



St Anthony's Parish



St Bernard's Parish

67-75 EXFORD ROAD, MELTON SOUTH, 3338.
P.O BOX 2152 MELTON SOUTH 3338
TEL: 9747 9692

61 LERDERBERG STREET, BACCHUS MARSH 3340
TEL: 5367 2069
OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, KOROBET
309 MYRNIONG-KOROBET ROAD 3341

6th Sunday In Ordinary Time-Year B

14th February 2021

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith
ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint /Father Marcus Goulding

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Parish Office Hours:
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9.00am-4.00pm
Tuesday 9.00am-1.00pm Thursday 9.00am-5.30pm
Email: meltonsouth@cam.org.au
Website: www.stanthonyofpadua.com.au
St Anthony's School Principal: Damien Schuster
Wilson Road, Melton South 3338
Phone: 8099 7800
Email: principal@sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au

ST BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper: Naim Chdid
Parish Office Hours:
Tuesday-Friday 9.00am-1.00pm
Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au
St Bernard's School Principal: Emilio Scalzo
19a Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340
Phone: (03) 5366 5800
Email: principal@sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)
Principal: Marlene Jorgensen **Phone:** 8099 6000
Website: www.crcmelton.com.au

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Sue Alexander	0400 171 843
Lillian Christian - Vice Chair	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	03 9747 0078
Natalie Howard - Chair	0492 947 201
Rose Ma'ae	0431 386 473
Sally Markulin	0405 814 490

EX-OFFICIO:
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Marcus Goulding
and Damien Schuster Council Secretary: Judy Johnson

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Shane Cook -School Advisory Board	0419 999 052
Peter Farren	0418 594 501
Moir Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell - Chair	0401 927 502

EX-OFFICIO:
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Marcus Goulding
and Emilio Scalzo

CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS

Coordinator: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449)

Officers: Karina Dunne & Lorraine Tellis

PARISHIONER'S FIRST COLLECTION/SECOND COLLECTION

Parishioners who normally give cash each weekend for the collections, if they wish to donate, are now able to go to the link below and make their payments online.

The link to the St Anthony's Parish is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMeltonSouth>

The link to the St Bernard's Parish is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayBacchusMarsh>

Please put your name and thanksgiving number if you know it as a reference.

If you need a Priest in the case of an emergency please call 0403 435 471

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S 15/2-21/2 MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 15th Feb: 6.30pm

Tuesday 16th Feb: 9.15am & 6.30pm

Wednesday 17th Feb: ASH WEDNESDAY
7.30am & 9.15am & 7.30pm

Thursday 18th Feb: 9.15am

Friday 19th Feb: 7.30am & 9.15am

Holy Hour will be held each Tuesday evening at 5.30pm

Saturday Vigil 20th Feb: 5.00pm

Sunday 21st Feb: 8.30am

10.30am

5.00pm

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

ST BERNARD'S 15/2-21/2 BACCHUSMARSH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 15th Feb: No Mass

Tuesday 16th Feb: 7.30am

Wednesday 17th Feb: ASH WEDNESDAY
9.30am & 7.30pm

Thursday 18th Feb: 7.30am

Friday 19th Feb: 9.30am
Senior's Mass 10.45am

Saturday 20th Feb: (EF Latin 1962) 9.00am

Holy Hour will be held each Tuesday evening at 7.30pm.

Saturday Vigil 20th Feb: 5.00pm

Sunday 21st Feb: 8.30am

10.00am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

PROVIDENCE MASS will be held on Wednesday 17/2 at
11.30am The Village 5-7 Griffith St, Maddingley.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK Anointing of the sick can be organised with the Priests directly, please call them.

Father Fabian 0403 435 471

Fr Lucas 0478 768 141 /Fr Marcus 0468 367 893

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

MASS TIME

Saturday Vigil: 6.30pm

LEARN ABOUT THE LATIN MASS

10am – 11am Saturdays during February @ St Bernard's Parish Hall, Bacchus Marsh

Preceded by Latin Mass at 9am in St Bernard's Church.

Over the last decade, there has been a great renewal in appreciation for the pre-Conciliar form of the Sacred Liturgy, often termed the 'Extraordinary Form' or 'Latin Mass'. To help you familiarise with this beautiful and ancient form of the Church's worship, Fr Marcus is offering four catechetical presentations during February.

Session 1 | 6th Feb 2020 – The Structure of the Mass

Session 2 | 13th Feb 2020 – The Postures and Responses

Session 3 | 20th Feb 2020 – History & Theology of the Mass

Session 4 | 27th Feb 2020 – Testimonies

THE NEED IS ACUTE!

Low-income communities are not asking us for money or gifts. They reject degrading dependence. They want you to share your skills to help develop self-reliance and sustainable solutions to poverty. The call is to all trades and professions to assist build the ability of their people and the capacity of their organisations. To properly prepare for a 2022 placement you do need to [enquire now](#).

Find out more: **Ross House, Mezzanine-Sue Healy Room**, 247 Flinders Lane, MELBOURNE
Saturday 20 February @ 10:00am palms.org.au



Palms Australia
Reach Beyond

PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

ST BERNARD'S

ASH WEDNESDAY– 17th FEBRUARY

St Anthony's Ash Wednesday Masses: 7.30am 9.15am & 7.30pm

St Bernard's Ash Wednesday Masses: 9.30am & 7.30pm

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK Volunteers could you please check if your WWCC is still current, If you need any assistance please contact Lesley 9747 9692 (St Anthony's) or Dolores 5367 2069 (St Bernard's).

THE STRENGTH OF VIRTUE – RETREAT DAY – SATURDAY 27th MARCH

What does it mean to be a virtuous woman? How do we acquire the virtues in a stable way, to live out our vocation as one made in the Image and Likeness of God? How does the practice of virtue rehabilitate us to our true selves and free us to act in accord with the teachings of Christ?

Join Father Paul Rowse, O.P., Anna Krohn, and the Dominican Sisters for a day of reflection on what it means to be a woman of strength, a woman of virtue. 9:30am– 4.00pm, St Bernard Parish Hall. Lunch is provided. Babies are welcome.

LENTEN WEEKLY FAITH FORMATION

This Lent St Anthony's is hosting a weekly faith formation series looking at St Joseph: Model of the Spiritual Life. The series will be run by *Sapientia*, a group of theologians from Melbourne. Each night will consist of a talk, a period of discussion, and hospitality. Come along to hear about and discuss the litany of St Joseph and his titles of Promotor of Social Justice, Model of Virtue, Protector of Christ, and Son of David. Mondays 22 Feb, 1, 15, 22 Mar, 7pm in the Meeting Room ALL WELCOME Register at <https://tinyurl.com/meltonsouth>. Flyers available in Church foyer. Please put your name down on the Expression of Interest Clipboard. Thank you.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES

The Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting (26th Nov 2020) Are on display and available for collection in the Church Foyer.

MOVIE NIGHT RETURNS

Our Movie Nights are back! We will have a Movie Night on the 4th Sunday of the Month. Our next date is 28th February at 6.30pm. BYO snacks. Movie Title: To Be Confirmed.

CUPPA

Our cuppa weekends will be on the 4th Weekend of the month. Our next cuppa weekend will be held on the 27th & 28th February, after the Saturday Vigil and Sunday 8.30am & 10.30am Masses. It will be great to be able to catch up with our fellow Parishioners in our new gathering space.

BINGO

St Anthony's Bingo has recommenced. Start time: 7.00pm Finish time 9.45pm. We have 3 sessions per evening with a cost of \$9.00 a set (45 games). Come and have a great social evening with your fellow parishioners and friends. Coffee and tea provided and canteen services available.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021

The WDP host country for 2021 is Vanuatu. This year the service will take place at St Catherine of Siena Church, Bulman's Rd on **Friday 5th March, at 11am**. All welcome especially women and children. Our parish will be having a leaving collection, at all Masses on the weekend 27-28th Feb, to raise money for the needs of the Women and Children at risk. *I trust you will give generously as you have in previous years in support of our brothers and sisters in Vanuatu. God Bless.* Any queries, contact Marian 0400007286

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Register at <https://tinyurl.com/sapientiacchusmarsh>.

Flyers are available in the Church foyer.

LENTEN REFLECTION

You are invited to share reflections on Sunday Gospels at St Joseph's Convent, 68 Lerderberg St on Thursday mornings 10.30 am beginning 18th February. Bookings essential as early as possible. Phone Sr Mary 5367 2078 or email Mary.fermio@sosj.org.au

SENIORS MASS

A special Seniors Mass will be held on Friday 19th February at **10.45am** in the Parish Centre. All Parishioners are invited to come along to acknowledge and give thanks for the wonderful contribution Elizabeth Lummis has given to 'Our Parish Seniors' over the past 33 years. **Morning tea provided.**

CHOIR FOR ST BERNARD'S SUNDAY 10.00AM MASS

Rehearsals have begun and the choir will begin singing from The First Sunday of Lent.

New members welcome. Next rehearsals:

6.30pm Wednesday 17th February (Church)

9.00am Sunday 21st February (Parish Centre)

7.00pm Wednesday 24th February (Church)

THE JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS

The Josephite Companions, formerly the Josephite Associates, are having their annual Leaders meeting on the 27th February. It will be at the Heritage Centre in East Melbourne. It will begin at 9.30. Chris N. Van Order is attending and although numbers are limited, if anyone from the group would also like to attend then please contact Chris V. O. 0474 090 977. It will be a learning, friendship and prayerful day.

WORSHIP NEWS

ALL VOLUNTEERS IN OUR PARISH MUST HAVE A CURRENT WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 20th & 21st Feb MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm Vigil: Marian Muller
8.30am: John Brewis
10.30am: Karina Dunne
5.00pm: Pat Fernandez

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Ann Tennakoon & Gavin Pereira
8.30am: Lillian Christian & Ineke Allen
10.30am: Elaine Lacey & Richard Tuala
5.00pm: Geoff Sutton & Lorraine Tellis

If you are unavailable for these dates please contact the emergency minister on the roster. Thank you

MASS COORDINATORS

5.00pm Vigil: Carmen & Godwin
8.30am: Natalie & Ron
10.30am: Annonika & Lillian
5.00pm: Leonia & Sally

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for those whose death anniversaries occur at this time:

Tamafnata Sefo Amoa, Gina Barker, Arthur Chiles & Falanou Aukuso Kelsall

Please pray for the Sick:

Martha Baice, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Sabina (Ina) Faux, Chinnamma Joseph, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Damien Michael, Kevin Michael, Tony Michael, Veronica Michael, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Peter Poole, Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Charlie Spiteri, Janko Stojanovic, Clint Abela Wadge, & John Xuereb and all those who have requested our prayers.

(PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED ON THIS LIST)

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Father we lift up all those who are facing illness. We ask that You bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Calm their fears and let them experience the healing power of your love.

Amen



ST BERNARD'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 20th & 21st Feb MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: John Thorne
8.30am: Margaret Love
10.00am: Martin Phillips

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Geraldine Vereker
8.30am: Volunteer needed
10.00am: John Wilson

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Jessica Cato, Telly Agatha Khomar & Marija Magdic

We pray for those whose death anniversaries occur at this time:

Noeline Wadey, Stanley Walsh, and Laurie Wheelahan.

Please pray for the Sick:

Noah Barlow, Chaiel Balcombe, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Tina Bower, John Canty, Fred Capuano, Gary Ching, Josephine Cilia, Robyn Cola, Ted Cooling, Marianne Cuskelly, Lindsay & Kathleen Dally, Judy Delahey, Jack DeLuca, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Adam Hillier, Leonie Kervin, Elle Hillman, Kiahni Holamotutama, Alicia Holborn, Chaiel Jackson, Matthew Jansen, David Kasprzak, Michael Larkin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, Brian Marshall, Debbie Marshall, Jordanis Mary Pauline McDonald, Ian McKechnie, Marcus Meno, Paul Mullin, Arthur Pape, Michael Paterson, Georgia Peacock, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Catherine Time, Susan Trist, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Cath Wheelahan, Jayne Wilkins, Patricia Yazbek, & Betty Young.

(PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED ON THIS LIST)

SERVICE / COMMUNITY

ST ANTHONY'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS: 20th & 21st Feb

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil: Kim Barton
8.30am: Edwina La Rose
10.30am: Volunteer needed
5.00pm: Volunteer needed

CHURCH FLOWERS

February: No Flowers during Lent



CLEANING ROSTER: Thursday

Lorelle Porter

Volunteers would be appreciated as well.

Please contact the Parish Office if you are able to help 9747 9692. Thank you.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330

The Melton South Conference meet every 3rd Tuesday morning in the Holy Family Room 10.30am.

New members most welcome, training provided.

Non perishable items within the use by date can be left in the 'drop box' in the Church foyer.

Thank you.

COMBINED CHURCHES CARING MELTON INC

We're here to support City of Melton residents get ahead through access to our foodbank and other community programs. It's never just about the food or the budget help, it's about recognising the beauty that is in the person and bringing it out so they can be their best.

Address: 100 Coburn Road Melton South 9747 6811

God, strengthen and sustain all those who volunteer in our Churches; that with patience and understanding they may love and care for your people; and grant that together they may follow with Jesus Christ offering to you their gifts and talents.

Amen



ST BERNARD'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS : 20th & 21st Feb

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Sunday: Margot Short

CHURCH FLOWERS

February: No Flowers during Lent



PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-

Front Garden:

Back/Side Garden:

Parish Centre: Roster Pending

Carpark/Pines:

Back Paddock:

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

Welfare Number is 1800 305 330.

The Vinnies Store is located at 8 Grant Street, Bacchus Marsh. The store is open 7 days a week. If you are able to volunteer and would like some more information, please contact the Store Manager on 8199 4205.

THE NEIGHBOURS PLACE

The Neighbours' Place is a Christian not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to serve people of the **Moorabool Shire**, west of Melbourne Australia, who are disadvantaged, at risk or temporarily unable to feed themselves or their family and who are in need of emergency food relief.

NILS is a **No Interest Loans Scheme** for assistance of up \$1500 for things like white goods, furniture and minor car repairs to keep life going.

We are located at [77 Main Street, Bacchus Marsh](#)

Phone: 03 5367 6222

Email: neighbourspl@iinet.net.au

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am-12.30pm. Closed on public holidays.

SOUL FOOD

Soul Food provides a free community meal each Wednesday (excluding school holidays), in the Uniting Church Hall, Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh. Meals are served up at 12noon. All are welcome and this is a free event. No need to book, just come along.

PARISH CENTRE BOOKING

Tel: 5367 3427 Mon—Fri 9.00am to 6.00pm

Hall Managers: Marie & Terry Casey

FAITH FORMATION

ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

BAPTISM PREPARATION PROGRAM– ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

The Baptism Preparation Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Time: **6.30pm-7.45pm.**

Next preparation meeting : **Thursday 25th February**

Location: **St Bernard's Parish Centre**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

Both parents are required to attend these meetings. We kindly request adults only and a copy of the birth certificate.

Please be advised that Baptism applications must be submitted 2 months in advance.

Please contact the Parish Office if you have any queries.

BAPTISM TEAM: Roster Pending



ADULT PREPARATION

Adult preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation are through the R.C.I.A Program. Please see Fr Fabian, Fr Marcus or Fr Lucas .

FATIMA STATUE—ST ANTHONY'S

These families are praying together for the mission of the Parish:



Group 1: **Barry & Rosanna Melder 9743 5063**

Group 2: **Julius Caan Can 0452 411 388**

Group 3: **Santos & Liz Schembri 0466 854 476**

DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

1st Sunday of the Month-3.00pm

PRAYER TO ST MICHAEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



NEO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

[bow during the next line]

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

Be my protector, O God,
a mighty stronghold to save me.
For you are my rock, my stronghold!
Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

FIRST READING Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons.

'The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean." As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart; he must live outside the camp.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 31

Commentator: I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

All: I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Happy the man whose offence is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.

O happy the man to whom the Lord
imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile.

But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.

I said: 'I will confess
my offence to the Lord.'
And you, Lord, have forgiven
the guilt of my sin.

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,
exult, you just!

O come, ring out your joy,
all you upright of heart.

I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 10:31 - 11:1

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone - to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved. Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

A great prophet has appeared among us;
God has visited his people.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

They ate and had their fill,
and what they craved the Lord gave them;
they were not disappointed in what they craved.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT-YEAR B

First Reading: Gen 9:8-15;

Second Reading: 1 Pet 3:18-22;

Gospel: Mk 1:12-15



The Psalms VIII

The prayerbook par excellence

From Pope Benedict XVI's Wednesday catechesis, June 22, 2011 (Part Two of three parts)

The book of the Psalter was given to Israel and to the Church precisely in order that the people of believers might be permitted to unite themselves to this song.

The Psalms, in fact, teach us to pray. In them, the Word of God becomes the word of prayer — and they are the Psalmists' inspired words — which also become the word of the one who prays the Psalms.

This is the beauty and the special nature of this biblical book: Unlike other prayers we find in sacred Scripture, the prayers contained in the Book of Psalms are not inserted into a narrative story which specifies either their meaning or their function. The Psalms are given to the believer precisely as a text of prayer, which has as its one end that of becoming the prayer of the one who takes them up and, with them, addresses himself to God.

Since they are the Word of God, he who prays the Psalms speaks to God with the very words that God has given to us; he addresses Him with the words that He Himself gives us. Thus, in praying the Psalms we learn to pray. They are a school of prayer.

Something analogous happens when a child begins to talk; when he learns, that is, to express his feelings, emotions, and needs with words that do not belong to him naturally, but which he learns from his parents and from those who live around him.

What the child wants to express is his own personal experience, but the means of expression belong to others; and little by little he appropriates them — the words received from his parents become his words, and through those words he also learns a way of thinking and feeling; he enters into a whole world of concepts, and in this world he grows, relates with reality, with men and with God.

By Pope Benedict XVI, discerninghearts.com

At last, the language of his parents becomes his language; he speaks with the words received from others, which by now have become his words.

And so it is with the prayer of the Psalms. They are given to us so that we might learn to address ourselves to God, to communicate with Him, to talk to Him about ourselves with His words, to find language for an encounter with Him. And, through those words, it will also be possible to know and to receive the standards of his way of acting, to approach the mystery of his thoughts and of his ways, so as to grow always more in faith and love.

As our words are not only words, but also teach us about a real and conceptual world, so also these prayers teach us about the heart of God, for which reason are we able not only to speak with God, but also to learn who God is and — in learning how to speak with Him — we learn what is it to be human, to be ourselves.

In this regard, the title given to the Psalter by the Jewish tradition appears significant. It is called *Tehellim*, an Hebraic term that means “songs of praise”, which comes from the root word we find in the expression “Halleluiah” — literally: “praise the Lord”.

Thus, even though this prayerbook is so multifaceted and complex — with its various literary genres and with its connection between praise and petition — it is ultimately a book of praise, that teaches us to give thanks, to celebrate the greatness of the gift of God, to acknowledge the beauty of His words and to glorify His holy Name.

This is the most fitting response before God's self-revelation, and the experience of His goodness. By teaching us to pray, the Psalms teach us that, even in the midst of desolation, in suffering, God's presence remains and is the source of wonder and of consolation; we can cry, beg, intercede, lament, but we do so in the knowledge that we are walking towards the light, where praise can be definitive; “in thy light do we see light” (Psalm 36).

To be continued