



St Michael's Parish

Incorporating the Churches of Holy Family Bell Park, Ss Peter & Paul's Geelong West & Holy Spirit Manifold Hts.

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Mon-Wed, Fri 9am-5pm, Thurs 9-2pm.

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Reflection by Richard Leonard SJ

These days there are some young Catholic parents who wonder whether baptism is the proper thing for them to seek for their children. One argument they sometimes offer is that it would be better to defer baptism until their child reaches adulthood and then he or she has the opportunity to choose it. As appealing as this argument might seem on the surface, the problem is that the reasoning behind it is so inconsistently applied.

Young Catholic parents do not give their children any choice about eating vegetables, learning to read or write and living out a moral code. They enforce these things because they know that nutrition, literacy and ethics are essential for adulthood. If we recognise that, from birth, a child has spiritual as well as educational, moral and physical needs, it strikes me as inconsistent to relegate this

constitutively otherworldly element of a child's character to a 'must be decided on later' category.

Baptism is not brainwashing. Adults can come and go from the practise of their faith as they feel drawn. Sadly for us, they can even choose against belief. To grow up, however, with no religious foundation or no basis on which to make spiritual choices seems to limit freedom rather than promote it. In our culture baptism of infants by their parents is an entirely proper thing to do.

In today's Gospel we hear that Jesus was baptised by John in the Jordan because it was 'the proper thing to do'.

This can seem all quaintly odd to us today because we seem to accept that our only convention is to flout convention. The done thing today is to undo what we've done before.

We hold very strongly, however, to the

idea that God always does the 'proper thing'. It's called 'appropriateness' in theology. We believe, for example, that God decided it was proper to become incarnate when he did, how he did and where he did. Over the centuries there's been endless debate about what would've happened if the Word had come to us as a woman, in another era, on another continent. While these are interesting enough matters on which to speculate, they are not what God thought proper – or what, in fact, happened.

In line with the right action of God, Jesus does the proper thing in being baptised by John's baptism of repentance, even though he had nothing of which to repent. Jesus is not simply baptised, however, simply because it was expected of him, just a fulfilment of his duty.

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- The Baptism of the Lord -

*(Year C - January 13, 2019)***ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:**

After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened,
and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove.

And the voice of the Father thundered:

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!

John said: He who is to come is mightier than I; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. **Alleluia!**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 62:1-5

2nd Reading: 1Cor 12:4-11

Gospel: Jn 2:1-11

**PARISH PRAYER:**

God our Father, bless this parish so that we may love you more. Help the parents to be a good example to the children and our youth to grow in strength as good Christians.

Encircle our families with your loving care. To the sick grant health, to the aged bring serenity and to those in sorrow, joy. May we grow stronger in faith and may our love for one another become deeper in our daily living. Amen.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS:

Heavenly Father, help us to respond to and live out our mission in the Church, and in the world.

Help all your people to know their vocation in life and assist them to live it well.

For your greater glory and for the service of your people, call many to be priests and religious.

Give those whom you call the grace to respond generously and to persevere faithfully.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ST MICHAEL'S PARISH AT PRAYER



WEEKEND MASSES:

Holy Family, Bell Park:

English... 8am and 9.30am Sunday

Croatian... 11am Sunday

Slovenian.. 12.15pm every 2nd Sunday of the month

Holy Spirit, Manifold Hts:

11am Sunday

Ss Peter & Paul's, Geelong West:

5.00pm Saturday

WEEKDAY MASSES:

Holy Family:

9.15am Tues (followed by Novena to St Anthony), 9.15am Thurs

Holy Spirit:

9.00am Wed, 11am Fri and 9am 1st Sat. **Reconciliation after Saturday Mass**

McKellar Centre:

10.15am - 1st Tuesday (3rd & 5th Communion Service)

Multicultural Centre:

1.30pm - 1st Friday;

Elstoft House (formerly Vincentian Village): 3.00pm 1st & 3rd Tuesday, (2nd & 4th Communion Service)

St John of God Hospital: 11.30am every Thursday in SJOG Chapel

BAPTISMS:

1st & 3rd Sundays 12noon at Holy Spirit, 2nd & 4th Sundays 12.30pm at Ss P&P, 3rd Sunday 2pm at Holy Family

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Mon... Holy Family Women's Prayer Group

10.00am

Holy Family Community Centre

Tues... Meditation Group

5.30pm

Holy Family Community Centre

Wed... Prayer of the Church

Before 9am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

Wed... Holy Family Women's Prayer Group

10.00am

Holy Family Community Centre

Thurs... Italian Prayer Group

10.00am

St Patrick's Chapel

Fri... Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

After 11am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

Fri... Divine Mercy

3.00pm

Holy Spirit Church

Sat... Rosary

After 9am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

OUR LADY'S STATUE:

If anyone would like to have Our Lady's Statue or if you could spare an hour a month to help, ph Tina Montalto on 5278 9314.

AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

RECENT DEATHS:

Catherine Taylor, Antonio Lombardo, Helene Augustin, Mihael Verzak and Alojz Seljak

ANNIVERSARIES:

Cresenciana Mangas and Stefania Gwizdek

BAPTISMS:

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PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Joe Vanjek, Frank Mason, Val Howard, Kylie Kotic, Anita Capicchiano, Sandra Klinge, Allan Ansell, Marie Brown, Cheryl Lambert, Elizabeth Topic, Allan Ansell, Alexander, Val Howard, Peter Brown



PRAYING FOR ALL SOULS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER:

Jan 15... Baulch and Morgan family members

Jan 16... Cidla family members

Jan 17... Lukesic family members

Jan 18... Battye family members

Roster for Next Sunday

(3rd Sunday of the Month)

Ss PETER & PAUL'S - 5.00PM

Commentators

Lectors

Special Ministers

Welcomers

Projectionist

Co-Ordinator

K Maddalena

K Maddalena

D Whelan

M Gifford, 5229 1656

HOLY FAMILY

Commentators

Lectors

Special Ministers

Welcomers

Projectionist

Co-Ordinator

8.00AM

K Saunders

P. Carvalho

Sr Concepta, P Ruggeri, R Culo

P Ruggeri, R Culo

R Allum

L. Kelly, 0409 291 138

HOLY SPIRIT - 11AM

M Kroger

J McKenzie

L Stalio

L Fossey

F Kearney

9.30AM

A Scaddan

H Verdnik, T McMahon

C Taylor, M Fiorillo, M. Perera

E Dalton

C Resciniti

J Mann, 0488 784 802

RECURRING ACTIVITIES IN ST MICHAEL'S:

St Michael's Luncheon...	First Sunday of each month at the Holy Spirit Hall from 12noon. BYO food and drink to share.
Holy Family Luncheon..	Third Sunday of each month at the Community Centre from 12noon. BYO casserole & drink to share.
Holy Family Women's Group...	First Monday evening of each month at the Community Centre 6.30pm
St Vincent de Paul...	Holy Family meet 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at the Community Centre 7pm. Holy Spirit meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 5.00pm in Holy Spirit Hall
Legion of Mary...	Every Friday 9.30am in the Holy Family Community Centre
Baptism Preps	4th Mondays 7.30pm in the Community Centre
Holy Family Choir Practice...	Every Wednesday night at Holy Family Church 7pm
Manifold CWL...	Holy Spirit Hall, 1st Wednesdays in the month
Italian Mass...	First Thursday of the month in St Patrick's Chapel
Catholic Diners' Club...	2nd Tues of each month, 6.15pm at Capri Receptions. Dinner/Guest Speaker - ph 0431 959 584

If you wish to know more about these groups, as well as about our Sacramental Program for children in non-Catholic schools, our Baptism and Wedding procedures, our Partnership with the Columbans in the Philippines and so on, please visit our webpage:

www.pastoralclustergeelong.org

St Michael's News:

OFFICE HOURS:

Normal office hours will resume from Monday January 14, 2019.

THE COMBINED SOCIETIES OF MARY welcomes you to a beautiful **Our Lady of Lourdes Celebration** on Sunday February 10th at St Colman's Church, 293 Carlisle St Balaclava. 1.40pm Rosary and 2pm Adoration, Prayers, Benediction, Healing Mass Blessings with Lourdes Water and a Procession, with Veneration of the First Class Relic of St Bernadette.

Reflections from Pope Francis

FORGOTTEN HOW TO WEEP

We are a society that has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion — “suffering with” others: the globalization of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep! . . . Let us ask the Lord for the grace to weep over our indifference, to weep over the cruelty of our world, of our own hearts, and of all those who in anonymity make social and economic decisions which open the door to tragic situations. . . .

Today has anyone wept in our world?

— Homily, July 8, 2013

Reflection: Take a moment to examine your compassion for others, those around you and those in the world. What can you do to help others in concrete ways in the next couple of weeks?

VOCATIONS:

The Baptism of the Lord. The call given to each of us at our Baptism is unique. At Baptism we were made ‘priests, prophets and kings’ as the Rite of Baptism reminds us. As we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord this weekend, reflect on the call given to us at our baptism, no matter how long ago it was. As baptised Christians we are called to spread the ‘Good News’ and grow in holiness. Let us pray today for the young members of our families and our congregations and our secondary schools: that they will live out this call in a radical way and respond to whatever the Lord calls them to, perhaps consecrated life or priesthood.

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Jesus' experience of baptism starts with John's baptism as an admission of guilt and then reveals that baptism is primarily about the Father's love. To this day our baptismal ritual holds these two realities in a healthy tension. When we are baptised in Christ, we acknowledge both Original Sin and Original Grace. God's love comes alive in us even though we are aware of how

far from that love we stray.

The Baptism of Jesus and every baptism done in his name ever since, is the moment when we hold together the greatness of God's love, that calls each of us by name to be his son or daughter, with the reality of our human frailty. What more appropriate way of welcoming anyone into the world than having a community of frail, human believers initiate its members by reminding

them that Original Sin does not have the last word. For those of us baptised in Christ, the Father's love always and everywhere has the final, appropriate say on every matter.

May this Eucharist make us worthy of the love lavished on us in baptism and give us the courage to keep doing the appropriate things for the coming generations.

Community News:

- ◆ **Belmont Senior Citizens Centre** proudly presents **DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS**. Onstage Monday February 4, 1.30pm. This is a traditional 'Blue Grass' Country Music Group and you will enjoy every moment as you relive this country music that is so popular with many. Entry \$5 with tea/coffee afterwards. Venue - Belmont Seniors Concert Hall, 52 Thomson St Belmont. All welcome! Information ph 5241 1776.



REFLECTING ON THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

At first glance, the scene makes little sense. John's strident call to repentance provokes an overwhelming response. People of all shapes and sizes flock to him in the wilderness. They are baptized in the Jordan as a sign of repentance and cleansing.

Suddenly, out of the crowd steps John's cousin, Jesus.

Wait a minute. What's Jesus, the sinless one, doing in a crowd of repenting sinners? What's he doing coming forward to be baptized by John, who is by his own admission, is inferior to his cousin?

Jesus does not enter the water to be sanctified. No, the Holy One enters the water to sanctify. He empowers the water to become no longer just an outward sign, but a vehicle of the Holy Spirit bringing inner cleansing, rebirth, and transformation.

Here Jesus institutes the sacrament of Christian baptism, something essentially different and greater than the baptism of John, which foreshadowed it.

Immediately after coming out of the water, the Spirit descends upon him in the form of a dove. Now another sacrament is instituted by Christ, the sacrament of Confirmation or, as the Eastern churches call it, Chrismation.

Notice that as the Spirit descends upon Jesus, the Father announces from heaven that this is His beloved Son. Here we have a majestic revelation of the Most Holy Trinity, one God in three persons. Then notice that Peter, speaking of this event in Acts 10:37, calls it Jesus' "anointing."

In the Old Testament, people were anointed with a special type of perfumed olive oil called "chrism" which was stored in a bull's horn, a symbol of strength. The first people to be so anointed in the Old Testament were priests, authorized to offer sacrifice on behalf of the people. Then came prophets, anointed to proclaim God's challenging and energizing word. Finally kings were anointed by God to save their people from their enemies. Actually, the reigning king of Judah was called the anointed one, "messiah" in Hebrew or, in Greek, "Christ."

So this feast is Jesus' "name day." Of course he is the Word made flesh, full of the Spirit, and savior of Israel from the moment of his conception. But on this day, the Spirit anoints his human nature in a new way, empowering and equipping him for battle, for his mission to smash the oppressive powers of sin, Satan, and death, and to lead his people into freedom. He is anointed or "christened" not just as savior-king, but as perfect prophet who speaks God's final word, and perfect priest who offers the perfect sacrifice taking away all sin.

Some wonder why we need the sacrament of Confirmation. To some it appears to be an afterthought, as anticlimactic. After all, we receive the Spirit in baptism and receive Christ bodily in the Eucharist. So what else do we get when we are confirmed?

Simple. We receive our mission and the power to carry it out. For being a "Christian" is not about just "getting saved." It's about sharing in Christ's anointing to transform the world. The mission is an essential part of the package, not an option.

That's why we are called "Christians" or anointed ones. It is not just priests and religious who are supposed to make it happen. Every single one of us is called and anointed. And that's why confirmation is one of the essential sacraments of initiation. Without it, one is not fully incorporated into the Church, which is a missionary community.

The question for those of us who have received this power-packed sacrament is this—what are we doing with it?

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