

**Benigna Cascun's Place – 7:00pm
led by Gebran Azzi**

Additional Resources:

Lenten books are available at the entrances of the church for your personal reflection, helping you journey through Lent even if you cannot attend the group sessions.

CATECHISTS' NEWS

All SRE/Scripture classes have now resumed. Many of our lessons this week focussed on Ash Wednesday and what can we do through Lent.

Please continue to keep our Catechists, and the students they teach, in your prayers.

If you are interested in learning more about being a Catechist or helper (training is provided), please contact myself or Paula at the parish office or any of our priests.

God bless,
Miriam Brown srearcadia@gmail.com
Parish Catechist Co-ordinator



LITURGICAL FORMATION SERIES 1 The Art of Celebrating Holy Week

Members of Parish **Liturgy Committees, Acolytes, Ministers at the Altar, Senior Servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion** are warmly invited to attend this day seminar which will focus on the different Holy Week – Easter Triduum liturgies; Palm Sunday, Mass of the Lord's Supper, Good Friday, Holy Saturday & Easter Sunday.

Date: Saturday, 14 March 2026
Time: 9:30am – 3:00pm

Venue: Caroline Chisholm Centre, Pennant Hills
information: mission@bbcatholic.org.au

Morning tea and lunch provided

ST BENEDICT'S KIDS YOUTH GROUP

Join the fun! Ages 8–12 years
Our **Kids Youth Group** is back on **Fridays!**

A wonderful opportunity for children to **grow in faith, make friends, and enjoy fun activities** in a safe and welcoming environment. A big **thank you to Gabe & Jules for helping make this possible!**
Come along and be part of the fun!



OPEN DAY 2026

The St Edmund's College 2026 Open Day will be held on Tuesday 10 March from 9.30am - 12pm.

We warmly invite you to come along and enjoy a tour of our state-of-the-art Year 5-12 campus and facilities. We provide, for Year 5 and Year 6 students, an opportunity to access a high-quality transition program within a special needs educational context. For Year 7-12 students, our high school model provides our students with the delivery of a NESA Life Skills curriculum within a unique and innovative educational environment offering a range of experiences that include VET courses, work experience and transition to post-school opportunities.

Morning tea will be provided, as well as information sessions facilitated by members of our Leadership Team and Allied Health Team. We look forward to welcoming you.

Please register at www.stedmunds.nsw.edu.au/open-day

🌐 www.stedmunds.nsw.edu.au
✉ reilly@stedmunds.nsw.edu.au
📍 60 Burns Road, Wahroonga
☎ 02 9487 1044



ITALIAN ROSARY GROUP

Every **Monday 2.00pm.**
Everyone welcome.

For more details call

Angela Egiziano on 9652 1358.



CCC PRAYER GROUP



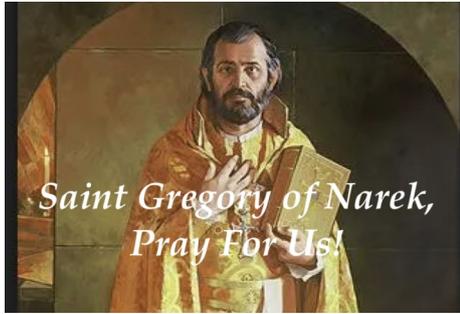
Prayer meeting held every **Wednesday morning:**
after 9.30am Mass.
Come and meet new people and have a cuppa!

For more details call
Mary Camilleri on 0403 116 987.

CRAFT GROUP

The quilting and craft group will meet every **4th Tuesday** of the month at 10.30am in the parish meeting room.

Bring your craft and come and join us!



SAINTS OF THE WEEK

Saint Gregory of Narek

Abbot & Doctor of the Church

Feast Day: February 27

c. 951 - 1003

Widely venerated in the Armenian Church

Declared a Doctor of the Church in 2015 and inscribed on the Church Calendar as an Optional Memorial by Pope Francis in 2021

Quote:

Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart. The voice of a sighing heart, its sobs and mournful cries, I offer up to you, O Seer of Secrets, placing the fruits of my wavering mind as a savory sacrifice on the fire of my grieving soul to be delivered to you in the censer of my will. ~From Prayer One, Book of Narek, by Saint Gregory

Evangelized by the Apostles Saint Jude Thaddeus and Saint Bartholomew, Armenia became—in 301—the first kingdom to make Christianity its official religion. The Church thrived in Armenia, but in 451, the Armenian Church separated from the Church of Rome over disagreements on doctrine from the Council of Chalcedon. The Armenian Church remained an apostolic Church, its Sacraments and life of prayer continued, but the division remained. Attempts at reunification have intensified in recent decades, and the honouring of Saint Gregory of Narek is the Roman Church's most recent attempt to more fully unite with the Eastern Church of Armenia.

Gregory was born in 951, near Lake Van in modern-day Turkey. His mother died when he was young, leading to his deep devotion to our Blessed Mother. His father was the ruling prince of the Andzevatsiq province and an Armenian bishop and scholar whose support of some of the teachings of the Council of Chalcedon led to his excommunication from the Armenian Church.

After their mother's death, Gregory and his older brother were sent to live at the Monastery of Narek. At about the age of twenty-six, Gregory was ordained a priest for the monastery and remained there for the rest of his life, teaching theology in the monastery's school.

Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, Gregory wrote a commentary on the Song of Songs. He also wrote commentary on the Book of Job, and numerous chants, homilies, and speeches that sang the praises of holy men. Toward the end of his life, he wrote his most famous work, *The Book of Lamentations*, or, as it is commonly known today, *The Book of Narek*.

Gregory's father taught him to remain in continuous dialogue with God, ever attentive to His divine presence. *The Book of Narek* is a compilation of ninety-five prayers that flow from that dialogue. Each begins with the phrase, "Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart." The prayers express a troubled—even tormented—soul's deepest love of God. The torment is not despair, but an interior expression of hope from a soul in touch with its fallen humanity and sin, while also keenly aware of God's mercy. His prayers reflect the psalms and are similar to Saint Augustine's *Confessions*. Saint Gregory states that these prayers were written "by the finger of God" (*Prayer 34*) and that he saw God, as he says, "with my own eyes" (*Prayer 27f*).

In the centuries after Gregory's death, Armenia suffered greatly under foreign domination, culminating in the Armenian genocide when the Turks murdered an estimated 1–1.8 million Armenians in 1915-16. During their suffering, the Armenian people relied on Saint Gregory's book of prayers. When Pope Francis declared Saint Gregory a Doctor of the Church, the book of prayers became accessible to the whole world. Let us conclude with the ending of Gregory's final prayer.

Prepare the earth for the day of light and let the soil bloom and bring forth fruit, heavenly cup of life-giving blood, ever sacrificed, never running dry all for the salvation and life of the souls in eternal rest. And though my body die in sin, with Your grace and compassion, may I be strengthened in You, cleansed of sin through You, and renewed by You with life everlasting, and at the resurrection of the righteous be deemed worthy of Your Father's blessing. To Him together with You, all glory, and with the Holy Spirit, praise and resounding thanks, now, always and forever, Amen.

St Benedict's Country Fete

Sunday 22 March 2026

**10am
to 3pm**

2 FAGANS ROAD ARCADIA PH: 9653 2312

**Fruit & Veggie Stall • Chocolate Wheel • Raffle
Dev Tea • BBQ • Gifts • Coffee • Cakes • Lolly Stall
Hot Dogs • Pop Corn • Gelato • Face Painting
Flowers • Crafts • Plants • Rides & lots more...**

FETE NEWS – GET INVOLVED!

Our Parish Fete is coming, and we need YOU to make it a success!

- **Raffle Tickets:** Available now – grab some to sell and help us spread the word!
- **Donations Needed:** **Flowers** to bring in on the day, cakes for the stalls, and **new gifts** for the gift stand. **Big prizes** are especially **needed** for the chocolate wheel.
- **Businesses Welcome:** Own a business? Donate to the chocolate wheel or hold a stall – contact **Tania on 0401 597 278**

Every contribution counts and helps create a fun, memorable day for our whole parish community. Let's make this Fete the best yet!

Next FETE Meeting:

Tuesday, 3rd March, 7:00 pm – come along and join the excitement!



Profession Anniversaries

Fr David

13 February 1967 – 59 yrs

Fr Bernard

22 February 1969 – 57 yrs

Fr Michael

27 February – 61 yrs

Congratulations!

Celebrating your holy Profession, we give thanks for your lifelong dedication, faith, and service to God and the Church.

Your steadfast commitment is an inspiration to us all.

May God continue to bless you all with health, joy, and peace in your ministry.

God bless you all!

PROFESSION ANNIVERSARY

Parish Roster

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
MORNING TEA AFTER THE 9AM MASS

NEXT WEEKEND'S ROSTER
28/2/2026 to 1/3/2026
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A

	SATURDAY 7.00pm	SUNDAY 9.00am	SUNDAY 10.30am
Acolyte		Nigel M	George A
Reader1	Margaret B	Thomas T	CHILDREN'S
Reader2	Sr Carol T	Judy H	CHILDREN'S
Prayers	Miriam B	Lorraine D	CHILDREN'S
TV		Jules O	Jutrisa family
EMHC 		Pam G	Lorna B
EMHC 		Jessie G	Robin B
Music		Melanie H	Melanie H
Music		Theresa N	Fogarty Family
Music		Marisa Q	
Music			
Morning Tea		Sophie R	Robin B
FLOWERS	No flowers	during lent	

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and their enduring connection to country, waters, and culture.
We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging.

Above all we give thanks to **God our Father**, who blesses this land, its people, and all creation. May we live in harmony, justice, and peace, guided by His love.

SAFEGUARDING MISSION STATEMENT

St Benedict's Parish is committed to the safety of all, especially children and vulnerable people.
Concerns? Contact Fr Shansana 0437 884 233, or the Office for Safeguarding 8379 1605.

For all parish **OH&S and Safeguarding Children** matters Contact: Lorraine Dailey on 0416 081 882.

MONASTERY CHAPEL

Liturgy of the Hours

"Seven times a day I will praise you"

Psalm 119:164

The liturgy of the hours is a set of prayers (psalms, hymns, readings and other prayers). It is recited in the Monastery Chapel daily at the following times:

5.45am Office of Readings
6.30am Morning prayer - Lauds
12.45pm Midday prayer
6.00pm Evening prayer - Vespers
8.00pm Night prayer - Compline
ALL are welcome to attend any time.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM UPDATE



NEXT NEW SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM ENROLMENTS - mid year

For any queries please email the parish office:
arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au

For our current Sacramental Program—the children who were confirmed and enrolled last year—we begin Reconciliation classes:

Wednesday 4th MARCH
and Friday 6th MARCH.

Please keep these children, their families, and their teachers in your prayers as they take this important step in their faith journey. May they experience God's love, forgiveness, and joy as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

DID YOU KNOW...



The Pope's shoes are traditionally red to symbolise the blood of Christ and the martyrs.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays & Fridays: 9.00am to 2.00pm
Fr Eugene: 0499 548 521

Parish Office: 02 9653 2312
Address: 2 Fagans Road, Arcadia 2159
Email: arcadia.parish@bbcatholic.org.au
Website: www.bbcatholic.org.au/arcadia

Parish Priest: Fr Shansana Samarasinghe OSB
Email: sanshanasamarasinghe@yahoo.com
After hours: 0437 884 233

Facebook: stbenedictsarcadia



MONASTERY: 02 9653 1159
121 Arcadia Rd, Arcadia 2159

PARISH BANK DETAILS for ONLINE only donations:
BSB: 062 784 **Account:** 100002141
Account Name: Catholic Parish of Arcadia Bank:
CBA—Catholic Development Fund

Support our parish!
Scan this QR code to make a donation.

