



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 FAX: 9746 0422

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

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year C

17th November 2019

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith

ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint & Fr Alexander Athanas SAC

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew

Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson

Parish Office Hours:

Mon 9.00am-4.00pm Tue 1.00pm-5.00pm

Wed—Thurs 9.00am-5.00pm Friday 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: 8099 7800

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 –Fri 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
Lillian Christian - Vice Chair	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	03 9747 0078
Natalie Howard - Chair	0410 478 046
Villy Julita	0403 751 343
Rose Ma'ae	0431 386 473
Marthese Mercieca	0421 378 691
Kim Nguyen	0431 035 980
EX-OFFICIO:	
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Alexander Athanas and Damien Schuster Council Secretary: Judy Johnson	

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Cathy Belcher - Vice Chair	0431 082 886
Shane Cook -School Advisory Board	0419 999 052
Peter Farren	0418 594 501
Moira Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell	0401 927 502
Emilio Scalzo	5366 5800
John Thorne - Secretary	5310 6692
James Waters - Chair	0403 822 795
EX-OFFICIO:	
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Alexander Athanas 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

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

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES : 18th-24th November

Monday:	7.45am	FFS
Tuesday am:	9.15am	FLM
Tuesday pm:	6.30pm	FLM
Wednesday:	7.45am	FAA
	9.15am	FFS
Thursday: The Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary	Memorial	
	7.45am	FLM
	9.15am	FAA
Friday: St Cecilia Memorial	9.15am	FLM
Saturday Vigil:	5.30pm	FAA
Sunday:	8.30am	FAA
	10.30am	FAA

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 4.45pm and before and weekday Mass.

ROSARY:

Prayed at 9.00am before every weekday Mass.

ADORATION:

No Adoration during the Church Renovations.

CRC MELTON CHAPEL: 8.00am

Mass held on Fridays during school term.



OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOROBET

MASS TIME

Saturday Vigil: 6.30pm FFS

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES : 18th-24th November

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

Monday :	No Mass	
Tuesday:	5.30pm	FAA
Wednesday :	9.30am	FLM
Thursday : The Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary	Memorial	
	9.30am	FFS
Friday: St Cecilia Memorial	9.30am	FAA
KSC and Parishioners Memorial Mass	6.00pm	FFS
Saturday Vigil :	5.00pm	FFS
Sunday :	8:30am	FFS
	10.00am	FFS

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 4.30pm and before and after weekday Mass.

ROSARY: Prayed every Monday at 7.30pm with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for one hour. Rosary is also held on the first Friday of the month following morning mass.

Next Date : **Friday 6th December**

ADORATION: 30 minutes before every weekday Mass.

Adoration is held every first Friday 10.00am until 4.00pm

Next Date: **Friday 6th December**

PROVIDENCE MASS: Is held on the second Friday of the month at 11.00am The Village 5-7 Griffith St, Maddingley.

Next Mass: **Friday 20th December (please note date)**

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 13th December—Christmas Mass (please note date)**

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

RERUM NOVARUM: WALKING TALL—A JOURNEY TOWARDS TREATY AND RECONCILIATION

Tuesday 26 November, 7pm (light refreshments) 7.30pm start

Philippa Brazill Theatre, ACU, 8 Brunswick Street Fitzroy

In January 2018 the Victorian Government established the Treaty Advancement Commission as an independent office to facilitate the desire of the Government to establish treaties with Victoria's First Peoples. The Commission is tasked with organising the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria as the authoritative body, to develop the 'ground rules' for these treaties.

Orator: Eleanor Burke, Chair, Victorian Aboriginal Treaty Working Group

Respondent: Sherry Balcombe, Executive Officer, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Melbourne

RSVP: Friday 22 November, justice@cam.org.au or 9926 5727

PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTERS & ENVELOPE DISTRIBUTION WEEKEND

Our Parish Renewal Program has been finalised and once again I warmly thank everyone for their involvement and generous response. Final results will be published soon.

Collect today your acknowledgement letters - and your new giving envelopes (where applicable). These letters are available in alphabetical surname order in the Church foyer/rear of the Church. The new pledge commitments take effect next week on Sunday 24th November.

Not yet completed your pledge? Don't worry – pledge cards are available on the table at the rear of the Church. Completed cards can still be placed in the collection plate.

A reminder that all Groups & Ministries responses are currently being processed and all those who responded will be contacted in shortly. Your support in this key area of parish life is very much appreciated.

THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN!

Fr Fabian.

RETREATS Brochures for the Retreats are available this weekend. Please complete forms and return. Women's Retreat to be booked online.

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

JAMES TELLIS—ROSARY AND FUNERAL DETAILS

Rosary: Thursday 21st November at 6.00pm

Gardenia Funerals Melton, 29 Reserve Rd, Melton

Funeral: Friday 22nd November at 3.00pm

St Bernard's Church, 61 Lerderberg St
Bacchus Marsh

The Tellis Family have requested, in lieu of flowers, donations may be made for the Tabernacle in the New Chapel. Envelopes will be available in the Church foyer. Thank You.

PARISH SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2020 (for students who attend non-Catholic schools)

To enrol your child in the program please speak to the Sacramental Coordinator after Mass, this Saturday evening. All information and dates will be mailed to you after they have been confirmed.

EFTPOS is available.

DONATIONS FOR HEATING AND COOLING FOR CHURCH

If you would like to make a direct online donation to the heating and cooling fund you can do so with the following details

Account Name: St Anthony's Parish Annual Appeals

Account No: 083347/025471925

Reference: 110116461.

Thank You.

PRIME TIMERS

Our next outing is Tuesday, 3rd. December 2019 for Christmas Lunch at the Wallace Hotel, 741 Bungaree-Wallace Rd. Wallace. Cost per person is \$27.00.

Please RSVP by Thursday 28th November. Enquiries call Ineke on 0400120401 or email ineke49@yahoo.com

CATHOLIC DEAF APPEAL

Last weekend we had a special collection for the Catholic Deaf Appeal. We collected \$653.50. Thank you for your generosity.

ST BERNARD'S

PARISH SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2020 (for students who attend non-Catholic schools)

To enrol your child in the program, please arrange a meeting time with Naim Chdid, our Sacramental Coordinator, through the Parish Office (5367 2069). The enrolment meetings will be held on Fridays in November. He will be available each Friday 10.00am –5.00pm and 12noon—6.30pm alternately. All information and dates will be given to you at the Sacramental Enrolment Meeting.

St BERNARD'S NATIVITY PLAY

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, the St Bernard's Nativity Play has been cancelled. Apologies for any inconvenience.

PIETY STALL Christmas cards are available in the Piety Stall \$9 for a pack of 10. Also don't forget to purchase your Columban Calendar from the stall.

CATHOLIC MUSEUM

Our Catholic Museum will be open this Sunday from 12 to 3pm. For those that haven't visited before, this is in the chapel of the old convent at the end of Convent Lane, Bacchus Marsh. All welcome to drop in.

CATHOLIC DEAF APPEAL

Our Catholic Deaf Appeal that was scheduled for last weekend was not collected. We will have the special collection this weekend. Please give generously. Thank you.

KSC RACING GAME

Result Update

Game 1

Carmel Welsh – 80 points

George Kearney – 77 points

Shirley Long – 75 points

Game 2

Bev Skinner – 80 points

Matthew Tung – 77 points

Lyn Shea – 75 points

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 23rd & 24th November MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.30pm : Liza Fernandes
8.30am: Geoff Sutton
10.30am: Rose Ma'ae

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.30pm: Philip Anyayahan(P) & Dolores Turcsan
8.30am: Sue Alexander (P), Ron Howard
& Ineke Allen
10.30am: George Bonello (P) & Richard Tuala

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: Natalie Howard & Ron Howard
10.30am: Leonia Jessop & Josephine German

ALTAR SERVERS

5.30pm: Jonathan Dacunha & Mason Azzopardi
8.30am: Rhys Tuala & Andre Oqueli
10.30am: Ethan Porter & Nick Taunuu

If you are unavailable please contact Ben Kratochvil 0423 076 305

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

Michael Borg, May Boyce, Bryan Davies, Anthony D'Cruz, Francis D'Cruz, Jorris D'Cruz, Joseph Gomez, Rosa Gomez, Darren Hunter, Douglas Leslie, Sylvia Ladson, Robert Marley, John McDade, Rose McDade, Margery Montgomery, Tony Pollock & Stella Silva

Please pray for the Sick:

Jean Barnett, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Brendan Michael, Veronica Michael, Wanda Novak, John Osborne, Peter Poole, Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Charlie Spiteri, Clint Abela Wadge, & 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

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: 23rd & 24th November MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Vikki Benson
8.30am: Moira Ross & Marj Tung
10.00am: Sr Mary Fermio

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Colin Remedios
8.30am: Theo Franken
10.00am: Anne Daly

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ROSTER

November: John Thorne

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

ST BERNARD'S YOUTH GROUP

Growing in the Spirit of Faith, Friendship and Fun
Age group: 11-30yrs Where: St Bernard's Church chapel and Parish Centre
61 Lerderberg Street, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340
When: Fortnightly, Thursday's 7:15pm - 9:15pm
Next Youth Group meet up: **21st November**
Email contact: saintbernardsyouthgroup@gmail.com

FAITH ON FIRE PRAYER GROUP

Every fortnight on Thursday 7.15pm - 9.15pm. Prayers in the Church followed by fellowship in the Parish Centre.
Next meeting **21st November**

We pray for the recently deceased:

Sheila Barratt and Desmond Trask.

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

Arthur Bell, Anthony Giani, Jack Glasheen, and Grace Green

Please pray for the Sick:

Noah Barlow, Dudley Baddeley, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Kevin Bridges, Tina Bower, 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 Johnson David Kasprzak, Loretta Kervin, Michael Larkin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, Debbie Marshall, Jordanis Maryo, Pauline McDonald, Ian McKechnie, Marcus Meno, Paul Mullin, Arthur Pape, Michael Paterson, Georgia Peacock, Bev Pickett, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Susan Trist, Hayden Tung, Mitchell Tung, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Mary Walsh, 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: 23rd & 24th November

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.30pm: Kristina Scerri
8.30am: Judy Johnson
10.30am: Sally Markulin

CUPPA ROSTER

Cuppa Weekend: 23rd & 24th November

5.30pm: Visna & Oshadie
8.30am: Geoff Sutton & Sky James
10.30am: Charlie & Lina Vasallo



CHURCH FLOWERS—Nov

No fresh flowers during renovation



CLEANING ROSTER: Thursday

Lorelle Porter

Volunteers would be appreciated as well.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330

The Melton South Conference meet every 3rd Tuesday morning in the Holy Family Room 10.30am.

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

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

VOLUNTEERS WEEKEND : 23rd & 24th November

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Saturday: Sean Giani
Sunday: Marj Tung

MORNING TEA ROSTER

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

Next Morning Tea: **1st December**

Host: Parish Pastoral Council



CHURCH FLOWERS—November

Natalia & Jessica Klenkowski



COUNTING TEAM # 6

Jill Geurts

Ron Geurts

PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS- (November)

Front Garden: Stuart Robertson

Back/Side Garden: Hugh Miller

Parish Centre: **Volunteer Please**

Carpark/Pines: **Volunteer Please**

Back Paddock: **Volunteer Please**

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

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 28th Nov**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month: **1st & 15th Dec**

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 Alexander, Fr Lucas 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 Alexander or Fr Lucas .

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: **Lorraine Tellis** 0437 658 423

Group 2: **Gavin & Alison Pereira** 0423 960 538

Group 3: **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 24th November**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month: **1st & 15th Dec**

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 Alexander, Fr Lucas or the Parish Office for queries.

COORDINATORS : Steve and Geraldine

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

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 PROCESSION

The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You will call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives from every place.

FIRST READING Malachi 3:19-20

The day is coming now, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and the evil-doers will be like stubble. The day that is coming is going to burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, leaving them neither root nor stalk. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will shine out with healing in its rays.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 97

Comm: The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.

All: The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp
with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord.

Let the sea and all within it, thunder;
the world, and all its peoples.

Let the rivers clap their hands
and the hills ring out their joy
at the presence of the Lord.

For the Lord comes,
he comes to rule the earth.
He will rule the world with justice
and the people with fairness.

All: The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS –

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST KING OF THE UNIVERSE

First Reading: 2 Sam 5:1-3;

Second Reading: Col 1:12-20;

Gospel: Lk 23:35-43



SECOND READING 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

You know how you are supposed to imitate us: now we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we ever have our meals at anyone's table without paying for them; no, we worked night and day, slaving and straining, so as not to be a burden on any of you. This was not because we had no right to be, but in order to make ourselves an example for you to follow.

We gave you a rule when we were with you; not to let anyone have any food if he refused to do any work. Now we hear that there are some of you who are living in idleness, doing no work themselves but interfering with everyone else's. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we order and call on people of this kind to go on quietly working and earning the food that they eat.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lift up your heads and see;
your redemption is near at hand.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 21:5-19

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, 'All these things you are staring at now - the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed.' And they put to him this question: 'Master,' they said 'when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?'

'Take care not to be deceived,' he said 'because many will come using my name and saying, "I am he" and, "The time is near at hand." Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

'But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated by all men on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

To be near God is my happiness,
to place my hope in God the Lord.

The Catholic family: Raising children in a secular world L

Must you know the reasons behind a behaviour to change it?

Some of the toughest questions parents ask me have the word “why” in them. “Why does Katie hate school?” “Why is Bill so immature?” “Why can’t Chris control his temper?” To many of these, I have to answer: “I don’t know.” But that doesn’t mean something can’t be done.

The “you must know why” myth may be the oldest of the parenting myths. It has its roots in the earliest days of psychology, when theories about kids focused almost totally on why they behaved as they did, saying that the answer lay buried hidden in past unresolved conflicts and hurts. As other viewpoints became popular, less emphasis was put on the past. Nevertheless, many of these viewpoints also said that, in order to change behaviour, one must first identify its causes. This old and erroneous idea still governs parenting today.

Because of the “you must know why” myth, you may think that really good parents should be psychologically insightful enough to elicit their children’s true feelings, resolve the dilemmas caused by those feelings, and thus enable all conflicts to evaporate.

Knowing why sometimes helps. It sometimes does not. But either way, it is not necessary. Look at your own behaviour. If you procrastinate, do you understand all the reasons why? Does this mean you cannot work at changing yourself? When you have a headache, do you always know where it came from? Nonetheless, you do things to get rid of it, don’t you? In fact, most of the time you are forced to change yourself without completely understanding how you got that way. The same is true of children. You can’t always understand them, but you may still have to change their behaviour.

Many parents feel uneasy when they can’t figure out their kids. They are afraid of acting prematurely or being unfair. “What if we punish Jimmy, and we miss something that is upsetting him?” Even if something is upsetting Jimmy, and you’re not aware of it, he is still responsible for his actions. Maybe the kids at school made fun of his designer lunch box. That gives him no excuse to come home and push around his sister.

“But,” you ask, “won’t a behaviour keep coming back if its causes still exist?” Again, not necessarily. In fact, part of maturing is learning new behaviour in the same old bad situations. You want Jimmy to learn how to ignore name-calling instead of getting upset by it, or to realise that he can get good grades even if his teacher doesn’t like him. You need to teach Jimmy that he can change his behaviour even though his environment or the people in it may not change.

If you are preoccupied with why, you may also waste energy looking for complicated explanations that don’t exist. One of my colleagues was seeing a family for counselling. During a session, the father repeatedly badgered his teenaged daughter to tell him why she smoked. Each time, she doggedly answered, in true teenaged fashion: “I don’t know.” Finally, the therapist stepped in: “Will you please tell your father why you

smoke?” The girl then confessed: “Because I want to. I know you don’t like it, but I don’t care.” That was too obvious for Dad. “Don’t avoid the issue. Why do you really smoke?” He believed they couldn’t get anywhere until they got to the psychological bottom of things.

Of course, often you are in fact able to figure out the reasons for your child’s behaviour, or at least what you think the reasons are. Even so, you are often unable to do anything about them. Nevertheless, you can still solve the problems they cause.

If the reasons are in the past, they are beyond your reach. You can’t go back and undo them. Suppose your 14-year-old daughter Katie hates school. Her attitude has been building for years. Why? By now, the reasons are so many and complex that you could never identify them all. And even to try would probably be a waste of time. The main thing is to get her to school now.

If the reasons are in the present, they may still be beyond your reach. “Katie is so hard to manage after she comes back from a weekend with (fill in the appropriate relative). It takes me a week to get control again.” But if Katie has to visit that relative, and that person won’t cooperate with you in disciplining her, then you are forced to handle Katie when she’s with you, in the here and now. You can’t eradicate all the present causes of her unmanageability.

I can pull a similar illustration from my own family. My younger brother Mike began to dislike school intensely during the middle of one school year. His attitude manifested itself in crying spells, slipping grades, and assorted illnesses. My mother could not understand what was happening, because Mike had always enjoyed school. Looking into the change, she learned that Mike’s teacher, for personal reasons, was having a difficult year in the classroom. And my brother, who was a sensitive little guy, was reacting. There was little my mother could do about the classroom situation, so she supported Mike but still insisted that he attend school, “sick” or not. She also held him responsible for his grades. Eventually, Mike pulled out of his slump, even though the “cause” was still there.

The reasons for a child’s behaviour regularly come purely from his own peculiar motivations. In other words, the why lies inside the child’s head. Just as we adults perceive the world in our own unique and sometimes distorted ways, so too do kids. They may misperceive what they see and experience, and then act upon their misperceptions. The result is behaviour that seems to have no logical basis. And what frustrates us adults even further is that kids often can’t or won’t explain what is going on.

To save yourself much misdirected energy, replace your why’s with what’s and how’s. Instead of asking, “Why is this happening?” ask, “What can I do about it?” or “How am I allowing this problem to continue?” These questions will guide you towards causes over which you do have control. You may not be able to change the past, the environment, or what’s in your child’s head, but you can change you. And you are often the strongest influence on your youngster’s actions.