



Malvern, Malvern East and Glen Iris Family of Parishes

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17th July 2026

Dear Malvern, Malvern East & Glen Iris Parishioners,

Re: Sunday Mass Times

As you are well aware, we are now a one-priest family of parishes, and have been relying on 'supply priests' in order to fulfill our weekend Mass timetable. These priests have been very generous in assisting us at short-notice. However, it is not sustainable to rely on supply priests for much longer. They all have other work to which they are committed. It also takes quite some time seeking supplies and coordinating the set-up of Masses and opening of churches each week, and at the beginning of each week we still sometimes have to consider cancelling a Mass on the weekend.

Given that we will not be receiving another Assistant Priest in our parishes for at least the next 18 months, we need to adjust the weekend Mass timetable to make it sustainable for one priest. Our May Mass Count numbers show that it is possible for all those attending to be accommodated within four Vigil/Sunday Masses.

		<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Sat Vigil 5:00pm	Holy Eucharist	111	127	119
Sun 8:30am	St Mary's	89	95	109
9:30am	St Roch's	205	209	227
10:30am	St Joseph's	176	184	184
5:00pm	St Roch's	165	191	174
Total:		746	806	813

Not only is it possible for us to accommodate all our parishioners within four Masses, it is also good for us. It is good for parishioners to be in a full, vibrant church for every Mass. It is good for our volunteers to be stretched over fewer Masses. It is good for people to see their Parish Priest every Sunday. The Parish Priest can only say 3 Masses on a Sunday, and two on a Saturday. It seems reasonable that each church should have one Vigil/Sunday Mass, which means that St Roch's will have to lose a Mass.

With all these points in consideration, the Parish Pastoral Council considered seven different arrangements of our four Vigil/Sunday Masses. We know it is not possible to please every parishioner, but the council debated every possible way in which we could minimise the disruption for as many parishioners as possible. The option that was finally recommended by the Parish Council is as follows:

Sat	5:00pm	Holy Eucharist
Sun	9:00am	St Roch's
	11:00am	St Joseph's
	5:00pm	St Mary's

We will begin this new Mass timetable on 8th August 2026.

I acknowledge the loss of the Sunday evening Mass at St Roch's. It has been well-attended and served by a dedicated band of volunteers. It is our third-biggest of the five Masses, but for the aforementioned reasons cannot continue. I acknowledge also the faithful crowd at St Mary's each Sunday morning, especially those who have made the morning cuppa a success. I hope that spirit and practice will be transferred to the evening Mass at St Mary's.

If our people from each of these Masses now come together at St Mary's on a Sunday evening, we will have the opportunity to develop a thriving gathering of our parish community. The fortnightly Neri Youth gathering will then occur at St Mary's after the evening Mass, which will also bring life to that Mass.

While changes to our routines are always difficult, there is great opportunity in these changes. As your shepherd, I look forward to seeing all of you each weekend, rather than only fortnightly. I look forward to the concentration of our people, especially our volunteers, that will breathe new life into our Masses.

We have experienced much change in our parishes in the last four years. While the changes can make us feel as though things are falling down around us, coming together has in fact already presented us with opportunities. We have enjoyed meeting people from other parishes and shared our own gifts with them.

Our overall Mass attendance has grown each year since we came together as a family, even with fewer Masses. We have a fortnightly youth group meeting on a Sunday night, averaging attendance in the mid-30s from across our three parishes. Last Easter 18 adults chose to become Catholics in our parishes. They were drawn to the vibrant community in each of our four churches.

The original four parishes that make up our family of parishes were built on the blood, sweat and prayers of thousands of parishioners over more than a century. We stand on their shoulders today as we continue to come together to form one strong community spread across four churches.

Your Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Fr Michael Gallacher JCL PP

St Philip Neri, pray for us.