



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
OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, KOROBET
309 MYRNIONG-KOROBET ROAD 3341

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year C

7th July 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:

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 –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
Lillian Christian	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	03 9747 0078
Natalie Howard	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 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
Moira Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell	0401 927 502
Emillio Scalzo	5366 5800
John Thorne	5310 6692
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

If you need a Priest in the case of an emergency please call 0404 598 558

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES : 8th July—14th July

Monday:	No Mass	
Tuesday morning:	9.15am	FJP
Tuesday evening:	6.30pm	FJP
Wednesday:	9.15am	FJP
Thursday:	9.15am	FJP
Friday:	9.15am	FJP
Saturday Vigil:	5.30pm	FFS
Sunday:	8.30am 10.30am	FJP FFS

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 4.45pm and before and after weekday Mass.

ROSARY:

Prayed at 9.00am before every weekday Mass.



ADORATION:

30 min. before and 30 min. after every weekday Mass.

CRC MELTON CHAPEL: 8.00am

Mass held on Fridays during school term.

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH

MASS TIMES : 8th July– 14th July

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

Monday :	No Mass	
Tuesday	5.30pm	FJP
Wednesday :	9.30am	FPB
Thursday :	No Mass	
Friday:	9.30am	FFS
Saturday Vigil :	5.00pm	FPB
Sunday :	8:30am 10.00am	FPB FPB

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 2nd August**



ADORATION:

30 minutes before every weekday Mass.

Adoration is held every first Friday

10.00am until 4.00pm

Next Date: **Friday 2nd August**

PROVIDENCE MASS

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

The Village 5-7 Griffith St, Maddingley.

Next Mass: **Friday 12th July**

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 19th July**

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOROBET

MASS TIME:

Saturday Vigil:	6.30pm	FJP
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ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY

Today on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday we celebrate the contributions that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic brothers and sisters have gifted to our Australian Catholic Church. Their culture, spirituality and commitment to Jesus Christ is a shining example of God's love and wonder. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders-past, current and emerging and thank them for their care and love of this land.



PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

THE PETER PENCE COLLECTION

Last weekend we had a special collection for Peter Pence, a collection to support the charitable works of Pope Francis for the relief of those most in need. St Anthony's Parish raised \$587.40 and St Bernard's Parish raised \$492.00. Thank you for your generosity.

FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

An RCIA program will commence on the Sunday 28th July. If you:

.. are interested in finding out more about the Catholic faith,

.. wish to become a Catholic,

.. didn't receive all your sacraments as a child and you would like to receive them, and,

.. are interested in deepening your faith, the way you worship, and want to understand the fruits for Christian life required of a Catholic, then join us on this journey. Venue, time and dates to be advised. Please register your interest with the Parish Office.

SAINT MALACHY'S CHURCH- SUNDAY EVENING MASS

Byres Road, Blackwood. Sunday evening Mass at 4 pm. All Welcome.

JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES MEETING

The meeting will be held at the Josephite Convent, at 2pm on Sunday 7th July.

For details please contact Christine Nicholls Van Order 0421 845 635.

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

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.

READERS & EUCHARIST MINISTERS WORKSHOP - Saturday, 20th July 2019

All Readers and Eucharist Ministers are required to attend this workshop scheduled for **Saturday, 20th July 2019 at 9:00am** in the Church. New Volunteers who are interested to perform this role, please attend this workshop. Kindly leave your contact details on the clipboard that is at the back of the Church.

PRIME TIMERS

This month's outing will be "Christmas In July"

Venue: Bacchus Marsh Golf Club, Links Rd, Bacchus Marsh

Date: Tuesday 30th July, 2019

Time: 12noon

Cost: \$20.00 per head Main: Turkey, Dessert: Plum Pudding

Please wear something Christmassy.

RSVP Ineke 0400 120 401 or

email ineke49@yahoo.com by 27/7/19.

INVITATION TO CRAFT GROUP

Come join in our craft group or come along to enjoy a cuppa and a chat. Every second Saturday of the month. Group meets at Parish church 10.30- 1.00 pm. Next meeting Saturday the 13th July. Hope to see you then. Any queries please contact: Natalie Howard 0410478046 or Kim Barton 0425770618.

PARISH OFFICE

Please note the Parish Office will be closed on Monday 8th July.

Thank you.

ST BERNARD'S

TWO HEARTS PRAYER GROUP

Every fortnight on Thursday evenings 7.15pm - 9.15pm.

Prayers in Church followed by fellowship in the Parish Centre.

Next date: **18th July**

THE NEIGHBOUR'S PLACE (TNP)

Emergency food bank in Bacchus Marsh is looking for volunteers. If you are in a position to give up just a small amount of your time and skills to help us run TNP, we would love to hear from you. We are also looking for help for a Store Person if you have supermarket skills (not a requirement) and would like to assist us maybe once a week, have to be reasonably fit, some carrying and lifting will be required. Contact Jackie on 5367 6222 to discuss volunteering.

KSC MEETING

Monday 8th July 2019, 8pm in the Parish Centre.

KSC FAMILY BONFIRE - THANK YOU

What a great night and an impressive bonfire! Even with the wet weather and a decrease in attendance this year, we all thoroughly enjoyed the night. The food and the music were fantastic, and approximately \$500 was raised to help the De la Salle Brothers continue their missionary work in Papua New Guinea. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the night.

Be sure not to miss out next year!

WORSHIP NEWS

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

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 13th & 14th July
MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.30pm : Volunteer Please
8.30am: Michael Higgins
10.30am: Romeo Sacris

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.30pm: Philip Anyayahan (P) & Volunteer Please
8.30am: Lois Brewis (P) & Villy Julita
& Volunteer Please
10.30am: Elaine Lacey (P) & Doris Bonello

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: Leonia Jessop & Godwin Barton

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 ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

William Ainsworth, Fonoti Sepelini Ma'ae, Bianca McCurry, Mabel McShane, Chantelle Medhurst, William Mullins, Judith Pereira, Clarrie Rietschel & Estanislao Sanchez

Please pray for the Sick:

Jean Barnett, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Margaret Hall, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Veronica Michael, Wanda Novak, John Osborne, 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: 13th & 14th July
MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Trish Davine
8.30am: Peter Lafranchi & Margaret Love
10.00am: Diane Corro & James Waters

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Vikki Benson
8.30am: Colm Carragher
10.00am: Jenny Kearney

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ROSTER

July Josephite Associates

ALTAR SERVERS

5.00pm: Roster Pending
8.30am: Volunteers Please
10.00am: Thank you

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

SPIRIT OF THE TWO HEARTS YOUTH GROUP

Experience faith, friendship and fun.
Age group: 11-30years When: Every Thursday fortnight, 7:15pm - 9:15pm Where: St. Bernard's Chapel and Parish Hall 61 Lerderberg Street, Bacchus Marsh
Next Youth Group: 18th July
Contact: Sister Clare 0415 806 217 or
Email : twoheartscentre@bigpond.com
Website: www.missionariesofloveandpeace.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 recently deceased:

Sr Anne Cahir RSG & Rosemary Fellows.

We pray for the death anniversary at this time of:

Mary Glenane, Paul Murray, David Rowan & Edward Skinner.

Please pray for the Sick:

Terry Sims, 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, 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, Marian Smith, Frank & Elizabeth Stehmann, Susan Trist, Hayden Tung, Mitchell Tung, Stephen Van Eede, 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: 13th & 14th July

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.30pm: Lorraine Tellis

8.30am: Ineke Allen

10.30am: Imalsha Silva



CUPPA ROSTER

Cuppa Weekend: **27th & 28th July**

5.30pm: Zarb Family

8.30am: Chris Fitzgerald & Graziella Corcoran

10.30am: Anne Nappi & Doris Bonello

CHURCH FLOWERS—July

Ana Taunuu & 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.

Contact:

Natalie Howard 0410 478 046,

Amy Honrade 0457 042 695

Lillian Christian 0400 441 257

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

ST BERNARD'S

VOLUNTEERS WEEKEND : 13th & 14th July

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Saturday: Mandy Harrington

Sunday: Jan & Colm

MORNING TEA ROSTER

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

Next Morning Tea: **7th July**

Host: Knights of the Southern Cross



CHURCH FLOWERS

Francis McDaid



COUNTING TEAM # 7

Denis Everard

Bernard Coburn,

Mary Flanagan

Patrick Flanagan

PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS- (July)

Front Garden: **Volunteer Please**

Back/Side Garden: **Volunteer Please**

Parish Centre: John Tung

Carpark/Pines: John Tung

Back Paddock: 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

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 25th July**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd

Sunday of the month: **4th & 18th August**

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: **Brian Barker** 0408 974 322

Group 2: **George & Doris Bonello** 0431 459 668

Group 3: **Angela Saliba** 0431 095 885



ST BERNARD'S

BAPTISM PREPARATION PROGRAM

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

Next program: **Sunday 28th July**

Baptisms are held on the 1st and 3rd

Sunday of the month: **4th & 18th August**

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 : Kate & Danny

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 PROCESSION

Your merciful love, O God,
we have received in the midst of your temple.
Your praise, O God, like your name,
reaches the ends of the earth;
your right hand is filled with saving justice.

FIRST READING Isaiah 66:10-14

Rejoice, Jerusalem,
be glad for her, all you who love her!
Rejoice, rejoice for her,
all you who mourned her!
That you may be suckled, filled,
from her consoling breast,
that you may savour with delight
her glorious breasts.
For thus says the Lord:
Now towards her I send flowing
peace, like a river,
and like a stream in spate
the glory of the nations.
At her breast will her nurslings be carried
and fondled in her lap.
Like a son comforted by his mother
will I comfort you.
And by Jerusalem you will be comforted.
At the sight your heart will rejoice,
and your bones flourish like the grass.
To his servants the Lord will reveal his hand.
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 65

Comm: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

All: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise.
Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds!

'Before you all the earth shall bow:
shall sing to you, sing to your name!
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men.

He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him;
he rules for ever by his might.

Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what he did for my soul.
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer
nor withhold his love from me.

All: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

SECOND READING Galatians 6:14-18

The only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. It does not matter if a person is circumcised or not; what matters is for him to become an altogether new creature. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, who form the Israel of God. I want no more trouble from anybody after this; the marks on my body are those of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my brothers. Amen.
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, "Peace to this house!" And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, "The kingdom of God is very near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, "We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near." I tell you, on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.'

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. 'Lord,' they said, 'even the devils submit to us when we use your name.' He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Yes, I have given you power to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS – 15th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Deut 30:10-14;
Second Reading: Col 1:15-20;
Gospel: Lk 10:25-37



The Catholic family: Raising children in a secular world XXXI

Investment in marriage

As Francine and I raced around on a typical Saturday afternoon, we found ourselves at the local shopping village together. Never one to waste the opportunity to gain a “good husband” brownie point, I declared we should have a “coffee date”. Naturally, Francine obliged. She practically never says “no” to a “date” no matter how pathetic (have I ever mentioned my “do you want to come on a fill up the car date?”).

So we ventured 50 metres to a great little Italian restaurant. We were warmly greeted by the owner, whom we had not seen for some months. A young up and coming restaurateur with a growing number of venues, the last time we saw him he was rapidly approaching the birth of his first child. Francine immediately enquired after the baby.

“Oh my God, we are in complete shock,” was the immediate response with all the energy of someone who was still working through a major trauma. “I thought running a restaurant was stressful, but this is worse,” he went on to say. “Here I am in control, and I can fix things when there are problems, but our lives are now completely run by our little boy. I mean, it’s wonderful, amazing, and we are so happy, but oh my God, I am in complete shock.”

It’s hard to catch the raw emotion that came with the words without the benefit of his melodic Italian accent and the accompanying body language, but perhaps you can grasp the sense of what was a very transparent encounter.

So, there went my date! We spend the next 20 minutes listening to the joys and tribulations of a young parent who has just realised his life is no longer about himself or even his wife. The agony and the ecstasy, the passion, the pain and the glory!

As old hands with five kids behind us, it’s easy to be smug and quietly think, “yep, been there, done that”, but we empathised and affirmed him in his newest and greatest enterprise. As we walked away, I playfully grumbled: “Who ate my date?”

Reflecting on this encounter over the next few days, we realised it was a great reminder

to us that anything and everything worth having in our life has come with a cost. It’s obvious when we think about it.

In the case of our traumatised restaurateur, it was embarking on that great unknown of parenting. All parents understand the sacrifices that come with raising children, and without any guarantees that it will turn out well. At a less grand scale, the same applies to fitness, education and community involvement.

But what about our marriages? Are we reinvesting in these the way we invest in our homes, our cars, our careers? It’s one of the greatest ironies of marriage: survey married people about what is the most important thing in their life and the number one response is their marriage, followed by their family.

If they are then asked, “What have you done to invest in your marriage? we tend to get blank looks. Why is it that as married people we expect to undertake professional development in our workplaces throughout our lives, and yet we are so casually neglectful about the most important thing in our lives?

When was the last time we read a quality book on building a better marriage or attended a seminar on the topic?

The trick with investing in our marriage, like dieting and fitness, is to recognise that it’s not the “grand gestures” that make the difference, but the small everyday acts. This should be good news, but somehow we seem to miss it.

So, instead we hold out for that once-a-year vacation with just the two of us, the occasional special dinner, the extravagant birthday gift.

What makes the real difference is going an extra bit for each other every day, not an extra mile once or twice a year. Doing that extra something that makes our spouse’s day a little easier or brighter, choosing to make an affirming comment rather than a critical one.

Here are two questions every married couple could ask themselves every day: “What have I done for my marriage today?” and: “What can I do to make your day better?” If we each asked ourselves these two questions every day, and answered it with action, we would be well on our way to making the daily investment needed for a flourishing marriage.

By Byron and Francine Piroia, from the SmartLoving series