



# 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

**6th Sunday of Easter**

**Year A**

**17th May 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 ten 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 140 parishioners the opportunity to participate in mass at St Anthony's church. To ensure everyone has the opportunity to come to Mass, parishioners will be contacted by a parishioner of St Anthony's Care Team in the next few days to update your contact details (Our Parish Census needs to be updated) and to ascertain how many in the household would like to attend mass and also get your preferred day and time. **If you have not been contacted by next Friday please text me on 0403435471 or email the parish [meltonsouth@cam.org.au](mailto:meltonsouth@cam.org.au)**

Masses will be celebrated weekly at the following times:

**Monday – Saturday** 9.15am and 6pm

**Sunday** 8.30am and 10.30am

**Confessions** 30mins before each weekday mass

**Rosary** Monday – Saturday 5.30pm

**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.**

# St Bernard's Parish



## **PUBLIC MASS AT ST BERNARD'S IS BACK! REGISTER NOW!**

Call 0432 055 992 now! From Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020, 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 ten people at Mass in addition to those required for the celebration of Mass.

To ensure everyone has the chance to come to Mass, parishioners will be limited to attendance at one Mass a week for the time being. Masses will be celebrated weekly at the following times:

Sunday 10am  
Tuesday 6pm  
Wednesday 10am  
Thursday 6pm  
Friday 10am  
Saturday 6pm (Vigil)

To register for a Mass, call our dedicated hotline 0432 055 992. Leave a message indicating your name, contact number and preferred Mass time and day. We will then call you back to confirm your registration. We will require 24 hours to process your registration. **Only those people whose registration we have confirmed will be admitted entrance to the church for Mass.**

Wednesday 13 May 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Throughout this situation of the Coronavirus pandemic our prayers and solidarity have been with you all, and will continue to guide the challenging decisions we have been called to make.

Despite the many weeks of worry and social restrictions, we are delighted that as of 11.59pm yesterday, Tuesday 12 May 2020, churches in Victoria may now be open in certain circumstances.

This opportunity for small gatherings and for some quiet moments of prayer in the sacramental presence of Our Lord is a gentle first step in the right direction, and rightly a moment of rejoicing for God's people. We are pleased to work constructively with our communities to make appropriate adjustments. Strict restrictions still govern our actions due to the risks of COVID-19 and we are all being asked to show patience and fortitude.

Each Diocese is communicating with their parishes about how various ministries, including sacramental care, will be conducted in this first stage of the easing of social restrictions. We wish to be fully compliant with the directives that apply across Victoria, so that we ensure the protection of elderly and vulnerable people, and work together for the common good of our communities.

The conditions under which a church can be open include a collection of contact details (for the purposes of contact-tracing if it becomes necessary), strict monitoring of numbers, ongoing hygiene requirements, publicising the scheduled times for private worship, and public worship limited to ten people at a time.

Arrangements for liturgies and access to churches while ensuring these conditions are met will vary, depending on the facilities and resources that are available in each particular community. We recognise that deciding on these arrangements and putting them in place is not straightforward, and we ask for patience and understanding during this time. New stage of restrictions is subject to changing guidance that we receive from the State Government authorities, and we are advised this will be reviewed at the end of May.

After a difficult time for all of us, including many new pressures on families and great challenges for healthcare and emergency workers, we share in the disappointment that social restrictions are likely to continue for some time.

Nevertheless, we act with one accord in doing what is most prudent and loving for the sake of those most susceptible to the virus. We rejoice that Christ is with us and will walk with us as we begin the long journey out of the current stage of restrictions.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli  
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

Most Rev Paul Bernard Bird CSsR MA, DD  
BISHOP OF BALLARAT

Most Rev Shane Mackinlay  
BISHOP OF SANDHURST

Rev Peter Slater  
DELEGATE OF DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATOR, SALE

## 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/UC1MHR7tf4-7qIFEikXU6l\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1MHR7tf4-7qIFEikXU6l_w)  
The Masses are also being live streamed on Facebook. You can watch Masses by going to the website: [stanthonyofpadua.com.au](http://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:**                               **9.30am 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.**

### MASS AT ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

The 11am Sunday Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral will be televised every week during the COVID-19 restrictions, on Channel 31 (often listed as Channel 44 on digital TVs). Also 'Mass for you at Home' is televised on channel 10 every Sunday at 6am. Please share this news with friends and family who might be limited to TV viewing. Please check you TV guides for changes.

### ST ANTHONY'S PARISH OFFICE HOURS– THIS WEEK

Monday– Friday 10.00am-1.00pm

### 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](mailto:judyparishnews@gmail.com)*

## PARISH EVENTS & NOTICES

### PROJECT COMPASSION 2020 ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

#### PARISH DONATIONS DURING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Parishioners please note Project Compassion 2020 Donations can still be made:

Donation Box—Deliver to Parish Office

Credit Card Donation—Project Compassion website <https://lent.caritas.org.au/#blank>

Cheque—Mail to: Caritas Australia  
Melbourne Office  
Po Box 146  
East Melbourne Vic 8002



### To Our Blessed Mother

*We fly to your protection, most holy Mother of God; please listen to our petitions and needs, and deliver us from all dangers, ever glorious and blessed Virgin Mary.*

*Mary, our model and mother, by your obedience and patience you have taught us how to be true children of God. Please help us by your powerful assistance to overcome all our weaknesses, and to fulfill perfectly our tasks in life.*

*By your compassionate aid may we ever stand in spirit with you beneath the cross of Christ so that we may also rejoice with you in your divine Son's triumphant victory over sin and death.*

*In your maternal kindness help us to be faithful to prayers in the company of God's Church as you were one with the Apostles in the upper room as you waited for the promised Spirit of Pentecost.*

*With your gracious assistance may we be near you in the glory of Christ's kingdom come to sing with you and all the faithful the eternal praise of God. Amen.*

Source: [www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org)



**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:**

Helen Debrincat, Sammy & Maria Debrincat,  
Peter Jones, Alistar Knox, Sr Irene McCormack,  
Albert Micallef, Jon Nicotra, Tarcisio Scerri, Alma Smart, Edith Stone, Fuatino Taulapapa & Peduru Wisidagama

**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: **Stephen & Liza Fernandes**                      **0439 743 533**

Group 2: **Tunya & Jason Sant**                              **0422 178 260**

Group 3: **Josephine Vella**                                      **0411 568 012**



**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:**

John Raymond Carr, Gwyneth Davies, Jeffrey Galea, Gloria Rogers & Ray Stevens.

**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, Mary Wadeson, 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

# **A CORONAVIRUS HEALING PRAYER**

*Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness”. At your command, the sick were made well.*

*Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.*

*Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.*

*Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.*

*Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.*

*Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.*

*Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process.*

*May they know your protection and peace.*

*Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare.*

*In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.*

*Jesus Christ, heal us . Amen.*





# Along the track

## The Call of the Spirit

Our parish priest sometimes finishes Mass with the question: And what will the Spirit call you to do today? What will the Spirit ask of you? How will the Spirit inspire you today?

These are encouraging questions at the same time as being challenging. The Spirit has been with us since the dawn of creation, when "the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." The Spirit breathed life into our world, the Spirit inspired the prophets fearlessly and passionately to proclaim a message that was sometimes unwelcome but always inspiring. That same Spirit inspired Mary's 'yes' to become Mother of Jesus and urged Joseph to accept the challenge of being husband to Mary and father to Jesus. It is the same Spirit who came to Jesus at his baptism by John, the Spirit was at work in His miracles, it enabled the apostles, so afraid that they had locked themselves away, to come out and face the crowds, to speak with such passion that people of different languages and cultures were able to understand them, that Spirit filled the minds and hearts of so many who heard them and inspired their faith. Down through the ages, that same Spirit has inspired countless men and women to give their lives for extraordinary causes.

We can sometimes see the Spirit as not being a tangible part of our lives but rather as Someone belonging to the saints, inspiring great deeds, enabling some to speak in tongues, others to undertake courageous journeys to foreign and unwelcoming lands, to give up their lives for a great cause or effect miracles on behalf of God. That is part of our tradition. Pope Francis warns us, however, not to be intimidated or discouraged:

*We should not grow discouraged before examples of holiness that appear unattainable. There are some testimonies that may prove helpful and inspiring, but that we are not meant to copy, for that could even lead us astray from the one specific path that the Lord has in mind for us. The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. 1 Cor 12:7), rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them. We are all called to be witnesses, but there are many actual ways of bearing witness. #11*

It is the one and the same Spirit we all received at Baptism, at Confirmation. It is that same Spirit who seeks us out in our daily lives, inspiring, encouraging, lifting us up in the down times, showing us the way in the good times and when we are not sure what to do next. In the words of St Paul:

*And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. Rom 8:26*

It is the same Spirit who is quietly present when we are surprised by what we discovered we could do, when we found the right word to say when it was needed most. It is the same Spirit who inspires us to love – after all, God is love. That is what God is and when we love we are part of the action and life of God. It is the same Spirit who encourages us to do our absolute best to find and hone and employ the gifts each of us has been given. It is the same Spirit who encourages us to do our best to reach out to touch and uplift many of those people we meet and greet, the people we love and care for. It is the same Spirit that fills us at times with laughter, imagination and humour.

Today, in these difficult and challenging times, that Spirit still calls us to have confidence and courage. It is the Spirit who inspires us to love, to be patient and caring in our families, our schools and hospitals, in our workplaces, where we live and shop... in all that we do. When we reach out to others, when we encourage and challenge, when we comfort and bring joy, we do so because the Spirit is at work.

*We need the Spirit's prompting, lest we be paralysed by fear and excessive caution, lest we grow used to keeping within safe bounds. Let us remember that closed spaces grow musty and unhealthy. Pope Francis.*

Regards  
Jim Quillinan

Email: [jquillinan@dcsi.net.au](mailto:jquillinan@dcsi.net.au)

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### **ENTRANCE PROCESSION**

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard;  
Proclaim to the ends of the earth:  
The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

### **FIRST READING** Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

### **RESPONSORIAL PSALM:**

**Response:** 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! **R.**

'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. **R.**

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. **R.**

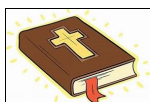
Come and hear, all who fear God.  
I will tell what he did for my soul:  
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer  
nor withhold his love from me. **R.**

### **NEXT WEEK'S READING-- THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

**First Reading:** Acts 1:1-11;

**Second Reading:** Eph 1:17-23;

**Gospel:** Mt 28:16-20



### **SECOND READING** 1 Peter 3:15-18

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

**The word of the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

Alleluia!

### **GOSPEL** John 14:15-21

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father,

and he will give you another Advocate

to be with you for ever,

that Spirit of truth

whom the world can never receive

since it neither sees nor knows him;

but you know him,

because he is with you, he is in you.

I will not leave your orphans;

I will come back to you.

In a short time the world will no longer see me;

but you will see me,

because I live and you will live.

On that day

you will understand that I am in my Father

and you in me and I in you.

Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them

will be one who loves me;

and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,

and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord,  
and I will ask the Father and he will send you another  
Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

# The life of Catholic worship and piety XVII

## Holy Water

Why do we have holy water fonts at the entrances to our churches and why do we make the sign of the cross with the holy water when we enter and leave the church?

Traditionally, we have placed fonts of holy water near the entrances of our churches. This usage corresponds to Old Testament Jewish practices of purification: The Book of Leviticus prescribed various ritual purifications using water to remove the “uncleanness” associated, for instance, with coming into contact with a dead body, menstruation, childbirth, or leprosy (cf. Leviticus 12-15). A person also purified himself with water before entering the Temple precincts, offering prayer and sacrifice, and eating.

For this reason, in the Courtyard of the Priests (the area before the actual Temple building) was the Laver, an immense bronze basin filled with water. Here the priests purified their hands and feet before offering sacrifices at the nearby altar, bathed before entering the Temple itself, and also drew water for other purifications prescribed in Jewish rituals.

We too have fonts filled with holy water for blessings for three reasons: as a sign of repentance of sin; for protection from evil; and as a reminder of our Baptism. The repentance of sin symbolised in the washing with water is reflected in Psalm 50: “Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. Cleanse me of sin with hyssop that I may be purified; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (3-4, 9). (Hyssop is a small bush used for sprinkling water). Remember too how St John the Baptist called all to conversion using a ritual washing of water to signify repentance for sin and purification.

These actions have been incorporated into our own Mass. In the Penitential Rite, one of the options is the Asperges, which includes the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling with Holy Water. As the priest passes through the congregation, sprinkling them with the holy water, they customarily chant the Asperges Me, which is based on Psalm 50. In all, each person again makes an act of repentance of sin.

By Fr William Saunders, [www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org)

Second, holy water protects us against evil. In the prayer for blessing of water we read: “Lord, God Almighty, creator of all life, of body and soul, we ask you to bless this water: as we use it in faith forgive our sins and save us from all illness and the power of evil. Lord, in your mercy give us living water, always springing up as a fountain of salvation; free us, body and soul, from every danger, and admit us to your presence in purity of heart.”

Finally, holy water reminds us of our Baptism, when by the invocation of the Holy Trinity and the pouring of holy water, we were set free from Original Sin and all sin, infused with sanctifying grace, incorporated into the Church, and given the title son or daughter of God. In making the sign of the cross with the holy water, we are mindful that we are called to renew those baptismal promises of rejecting Satan, all his works, and all his empty promises. Once again, we repent of sin, so that we can offer our prayers and worship to God with pure and contrite hearts. Just as water and blood flowed from the Sacred Heart of our Lord as He hung upon the cross — signifying the great sacraments of Baptism and Holy Eucharist, the taking of holy water and making the sign of the cross remind us of our Baptism in preparation for the reception of Communion.

Never should we doubt the power of this great sacramental. St Teresa of Avila wrote of the power of holy water: “I was once in an oratory, and [the devil] appeared to me in an abominable form at my left side. Because he spoke to me, I looked particularly at his mouth — which was most frightening. It seemed that a great flame, all bright without shadow, came forth from his body. He told me in a terrifying way that I had really freed myself from his hands but that he would catch me with them again. I was struck with great fear and blessed myself as best I could; he disappeared, but returned right away. This happened to me twice. I didn’t know what to do. There was some holy water there, and I threw it in that direction; he never returned again ... I often experience that there is nothing the devils flee from more — without returning — than holy water.” Thus we see the importance not only of pausing to bless ourselves with holy water as we enter and leave Church but also of having holy water available in our homes.