



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, KOROBET
309 MYRNIONG-KOROBET ROAD 3341

22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME-YEAR C

28th August 2022

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Fabian Smith
ASSISTANT PRIESTS: Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint and Fr Samuel Kapani

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Lesley Morffew
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Parish Office Hours: Monday 9.00am-12noon
Tue 9am-4pm Wed 9am-5.30pm Thu /Fri 9am-4pm
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

St Lawrence of Brindisi School **Principal:** Bill Hill
31 Waterway Boulevard, Weir Views, 3338
Phone: 0477 155 210
Email: principal@slweirviews.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.slweirviews.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)

Principal: Marlene Jorgensen **Phone:** 8099 6000
109-141 Bulmans Rd, West Melton, 3337 **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 9.00am-11.30am Wed & Thu 9.00am-1.00pm

Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au
Facebook link:
<https://www.facebook.com/stbernardsbacchusmarsh>

St Bernard's School **Acting Principal:** Larissa Feketa
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

Naim Chid	0437 004 790
Lillian Christian - Vice Chair	0400 441 257
Stephen Fernandes	0439 743 533
Amy Honrade	0457 042 695
Natalie Howard - Chair	0492 947 201
Rose Ma'ae	0460 672 571

EX-OFFICIO: Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint,
Fr Samuel Kapani, Damien Schuster and Bill Hill
Council Secretary: Judy Johnson

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL COUNCIL

Shane Cook - School Advisory Board	0419 999 052
Peter Farren	0418 594 501
Peter Kennedy - Secretary	0407 778 119
Maira Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell - Chair	0401 927 502

EX-OFFICIO:
Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint and Fr Samuel Kapani

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Coordinator/Officer: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449) **Officers:** St Anthony's - Lorraine Tellis 0437 658 423 & Geetha Vincent 0478 112 996
St Bernard's - Margaret Love (0437 247 779) Evana Miesen & Ron Geurts

Items for the newsletter must be submitted by Wednesday 1.00pm. Please email judyparishnews@gmail.com or call 0414 007 009

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S MELTON SOUTH 29/8/2022-4/09/2022

MASS TIMES:

Monday 29/8	6.30pm
Tuesday 30/8	9.30am & 6.30pm
Wednesday 31/8	7.30am & 9.30am
Thursday 1/9	9.30am
Friday 2/9	7.30am & 9.30am
1st Friday Devotions Mass	7.30pm & Midnight
1st Saturday Mass 3/9	8.30am

Rosary 9.00am before 9.30am weekday Mass.



Sunday Masses

Saturday 3/9	5.00pm
Sunday 4/9	8.30am, 10.30am & 5.00pm

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.
No Confession on Monday.

ST BERNARD'S BACCHUS MARSH 29/08/2022-4/09/2022

MASS TIMES:

Monday 29/8	No Mass
Tuesday 30/8	7.30am
Holy Hour	7.30pm
Wednesday 31/8	9.30am
Thursday 1/9	7.30am
Friday 2/9	9.30am
Saturday 3/9	9.00am

Sunday Masses

Saturday 3/9	5.00pm
Sunday 4/9	8.30am & 10.30am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

VIGIL MASS	3/9	6.30pm
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If you need a Priest in the case of a genuine emergency please call 0403 435 471

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: <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.

REFLECTION 22nd SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME– Mary Fermio rsj

During my early years at Bacchus Marsh, I had the privilege of helping with the Soul Food group preparing and serving a meal for those who came. As well, bread, fruit etc were also available for them to take home. Some needed this practical support, some came for companionship as they lived alone in outlying areas.

In today's Gospel Jesus invites us to share with the crippled, the lame, the blind, those who are in need in more ways than one. He promises we shall receive us much ourselves, not only here, but in the life to come.

Those who work with Vinnies are fulfilling this invitation by helping those who are in need by offering financial help and advice, practical help with food and a shop providing less expensive goods. This they do without any expectations of returns.

Like me, I am sure by giving of their time and efforts, they have received more blessings themselves and are enriched by those they serve.

How do you follow the words of Jesus?

Our time is the most valuable gift we can share.



PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

THINKING OF BECOMING CATHOLIC? Looking for love? Needing hope? Seeking God's love? Find peace, hope and love through the Catholic Faith. Call our Catechist Naim Chdid to learn more 0437 004 790. Classes begin on the 23rd August at 7.00pm at St Anthony's Church of Padua, 67-75 Exford Road, Melton South (Age 16+).

This week's Topic is "Who Are You?" Who Am I? Is there more to me than matter? Is there more than meets the eye?

FOSTERING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH FAITH!-by Dr Benjamin Arulanandhu

These sessions are intended to strengthen our knowledge about mental health, and how to improve mental health outcomes through faith. Who should attend? All are welcome and is not limited to those with mental health concerns. These sessions are intended to journey together in Faith.

YOU CAN JOIN THESE SESSIONS AT ANY TIME. 6 sessions left, every Wednesday until 5th October in St Anthony's Meeting room 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Scan QR Code to register



ST ANTHONY'S

INDIAN FOOD FUNDRAISER

Our Indian community last weekend raised \$1650.00 for the Padua Hall extension. Thank you for your generous support!

FATHER'S DAY RAFFLE

This weekend the Social Committee will be selling raffle tickets for the Father's Day hampers. Please support this fundraiser as all money raised will go towards the Padua Hall Extension.

MESSAGE FROM SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

All volunteers are required to have a current valid Working with Children Check and a Code of Conduct form signed. Any queries, please see or contact any of the Safeguarding Officers - Lorraine Tellis, Geetha Vincent or Godwin Barton. Contact details are on the front page of the newsletter.

PARISH OFFICE

The parish office will be closed on Monday 29th August.

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH CORPORATE DINNER

Venue: Tabcorp Park, 2 Ferris Rd, Melton 3337

Date: 22nd October 2022

Time: 6pm till late

Dress Code: Black Tie

Adult: \$100 per head **Child:** \$50.00 (12 years and under)

RSVP: 1st October 2022

Contacts: Julie S 0402182 458 & Ana T 0406 503 363

FATHER'S DAY NEXT WEEKEND

Next weekend we will be conducting the Annual Father's Day Appeal for Sick and Retired Priests. This is a great way of showing your gratitude for the enormous work our priests have done for us in the past and present day and to give them comfort and respite in the later years. Please give generously.

THERE WILL BE A CUPPA AFTER ALL MASSES NEXT WEEKEND FOR FATHER'S DAY.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOME PARISHIONERS TO BRING A CAKE FOR THE FATHER'S DAY CUPPA. IF YOU CAN OBLIGE PLEASE CONTACT LESLEY AT THE PARISH OFFICE.

ST BERNARD'S

THE DOMINICAN SISTERS' MAJOR SUPERIOR'S VISIT

The Dominican Sisters' major superior, Mother Anna Grace, will be coming from the United States to visit the sisters and meet the parish community at the beginning of September. Please join us in welcoming Mother Anna Grace on her first visit to Australia with a morning tea after the 8:30 am Mass on Sunday 4 September.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

Our Safeguarding role is about looking after the well-being of our parishioners and anyone using St Bernard's Parish facilities. It is not just about our physical safety, but also aims to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. We fully embrace the bishops' responses to the crimes and failures of our Church documented by the Royal Commission – 'The governance and management of dioceses and parishes must maintain an unwavering commitment to protect the most vulnerable and rebuild trust and credibility among the Catholic and broader communities for the health and integrity of the Church.' Our committee has begun assessing all risk issues submitted in survey returns. Urgent items requiring finance – uneven concrete, disabled toilet, choir rail - have been discussed with the Finance Committee.

St Bernard's Parish Safeguarding Committee

FATHER'S DAY NEXT WEEKEND

Next weekend we will be conducting the Annual Father's Day Appeal for Sick and Retired Priests. This is a great way of showing your gratitude for the enormous work our priests have done for us in the past and present day and to give them comfort and respite in the later years. Please give generously.

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: 3rd & 4th 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 Vigil: Aloysious Dacunha

8.30am: Leonia Jessop

10.30am: Romeo Sacris

5.00pm: Dolores Turcsan

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

5.00pm Vigil: Gavin Pereira

8.30am: Geoff Sutton

10.30am: George Bonello

5.00pm: Not rostered

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

MASS COORDINATORS

5.00pm: Coleen & Godwin

8.30am: Julie & Godwin

10.30am: Leonia & Godwin

5.00pm: Deepa & Godwin

ST ANTHONY'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Dorette Turcsan

Please pray for the Sick:

Hazel Michael, Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana, Christabelle, Lydia De Vega, Melanie Fue, Bruce Hynes, Kotinis Cornelia Kani, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen, Lisa Melia, Damien Michael, Tony Michael, Veronica Michael, Nickol, Paul Nowak, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts, Samantha Smith, Charlie Spiteri, Janko Stojanovic, Christina Tuigamala, 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

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Father we lift up all those who are facing illness. We ask that You bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Calm their fears and let them experience the healing power of your love. Amen



ST BERNARD'S MINISTRIES

MINISTERS OF THE WORD : THIS WEEKEND

5.00pm: Vikki Benson

8.30am: Dominican Sisters

10.30am: St Vincent de Paul Conference

MINISTERS OF THE WORD: 3rd & 4th September

5.00pm: Sonia Smith

8.30am: Moira Ross

10.30am: Beatrice Younger

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

September: Sr Mary Fermio

ST BERNARD'S PASTORAL CARE

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

Kevin Bridges, Gilly Gleeson, Ashley Hine, Joan Kervin, Denis Leahy, Phillip Lennox, Kathleen Martin, Nathan Prince and Robert Taylor.

Please pray for the Sick:

Patricia Allison, Noah Barlow, Chaiel Balcombe, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett, Steven Braszel, Tina Bower, Fred Capuano, Gary Ching, Chris, Josephine Cilia, Robyn Cola, Ted Cooling, Lindsay & Kathleen Dally, Judy Delahey, Theresa Dockter, Allison Evans, Helen Evans, George Farrell, Justin Fernandez, Pasquale Gagliarbi, Mario Galea, Cynthia Goodyear, Gwen Green, Joe Gristi, Adam Hillier, Leonie Kervin, 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, Mitchell Prendergast, Peter Roberts, Ken Shaw, Terry Sims, Marian Smith, Elizabeth Stehmann, Catherine Time, Susan Trist, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw, Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry Walsh, Cath Wheelahan, Jayne Wilkins, 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

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: 3rd & 4th September

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

5.00pm Vigil: Lorraine Tellis
8.30am: Edwina La Rose
10.30am: Judy Van Hoos

CUPPA VOLUNTEERS 27th & 28th August

5.00pm Vigil: Julie Sequiera & Judy Van Hoos
8.30am: Sam & Pat Chiles
10.30am: Kathleen McCurry & Frank Paulo

CHURCH FLOWERS

September: Ana Taunuu



ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Welfare Number: 1800 305 330
The Melton South Conference meet every 3rd Tuesday morning in the Meeting 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.
Address: 100 Coburn Road Melton South 9747 6811

God, strengthen and sustain all those who volunteer in our Churches; that with patience and understanding they may love and care for your people; and grant that together they may follow with Jesus Christ offering to you their gifts and talents.



ST BERNARD'S

WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS : 3rd & 4th September

PIETY STALL VOLUNTEERS

Piety Stall is open after all Masses

Saturday: 5.00pm Jan Farmelo
Sunday: 8.30am Jan & Colm
10.30am Natalia Klenkowski

CHURCH FLOWERS

September: Frances McDaid



PRESBYTERY & CHURCH GROUNDS-MOWING

September: Colm Carragher & Ron Guerts

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

Welfare Number is 1800 305 330.
The Vinnies Store is now located at Shop 19, The Village, 164-190 Main Street Bacchus Marsh
The store is open 7 days a week. If you are able to volunteer and would like some more information, please contact the Store Manager on 8199 4205.

THE NEIGHBOURS PLACE

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 \$1500 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

FAITH FORMATION

ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

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

Dear Parishioners

Keeping in line with the Archbishop's vision for Mission, the Parishes of St Anthony's and St Bernard's have put together a new Baptism Preparation Program, for any parents who wish to have their child Baptised.

Preparations for Baptisms will take place on Saturdays alternating between both Parishes.

A welcome Mass must be attended prior to the Baptism. Baptisms will be held on

Saturday mornings at 11.00am. Parents must attend two sessions.

Sessions will run from 12.00pm-4.00pm. Godparents must attend the 2nd session.

Bookings must be made to attend these sessions. Please visit our website for a detailed

description of the new program. Contact the Parish Office to book your Preparation and Baptism.



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

FATIMA STATUE—ST ANTHONY'S

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

Group 1: Joe & Jacqueline Spiteri 0402 512 841

Group 2: Tunya & Jason Sant 0422 178 260

Group 3: Rohini Selvanayagam 0425 868 967

DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

1st Sunday of the Month-3.00pm



PRAYER TO ST MICHAEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle,
be our protection against the wickedness
and snares of the Devil; may God rebuke him,
we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the
heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits, who prowl
through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



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

Have mercy on me, O Lord,
for I cry to you all the day long.
O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of mercy to all who call to you.

FIRST READING Sirach 3:17-20, 28-29 (JB)

My son, be gentle in carrying out your business,
and you will be better loved than a lavish giver.
The greater you are, the more you should behave humbly,
and then you will find favour with the Lord;
for great though the power of the Lord is,
he accepts the homage of the humble.
There is no cure for the proud man's malady,
since an evil growth has taken root in him.
The heart of a sensible man will reflect on parables,
an attentive ear is the sage's dream.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 67

Commentator: God, in your goodness,
you have made a home for the poor.

All: God, in your goodness,
you have made a home for the poor

The just shall rejoice at the presence of God,
they shall exult and dance for joy.
O sing to the Lord, make music to his name;
rejoice in the Lord, exult at his presence. R.

Father of the orphan, defender of the widow,
such is God in his holy place.
God gives the lonely a home to live in;
he leads the prisoners forth into freedom. R.

You poured down, O God, a generous rain:
when your people were starved you gave them new life.
It was there that your people found a home,
prepared in your goodness, O God, for the poor. R.

God, in your goodness,
you have made a home for the poor

NEXT WEEKEND'S READINGS-

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Wis 9: 13-18

Second Reading: Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Gospel: Lk 14:1, 25-33



SECOND READING Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

What you have come to is nothing known to the senses:
not a blazing fire, or a gloom turning to total darkness, or a
storm; or trumpeting thunder or the great voice speaking
which made everyone that heard it beg that no more
should be said to them. But what you have come to is
Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly
Jerusalem where the millions of angels have gathered for
the festival, with the whole Church in which everyone is a
'first-born son' and a citizen of heaven. You have come to
God himself, the supreme Judge, and been placed with
spirits of the saints who have been made perfect; and to
Jesus, the mediator who brings a new covenant.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Take my yoke upon you;
learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 14:1, 7-14

On a Sabbath day Jesus had gone for a meal to the house
of one of the leading Pharisees; and they watched him
closely. He then told the guests a parable, because he
had noticed how they picked the places of honour. He said
this, 'When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do
not take your seat in the place of honour. A more distin-
guished person than you may have been invited, and the
person who invited you both may come and say, "Give up
your place to this man." And then, to your embarrassment,
you would have to go and take the lowest place. No; when
you are a guest, make your way to the lowest place and sit
there, so that, when your host comes, he may say, "My
friend, move up higher." In that way, everyone with you at
the table will see you honoured. For everyone who exalts
himself will be humbled, and the man who humbles him-
self will be exalted.'

Then he said to his host, 'When you give a lunch or a din-
ner, do not ask your friends, brothers, relations or rich
neighbours, for fear they repay your courtesy by inviting
you in return. No; when you have a party, invite the poor,
the crippled, the lame, the blind; that they cannot pay you
back means that you are fortunate, because repayment
will be made to you when the virtuous rise again.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

How great is the goodness, Lord,
that you keep for those who fear you.

The Crusades III

What the Crusades were really like (Part 1)

The Crusaders were not unprovoked aggressors, greedy marauders or medieval colonialists, as portrayed in some history books. In fact, Thomas Madden, chair of St Louis University's history department and author of *A Concise History of the Crusades*, contests that the Crusaders were defensive wars, not wars of conquest.

In the following Q&A, Madden shares the most popular myths about the Crusades and the modern findings that prove the myths wrong.

Q: What are some common misconceptions about the Crusades and the Crusaders?

Madden: The following are some of the most common myths and why they are wrong.

Myth 1: The Crusades were wars of unprovoked aggression against a peaceful Muslim world.

This is as wrong as wrong can be. From the time of Mohammed, Muslims had sought to conquer the Christian world. They did a pretty good job of it, too. After a few centuries of steady conquests, Muslim armies had taken all of North Africa, the Middle East, Asia Minor and most of Spain.

In other words, by the end of the 11th century, the forces of Islam had captured two-thirds of the Christian world. Palestine, the home of Jesus Christ; Egypt, the birthplace of Christian monasticism; Asia Minor, where St Paul planted the seeds of the first Christian communities — these were not the periphery of Christianity but its very core.

And the Muslim empires were not finished yet. They continued to press westward towards Constantinople, ultimately passing it and entering Europe itself. As far as unprovoked aggression goes, it was all on the Muslim side. At some point what was left of the Christian world would have to defend itself or simply succumb to Islamic conquest.

Myth 2: The Crusaders wore crosses but they were really only interested in capturing booty and

land. Their pious platitudes were just a cover for rapacious greed.

Historians used to believe that a rise in Europe's population led to a crisis of too many noble "second sons", those who were trained in chivalric warfare but who had no feudal lands to inherit. The Crusades, therefore, were seen as a safety valve, sending these belligerent men far from Europe where they could carve out lands for themselves at someone else's expense.

Modern scholarship, assisted by the advent of computer databases, has exploded this myth. We now know that it was the "first sons" of Europe that answered the Pope's call in 1095, as well as in subsequent Crusades.

Crusading was an enormously expensive operation. Lords were forced to sell off or mortgage their lands to gather the necessary funds. Most were also not interested in an overseas kingdom. Much like a soldier today, the medieval Crusader was proud to do his duty but longed to return home.

After the spectacular successes of the First Crusade, with Jerusalem and much of Palestine in Crusader hands, virtually all of the Crusaders went home. Only a tiny handful remained behind to consolidate and govern the newly won territories.

Booty was also scarce. In fact, although Crusaders no doubt dreamed of vast wealth in opulent Eastern cities, virtually none of them ever even recouped their expenses. But money and land were not the reasons that they went on Crusade in the first place. They went to atone for their sins and to win salvation by doing good works in a faraway land.

They underwent such expense and hardship because they believed that by coming to the aid of their fellow Christian in the East they were storing up treasure where rust and moth cannot corrupt. They were very mindful of Christ's exhortation that he who will not take up his cross is not worthy of Christ. They also remembered: "Greater love hath no man than this, than to lay down his life for his friends."