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PROCLAIM

A magazine for Missionary Animation



**JESUS
IS
RISEN
from
the
dead!**

Alleluia!

"Go into the whole world and PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS to all creation" Mark 16:15

**PRAY FOR THE
NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM**



**HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL GRACIAS!
40 ARCHBISHOPS + BISHOPS!
160 PRIESTS + RELIGIOUS!
WILL GATHER TO CHART
NEW EVANGELIZATION FOR THE
CHURCH IN INDIA**

**BETWEEN 7TH – 9TH MARCH 2018
AT ST JOHN'S NATIONAL ACADEMY
OF HEALTH SCIENCES – BANGALORE**

**Pontifical Mission
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**“God our Saviour revealed
His eminent goodness and
love for humankind and
saved us, not because of
good deeds we may have
done, but for the sake of His
own mercy...” — Titus 3:4-5**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Encountering the Risen Lord



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Universal Church to acknowledge with gratefulness the efforts of all the bishops, the priests, the Religious and the Lay Faithful for beautifully celebrating the Missionary Childhood Day 2018 all over India on the 11th of February 2018. The day was meaningfully celebrated by organizing programmes and liturgy to instil missionary enthusiasm among our children. As we have mentioned several times earlier in these column, children are little missionaries. The zeal created in them when they are very young will mature gradually to make them great soldiers for Christ.

The Christian Mission (also called Evangelization) aims at bringing the Good News of God the Father into the whole world as his son Jesus commanded us (Mk 16:15). The understanding of Mission has undergone a paradigm shift after Vatican II. More than fifty years after the Council, we are just at the beginning of the discovery of the theological implications of evangelization. The New Evangelization calls for new zeal, new expression and new methods in communicating the love of God the Father through his beloved Son with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In a Court of Law a witness testifies about an event he/she has seen happening or has personal knowledge about. He/she does not have to pay with one's life in order to prove the truthfulness of the testimony. Christian witnessing is a more profound experience of a person who has encountered Christ as Lord and Saviour. This kind of faith one is ready to testify even at the cost of one's life (Martyrdom). The Holy Scripture will guide us in understanding the true meaning of Christian witness.

We as followers of Jesus Christ are called upon to be witnesses to this truth. The experience of the encounter with the Risen Lord is real to us. That experience has to make us enthusiastic to make it known to others. The experience is such a beautiful moment that we cannot but share this good news that we cherish dearly. The good news in our lives we cannot keep for ourselves. There is an urge from inside to share every joyful event in our lives. How much more then the urge for sharing the Good News of the resurrection of our Lord?

Are we true witnesses of this event? Is there in me that 'Joy of the Gospel'? Holy Father Pope Francis beginning the Apostolic Letter 'Evangelii Gaudium' says, "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus". We shall pray for this 'Joy of the Gospel': Lord Jesus, give me the experience of your visit to my hearts and life. May it permeate my whole being so completely that my spirituality, my words, my actions --- in one word, whatever I am, whatever I have and whatever I do --- may radiate to the whole world my love for you as a response, however inadequate, to your unbounded love for me and for the whole humanity.

May the Season of Lent help us to become more acutely aware of God's love for us and the challenge it poses us to respond to it adequately and appropriately, depending on the situation He has placed us in.

May the love of the Risen Lord enfold you and your loved ones, always and everywhere.

Fr Fausttine L Lobo
National Director, PMO-India

The Joy of Truth

Pope Francis' New Apostolic Constitution 'Veritatis Gaudium' on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties



Pope Francis begins his new Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, with this thought: “The joy of truth expresses the restlessness of the human heart until it encounters and dwells within God's Light, and shares that Light with all people.”

The Holy Father emphasises that “truth is not an abstract idea, but is Jesus himself, the Word of God in whom is the Life that is the Light of man”; and this, he says, “is the joy that the Church is impelled by Jesus to bear witness to and to proclaim in her mission, unceasingly and with ever renewed vigour.”

A courageous renewal of ecclesiastical studies

In “the changed social-cultural context worldwide,” characterised by “a wide-ranging 'anthropological' and 'environmental crisis',” Pope Francis says there is need of a “wise and courageous renewal” of ecclesiastical studies “for a more effective mission in this moment of history,” as laid out in his programmatic Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*.

Catholic universities for a missionary Church

Starting from the “primary need today” for a “missionary transformation of a Church that 'goes forth',” and which involves the whole People of God, Pope Francis says that ecclesiastical studies are called not only “to offer opportunities and processes for the suitable formation of priests, consecrated men and women, and committed lay people” but constitute “a sort of providential

cultural laboratory in which the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nourished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways – from the *sensus fidei fidelium* to the magisterium of the bishops, and from the charism of the prophets to that of the doctors and theologians.”

A cultural revolution in the light of tradition

This, the Pope said, requires “a radical paradigm shift, or rather... 'a bold cultural revolution’” in which “the worldwide network of ecclesiastical universities and faculties is called to offer the decisive contribution of leaven, salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the living Tradition of the Church, which is ever open to new situations and ideas.”

Today, he continued, it is becoming increasingly evident that 'there is need of a true



evangelical hermeneutic for better understanding life, the world and humanity, not of a synthesis but of a spiritual atmosphere of research and certainty based on the truths of reason and of faith.

Philosophy and theology permit one to acquire the convictions that structure and strengthen the intelligence and illuminate the will... but this is fruitful only if it is done with an open mind and on one's knees. The theologian who is satisfied with his complete and conclusive

thought is mediocre. The good theologian and philosopher has an open, that is, an incomplete, thought, always open to the maius of God and of the truth, always in development.'

Discovering God in every human person

Pope Francis points out four "fundamental criteria" for the renewal and revival of the contribution ecclesiastical studies can make for a missionary Church: "First, the most urgent and enduring criterion is that of contemplation and the presentation of a spiritual, intellectual and existential introduction to the heart of the kerygma, namely the ever fresh and attractive good news of the Gospel of



Jesus Christ, which continues to take flesh in the life of the Church and of humanity." From this arises that universal fraternity "which is 'capable of seeing the sacred grandeur of our neighbour, of finding God in every human being, of tolerating the nuisances of life in common by clinging to the love of God, of opening the heart to divine love and seeking the happiness of others just as their heavenly Father does'." This leads to "the imperative to allow our hearts and minds to heed the cry of the earth's poor and to give concrete expression to the social dimension of evangelisation, which is an integral part of the Church's mission. For 'God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual person but also the social relations existing between men'."

Dialogue with believers and non-believers

A "second guiding criterion" is "that of wide-ranging dialogue" with believers and non-believers; "not as a mere tactical approach," but rather as an authentic culture of dialogue "between all the authentic and vital cultures, thanks to a reciprocal exchange of the gifts of each in that luminous space opened up by God's love for all his creatures."

Unity of knowledge in the face of an uncertain

and fragmented pluralism

The third fundamental criterion proposed by Pope Francis is "inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches carried out with wisdom and creativity in the light of Revelation," according to "the vital intellectual principle of the unity in difference of knowledge"; and this also "in relation to the fragmented and often disintegrated panorama of contemporary university studies and to the pluralism – uncertain, conflicting and relativistic – of current beliefs and cultural options." The Holy Father cites Benedict XVI, writing in *Caritas in veritate*: today "there is a lack of wisdom and reflection, a

lack of thinking capable of formulating a guiding synthesis." This, Pope Francis says, "is where the specific mission entrusted to the programme of ecclesiastical studies comes into play," so that they might have "real cultural and humanising importance."

Networking

Finally, the fourth fundamental criterion concerns "concerns the urgent need for 'networking' between those institutions worldwide that cultivate and promote ecclesiastical studies, in order to set up suitable channels of cooperation also with academic institutions in the different countries and with those inspired by different cultural and religious traditions. At the same time, specialised centres of research need to be established in order to study the epochal issues affecting humanity today and to offer appropriate and realistic paths for their resolution."

Reviving research

Pope Francis says "the revival of ecclesiastical studies entails the pressing need to give new impulse to the scientific research conducted in our ecclesiastical universities and faculties." Ecclesiastical studies, he says, "cannot be limited to passing on knowledge, professional

Sacramental sign of our conversion

*[The following is the Message of the Holy Father for Lent 2018 on the theme:
Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold (Mt 24: 12).]*



Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in His providence offers us each year the season

of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion”. Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life.

With this message, I would like again this year to help the entire Church experience this time of grace anew, with joy and in truth. I will take my cue from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: “Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (24:12).

These words appear in Christ's preaching about the end of time. They were spoken in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, where the Lord's passion would begin. In reply to a question of the disciples, Jesus foretells a great tribulation and describes a situation in which the community of believers might well find itself: amid great trials, false prophets would lead people astray and the love that is the core of the Gospel would grow cold in the hearts of many.

False prophets

Let us listen to the Gospel passage and try to understand the guise such false prophets can assume.

They can appear as “snake charmers”, who manipulate human emotions in order to enslave others and lead them where they would have them

go. How many of God's children are mesmerized by momentary pleasures, mistaking them for true happiness! How many men and women live entranced by the dream of wealth, which only makes them slaves to profit and petty interests! How many go through life believing that they are sufficient unto themselves, and end up entrapped by loneliness!

False prophets can also be “charlatans”, who offer easy and immediate solutions to suffering that soon prove utterly useless. How many young people are taken in by the panacea of drugs, of disposable relationships, of easy but dishonest gains! How many more are ensnared in a thoroughly “virtual” existence, in which relationships appear quick and straightforward,

only to prove meaningless! These swindlers, in peddling things that have no real value, rob people of all that is most precious: dignity, freedom and the ability to love. They appeal to our vanity, our trust in appearances, but in the end they only make fools of us. Nor should we be surprised. In order to confound the human heart, the devil, who is “a liar and the father of lies” (Jn 8:44), has always presented evil as good, falsehood as truth. That is why each of us is called to peer into our heart to see if we are falling prey to the lies of these false prophets. We must learn

to look closely, beneath the surface, and to recognize what leaves a good and lasting mark on our hearts, because it comes from God and is truly for our benefit.

A cold heart

In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice, in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our





love is beginning to cool?

More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, “the root of all evil” (1 Tim 6:10). The rejection of God and his peace soon follows; we prefer our own desolation rather than the comfort found in his word and the sacraments. All this leads to violence against anyone we think is a threat to our own “certainties”: the unborn child, the elderly and infirm, the migrant, the alien among us, or our neighbour who does not live up to our expectations.

Creation itself becomes a silent witness to this cooling of charity. The earth is poisoned by refuse, discarded out of carelessness or for self-interest. The seas, themselves polluted, engulf the remains of countless shipwrecked victims of forced migration. The heavens, which in God's plan, were created to sing His praises, are rent by engines raining down implements of death.

Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal.

What are we to do?

Perhaps we see, deep within ourselves and all about us, the signs I have just described. But the Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the

often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

By devoting more time to prayer, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception, and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well.

Almsgiving sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us! How I would like us, as Christians, to follow the example of the Apostles and see in the sharing of our possessions a tangible witness of the communion that is ours in the Church! For this reason, I echo Saint Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to take up a collection for the community of Jerusalem as something from which they themselves would benefit (cf. 2 Cor 8:10). This is all the more fitting during the Lenten season, when many groups take

up collections to assist Churches and peoples in need. Yet I would also hope that, even in our daily encounters with those who beg for our assistance, we would see such requests as coming from God Himself. When we give alms, we share in God's providential care for each of His children. If through me God helps someone today, will He not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more

generous than God.

Fasting weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour. It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger.



EASTER SUNDAY

Empty Tomb! Praise the Lord, Alleluia

Acts: 10:34, 37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn: 20:1-9

By John Rose

Cecil B DeMille, who was the famous producer of such blockbuster movies as “The Ten Commandments” and “The King of Kings”, wrote this shortly before his death. “One day I was lying on a canoe, a big black beetle came out of the water and climbed into the canoe. I watched it idly for some time. Under the heat of the sun, it proceeded to die. Then, a strange thing happened. His glistening black shell cracked all the way down his back. Out of it came a shapeless mass, which quickly transformed itself into a beautiful, brilliantly colored life.”

“As I watched in fascination, there gradually unfolded shining wings from which the sunlight flashed a thousand colors. The wings spread wide, as if in a worship of the sun. The blue green body took shape. Before my eyes had occurred a metamorphosis – the transformation of a hideous beetle into a gorgeous dragonfly, which started dipping and soaring over the water. I witnessed a miracle – from a musk came a beautiful butterfly. As I watched the body – the empty shell which the beetle left behind and which still clung to the canoe, I wondered: if the Almighty Creator could do such wonder with the lowliest of creatures, what must be in store for the human spirits.”

The Creator truly does work wonders with the human spirits. On Easter Sunday morning, He began a new creation with the Resurrection of Christ. On that glorious morning, according to the

Gospels of Mathew and Mark, Mary Magdalene and the other women went to the tomb of Christ to anoint the body of Jesus with spices. On the way they were discussing “who would roll away the stone for us.” As they went closer they found the tomb open and empty. A hundred thoughts would have entered their minds. Have the tomb robbers stolen the body of Jesus? If so, why did they leave the costly linen behind? How did the robbers deceive or defeat the Roman soldiers who stood guard at the tomb? Or what happened to the body of Christ?



Being perplexed with these haunting questions, as they entered the tomb they saw a young man in white robe seated on the righthand side and he said to them, “There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him (Mk 16:5-6).” The tomb of Jesus was empty. Till today, if you go to Jerusalem, in the church of the Holy Sepulcher, where Jesus was buried, you

will find the tomb of Jesus open and empty.

No other tomb in history is open and empty. All the tombs – from the Pharaohs of Egypt to the Caesars of Rome, from the rajas of India to the emperors of France, are all closed and occupied. Only the tomb of Jesus is an empty tomb. Even the tombs of the religious reformers are not reported to be empty.

Jesus's tomb is empty because He said that it would be empty. In His altercation with the Jews

as reported in the Gospel of John (2:18), referring to His body Jesus said, “I will destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.”

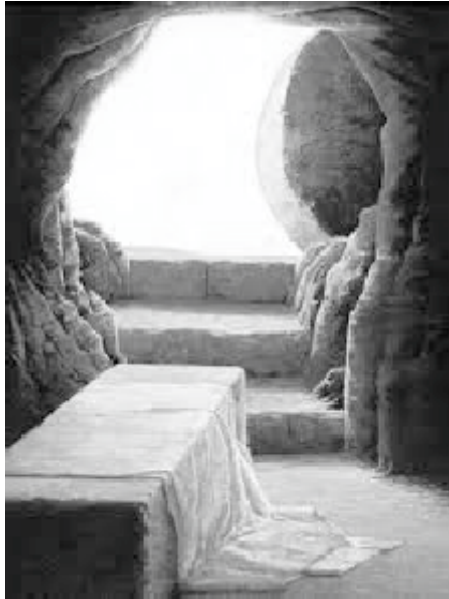
The tomb of Jesus had to be empty, otherwise the death of Jesus on the cross would have been vain; the tomb of Jesus had to be empty, otherwise the blood that Jesus shed on Mt. Calvary would have been ineffective; the tomb of Jesus had to be empty, otherwise there would not have been the victory of God.

Because of the Empty Tomb, we can lay claim to forgiveness; because of the Empty Tomb, we can lay claim to redemption, and because of the Empty Tomb, we can lay claim to eternal life.

1) We Can Lay Claim to Forgiveness:

When Mary Magdalene peeped inside the tomb, she saw the two angels sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They were Cherubims seated at the either end of the flat surface. In the book of Exodus 25:17-18 we see two angels seated on either end on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. It was called the Mercy seat or the atonement cover. According to the book of Leviticus 16:14 the Mercy seat was where the blood was applied for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus is our Mercy Seat; He is our atonement. God the Father put Jesus Christ forward as a sacrifice of atonement by His blood (Rom 3:25).

When we stand before the Empty Tomb and have faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. St. Paul said, “In Jesus we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace (Eph 1:7).”



Sin separates us from God but the Empty Tomb tells us that the One Who died on the cross and rose again for us has forgiven our sins. St. John wrote, “The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn 1:7).” Because of the Empty Tomb we can claim for forgiveness in the blood of Christ. We can now live freely and fully because Jesus died and rose for us and left His Tomb empty.

2) We Can Lay Claim to Redemption

Job could be described as someone who was 'blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.' He was the father of ten children and the owner of a large flocks and herds. He regularly offered up sacrifices for his children just in case they might have sinned against God when they got together for a feast. The devil had an eye on him. He told the Lord that Job was virtuous



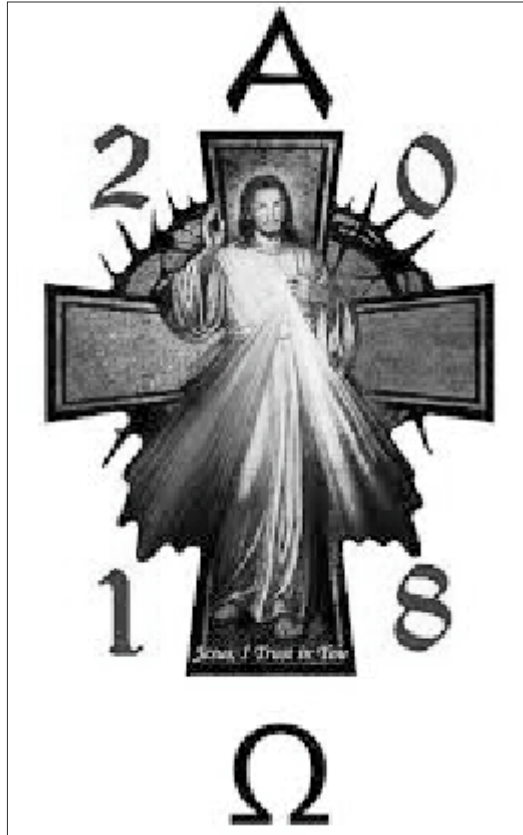
only because the Lord had been good to him, and if the Lord took away His favor from him, he would become unfaithful to God. God allowed the devil to touch his life. Job lost his possessions, his children, and his health in a very short period of

time. Even in his misfortune, his response was, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised (1:21).”

Job did struggle along the way, especially when his wife and three friends proved less than helpful in his misfortune. The spiritual warfare goes on for thirty-seven chapters in the book, but by faith Job stayed in the course. In the end the Lord blessed him with ten more children and even greater riches than before.

In the middle of his struggle, Job made a spectacular Easter confession. Even though he lived many centuries before Christ, he said, “O that my words were written down!.... O that with an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth (19:23-25).” When we look upon the empty tomb, we know, like Job, that our Redeemer lives.

Our Redeemer had borrowed the grave from Joseph of Arimathea just for three days, for He never intended to live there for more than three days. Our Redeemer borrowed many things during his lifetime here upon this earth. He borrowed a Virgin's womb where He could be conceived; He borrowed a manger, where He could be born as a Babe; He borrowed a virgin tomb where He could be buried. Why! He even borrowed our sins so that He could atone for them.



The sins that Jesus took upon Himself were not His own, they were our sins. He borrowed them so that He could die on behalf of us. The Redeemer paid for our ransom. He died as a substitute for us. When we look at the Empty Tomb, we know that our Redeemer lives, and we could claim redemption through Him.

3) We Can Lay Claim to Eternal Life

Jesus came to give us eternal life. He once said to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me even though they die, will live, and every one who lives and believes in me

will never die (Jn 11:25).” Jesus by His death on the cross had conquered death. Death has no more dominion over Him. That's the reason St. Paul once said, “Death has been swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? (1 Cor 15:55).” Jesus had passed beyond death, and the tomb could not hold Him (Cf Acts 2:24; Rom 4:25). That is the reason there was an empty tomb.

When we look at the Empty Tomb, we know that Jesus had conquered death; and He, who is risen and is alive, shares this gift of eternal life with all those who believe and accept Him as their Savior. As we celebrate Easter, may we look at the Empty Tomb and pray to our Redeemer Jesus who rose from the dead that He may forgive our sins and grant us eternal life.

From the Author's book *John's Sunday Homilies (Cycle B)*, ATC Publications ♦

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION – III

By Fr Dr S Joseph Lionel

The Christian faithful who have committed sin, by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, come to the Sacrament of Penance should above all be wholeheartedly converted to God. It is expressed through confession made to the Church, due expiation, and amendment of life. God grants pardon for sin through the Church, which works by the ministry of priests.



heart to the Church's minister; this completes the Sacrament of Penance" (The Rites, vol. 1, 530). God's plan of salvation to reconcile the world to himself was visibly manifested in the mystery of Incarnation, in the person of Jesus Christ who through his Paschal Mystery accomplished the reconciliation God desired. The broken covenant was renewed by this visible sign in Christ's

The Rite speaks about four elements in the sacrament of reconciliation: 1) contrition, 2) confession, 3) act of penance, and 4) absolution.

The Church teaches that the most important act of the penitent is contrition, which is heartfelt sorrow and aversion for the sin committed along with the intention of sinning no more. The kingdom of Christ can be approached only by metanoia, that is, total conversion, both internal and external. The genuineness of penance depends on this heartfelt contrition. This conversion should help the person to feel ever-closer likeness to Christ and help him to organize his life according to the love of God.

The process of true conversion reaches completion by expiation of sins committed, by amendment of life, and also by rectifying injuries done. The expiation must correspond to the extent of the injury because it is a remedy to heal the wound caused by sin. It helps to renew the life. It helps the reconciled person to say together with Paul, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead..." (Phil 3:13).

The Rite says that "Through the sign of absolution God grants pardon to sinners who in sacramental confession manifest their change of

humanity. The presence of Christ in the person of the priest in the celebration of the sacrament grants pardon through the sign of absolution. It brings to mind two biblical images and their implication in the life of the Church:

Christ bringing the lost sheep on his shoulders, and return of children from afar bringing great rejoicing at the banquet of God's Church (Lk 15:7,10,32). Thus, reconciliation is a serious striving to perfect the grace of Baptism, allowing the gifts of the Holy Spirit received at Confirmation to flourish, and consenting to be nourished at the Table of the Eucharist. Furthermore, reconciliation allows the grace of every sacrament to flow into one's life. Now, we will study the Sacrament of Reconciliation from two aspects: 1) celebration of the sacrament, and 2) offices and ministries.

1. Celebration of the Sacrament

The Rite foresees two different scenarios in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They are:

- 1) Rite of Reconciliation of individual penitents; and
- 2) Rite of Reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution. We will



explain them one by one.

1.1. Rite of Reconciliation of Individual Penitents

The structure of the Rite of Reconciliation of individual penitents has the following elements: Reception of the penitent, Reading of the Word of God, Confession of sins and acceptance of satisfaction, Prayer of the penitent and absolution, and Proclamation of praise of God and dismissal.

The Rite exhorts that both priest and penitent should prepare themselves through prayer. The priest welcomes penitents with fraternal charity. After the sign of the cross the priest urges penitent to have confidence in God's mercy.

Like all the other celebrations of sacraments, the reading of the word of God also receives importance in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Either the priest or penitent can read the word of God. The followers of Christ receive light to recognize their sins through the word of God. And it is through the same word of God they are called to conversion and to trust in God's mercy. Sometimes the reading of the word of God may take place during preparation for confession.

Then if necessary the priest helps penitent to make an integral confession. As the rubrics

direct priest can remind penitent that through the sacrament of penance the Christian dies and rises with Christ and is thus renewed in the Paschal Mystery.

Then the priest proposes an act of penance which the penitent accepts to make satisfaction for sin and to amend his life. It should serve not only as atonement for past sins but also as an aid to a new life. It may take a form of prayer, self-denial, or service to neighbor and works of mercy. It underlines the fact that sin and its forgiveness have a social aspect.

The next element is prayer of the penitent and absolution. Through a prayer for God's pardon, the penitent expresses contrition and the resolution to begin a new life. The following prayer is said by the penitent:

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

There are other similar texts given in the rites which are biblically inspired prayers. Any of those prayers could be used. The rite also give an option that a simple prayer such as "Lord Jesus, Son of God have mercy on me a sinner" may be said in the place of the above mentioned prayer. After the prayer by the penitent the priest extend either his both hands or at least his right hand over the head of the penitent and says:

God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and **I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.**

In this prayer of absolution the last phrase in bold is the essential phrase. The priest makes a sign of the cross when he pronounces the phrase. This formula of absolution highlights the

following important theological dimensions:

- 1) The reconciliation of the penitent comes from the mercy of the Father;
- 2) it shows the connection between the reconciliation of the sinner and the Paschal Mystery of Christ;
- 3) it stresses the role of the Holy Spirit in the forgiveness of sins; and
- 4) it underlines the ecclesial aspect of the sacrament, because reconciliation with God is asked for and given through the ministry of the Church.



The last element in the structure for the Rite of Reconciliation of individual penitents is proclamation of praise of God and dismissal. After receiving pardon for sin, the penitent praises the mercy of God and gives him thanks in a shorter invocation taken from Scripture. When the priest says, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good" the penitent responds by saying "His mercy endures forever." Then the priest dismisses the penitent who has been reconciled by saying, "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace."

The rite also provides other texts for dismissal. Thus, the penitent continues the conversion and expresses it by a life renewed according to the Gospel and more and more steeped in the love of God for "love covers over a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8).

1.2. Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents

The communal celebration of reconciliation shows more clearly the ecclesial nature of penance. When the faithful have

gathered, the celebration begins with a suitable hymn. The priest greets the assembly.

It is followed by a short introduction to the celebration either by him or another minister. After a brief period of silence the introductory rite comes to a close with the opening prayer.

Then the celebration of the word of God begins. God's word calls his people to repentance and leads them to true conversion. One or more readings may be chosen for the occasion. If there are more than one reading, either a period of silence or psalm is to be inserted in between the readings. If it is only one reading, it is to be from the gospel.

During the homily that follows readings, the minister should lead the penitents to examine their conscience and turn away from sin and toward God. The inner dimension of conversion expressed through outward actions, social dimension of sin, and exercise of charity towards neighbor may receive attention in the explanation according to circumstances. Analogies, personal testimonies, or stories of people experiencing God's mercy may be helpful for the members of the community to understand the love and mercy of God.

After homily a brief period of silence helps the faithful to ruminate what they heard and examine their consciences in the light of the word of God. A more formal examination of conscience also may take place after homily.

After the examination of conscience the rite of reconciliation begins. At the invitation of the minister all kneel or bow down and say a form of general confession (e.g.: I confess to almighty God...). Then, a suitable song to express contrition may be sung followed by the recitation or singing of the Lord's Prayer, which should not be omitted. Then the penitents are instructed to go to any priest available for confession.

When the individual penitent makes confession to a priest and after accepting suitable act of penance, the priest absolves him/her using the formulary for the reconciliation of an individual penitent.

When confessions are over, the priest who

presides invites all to praise and give thanks to God for his mercy. It can be done by singing a psalm or suitable hymn. Then the priest recites the concluding prayer followed by final blessing.

For the dismissal the priest says, "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace" for which all respond "Thanks be to God." Thus the rite brings out the ecclesial nature of the celebration.

2. Offices and Ministries

The Rite of Penance in its Introduction describes that "The Church exercises the ministry of the sacrament of penance through bishops and priests" at the same time the Introduction also reminds us that "The whole Church, as a priestly people, acts in different ways in the work of reconciliation that has been entrusted to it by the Lord"(The Rites, vol. 1., 531). The bishops and priests, by preaching God's word they call the faithful to conversion; in the name of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit they declare and grant the forgiveness of sins.

The competent minister of the sacrament is a priest who has the faculty to absolve in accordance with the provisions of the code of Canon Law (967-975). While exercising this ministry, priests act in communion with the bishop and share in his power and office as the one who regulates the penitential discipline. Hence, a confessor must be attentive to gain needed knowledge and prudence by constant study under the guidance of the teachings of the Church, and especially by praying fervently to God.

One of the desired qualities of a good

confessor is his readiness to hear confession when people reasonably request for it. The priests as confessors are obliged to preserve the seal of confession absolutely unbroken, that is, maintain confidentiality.



Penitents also have role in the sacrament. Their act of approaching this saving remedy instituted by Christ becomes part of the sacrament. This act of penitents is completed by the prayer of absolution by a priest spoken in the name of Christ. Hence, the penitents join with the priest celebrating the liturgy of the Church's continual self-renewal. The community on their part have role in the celebration.

The Church not only calls the sinner to repentance but the Church intercedes for them and helps them to seek the mercy of God. The community's prayer for each other is significant. The Church becomes the instrument of the conversion and absolution of the penitent through the ministry entrusted by Christ to the apostles and their successors. ♦

Twenty-three Catholic Missionaries Killed in 2017

FIDES: Twenty-three Catholic missionaries were killed in the world in 2017: 13 priests, one Religious, one nun, and eight laymen reported the Vatican Agency *Fides*, on Thursday, December 28, 2017.

For the eighth consecutive year, the highest number was recorded in America, where 11 Catholics on mission were killed (eight priests, one Religious, and two laymen), followed by Africa with 10 victims (four priests, one nun, and five laymen), and by Asia where one priest and one layman were killed.

According to data published by *Fides*, from 2000 to 2016, 424 Catholics on mission were killed in the world, of which five were Bishops. ♦

Mary knows

[Below is the text of Pope Francis' homily during the Mass over which he presided at Lobito Campus in the Chilean city of Iquique, Jan 18, 2018, during his Apostolic Visit to Chile and Peru, Jan. 15-22]

Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee” (Jn 2:11).

These are the final words of the Gospel we just heard, which describes Jesus' public appearance: at a party, no more or less. It could not be otherwise, since the Gospel is a constant invitation to joy. From the outset, the angel says to Mary: “Rejoice!” (Lk 1:28). Rejoice, he says to the shepherds; rejoice, he says to Elizabeth, an elderly and barren woman...; rejoice, Jesus says to the thief, for this day you will be with me in paradise (cf. Lk 23:43).

The Gospel message is a wellspring of joy: “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete” (Jn 15:11). A joy that is contagious, passing from generation to generation, a joy that we have inherited. Because we are Christians.

How much you know about this, dear brothers and sisters of northern Chile! How much you know about living your faith and your lives in a festive spirit! I have come as a pilgrim to join you in celebrating this beautiful way of living the faith. Your patronal feasts, your religious dances – which at times even go on for a week – your music, your dress, all make this region a shrine of popular piety and spirituality. Because the party does not remain inside the Church, but you turn the whole town into a party. You know how to celebrate by singing and dancing God's “fatherhood, providence, constant



and loving presence”, and this engenders “interior attitudes rarely observed to the same degree elsewhere: patience, the sign of the cross in daily life, detachment, openness to others, devotion”.^[1] The words of the prophet Isaiah come to life: “The wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field will be deemed a forest” (Is 32:15). This land, surrounded by the driest desert of the world, manages to put on party clothes.

In this festive atmosphere, the Gospel shows us how Mary acts to make that joy continue. She is attentive to everything going on around her; like a good mother, she doesn't sit still. So she notices, amid in the party and the shared joy, that something is about to happen that might “water it down”. She approaches her Son and tells him simply: “They have no wine” (Jn 2:3).

In the same way, Mary passes through our towns, our streets, our squares, our homes and our hospitals. Mary is the Virgin of la Tirana; the Virgin Ayquina in Calama; the Virgin of the Rocks in Arica. She notices all those problems that burden our hearts, then whispers into Jesus' ear and says: Look, “they have no wine”.

Mary does not remain quiet. She goes up to the servants and says to them: “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). Mary, a woman of few but very pointed words, also comes up to each of us and says simply: “Do whatever he tells you”. In this way, she elicits the first miracle of Jesus: to make his friends feel that they too are part of the miracle. Because Christ “came to this world not to perform a task by himself, but with us” – he performs miracles with us – “with all of us, so as to be the



head of a great body, of which we are the living, free and active cells”.^[2] This is how Jesus performs miracles: with us.

The miracle begins once the servants approach the jars with water for purification. So too, each of us can begin the miracle; what is more, each one of us is invited to be part of the miracle for others.

Brothers and sisters, Iquique is a land of dreams (for so its name means in the Aymara language). It is a land that has given shelter to men and women of different peoples and cultures who had to leave everything behind and set out. Setting out always with the hope of obtaining a better life, yet, as we know, always with their bags packed with fear and uncertainty about the future. Iquique is a region of immigrants, which reminds us of the greatness of men and women, entire families, who, in the face of adversity, refused to give up and set out in search of life. In search of life. They – especially those who had to leave their land for lack of life's bare necessities – are an image of the Holy Family, which had to cross deserts to keep on living.

This land is a land of dreams, but let us work to ensure that it also continues to be a land of hospitality. A festive hospitality, for we know very well that there is no Christian joy when doors are closed; there is no Christian joy when others are made to feel unwanted, when there is no room for them in our midst (cf. Lk 16:19-31).

Like Mary at Cana, let us make an effort to be more attentive in our squares and towns, to notice those whose lives have been “watered down”, who have lost – or have been robbed of – reasons for celebrating; those whose hearts are saddened. And let us not be afraid to raise our voices and say: “They have no wine”. The cry of the people of God, the cry of the poor, is a kind of prayer; it opens our hearts and teaches us to be attentive. Let us be attentive, then, to all situations of injustice and to new forms of exploitation that risk making so

many of our brothers and sisters miss the joy of the party. Let us be attentive to the lack of steady employment, which destroys lives and homes. Let us be attentive to those who profit from the irregular status of many migrants who don't know the language or who don't have their papers “in order”. Let us be attentive to the lack of shelter, land and employment experienced by so many families. And, like Mary, let us say: They have no wine, Lord.

Like the servants at the party, let us offer what have, little as it may seem. Like them, let us not be afraid to “lend a hand”. May our solidarity in the commitment for justice be part of the dance or song that we can offer to our Lord. Let us also make the most of the opportunity to learn and make our own the values, the wisdom and the faith that migrants bring with them. Without being closed to those “jars” so full of wisdom and history brought by those who continue to come to these lands. Let us not deprive ourselves of all the good that they have to contribute.

And let us allow Jesus to complete the miracle by turning our communities and our hearts into living signs of his presence, which is joyful and festive because we have experienced that God is with us, because we have learned to make room for him within our hearts. A contagious joy and festivity that lead us to exclude no one from the proclamation of this Good News, and to share all that belongs to our original culture, in order to

SAINT OF THE MONTH

St Seraphina

1238 – 1253

Feast Day: 12 March

Saint Seraphina is a wonderful little saint, and her short life is very interesting. She became like the finest gold, in all the virtues, especially the beautiful virtues of purity and humility. During her life she rose higher and higher in virtue until the time of her death, when she came face to face with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Seraphina was born to a poor family in San Gimignano, Tuscany, Italy in 1238. Her father died when she was very young and her widowed mother went to work, leaving her alone at home. She was an attractive girl with a cheerful, congenial nature and a deep empathy for others — sharing half her food with those less fortunate than herself. She spent her time alone sewing, spinning, and praying.

She avoided going out into the world for any unnecessary reason, in order to keep her peace of mind. And when she did go out, she would walk with her eyes looking down, so that by not looking around, she would not be tempted to sin.

Seraphina was a tall beautiful girl. She never wore any makeup or jewelry. She wanted only to please God and not worldly man. She often fasted, eating little food, and for penance she wore a hair shirt. When she was not praying, she kept herself busy doing woman's work, so as not to remain idle. She knew that idle hands and an idle mind could be used by the devil, and she avoided this at all costs.

After her father's death, she was struck with a strange and paralyzing illness. She became misshapen and ugly, in constant pain, unable to get out of bed or even to move. Her mother took care of her but had to leave her for hours at a time to attend



to her work. Seraphina's only consolation was the crucifix, and she realized that she was called to imitate the suffering Christ.

Yet she never complained. She managed to remain serene, and something beautiful shone out of her face. Then she was struck another blow. Her mother died, and she was left completely destitute, her neighbors repelled by her appearance and her sickness, her only friend, a girl named

Beldia, who visited her and brought her food.

In her reading, Seraphina had heard of the great sufferings of Pope St Gregory the Great and he became her special saint. She prayed to him, drew strength from the sufferings that he had to endure, and prayed that he would obtain for her the patience she needed to bear her own sufferings. She was now so weak and helpless that it was clear to everyone she could not live very long.

Through her prayers and sacrifices, God granted Seraphina the grace to know when she was going to die. Pope St Gregory appeared to her eight days before her death. When he appeared he said, ***"Dear daughter, make your peace with Jesus Christ, as you did in the beginning, for on the Feast of St Gregory, you will die, and God will reward you for your penances and sacrifices!"*** (In those days his feast day was celebrated on March 12).

Then Seraphina bowed her head to St Gregory and begged him to pray for her, and he disappeared. Two of her servants were there at the time of the vision, and she told them not to tell anybody about the vision, as long as she was alive.

After the vision of St Gregory, Seraphina

SAINT OF THE MONTH – II

St Stanislaus of Krakow

July 26, 1030 – April 11, 1079

Feast Day: April 11



Anyone who reads the history of Eastern Europe cannot but chance on the name of Stanislaus, the saintly but tragic bishop of Kraków, patron of Poland. He is remembered with Saints Thomas

More and Thomas Becket for vigorous opposition to the evils of an unjust government.

Stanislaus was born of noble parents on July 26th 1030 at Szczepanow near Krakow, Poland. His parents, Belislaus and Bogna, pious and noble Catholics, gave him a religious education. He was educated at Gnesen and was ordained there. After the death of his parents he distributed his ample inheritance among the poor. He was appointed preacher and archdeacon to the bishop of Kraków, where his eloquence and example brought about real conversion in many of his penitents, both clergy and laity. He was successful in his reforming efforts, and in 1072 upon the death of the bishop of Cracow, he was nominated bishop of the diocese by Pope Alexander II.

Stanislaus worked with his wonted energy for his diocese, and inveighed against vices among high and low, regardless of consequences. Boleslaw II had become King of Poland. The renown he had gained by his successful wars he now sullied by atrocious cruelty and unbridled lust. The king trying to strengthen his own power led an expedition against the grand duchy of Kiev, making himself very unpopular with the nobles of

the country, who opposed his policies. Stanislaus of Krakow sided with the nobles, led by the king's brother, Ladislaus, and this brought him into conflict with the king.

Moreover the bishop had several serious disputes with the king about a piece of land belonging to the Church which was unjustly claimed by Boleslaw, and about some nobles, who had left their homes to ward off various evils threatening their families and who were in consequence cruelly treated by the king. Stanislaus spared neither tears nor prayers and admonitions to bring the king to lead a more Christian life.

The king first excused himself, then made a show of penance, then relapsed into his old ways. Stanislaus continued his open opposition in spite of charges of treason and threats of death, finally excommunicating the king. Stanislaus retired to the Chapel of St Michael in a suburb of Krakow.



The king was furious and followed the bishop with his guards, some of whom he sent to kill the saint. These dared not obey, so Boleslaw slew him during the Holy Sacrifice on 11 April 1079. The body was at first buried in the chapel, but in 1088 it was transferred to the Cathedral by Bishop Lambert II.

Pope Gregory VII placed the country under interdict and Boleslaus fell from power, fleeing to Hungary, where he entered the monastery of Osiak to do penance for his crime. Stanislaus, canonized by Pope Innocent IV in 1253, is one of the patron saints of Poland

Source:

www.newadvent.org/cathen;

www.catholicculture.org/culture;

www.catholic.org/saints;

www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-stanislaus ♦



competence and experience to the men and women of our time who desire to grow as Christians, but must also take up the urgent task of developing

intellectual tools that can serve as paradigms for action and thought, useful for preaching in a world marked by ethical and religious pluralism.”

Theology lives on the frontiers

“Theology and Christian culture have lived up to their mission whenever they were ready to take risks and remain faithful on the borderline,” Pope Francis says. Today, he concluded, we face “a great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal” – a path of renewal that is also demanded of ecclesiastical universities and faculties. ♦

Continued from Page 5: Sacramental sign of our conversion

I would also like my invitation to extend beyond the bounds of the Catholic Church, and to reach all of you, men and women of good will, who are open to hearing God's voice. Perhaps, like ourselves, you are disturbed by the spread of iniquity in the world, you are concerned about the chill that paralyzes hearts and actions, and you see a weakening in our sense of being members of the one human family. Join us, then, in raising our plea to God, in fasting, and in offering whatever you can to our brothers and sisters in need!

The fire of Easter

Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

One such moment of grace will be, again this year, the “24 Hours for the Lord” initiative, which invites the entire Church community to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in the context of Eucharistic adoration. In 2018, inspired by the words of Psalm 130:4, “With you is forgiveness”, this will take place from Friday, 9 March to Saturday, 10 March. In each diocese, at least one church will remain open for twenty-four



consecutive hours, offering an opportunity for both Eucharistic adoration and sacramental confession.

During the Easter Vigil, we will celebrate once more the moving rite of the lighting of the Easter candle. Drawn from the “new fire”, this light will slowly overcome the darkness and illuminate the liturgical assembly. “May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds”, [7] and enable all of us to relive the experience of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. By listening to God's word and drawing nourishment from the table of the Eucharist, may our hearts be ever more ardent in faith, hope and love. ♦

Bible Quiz - 39

Compiled by Mahesh H Lobo

This Quiz is based on the Book of Jeremiah: Chapters 01-25. We have used the RSV edition for formulating the questions, but you may use any Catholic edition of the Bible. Kindly mention the name of the Bible Edition you use to answer this quiz.

There are 20 questions. The answer to each question must necessarily cite the Scripture reference. Please do not write out the questions; just write the question number, your answer and the Scripture reference (For format, see the answers to Quiz No. 38 below)

All our readers/members of a family, young and old, are welcome to participate in the quiz individually. Kindly mention your full name, complete postal address and telephone (landline / mobile) number. You can post/courier /email your entries to the address provided on Page 1. All entries must reach us by 30 March 2018.

Five correct entries will be rewarded with a one-year subscription of Proclaim. If there are more than 5 correct entries, the winners will be selected by lot.

Study ^{the} Bible
with us



01. In what manner did the Lord God put his words into Jeremiah's mouth?
02. What are the two evils committed by the people against their God?
03. What kind of shepherds did the Lord God promise to the people of Israel and Judah?
04. What kind of circumcision does the Lord God desire for his people?
05. If God wants to make His words fire in Jeremiah's mouth, what will He make the people of Israel?
06. What does the Lord God say concerning his house called by his name?
07. If the Lord gives poisonous water to drink as punishment, what will he give to eat?
08. What will happen to the so-called gods who have created neither heaven nor earth?
09. What will the Lord do even if Jeremiah prays for his people or lifts up a cry on their behalf?
10. In what manner did the Lord God want his people Israel and Judah cling to him?
11. What will happen to the prophets who prophesy in the name of the Lord God that sword and famine shall not come to the land?
12. What did Jeremiah do when he found the words of the Lord God and what were the consequences?
13. To what is a man who trusts the Lord God likened?
14. What did Jeremiah see in the potter's house as the potter was working at his wheel?
15. What is the problem Jeremiah has to face if he doesn't pass on the message that comes from the Lord God?
16. What will the nations and people who pass by seeing such sad situation of the city say to their neighbours?
17. Why can't one hide himself in some secret place that the Lord God cannot see him?
18. In what manner will the Lord treat Zedekiah and his princes and the remnant who remain in the land?
19. For how many years do people of Judah have to serve the king of Babylon?
20. What will happen to the people if they put Jeremiah to death?

Answers to Quiz 38

(All the references are from the book of Isaiah)

(1) righteousness, 45:8; (2) loss of children and widowhood, 47:9; (3) peace like a river and righteousness like the waves of the sea, 48:18; (4) that salvation may reach to the ends of the earth, 49: 6; (5) The Lord has comforted his people and will have compassion on his afflicted, 49:13; (6) eat their own flesh and drink their own blood, 49:26; (7) gave my back to the smiters, cheeks to those who pulled out the beard and hid not my face from shame and spitting, 50:6 (8) moth will eat them like a garment and the worm will eat them like wool, 51:8; (9) shall speedily be released and shall not go down to the pit, 51:14; (10) he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors, 53:12; (11) will not depart from his people and the covenant of peace will not be removed, 54:10; (12) heavens are higher than the earth, 55:9; (13) a house and a monument and name within the walls, 56:5; (14) he enters into peace, 57:2; (15) with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, 57:15; (16) to loose the bonds of wickedness, undo the thongs of the yoke, let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, 58:6; (17) righteousness as breastplate and helmet of salvation upon his head, 59:17; (18) shall be called My delight in her and your land Married, 62:4; (19) might quake at his presence, 64:1; (20) as mother comforts and in the city of Jerusalem 66:13

Winners of Quiz 38

1) Jacob John, Kochi; 2) Lina Kropi, Patna; 3) Maria Joseph, Trichi; 4) Prakash Lakra, Ranchi; 5) Theresa D'Souza, Bengaluru

Continued from Page 15: St Seraphina



b e g a n t o grow much weaker and she suffered great pains in her head. She continued to suffer for the love of God, and on March 12th, 1253, St

Gregory's Feast Day, she made a general confession in the morning and received Holy Communion. Then while she was offering her pure soul to God, she died, and angels carried her pure soul to Heaven.

As soon as Seraphina died, the angels started ringing all the church bells in St Geminiano. When this miracle happened, those who lived at the Castle of St Geminiano ran to Seraphina's room and with great solemnity carried her body to the

castle church. During this time, they also noticed that a beautiful odour came from the body of Seraphina – this odour is called the odour of sanctity!

Seraphina's body lay for many days in the church of St Geminiano, and finally it was carried to the place of burial. When Seraphina's body was removed from the oak board, God caused beautiful flowers, which gave off a wonderful perfume, to grow out of the board where she had lain! At this time, many people from castles, towns and villages came to honour holy Seraphina. Many of these people brought beautiful cloths of gold, and candles of pure bee's wax, to place before her tomb.

Source:

<http://fsspx.com/EucharisticCrusade;>

www.holyspiritinteractive.net/dailysaint;

<https://catholicsaints.info/saint;>

www.catholic.org/saints;

www.jeanmheimann.com ♦



After living what I felt was a "decent" life, my time on earth came to the end. The first thing I remember is sitting on a bench in the waiting room of what I thought to be a court house.

The doors opened and I was instructed to come in and have a seat by the defense table.

As I looked around I saw the "prosecutor." He was a villainous looking gent who snarled as he stared at me. He definitely was the most evil person I have ever seen.

I sat down and looked to my left and there sat My Attorney, a kind and gentle looking man whose appearance seemed so familiar to me, I felt I knew Him.

The corner door flew open and there appeared the Judge in full flowing robes. He commanded an awesome presence as He moved across the room I couldn't take my eyes off of Him.

As He took His seat behind the bench, He said, "Let us begin."

The prosecutor rose and said,

"My name is Satan and I am here to show you why this man belongs in hell."

He proceeded to tell of lies that I told, things that I stole, and In the past when I cheated others. Satan told of other horrible Perversions that were once in my life and the more he spoke, the further down in my seat I sank. I was so embarrassed that I couldn't look at anyone, even

my own Attorney, as the Devil told of sins that even I had completely forgotten about.

As upset as I was at Satan for telling all these things about me, I was equally upset at My Attorney who sat there silently not Offering any form of defense at all. I know I had been guilty of those things, but I had done some good in my life - couldn't that at least equal out part of the harm I'd done?

Satan finished with a fury and said, "This man belongs in hell, he is guilty of all that I have charged and there is not a person who can prove otherwise."

When it was His turn, My Attorney first asked if He might approach the bench. The Judge allowed this over the strong objection of Satan, and beckoned Him to come forward. As He got up and started walking, I was able to see Him in His full splendor and majesty. I realized why He seemed so familiar; this was Jesus representing me, my Lord and my Savior.



He stopped at the bench and softly said to the Judge, "Hi, Dad," and then He turned to address the court.

"Satan was correct in saying that this man had sinned, I won't deny any of these allegations. And, yes, the wage of sin is death, and this man deserves to be punished."

Jesus took a deep breath and turned to His

Father with outstretched arms and proclaimed, "However, I died on the cross so that this person might have eternal life and he has accepted Me as his Savior, so he is Mine."

My Lord continued with, "His name is written in the book of life and no one can snatch him from Me. Satan still does not understand yet. This man is not to be given justice, but rather mercy."

As Jesus sat down, He quietly paused, looked at His Father and said, "There is nothing else that needs to be done. I've done it all."

The Judge lifted His mighty hand and slammed the gavel down. The following words bellowed from His lips..

"This man is free." The penalty for him has already been paid in full. Case dismissed."

As my Lord led me away, I could hear Satan ranting and raving, "I won't give up, I will win the next one." I asked Jesus as He gave me my instructions where to go next, "Have you ever lost a case?"



Christ lovingly smiled and said, "Everyone that has come to Me and asked Me to represent them has received the same verdict as you, Paid In Full.

Source:<http://gatewaytojesus.com/encouragingwritingspage1.html> ♦

Continued from Page 15: Mary Knows.....



enrich it also with what is truly ours, with our own traditions, with our ancestral wisdom, so that those who

come may encounter wisdom and share their own.

This is the celebration. This is the water transformed into wine. This is the miracle that Jesus performs.

May Mary, under her different titles in this blessed land of the north, continue to whisper in the ear of Jesus, her Son: "They have no wine", and may her words continue to find a place in us: "Do whatever he tells you". ♦

Padma Bhushan conferred on retired head of Mar Thoma Church

UCAN: Bishop Philipose Mar Chrysostom, the former head of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, was honoured with the Padma Bhushan award.

100-year-old Mar Chrysostom is the oldest living bishop in the world. A bishop for last 64 years, Mar Chrysostom is considered the longest serving prelate in the country.

Mar Chrysostom was born on April 27, 1917. He was ordained as deacon in 1944 and later as an episcopa. He was given the title Philipose Mar Chrysostom in 1953.

He retired from the administrative responsibilities as the supreme head of Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in 2007, but has been active in Kerala's social life, meeting people and attending functions as the senior metropolitan.

He now lives at Maramon Jubilee home in Pathanamthitta. ♦

News Round-Up

Cardinal Gracias to head Indian Catholic Church

Bangalore (CCBI): Cardinal Oswald Gracias (73), the Archbishop of Bombay, the President of the CCBI, and one of the advisors of Pope Francis, was on 8 February 2018 elected the President of the Catholic Bishops in India (CBCI).

Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios (67), Bishop of the Syro-Malankara Eparchy of Mavelikara, has been elected the new First Vice-President and Most Rev. George Njaralakatt (71), Metropolitan of Syro Malabar Archiepharchy of Tellicherry, was elected the Second Vice-President for a period of two years. Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas SFX continues his three-year term as the Secretary General of CBCI.

With the election, Cardinal Gracias created history as the first Church leader to head the Church in Asia as well and in India. Cardinal Gracias is the president of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) and Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI), the episcopal body of the Latin rite prelates in the country. Cardinal Gracias had headed the Indian Church for four years from 2010. He is one of the eight cardinals Pope Francis chose on April 13, 2013, to advise him on the management of the Universal Church and reformation of the Vatican Curia. Pope Benedict XVI made him a cardinal in 2007, a year after he was appointed the archbishop of Bombay. ♦

Fr James Athikalam new Bishop of Sagar

Bangalore (CCBI): The Synod of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church, gathered at Mount St. Thomas, Kerala, having received prior Papal Assent according to CCEO can. 184, canonically elected to the office of Bishop of Sagar in Madhya Pradesh Rev Fr James Athikalam (59) MST.

Fr. James Athikalam was born on 5th July, 1958, at Pulincunnoo, Changanacherry. He was ordained priest on 22nd March, 1984, for the Missionary Society of St Thomas the Apostle (MST). He holds a Master's Degree from Mysore University. He has obtained a licentiate in Biblical Theology and Doctorate in Patrology from Rome.

As a priest he worked at Barnagar in the Diocese of Ujjain, and later was appointed professor and procurator of the Diocesan Minor Seminary of Ujjain and professor at the MST Minor Seminary. In 1991, he was appointed Director of the Missionary Orientation Course at JeevanJyothi, Mandya, professor of Patrology in Ruhalya Major Seminary, Ujjain, of which he was later appointed Rector.

He became the Director General of the Missionary Society of St. Thomas the Apostle and was serving in that office till last year. At the time of his appointment as bishop he was the Director of Nirmal Jyoti Mental Health Programme, Bhopal. ♦

Fr John Nellikunnel new Bishop of Idukki

Bangalore, 12 January 2018 (CCBI): The Synod of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church, gathered at Mount St. Thomas, Kerala, having received prior Papal Assent according to CCEO can. 184, canonically elected to the office of Bishop of Idukki, Kerala Rev Fr. John Nellikunnel (45). This provision was made public in Rome on Friday, 12th January, 2018.

Fr. John Nellikunnel was born on 22nd March, 1973, at Kadaplamattom, Kerala. He joined St. Joseph's Minor Seminary, Kothamangalam on 18th June, 1988 and there completed his Pre-Degree education. He accomplished philosophical and theological studies from St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, during 1991-1998. He was ordained priest on 30th December, 1998 at St. Mary's Church, Mariapuram. From 2007 to 2010 he served as Eparchial Chancellor and Secretary to the Bishop. Besides this, he served also as Director of Catechetical Department and Bible Apostolate. In 2010 he was appointed resident staff at St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha. Besides this, he served as House Procurator of the Seminary

from 2011-2015. From 2015 to 2017 he was Dean of Philosophy at Mangalapuzha Seminary. Till the present, he is the Secretary of the Corporate Education Agency of the Eparchy of Idukki. ♦

Fr Athanasius Rethna Swamy Swamiadian new bishop for Ahmedabad

Pope Francis has appointed Fr Athanasius Rethna Swamy Swamiadian as the new Bishop for the Diocese of Ahmedabad in Gujarat. He is currently the Rector of Vianney Vihar, the Interdiocesan Major Seminary in Baroda.

Bishop-elect Swamiadian was born on 10 February 1961 at Parampukkarai in Tamil Nadu's Kottar Diocese.

Following priestly studies at St Charles Major Seminary in Nagpur, he was ordained a priest for the Ahmedabad on March 29, 1989. He holds a Licentiate in Clinical Psychology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

He served as parish priest in Sanand, rector of St Joseph's Minor Seminary, Ahmedabad, and dean of St Xavier's High School, Chavdapura.

He left for Rome in 1994 to pursue studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University and in 1998 appointed Rector of Shradha Interdiocesan Seminary, Ahmedabad, till 2002.

For ten years until 2012, he was Rector of St Joseph's Minor Seminary in Ahmedabad and spiritual director of Gujarat Vidya Deep Seminary, Baroda.

Since 2012, he has been serving as the Rector of the Interdiocesan Major Seminary Vianney Vihar in Baroda, teacher and Spiritual Director at Gujarat Vidya Deep in Baroda, and Spiritual Director at St Joseph's Minor Seminary in Ahmedabad, Member of the presbyteral Council and Consulter of the Diocese of Ahmedabad. ♦

Young Sikh, Hindu to joint Vatican preparatory meet

UCAN: India's bishops have chosen five young people, including a Sikh and a Hindu, to join some 300 young people from around the world in a preparatory meeting for the October bishops' synod on young people.

Inderjit Singh from Jalandhar Diocese in Punjab will represent the Sikh religion while Sandeep Pandey from Vasai Diocese in Maharashtra will represent the Hindu faith at the March 18-24 gathering.

The three others — Percival Holt, Paul Jose and Shilpa --- are officials of the Indian Catholic Youth Movement, the church's national youth network.

Some 300 young leaders are expected to attend the six-day gathering in Rome to discuss issues affecting youth in the modern world to help bishops understand them and plan pastoral programs accordingly.

The discussions at this meeting will be summarized in a document and given to the bishops participating in the October synod, said Bishop Franco Mulakkal, chairman of youth office of the bishops' conference, in a Feb. 14 statement. ♦

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

March 2018

Evangelization: Formation in Spiritual Discernment

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.

April 2018


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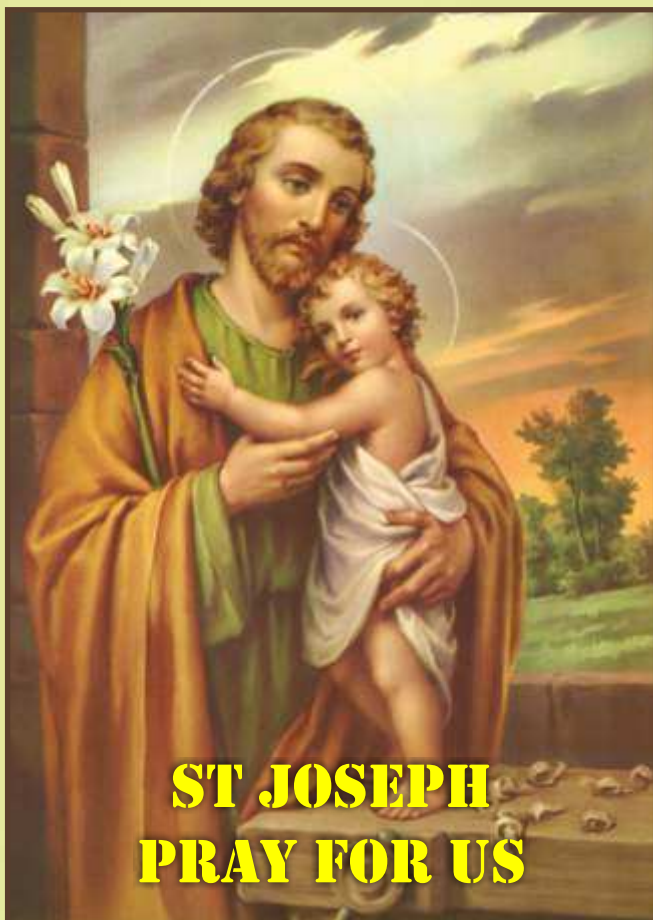
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ST JOSEPH PRAY FOR US

Prayer to St Joseph (Feast: 19th March)

Blessed Joseph, husband of Mary, be with us this day. You protected and cherished the Virgin; loving the Child Jesus as your son, you rescued Him from danger of death. Defend the Church, the household of God, purchased by the blood of Christ.

Guardian of the Holy Family, be with us in our trials. May your prayers obtain for us the strength to flee from error and wrestle with the powers of corruption so that in life we may grow in holiness and in death rejoice in the crown of victory. Amen.

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"Go into the whole world and PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS to all creation" Mark 16:15