



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

The Epiphany of the Lord

6th January 2019

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: (January)
Tuesday- Friday 9.00am—1.00pm
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 : 7/1/19– 13/1/19

Monday :	No Mass	
Tuesday morning:	No Mass	
Tuesday evening:	6.30pm	FFS
Wednesday:	9.15am	FFS
Thursday:	9.15am	FFS
Friday:	9.15am	FFS
Saturday morning:		
Saturday Vigil :	5.30pm	FFS
Sunday :	8.30am	FJP
	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

Masses resume 4th February 2019.

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES : 7/1/19– 13/1/19

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

Monday :	No Mass	
Tuesday :	No Mass	
Wednesday :	No Mass	
Thursday :	No Mass	
Friday :	No Mass	
Saturday Vigil :	5:00pm	FPB
Sunday :	8:30am	FPB
	10.00am	FPB

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**

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOROBET

MASS TIMES :

Saturday: 6.30pm Mass FJP

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

Fundraising New Year's Eve Ball Raffle

A Big thank you to everyone who supported the Raffle, your support is greatly appreciated. Could all raffle winners please collect their prizes over the weekend from the Sacristy.

A Big congratulation to the following Raffle ticket holders.

Orange ticket no 11E	Anab Dil	Statue of Our Lady of Fatima
Orange ticket no 40E	Lina Calleja	Blue Stone Cook Ware
Yellow ticket no 024D	Anne Nappi	Stanley Rodgers Cutlery Set
Orange ticket no 72E	Anna Taune	Air Fryer
Green ticket no 044C	Lina	Alcohol Hamper
Yellow ticket no 001D	Antony Family	Gift Hamper.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL – BACCHUS MARCH

Many thanks to the Parishioners who donated items for our Christmas hampers. Our conference provided 34 hampers to members of the Bacchus Marsh community with items received from: St Bernard's Parish, St Bernard's Primary School, Grades 2C & 2G Bacchus Marsh Primary School and Patrons and staff of Little Lucky Cafe.

The Catholic family: The Epiphany

On January 6 the Church celebrates the feast of the Epiphany, when we commemorate the mysterious visit of the magi to the Baby Jesus.

The word, “Epiphany”, means “manifestation”. It comes from Greek roots that mean “to show, to display” (phainein) and “on, to” (epi-).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us:

The Epiphany is the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God and Saviour of the world. The great feast of Epiphany celebrates the adoration of Jesus by the wise men (magi) from the East, together with his baptism in the Jordan and the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee.

In the magi, representatives of the neighbouring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation.

The magi's coming to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the king of the Jews shows that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the star of David, the one who will be king of the nations.

Their coming means that pagans can discover Jesus and worship him as Son of God and Saviour of the world only by turning towards the Jews and receiving from them the messianic promise as contained in the Old Testament.

Pope Benedict explains about the magi: “Magi are understood to be members of the Persian priestly caste. Even if they were not exactly members of the Persian priesthood, they were nevertheless custodians of religious and philosophical knowledge that had developed in that area” (*Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives*).

The magi came to see Jesus because they apparently had material of a prophetic nature (some have suggested that they got it from an eastern Jewish community, such as the one in Babylon) that allowed them to identify the birth of the new “king of the Jews” astronomically.

They may have been especially motivated to come see this king of the Jews since there was an expectation at the time that a universal ruler would shortly come from Israel. Pope Benedict explains: “We know from [Roman historians] Tacitus and Suetonius that speculation was rife at the time that the ruler of the world would emerge from Judah—an expectation that [Jewish historian] Flavius Josephus applied to [Roman emperor] Vespasian, consequently finding his way into the latter's favour” (*The Infancy Narratives*).

Why did the magi go to Herod? Probably, because they assumed the newborn king would be a son of Herod—the current “king of the Jews”. Pope Benedict comments: “It is quite natural that their

search for the newborn king of the Jews should take them to Israel's royal city and to the king's palace. That, surely, is where the future king must have been born” (*The Infancy Narratives*).

This, of course, played into Herod's paranoia for his throne and led to the slaughter of the innocents.

What the star was is hard to know. Some question whether the star was a natural phenomenon at all, pointing out that it seems to lead the magi to Jerusalem, disappear, and then reappear and hover over the house in Bethlehem.

But this isn't what Matthew says. He does not say that the star led them to Jerusalem. They merely report that they had seen the new king's star “in the east” (that is, back in their homeland), which is why they came to Jerusalem. What Matthew does say is: “When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was.”

This does not necessarily mean that the star appeared to move in the sky in a way that stars don't ordinarily. Departing from Jerusalem at night, they may have noted on the short (eight-kilometre) trip to Bethlehem that the star was in front of them in the sky—a coincidence arranged by divine providence. Then, when they got to the house, they noticed it was directly over the house—again, a coincidence arranged by divine providence but not necessarily an unusual motion for a star.

Thus the question of whether it could have been a natural phenomenon remains.

This does not mean that astrology is OK. The Catechism explains: “All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to ‘unveil’ the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology ... contradict the honour, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone” (CCC 2116).

God may have arranged for certain signs to attend the birth of his Son, but this is the opposite of what astrology involves. Pope Benedict explains:

Gregory Nazianzen says that at the very moment when the magi adored Jesus, astrology came to an end, as the stars from then on traced the orbit determined by Christ. ... In the letters he wrote from prison to the Ephesians and the Colossians, Paul emphasises that the risen Christ has conquered all the powers and forces in the heavens, and that he reigns over the entire universe.

The story of the wise men's star makes a similar point: it is not the star that determines the child's destiny, it is the child that directs the star (Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives).

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 12th & 13th January

MINISTERS OF THE WORD:

5.30pm: John Little
8.30am: Amy Honrade
10.30am: Romeo Sacris

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.30pm : Philip Anyayahan (P) & Mila Little
8.30am : Villy Julita (P), Lois Brewis
& *Volunteer Please*
10.30am: Elaine Lacey (P) & Rita Harinos

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

MASS COORDINATORS

5.30pm: Dolores Turcsan & Pat Fernandez
8.30am: Lina Calleja & Ken Dumandan
10.30am: Godwin Barton & Carmen Vella

ALTAR SERVERS

5.30pm: Josh Djie-Spiteri & Jonathan Dacunha
8.30am: Rhys Tuala & Andre Oqueli
10.30am: Anakin Anderson & Ethan Porter

If you are unavailable please contact Ben Kratochvil 0423 076 305

ST BERNARD'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 12th & 13th January

MINISTERS OF THE WORD:

5.00pm: Vikki Benson
8.30am: Gerard Harrington & Jenny Hooper
10.00am: Cathy Belcher & Carole Ryder

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Mary Beaton
8.30am: Peter Lafranchi
10.00am: Jennifer Taylor

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ROSTER

December: Office Staff

ALTAR SERVERS

5.00pm:
8.30am: TBA
10.00am:

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:
Joseph Buttigieg, Joseph Galea, Toloai Malo Ma'ae,
Patrick Joseph McCurry & Fred Sultana.

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 death anniversary at this time of:

Leah Abraham, Joyce Atkinson, Jack Coburn, William Daly,
Therese Ellis, Denise Freeman, Andree (Onnie) Greenwood,
Raymund Anthony Hare, Robert (Bob) Kelly, Fred Lewin, Gordon
Lockman, Claire Noye, Peter O'Connor, Fr Sean O'Connell, Gwen
Shanahan, Nathan Shanahan, Ginny Shea Roy Shearer
& Teresa Sloupe.

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: 12th & 13th January

PIETY STALLS VOLUNTEERS

5.30pm: Lorraine Tellis

8.30am: Ineke Allen

10.30am: Imalsha Silva

CUPPA ROSTER

Cuppa Weekend: **23rd & 24th February**

5.30pm:

8.30am: Roster Pending

10.30am:



CHURCH FLOWERS

Ann Tannu & Roperta Mavaega



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 : 12th & 13th January

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Saturday: Carmel Shea

Sunday: Jan Farmelo

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: TBA



CHURCH FLOWERS

Bernadette Kearney



COUNTING TEAM # 2

John Tung

Lucille Wheelahan

Jennifer Taylor

PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS- (January)

Front Garden:

Back/Side Garden:

Parish Centre: Roster Pending

Carpark/Pines:

Back Paddock:

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number is 1800 305 330.

The Bacchus Marsh Conference meets once a month in the Parish Centre. New members are welcome and training is available. 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. Presently, the store is looking for homewares and toys. However, 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: **Allen & Ellen Johnson 0418 200 144**

Group 2: **Porter Family 0409 939 002**

Group 3: **John & Anthea Scerri 0467 564 601**



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

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come;
and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

Arise, shine out Jerusalem, for your light has come,
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,
though night still covers the earth
and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises
and above you his glory appears.
The nations come to your light
and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round:
all are assembling and coming towards you,
your sons from far away
and daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant,
your heart throbbing and full;
since the riches of the sea will flow to you;
the wealth of the nations come to you;

camels in throngs will cover you,
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing the praise of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 71

Comm: Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

All: Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, give your judgment to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgment.

In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds.

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him.

For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor.

All: Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians
The revelation means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
We have seen his star in the East;
and have come to adore the Lord.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
We have come from the East to worship the king.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS- THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

First Reading: Is 40:1-5, 9-11;

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7;

Gospel: Lk 3:15-16, 21-22



The Catholic family: Raising children in a secular world VI

PRIORITIES

Your Time

In raising our children, we as parents must keep constant vigilance over our true priorities, that what momentarily seems important does not interfere. God comes first, then your family. Everything else comes after your family.

One of the best things you can do for your family is to give your children your time. Your time is so important to them, yet the number of temptations to occupy your time and keep you away from them is infinite. Are you trying to do too much, even too many good things? Are you often in a hurry? One way I notice when my family is being pulled in too many different directions is when we find ourselves constantly hounding the children with, "C'mon, hurry up." If we find ourselves saying it even when we take them out for a walk, we know we've gone way over our limit.

Parents are often tempted to compromise what is best for the family for some worthwhile endeavour. Pressure to over-commit yourself in this or that cause, this or that organisation.

Sometimes other people have ideas of what they would like you to do. Pressures can come from parents, in-laws, siblings, friends, relatives or even just acquaintances. Their ideas may not be what is best for the family. Worse yet is when pressure is in direct contradiction to Faith and Morals. You might have someone who feels the number of children should be limited, or someone who ridicules your family for the values you have placed on obedience, honesty, prayer, or going to Mass. Yes, you have to treat them with charity. But when you are making decisions, no matter who they are, do what is best for your children and their souls.

It is important to be firm in giving your family the priority it deserves. Otherwise you will find yourself filling the wishes of others and your family will get whatever scraps of time are left over. You must be totally honest with yourself in considering what is best for your family and what is too much and will take away peace.

It can be easy to overlook the needs of family members. They always seem to get whatever time is left over. The needs of others outside the family are met first. One takes time to listen to someone who needs someone to talk to. But it's at the expense of the spouse at home who needs that too. Or an organisation that beckons and says you have so much to offer others and yet it is evident you have minimal contact with your children.

Do you have the "just until" disease? We are all prone to it in some form or another. You fill in the blank: "Just until I ____ then I will have the time I

need for my family." For me it is painting the walls in our house. And the problem with the "just until" disease is that, when a project is finished, there is usually a new one to replace it.

Another one of my weaknesses is organising the house. I want to go, go, go getting everything in order, so that when I'm done I'll have more time with the children. But all the while, I'm passing up that time with my children that I seek so much to have. It just doesn't make sense. The time with my children is so precious, and if I don't block time out for them first, something else will gobble it up.

For one person it's fixing up the house, for another it's their job, or working towards a holiday. In pursuing "big pleasures", you miss the little treasures. When a family works so hard to take a fabulous one-week vacation, they miss making teddy bears in the bread dough of daily life. In seeking comforts we miss the special moments.

What are we really concerned about? Is it "accomplishing" things? Or that others won't see our failings? When we spend time or work with our children, we might not appear to be much of a success. Raising children doesn't often give you the satisfaction of seeing immediate results from your efforts. Good as these other projects may be, we must first teach our children.

One opportunity we have to see where our priorities really lie, is when we are sick. What are the first things that get let go? Are they things for the family, while we still try to meet the commitments we have made outside the home? Are you saying, "Others are depending on me"? We have this great responsibility and enormous opportunity to get our children's souls to heaven through the everyday seemingly unimportant tasks.

The importance you give your family will show in how you act and think when you are alone with them. It can be so easy to let things bother us so that we become irritable and cross when we are with them. Even more so when we are alone with them and there's no one else to see our crabby behaviour. Children, as perceptive as they are, can readily see the double standard!

The time we as parents spend with our children is always "quality" time because all time is meaningful. The question is: are we willing to use it for good or let it go wasted? Are we willing to make the extra effort to include the child in what we're doing, to work patiently with or talk with the child? Or are we dead set on getting things done and bothered by the little interruptions that are actually the best opportunities for learning and don't always come when we are ready to take the time. We are setting the mould during those early years.