



St Anthony's Parish



St Bernard's Parish

67-74 EXFORD ROAD, MELTON SOUTH, 3338.
P.O BOX 2152 MELTON SOUTH 3338
TEL: 9747 9692 FAX: 9746 0422

61 LERDERBERG STREET, BACCHUS MARSH 3340
TEL: 5367 2069 FAX: 5367 4863
OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, KOROBET
309 MYRNIONG-KOROBET ROAD 3341

4th Sunday of Advent

Year C

23rd December 2018

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith

ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Patrick Bradford & Fr Joseph Panackal IV Dei

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Parish Office Hours:
Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9.00am—4.00pm
Email: meltonsouth@cam.org.au
Website: stanthonysmeltonsouth.wordpress.com

St Anthony's School Principal: Damien Schuster
Wilson Road, Melton South 3338
Phone: 9743 1401
Email: principal@sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)
Principal: Mr Mark Sheehan **Phone:** 8099 6000
Website: www.crcmelton.com.au

ST BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper:
Naim Chdid Fri 10.00am—3.00pm

Parish Office Hours: Tue –Thurs 9.00am-1.00pm
Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: http://pol.org.au/bacchusmarsh/Home.aspx

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

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Sue Alexander	0400 171 843
Naim Chdid	0437 004 790
Lillian Christian	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	03 9747 0078
Natalie Howard	0410 478 046
Rose Ma'ae	0431 386 473
Marthese Mercieca	0421 378 691

EX-OFFICIO:
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Patrick Bradford, Fr Joseph Panackal
and Damien Schuster Council Secretary: Judy Johnson

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Cathy Belcher	0431 082 886
Shane Cook	0419 999 052
Peter Farren	0418 594 501
David Loxley	0459 974 960
Moira Ross	0400 675 056
Emillio Scalzo	5366 5800
James Waters	0403 822 795

EX-OFFICIO:
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Patrick Bradford, Fr Joseph Panackal
and Emilio Scalzo

CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS

Coordinator: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449)
Officers: Aloysious Dacunha, Karina Dunne & Lorraine Tellis

Please contact Judy Johnson for any Parish news you would like published in the Newsletter
Articles must be received by midday Tuesdays. Email: judyparishnews@gmail.com
For appointments with Father Fabian please call Judy on 0414 007 009
For urgent matters only please call Fr Fabian on 0403 435 471

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES : 24/12/18-30/12/18

Monday : (Christmas Eve please see
page 3 Newsletter for Mass Times)

Tuesday

Christmas Day: 9.00am FFS

Wednesday: No Mass

Thursday: 9.15am FFS

Friday: 9.15am FJP

Saturday Vigil : 5.30pm FJP

Sunday : 8.30am FFS
10.30am FFS

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 4.45pm and before and after weekday Mass.

ROSARY:

Prayed at 9.00am before every weekday Mass.



ADORATION:

No Adoration and Devotions for the month of January.

CRC MELTON CHAPEL

No Masses during school holidays.

Masses will resume 4th February 2019

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOROBET

MASS TIMES :

Saturday: 6.30pm Mass FFS

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES : 24/12/18-30/12/18

All weekday Masses (except Thursday) will be held in the Chapel

Monday : (Christmas Eve please see
page 3 Newsletter for Mass Times)

Tuesday

Christmas Day: 8.30am FJP
10.00am FJP

Wednesday : No Mass

Thursday : No Mass

Friday : No Mass

Saturday Vigil : 5:00pm FFS

Sunday : 8:30am FJP
10.00am FJP

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 4.30pm and before and after weekday Mass

ROSARY:

Monday night Rosary and Adoration will resume on 21st January 2019



ADORATION:

1 hour before every weekday Mass.

PROVIDENCE MASS

Is held on the second Friday of the month at 11.00am

The Village 5-7 Griffith St, Maddingley.

Next Mass: **No Masses in December and January**

SENIOR PARISHIONER'S MASS

Is held on the third Friday of the month in the Parish Centre at 10.30am. Everyone is welcome not just the seniors. Next

Senior's Mass: **Friday 15th February 2019**

(no Mass in January)

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

ARCHBISHOP'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Archbishop's Comensoli Christmas Message is available on the below website and also please note that the 9.00pm Christmas Eve Mass from the Cathedral will be live streamed on the [Melbourne Catholic Website](http://www.melbourne.catholic.org.au).

RECITAL

The Young French Organists Recital will be held at St Patrick's Cathedral on Friday 4 January at 6.30pm. This concert has been organised by the great French Organist Johann Vexo, who at just 25 years of age was appointed as the Choir Organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. The concert will feature Alexandre Bonnemort, Jean Nouvel-Alaux, Jean Poitevin and Arthur Scandola on the St Patrick's Cathedral Organ. We would also like to bring your attention to a new page on the St Patrick's Website dedicated to Concerts in the Cathedral.

<https://www.cam.org.au/cathedral/Music/Music-Concerts>

PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

DAWN CHRISTMAS NOVENA MASSES

The Parish of Melton invites you to join 'Simbang Gabi sa Melton' (The nine dawn Christmas Novena Masses). To be held 16th December—24th December 2018. Starts 5.00am at St Catherine of Siena Church, 108 Bulmans Road, Melton West. All welcome.

RCIA 2019

If you want to learn more about the Catholic Faith, want to become a Catholic, or you didn't receive all your Sacraments as a child and you want to receive them.

Classes for Adult Faith Formation are being held: February 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th. March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th.

At St Bernard's Parish Centre Bacchus Marsh 5pm till 6pm.

For further information, can you please contact the Parish Office on 5367 2069

BINGO—CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

St Anthony's Bingo will recommence on Tuesday 15th January 2019.

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

CHRISTMAS 2018

Christmas Vigil Monday 24th December

5.30pm (FPB), 8.00pm (FJP) & Midnight (FFS)

(all Masses preceded by Carols)

Christmas Day—25th December

9.00am (FFS) (preceded by Carols)

Please note that incense will be in use at 8.00pm, Midnight & 9.00am Christmas Masses

New Years Eve 31st December

11.00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with Rosary (FJP)

11.45pm Benediction followed by Midnight Mass (FFS) for the Feast of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

New Years Day 1st January 2019

9.00am Mass (FJP)

NEW YEAR'S EVE BALL—RAFFLE TICKETS

Raffle tickets are now available after every Mass on the weekends. All proceeds will go towards the New Adoration Chapel.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

There is a box on the Sanctuary for Parishioners who would like to donate towards the cost of the Christmas flowers for our Masses. Thank You.

CHURCH CLEANERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR PERIOD

We need volunteers to help clean the Church over the Christmas /New Year Period. If you can assist please leave your name and contact details on the clipboard at the rear of the Church.

CLEANING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR A FORTNIGHTLY ROSTER

We need volunteers to clean the Church on a fortnightly basis.

If you can assist please leave your name and contact details on the clipboard at the rear of the Church.

MASS COORDINATORS / READERS/EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS—CHRISTMAS MASSES

Thank you to everyone that volunteered for the Christmas Masses. Please find a roster on the noticeboard at the rear of the Church and we have extra copies of the roster for collection.

CUPPA WEEKEND

It's cuppa weekend after all Masses. Please stay and have a cuppa and a chat with your fellow parishioners.

ST BERNARD'S

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES—2018

St Bernard's

Christmas Vigil –Monday 24th December

7.00pm (FFS)—Vigil Family Mass (preceded by Carols at 6.30pm)

10.30pm (FPB)—Mass (preceded by Carols at 10.00pm)

Christmas Day—Tuesday 25th December

8.30am and 10.00am (FJP) Mass

Our Lady Help of Christians

Christmas Vigil—Monday 24th December 2018

8.00pm (FPB)—Vigil Mass (preceded by Carols at 7.30pm)

ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

PARISH OFFICES—CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Dear Parishioners

The Parish Offices will be closed for the Christmas

Holidays from the 24th December until the

2nd January.

Both offices will reopen on Thursday 3rd January

9.00am-1.00pm

St Anthony's Parish Office will be open in January

Tuesday—Friday 9am-1pm

St Bernard's Parish Office will resume normal hours from 3rd January

Wishing all our Parishioners a Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

God Bless from Lesley, Dolores, Naim and Judy

(For urgent matters only please call Fr Fabian on 0403 435 471)



WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 29th & 30th December

MINISTERS OF THE WORD:

5.30pm: Mila Little
8.30am: Anthea Scerri
10.30am: Elaine Lacey

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.30pm : Gavin Pereira (P) & Lorriane Tellis
8.30am : Lillian Christian (P), Sue Alexander
& Michael Higgins
10.30am: Doris Bonello (P) & George Bonello

If you are unavailable for these dates please contact the emergency minister on the roster. Thank you.

MASS COORDINATORS

5.30pm: Dolores Turcsan & Carmen Vella
8.30am: Indika Silva & Lina Calleja (G Barton)
10.30am: Ken Dumandan & Josephine German (C Vella)

ALTAR SERVERS

5.30pm: Jedi Anyayahan & Mason Azzopardi
8.30am: Nixon, Thytus & Aaron Ben
10.30am: Anakin Anderson & Nick Taunuu

If you are unavailable please contact Ben Kratochvil 0423 076 305

ST BERNARD'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 29th & 30th December

MINISTERS OF THE WORD:

5.00pm: Maureen Zahara
8.30am: Moira Ross & Marj Tung
10.00am: Sr Mary Fermio

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Colin Remedios
8.30am: Brendan Harrison
10.00am: Carole Ryder

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ROSTER

December: Diane Corro

ALTAR SERVERS

5.00pm:
8.30am: To Be Advised
10.00am:

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

Consilija Bonnici, Charlu Sr Chua, Dan Hassett & Sam Micallef

Please pray for the Sick: Jean Barnett, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Veronica Michael, Wanda Novak, John Osborne, Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Charlie Spiteri, Clint Abela Wadge, Michael Wright & 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

May you be wrapped up in God's love,
Found deep in his everlasting wings;
Carried and kept safe and cherished.
May the healing power of Christ be
with you.
Amen



ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

SPIRITS OF THE TWO HEARTS YOUTH GROUP

Experience faith, friendship and fun.

Age group: 11years+ **When:** Every 4th Thursday of the month 7.00pm-9.00pm **Where:** Two Hearts Centre, 274 La Cote Road, Greendale

Contact: Sister Clare 0415 806 217 or

Email : twoheartscentre@bigpond.com

'Coordinated by the Missionaries of Love and Peace of the Most Blessed Trinity of the Pilgrimage of the Two Hearts'

We pray for the recent death of:

Alexander Charles Koltay & Kevin Long

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

Teresa Darlington-Canty, Eddie Mullane, Vanessa Owen & Robert Taggart.

Please pray for the Sick:

Noah Barlow, Dudley Baddeley, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Kevin Bridges, John Canty, Fred Capuano, Gary Ching, Ted Cooling, Lindsay & Kathleen Dally, Judy Delahey, Jack DeLuca, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Brian Harrison, Adam Hillier, Elle Hillman, Kiahni Holamotutama, Alicia Holborn, Matthew Jansen, David Kasprzak, Loretta Kervin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, Debbie Marshall, Jordanis Maryo, Pauline McDonald, Ian McKechnie, Marcus Meno, Paul Mullin, Kevin O'Gorman, Arthur Pape, Michael Paterson, Georgia Peacock, Arabella Periera, Bev Pickett, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Marian Smith, Frank & Elizabeth Stehmann, Susan Trist, Hayden Tung, Mitchell Tung, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Mary Walsh, Carol Wells, Cath Wheelahan, Jayne Wilkins, Nils Wyren, Patricia Yazbek, Betty Young & Hannah Young.

(PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED ON THIS LIST)



SERVICE / COMMUNITY

ST ANTHONY'S

VOLUNTEERS WEEKEND: 29th & 30th December

PIETY STALLS VOLUNTEERS

5.30pm: Marthese Mercieca
8.30am: Chris Fitzgerald
10.30am: Kim Barton

CUPPA ROSTER

Cuppa Weekend: **This Weekend**

5.30pm: John & Anthea Scerri
8.30am: Ineke Allen & Lilly Offer
10.30am: Rose Ma'ae & Family



CHURCH FLOWERS

Doris Bonello &
Josephine German



CLEANING ROSTER: Thursday

Lorelle Porter

Volunteers would be appreciated as well.

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY QUADRANT

Volunteers are required for the following groups:
Piety Stall, Social Committee, & Monthly Cuppa.
Contact:

Natalie Howard	0410478046,
Amy Honrade	0457042695
Lillian Christian	0400441257

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330

The Melton South Conference meet every 3rd Tuesday morning in the Holy Family Room 10.00am.

New members most welcome, training provided.

Non perishable items within the use by date can be left in the 'drop box' at the back of the Church. Thank you.

COMBINED CHURCHES CARING MELTON INC

CCCM's aim is to supply free food to help people in our local community in need and walk alongside them to reduce dependency through friendship and education.

Address: 100 Coburn Road Melton South 9747 6811

Hours: Mon– Thurs: 10.00am–3.00pm

Friday : 10.00am–12.15pm

School Holidays : 10.00am–12.30pm

ST BERNARD'S

VOLUNTEERS WEEKEND : 29th & 30th December

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Saturday: Sean Giani
Sunday: Marj Tung

MORNING TEA

Is held on the first Sunday of the month in the Parish Centre after 10.00am Mass.

Next Morning Tea: **3rd February 2019**

Host: To Be Advised



CHURCH FLOWERS

Frances McDaid



COUNTING TEAM

Parish Office Staff

PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS- (December)

Front Garden:	*Volunteer Please*
Back/Side Garden:	*Volunteer Please*
Parish Centre:	Ron Geurts
Carpark/Pines:	Ron Geurts
Back Paddock:	Colm Carragher

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number is 1800 305 330.

The St Vincent de Paul Conferences are obliged to elect a new President every four years. On Monday 3rd December 2018, we met and elected Margot Short as our new President. Margot has been a member of the this parish for many years and has worked on various committees. We are pleased to have her as our new leader. Please remember Margot and the other members in your prayers.

The contact number is 5310 6322.

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. All donations are gratefully accepted.

THE NEIGHBOURS PLACE

Emergency Foodbank and Hospitality centre

Address: 77 Main Street Bacchus Marsh

Open: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9.30am-3.00pm

Email: neighbourspl@iinet.net.au

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.

Contact: Jenny Kearney 0408 104 155

PARISH CENTRE BOOKING

Tel: 5367 3427

Mon–Fri 9.00am to 6.00pm

Hall Managers: Marie & Terry Casey

FAITH FORMATION

ST ANTHONY'S

BAPTISM PREPARATION PROGRAM

Held on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Church 6.30pm-7.45pm.

Next preparation : **Thursday 24th Jan**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd

Sunday of the month: **Sunday 3rd & 17th February**

See details on Parish Homepage as listed on front page and download forms. Forms are also available from the Parish Office or from the Sacristy after Mass from Father. Both parents are required to attend these meetings. We kindly request adults only and a copy of the birth certificate.

Contact Fr Fabian, Fr Patrick, Fr Joseph or the Parish Office for queries.

BAPTISM TEAM: Karina Dunne & Judy Johnson

ADULT PREPARATION for the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation are through the R.C.I.A Program. Please see Fr Fabian, Fr Patrick or Fr Joseph .

CHILDREN'S LITURGY Is held during Saturday evening Vigil Mass and Sunday 10.30am Mass.

DIVINE MERCY: 1st Sunday of the month at 3pm .

FATIMA STATUE

These families are praying together for the mission of the Parish:

Group 1: **Darian & Hoan Pertzelt 0413 961 958**

Group 2: **Aubrey & Doreen Smith 0433 003 322**



ST BERNARD'S

BAPTISM PREPARATION PROGRAM

Held on the fourth Sunday of the month in the Parish Centre at 11:15am.

Next program: **Sunday 27th January**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd

Sunday of the month: **Sunday 3rd & 17th February**

Registration forms can be downloaded from our website www.pol.cam.org.au/bacchusmarsh. Bring completed Registration Form with a copy of Birth Certificate to the program.

Please note: Both parents are required to attend the program.

Contact Fr Fabian, Fr Patrick, Fr Joseph or the Parish Office for queries.

COORDINATORS : To be advised

ADULT PREPARATION for the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation are through the R.C.I.A Program. Please see Fr Fabian, Fr Patrick or Fr Joseph.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY Is held every Sunday during 10.00am Mass in the meeting room in the Parish Centre.



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.

NICENO-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

WEEKLY PRAYERS & READINGS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Micah

Out of you will be born the one who is to rule over Israel.

The Lord says this:

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
the least of the clans of Judah,
out of you will be born for me
the one who is to rule over Israel;
his origin goes back to the distant past,
to the days of old.

The Lord is therefore going to abandon them
till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth.
Then the remnant of his brothers will come back
to the sons of Israel.

He will stand and feed his flock
with the power of the Lord,
with the majesty of the name of his God.
They will live secure, for from then on he will extend
his power
to the ends of the land.
He himself will be peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 79

Comm: Lord, make us turn to you;
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

All: Lord, make us turn to you;
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,

O Lord, come to our help.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.

And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name.

All: Lord, make us turn to you;
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

I am coming to do your will.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Why should it happen that I am honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?

Mary set out at that time and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;
and his name will be called Emmanuel.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS- THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

First Reading: 1 Sam 1:20-22, 24-28;

Second Reading: 1 Jn3:1-2;

Gospel: Lk 2:41-52



The Catholic family: Raising children in a secular world IV

HOW WE TAUGHT THE FAITH

The following are some ideas my husband and I employed when our children were young:

- ◇ Screened TV programs they watched.
- ◇ Supervised children's choice of friends and discouraged bad companions.
- ◇ Taught them the catechism at home.
- ◇ Said family rosary.
- ◇ Insisted they attend Mass every week and on religious holidays (even as they became adults).
- ◇ Searched out churches while on vacation, so as not to miss Mass.
- ◇ Encouraged vocal prayer and participation at Mass.
- ◇ Gave children practical reasons for praying (for example, special intentions).
- ◇ Inquired of children as to whether their actions constituted a "Christian" attitude.
- ◇ Taught them Christian life by our example.
- ◇ Had them watch religious programs with us at Christmas time and Easter.
- ◇ Created games that promoted real meaning of Christmas (for example, making paper chain of good deeds; putting on a Nativity play).
- ◇ Displayed Advent candle at dinner table.
- ◇ Gave some religious articles as gifts for Communions, Confirmations, weddings, birthdays and Christmas.
- ◇ Always said grace before meals.
- ◇ Presence of religious articles in home (for example, crucifix, holy pictures, Sacred Heart and Blessed Mother statues),
- ◇ Children witnessed parents' participation in attending novenas and parents becoming members of parish's pro-life committee.
- ◇ Encouraged children to participate in some pro-life activities.
- ◇ When topics, such as divorce and remarriage, pregnancy out of wedlock or abortion arose, vocally condemned these practices in the presence of the children.

Extract from *Teaching the Catholic Faith Effectively*, edited by Father John Hardon SJ

- ◇ Children witnessed parents' reading a great deal of religious material.
- ◇ Encouraged frequent Confession.

The following have been helpful in fostering a love and devotion to Jesus Christ.

1. Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in our home.
2. Divine Mercy devotion. A major part of these is having the pictures in prominent places in our home.
3. Going to Mass on First Fridays and explaining to the children all the promises Jesus made to those who keep this devotion. This includes having pictures of the Sacred Heart in the children's rooms.
4. Consecration of our family to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
5. Devotion to our Lady of Fatima. Some sisters at a church that we used to belong to gave us a Pilgrim Virgin Statue. When we first got it I wouldn't let anybody touch it, but when I read the literature about it, I found out it was meant to be handled by children to foster devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. As soon as I told our children they could touch and hold the statue of Our Lady, she was smothered with hugs and kisses and has become a favourite statue in our home. We have made a home altar and the children adorn it with flowers, pictures, their favourite statues and rosaries. It has led to praying the family rosary every night.
6. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament. We let the children get as close to the tabernacle as they can without disrupting anything and explain as much as we can about the sanctuary. We also light votive candles. We tell the children that they can offer up every Mass for their intentions. They especially like to know that they can save babies from being aborted.
7. Use a missalette to go over the readings for the next day or Sunday. The children get a better understanding when they have heard it explained beforehand.
8. Have the house blessed. Keep holy water fonts near doorways low enough for the children to reach them. I try to bless them every night before they go to bed and when someone gets a scrape or bump.