



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

4th Sunday of Lent-Year B

14th March 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
Naim Chdid	0437 004 790
Lillian Christian - Vice Chair	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	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: St Anthony's -Karina Dunne & Lorraine Tellis
St Bernard's -Dolores Turcsan

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 15/3- 21/3 MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 15th March:	6.30pm
Tuesday 16th March:	9.15am & 6.30pm
Week 1 Novena to St Anthony Novena to St Anthony starts after Mass on Tuesday 16th March for 13 weeks ending on Our Parish Feast Day 13th June.	
Wednesday 17th March: St Patrick	7.30am & 9.15am
Thursday 18th March:	9.15am
Friday 19th March: St Joseph	7.30am & 9.15am
Holy hour and Confession 6.00pm Stations of the Cross 7.00pm	
St Joseph's Feast Day Mass after Stations of the Cross	
Saturday Vigil 20th March:	5.00pm
Sunday 21st March:	8.30am
	10.30am
	5.00pm

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

Holy Hour will be held each Tuesday evening at 5.30pm

ST BERNARD'S 15/3-21/3 BACCHUSMARSH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 15th March:	No Mass
Tuesday 16th March:	7.30am
Wednesday 17th March: St Patrick	9.30am
Thursday 18th March:	7.30am
Friday 19th March: St Joseph	9.30am
Stations of the Cross	7.00pm
Saturday 20th March: (EF Latin 1962)	9.00am
Saturday Vigil 20th March:	5.00pm
Sunday 21st March:	8.30am
	10.00am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

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

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

MASS TIME

Saturday Vigil: 6.30pm

LENTEN REFLECTION ON FEET

Imagine life without feet! Our feet take us to the shops, enable us to drive a car, chase our children, walk in sand, kick a football, play tennis, take us on walks through gardens and along streets. Volunteers at Soul Food serve meals to those who are lonely or finding life difficult.

Pope Francis' feet have taken him to Iraq, to visit persecuted Christians there, where danger could be present. On Holy Thursday feet will be washed and dried by our Priests, a task in the time of Jesus for the lowest in the household, but can be an act of acceptance and humility. Jesus' feet carried his cross to Calvary and were nailed to it. Our feet take us to receive the Bread of Life, gift of our good God.

A Jesuit priest, walking across Europe to Rome, discovered the Rosary was a wonderful walking prayer. Most of us go for a daily walk. Consider making the Rosary your "walking prayer", even one decade said slowly and reflectively brings us closer to God and the life of Mary.

This Lent let your feet take you on a visit to your neighbour, to someone who lives alone, to the Church to pray, or to offer as a volunteer in our community or parish. May your feet be blessed this Lent by where they take you.

Mary Fermio rsj



Fourth Sunday of Lent 14th March 2021



Arsad, an Indonesian farmer, had no toilet at home and was often sick due to the practice of open defecation.

Through Caritas Australia's support, Arsad and his community improved hygiene and sanitation,

and funded their own toilets. **Please donate to Project Compassion 2021 and help improve health and wellbeing of**

communities in Indonesia so they can work towards eradicating poverty, providing a better future for all.

You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.



PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

ST BERNARD'S

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

The Strength of Virtue Retreat for Women: **Saturday 27 March 9:30 – 4PM, St Bernard Parish Hall.** Father Paul Rowse, O.P., Anna Krohn, and the Dominican Sisters will speak on what it means to be a woman of strength, a woman of virtue.

Lunch is provided. Babies are welcome. Cost is free. RSVP requested for catering purposes.

Please go to: <https://www.trybooking.com/BPHFD> or contact: melbourne@op-tn.org.

SUNDAY EVENING MASSES

Parishioners please note there will be **no 5.00pm Sunday Masses on Palm Sunday (28/3), Easter Sunday (4/4) and Divine Mercy Sunday (11/4).**

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office will be closed Monday 15th March.

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 15, 22 Mar, 7pm in the Meeting Room

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.

ST ANTHONY'S YOUTH DATES

Thu 18th March @ Parish Hall
Mon 22nd March @ Parish Hall
Sat 27th March VISITA IGLESIA
9-11th April MHCC Camp

EASTER FLOWERS

Parishioners can donate money for the Easter Flowers. A donation box has been placed on the Sanctuary. Thank you.

ST PATRICK'S FEAST DAY 17th MARCH

"May the strength of God pilot us, may the wisdom of God instruct us, may the hand of God protect us, may the word of God direct us. Be always ours this day and for evermore." ~ Saint Patrick



Source: www.wazquotes.com

SUNDAY MASS TIMES AT ST BERNARD'S

Parishioners please see the letter on Page 4 (next page).

ST BERNARD'S AGM & BBQ NEW DATE 6.00pm, Saturday

20th March 2021 All St Bernard's parishioners are invited to attend our rescheduled parish AGM and BBQ dinner following the Vigil Mass on Saturday, 20th March in the Parish Hall. The AGM is an opportunity to learn more about the life of our parish and plan for the year ahead.

Opportunities for respectful questions will be provided. Families and children particularly welcome. BYO drinks. The meeting is the excuse for the meal! **AGM Agenda:** (1) Prayer; (2) Attendance; (3) Minutes of AGM 2020; (4) Sacramental Statistics; (5) School governance update; (6) Finance update; (7) Property development opportunities; (8) 12-month forward plan; (9) General Business; (10) Expressions of Thanks; (11) Set date of AGM 2022; (12) Prayer.

SOUP AND STATIONS *Fridays in Lent*

Two parish families are very kindly providing a soup dinner before Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent. Soup will be served in the Parish Hall at 6pm with Stations to follow in the Church at 7pm. Come along and feed both body and soul!

HOLY HOUR WITH CONFESSIONS & NIGHT PRAYER

7.30pm Tuesdays A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration is held at St Bernard's Church each Tuesday at 7.30pm. Confessions are available throughout and the Holy Hour concludes with Night Prayer (Compline) and Benediction. Build some time with our Eucharistic Lord into your week this Lent.

LENTEN WEEKLY FAITH FORMATION This Lent St Bernard'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. Wednesdays 17 Mar, 7pm in the Parish Centre.

ALL WELCOME! Register at <https://tinyurl.com/sapientiabacchusmarsh>. Flyers are available in the Church foyer.

CHOIR FOR ST BERNARD'S SUNDAY 10.00AM MASS

Rehearsals for the choir are as follows:

7.00pm Wed 17th March /Wed 24th March (Church)

9.20am Sunday 21st March (Church) *New members welcome.*

PARISH MINISTRIES Share your gifts with our St Bernard's Parish.

We have lost Readers and Extraordinary Ministers for 10 am Sunday Mass. Would you like to serve your parish in this way? Training will be provided. Two people are also needed to help prepare Prayers of the Faithful. This involves writing 2 prayers for each Sunday for 1 month during the year. A book with examples is now available to assist you. Please contact Dolores at Parish Office 5367 2069 or by email or Sr Mary Fermio 5367 2078 or email mary.fermio@sosj.org.au

THE AUTUMN SWAG has arrived, the newsletter of the National Council of Priests. If you have not ordered a regular copy, one can be obtained by ringing Sr Mary 5367 2078 or email : mary.fermio@sosj.org.au and it will be delivered to you.

KNIGHTS OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS The next KSC Meeting will be held this Monday 15th March 2021 at 8:00pm in the Parish Centre.



Catholic Parish of Bacchus Marsh

St Bernard's, Bacchus Marsh

Our Lady Help of Christians, Korobeit

Presbytery & Parish Office: 61 Lerderberg Street, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340

T: (03) 5367 2069

E: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au

W: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au

6th & 7th March 2021

Letter Regarding Sunday Mass Times at St Bernard's

Dear parishioners of St Bernard's,

As our parish has returned to a regular routine, the three of us priests have been discussing the pastoral challenges created by the short 30-minute window between the two Sunday morning Masses. We have discussed our concerns with the Parish Pastoral Council who support us bringing these concerns to the parish at large.

The Issue

Our concerns regarding the short timeframe between the two Sunday morning Masses are as follows:

1. We are not able to devote enough time to talking with parishioners following the 8.30am Mass. The opportunity for priests and parishioners to talk after Mass is of great pastoral value.
2. We are not able to be consistently available for confessions before the 10.00am Sunday Mass. Making confession available to parishioners when it is most convenient to them – namely, on Sunday – is a key pastoral priority for us.
3. We are not able to adequately prepare for the 10.00am Sunday Mass. Before Mass we often need to prepare the sacred vessels and consult readers, extraordinary ministers, musicians, collectors, families presenting children for baptism, and school families attending sacrament enrolment Masses.

Possible Solutions

We would ideally like to adjust the Sunday morning Mass times to create a 60-minute window between the two Masses. A 60-minute window would resolve the concerns listed above and would enable us to be more available to you. This outcome is, in principle, supported by the Parish Pastoral Council. Three possible ways of achieving this outcome seem feasible:

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| Solution 1 | 8.00am & 10.00am |
| Solution 2 | 8.15am & 10.15am |
| Solution 3 | 8.30am & 10.30am |

Opportunities for Feedback

We understand that Mass times are reference points for our day and our week and changing them can be a disruptive experience. This is why we want your feedback. We will be taking the following steps to seek your input regarding adjusting the Mass times:

- This letter will run in the bulletin until 20/21 March inclusive;
- Over the next two weeks, we invite you to share your perspective in person with our priests;
- There will be an opportunity to discuss the issue during General Business at the AGM;
- On Sunday 21st March we will ask parishioners at the 8.30am & 10.00am Masses to complete a brief feedback form.

We will discuss the results of this process with the Parish Pastoral Council and come to a decision about how to proceed. It is our hope that you will appreciate our concerns, which have your pastoral and spiritual interests at heart, and support an adjustment to the Mass times.

Sincerely,

Father Fabian Smith PP, Fr Marcus Goulding & Fr Lucas Myint

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 20th & 21st March
Please present yourself to the Mass Coordinator 15 minutes before the scheduled Mass time or a replacement will be found. Thank you.

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm Vigil: Stephen Fernandes
8.30am: Amy Honrade
10.30am: Faustina Ma'ae
5.00pm: Michael Higgins

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Dolores Turcsan & Philip Anyayahan
8.30am: Michael Higgins & Geoff Sutton
10.30am: Elaine Lacey & Richard Tuala
5.00pm: Not Rostered

If you are unavailable for these dates please contact Lesley at the Parish Office Thank you

MASS COORDINATORS

5.00pm Vigil: Annonika & Godwin
8.30am: Lina & Julie
10.30am: Lillian & Godwin
5.00pm: Leonia & Godwin

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Senara Noaese Teo & Poulo Sekutty

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

Charlie Calleja, Charles Depares, Paola Giodamanja, Charles Giordmaina, Joseph Micallef & Bill Ryan

Please pray for the Sick:

Martha Baice, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, 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, Wai Walsh & 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 March

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Miesen Family
8.30am: Volunteer needed
10.00am: Erin Phillips

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Mary Beaton
8.30am: Ben Kratochvil
10.00am: Tup Shea

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Eric Hurley

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

Michael Brady, Bob Carr, Cristina Kingcott, Peter Ward & Bernard Wilkie.

Please pray for the Sick:

Daniel Andrews, 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, Theresa Dockter, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Baby Jack Gibson, 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)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

FIRST READING *2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23*

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.' And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: 'Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up."' The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 136

Commentator: Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

All: Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept,
remembering Zion;
on the poplars that grew there
we hung up our harps.

For it was there that they asked us,
our captors, for songs,
our oppressors, for joy.
'Sing to us,' they said,
'one of Zion's songs.'

O how could we sing
the song of the Lord
on alien soil?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!

O let my tongue
cleave my mouth
if I remember you not,
if I prize not Jerusalem
above all my joys!

Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

SECOND READING *Ephesians 2:4-10*

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ - it is through grace that you have been saved - and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
that all who believe in him might have eternal life.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL *John 3:14-21*

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

'The Son of Man must be lifted up
as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,
so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.
Yes, God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believed in him may not be lost
but may have eternal life.

For God sent his Son into the world
not to condemn the world,
but so that through him the world might be saved.
No one who believes in him will be condemned;
but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already,
because he has refused to believe
in the name of God's only Son.

On these grounds is sentence pronounced:
that though the light has come into the world
men have shown they prefer
darkness to the light
because their deeds were evil.
And indeed, everybody who does wrong
hates the light and avoids it,
for fear his actions should be exposed;
but the man who lives by the truth
comes out into the light,
so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed,
I saw and I believed in God.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT-YEAR B

First Reading: Jer 31:31-34;

Second Reading: Heb 5:7-9;

Gospel: Jn 12:20-33



Year of Saint Joseph I

With a Father's Heart (*Patris Corde*)

That is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as “the son of Joseph”.

Matthew and Luke, the two Evangelists who speak most of Joseph, tell us very little, yet enough for us to appreciate what sort of father he was, and the mission entrusted to him by God's providence.

We know that Joseph was a lowly carpenter, betrothed to Mary. He was a “just man”, ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the Law and through four dreams. After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since “there was no place for them” elsewhere. He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds and the Magi, who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagan peoples.

Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: “You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). As we know, for ancient peoples, to give a name to a person or to a thing, as Adam did in the account in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:19-20), was to establish a relationship.

In the Temple, 40 days after Jesus' birth, Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened with amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his Mother. To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph dwelt as a foreigner in Egypt. After returning to his own country, he led a hidden life in the tiny and obscure village of Nazareth in Galilee, far from Bethlehem, his ancestral town, and from Jerusalem and the Temple. Of Nazareth it was said, “No prophet is to rise”. When, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary lost track of the 12-year-old Jesus, they anxiously sought him out and they found him in the Temple, in discussion with the doctors of the Law.

After Mary, the Mother of God, no saint is mentioned more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My Predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate more fully his central role in the history of salvation. Blessed Pius IX declared him “Patron of the Catholic Church”, Venerable Pius XII proposed him as “Patron of Workers” and Saint John Paul II as “Guardian of the Redeemer”. Saint Joseph is universally invoked as the “patron of a happy death”.

Now, 150 years after his proclamation as Patron of the Catholic Church by Blessed Pius IX (December 8, 1870), I would like to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure, so close to our own human experience. For, as Jesus says, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”. My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. ...

By Pope Francis, www.vatican.va

How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility! How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer.

Each of us can discover in Joseph — a daily, discreet and hidden presence — an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation.

A beloved father

The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, in the words of Saint John Chrysostom, “at the service of the entire plan of salvation”.

Saint Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood “by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home.”

Thanks to his role in salvation history, Saint Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown in the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious Institutes, Confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and the many traditional expressions of piety in his honour. Innumerable holy men and women were passionately devoted to him. Among them was Teresa of Avila, who chose him as her advocate and intercessor, had frequent recourse to him.

Every prayer book contains prayers to Saint Joseph. Prayers are offered to him each Wednesday, especially during the month of March, which is traditionally dedicated to him.

Popular trust in Saint Joseph is seen in the expression “Go to Joseph”, which evokes the famine in Egypt, when the Egyptians begged Pharaoh for bread. He in turn replied: “Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do” (Genesis 41:55). Pharaoh was referring to Joseph the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers and who subsequently became viceroy of Egypt.

As a descendant of David, from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan, and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, Saint Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

Excerpt Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter, *Patris Corde*, (“With a Father's Heart”) announcing the Year of Saint Joseph.