



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 Most Holy Trinity

Year A

7th June 2020

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith

ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint /Father Marcus Goulding

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew

Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson

Parish Office Hours: Mon-Fri 10.00am-1.00pm

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

Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson

Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper: Naim Chdid

Parish Office Hours: Tue/Thu/Fri 10.00am-1.00pm

Father Fabian 0403 435 471

Fr Lucas 0478 768 141 /Fr Marcus 0468 367 893

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
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 735 449)

Officers: Aloysious Dacunha, 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.



St Anthony's Parish

Dear Parishioners of St Anthony's

We are pleased to be able to celebrate public Masses at St Anthony's subject to the temporary conditions laid down by the Victorian Government and the Archbishop of Melbourne. We can accommodate twenty people at Mass in addition to those required for the celebration of Mass.

We had 650 parishioners attending mass before the lockdown. Celebrating 14 masses per week will enable 280 parishioners the opportunity to participate in mass at St Anthony's church. To ensure everyone has the opportunity to come to Mass, parishioners have been contacted by a parishioner of St Anthony's Care Team over the past three weeks. Those who have been contacted have been able to attend mass already. Some are scheduled to attend mass in the coming weeks according to their work schedule.

There are however many parishioners whose details are outdated and therefore have not been able to be reached. In order to reach out these parishioners we are doing some door knocking and letter dropping next week.

If you have not had the opportunity yet to come to mass please email Judy Johnson on judyparishnews@gmail.com or SMS Judy on 0414 007 009 with the names of those who wish to attend mass.

Mass Monday to Saturday 9.30am & 6pm (Rosary will begin 25 mins before mass Monday to Saturday).
Mass Sunday 8.30am & 10.30am
Confessions 9am & 6.30pm

Please note: All evening masses are Live- Streamed so we need it to be conducive for Live-Streaming. If you have children under four years of age can you please book in to come to the morning masses Monday to Saturday at 9.30am or Sunday 8.30am.

To ensure all safety requirements are met for the wellbeing of all in attendance, only those who are allocated a time and day will be admitted entrance to the church for Mass. The more flexible you are with your day and time the easier it will be for you to attend mass. Entry will be closed 10mins before mass begins.

St Bernard's Parish



REGISTER TO ATTEND MASS AT ST BERNARD'S BY TRYBOOKING OR PHONE

Dear parishioners of St Bernard's,

We are pleased to be able to celebrate public Masses at St Bernard's subject to the temporary conditions laid down by the Victorian Government and the Archbishop of Melbourne. We can accommodate 20 people at Mass (from 1st June 2020) in addition to those required for the celebration of Mass.

We are now using Trybooking to facilitate registration for Masses at St Bernard's. To book for Mass, visit www.trybooking.com/BJVHO. Alternately, visit our parish website www.pol.org.au/bacchusmarsh and follow the link to Trybooking. Parishioners who do not have access to the internet can continue to register for Mass using our dedicated registration phone number **0432 055 992**.

Parishioners are welcome to attend Mass **twice a week**. You are welcome to register for additional Masses only if, within three hours of the scheduled start of a Mass, Trybooking indicates that there are still vacancies for that Mass.

Confessions will be heard for half an hour prior to the start of each Mass.

Masses are being offered at St Bernard's at the following times:

Sunday | 8.30am & 10.00am

Tuesday | 6.00pm

Wednesday | 10.00am

Thursday | 6.00pm

Friday | 10.00am

Saturday | 6.00pm (Vigil)

Only those people who have registered by Trybooking or Phone will be admitted entrance to the Church for Mass. We look forward to seeing you back at St Bernard's.

PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

RECONCILIATION/ANOINTING OF THE SICK

St Anthony's Parish—Father Fabian/ Father Marcus are available for Reconciliation Tue-Friday 10.00am-1.00pm, also you can arrange a time to see them for Reconciliation outside these hours just give Father Fabian or Father Marcus a call.

St Bernard's Parish—Father Lucas is available for Reconciliation Tue-Friday 10.00am-1.00pm, also you can arrange a time to see him outside these hours for Reconciliation , just give him a call.

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.

MASSES AVAILABLE ON LIVE STREAMING– FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

St Anthony's Parish are live streaming Masses on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1MHR7tf4-7qIFeikXU6I_w

The Masses are also being live streamed on Facebook. You can watch Masses by going to the

website: stanthonyofpadua.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).

MASS TIMES—LIVE STREAMING FROM ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH

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

Sunday: 10.30am Mass

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.

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH OFFICE HOURS– THIS WEEK

Monday– Friday 9.30am-1.30pm

ST BERNARD'S PARISH OFFICE HOURS-THIS WEEK

Tue/Thu/Fri– 10.00am-1.00pm

Please contact Judy Johnson for any Parish news you would like published in the Newsletter

Email: judyparishnews@gmail.com

PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

ST ANTHONY'S MORNING MASSES TIME CHANGE

St Anthony's Morning Masses **Monday—Saturday** will now be held at 9.30am. The change to Mass times is to help with the school traffic congestion.

BAPTISMS—ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

Baptisms will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. Parents and Godparents must attend a Baptism Preparation meeting. Current government restrictions on gatherings will be adhered to for both the Preparation Meetings and the Baptism Services. Please contact Judy Johnson 0414 007 009 or email judyparishnews@gmail.com. If you have any queries. Judy's Parish Office Hours are Tue-Thu 10.00am-1.00pm. **Please note we need a minimum of 4 weeks notice before the Baptism.**

HOLY WATER AND PALMS

Holy Water and Palms are available for collection at both Churches. To ensure we have enough Holy Water for all our families we have a limit of 1 Holy Water Bottle for each family. Thankyou.

ST ANTHONY OF PADUA FEAST DAY-13th JUNE

Anthony of Padua (1195-1231), a Franciscan friar, was a remarkable theologian and preacher.

He became the first theology teacher in the Franciscan order and is referred to as "Doctor of the Church. **Anthony** was canonized less than a year after this death because of the many miracles attributed to him.

Born: August 15, 1195, Lisbon

Died: June 13, 1231

Profession: Preacher, Priest



Actions speak louder than words; let your words teach and your actions speak.

~ Anthony of Padua

AZ QUOTES



Save the date

Catholic Regional College Melton
is celebrating 40 years as a college on

Sunday 30 August

More details will be provided
closer to the date.

40 YEARS

in the making



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:

Emmanuel Bonnice, Emmanuel & Jane DeBrincat, Felicity Galea, Johny Kolaj, Losa McAlpine, Valencia Suares, Tuala & Joan Unferdorben

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)

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 those whose death anniversaries occur at this time:

Kathleen Corrigan, Bill Dudley, Kevin Monagle, Peter Mullins, Norma Nichol, Frank O'Malley, Georgina Simic.

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 Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Adam Hillier, Elle Hillman, Kiahni Holamotutama, Alicia Holborn, Chaiel Jackson, Matthew Jansen, David Johnson, David Kasprzak, Michael Larkin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, 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)

FATIMA STATUE

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

Group 1: **Richelle & Mike Lorenzo** **0475 887 149**

Group 2: **Angelos & Rita Harinos** **0434 368 221**

Group 3: **Mary & Tony Galea** **0401 169 224**



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

Embracing Mystery

The Hunter Valley offers some extraordinarily beautiful vistas. In the early morning the fog rests in valleys and over low lying hills. Recently I watched the sun rise out of the mist – there was a stillness in the air and, all of a sudden, six hot-air balloons emerged from the fog and silently floated across the valley. The next morning offered a repeat performance and, as I watched this beautiful sight, I became aware of about twenty others who were also silently enjoying the spectacle.

Nature offers us similar experiences every day – sometimes they can literally take our breath away. If we let them! We can't always explain why or how we are so deeply moved by sights or sounds or songs or poetry or whatever - sometimes our reactions defy explanation, words can't explain them.

In a recent talk at the Vatican, Noam Chomsky (philosopher, cognitive scientist, logician, political activist and 'not a believer'), spoke about the limits of human knowledge, arguing that a fundamental understanding of the world is likely to remain forever beyond the reach of scientists. He urged his audience to embrace mystery, explaining that he did not share the urge of many of his colleagues to reduce all phenomena to a set of basic building blocks.

It's a good expression – 'to reduce all phenomena to a set of building blocks'. We can't explain everything – we can try but some things defy words. Finding a place for mystery, a place for wonder and imagination is an integral component of having 'life to the full'. It is an integral component of science and of religion, or more accurately, faith.

Exploring the mysteries and wonders of science opens up many more questions than answers. We are discovering almost daily more and more about the vastness of our universe, for example. Some of the 'laws of science' that we have assumed are unchanging are now being challenged by new understandings and discoveries. Often we are too quick to close the questions, too quick to find explanations, to settle for formulas and certainties when we are really being led deeper into mystery. We can be too quick to find answers rather than letting loose the energy and wisdom of the Spirit.

There is a graphic image of the work of the Spirit in the opening to the book of Genesis at the dawn of Creation.

In the beginning the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep and the wind (spirit) of God swept over the waters. God said "Let there be light" and there was light..(Gen 1: 1-3).

The story illustrates just how integral to the work of Creation the Spirit really is. Some writers suggest that the point of this section of the Creation story is that it is the Spirit who casts light on Creation, the Spirit who reveals the joys and wonders, the mysteries of Creation, the wonders of the presence of God. But much of creation is

also invisible. Love and compassion, creativity, generosity, awe, wonder, curiosity also belong to this world. Such activities help us to explore physical creation and to look beyond to see and experience this deeper level of life, to experience the goodness and beauty of the God who lies deep within each of us and all of creation.

We can also 'reduce' our faith to a set of building blocks, limiting it to a set of formulas and doctrines. Just like scientific formulas, they do help describe our understanding, but they are limited. They don't tell us all. If they don't lead us to wonder and to question, if they don't lead us to want to discover more about God and God's ways, they have not achieved their purpose. As the Catechism puts it: We do not believe in formulas, but in those realities they express, which faith allows us to touch. (CCC #170) They allow us to express our understanding of some of the mysteries of our faith and help to pass it on, to celebrate it. We could say the same for scientific discoveries too. But there is more to understand and discover and both science and faith lead us on to greater understandings, deeper into greater mysteries.

In a real sense, creation is still unfolding. So is the work of the Spirit, continuing to reveal to us its mysteries and wonders. The gift of modern technology has offered us so much, it has been an extraordinary vehicle to aid further research and discovery. It has helped us to describe more accurately so much about our world, our universe and how it works. It has been spurred on by one of the other gifts of creation, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit – curiosity, our innate desire to wonder and to question, to seek further understanding. We might even say, one spurs on the other! Albert Einstein remarked: "Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind." Pope John Paul II asserted this same fundamental point when he said: "Science can purify religion from error and superstition. Religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes."

Religious dogmas and ethical principles should not stifle thinking any more than scientific formulas and definitions stifle the thinking of the scientist. They do not "spare us the trouble of thinking" but, on the contrary, they help us to think in a structured way, providing us with the very categories we need in order to be able to enter more deeply into scientific reality. Similarly, religious dogma and sound ethical teaching give us tools and language to enter reasonably into a discussion of the ultimate questions that every person faces, questions of purpose, morality and human destiny.

Albert Einstein suggested: "The most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible." So let's embrace some mystery in our lives and, out of that experience, we might discover more of the wonders of this world and its Creator.

Regards
Jim Quillinan

Email: jquillinan@dcsi.net.au



A Prayer to Combat the Coronavirus Pandemic

Most Merciful and Triune God,
We come to You in our weakness.
We come to You in our fear.
We come to You with trust.
For You alone are our hope.

We place before You the disease present in our world.
We turn to You in our time of need.

Bring wisdom to doctors.
Give understanding to scientists.
Endow caregivers with compassion and generosity.
Bring healing to those who are ill.
Protect those who are most at risk.
Give comfort to those who have lost a loved one.
Welcome those who have died into Your Eternal Home.

Stabilize our communities.
Unite us in our compassion.
Remove all fear from our hearts.
Fill us with confidence in Your care.

(mention your particular concerns and prayers now)

Jesus, I trust in You.
Jesus, I trust in You.
Jesus, I trust in You.
Amen.

(Source: My Catholic Life)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

Blest be God the Father,
and the Only Begotten Son of God,
and also the Holy Spirit,
for he has shown us his merciful love.

FIRST READING Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9

With the two tablets of stone in his hands, Moses went up the mountain of Sinai in the early morning as the Lord had commanded him. And the Lord descended in the form of a cloud, and Moses stood with him there. He called on the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'Lord, Lord, a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness.' And Moses bowed down to the ground at once and worshipped. 'If I have indeed won your favour, Lord,' he said 'let my Lord come with us, I beg. True, they are a headstrong people, but forgive us our faults and our sins, and adopt us as your heritage.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Daniel 3:52-56

You are blest, Lord God of our fathers.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

Blest your glorious holy name.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

You are blest in the temple of your glory.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

You are blest on the throne of your kingdom.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

You are blest who gaze into the depths.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

You are blest in the firmament of the heaven.
R. Glory and praise for ever!

SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Brothers, we wish you happiness; try to grow perfect; help one another. Be united; live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Greet one another with the holy kiss. All the saints send you greetings.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with you all.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:
to God who is, who was, and who is to come.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 3:16-18

Jesus said to Nicodemus,
'God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost
but may have eternal life.
For God sent his Son into the world
not to condemn the world,
but so that through him the world might be saved.
No one who believes in him will be condemned;
but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already,
because he has refused to believe
in the name of God's only Son.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Since you are children of God,
God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of his Son,
the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father.

NEXT WEEK'S READING-- THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

First Reading: Deut 8:2-3, 14-16;

Second Reading: 1 Cor 10:16-17;

Gospel: Jn 6:51-58



The life of Catholic worship and piety XX

The Use of Votive Candles

Before I address the use of votive candles in particular, we have to appreciate the symbolism of light and the general usage of candles in religious practice.

In Judaism, a perpetual light was kept burning in the Temple and the synagogues not only to ensure the ability to light other candles or oil lamps in the evening but also to show the presence of God. Later, the Talmud prescribed a lit lamp at the Ark, where the Torah and other writings of Sacred Scripture were kept, to show reverence to the Word of God. (This practice probably influenced our own one of having a lit candle near the tabernacle to indicate the presence of and to show reverence for the Blessed Sacrament.)

Roman pagan culture also used candles in religious practice. Lit candles were used in religious and military processions, showing the divine presence, aid or favour of the gods. With the development of emperor worship, candles were also lit near his image as a sign of respect and reverence. By the time of Jesus, the emperor was considered divine and even given the titles Pontifex Maximus (high priest) and Dominus et Deus (Lord and God).

Christians adapted the use of lit candles (or even oil lamps in the Eastern Roman Empire) for Mass, liturgical processions, evening prayer ceremonies, funeral processions and, again, to show reverence to the reserved Blessed Sacrament. Moreover, there is evidence that candles or oil lamps were burned at the tombs of saints, especially martyrs, by the 200s AD, and before sacred images and relics by the 300s. St Jerome (d 420) attested to this practice. Note that this practice probably existed well before our available written evidence.

In our Catholic tradition, since early times light has had a special significance. Recall that Jesus said: "I am the light of the world. No follower of Mine shall ever walk in darkness; no, he shall possess the light of life" (John 8:12) and: "I have come to the world as its light, to keep anyone who believes in Me from remaining in the dark" (John 12:46).

Moreover, the prologue of St John's Gospel connects Christ and true life with the imagery of light: "Whatever came to be in Him found

life, life for the light of men" and: "The real light which gives light to every man was coming into the world" (John 1:4, 9).

For this reason, in our liturgy for the sacrament of baptism, the priest presents a candle lit from the Paschal candle, which in turn symbolises the Paschal mystery, and says to the newly baptised: "You have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet Him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom." The light, then, is a symbol of faith, truth, wisdom, virtue, grace, the divine life, charity, the ardour of prayer and the sacred presence which flow from Christ Himself.

With this background, we can appreciate the usage of votive candles. Here, as in early Christian times, we light a candle before a statue or sacred image of our Lord or of a saint. Of course, we do not honour the statue or the image itself, but the one whom that statue or image represents. The light signifies our prayer offered in faith coming into the light of God. With the light of faith, we petition our Lord in prayer, or petition the saint to pray with us and for us to the Lord. The light also shows a special reverence and our desire to remain present to the Lord in prayer even though we may depart and go about our daily business.

In the Middle Ages, the symbolism of votive candles was elaborated. St Radigund (d 587) described a practice whereby a person would light a candle or several candles that equalled his own height. This was called "measuring to" a saint. This "measuring to" reflects the idea of the candle representing the person in faith who has come into the light to offer his prayer.

Also, some medieval spiritual writers expanded the imagery of the candle itself: bees wax symbolised the purity of Christ; the wick, the human soul of Christ; and the light His divinity. The burning candle symbolised a sacrifice, which is made in both the offering of the prayer and the acceptance of the Lord's Will.

The symbolism does remind us that prayer is a "coming into" the light of Christ, allowing our souls to be filled with His light, and letting that light burn on in our souls even though we may return to our other activities.