# THE SAVING WORD

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A 1 FEBRUARY 2026

## FIRST READING Zeph 2: 3; 3: 12-13

**A reading from the prophet Zephaniah**

*In your midst I will leave a humble and a lowly people.*

Seek the Lord
all you, the humble of the earth,
who obey his commands.
Seek integrity, seek humility:
you may perhaps find shelter
on the day of the anger of the Lord.
In your midst I will leave
a humble and lowly people,
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge
in the name of the Lord.
They will do no wrong,
will tell no lies;
and the perjured tongue will no longer
be found in their mouths.
But they will be able to graze and rest
with no one to disturb them.

**The word of the Lord.**

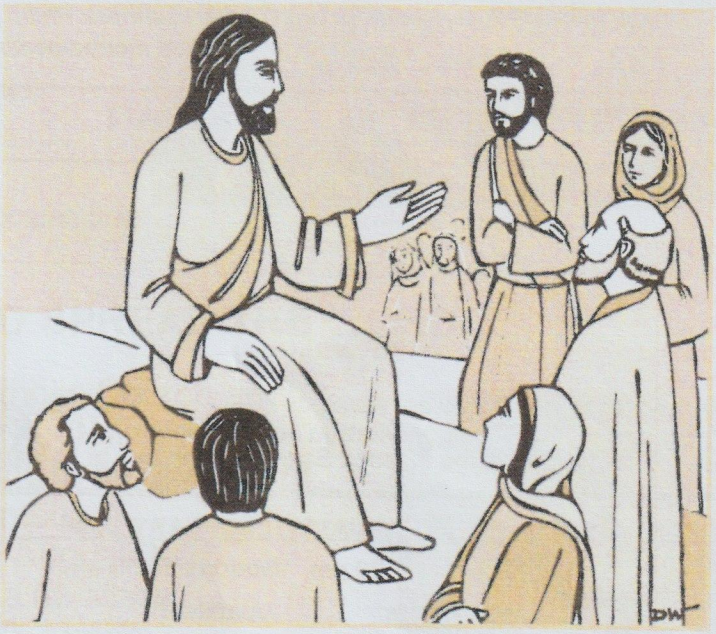
## RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 145: 7-10

**R. Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!** (*or* **Alleluia!**)

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, / who is just to those who are oppressed. / It is he who gives bread to the hungry, / the Lord, who sets prisoners free. R.

2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, / who raises up those who are bowed down, / the Lord, who protects the stranger / and upholds the widow and orphan. R.

3. It is the Lord who loves the just / but thwarts the path of the wicked. / The Lord will reign for ever, / Zion's God, from age to age. R.



## SECOND READING 1 Cor 1: 26-31

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

*God has chosen what is weak by human reckoning.*

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

**The word of the Lord.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Mt 5: 12

**Alleluia, alleluia!**
**Rejoice and be glad:**
**your reward will be great in heaven.**
**Alleluia!**

# *The Parishes Of St Mary's Merredin and St Joseph's Kellerberrin*

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**FOURTH SUNDAY IN OT** **A/2** **1 FEBRUARY 2026**

**Merredin celebrations during the week:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Monday:** | **No Mass** |
| **Tuesday:** | **No Mass** |
| **Wednesday:** | **9.00 am Mass** |
| **Thursday:** | **9.00 am Mass** |
| **Friday:** | **9.00 am Mass** |
| **Saturday:** | **6.30pm** |
| **Sunday:** | **10.30am** |

**Kellerberrin: Sunday 8:00 am Mass**

**Sat. Holy Half Hour-Rosary**
**6:00 to 6:30 pm**

***Reconciliation : 6pm Saturday***

****Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick available on request****

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Friday at St Mary's Church, Merredin from 2.30pm to 3.30pm.

| **CHURCH ROSTER:** | **31 JANUARY/1FEBRUARY 2026** | | **7/8 FEBRUARY 2026** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Saturday 6.30 pm** | **Sunday 10.30 am** | **Saturday 6:30 pm** | **Sunday 10:30 am** |
| Readers: | Volunteer | Volunteer | Volunteer | Volunteer |
| Collection: | Volunteers | Volunteers | Volunteers | Volunteers |
| Offertory: | | | | |
| Church Cleaners: | | | | |
| Sacristy | Volunteers | Volunteers | Volunteers | Volunteers |
| Altar Servers: | | | | |

## A Miracle at Hiroshima, Japan

On August 6, 1945, the first nuclear bomb ever used was detonated over Hiroshima, Japan, killing 140,000 people. Everything within a mile of the blast was annihilated with nothing left standing, no survivors. Yet, just eight blocks from ground zero (to be exact, 1 kilometer or 6/10 of a mile) there was a two-story house left standing intact with no damage to it, not even the windows were broken. When inquiry was made as to what was different about the building it was discovered that there was a community of eight Jesuit priests living there who said the Rosary each day.

Fr. Hubert Schiffer, who headed the community, was virtually untouched by the nuclear blast with no radiation found in his body, and he publicly testified to this miracle at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia in 1976. In an interview with Fr. Paul Ruge, he describes the horrific nightmare of August 6, 1945: "Suddenly, a terrific explosion filled the air with one bursting thunder stroke. An invisible force lifted me from the chair, hurled me through the air, shook me, battered me, whirled me 'round and round' like a leaf in a gust of autumn wind."

Fr. Ruge relates that the next thing he [Fr. Schiffer] remembered was that he opened his eyes and found himself laying on the ground. He looked around and there was NOTHING in any direction: the railroad station and buildings in all directions were levelled to the ground. The only physical harm to himself was that he could feel a few pieces of glass in the back of his neck. As far as he could tell, there was nothing else physically wrong with himself.

Shortly thereafter, Fr. Schiffer was told by medical authorities that he would eventually die of cancer because of all the radiation exposure, yet he lived another 30 years in full health with no cancer or effects from the radiation. The same is said of the other seven survivors of the priestly community. Aside from some slight surface abrasions or scratches, they all lived out their days in full health with no cancer or side effects from radiation. (cont next page)

**RECONCILIATION:** Saturday 6:00pm – 6:20 pm
or on request prior to Sunday mass
**Saturday - 6:00pm Angelus then the Rosary**

# PARISH NOTICES

**Feast days for the week**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mon | 2 | The Presentation of the Lord |
| Tue | 3 | St Oscar, St Blaise, St Laurence of Canterbury, St Dunstan of Canterbury, St Theodore of Canterbury, St Werburg, St Anne Line |
| Wed | 4 | St Gilbert of Sempringham, St John de Britto, St Catherine de Ricci OP |
| Thu | 5 | St Agatha |
| Fri | 6 | St Paul Miki and his Companions, SS Gonsalo Garcia, Peter Baptista and Companions |
| Sat | 8 | St Mel |

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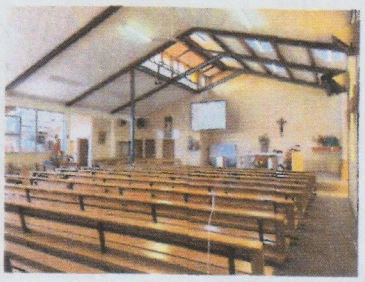
## SAVE THE DATE AND SPREAD THE WORD

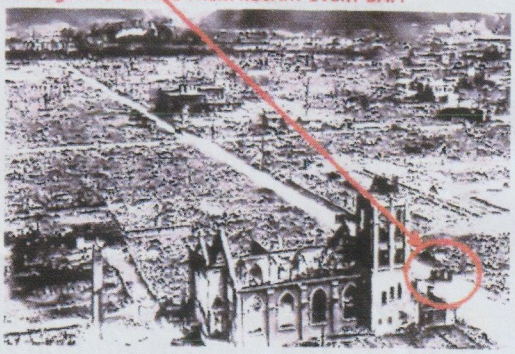
St Mary's Catholic Church and
St Mary's School
will be combining to celebrate our
Centenary
Sunday 2 August 2026
10.00 a.m. Mass
12.00 Lunch
More details to come



## A Miracle at Hiroshima, Japan (cont)

According to Dr. Stephen Rinehart, a nuclear physicist with the U.S. Department of Defense who had studied this phenomenon intently, they should have been dead in a flash. In his commentary on the Hiroshima blast, he states: "Their residence should still have been utterly destroyed (temp; 2000 F and air blast pressures; 100 psi)…….a human will experience severe lung and heart damage, burst eardrums; and your limbs can be blown off……..All the cotton clothes would be on fire at 350 F (probably at 275 F) and your lungs would be inoperative within a minute breathing air (even for a few seconds) at these temperatures…….. All who were at this range from the epicenter should have received enough radiation to be dead within at most a matter of minutes if nothing else happened to them……."From a scientific viewpoint, what happened to those Jesuits at Hiroshima still defies all human logic from the laws of physics as understood today (or at any time in the future). It must be concluded that some other (external) force was present whose power and/or capability to transform energy and matter as it relates to humans is beyond current comprehension."

*The Jesuits at Hiroshima, less than a mile from ground zero of the atomic bomb, not only survived, but never got radiation poisoning! Why? Because they were living out the Fatima message AND SAYING THEIR ROSARY EVERY DAY!*



**The Only Possible Explanation**

**The Rosary Miracle** that occurred at Hiroshima is well known and well documented and has been published in various journals since the war, and can be read today on several websites. Yet, to date no one has ever been able to offer a scientific explanation for this phenomenon. The best they can do is hold their peace and remain bamboozled. There is one exception though. There are those of rational thought (e.g., Dr. Rinehart) who recognize the hand of God in this. This miracle was intended as a lesson for the world……

**"We believe that we survived because we were living the Message of Fatima.** We lived and prayed the Rosary daily in that home." – the Jesuit priests

## GOSPEL

Mt 5:1-12

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.**

*Happy are the poor in spirit.*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.
Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.
Happy those who hunger and thirst for
what is right:
they shall be satisfied.
Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.
Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.
Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.
Happy those who are persecuted in the
cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL**

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# Breaking Open the Word

### TRUE BLESSEDNESS

What is discipleship about? This becomes the focus of Matthew's Gospel over the next few Sundays as we turn to Jesus' first major moment of teaching, what we know as the 'Sermon on the Mount'. Jesus, like Moses in the Old Testament, gathers with his disciples on a mountain. They surround him and listen to his teaching. He teaches them about blessedness in eight 'Beatitudes'. Each Beatitude begins with 'Blessed are those...' and then names those who are blessed by God.

Some translations unhelpfully have '*Happy* are those...' There is a theological distinction between being 'blessed' and 'happy'. Being happy relies on one's self-referential internal disposition. The focus of 'blessedness' is different. It is God. The Greek (*makrios*) is about God's action to those who are without status ('poor in spirit'), know their own humble status ('gentle'), seek comfort amidst life's sadness ('mourn'), are passionate for justice ('hunger and thirst for what is right'), show compassion to others ('merciful'), are thoughtfully genuine and authentic ('pure of heart'), seek to bring about peace where there is division ('peacemakers') and who suffer for their conviction to act justly with integrity ('persecuted in the cause of right').

Those named as blessed have an ultimate openness to God in all life's experiences. God will respond to them, will bless them and will allow the Kingdom (rather 'Kin-dom') to be revealed in them. The Beatitudes are framed with the promise, 'the kin-dom of God is theirs'. A final Beatitude is tacked on to the original eight. It acknowledges the suffering and persecution now experienced by Matthew's community. A lingering contemplation of any of these Beatitudes can remind us how much we are blessed by God now.

**Fr Michael Trainor**