



ST. BERNARD'S

— BACCHUS MARSH PARISH —

Parish Priest | Rev. Fr. John Paul Mount



YEAR A

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

28th December 2025

— THE HERODS —

I've had no time to write a reflection this week. So I'm representing something I've previously written on the Herods. However I added some more information about Herod Agrippa II at the end:

There are many references to the Herods in the life of Jesus. For instance, Herod the Great is infamous in regards to today's feast of the Holy Innocents (if it wasn't a Sunday). John the Baptist, that great figure of Advent, was imprisoned and beheaded by Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. Antipas succeeded his father as king or tetrarch of Galilee. Keeping track of all the Herods can be pretty hard work!. I thought it might help to at least try to get a hold on who all these Herods are. (Warning, some fairly violent descriptions to follow!)

Let's make a start then with Herod the Great who ruled as King of Judea from about 37BC and died when Jesus Christ was an infant/child hiding with His family in Egypt (Mt 2:19,20). We can read a lot about Herod the Great in the writings of Josephus in the Jewish Wars and The Antiquities of the Jews. Through politics, marriage, warfare and being on good terms with the Romans, including Marc Antony, Herod the Great gained power and maintained it, even against threats from Cleopatra Queen of Egypt. The region gained stability under his rule, despite his brutal means of keeping it. He was a great builder, renowned to this day. He began the building of the Temple that the Apostles marveled at and that was one of the great marvels of the ancient world. He was not interested in the strict observance of religion of course, but rather with power and glory. At one point he erected a golden eagle above the Temple gate. Some 40 zealous Jews cut it down believing it to be idolatry. Herod the Great had them burned alive. Herod the Great was consumed by zealousness for holding power. No better example is his attempt to assassinate the infant Jesus by murdering every child under two years of age in the area of Bethlehem. Herod put to death many of his family, including his wife, Mariame, and three of his sons. One son, Antipater (named after his grandfather), told Herod that his brothers Alexander and Aristobulus were plotting against him. Herod had them strangled to death. Antipater was later put to death. Emperor Augustus joked that it was safer to be Herod's pig than his son (as Jews abstain from eating pig). Herod the Great, descending into paranoia, decayed in mind and body and died himself of a horrible disease.

CONTINUED INSIDE.....

— SUNDAY MASSES —

Saturday	5:00pm (Vigil)
Sunday	8:30am & 10:30am

OLHC, Korobeit

1st & 3rd Saturday

3rd & 17th Jan 6:30pm (Vigil)

— WEEKDAY MASSES —

*During school holidays,
weekday Masses will be held at 9:30am.*

Mon	no Mass
Tue, Thu, Fri	9:30am
Wed	9:30am
Sat	9:30am

Please note the following cancellations:

Tues 30 th Dec	no 9:30am, no Holy Hour
Wed 31 st Dec	no 9:30am Mass
Fri 2 nd Jan	no 9:30am Mass
Tue 6 th – Sat 10 th Jan	no 9:30am Masses

— CONFESSION —

30 minutes prior to each Mass
& during Holy Hour

— DEVOTIONS —

Mon	3:00pm	Divine Mercy Chaplet <i>resuming Feb 2026</i>
Tue	7:00pm	Holy Hour
Tue	30 th Dec	no Holy Hour
Tue	6 th Jan	no Holy Hour
Fri	24 hours	First Friday Adoration
Sun	10:00am	Rosary (Chapel)

— DIARY —

December 2025

Wed 31st New Year's Eve Mass – 6:00pm

January 2026

Thu	1 st	New Year's Day Mass – 9:30am
Sun	11 th	Baptism Preparation Session
Mon	26 th	Australia Day Public Holiday
Tue	27 th	School Teachers' Mass – 8:30am
Fri	30 th	Start of School Term 1 (<i>all students</i>)

— DONATE —

To support our Parish,
scan the QR code,
or contact the Parish Office
to set up recurring contributions.



ST. BERNARD'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH
61 Lerderberg Street
Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340

Rev. Fr. John Paul Mount
PARISH OFFICE
Tuesday – Friday, 9:30am – 1:30pm
(03) 5367 2069
bacchusmarsh@cam.org.au
www.stbernardsbacchusmarsh.com.au

OUR LADY
HELP OF CHRISTIANS
309 Myrniong-Korobeit Road
Korobeit VIC 3341

— Our Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and human dignity of children, young people and adults. —

PARISH NEWS

SACRAMENTS FOR CHILDREN 2026

Reconciliation

Reflection Evening – Thursday 15th October at 6:30pm
 Family Commitment Mass – Saturday 17th October at 5:00pm
 Preparation Day – Thursday 19th November, 9:30am-3:00pm
 Celebration of Reconciliation – Thursday 26th November at 6:30pm

First Eucharist

Reflection Evening – Thursday 30th April at 6:30pm
 Family Commitment Mass – Saturday 2nd May at 5:00pm
 Retreat Day & Reconciliation – Thursday 11th June, 9:30am-3:00pm
 Celebration of First Eucharist – Saturday 13th June, 9:30am & 11:30am

Confirmation

Reflection Evening – Thursday 26th February at 6:30pm
 Family Commitment Mass – Saturday 28th February at 5:00pm
 Retreat Day & Reconciliation – Thursday 14th May, 9:30am-3:00pm
 Celebration of Confirmation – Tuesday 19th May, 5:00pm & 7:00pm

To obtain a list of all the preparation classes for the above Sacraments, please contact the Parish Office.

WEEKDAY MASSES

During the school holidays, weekday Masses will be held at 9:30am.
 Regular weekday Mass times will resume on Wednesday 28th January 2026.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Tuesday 30 th December	9:30am no Mass 7:00pm no Holy Hour
Wednesday 31 st December	9:30am no Mass.
	6:00pm Mass NYE
Thursday 1 st January	9:30am Mass
Friday 2 nd January	9:30am no Mass
Saturday 3 rd January	9:30am no Mass
Tuesday 6 th – Saturday 10 th January	9:30am no Masses
Tuesday 6 th January	7:00pm no Holy Hour

PARISH DONATIONS

1st Collection: Presbytery – supports our Parish Priest and priests of the Archdiocese.
 2nd Collection: Church – supports our Parish.
 A 'Tap & Go' device for donating to the Church account is in the Gathering Space.
 Direct transfers can also be made to the Church account:
 Account Name: Archdiocese of Melbourne Catholic Development Fund
 St Bernard's Parish Bacchus Marsh
 BSB: 083 347 Account No.: 651663131

LET US PRAY

Recently Deceased

Regina Mary De Leur

Death Anniversaries

Kathleen Adair, Cynthia Camilleri, Lisa Closter,
 Jack Coburn, Raymond Hare, Imelda Pace,
 Vicki Riddell, Roy Ryder.

The Sick

Barry Anderson, Brendan Coburn, Kathleen Dally,
 Dean Elms, Robert Elms, Nola Franklin,
 Frances, Caleb Silas Ginger, Karen & Astrid
 Karenpaula, Hannah & Molly, Michael Johnston,
 John & Patricia Kelly, Michael Larkin,
 Vivian Malubay, Joanne Mumford,
 Chinenye Victoria Oriaku Nwalozie,
 Peter Roberts, Krystal Shea, Anthony Tabone,
 Carmel Welsh, and all those who need our prayers.

COMMUNITY

Soul Food

Soul Food provides a free meal each Wednesday (excluding school holidays). This community service is held in St Bernard's Parish Centre and is a free event. All are welcome. No need to book – just come along.

Bacchus Marsh

St Vincent de Paul Conference

We support people in need within our community by providing practical assistance such as food parcels, food vouchers, bill relief, clothing, furniture as well as offering person to person support.
 Welfare assistance is available Monday - Friday, 10:00am - 3:00pm on 1800 305 330.
 New members most welcome.
 Contact Peter Kennedy on 0407 778 119.

The Neighbour's Place

The Neighbour's Place is a Christian not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to serve people of the Moorabool Shire who are disadvantaged, at risk, or temporarily unable to feed themselves or their family. They offer a No Interest Loans Scheme.
 77 Main Street, Bacchus Marsh
 (03) 5367 6222 office@neighboursplace.org.au
 9:30am – 12:30pm, Monday, Wednesday & Friday.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMMES

Infant Baptism

Baptisms are held on the second & fourth Saturdays of the month at 11:00am.
 Preparation sessions are facilitated on the second Sunday of the month at 11:30am. Application forms can be downloaded from our website.

Sacraments for Children

If your child does not attend a Catholic school but would like to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion or Confirmation, application forms are available on our website.

Becoming Catholic

For adults wishing to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation, you can register your interest on our website or speak directly to Fr John Paul.

Children are to be supervised by a parent/guardian at all times.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Vicki Benson
 Jennifer Costin

Ron Geurts

Margaret Love
 0437 247 779

Madeleine McManus
 Peter Kennedy

REFLECTION

Feast of Holy Family

During these months families gather to reminisce, share food, tell family stories, go to Church together. Children meet new members of the family and especially honour their grandparents.

What makes the Holy Family holy? Mary and Joseph both lived a life of loving obedience to God. Jesus said of his mother: She is the one who heard the word of God and obeyed it. Several times Joseph listened to the command of the angel and obeyed, protecting the life of Jesus and Mary. Jesus came to do the Will of his Father.

Holiness is no protection against the sufferings and difficulties of life. Even the Holy Family endured being refugees and the normal hardships of life. We will live in peace in our family by allowing God to reign in our hearts and homes and avoiding what threatens family values. The recent events in Bondi have, I am sure, encouraged us to be united in love, kindness and forgiveness.

Sr. Mary Fermio

THE HERODS CONTINUED:

Herod the Great divided the kingdom between his sons Herod Antipas, Philip and Archelaus. Herod Antipas divorced his wife to be with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife...not to mention his own niece, being the daughter of previously mentioned Aristobulus. Antipas has John the Baptist beheaded at the request of Herodias and Philip's daughter, who he was also enamored by after she danced for him. John the Baptist preached that the 'marriage' between Antipas and Herodias was unlawful which brought their ire towards John. A point of interest, Josephus says that at one point the Army of King Aretus of Arabia/Syria defeated the army of Antipas, and the common belief among the Jews was that this was a sign to Antipas of God's displeasure in his killing John the Baptist. (The Antiquities of the Jews 18.5.116) Jesus was sent by Pilot to Antipas, and when Jesus refused to speak to him, and after his soldiers mocked Him (Lk 23:11) sent Him back. Herodias later had ambitions for Herod Antipas and put him forward to the Emperor for promotion. This backfired however and Emperor Caligula had Antipas exiled. To her credit Herodias went with him though she didn't have to. Herodias was the sister of Herod Agrippa I.

Agrippa I (son of previously mentioned Aristobulus) persecuted Christians to gain the favour of the Jews. He killed James the Apostle and then imprisoned Peter who was then released by an angel. In Acts 12 it describes his death. After giving an oration he was pleased to be called a god, and so was struck down, died and was eaten by worms. (Acts 12) Josephus' version of the event is that the royal robes of Agrippa I were dazzling in the sunlight and so the people praised him as a god, at which point he was struck down by a painful illness in his stomach and soon died.

Agrippa I had a son, Herod Agrippa II. Agrippa II is mentioned in Acts (Chapters 26,27) when Paul comes before him on trial. Festus, governor or procurator of Judea, successor of Felix, brought Paul before King Agrippa. With Festus and the military and prominent men of the city present, Paul made a defence before Agrippa and Bernice. Bernice was Agrippa's sister – though there were popular rumours of something more scandalous between them. Paul preaches powerfully, and not only that, appeals to King Agrippa for him to convert (Acts 26:27). St Paul says Agrippa believed the prophets, that he knew about Jesus, and appeals to him. Agrippa II, I think, also finally finished the Temple his grandfather started- just in time for it to be destroyed. Agrippa II is mentioned by Josephus as trying to convince the Jews not to make war with the Romans. He was brought up in Rome and was on very good terms with the Emperor- and so in the Jewish War he allied himself with the Romans and secured peace for himself and his regions.

And you thought your family had dramas!

If you would like to know more about the Herods I recommend reading the historian, Josephus, or Flavius Josephus, the Jewish Wars and The Antiquities of the Jews

MINISTERS

3rd & 4th January

Mass	Reader	Holy Communion	Piety Stall
5:00pm	Sonia Smith	Jackie Tabone	Margot Short
8:30am	Nathan Costin	Tup Shea	Carmel Shea
10:30am	Beatrice Younger	Cheryl Stevens	Cheryl Stevens

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,
[all 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

ST. BERNARD'S PARISH CENTRE

The Parish Centre is available for hire
and can be booked through our Hall
Managers – Marie & Terry Casey.
All use must be authorised by the
Parish Office.

Phone: (03) 5367 3427
Mon - Fri, 9:00am - 6:00pm

Entrance Antiphon

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in
a manger.

First Reading *Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14*

The Lord honours the father in his children,
and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.
Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins,
he who honours his mother is like someone
amassing a fortune.
Whoever respects his father will be happy with
children of his own,
he shall be heard on the day when he prays.
Long life comes to him who honours his father,
he who sets his mother at ease is showing
obedience to the Lord.
My son, support your father in his old age,
do not grieve him during his life.
Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,
do not despise him in your health and strength;
for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten
but will serve as reparation for your sins.

Responsorial Psalm *Psalms 127:1-5*

R: *Happy are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways.*

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. *Response*

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. *Response*

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life! *Response*

———— NEXT SUNDAY ————
The Epiphany of the Lord

First Reading *Isaiah 60:1-6*
Responsorial Psalm *Psalms 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-13*
Second Reading *Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6*
Gospel *Matthew 2:1-12*

Second Reading *Colossians 3:12-21*

You are God’s chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and
you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness
and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one
another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins.
The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.
Over all these clothes, to keep them together and
complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ
reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were
called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.
Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home
with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all
wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and
hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do
anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving
thanks to God the Father through him.
Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the
Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with
gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always,
because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never
drive your children to resentment or you will make them
feel frustrated.

Gospel Acclamation *Colossians 3:15, 16*

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the peace of Christ rule in our hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.
Alleluia!

Gospel *Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23*

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord
appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take
the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt,
and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to
search for the child and do away with him.’ So Joseph got
up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that
night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead.
This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the
prophet:
I called my son out of Egypt.
After Herod’s death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a
dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child
and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel,
for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.’ So
Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with
him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt
that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of
Judea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a
dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in
a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken
through the prophets were to be fulfilled:
‘He will be called a Nazarene.’

Communion Antiphon

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived
among us.