



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

The 16th Sunday In Ordinary Time

Year A

19th July 2020

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith

ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint /Father Marcus Goulding

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew Mon Tue Wed & Fri 9am-4pm

Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson Tue-Thu 10am-2pm

Parish Office Hours: phone/email contact only

Father Fabian 0403 435 471

Fr Lucas 0478 768 141 /Fr Marcus 0468 367 893

Email: meltonsouth@cam.org.au

Website: www.stanthonyofpadua.com.au

St Anthony's School Principal: Damien Schuster

Wilson Road, Melton South 3338

Phone: 8099 7800

Email: principal@sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au

Website: www.sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)

Principal: Marlene Jorgensen **Phone:** 8099 6000

Website: www.crcmelton.com.au

ST BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan Wed-Fri 9am-1pm

Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson Tue-Thu 10am-2pm

Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper: Naim Chdid

Tue & Fri 10am-1pm

Parish Office Hours: phone/email contact only

Father Fabian 0403 435 471

Fr Lucas 0478 768 141/Fr Marcus 0468 367 893

Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au

Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au

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
Kim Nguyen	0431 035 980

EX-OFFICIO:

Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Marcus Goulding
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
Moir Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell	0401 927 502
John Thorne - Secretary	5310 6692
James Waters - Chair	0403 822 795

EX-OFFICIO:

Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Marcus Goulding
and Emilio Scalzo

CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS

Coordinator: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449)

Officers: Karina Dunne & Lorraine Tellis

PARISHIONER'S FIRST COLLECTION/SECOND COLLECTION

Parishioners who normally give cash each weekend for the collections, if they wish to donate, are now able to go to the link below and make their payments online.

The link to the St Anthony's Parish is: [CDFpay for St Anthony's Parish, Melton South](#)

The link to the St Bernard's Parish is: [CDFpay for St Bernard's Parish, Bacchus Marsh](#)

Please put your name and thanksgiving number if you know it as a reference. Thank you.

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Anointing of the sick can be organised with the Priests directly, please call them.

Phone numbers for the Priests are listed on the front page of the newsletter.

MASS TIMES—LIVE STREAMING FROM ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH

Monday-Saturday: 5.30pm Adoration/Rosary/Benediction
6.00pm Mass

Sunday: 10.30am Mass

MASSES AVAILABLE ON LIVE STREAMING— FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

St Anthony's Parish are live streaming Masses on YouTube.

The Masses are also being live streamed on Facebook. You can watch Masses by going to the website: stanthonypadua.com.au. Click the link for Live Masses. The Masses are coming through the St Anthony's Facebook page—St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church Melton South (you will need to have a Facebook account to be able to view the Masses).

ST ANTHONY'S FACEBOOK

Please visit our Facebook page.:

[St Anthony of Padua](#)

[Catholic Church Melton South](#) Live

Masses streaming from St
Anthony's daily.



PARISHIONER'S FIRST COLLECTION/SECOND COLLECTION OR PARISH APPEALS

Parishioners who normally give cash each weekend for the collections, if they wish to donate, are now able to go to the link below and make their payments online.

Parishioners are able to make quick and easy recurring thanksgiving payments or can choose a one-off offering from the comfort of their own home.

When making an offertory online, parishioners have the option to choose which collection they would like to partake in, as they usually would during Sunday Mass - first collection, second collection or a parish appeal.

The link to the St Anthony's Parish is: [CDFpay for St Anthony's Parish, Melton South](#)

The link to the St Bernard's Parish is: [CDFpay for St Bernard's Parish, Bacchus Marsh](#)

Please put your name and thanksgiving number if you know it as a reference. Thank you.

CHILD SAFETY OFFICER - ALOYSIOUS DACUNHA

The Parishes would like to thank Aloysious Dacunha for all his contributions as Child Safety Officer.

A PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH, THE GREAT PROTECTOR

St Joseph,

You were receptive to God working in your life.

Help us by your prayers at this time of trial.

You kept Jesus and Mary under your watchful care:

may your prayers assist our local Church to respond to those in need.

You taught the Christ Child your trade and prayers:

help us to follow his example of love.

You were part of God's plan for all humanity:

assist us to be vigilant and responsible this day.

You spent your life in service:

may we be mindful of others, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, caring for them in these difficult days.

You trusted in the clear primacy of God over all history and every situation: help us to grow in faith and pray to the

Father, *Thy will be done.*

Amen

Source: Website Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne





St Anthony's Parish

Dear Parishioners,

We are living through extraordinary times. Each day is a changing reality, and your continued patience and strength in these difficult times is greatly appreciated. Care of our people is of utmost importance as we enter into a six-week lockdown. Please know that I am praying for each of you at this time. You are remembered at the altar every day when I am offering mass. I am here for you, so please do not hesitate to contact me on 0403 435 471 when you need to speak to me. Please remember me in your prayers.

With our church closed again for a period of six weeks we will continue to live stream masses seven days a week. Monday – Saturday. We will be having exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 5.30pm while praying the Rosary which will be followed with Benediction and Mass at 6pm. Sunday mass will be at 10.30am.

Despite these challenges, we cannot lose heart. We must continue to bring to the Lord in prayer all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died.

I will be available in the Parish office at St Anthony's Tuesday – Saturday from 9.30am to 1pm. St Anthony's parish staff will be working their usual hours from home.

Bacchus Marsh is not part of metropolitan Melbourne and therefore not currently subject to the lock down. Masses will therefore continue to be celebrated at St Bernard's and the parish of St Bernard's will continue to operate as it has been to date.

Fr Marcus is now residing at St Bernard's with Fr Lucas. From Tuesday 14th July 2020, two Masses will be offered from Tuesday to Friday.

To ensure we comply with Archdiocesan and Government safety measures, Mass attendees will be required to produce their license or other document indicating their place of residence to be admitted entrance to the Church. **People from locked-down suburbs cannot be admitted entrance and should not attempt to book for Mass.**

May the Peace of Christ be with you

Fr Fabian

Parish Priest

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH OFFICE

Parishioners please be advised that the St Anthony's Parish Office will be closed during the COVID-19 Stage 3 lockdown. The Parish Staff will be working from home. Please contact us for any assistance you need.

Lesley Morffew Parish Secretary **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9.00am-4.00pm**

Email Lesley: meltonsouth@cam.org.au or call **9747 9692**

Judy Johnson Admin Assistant **Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10.00am-2.00pm**

Email Judy: judyparishnews@gmail.com or call **0414 007 009**

St Bernard's
Parish



MASSES CONTINUE AT ST BERNARD'S, BACCHUS MARSH

Dear Parishioners,

Bacchus Marsh is not part of metropolitan Melbourne and therefore not currently subject to the lock down. Masses will therefore continue to be celebrated at St Bernard's and the parish of St Bernard's will continue to operate as it has been to date. Fr Marcus is now residing at St Bernard's with Fr Lucas. From Tuesday 14th July 2020, two Masses will be offered from Tuesday to Friday.

To ensure we comply with Archdiocesan and Government safety measures, Mass attendees may be required to produce their license or other document indicating their place of residence to be admitted entrance to the Church. People from locked-down suburbs cannot be admitted entrance and should not attempt to book for Mass.

We continue to be able to accommodate 20 people at each Mass. Registration for Mass is still required and can be done at www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au or on 0432 055 992 for those who cannot access the internet. Parishioners are welcome to attend Mass once per day. Confessions will be heard half an hour before Mass.

From Tuesday, 14th July 2020 Masses are being offered at St Bernard's at the following times:

Sunday	8.30am & 10.00am
Tuesday	7.30am & 6.00pm
Wednesday	7.30am & 9.30am
Thursday	7.30am & 6.00pm
Friday	7.30am & 9.30am
Saturday	5.00pm (Vigil of Sunday)

We thank you for your cooperation during this very challenging time. We ask your continued prayers for those of us in lockdown. Please continue to bring to the Lord in prayer all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died.

As Dolores and Naim live in the metropolitan area and are subject to the lockdown they will be working their usual office hours from home.

May the Peace of Christ be with you

Fr Fabian

Parish Priest

ST BERNARD'S PARISH OFFICE

Parishioners please be advised that the St Bernard's Parish Office will be closed during the COVID-19 Stage 3 lockdown. The Parish Staff will be working from home. Please contact us for any assistance you need.

Dolores Turcsan Parish Secretary **Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9.00am-1.00pm**
Email Dolores bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au or call **0432 055 992**.

Naim Chdid Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper **Tuesday & Friday 10.00am-1.00pm**
Email Naim bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au

Judy Johnson Admin Assistant **Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10.00am-2.00pm**
Email Judy: judyparishnews@gmail.com or call **0414 007 009**

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

ST ANTHONY'S

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Marjorie Barker, Maria Hoa Dang, Marie Dove, Wayne Dunn, Doris Farrugia, Dr Marshal Leon Pereira & Francis Vella

Please pray for the Sick:

Jean Barnett, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Liza Fernandes, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Kevin Michael, Veronica Michael, Wanda Novak, John Osborne, Peter Poole, Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Charlie Spiteri, Dolores Turcsan, 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)

FATIMA STATUE

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

- Group 1: **Aloysious & Michelle DaCunha** **0469 863 253**
- Group 2: **Elena & Joseph Laurel** **0432 940 930**
- Group 3: **Rohini Selvanayagam** **0425 868 967**



ST BERNARD'S

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

FAITH ON FIRE PRAYER GROUP

Every fortnight on Thursday at 7.00pm. We pray the Rosary, Stations of the cross, Divine Mercy chaplet and do a Bible reading and discussion.

Next meeting **To be advised**

We pray for the recently deceased:

Marisa Avati, David Johnson, Adrianus (Aad) Weerdenburg, Margaret Wilson.

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

John & Muriel Daly, Lois Wheelahan, Irene Wojcicki.

Please pray for the Sick:

Noah Barlow, Chaiel Balcombe, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Kevin Bridges, Tina Bower, John Canty, Fred Capuano, Gary Ching, Josephine Cilia, Robyn Cola, Ted Cooling, Marianne Cuskelly, Lindsay & Kathleen Dally, Judy Delahey, Jack DeLuca, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagiarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Adam Hillier, Elle Hillman, Kiahni Holamotutama, Alicia Holborn, Chaiel Jackson, Matthew Jansen, David Kasprzak, Michael Larkin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, Brian Marshall, Debbie Marshall, Jordanis Mary Pauline McDonald, Ian McKechnie, Marcus Meno, Paul Mullin, Arthur Pape, Michael Paterson, Georgia Peacock, Bev Pickett, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Susan Trist, Dolores Turcsan, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Mary Walsh, Cath Wheelahan, Jayne Wilkins, Patricia Yazbek, & Betty Young.

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

NEO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

[bow during the next line]

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen

Along the track

Social Distancing

Life is made up of the ordinary. Otherwise there wouldn't be the extraordinary. The extraordinary, although usually very welcome, is not the stuff of life. Sometimes you read of people continually chasing the next adventure and you are left to wonder whether they miss out on the real joys of life in the meantime.

During this pandemic, the ordinary has become extraordinary in the sense that we have come to appreciate much more what we had become used to, what we had taken for granted. We find that the special exists in the ordinary, we discover that we do not need to look for the special – it is right here in the ordinary.

The social isolation (surely a contradiction in terms) brings many challenges to those who by nature are meant to congregate, to engage and connect. We miss the contact with others, the chance to meet up and talk, to share a meal, to have a coffee with others, to gather in crowds to feel first-hand the excitement of the football or the tennis or the movies, the theatre. We have come to realise just how important belonging to a community really means.

It is true that we were experiencing isolation before the pandemic. It had become easier to use social media than visit, relationship breakups were extraordinarily high, face to face interactions were diminishing even before 'working from home' became the norm for many of us. The social isolation mandated by the pandemic may have increased the risk of depression and anxiety, but it was there before the virus.

There are, however, some lessons we have learned. The gift of touch is important. Not being able to greet people by shaking hands, or embracing or a high five or whatever is quite strange. While that precaution is necessary, it doesn't feel natural. In Jesus' time the lepers, those who were ill or those considered to be sinners and thus 'unclean' were ostracised. They must have felt dreadfully alone and the no-touching rule must have made them feel even more unclean, more worthless. One of the first things Jesus did when he met them was to embrace them. The Gospels describe multiple cases in which Jesus reached out and embraced people. In many of His healing miracles He intentionally used tactile methods—hugging a leper, placing His hands on a crippled woman's spine, taking people by the hand, mixing up a mud pack and putting it on the blind man's eyes. What an enormous difference that alone must have made to them.

I am not suggesting that we embrace every person we meet, but to think again about the power of the ordinary gestures we take for granted and their power to enable healing and connection. It is the small things that remind us that love is more powerful than reason, heart than head and that it is more natural to find ways to belong than live in isolation, more natural to congregate together rather than to fragment, it is more natural for us to co-operate than compete.

This has been a time of learning, if we are open to it. I was struck by these words from spiritual writer Parker Palmer:

I'm learning more about the good hearts of people who reach out in ways that reflect our shared humanity. I'm touched by those who ask, "How you doing? Any way I can help?", and clearly want to know.

I'm learning more about millions of people around the planet who are in a "high-risk category" every day of their lives—not because of age or health, but because of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or poverty. They live in non-stop pandemics of racism, sexism, nationalism, homophobia, structural economic inequality, and armed conflict. I now have a tiny window to glimpse a bit of their experience for a little while. May I learn all I can, and may my learning stick.

In this pandemic, I am in the vulnerable category, not just because of age but underlying health problems. It is a time to take stock. It is the isolation I feel the most, despite being at home with family. The new commandment that Jesus gave us: "Love one another as I have loved you" needs to be translated into every age in ways that are needed at that time. In this age, the little things, the small gestures have taken on added significance as they did when Jesus embraced those who were starved of human contact, companionship and acceptance.

Regards
Jim Quillinan

Email: jquillinan@dcsi.net.au

LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

See, I have God for my help.
The Lord sustains my soul.
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart,
and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

FIRST READING Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

There is no god, other than you, who cares for everything,
to whom you might have to prove that you never judged unjustly.
Your justice has its source in strength,
your sovereignty over all makes you lenient to all.
You show your strength when your sovereign power is questioned
and you expose the insolence of those who know it;
but, disposing of such strength, you are mild in judgement,
you govern us with great lenience,
for you have only to will, and your power is there.
By acting thus you have taught a lesson to your people
how the virtuous man must be kindly to his fellow men,
and you have given your sons the good hope
that after sin you will grant repentance.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 85

Comm: Lord, you are good and forgiving.

All: Lord, you are good and forgiving.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call.
Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer
and attend to the sound of my voice.

All the nations shall come to adore you
and glorify your name, O Lord:
for you are great and do marvellous deeds,
you who alone are God.

But you, God of mercy and compassion,
slow to anger, O Lord,
abounding in love and truth,
turn and take pity on me.

All: Lord, you are good and forgiving

SECOND READING Romans 8:26-27

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 13:24-43

Jesus put a parable before the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?" "Some enemy has done this" he answered. And the servants said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn.'"

He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest shrub of all and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches.'

He told them another parable, 'The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'

In all this Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables; indeed he would never speak to them except in parables. This was to fulfil the prophecy: I will speak to you in parables and expound things hidden since the foundation of the world.

Then, leaving the crowds, he went to the house; and his disciples came to him and said, 'Explain the parable about the darnel in the field to us.' He said in reply, 'The sower of the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the darnel, the subjects of the evil one; the enemy who sowed them, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels. Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time. The Son of Man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that provoke offences and all who do evil, and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Then the virtuous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful,
has made a memorial of his wonders;
he gives food to those who fear him.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: 1 Kg 3:5,7-12;
Second Reading: Rom 8:28-30;
Gospel: Mt 13:44-52



The life of Catholic worship and piety XXVI

What Are Those Oils? (1)

In St Anthony's church, there is a special display of jars containing oils, These oils are used for the sacraments.

On Holy Thursday morning, the bishop and the priests of the diocese gather at the cathedral to celebrate the Chrism Mass. This Mass manifests the unity of the priests with their bishop.

Here the bishop blesses three oils: the Oil of Catechumens (*Oleum Catechumenorum* or *Oleum Sanctorum*); the Oil of the Infirm (*Oleum Infirmorum*); and Holy Chrism (*Sacrum Chrisma*) which will be used in the administration of the sacraments throughout the diocese for the year.

This tradition is rooted in the early Church as noted in the Gelasian Sacramentary (named after Pope Gelasius I, d. AD 496), but was later absorbed into the Holy Thursday evening Mass.

Throughout the Bible, various references indicate the importance of olive oil in daily life. Oil was used in cooking, particularly in the making of bread, that basic food substance for nourishment (Numbers 11:7-9); as a fuel for lamps (Matthew 25:1-9); and as a healing agent in medicine (Isaiah 1:6 and Luke 10:34). Moreover, with oil the Jews anointed the head of a guest as a sign of welcome (Luke 7:46), beautified one's appearance (Ruth 3:3), and prepared a body for burial (Mark 16:1).

In religious practices, the Jews also used oil to dedicate a memorial stone in honour of God (Genesis 28:18); to consecrate the meeting tent, the Ark of the Covenant, the table, the lampstand, the laver, the altar of incense, and the altar of holocausts (Exodus 31:26-29); and to offer sacrifices (Exodus 29:40). The use of oil was clearly a big part of the daily life of the people.

Sacred Scripture also attests to the spiritual symbolism of oil. For instance, Psalm 23:5 reads, "You anoint my head with oil", signifying favour and strength from the Lord. And Psalm 45:8 reads, "You love justice

and hate wickedness; therefore, God your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings", signifying the special designation from God and the joy from being his servant.

Moreover, to be "the anointed of the Lord" indicated receiving a special vocation from the Lord and the empowerment with the Holy Spirit to fulfil that vocation.

Jesus, echoing the words of Isaiah, spoke: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, He has anointed me" (Luke 4:18). St Paul emphasised this point: "God is the one who firmly establishes us along with you in Christ; it is He who anointed us and has sealed us, thereby depositing the first payment, the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1:21). Therefore, the symbolism of oil is rich sanctification, healing, strengthening, beautification, dedication, consecration and sacrifice.

Given this heritage, the early Church adopted the use of olive oil for its sacramental rituals.

The Oil of Catechumens is used in connection with the sacrament of baptism. St Hippolytus in his *Apostolic Tradition* (AD 215) wrote of an "Oil of Exorcism" used to anoint the candidates immediately before baptism.

This practice continues today. In the current baptismal liturgy, the priest offers the prayer of exorcism and then anoints the person to be baptised on the chest, saying: "We anoint you with the oil of salvation in the name of Christ our Saviour; may He strengthen you with His power, who lives and reigns forever and ever."

Anointing with the Oil of Catechumens following a prayer of exorcism may also take place during the period of the Catechumenate on one or several occasions. In both cases this anointing symbolises the person's need for the help and strength of God to sever the bondage of the past and to overcome the opposition of the devil so that the catechumen may profess his faith, come to baptism and live as a child of God.