

# NAZARETH PARISH

43 Surfcoast Highway  
TORQUAY VICTORIA 3218

March 2024

Stretching 30km across the suburb of Grovedale and coastal towns of Anglesea and Torquay, Nazareth Parish is located just approximately 95km southwest of Melbourne. It is home to some of the most beautiful beaches and surfing locations as well as exquisite walking tracks. With the recent population growths, the new suburb of Armstrong Creek to the south of Grovedale has been added to the Parish.

A snapshot of the Parish based on the 2021 Australian Census made available by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference shows:

Catholic population	13,717 (20% of the total population)
Total Catholic families	5,525
Catholics born overseas	2,177
Median age of Catholics	39 years

Average weekend Mass attendance (based on Parish Mass Count in May 2023) is 447.

The Parish Office and Presbytery are both in Torquay but in separate locations. The nearly four-year-old Presbytery is in a well-appointed location within the neighborhood and is a short distance from the Office and St Therese Church.

Parish staff consists of a Parish Secretary who works 25 hours (Tuesday – Friday), and a Finance Officer who works 15 hours (Tuesday – Wednesday). There is a financial provision for recruiting a Sacramental and Liturgical Coordinator.

Typical weekend Masses are:

6.00pm	St Christopher's Church, Anglesea
8.45am	St Therese Church, Torquay
10.30am	Nazareth Church, Grovedale

Also, on every third Sunday of the month a Parish Mass is celebrated in Armstrong Creek. This additional Mass began in 2024.

Being seaside towns, Mass at Anglesea and Torquay are often well attended by visitors and holiday makers during the summer holidays and long weekends throughout the year. There is a clear sense of warmth and welcome from parishioners across the Parish.

There are four Primary Schools, providing Catholic education for just under 1,300 students in the Parish: Nazareth, Grovedale (established 1979); St Therese, Torquay (est. 1985); Lisieux, Torquay North (est. 2018); St Catherine of Siena, Armstrong Creek (est. 2020). A fifth school, Mary Glowrey, Mt Duneed, is currently being planned by MACS and is due to open in 2026.

The newest local Catholic Secondary School in Geelong, Iona College (est. 2020), is also in the Parish, where a monthly Parish Mass is celebrated.

Statistics for other Sacraments, including funerals, for 2023 indicate:

Baptism – 277

First Eucharist – 166

Confirmation – 119

Weddings – 1

Funerals – 12

The Parish has been blessed with a good number of volunteers, including 148 parishioners participating in 37 different Parish groups and ministries. Each in its unique way contributes to the wellbeing and vibrancy of the Parish. Whilst most volunteers support the needs in their local church communities, key groups, such as Finance, Liturgy, Safeguarding, Advisory (to the Parish Priest), and Leadership, are parish wide.

A charter for the Leadership Team including the overall objectives and limitations has been created from which the Parish Leadership Team operates.

The Parish and Schools work together on an outreach project where money raised goes toward supporting an educational program overseas. This shared project is 10-year-old this year.

Active parishioners are very encouraging and supportive of the Parish Priest. They are the real asset of the Parish. Whilst it is essential to nurture the faith commitment and positive life-giving relationship of active parishioners, schools and young families in the growth areas provide a fertile ground for mission. Some of the opportunities include:

- Strengthening the relationship with the schools and school families.
- Reaching out to Catholic families in the newly developed area of Armstrong Creek.
- Working toward renaming the Parish to better reflect the presence of new communities within the Parish.
- Establishing a more permanent Pastoral and Admin Centre for the Parish.

If it is helpful in any way, the Parish Priest would be delighted to discuss further in confidence with any priest interested in the vacancy.