



St Anthony's Parish

67-75 EXFORD ROAD, MELTON SOUTH, 3338.
P.O BOX 2152 MELTON SOUTH 3338
TEL: 9747 9692 FAX: 9746 0422



St Bernard's Parish

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

2nd Sunday of Advent– Year B

6th December 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:
Monday /Wednesday/ Friday: 9.00am –4.00pm
Tuesday 9.00am-1.00pm Thursday 9.00am-5.30pm
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 BERNARD'S PARISH

Parish Secretary: Dolores Turcsan
Admin Assistant: Judy Johnson
Sacramental Coordinator/ Bookkeeper: Naim Chdid
Parish Office Hours:
Monday Closed
Tuesday-Friday 9.00am-1.00pm
Email: bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
Website: www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au
St Bernard's School Principal: Emilio Scalzo
19a Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340
Phone: (03) 5366 5800
Email: principal@sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sbbacchusmarsh.catholic.edu.au

Catholic Regional College - Melton (Years 7-12)
Principal: Marlene Jorgensen **Phone:** 8099 6000
Website: www.crcmelton.com.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	0492 947 201
Villy Julita	0403 751 343
Rose Ma'ae	0431 386 473
Sally Markulin	0405 814 490
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

Shane Cook -School Advisory Board	0419 999 052
Peter Farren	0418 594 501
Maira Ross	0400 675 056
Aaron Russell - Chair	0401 927 502
EX-OFFICIO: Fr Fabian Smith PP, Fr Lucas Kyaw Myint, Fr Marcus Goulding and Emilio Scalzo	

CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS

Coordinator: Godwin Barton (0425 734 449)

Officers: Karina Dunne & Lorraine Tellis

PARISHIONER'S FIRST COLLECTION/SECOND COLLECTION

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

The link to the St Anthony's Parish is: <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.

If you need a Priest in the case of an emergency please call 0403 435 471

MASS AND DEVOTIONS

ST ANTHONY'S 7/12-13/12 MELTON SOUTH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 7th Dec:	6.30pm*
Tuesday 8th Dec:	9.15am & 6.30pm
Wednesday 9th Dec:	7.30am & 9.15am
Thursday 10th Dec:	9.15am
Friday 11th Dec:	7.30am & 9.15am

A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration will be held each Tuesday evening at 5.30pm

Saturday Vigil 12th Dec: 5.00pm

Sunday 13th Dec: 8.30am
10.30am
5.00pm

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

*No confessions on Mondays

** Please note masks must be worn, except when receiving Holy Communion.*

ST BERNARD'S 7/12-13/12 BACCHUSMARSH

MASS TIMES:

Monday 7th Dec:	No Mass
Tuesday 8th Dec:	7.30am
Wednesday 9th Dec:	9.30am
Thursday 10th Dec:	7.30am
Friday 11th Dec:	9.30am
Saturday 12th Dec- (EF Latin 1962)	9.00am

A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration will be held each Tuesday evening at 7.30pm.

Saturday Vigil 12th Dec: 5.00pm

Sunday 13th Dec: 8.30am
10.00am

Confession available 30 minutes prior to each Mass

Please note masks must be worn, except when receiving Holy Communion

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

KOROBET

MASS TIME

Saturday Vigil: 6.30pm

MASS BOOKINGS

ST ANTHONY'S MASS BOOKINGS

Pre-registration is essential for **weekend** Masses. Visit www.stanthonyofpadua.com.au to register. Parishioners who do not have access to the internet or who do not have an email address can register to attend Mass by calling the Parish Office on **9747 9692** or Judy on **0414 007 009**.

Weekday Masses will not need to be booked online. Contact details will be collected upon arrival at Church.

ST BERNARD'S MASS BOOKINGS

No registration will be required, contact details will be collected upon arrival at Church.

MASS TIMES—LIVE STREAMING FROM ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH

Sunday: 10.30am Mass

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

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

Father Fabian 0403 435 471 /Fr Lucas 0478 768 141 /Fr Marcus 0468 367 893

PARISH & EVENTS NOTICES

ADVENT YOUTH EVENT

Youth ages 12-18 are invited to an Advent youth event hosted by Fr Marcus and the Dominican sisters on Thursday 10 December from 4-6 PM at Catholic Regional College, Melton. For more information or to register contact Sr Mary Sarah smarysarah@crcmelton.com.au.

BAPTISM PREPARATION MEETING-ST ANTHONY'S AND ST BERNARD'S

A Baptism Preparation meeting will be held at St Anthony's Church on Wednesday 16th December for parents wishing to have their child baptised. Please contact the Parish Offices for further details. Thank you.

NEWS FROM THE PARISH OFFICES

ST ANTHONY'S

READER'S ROSTER WEEKEND 12th / 13th DECEMBER

Saturday 12th December

5.00pm: Marian Muller

Sunday 13th December

8.30am: Kim Nguyen

10.30am: Anonica Mavaega

5.00pm: Dolores Turcsan

Readers please note rosters are currently being drawn up by Lesley. All readers have been sent and email, we especially need readers for the 5.00pm Sunday Masses. Thank you.

PARISH OFFICE

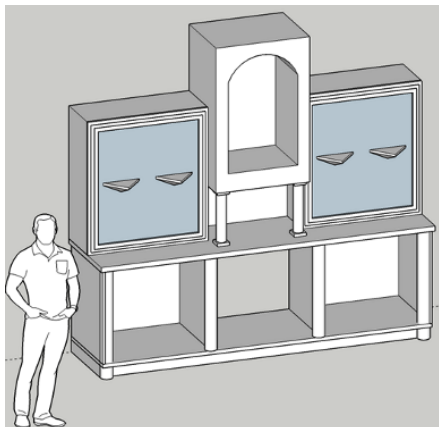
The Parish Office will be closed Friday 11th December.

CHAPEL

Dear Parishioners of St Anthony's,
Just an update on where we are at with the furnishings for the new chapel. The following items need your generous contribution; **High Altar and the St Anthony's Statue.** **Only if you are in a financial position to help make this happen** and wish to contribute towards the furnishings, I am providing our **NAB** bank details.

Ac Name **ST ANTHONYS CHURCH, BSB 083 347**

Account No **641915964**. Please put in your Full Name for record keeping. If you need to talk to me please contact me on 0403 435 471. Many Blessings Fr Fabian



ST BERNARD'S

READER'S ROSTER

To Be Advised

CHRISTMAS CARDS & COLUMBAN CALENDARS

Christmas cards (\$2.50 per pk 5) and Columban Calendars (\$9.00) can now be purchased from the Piety Stall which will be open from **9.30-10.00am on Sundays**. They can also be purchased from the Presbytery during of-fice hours. Tues-Friday 9am-1pm.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

WANTED: Generous parishioners willing to do 2 prayers of the faithful each weekend for one month each year.

Guidelines provided, help given if needed. If you meet this description, please contact Sr Mary Fermio 5367 2078 asap or email mary.fermio@sosj.org.au Thank you.

**"It is not
enough just to
wish well;
we must also
do well."
-St. Ambrose**

St Ambrose Feast Day- 7th December

THE ADVENT WREATH



Advent, which begins the Church's liturgical year, began on Sunday 29 November 2020. Advent encompasses the four Sundays and weekdays leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation for our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas. The Advent Wreath can be a way to involve even very little children in learning about Christian preparation - not only for celebrating Our Lord's birth, but to make our hearts truly ready to receive Him.

Gathering materials for the wreath-perhaps on an outing in the park or woods, or even in the backyard- and assembling it at home is an interesting family project in which even the youngest children can participate.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season.

- The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life.
- The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.
- The evergreens that make up the wreath signifies victory over persecution and suffering. The pine and holly, signify immortality and the cedar signifies strength and healing. The pinecones that decorate the wreath symbolize life and resurrection. The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God's promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.
- The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour purple is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice. And one candle, the third candle is pink and signifies joy. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world and the anticipation of His second coming to judge the living and the dead.

The Candles

The first candle, which is purple, symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

The second candle, also purple, represents faith. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a liturgical colour for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Saviour. This final candle, the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

The white candle is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The colour white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Saviour.

Celebrating Advent is an excellent way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas.

In family practice, the Advent wreath is most appropriately lit at dinner time after the blessing of the food.

A traditional prayer service using the Advent wreath proceeds as follows:

During the second week of Advent, the father prays:

O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare for Thy only begotten Son,
that through His coming we may be made worthy to serve Thee with pure minds.
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.



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:

Arthur Abela, Mark Clarke, Alessandro D Martino,
Lafaele (Ralph) Mataia, Anthony Mercieca, Frederick Radford,
Felix Scotto

Please pray for the Sick:

Nickolia & Klara Butkovic, Maria Caruana, Mary Caruana,
Chinnamma Joseph, Judy Layton, Peter Manicaro, Reg Marslen,
Damien Michael, Kevin Michael, Tony Michael, Veronica Michael,
Wanda Novak, Caleb O'Brien, John Osborne, Peter Poole,
Irene Rahilly, Catherine Roberts, Peter Roberts, Pat Roberts,
Charlie Spiteri, Janko Stojanovic, 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

We pray for the recently deceased

Mary Grech

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

Brian Barry, Betty Condon, Laurie Cumper, John Graham Glide,
Kevin Leonard, Gnaire Lockman, Marita Miesen, Peter Mullins,
Myra O'Leary, Con Rigby, Gavan Shea, & Roma Webster.

Please pray for the Sick:

Noah Barlow, Chaiel Balcombe, Michael Barrett, Peter Bennett,
Steven Braszel, 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 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, Susan Trist,
Dolores Turcsan, Stephen Van Eede, John Van Orsouw,
Angela Vicum, Louis Vogels, Barry 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: **Robert & Angela Lacono** **0424 801 928**

Group 2: **Kim & Villy Nguyen** **0403 751 343**

Group 3: **Mark & Edwina LaRose**



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

A Friend in Me

When they (the Magi) had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him. So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod." Mtt 2 13-15

Biblical scholars may question the historical accuracy of this story but it is certainly heavy with symbolism. The Joseph of the Christmas story is clearly reminiscent of the Joseph of the Exodus story, he too has a dream, he too goes to Egypt, and he too saves the family.

So what is the meaning of this story for us today? This vulnerable family fleeing tyranny and death is an image, a reminder of every displaced refugee in the world at any time.

The UN estimates that today more than 68 million people have been displaced from their homes because of factors such as war, threats from militia, natural disasters, the effects of climate change, and lack of economic opportunities. That is the highest number of displaced people since the end of World War II. The United Nations considers 25.4 million to be refugees, people forced to leave their countries because of persecution, war, or violence.

Christmas offers each of us an opportunity to commemorate the strength, the courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who undertake difficult and often terrifying journeys. And those who help them along the way. It offers an opportunity to try to see life through their eyes. This story of the flight into Egypt is a reminder that few people would leave home if they had a real choice. Deprivation or desperation leads someone to board an overloaded boat and sail across the Mediterranean Sea toward the unknown, to walk through the desert or pay smugglers thousands of dollars to cross multiple borders in search of a better life. Tens of thousands of children migrate unaccompanied, to escape poverty and violence. What a journey to take alone!

Pope Francis has made the care of migrants and refugees a major focus of his papacy, reminding the world of our shared obligations to others. But for many, the arduous and dangerous journey does not end when they arrive in a 'safe' country. Many people see them as a menace. They are met with prejudice and suspicion which turns quickly into intolerance, hostility and then to active persecution.

Such views are easily exploited, pandering to our own fears and insecurity. We have seen that in our own country. And they have nowhere else to go.

But, in Pope Francis' words:

It is not easy to enter into another culture, to put oneself in the shoes of people so different from us, to understand their thoughts and their experiences. As a result we often refuse to encounter the other and raise barriers to defend ourselves. Local communities are sometimes afraid that the newly arrived will disturb the established order, will 'steal' something they have long laboured to build up. And the newly arrived also have fears: they are afraid of confrontation, judgment, discrimination, failure. These fears are legitimate, based on doubts that are fully comprehensible from a human point of view. Having doubts and fears is not a sin. The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection. The sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbour, when this is in fact a privileged opportunity to encounter the Lord. Pope Francis

So we pray:

God, the loving Father of all people of all nations,
Give us open and generous hearts,
especially to those who seek refuge and safety
among us,
seeking what we take for granted.
Open our ears to hear their cries for help, for safety,
for hope and
Inspire us with courage to challenge those who seek
to make them a threat.
Open our eyes to this moment of grace You offer us,
Give us hands to reach out so that they may find a
generous welcome in this country.
May they find hope and peace from persecution
here.

Give us, loving Father of all people,
The courage and understanding to support them as
they make a new home, a new beginning,
May they be reunited with their loved ones.
God, the loving Father of all people, protect all
refugees in their travels.
May they find a friend in me
And a refuge in this country that I love.
Amen

Regards

Jim Quillinan

Email: jquillinan@dcsi.net.au

LITURGY OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

FIRST READING Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

'Console my people, console them'
says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call to her

that her time of service is ended,
that her sin is atoned for,
that she has received from the hand of the Lord
double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness
a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God
across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges a valley;
then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all mankind shall see it;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain,
joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice,
joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear,
say to the towns of Judah,
'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power,
his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him,
his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 84

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your
salvation.

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.

His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

SECOND READING 2 Peter 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
all people shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL COMMUNION ANTIPHON Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

NEXT WEEK'S READING

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading: Is 61:1-2, 10-11;

Second Reading: 1 Thess 5:16-24;

Gospel: Jn 1:6-8, 19-28



The life of Catholic worship and piety XXXXVI

O Antiphons:

A devotional meditation (2)

DECEMBER 18

O Adonai, and Ruler of the house of Israel, Who didst appear unto Moses in the burning bush, and gave him the law in Sinai, come to redeem us with an outstretched arm!

O Adonai, et Dux domus Israel, qui Moysi in igne flammæ rubi apparuisti, et ei in Sina legem dedisti: veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.

This antiphon speaks of Jesus as Lord and Ruler. We shall ponder him as ruler and king in another antiphon below.

But here, note the description of the Lord particularly in the aspect of fire. The first aspect of fire is explicit, in the burning bush that Moses encountered.

The second image is less explicit, speaking of Moses up on the mountain receiving the law. The great theophany on Sinai's heights is described in a fiery sort of way in Exodus 20:18-20 as being almost like a volcano. There are clouds, fire, lightning, and trumpet blasts as Moses goes up on the mountain. The people below are terrified; they instinctively realise that they cannot even touch the base of the mountain because they are not worthy or holy enough to be in God's fiery presence.

Scripture speaks of God as a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29, Psalm 18), a holy fire, and, most productively for us, as a refining fire (Malachi 3:2). As a refining fire, He shall burn away impurities so that we may one day be able to stand before Him with hands raised up praising Him who has redeemed us with strong hand and outstretched arm.

It is no accident that the Holy Spirit descended in the form of tongues of fire. The Holy Spirit enters us as fire to bring us up to the temperature of glory, burning away sinfulness, refining us as pure gold, enabling us to endure the blazing fire of God's love.

By Mon Charles Pope, catholiceducation.org/en/

DECEMBER 19

O Root of Jesse, which stands for a sign over the people, at Whom the kings shall shut their mouths, Whom the Gentiles shall seek, come to deliver us, do not tarry.

O Radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum, super quem continebunt reges os suum, quem Gentes deprecabuntur: veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.

This antiphon stresses the historical roots of the Gospel in and among the Jewish people, whom God chose long ago to be the root, the vine, and eventually the very cradle of His saving love for all the nations.

The root of Jesse here (in accord with Isaiah 11) speaks of the Jewish people, of whom Jesus said and affirmed: "Salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22).

And yet, as countless prophecies also disclosed, there would come a day when the Gentiles would also be joined to the saving plan of God and receive their Messiah from and through the Jewish people.

In Romans 11:17, St Paul speaks of the Gentiles as being like wild olive shoots grafted onto the olive tree, onto the vine of Israel. In this way all Israel will be saved, believing Jews and Gentiles together, grafted to the one vine, made members of the one Body of Christ. And Christ Himself joined the family of Jesse; He is a member of our own family tree!

This, then, is an antiphon that speaks to family ties and history. The Gospel is not located up in the skies; it is down to earth; it is among us by God's grace. He is from us in His human roots and surely is also for us.

