



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 HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH –YEAR C

26th December 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: Please see page 3
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:
Please see page 3
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

Naim Chdid	0437 004 790
Lillian Christian - Vice Chair	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	0457 042 695
Natalie Howard– Chair	0492 947 201
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

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Coordinator: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449) **Officers:** St Anthony's -Karina Dunne, Lorraine Tellis & Geetha Vincent
St Bernard's –Margaret Love (0437 247 779)



St Anthony's
QR code

Location code E2B Y8D



St Bernard's
QR code

Location code C7N T6M

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S 27/12/21-2/1/22 MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES: (no booking required)

Monday 27/12	6.30pm
Tuesday 28/12	9.30am
5.30pm Holy Hour followed by Mass at	6.30pm
Wednesday 29/12	9.30am
Thursday 30/12	9.30am
Friday 31/12 Adoration/Devotion and Rosary	11.00pm
New Year's Eve Mass	Midnight
Saturday 1/1	9.00am
First Saturday/New Year's Day	
Saturday 1/1 Vigil	5.00pm
Sunday 2/1	8.30am & 10.30am
	5.00pm

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.
No Confession available on Monday

ST BERNARD'S 27/12/21-2/1/22 BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES: (no booking required)

Tuesday 28/12	9.30am
	Holy Hour 7.30pm
Wednesday 29/12	9.30am
Thursday 30/12	9.30am
Friday 31/12	9.30am
Saturday 1/1	9.00am
New Year's Day	
Saturday 1/1 Vigil	5.00pm
Sunday 2/2	8.30am & 10.30am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

MASS TIME Vigil

6.30pm

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

PARISHIONERS 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 THE HOLY FAMILY

If any of you have lost a child in a shopping centre or at the beach, you will know how Mary and Joseph felt when Jesus was missing from the people they were travelling with. How anxious they would have been, asking all they met, looking in places he may have gone to. And then to find him calmly discussing with the Jewish elders, I wonder if they felt hurt.

But we are told "Jesus lived under their authority" and "grew in wisdom" thus cementing for the next 20 years a family life shared with Joseph, Mary and the people of Nazareth. Pope Francis tells us that there are three key words to maintain peace and joy in a family. They are "May I?" "Sorry!" and "Thank You". Love, reconciliation, mutual help and mutual forgiveness are the keys to a strong and happy family life.

As we prepare for the New Year let each of us consider how often we use these words, and to resolve to be more attentive to our family and to how I can contribute to the peace and joy in my family. We can take much for granted and how easy and simple these words are. May each of your families be blessed in the coming year.

Mary Fermio rsj



PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

PARISH OFFICE NEWS

Dear Parishioners please note that both St Anthony's and St Bernard's Parish Offices will be closed for Christmas /New Year. St Anthony's will be closed from Monday 27th December 2021 and reopen on Monday 10th January 2022. St Bernard's will be closed from Friday 24th December 2021 and reopen on Tuesday 11th January 2022.

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

ST ANTHONY'S OFFICE HOURS- JANUARY

Monday 10th- Wednesday 12th January 9.00am-1.00pm
Tuesday 17th -Friday 21st January 9.00am-4.00pm
Tuesday 24th-Friday 28th January 9.00am-4.00pm (Closed 26th Jan Australia Day)
Monday 31st January onwards normal office hours

ST BERNARDS OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 11th January- normal office hours Tuesday-Thursday 9.00am-1.00pm

CLASSES FOR SACRAMENTS

Classes for First Holy Communion and Confirmation begin on Saturday 15th January. Applications must be received by 15th January. Please go to our website for applications and further information. Please send any queries to enrol4sacraments@gmail.com.

ST ANTHONY'S

SUPPORT MELTON SOUTH PARISH by giving with CDFpay. Simply scan the QR code with your mobile phone and in a few easy steps you can quickly and securely give to your parish. Laminated QR posters are in the foyer.

PARISH PHOTOS

Dear Parishioners we would like to archive and put photos on our website of our Parish, if you have any photos that you would like to share with us of Parish events please send them to judyparishnews@gmail.com or contact Lillian 0400 441 257 Please add names, dates and occasions if possible. Many thanks.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS -SPECIAL COLLECTION

We collected \$608.00 for our Christmas Flower Collection. Thank you for your generosity.

ST BERNARD'S

SAVE THE DATE - FATHER GLASHEEN MASS

A Mass to celebrate Father Glasheen's 50th Anniversary of his Ordination will be held on Sunday May 15, 2022 at 10.30am Mass. More details to follow.

KSC 2021 RACING GAME FINAL RESULTS

After 26weeks, the final horse race was completed last weekend and we ended up with a dead-heat for first!
The winners are **Marlene Shanahan** and **Hugh Miller** equal on 88 points, with **Nadia Farrell** on 86 points
The First and Second prize money (\$200 and \$100) will be divided between the winners on 88, = \$150 each.
Third place prize of \$50 goes to Nadia.
Thank you to all our parishioners who joined in this fundraiser, where all the profits go to support our St Bernard's primary school scholarships.
Knights of the Southern Cross - Bacchus Marsh Branch.

FORMED

We now have a parish FORMED subscription

FORMED is a Catholic streaming service. We have purchased a parish subscription that you can access for free at home. Please limit yourselves to one account per household. To register under our subscription, follow these steps:

1. Visit <https://signup.formed.org/>
2. Input *St Anthony's & St Bernard's Catholic Parishes* in the "Find your Parish" box.
3. Input your name and email address.
4. Visit formed.org on your preferred device to begin watching.

If you enjoy using FORMED, consider making a donation to our parish to help us keep providing this service.

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, You make all things new

You bring hope

Alive in our hearts

And cause our Spirits

to be born again.

Thank you for this new year

For all the potential it holds.

Come and kindle in us

A mighty flame,

many will see the

Wonders of God

And live forever to praise

Your glorious name.

Amen

Source: Catholic New Year's Day Prayer

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 1st & 2nd January

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: Karina Dunne

5.00pm: Regina Tuala

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Ron Howard

8.30am: Lillian Christian

10.30am: 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: Leonia & Godwin

8.30am: Lillian & Julie

10.30am: Lillian & Godwin

5.00pm: Annonica & Godwin

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Emanuel Bonnici, Eustace Christian, Charlu Sr Chua, Michael Angelo Gatt, Dan Hassett, Sam Micallef, Thomas Portelli, and Leonard Sacco.

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, Paul Nowak, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, 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: 25th & 26th December

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm:

8.30am: To be advised

10.30am:

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm:

8.30am: To be advised

10.30am:

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Jan: Parish Office

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Raymond Hare, Michael Marshall, Eddie Mullane, Imelda Pace, Pat Pigott, Vicki Riddell, Brian Shanahan, Alice Sloan.

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, Frank, 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, Bill Shea, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Catherine Time, Susan Trist, Tristan, 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: 1st & 2nd January

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil:

8.30am: To be advised

10.30am:

CUPPA VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil:

8.30am: To be advised

10.30am:

CHURCH FLOWERS

January: Ropeta



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

***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 : 1st & 2nd January

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Sunday: Margot Short

CHURCH FLOWERS

January: Tup Shea



PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-MOWING:

January: Colm Carragher & 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

FAITH FORMATION

ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

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

Dear Parishioners

Keeping in line with the Archbishop's vision for Mission, the Parishes of St Anthony's and St Bernard's going forward will put together a new Baptism Preparation Program, for any parents who wish to have their child Baptised.



Preparations for Baptisms will take place on Saturdays alternating between both Parishes.

Parents must attend two sessions. Sessions will run from 12.00pm-3.30pm.

Baptisms will be held on Saturday mornings at 10.30am.

The new program will begin in February 2022. Bookings must be made to attend these sessions.

More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

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: Theresa Anderson 0420 820 118

Group 2: Julie & Aotearoq Seufatu 0402 182 458

Group 3: Philip & Cristina Anyayahan 0403 171 918

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

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son, and called him Samuel 'since' she said 'I asked the Lord for him.'

When a year had gone by, the husband Elkanah went up again with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go up, having said to her husband, 'Not before the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and present him before the Lord and he shall stay there for ever.'

When she had weaned him, she took him up with her together with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the temple of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was with them. They slaughtered the bull and the child's mother came to Eli. She said, 'If you please, my lord. As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord. This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord granted me what I asked him. Now I make him over to the Lord for the whole of his life. He is made over to the Lord.'

There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 83

Commentator: How happy they who dwell in your house,
O Lord.

All: How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord, God of hosts.

My soul is longing and yearning,
is yearning for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God.

They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.

They are happy, whose strength is in you;
they walk with ever growing strength.

O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob.

Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,
look on the face of your anointed.

How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD —YEAR C

First Reading: Is 60:1-6;

Second Reading: Eph 3:2-3,5-6;

Gospel: Mt 2:1-12



SECOND READING 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.

Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed,
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him

because we shall see him as he really is.

My dear people,

if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience,
we need not be afraid in God's presence,
and whatever we ask him,

we shall receive,

because we keep his commandments

and live the kind of life that he wants.

His commandments are these:

that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ

and that we love one another

as he told us to.

Whoever keeps his commandments

lives in God and God lives in him.

We know that he lives in us

by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Open our heart, O Lord,

to listen to the words of your Son.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 2:41-52

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies.

They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant.

He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Feast of the Holy Family

The Holy Family is the name given to the family unit of Jesus, the Divine Son of God Jesus, his mother Mary, and his foster-father Joseph.

We know very little about the life of the Holy Family through the Canonical Scriptures. They speak of the early years of the Holy Family, including the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, the flight into Egypt, and the finding of Jesus in the temple.

Several non-canonical works, including the so-called Infancy Gospel of Thomas, try to fill in the blanks. However, even though these apocryphal works may contain some truth from oral tradition, they have been deemed unworthy of canonical status because of the way they present Jesus and because they postdate the Apostolic Era and so cannot possibly have been written by an Apostle (such as St Thomas). While the exact details of the day-to-day life of the Holy Family may be unknown, we can still learn a lot from the stories we do have.

Devotion to the Holy Family is a relatively recent development, but one that naturally grows out of a love for Jesus and his family. The cult of the Holy Family grew in popularity in the 17th century, and several religious congregations have been founded under this title. The Holy Family was also portrayed in popular art of the period.

On October 26, 1921, the Congregation of Rites (under Pope Benedict XV) inserted the Feast of the Holy Family into the Latin Rite general calendar. Until then it had been celebrated regionally.

Popes before and including Benedict XV (especially Leo XIII) promoted the feast as a way to counter the breakdown of the family unit. Today the Church celebrates the Feast on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year's Day (the Feast of Mary Mother of God). If both Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Sundays, no Sunday exists between the two dates, so the Church celebrates the Holy Family Feast on December 30. Up until 1969, the Feast of the Holy Family was kept on the first Sunday after the Epiphany. It was transferred to its current date in 1969.

www.ucatholic.com

The Feast of the Holy Family is not just about the Holy Family, but about our own families too. The main purpose of the Feast is to present the Holy Family as the model for all Christian families, and for domestic life in general.

Our family life becomes sanctified when we live the life of the Church within our homes. This is called the "domestic church" or the "church in miniature". St John Chrysostom urged all Christians to make each home a "family church" and, in doing so, we sanctify the family unit.

Just how does one live out the Church in the family? The best way is by making Christ and his Church the centre of family and individual life. We can do this by reading Scripture regularly, praying daily (the Rosary is the perfect family prayer), attending Mass at least on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, imitating the actions of the Holy Family, all done together as a family unit.

In addition to cultivating positive actions, the Church reminds us that various actions and behaviours are contrary to God's plan for the family, and these should be avoided.

These include abortion, contraception, same-sex "marriage", polygamy, embryonic stem-cell research, divorce, spousal abuse and child abuse. The Church teaches that a marriage must be open to children. Anything artificial that prevents this is contrary to divine law. Also, faithful Christians must tackle poverty, lack of healthcare, and other injustices because of the negative effect these have on the family unit.

The Feast of the Holy Family is a good time to remember the family unit and pray for our human and spiritual families. We also may take this Feast to reflect on the value and sanctity of the family unit, and to evaluate our own family life. What ways may it be improved? What would Jesus, Mary, and Joseph do?

Finally, we can ask ourselves on this day what are we doing to promote the family within our own neighbourhoods.