



# 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

## Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

## 4th April 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
Peter Kennedy	0407 778 119
Maira 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 5/4-11/4 MELTON SOUTH

#### MASS TIMES:

Monday 5th April:	6.30pm
Tuesday 6th April:	9.15am
Holy Hour	5.30pm
Week 4 Novena to St Anthony	6.15pm
Mass	6.30pm
Wednesday 7th April:	9.15am
Thursday 8th April:	9.15am
Friday 9th April:	9.15am
First Friday Mass	7.30pm
	Midnight
Saturday Vigil 10th April:	5.00pm
Sunday 11th April:	8.30am
	10.30am
<b><i>Divine Mercy Sunday</i></b>	<b><i>3.00pm</i></b>
<i>(Confession 2.00pm)</i>	
	5.00pm

**Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass**

### ST BERNARD'S 5/4-11/4 BACCHUSMARSH

#### MASS TIMES:

Monday 5th April:	No Mass
Tuesday 6th April:	9.30am
Wednesday 7th April:	9.30am
Thursday 8th April:	9.30am
Friday 9th April:	9.30am
Saturday 10th April: (EF Latin 1962)	9.00am
Saturday Vigil 10th April:	5.00pm
Sunday 11th April:	8.30am
	10.00am

**A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration will be held each Tuesday evening at 7.30pm**

**Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass**

### OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

#### MASS TIME

Saturday Vigil 6.30pm

### EASTER REFLECTION ON LIGHT

After the AGM I walked home glad of the walker in case I stumbled in the half-light of street lamps, on a path I knew so well. As I reached the veranda the security lights came on and my steps became surer and quicker. Lent is like a season of half-light when we walk stumbling, seeking Jesus.

EASTER is the season of LIGHT when our steps become surer because we know we are saved and we are being called to see Jesus as our Risen Lord. We light candles in the dark, the Paschal candle is placed in the centre of our Church, drawing us like moths to the flame, the Light of Christ.

Easter continues each time we meet others, when we can be the Light of Christ for them by looking at them with love, gratitude, forgiveness, compassion, caring and concern.

As we wait in the dark for sleep, can we see our day as being one where we have given light to someone and thank God we can.

Mary Fermio rsj



Easter Sunday  
4th April 2021



**Happy Easter from all at Caritas Australia!**

Thank you for supporting us this year as we demonstrate how love and compassion for our global community can transform lives. You have responded to St. Oscar Romero's invitation to "Be More," putting your compassion into action to support some of the world's most vulnerable communities. By aspiring to be more, you have helped change lives.

**Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2021 Lenten appeal.**

[www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion) #projectcompassion 1800 024 413



## PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

### NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

#### ST ANTHONY'S

#### ST BERNARD'S

#### **REMINDER - WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK SHOULD BE VALID**

All new and current volunteers, please call 1300 652 879 or go online at <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/> if you need to apply or renew or associate your card with St Anthony's or St Bernard's. Any queries, please speak to any of the Child Safety Team members, Lesley at the St Anthony's Parish Office or Dolores at St Bernard's Parish Office. Thank you.

#### **PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES**

Project Compassion Boxes can now be returned. Thank you for your generosity.

#### **FIRST FRIDAY AND FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS -APRIL**

We will have **First Friday Devotions** on the **9th April**. There will be no 8.30am Mass on Saturday 10th April.

#### **ARCHBISHOP PETER'S VISIT**

Archbishop Peter will visit our Parish on **Sunday 25th July (10.30am Mass)** to bless our newly renovated Church.

#### **MEAT TASTING FUNDRAISER**

The Meat Tasting Fundraiser will be held on **Sunday 18th April**. Details to follow.

#### **MEMORIAL MASS**

A Memorial Mass will be held on **Friday 30th April 7.00pm** for families that have lost a loved one in **2020/21**. You are welcome to bring a photo of your loved one. We will have a light supper following the service. Please bring a plate to share.

#### **WOMENS GROUP**

A Women's Group will be formed, the group will get together weekly to discuss and reflect on the weekend's readings and share life experiences. Please call Lillian Christian 0400 441 257 for more information.

#### **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES**

The PPC Minutes dated 4th February 2021 are on display and available for collection in the Church foyer.

#### **ST BERNARD'S SUNDAY MASS TIMES CHANGING TO 8.30AM & 10.30AM on 1/2 May 2021**

Thank you to all who participated in the Mass Times survey last Sunday. It will be no surprise that the survey was inclusive with regard to Mass times. Even so, it did clearly indicate that the vast majority of people would not be seriously inconvenienced by a change. Mindful of the benefit of creating an hour break between Masses in a way that impacts as few people as possible, Father Fabian and the Parish Council have decided that **Sunday Mass times will change to 8.30am and 10.30am beginning the weekend 1/2 May 2021**. The vigil Mass will remain at 5pm. Thank you for your understanding.

#### **ST BERNARD'S CHOIR REHEARSALS**

*No rehearsal on Wed 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021*  
9.30am | Divine Mercy Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021

#### **AN EASTER BLESSING**

*May the glory and the promise of this joyous time of year bring peace and happiness to you and those you hold most dear.*

*And may Christ, Our Risen Saviour, always be there by your side to bless you most abundantly and be your loving guide.*

*Author Unknown*



#### **DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY— St Anthony's Church**

**11th April 2021**

**Main Celebrant: Fr Fabian Smith**

Commencement at 2.00pm with Confessions followed by:

Adoration, Rosary, Litany

Quiet Reflection

3.00pm Prayer

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Benediction

Holy Mass

Blessing of Divine Mercy Images



## WORSHIP NEWS

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

### ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

**NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 10th & 11th April**  
**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:** Liza Fernandes  
**8.30am:** Kim Nguyen  
**10.30am:** Annonica Mavaega  
**5.00pm:** Dolores Turcsan

#### **EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS**

**5.00pm Vigil:** Ann Tennakoon & Gavin Pereira  
**8.30am:** Geoff Sutton & Ron Howard  
**10.30am:** Elaine Lacey & Lillian Christian  
**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 & Carmen  
**8.30am:** Lina & Julie  
**10.30am:** Lillian & Godwin  
**5.00pm:** Leonia & Annonika

### ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Marie Dromey, Marcelina Nailpay & Stephen Vella

**Please pray for the Sick:**

Martha Baice, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Bruce Hynes, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Damien Michael, Kevin Tony Michael, Veronica Michael, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Sherine Pereira, 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: 10th & 11th April**

#### **MINISTERS OF THE WORD**

**5.00pm:** Trish Davine  
**8.30am:** Gerard Harrington  
**10.00am:** Beatrice Younger

#### **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:**

Baby Jack Gibson

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

Bill Cameron, Liz Kuczynski, Ray Marshall & Jane Sammut.

**Please pray for the Sick:**

Patricia Allison, 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, 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:** 10th & 11th April

#### PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil:

8.30am:

10.30am: Roster Pending

5.00pm:

#### CUPPA VOLUNTEERS– 24th & 25th April

5.00pm Vigil: Gavin & Alison Pereira

8.30am: Geoff & Debra Sutton

10.30am: Gladys Clarke &  
Judy Van Hoos

#### CHURCH FLOWERS

April: Easter Flowers



#### CHURCH CLEANING

Lorelle Porter and a Team of Volunteers.

#### ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330

The Melton South Conference meet every 3rd Tuesday morning in the Meeting 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 :** 10th & 11th April

#### PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Sunday: Sean Gianì

#### CHURCH FLOWERS

April: Easter Flowers



#### 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](mailto: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 22nd April**

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:** St Anthony: **April & Gihan** St Bernard: **To be advised**



### 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: **John & Rose Ma'ae** **0431 386 473**

Group 2: **Elaine & Edward Rodrigues** **0405 956 724**

Group 3: **Helen Calleja** **0401 497 980**



### 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

**ENTRANCE PROCESSION**

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia.  
You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia.  
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

**FIRST READING** *Acts 10:34, 37-43*

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.' Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses - we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 117**

**Commentator:** This is the day the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad.

**All:** This is the day the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.  
Let the sons of Israel say:  
'His love has no end.'

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;  
his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds.

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.  
This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

This is the day the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad.

**SECOND READING** *Colossians 3:1-4*

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Christ has become our paschal sacrifice;  
let us feast with joy in the Lord.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** *John 20:1-9*

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.' So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia;  
therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread  
of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.

**NEXT WEEK'S READING**  
**DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**

**First Reading:** Acts 4:32-35;  
**Second Reading:** 1 Jn 5:1-6;  
**Gospel:** Jn 20:19-31



# Year of Saint Joseph IV

## With a Father's Heart (*Patris Corde*) (4)

### A creatively courageous father

If the first stage of all true interior healing is to accept our personal history and embrace even the things in life that we did not choose, we must now add another important element: creative courage. This emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. In the face of difficulty, we can either give up and walk away, or engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had.

As we read the infancy narratives, we may often wonder why God did not act in a more direct and clear way. Yet God acts through events and people. Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the beginnings of the history of redemption. He was the true “miracle” by which God saves the child and his mother. God acted by trusting in Joseph’s creative courage. Arriving in Bethlehem and finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph took a stable and, as best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the world. Faced with imminent danger from Herod, who wanted to kill the child, Joseph was warned in a dream to protect the child, and rose in the middle of the night to prepare the flight into Egypt.

A superficial reading of these stories can often give the impression that the world is at the mercy of the strong and mighty, but the “good news” of the Gospel consists in showing that, for all the arrogance and violence of worldly powers, God always finds a way to carry out his saving plan. So, too, our lives may at times seem to be at the mercy of the powerful, but the Gospel shows us what counts. God always finds a way to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence.

If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned, but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions ourselves.

That kind of creative courage was shown by the friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (Luke 5:17-26). Difficulties did not stand in the way of those friends’ boldness and persistence. They were convinced that Jesus could heal the man, and “finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he

said, ‘Friend, your sins are forgiven you’”. Jesus recognised the creative faith with which they sought to bring their sick friend to him.

The Gospel does not tell us how long Mary, Joseph and the child remained in Egypt. Yet they certainly needed to eat, to find a home and employment. It does not take much imagination to fill in those details. The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many migrants who, today too, risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger. In this regard, I consider Saint Joseph the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.

At the end of every account in which Joseph plays a role, the Gospel tells us that he gets up, takes the child and his mother, and does what God commanded him. Indeed, Jesus and Mary his Mother are the most precious treasure of our faith.

We should always consider whether we ourselves are protecting Jesus and Mary, for they are also mysteriously entrusted to our own care and safekeeping. The Son of the Almighty came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected, cared for and raised by Joseph. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who found in him someone who would always provide for her and her child. In this sense, Saint Joseph could not be other than the Guardian of the Church, for the Church is the continuation of the Body of Christ in history, even as Mary’s motherhood is reflected in the motherhood of the Church. In his continued protection of the Church, Joseph continues to protect the child and his mother, and we too, by our love for the Church, continue to love “the child and his mother”.

That child would go on to say: “As you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, is “the child” whom Joseph continues to protect. For this reason, Saint Joseph is invoked as protector of the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying. Consequently, the Church cannot fail to show a special love for the least of our brothers and sisters, for Jesus showed a particular concern for them and personally identified with them. From Saint Joseph, we must learn that same care. We must learn to love the child and his mother, to love the sacraments and charity, to love the Church and the poor. Each of these realities is always “the child and his mother”.

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