



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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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 practice 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 baptised, however, simply because it was expected of him, just a fulfilment of his duty. 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.

- The Baptism of the Lord -

(Year A - January 12, 2020)

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:

The Lord will bless his people with peace.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!

The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. **Alleluia!**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 49:3,5-6
2nd Reading: 1Cor 1:1-3
Gospel: Jn 1:29-34



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 3rd Tuesday, (1st, 2nd & 4th Communion Service)

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

AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

RECENT DEATHS:

Ted Tarrant, Katarina Vlanovic, Rosa Negro and Bing Redden

ANNIVERSARIES:

Tony Langerano, Sebastiano Puccinelli, Vytaytas Bindokas, Margaret Stewart, Stefania Gwizdek, Assunta Fazio

BAPTISMS:

Henry Curry and Willow Ord

PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Veronica Werzek, Ken Fusea, John McDonald, Angela Reed, Narciso Baldasso, Josica Markov



PRAYING FOR ALL SOULS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER:

Tues January 14... Macarol, Biviano, Virgona & Santospirito family members

Wed January 15... Lehpamer family members

Thurs January 16... Almeida family members

Fri Jan 17... Bole family members

◆ **SPECIAL COLLECTION:** There will be a Special Collection taken up on the Australia Day weekend (Jan 25/26) for the Bushfires. As well as donations at the Masses, people are encouraged to support the immediate response and the ongoing work of Vinnies in your state or throughout bushfire-affected communities. You can donate through St Vincent de Paul on donate.vinnies.org.au

◆ **NEW PARISH CHILD SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE:** A Safeguarding Committee at St Michael's Parish is currently being established to promote the safeguarding of children and young persons. More information to be provided over the coming weeks.



PRAY FOR AUSTRALIA: Bruce Downs, from The Catholic Guy, is calling people together online to pray powerfully with him every night at 8pm on Facebook.com/TheCatholicGuyBruceDownes, Instagram.com/TheCatholicGuy, Youtube.com/TheCatholicGuytv or pray with him wherever you are...

Pray for the firefighters and emergency workers. Pray for the victims and families. Pray for the homes and businesses destroyed. Pray for the burnt land and death and injury of our animals. Pray for rain, so much rain needed! Pray for healing.

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

M Howard

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

M Fiorillo, M. Perera

E Dalton

C Resciniti

J Mann, 0488 784 802