



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

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B

1st August 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:

Mon 9.00-1.00pm Tuesday 9.00am-4.00pm

Wednesday 9.00am-5.30pm Thu-Friday 9.00am-4.00pm

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-Thursday 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
Rose Ma'ae	0460 672 571

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 & Geetha Vincent
St Bernard's -Dolores Turcsan



St Anthony's
QR code

Location code E2B Y8D



St Bernard's
QR code

Location code C7N T6M

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S 2/8-8/8 MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 2nd August	6.30pm
Tuesday 3rd August	9.30am
Adoration & Confessions	5:30pm
Novena to St Anthony followed by Benediction	6.15pm
Mass	6.30pm
Wednesday 4th August	7.30am (Chapel) & 9.30am
Thursday 5th August	9.30am
Friday 6th August	7.30am (Chapel) & 9.30am
First Friday Mass	7.30pm
	Midnight
First Saturday Mass	8.30am
Saturday Vigil 7th August	5.00pm & 6.30pm
Sunday 8th August:	8.30am
	10.30am
	5.00pm

Attendees at all Masses must wear masks and check-in with the QR code upon arrival.

Confession Monday—No Confession

Tuesday-Sunday-Confession available 30 minutes prior to Mass

ST BERNARD'S 2/8-8/8 BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 2nd August*	No Mass
Tuesday 3rd August**	7.30am
Wednesday 4th August	9.30am
Thursday 5th August	7.30am
Friday 6th August	9.30am
Saturday 7th August (EF Latin 1962)	9.00am
Saturday Vigil 7th August	5.00pm
Sunday 8th August	8.30am
	10.30am

* Rosary and Adoration every Monday evening 7.30pm

** A Holy Hour of Eucharist Adoration will be held every Tuesday evening at 7.30pm

Attendees at all Masses must wear masks and check-in with the QR code upon arrival.

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBEIT

<u>MASS TIME</u>	Saturday Vigil	6.30pm
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If you need a Priest in the case of an emergency please call 0403 435 471

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.

REFLECTION ON BELIEF IN JESUS

We all need to have belief in ourselves, in what we can do and achieve; belief that we can overcome difficulties and provide for ourselves and family; belief in my family and our love for each other.

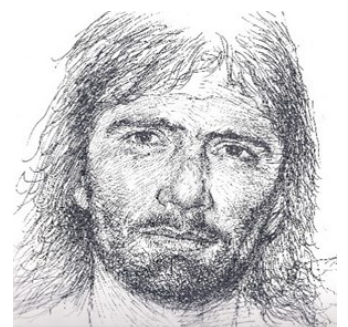
Jesus often praises people for their belief in him. In the Gospel Jesus says that "This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent". Signs will not be given. They must look at the works of Jesus: healing, feeding, giving the blind sight, the deaf hearing. When John the Baptist's disciples came and asked him, was he the one, he told them to go back and tell John what they had seen.

The Jewish leaders believed wealth, health and material blessings meant God was pleased with them. Jesus, by his works, showed this was not so.

The criteria Jesus explained to his disciples for entering eternal life describe the works we should do: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and in prison,

welcome the homeless...would he add: phone the lonely, greet others pleasantly, share with the unemployed, pray for those who are sick, sign in where we go, clean our hands, etc. etc. During these days of pandemic and lockdown what would Jesus say to you? Would he say: Have you shown your belief in me by your works?

Mary Fermio rsj



Frank Pash drawing of Jesus

PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

ST BERNARD'S

JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS

The Regional meeting will be held on the 7th August at 9.30am for 10.00am start. It will be held at St Bernard's Parish Centre. Please BYO lunch, the Bacchus Marsh group will supply morning tea. We will have 3 sessions and then lunch. Core group leaders will meet early afternoon. All welcome.

NEW EDUCATION PROGRAM MELTON - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! JOB NO: SVDP1415

Location: **Melton**

Who: Volunteers to support children in our Brand New Education Program in Melton. Students who attend the program have the opportunity to develop social, emotional and academic skills as part of a positive learning experience.

When & Where: Wednesday 3.30-5.30 during school terms. Melton Community Centre, 239 Station Street, Melton

Requirements: No experience required. St Vincent de Paul will assist you in acquiring all checks. No cost is involved

How do I apply? Please go to <https://svdpvolunteers.applynow.net.au/jobs/SVDP1325-education-program-volunteering>

Contacts: Dr. Linette Etheredge

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria (SVDPV)

P 03 9895 5926 | M 0437 168 366 email linette.etheredge@svdp-vic.org.au www.vinnies.org.au or Ineke Allen 0400 120 401

CATHOLICCARE VICTORIA SUNDAY APPEAL

Next weekend is the CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal. As our parish's social service agency, CatholicCare Victoria delivers counselling and mental health services, specialised support for children and teens, refugee and asylum seeker help, support for separating families, homelessness support and pastoral care. Donations from our parish community will help to support the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community. Please donate to the CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal. Your support and generosity will help the vulnerable and marginalised in our community and empower everyone to reach their full potential.

CATHOLIC REGIONAL COLLEGE MELTON- YEAR 7 2023 ENROLMENTS DUE 20th AUGUST 2021

Enrolment applications for Year 7 2023 at our West Melton and Cobblebank campuses are due on Friday 20 August 2021.

Apply online now at www.crcmelton.com.au/join-us/enrolment.

MASS BOOKINGS

PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL FOR SUNDAY MASSES

Mass numbers are limited. This means that pre-booking is essential for the Vigil and Sunday services.

Please book through the parish website or ask someone with internet access to book on your behalf.

Pre-booking will not be required for weekday Masses.

Attendees at all Masses must wear masks and check in with the QR code, if you are unable to use the QR code service, an alternate check-in method will be available.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have an elderly Parishioner living at Sutton Park who would like to attend Mass on weekends. We are looking for a couple of volunteers to share the job of picking her up and dropping her off. If you are able to help please contact Lesley 9747 9692 or email judyparishnews@gmail.com Thank you.

NEW VOLUNTEERS - EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS & READERS WORKSHOP - SATURDAY, 14TH AUGUST 2021

All new volunteers who would like to commit to the role of an Extraordinary Minister or as a Reader, could you please attend the following sessions on **Saturday, 14th August 2021**.

9:30am to 10:30am - Session for Extraordinary Ministers

10:45am to 11:45am - Session for Readers

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office will be closed on Friday 6th August.

MASS BOOKINGS

Mass bookings are not needed to attend Mass at St Bernard's.

FR. BRIAN GLASHEEN GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATION Fr Brian Glasheen will be at St Bernard's for the Vigil 5.00pm Mass on Saturday 11th September 2021.

MEMORIAL/FEAST DAYS-AUGUST

Monday 2nd August	St Peter Faber
Tuesday 3rd August	St Dominic
Wednesday 4th August	St John Mary Vianney
Friday 6th August	The Transfiguration of the Lord
Sunday 8th August	St Mary of the Cross
Tuesday 10th August	St Lawrence
Wednesday 11th August	St Clare
Saturday 14th August	St Maximilian Mary Kolbe
Sunday 15th August	The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Friday 20th August	St Bernard
Saturday 21st August	St Pius X
Tuesday 24th August	St Bartholomew, Apostle
Friday 27th August	St Monica
Saturday 28th August	St Augustine

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 7th & 8th August
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: Lorraine Tellis
8.30am: Amy Honrade
10.30am: Anastasia Mavaega
5.00pm: Rebecca Comini

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Ann Tennakoon & Philip Anyayahan
8.30am: Geoff Sutton & Ron Howard
10.30am: Doris Bonello & George Bonello
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: Annonica & Carmen
8.30am: Lina & Godwin
10.30am: Deepa & Godwin
5.00pm: Leonia & Godwin

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Veronica Butler, Domenica Dimartino, Jack Tolhurst & Carmen Zarb

Please pray for the Sick: Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Melanie Fue Bruce Hynes, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Lisa Melia, Damien Michael, Tony Michael, Veronica Michael, Maiava Kuno Nickol, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Sherine Pereira, Peter Poole, Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Charlie Spiteri, Janko Stojanovic, Uatoa Tuigamala, Dolores Turcsan, Clint Abela Wadge & Wai Walsh 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: 7th & 8th August

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Kratochvil Family
8.30am: Moira Ross
10.30am: Carmel Shea

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Peter McPhan
8.30am: Volunteer needed
10.30am: Volunteer needed

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

August: John Wilson

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Bernadette O'Shannassy

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

Mary Evans, David Fava, William (Bill) Griffith), John McMahon, Audrey Peasley, Mary Shea, Nadia Vescovi, Gerard Wheelahan.

Please pray for the Sick:

Patricia Allison, Noah Barlow, Chaiel Balcombe, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Tina Bower, John Canty, Fred Capuano, Gary Ching, Chris, 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, Dolores Turcsan, 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

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

ST ANTHONY'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS: 7th & 8th August

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil: Lorraine Tellis
8.30am: Gilles Maitre
10.30am: Elizabeth Underwood

CUPPA VOLUNTEERS 28th & 29th August

5.00pm Vigil: Melissa Va'a & Technica
8.30am: Ineke Allen & Mercy Seufatu
10.30am: Doris & Emily Bonello

CHURCH FLOWERS

August: Gloria



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.

We cannot accept re-packaged food. 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

ST BERNARD'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS : 7th & 8th August

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Sunday: Marj Tung

CHURCH FLOWERS

August: Deborah Hosking



PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-MOWING

August: Ron Geurts

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

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



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**

Next preparation meeting : **Thursday 26th August**

Location: **Parish Centre, St Bernard's, Bacchus Marsh**

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.**

Visit our website for detailed information and application forms.

Please contact the Parish Office if you have any queries.

BAPTISM TEAM: St Anthony's: **Michelle & Shelley** St Bernard's: **Dolores Turcsan**

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: Brian Barker 0408 974 322

Group 2: Gavin & Alison Pereira 0423 960 538

Group 3: Joseph & Carmen Cilia 0418 201 027

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

O God, come to my assistance;
O Lord, make haste to help me!
You are my rescuer, my help;
O Lord, do not delay.

FIRST READING Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

The whole community of the sons of Israel began to complain against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness and said to them, 'Why did we not die at the Lord's hand in the land of Egypt, when we were able to sit down to pans of meat and could eat bread to our heart's content! As it is, you have brought us to this wilderness to starve this whole company to death!'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Now I will rain down bread for you from the heavens. Each day the people are to go out and gather the day's portion; I propose to test them in this way to see whether they will follow my law or not.'

'I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Say this to them, "Between the two evenings you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have bread to your heart's content. Then you will learn that I, the Lord, am your God."' And so it came about: quails flew up in the evening, and they covered the camp; in the morning there was a coating of dew all round the camp. When the coating of dew lifted, there on the surface of the desert was a thing delicate, powdery, as fine as hoarfrost on the ground. When they saw this, the sons of Israel said to one another, 'What is that?' not knowing what it was. 'That' said Moses to them 'is the bread the Lord gives you to eat.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 77

Commentator: The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

All: The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

The things we have heard and understood,
the things our fathers have told us,
we will tell to the next generation:
the glories of the Lord and his might.

He commanded the clouds above
and opened the gates of heaven.
He rained down manna for their food,
and gave them bread from heaven.

Mere men ate the bread of angels.
He sent them abundance of food.
He brought them to his holy land,
to the mountain which his right hand had won.

All: The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

St MARY OF THE CROSS

First Reading: 1 Kg 17:8-16;
Second Reading: Col 3:12-17;
Gospel: Mt 6:25-34



SECOND READING Ephesians 4:17, 20-24

I want to urge you in the name of the Lord, not to go on living the aimless kind of life that pagans live. Now that is hardly the way you have learnt from Christ, unless you failed to hear him properly when you were taught what the truth is in Jesus. You must give up your old way of life; you must put aside your old self, which gets corrupted by following illusory desires. Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

No one lives on bread alone,
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 6:24-35

When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus. When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered:

'I tell you most solemnly,
you are not looking for me
because you have seen the signs
but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat.
Do not work for food that cannot last,
but work for food that endures to eternal life,
the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you,
for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal.'

Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to do the works that God wants?' Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent.' So they said, 'What sign will you give to show us that we should believe in you? What work will you do? Our fathers had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

Jesus answered:

'I tell you solemnly,
it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven,
it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven,
the true bread;
for the bread of God
is that which comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.'

'Sir,' they said 'give us that bread always.' Jesus answered:

'I am the bread of life.

He who comes to me will never be hungry;
he who believes in me will never thirst.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

You have given us, O Lord, bread from heaven,
endowed with all delights and sweetness in every taste.

Year of Saint Joseph XXI

Theological reflections

on Saint Joseph (10)

The fatherhood of Saint Joseph (continued)

c) The fatherhood of Joseph is unique

In the whole course of human history there has never been a type of fatherhood that is identical to that of Saint Joseph. Why is this so? An event occurred in the life of Saint Joseph that has never occurred, and never will occur, to any other married men.

This tremendous event implied: (1) that Almighty God miraculously enabled his wife virginally to conceive and bring forth a son; (2) the child in question was the Incarnated Word of God; (3) all this occurred in such a way, according to the special designs of Divine Providence, that the Child was not a stranger to Saint Joseph, but the fruit of his own marriage; (4) and Joseph, by the same divine decree was, in a true sense, granted the rights and duties of fatherhood towards this Child.

It would be a mistake to conclude that what distinguishes Joseph's fatherhood from all forms of human adoptive fatherhood is the fact that the child in question was divine. Also unique in this case is the fact that the marriage of Mary and Joseph was ordained by God to receive the Son of God into the world. The Incarnate Word of God was the fruit of the marriage of this holy couple. Christ was not a stranger to their marriage. Quite different is an ordinary case of human adoptive parenthood, namely, the child adopted and given the rights accorded to natural children, is a *stranger* to the marriage of the couple in the sense that their marriage was not ordained to receive that child and care for him.

Were it ever to happen that God would miraculously and virginally make a man's wife fruitful precisely because of his marriage to her, that man would become the father of the child in the singular way that Joseph is the father of Christ. God could not in justice deny him a paternal right to the fruit of his wife's womb.

Hence, just as Mary became the Mother of God not because of the will of man but because of the will of God, so neither did Joseph receive his fatherhood towards Christ except by the will of God. Mary cooperated much more proximately and more intimately in the Incarnation than Joseph, so that she is not only morally the Mother of God, but *physically* as well. Her motherhood is perfect in every sense of the word. The fatherhood of Joseph does not have the perfection of physical fatherhood but it immeasurably surpasses any form of human adoptive fatherhood.

How is it possible for Joseph to have become the father of Jesus in the sense described without his knowledge or consent? Furthermore, there is the constant belief of the Church that he and Mary agreed to remain virgins. Does that not imply the resolve to have no children?

These objections are easily answered. When Mary and Joseph married, even with the resolve to abstain from the use of the sexual privileges of marriage, they were entering marriage with the idea of consecrating themselves to one another for the love of God. They were completely "open" to the designs of God's will, even though at the time they did not know what that Will implied. It is unimportant whether they understood down to the most minute detail what God was demanding of them; it was sufficient that they surrendered themselves without reserve to His unfathomable designs.

Their call to marriage was not a private vocation, a vocation that only concerned themselves; it was a call that was to affect the entire community of the human family. In all likelihood the only thing they were sure of in their hearts was that God was calling them to marriage and that they were to live a virginal life; they determined to live their married life according to the good pleasure of God. This attitude of mind and heart was the all-important thing at that moment. As yet they had no idea what great things God had in store for them.

Thus it was with Mary and Joseph. Only with the passing of time did they begin to understand how their marriage was to be the most privileged marriage of all time because, as Saint Augustine says, "the Holy Spirit gave a divine child to both of them". In the miraculous fruit of their marriage, God's most decisive and important intervention into human history took place.

What is the best title to express the unique fatherhood of Saint Joseph? Many terms are employed by the faithful and spiritual writers such as a fatherhood that is legal, reputed, foster, vicar of the Eternal Father, or virginal. American Josephologist Father Francis Filas, SJ, prefers the title, Joseph, the *Virginal Father* of Christ.

He justifies his choice of title in these words:

"'Virginal father' ... so limits the significance of the word 'father', by calling the fatherhood *virginal*, that it excludes all connotation of physical generation, with no ambiguity whatsoever. On the other hand, by its mention of a virginal *fatherhood*, it indicates that some sort of fatherhood is being referred to. Since physical paternity is excluded by the word 'virginal', the rights and duties of a fatherhood in the moral order seem to be the logical conclusion.

"St Joseph is father of Jesus *in so far as he, a virginal man, can be the father of Christ* — and in saying this we have exactly the thought of many centuries that Joseph was father in all respects, physical generation alone excepted! An adoptive father, whose son is extraneous to him and to his marriage, does not possess paternity in a fashion such as this. The description fits only St Joseph's relationship, according to which Christ was Joseph's true son in the moral order, and not extraneous to him. The Saint could not have obtained such a fatherhood except through the fact that Jesus was born of Joseph's wife. There is no other source possible; the marriage was the channel of parenthood to St Joseph.