



St Anthony's Parish

67-75 EXFORD ROAD, MELTON SOUTH, 3338.
P.O BOX 2152 MELTON SOUTH 3338
TEL: 9747 9692



St Bernard's Parish

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

THE 23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME -YEAR B

8th September 2024

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Alex Clemente
ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Wilford Urmaza and Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson

Parish Office Hours:

Tuesday—Friday 9.30am-4.30pm
Email: meltonsouth@cam.org.au
Website: www.stanthonyofpadua.com.au

St Anthony's School Acting Principal: Caitlyn Lalor
Wilson Road, Melton South 3338

Phone: 8099 7800
Email: principal@sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sameltonsth.catholic.edu.au

St Lawrence of Brindisi School Principal: Bill Hill
31 Waterway Boulevard, Weir Views, 3338

Phone: 8099 6699
Email: principal@slweirviews.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.slweirviews.catholic.edu.au

ST BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson

Bookkeeper: Naim Chdid
Pastoral Worker for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Parish Office Hours:

Tuesday—Friday 9.30am-1.30pm
Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au
Facebook link:
<https://www.facebook.com/stbernardsbacchusmarsh>

St Bernard's School Principal: Sr Mary Sarah Galbraith
19a Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340

Phone: (03) 5366 5800
Email: principal@sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au

St Francis Catholic College- Melton (Years 7-12)

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

109-141 Bulmans Rd, West Melton, 3337 / Bridge Rd, Cobblebank 3338 **Website:** www.sfcc.vic.edu.au

In the case of urgent situations-sickness etc. please call 0422 869 646

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2024

"In the Catholic Church, Child Protection Week is highlighted through Safeguarding Sunday, which this year falls on 8 September 2024. On Safeguarding Sunday, we recognise and apologise to those who have been abused, their families and supporters, from the harm done by priests, religious, and lay people within Church settings. Rebuilding trust and confidence in the Church requires constant work and vigilance, and on Safeguarding Sunday, we recommit ourselves to safe practices and protocols to create and maintain safe environments for all people."

(The Safeguarding Unit, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne)

The priests, staff and parishioners of the parishes of St Anthony's and St Bernard's endorse the above statement and are deeply committed to safeguarding legislation and Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's safeguarding requirements- so as to build a safe and supportive community for our children, young people and vulnerable adults.

(St Anthony's & St Bernard's Safeguarding Committee - Email: parish.safeguard@gmail.com)

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Coordinator/Officer: Aloysious Dacunha 0431 012 511 **Officers:** St Anthony's - Allison Pereira 0422 775 245 Lorraine Tellis 0409 110 259
Geetha Vincent 0478 112 996
St Bernard's - Margaret Love (0437 247 779) Ron Geurts, Vikki Benson & Marj Tung

Email: parish.safeguard@gmail.com

For any queries regarding the newsletter please contact Judy Johnson 0414 007 009 Items for the newsletter must be submitted by Wednesday midnight please email judyparishnews@gmail.com Judy Johnson's office hours are Tue, Wed and Thu 9.30am-1.30pm

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH 9/9/2024-15/9/2024

MASS TIMES:

Monday	9/9	6.30pm
Tuesday	10/9	9.30am & 6.30pm
Wednesday	11/9	9.30am
Thursday	12/9	9.30am
Friday	13/9	9.30am
Saturday	14/9	9.00am

Rosary **9.00am prior to weekday masses &**

Rosary **8.30am prior to Saturday mass**

Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil	14/9	5.00pm
Sunday	15/9	8.30am & 10.30am

(Rosary 10.00am on Sundays)

Confession is available and begins 30 minutes prior to each Mass and will cease 5 minutes before Mass commences.
No Confession on Monday.

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH 9/9/2024-15/9/2024

MASS TIMES:

Monday	9/9	No Mass
Tuesday	10/9	7.30am
Holy Hour		7.00pm
Wednesday	11/9	9.30am
Thursday	12/9	7.30am
Friday	13/9	7.30am
Providence and Friends Mass		11.00am
Saturday	14/9	9.00am

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil	14/9	5.00pm
Sunday	15/9	8.30am & 10.30am

(Rosary in the Chapel 10.00am on Sundays)

Confession is available and begins 30 minutes prior to each Mass and will cease 5 minutes before Mass commences.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOROBET MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil	2nd & 3rd Saturdays of the month	5.00pm
	Saturday 14th & 21st September	

PARISHIONER'S FIRST COLLECTION/SECOND COLLECTION

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

The link to the St Anthony's Parish is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMeltonSouth>

The link to the St Bernard's Parish is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayBacchusMarsh>

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

REFLECTION 23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME-YEAR B-Fr Alex Clemente, RCJ

Throughout the bible we can see Jesus heal countless people: he healed many gentiles, just like the man he healed in this Sunday's gospel. Not only was he a gentile, but he also was deaf and had a speech impediment. He was pretty much towards the bottom of the food chain in regard to being accepted. Society deemed him as unclean and unworthy. But Jesus didn't.

Jesus doesn't deem any one of us unclean or unworthy either. No matter what's going on in our lives, Jesus is always there willing to help and to heal us. In the midst of a broken world, Jesus is the ultimate healer and a living sign and symbol of God's compassion. Healing is a sign of God's incredible love and compassion for all his people.

Jesus not only healed but restored people to the fullness of life. Healing for Jesus always includes full restoration, for us to be whole. The man was healed in order to hear the word of God and proclaim it to others. When we are healed, there needs to be more than happens in us, than just within ourselves. But a change that radiates outward, a change and healing that impacts our actions and what we do. Healing experience doesn't leave us where we are but takes us to new places wanting to come closer before the Divine Healer. He invites us into his compassionate heart, so we can act compassionately to others, as he acted. Knowing in our hearts that there isn't anyone around us that is unworthy of God's love and mercy.

What sort of cure should I seek from Jesus?

How can I participate in the healing mission of Jesus?

PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

FAITH FORMATION

Sessions are held every **Tuesday at 7.15pm** in the Mackillop meeting room at St Anthony's church.

Everyone is encouraged to attend especially those who seek to deepen their faith or learn about the catholic faith or want to receive the Sacraments of the Catholic Church and be baptised a Catholic. **Week 3: Who are you? Evidence for life after death**

ST ANTHONY'S

BINGO CALLER VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We need a caller for Bingo-urgently- Tuesdays 5.30pm-10.00pm. If you are able to help please speak to Rose Ma'ae 0460 672 571.

SOLDIERS OF CHRIST-CHILDREN'S CATECHISM

Children's Catechism sessions will be held on

Sunday 8th September. Suitable for children aged 5-12 years of age. The class will be held after the 10.30am mass, in the Mackillop Room. The sessions will include games, Catechism activities and fun! Contact : Naim 0437 004 790.

BINGO

Bingo is held every Tuesday evening at 7.00pm, in the Padua Hall. Bingo books can be purchased from 6.00pm. We have a great canteen with delicious food available and we have complimentary tea and coffee. Come along and try you luck!

PARISH CENSUS 2024

If your name appears below please contact the Parish Office 9747 9692 to clarify the recent census cards that were completed . Thank you

Rul & LC Abad at Riverside Concourse, Meharzghi & Semhar at Wasim Circuit, Finn at Wembley Ave, Mary at Gretel Grove, Hardy & Leticia at Wembley Ave, Mary at Bolton St, Vincent at Station Rd, Janice & Andrew at Thornhill Park, Maria at Saltbush Cres, Ruby & Rodel at Viscosa, Joanna & Tai at Monash St.

PRIME TIMERS

The Prime Timers September outing will be to Tabcorp Park, Tuesday 24th Sept at 12 o'clock in the Bistro. Seniors Menu available. RSVP by Friday 20th Sept. Enquiries Ineke 0400 120401 or ineke49@yahoo.com.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross Feast Day 14th September

Most glorious and triumphant Lord, You gave Your life for the salvation of my soul, using the most horrific act of cruelty as the means of Your redeeming grace. I open myself to that grace today and pray that You bestow it in superabundance.

I also pray that I will have the courage and wisdom to embrace my crosses every day of my life, uniting them to Your Cross, and trusting that You will use these sacrifices as a means of the further bestowal of Your love on the world.

Saving Cross of Christ, have mercy on me.

Jesus, I trust in You.

ST BERNARD'S

MORNING TEA-THIS WEEKEND

Morning tea will be held after the 8.30am and 10.30am Masses on Sunday September 8th. All welcome!

TRAINING DATES FOR MINISTERS & ALTAR SERVERS

The dates/ times have been set for the training of Ministers of the Word, Eucharistic Ministers and Altar servers. These are as follows: **September 14th**, after the Vigil mass at **6:00pm** for **all new and existing ministers** of the Word and Eucharistic ministers. The sessions will be held in our church.

The training date for **all new and existing altar servers** will be held on **Sunday 15th September** after the 10:30am mass at **11:30am** in our church.

Yours in partnership, St Bernard's Liturgy co.

KNIGHTS OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

KSC meeting this Monday 9th September at 8pm in the Parish Centre. If you are interested to know more about the KSC, please check ksca.org.au

You can then attend a local branch meeting as a guest, and see what we do. We may be able to help each other.

PROVIDENCE AND FRIENDS MASS

Parishioners are invited to our monthly Providence and Friends Mass on Friday 13th September at 11.00am. Please bring a plate for morning tea/lunch.

If transport is required, please let the Parish Office know or call Margot Short 0419 507 438.

CCTV SURVEILLANCE

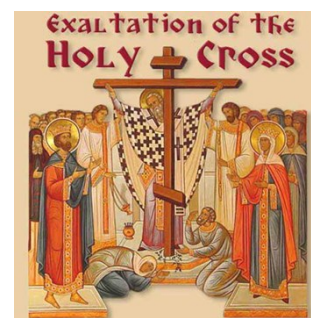
St Bernard's Presbytery, church and parish centre are now protected by security cameras. All installation, storage and access to footage meets legislative requirements.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, 12th October 2024

St Bernard's Parish Bush Dance

Keep an eye on next week's newsletter for more details



[Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross - My Catholic Life!](#)

WORSHIP NEWS

ALL VOLUNTEERS IN OUR PARISH MUST HAVE A CURRENT VALID WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK AND A CODE OF CONDUCT FORM SIGNED.

ST ANTHONY'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 14th & 15th September
Please present yourself to the Mass Coordinator
15 minutes before the scheduled Mass time or a replacement
will be found. Thank you.

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Mary Felix & Marian Muller
8.30am: Leonia Jessop & Geoff Sutton
10.30am: Alexander Gunaratnam & Ana Taunuu

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Leo Felix & Gavin Pereira
8.30am: Roa Seufatu & Ron Howard
10.30am: George Bonello & Doris Bonello

If you are unavailable for these dates please contact Lesley at the Parish Office Thank you

MASS COORDINATORS

5.00pm: Olen & Julie
8.30am: Josephine & Olen
10.30am: Leonia & Annonica

ST BERNARD'S MINISTRIES

NEXT WEEKEND ROSTER: 14th & 15th September

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

5.00pm: Vicki Benson
8.30am: Volunteer needed
10.30am: Volunteer needed

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm: Colin Remedios
8.30am: John Wilson
10.30am: Volunteer needed

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

September: Paul Miesen & family

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Gladys Clarke, Cristina Diao & Josephine Spiteri.

Gladys Clarke's funeral details:

Rosary: 5pm Sunday 8th September at St Anthony's Church
Monday 9th September at St Anthony's Church
Viewing: 12.00 noon Rosary: 12.30pm Funeral Mass: 1.00pm
Burial - Melton Cemetery followed by
Wake at 3.30pm- Melton Country Club.

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

A.N. Antony, Benjamin Arrozal, James Cabrerros, Mark Chiles, Concetta Chircop, Dorothy Davis, Emanuel DeBrincat, Richard D'Souza, Helen Mary Hurtis, Mavis McBain, Genoveffa Micallef, & Dorette Turcsan

Please pray for the Sick:

Teresita Arrozal, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Christabelle, Lydia De Vega, Ann Eskdale, Melanie Fue, Bruce Hynes, Kotinis Cornelia Kani, Judy Layton, Faamu Leiataua, Peter Manicaro, Gregory McCutcheon, Pam Meier, Damien Michael, Hazel Michael, Tony Michael, Veronica Michael, Jan Mifsud, Nickol, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Anna Samy, Samantha Smith, Sina, Saleri, Charlie Spiteri, Janko Stojanovic, Uatoa Tuigamala, Clint Abela Wadge, Wai Walsh, 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 PASTORAL CARE

We pray for the recently deceased:

Harper Button

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

Sr Mary Coburn RSJ, Ellen Greenan, Fr Peter Sinnema, Monica Steele, & Michael Williams.

Please pray for the Sick:

Aubrey, Noah Barlow, Michael Barrett, Stephen Beaton, Peter Bennett, Carmel Berry, Steven Braszel, Tina Bower, Tracey Burn, Alex, Fred Capuano, Charlie, Gary Ching, Josephine Cilia, Brendan Coburn, Robyn Cola, Ted Cooling, Lindsay & Kathleen Dally, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, Evelyn, George Farrell, Yvonne Feliciouz, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Adam Hillier, Leonie Kervin, Elle Hillman, Kiahni Holamotutama, Alicia Holborn, Matthew Jansen, John & Frances, Joe, David Kasprzak, Michael Larkin, Marie Maloney, Patricia Marechal, Brian Marshall, Debbie Marshall, Jordanis Mary Pauline McDonald, Ian McKechnie, Marcus Meno, Paul Mullin, Joanne Mumford June Murray, Nancy Pace, Arthur Pape, Michael Paterson, Georgia Peacock, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Colin Taffe, Catherine Time, Susan Trist, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Jayne Wilkins, Nathan Witmore, Patricia Yazbek, & Betty Young 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



SERVICE / COMMUNITY

ALL VOLUNTEERS IN OUR PARISH MUST HAVE A CURRENT VALID WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK AND A CODE OF CONDUCT FORM SIGNED.

ST ANTHONY'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS: 14th & 15th September

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil: Liza Chdid
8.30am: Ineke Allen
10.30am: Gilles Maitre

CHURCH FLOWERS

September: Gloria

CUPPA VOLUNTEERS

To be advised

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330

The Melton South Conference meet every 1st Tuesday of the month in the Mackillop Room 10.30am.

New members most welcome, training provided.

Non perishable items within the use by date can be left in the 'drop box' in the Church foyer.

We cannot accept re-packaged food.

COMBINED CHURCHES CARING MELTON INC

We're here to support City of Melton residents get ahead through access to our foodbank and other community programs. It's never just about the food or the budget help, it's about recognising the beauty that is in the person and bringing it out so they can be their best. 100 Coburn's Road Melton South 9747 6811.

*The Harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;
Pray therefore (**Rogate Ergo...**) to the Lord of the
Harvest that He may send Good workers into His vast
vineyard. (Mt. 9:37-38).*

*Prayer is the answer to the perennial
problem of the lack of good evangelical workers.
It is a command and not just a simple request or an
invitation. The Church needs holy workers.*

*She needs committed, faithful, and zealous ministers of
the Gospel. But if we will not beg the Lord, we will never
be blessed with Good and Holy Vocations.*

*St. Hannibal Ma. Di Francia, the Patron of Vocations
said; Vocations come from on High, if we do not pray,
vocations will not come. Let us therefore implore the
Master of the Harvest with this short prayer:*

Send, O Lord, Holy Apostles into Your Church!



ST BERNARD'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS : 14th & 15th August

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Saturday: 5.00pm: Jackie Tabone
Sunday: 8.30am: Lyn Shea

CHURCH FLOWERS

September: Tup Shea

PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-MOWING

Colm Carragher, Ron Geurts and Michael Love.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

Welfare number 1800 305 330.

Bacchus Marsh Vinnies Store 164-190 Main Street is in urgent need of donations. All donations gratefully appreciated and can be dropped at the Store 7 days a week. Any enquiries please contact the Store Manager on 8199 4205

THE NEIGHBOURS PLACE

The Neighbours' Place is a Christian not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to serve people of the **Moorabool Shire**, west of Melbourne Australia, who are disadvantaged, at risk or temporarily unable to feed themselves or their family and who are in need of emergency food relief.

NILS is a **No Interest Loans Scheme** for assistance of up to \$2000 for things like white goods, furniture and minor car repairs to keep life going.

We are located at [77 Main Street, Bacchus Marsh](#)

Phone: 03 5367 6222

Email: neighbourspl@iinet.net.au

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am-12.30pm. Closed on public holidays.

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.

PARISH CENTRE BOOKING

Tel: 5367 3427 Mon—Fri 9.00am to 6.00pm

Hall Managers: Marie & Terry Casey

All use of the Parish Centre must be authorised by either the parish office or by contacting Marie Casey. Mass coordinators will unlock & lock the Parish centre before & after masses so that the toilets can be accessed.

FAITH FORMATION

ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

BAPTISM PREPARATION PROGRAM– ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

Baptisms will be held at St Anthony's on the 1st & 3rd Saturdays of the month at 11.00am
and Baptisms will be held at St Bernard's on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the month at 11.00am.

Please go to:

[St Anthony of Padua Catholic Parish | Melton South](#)

[Baptism of Infants | St Bernard's Catholic Parish \(stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au\)](#)

click on 'Faith Formation' and then 'Baptism of Infants' for all the information and the application form.

Please contact the Parish Offices if you need any assistance. Thank you.

ADULT PREPARATION Adult preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation are through the R.C.I.A Program. Please see Fr Alex, Fr Wilford, Fr Lucas or Naim Chdid .



FATIMA STATUE—ST ANTHONY'S

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

Group 1:	Ben & Joan Antony	9743 8154
Group 2:	Maria Peter	0450 052 327
Group 3:	Philip & Cristina Anyayahan	0403 171 918



DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

1st Sunday of the month 3pm.

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

Lord, we ask you to continue

to be with us as we

' TAKE THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL '

together in prayer.

May we open ourselves to you

with a new depth of trust and conviction

in your guiding hand,

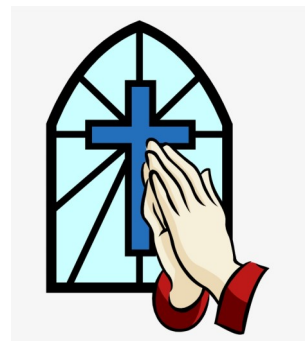
so that we may discern our journey

with compassionate and humble hearts

and come to know your Holy Spirit

Moving within and amongst us,

And so be transformed Amen.



LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right;
treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

FIRST READING Isaiah 35:4-7

Say to all faint hearts,
'Courage! Do not be afraid.
'Look, your God is coming,
vengeance is coming,
the retribution of God;
he is coming to save you.'
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
the ears of the deaf unsealed,
then the lame shall leap like a deer
and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy;
for water gushes in the desert,
streams in the wasteland,
the scorched earth becomes a lake,
the parched land springs of water.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 145

Commentator: Praise the Lord, my soul!

All: Praise the Lord, my soul!

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free.

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord who loves the just,
the Lord, who protects the stranger.

The Lord upholds the widow and orphan,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age.

Praise the Lord, my soul!

NEXT WEEKEND'S READINGS

24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING: Is 50:5-9

SECOND READING: James 2:14-18

GOSPEL: Mk 8:27-35



SECOND READING James 2:1-5

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats;' then you tell the poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest.' Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that?

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom
and healed all who were sick.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 7:31-37

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said 'he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
so my soul is yearning for you, my God;
my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

The Blessed Virgin Mary 17

The Visitation (2)

Our Lady flew to the aid of Saint Elizabeth as she shall do for us until the end of time.

“During those days Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to the town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.” (Luke 1: 39-40)

Ostensibly, Mary picked up and hurried to the hill country to help her pregnant cousin. Luke even notes that she stayed for three months, presumably to assist at the birth of Elizabeth's son, before returning to Nazareth.

On this side of heaven we cannot know what truly went on in Our Lady's mind as she travelled along the dusty road, her mind no doubt still filled with the angel's message to her and the burgeoning life within her. But I tend to think it was not merely a helpful whim that drove Mary with such haste to Zechariah's door.

Upon being greeted by Elizabeth, whose unborn child leaps in joyful recognition of his unborn Lord, Mary proclaims her beautiful song of praise, the Magnificat. This canticle is not only the longest recorded speech we have by Our Lady, but it is nothing less than an effusion of joy and adoration. In its tone, we can get a glimpse of the sheer love Mary has for her Creator and the wonder she feels at the honour he has bestowed upon her in asking her to be his own mother.

When I read the Magnificat, I imagine the relief Mary must have felt to pour out this song. Here she was with perhaps the only other woman on earth who could understand the magnitude of God's blessings upon them. She did not have to hide her Son's identity; Elizabeth had already proclaimed it, prompted by her own son. Mary can be unguarded. She knows that her fiat will

By Kelly Marcum, ncregister.com

bring suffering. She does not yet know the exact shape of her trials to come, but the many unknowns she faced as Christ's mother would be enough to worry any heart.

But no trepidation colours the Magnificat. There is only deep joy and awe in God's grace, and a certitude of her own place in salvation history. A place she treasures not out of pride, but out of the greatest humility, the lowliest maid exalted to be the mother of God, as proof of his greatness.

The joy of the Magnificat is, I posit, at the heart of why Mary made her journey to Judah. Her visit was not a command by God. Gabriel told her of the pregnancy, but he did not ask her to travel alone across the country to visit her cousin. She wanted to help her cousin, who no doubt was suffering a different kind of physical pain as an older woman experiencing pregnancy for the

first time. Mary would doubtless feel duty-bound to stand at Elizabeth's side at this time.

But even more than that, I imagine it was excitement, a wild joy that ached to be shared, that drove Mary over the dusty hills of Judah. This visit was not just that of a helpful relative; it was the first time Jesus was brought to be introduced and shared. Nestled beneath Mary's heart, he travelled with her. This was his first journey as God made man. His mother's body bore him under another's roof so that the joy of the Incarnation could be shared. His cousin John leapt at his coming, and Elizabeth named him aloud as her Lord.

In the Visitation we see Our Lady flying to the aid of another as she does for us and shall do until the end of time. And we witness a woman burning with love for God, her footsteps foreshadowing the generations of missionaries who will come after, bringing her Son to every corner of the world.