



St Anthony's Parish

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



St Bernard's Parish

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

17th April 2022

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 9.00am-12noon
Tue 9am-4pm Wed 9am-5.30pm Thu /Fri 9am-4pm
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 Lawrence of Brindisi School **Principal:** Bill Hill
31 Waterway Boulevard, Weir Views, 3338
Phone: 0477 155 210
Email: principal@slweirviews.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.slweirviews.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)
Principal: Marlene Jorgensen **Phone:** 8099 6000
109-141 Bulmans Rd, West Melton, 3337 **Website:** www.crcmelton.com.au

ST BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper:
Naim Chdid
Parish Office Hours:
Tue-Thu 9am-1pm
Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au

St Bernard's School **Principal:**
19a Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340
Phone: (03) 5366 5800
Email: principal@sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Naim Chid	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	0460 672 571

EX-OFFICIO: Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint,
Fr Marcus Goulding, Damien Schuster and Bill Hill
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
Moira Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell - Chair	0401 927 502

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

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) Evana Miesen & Ron Geurts

Items for the newsletter must be submitted by Wednesday 1.00pm. Please email judyparishnews@gmail.com or call 0414 007 009

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH 18/4/22-24/4/22

MASS TIMES:

Monday 18/4	6.30pm
Tuesday 19/4	9.30am
Holy Hour	5.30pm
Week 6 of the St Antony's Novena	6.15pm
followed by Mass at	6.30pm
Wednesday 20/4	9.30am
Thursday 21/4	9.30am
Friday 22/4	9.30am

Sunday Masses

Saturday 23/4	5.00pm
Sunday 24/4	8.30am & 10.30am

Divine Mercy Sunday

2.00pm Confession, Adoration, Holy Rosary, Litany and Meditations

3.00pm 3 o'clock Prayer, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Benediction and Holy Mass

No 5pm Mass

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.

No Confession on Monday

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH 18/4/22-24/4/22

MASS TIMES:

Monday 18/4	No Mass	Rosary	7.30pm
with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for one hour.			
Tuesday 19/4			9.30am
Holy Hour			7.30pm
Wednesday 20/4			9.30am
Thursday 21/4			9.30am
Friday 22/4			9.30am

Sunday Masses

Saturday 23/4	5.00pm
Sunday 24/4	8.30am & 10.30am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBEIT

VIGIL MASS

6.30pm

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 EASTER

The hours after a loved one has died brings many emotions for family and friends – peace, disbelief, weeping, shock, anger and a feeling of being stunned – all depending on the age of the person and the manner of death. And how cruel and unjust was the death of Jesus!

One can imagine the women and disciples would be reeling from the events of the Friday and that Sabbath would have been like no other. Mary can't wait any longer – very early on the Sunday, she must go to the tomb to grieve. What a shock she received! The tomb was open and her first thought was that the Body of Jesus must have been taken. She ran to tell Peter and John who immediately set off to see for themselves. On looking inside the tomb, they saw that the burial cloths were still there, and realised the body of Jesus had not been taken away – but Jesus had left the tomb himself! The words of Jesus must have come flooding back – I will rise in three days!

But Mary's dilemma remains – if Jesus is not in the tomb, where is he?

Where do we find Jesus ourselves? In the face of all we meet, in those dying in Ukraine, in Somalia, under the bridges of towns, squatting in empty buildings, the family next door – in fact, in every person we meet, either in person, on TV, in Social Media... Jesus is alive in all of us – ALLELUIA!



PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES

Project Compassion boxes may now to be returned. Please leave the boxes in the basket provided. Thank you.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY 24/4—ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH MELTON SOUTH

2.00pm Confession, Adoration, Holy Rosary, Litany and Meditations

3.00pm 3 o'clock Prayer, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Benediction and Holy Mass.

THANK YOU FROM OUR PRIESTS!

The celebration of the Sacred Triduum - Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil - requires a lot of preparation and planning. We want to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have assisted us over these days. In particular, we thank our musicians (St Gregory's Choir and St Peter's Choir at St Anthony's, and Lillian Lindorff, Rosanna Omogrosso, and the other choir members at St Bernard's), our altar servers, readers and florists. Thank you, too, to our staff and the numerous other volunteers who have dedicated their time to make these days a beautiful participation in the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

Your priests, Fr Fabian, Fr Marcus, & Fr Lucas

ST ANTHONY'S

BLESSING OF THE CHURCH SUNDAY 24th APRIL

Archbishop Peter Comensoli will be celebrating Mass and blessing our renovated Church extension and Chapel on Sunday 24th April 10.30am. Please bring a plate to share for a gathering after the Mass.

PRIME TIMERS

Our next outing will be for lunch at the Melton Valley Golf Club, 2/30 Melton Valley Drive, Melton. Tuesday 26th April, for 12 o'clock.

Seniors lunch available for \$18.00.

RSVP by Friday 24th for catering and staffing purposes.

Enquiries contact Ineke 0400120401 or ineke49@yahoo.com

PARISH OFFICE

Please note the Parish Office hours next week are:

Tuesday– Friday 9.00am-1.00pm

ST BERNARD'S

SUMMARY OF ST BERNARD'S PARISH PASTORAL

COUNCIL MEETING St Bernard's PPC met on 7/4/22 at 7.30pm in the presbytery. In attendance were Fr Fabian, Fr Lucas, Fr Marcus, Peter Kennedy, Moira Ross, Annette Marum, Peter Farren, and Shane Cook. Apologies were received from Aaron Russel (Chairperson). Peter Kennedy accepted nomination as Secretary. The PPC reviewed the AGM held on 26/2/22 as well as the joint PPC meeting held with St Anthony's PPC on 10/3/22. The next joint PPC meeting will be held on 5/5/22. The focus of this meeting will be on ways both parishes can further cooperate in light of Take the Way of the Gospel. The deposit for upgrades to the church pendant lights and fans has been paid and installation is expected in the month after Easter. Upgrades to the confessionals have also been completed. The next St Bernard's PPC meeting will be held on 2/6/22.

SAFEGUARDING Please return risk/safety survey sheet by Sunday, April 24th 2022. All those over 18 who volunteer in any capacity at all must have submitted, to the parish office, a WWCC aligned to our parish by Mat 31st. Once this is done a Code of Conduct Declaration is required. Don't give up because of this paperwork chore. We need our volunteers. You are the lifeblood of our parish. And another chore to satisfy legislative requirements - would an office-bearer or person in charge of any group using any parish facility obtain the mandatory Risk Assessment Checklist, Risk and Hazard Assessment Form and Attendance Sheet from me or from Evana Miesen. Once completed and signed off, the authority to operate will last for twelve months. Margaret Love

KSC MEETING

KSC meeting to be held in Parish Centre meeting room Monday, April 18, at 8pm.

God, may we feel the warm embrace of your love on this sacred day. May the glory of Jesus's resurrection remind us that with You, nothing is impossible or without hope. We pray in Your name. Amen.

*Wishing all our Parishioners a very Happy Easter
God Bless
Lesley, Dolores, Naim and Judy*



EASTER SUNDAY 17th APRIL 2022



Happy Easter from all at Caritas Australia! Thank you for your continued support for Project Compassion – past, present and future. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow For All Future Generations. Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2022 Lenten appeal. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow For All Future Generations. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your Parish, by visiting lent.caritas.org.au, or by calling 1800 024 413

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 23rd & 24th 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: Stephen Fernandes

8.30am: Amy Honrade

10.30am: Karina Dunne

5.00pm: No Mass

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Ann Tennakoon

8.30am: Lillian Christian

10.30am: George Bonello

5.00pm No Mass

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

MASS COORDINATORS

5.00pm: Coleen & Annonika

8.30am: Julie & Lillian

10.30am: Olen & Godwin

5.00pm: No Mass

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Joseph Aquilina, Susan Boslem, George Firth, Caroline Galanti, Charles Giordmaina, Fred Pullicino, Josephine Pullicino & Tony Pullicino

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, Clint Abela Wadge, and 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

MINISTERS OF THE WORD : 16th & 17th April

7:30pm Easter Vigil

Dominic van der Linden
& Beatrice Younger

8:30am Easter Sunday

Margaret Love

10:30am Easter Sunday

Sonia Smith

MINISTERS OF THE WORD: 23rd & 24th April

5.00pm: Evana Miesen

8.30am: Maggie Kratochvil

10.30am: Beatrice Younger

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

April: John Thorne

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Heather Mary Ryan

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

Leslie Crowe, Barbara Cywinski, Bob McGregor, Lawrence Mizzi, Margaret Moloney, Melva O'Brien, Sam Reale, James (Ray) Rogers & Theo Van Alkemade.

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, 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

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

ST ANTHONY'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS: 23rd & 24th April

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil: Julie Sequiera
8.30am: Pat Chiles
10.30am: Geetha Vincent

CUPPA VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil:
8.30am: To be advised
10.30am:

CHURCH FLOWERS

April: Ana



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 : 23rd & 24th April

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Sunday: To be advised

CHURCH FLOWERS

April: Melinda Martin Blooms



PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-MOWING

April: 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 have 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. A welcome Mass must be attended prior to the Baptism. Baptisms will be held on Saturday mornings at 11.00am.

Parents must attend two sessions. Sessions will run from 12.00pm-4.00pm. Godparents must attend the 2nd session. Bookings must be made to attend these sessions. Please visit our website for a detailed description of the new program. Contact the Parish Office to book your Baptism Preparation and Baptism.

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: Lorraine Tellis

0437 658 423

Group 2: Nirmala Meegama

0452 200 344

Group 3: Aubrey & Doreen Smith

0433 003 322

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 –MASS OF THE DAY

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

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians
If you have been raised with Christ,
seek the things that are above,
where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
Set your minds on things that are above,
not on things that are on earth, for you have died,
and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
When Christ who is your life is revealed,
then you also will be revealed with him in glory.
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 (JB)

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 WEEKEND'S READINGS- SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

First Reading: Acts 5:12-16;
Second Reading: Rev 1:9-13,17-19;
Gospel: Jn 20:19-31



Easter Sunday 2022

The Reading from Acts today (10:34;37-43) has been selected for Easter Sunday not only because the Resurrection is mentioned in it, but especially because St Peter in his first discourse to a gentile makes the Resurrection the basic doctrine and the crowning proof of the truth of the Christian faith. As St Paul says: "If Christ has not risen vain is our preaching, vain too is your faith" (1 Corinthians 15:14). And like Paul, St Peter stresses the truth of the Resurrection by citing witnesses, including himself, who had not only seen the Risen Jesus but had spoken to him and actually eaten with him.

There is no room for doubt but that the Apostles and disciples had thought that the sad events of Good Friday had put an end forever to the mission of love and mercy of their beloved Master. In spite of his previous references to his Resurrection, they had completely forgotten it and were convinced that the tomb near Calvary was the end of all their hopes.

They had locked themselves into the Room of the Last Supper for fear of the Jews — two of them had set off for home on the Sunday morning, down-hearted at the Master's failure, the others were waiting for an opportunity to slip out of the city quietly. But the Resurrection changed all this. The unexpected, the un hoped-for happened. Even the most sceptical of them all, doubting Thomas, was eventually convinced of its reality. Had they been hoping for it, or even thinking of it, there might be some reason to suspect it was only an hallucination, the result of their "wishful thinking", but the very opposite was the case. They were hard to convince even when they saw it with their own eyes.

All this was intended by God — the basis of our Christian faith was proved beyond doubt. Christ, who had died on the cross on Good Friday, was raised from the dead by his Father on Easter morning. He returned to heaven in the full glory of the divinity which he had hidden while on earth, together with his human body, now also glorified. There (in heaven), as God and Man, he pleads for us at the right hand of the Father until the day when he who redeemed all men will come to judge them all.

We are no longer mere humans living on this planet for a few short years. We are citizens of heaven, made children of God the Father by Christ our Brother. And he has gone before us to his and our kingdom to prepare a place for us. He conquered death. Our earthly death has, therefore, now no real fears for us: it is not the end but the beginning of our true lives. It is only after our earthly death that we truly begin to live.

There is only one death now which we can fear — the spiritual death of serious sin, which can keep us from our true heavenly life. But while this is a possibility for all of us, it is only a possibility. The sincere Christian who realises what God has done for him and what is in store for him, will never be so ungrateful to God or so forgetful of his own best interests as to let some temporal and passing pleasure, pride, or profit, come between him

By Fr Kevin O'Sullivan, catholicculture.org

and the eternal home which God's love has prepared for him. We were created for unending happiness in heaven, and it is only when we get there that our desire and our quest for some greater happiness will end. From then on, we will always enjoy and possess that all-satisfying happiness.

St Paul (Colossians 3:1-4) reminds us that we have this happiness within our grasp. We are moving steadily and more quickly than we realise towards it. The Holy Trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, have already done, and are daily continuing to do for us, all within their power. All that is needed is that we do the little that is asked of us.

St Paul tells us we must "mind the things that are above not the things that are on earth". We must never let the "things of earth", the pleasures, the power, the possessions which we can or could have in this life, block or impede us on our upward journey. Does this mean that we must all return to the deserts of Egypt, as some early Christians did? By no means. We are not forbidden to have the lawful pleasures of life. We are not forbidden possessions or power if they are used justly. All we are forbidden is the unlawful use of the things of this world.

While there are saints in heaven who lived lives of extreme self-mortification and did extraordinary things for God and for their neighbour, it is an encouraging and consoling thought that there are millions of unknown saints in heaven who lived normal lives, unnoticed by the world and maybe even by themselves. They are people who kept in God's friendship all their lives, or got back quickly to it, if they sometimes forgot or offended their heavenly Father.

What millions of others have done I can do too. I am aided by God's grace as they were. God wants me in heaven. He has an Easter Resurrection planned for me.

The fact of the Resurrection is the basis of the new Christian Faith. Had it not happened, Christianity would have been stillborn. It would have disappeared from Jerusalem and the world on that first Easter Sunday. Peter and his companions would have returned to their fishing nets and boats on Lake Genesareth, and Christ, the good and the kind man who had helped so many, would have been forgotten in half a generation.

But Christ was no mere man of kindly acts and words of wisdom. He was the suffering servant foretold by Isaiah, whose perfect obedience to his Father had led him to the Cross and the grave. But above all, he was the Son of God who had emptied himself (St Paul) of his divine glory in order to be the perfect human servant of the Father, and who was now raised by the Father, with his divine glory restored, and his glorified resurrected body sharing in that glory.

Today, let us thank God once more for Easter. Our personal Easter morning is not far away from even the youngest among us. We have a few Calvaries to climb perhaps in the meantime but what are they when we see our glorious Easter on the horizon?