

Spotlight 聚光

March 2018



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...and His clothes became dazzling white,
such as no fuller on earth could bleach them.

Mark 9:3

Submission of articles by the 12th of the month. Email your article to: **anghweeshen@gmail.com**

Please include your name, contact number and address. The editorial team reserves the right to edit any articles for publication. **Maximum article length: 450 words**

使 命 宣 言

我们，圣体堂区共融团体，愿成为基督圣体活的标记，尽力担当主基督祂舍己牺牲生命，为今日世界所付出的爱之标志与媒介。

MISSION STATEMENT

As the parish-community of the Blessed Sacrament, we want to be a living expression of the Holy Eucharist, by trying to become both a sign and an instrument of Christ's life-giving and self-sacrificial love in the world of today.

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Editor's Desk

For Your Glory

“Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy.” Pope Francis

Fully divine, He became human to be crucified and to die for our sins. Betrayed and publicly humiliated, Jesus took it all in His stride. When we look at our sufferings, our pain and disappointments, do we look at Jesus on the cross? Why is it so hard to carry the crosses in our lives?

We all have our personal values and expectations. Some of us see success as owning the dream car and house, while others may want to be a billionaire. Yet when we see news of natural disasters, or hear the death of loved ones, does this then trigger us to evaluate what the true meaning of life is? Whatever material things we have on this earth, we cannot bring it with us after we are gone.

When we place God as the priority of our lives, we learn to surrender and to grow in faith. Each day is a sign of love from God. Being able to get up each morning is another day of a new life. Being surrounded by family and friends, it shows that we are blessed with people who will journey with us in this lifetime. Having a place to stay and being able to earn a living, be thankful for our homes and daily bread to pay the bills. God provides us His grace each day for us.

In this season of Lent, let us focus on the paschal mystery – His passion, death, Resurrection and Ascension. What does it mean to you? Let us empty ourselves of our fear, pride, anger, selfishness and walk together with Jesus carrying the cross to Calvary. Feel the pain of being whipped at by the soldiers, the jarring pain of the thorns on His head, the nails being pierced through His hands and feet on the cross. Why did Jesus go through all these? His unconditional love for us – children of God, made in God's image and likeness.

Let us focus on Jesus on the cross as we journey through this season of Lent. Have a meaningful season of Lent.

God Bless
Patricia Ang

Announcements

Mass With Healing Service
Every 2nd Friday of the month
Mass with Healing Session @ 8pm – Damien Hall

Take a holiday with the Lord. This retreat aims to help young adults grow & deepen their faith in spite of a busy lifestyle. Through an arrangement of fun, rest and leisure activities, these days hope to find God in all things and time.

Accompanied by Cenacle Sr. Kriz, the daily guided group retreat includes morning & evening prayer sessions, spiritual input for the day, faith sharing & spiritual direction (upon request).

Venue : Bintan @S\$450 (include return ferry, land transfers, room & 2 meals.)

Dates : May 26 - 29 (Vesak Day holiday) 2018

For best rooming options, please register before March 4, 2018.

Send your enquiries to Sr. Kriz directly via

WhatsApp: +63 915 3540359 or email: cenaclemissionsingapore@gmail.com

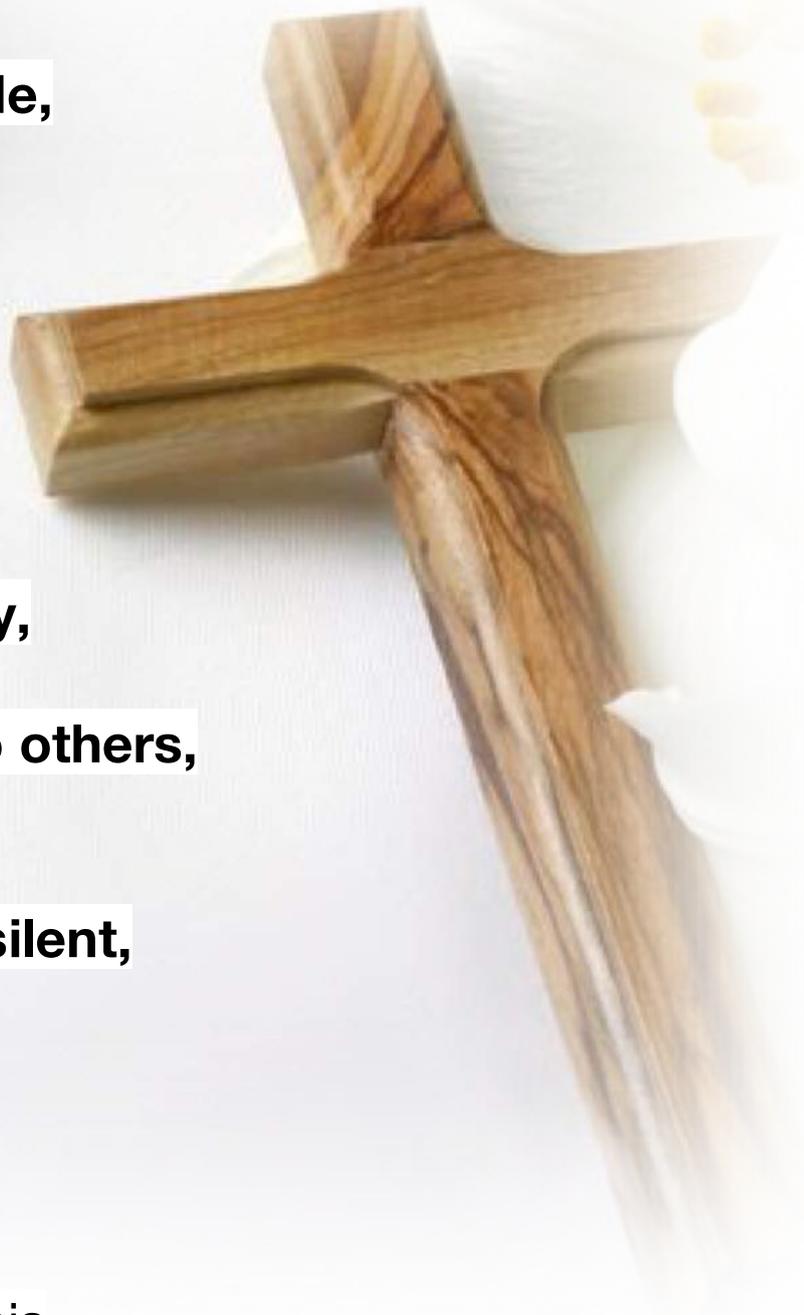


A program by Cenacle Sisters
www.cenaclemission.com
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Do you want to Fast this Lent?

**Fast from hurting words
and say kind words,
Fast from sadness
and be filled with gratitude,
Fast from pessimism
and be filled with hope,
Fast from worries
and trust in God,
Fast from the pressures
and be prayerful,
Fast from bitterness
and fill your heart with joy,
Fast from selfishness
and be compassionate to others,
Fast from grudges
and be reconciled,
Fast from words and be silent,
so that you can listen**



In the words of Pope Francis

Church Security is for You and Me

If you see someone loitering around suspiciously around the church premises, what do you do? What do you do in the event of a terrorist attack? Are you prepared for an emergency in the church? These were some of the points highlighted during a security training talk in January, organised by the Archdiocese Emergency Response Operations.

In light of the terror attacks around the world and some close to home, the aim of the talk was to alert Church workers of the possible threats they face as well as how to guard against them. On 11 Feb, Channel News Asia has reported **Sword-wielding man attacks churchgoers in Indonesia** (Read more at <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/sword-wielding-man-attacks-churchgoers-in-indonesia-9949310>) Surely we do not want to wait for something like this to happen to our friends and loved ones in church.

As a parishioner of BSC you, too have a part to play - to be on the alert to look out for suspicious people or activity in the church.

Do you know what you should do if you are caught in an attack? ***Run-Hide-Talk*** is the strategy to adopt.



RUN

Move quickly and quietly away from danger using the safest route

Do not surrender or attempt to negotiate

If escape is not possible, then...

HIDE

Stay out of sight, be quiet and switch your phone to silent mode

Lock yourself in and stay away from the doors

When it is safe to do so...

TELL

Provide information to the Police by calling 999, send a SMS to 71999 or using the ***SGSecure*** App

Provide details about the attackers such as the total number of attackers, equipment or weapons being carried, and the appearance of the attackers

Provide the location of attackers, both where they are now and where they are moving towards

To make our Parish a safe place for worship for our family and friends, a team of volunteers are being put together to set up the Parish Emergency Preparedness Team. This team will be working to develop emergency preparedness plans which outline appropriate and reasonable means to meet the challenge of an emergency situation in our parish.

If you have experience with safety, security and medical expertise and are can volunteer, please send an email to bsc.pastoral@catholic.org.sg or contact the church office at **6474 0582** .

SECURITY IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY



A Thursday Like No Other: Reflection for Holy Thursday *by Jacqueline Lee*

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)

On this night of betrayal, abandonment and denial, the outlook was grim and indeed there was more hatred and evil to come. However, it was also the night when Jesus spoke of His abiding love, peace and joy, giving us its divine perspective.

The Church distils for us the most important aspects of this holy night by commemorating the institution of the Eucharist and washing of the disciples' feet, pillars of Jesus' "new" command: **“Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another”** (John 13:34).

After the Supper, Jesus invites His disciples to meet with Him to what lies ahead, **“Rise, let us be on our way”** (John 14:31) and instructs them to **“watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation”** (Mark 14:38). As we watch and pray for the strength to stay faithful to Him, it can be an apt time to meditate on His farewell discourse (*Chapters 14 to 17 of John's Gospel*).

Here, He is much more than a dying master instructing His followers on what to do when He is gone; in fact, He is telling them how much can be done after His death because He will be with them even more intimately.

Jesus says, **“I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in Me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from Me you can do nothing (John 15:5).”** It is by staying connected to Him that we have life. This will happen because **“Those who love me will keep My word, and the Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them (John 14:23).”**

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will dwell in us: **“You know Him, because He abides with you, and He will be in you” (John 14:17)**, the Spirit Who will **“teach you everything, and remind you of all I have said to you (John 14:26).”** With this, we are sealed in communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus states His reasons for telling the disciples all this: **“so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete” (John 15:11)**; **“so that you may love one another” (John 15:17)**; **“to keep you from stumbling” (John 16:1)**; **“so that in Me you may have peace” (John 16:33)**. This is why we believe Him when He says, **“Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid (John 14:27).”**

His priestly prayer (Chapter 17) is full of assurances as He brings to God, in the Holy Spirit, all who believe in Him: **“I made Your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which You loved me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:26).”**

As we accompany Jesus to Gethsemane and the high priest’s house, we do know the way to His way, we have the truth set before us, and we are offered life in Him. May we watch, pray and abide in Him so that we are always on our way to bear His fruit in love for one another.



Mary, The Model Of Charity

by Stella Lee

Mary, Mother of the Lord and mirror of holiness, is outstanding among the saints. In the Gospel of Luke, we find her engaged in the service of charity to her cousin, Elizabeth. She remained with her for about three months to assist her in the final stage of pregnancy. She says on the occasion of that visit, “**My soul magnifies the Lord.**” (*Lk 1:46*). In these words, she does not set herself at the centre but leaves space for God Who is encountered in prayer and in service of neighbours.

Mary’s greatness consists in the fact that she wanted to magnify God, not herself. She is lowly and her only desire is to be the “**handmaid of the Lord**” (*Lk 1:38, 48*). She knows that she will only contribute to the salvation of the world if she places herself completely at the disposal of God’s initiatives.

Mary is a woman of hope because she believes in God’s promises and awaits the salvation of Israel when the angel Gabriel visits her and calls her to the decisive service of these promises.

Mary is a woman of faith. “Blessed are you who believed,” Elizabeth says to her (*Lk 1:45*). *The Magnificat* that speaks of her soul, is woven from Holy Scripture, drawn from the Word of God. She speaks and thinks with the Word of God. The Word of God becomes her word. Her thoughts are attuned to the thoughts of God. Her will is one with the will of God. Since Mary is completely imbued with the Word of God, she is able to become the Mother of the Word Incarnate.

Mary is a woman who loves. In her quiet gestures recounted in the Gospel of John (*2:1-11*), at the wedding feast of Cana, she intercedes for the needs of the newly married couple who have run out of wine. She makes it known to Jesus.

We see the humility with which she recedes into the background during Jesus’ public life, knowing that He must establish a new family and that her hour will come only with the Cross which will be Jesus’ true hour (*Jn 2:4, 13:1*). When the disciples flee, Mary remains beneath the Cross (*Jn 19:25-27*). Later at the hour of Pentecost, the disciples gather around her as they wait for the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 1:14*).

Mary has truly become the mother of all believers. Men and women of every time and place have recourse to her motherly kindness, purity and grace in all their needs and aspirations, their joys and sorrows, their moments of loneliness and their common endeavours. They constantly experience the gift of her goodness and the unfailing love that she pours out from the depths of her heart. The testimonials of gratitude offered to her from every continent and culture are a recognition of that pure love that is not self-seeking but simply benevolent. Mary, Virgin and Mother, shows us what love is, where it draws its origin and its constantly renewed power. To her we entrust the Church and her mission in the service of love.

Mary has a full and satisfying life as a faithful woman, wife and mother. She has many spiritually rewarding experiences. She overcomes many tests and trials. When we face unexpected challenges or when we are anxious over family problems, we can certainly learn from her example of faithful endurance.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light, Jesus Christ, your Son. You abandon yourself completely to God's call and thus became a wellspring of goodness that flows forth from Him. Show us to Jesus and lead us to Him so that we can be capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world.



A Missionary Church Starts with a Missionary Family

“...A form of missionary activity can be exercised even within the family. This happens when some member of the family does not have the faith or does not practice it with consistency. In such a case the other members must give him or her a living witness of their own faith in order to encourage and support him or her along the path toward full acceptance of Christ the savior.

Animated in its own inner life by missionary zeal, the church of the home is

also called to be a luminous sign of the presence of Christ and of his love for those who are "far away," for families who do not yet believe and for those Christian families who no longer live in accordance with the faith that they once received. The Christian family is called to enlighten "by its example and its witness those who seek the truth.

...Christian families offer a special contribution to the missionary cause of the church by fostering missionary vocations among their sons and daughters and, more generally, "by training their children from childhood to recognize God's love for all people"

(Familiaris Consortio, #54)

If we take an honest hard look at our family life today, which category will it fall under? One that is socially inward looking with no interactions with other communities; one that is socially outward looking but with interactions limited only to inner-circle communities (e.g. Church ministries / extended family or friends); one that is socially outward looking with interactions to other communities at large?

Whilst our children do participate in outreach activities in school like value in action projects or in Church ministries, we admit that more can be done for our family as whole to become one that is socially outward looking with interactions to other communities at large. This, is not an easy endeavour as it requires us to step out of our comfort zones. Especially, for families struggling to find time for themselves. However, in not doing so, do we risk raising up children who are inward looking with entire lives revolving around personal, academic, or materialistic pursuits?

There are no easy answers here. Perhaps, it is timely to contemplate, and re-prioritise our family life if we start to notice inward looking mentalities creeping into our daily lives. And as a Church, if our community interactions are largely limited only to Church ministries, we too risk being a "maintenance" Church instead of being a truly missionary Church like the early missionaries who not only preached about love, about God, but also reached out to others to be a part of a family of God.

(Ref: "Our Catholic Light – An SG50 Special"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbdx9vjSwqA>) © Copyright (2018), Aaron and Selly Soon Ken-Ji

To share your thoughts, email us – bhmssfamilylife@gmail.com

The Power of Your Love

by Kelley D'Cruz

As we prepare for the season of Lent, there are a couple of things I realised I need to prepare for mentally so that I can fully and properly live out this season, just as my Lord would want me to.

Last year, I spoke about forgiveness and how important it is, not just for other people, but more so for my relationship with God. This year, as I prepare myself for Lent (for what I want to sacrifice) I felt in a bit of a fix – that was when a story came to mind.

A couple of months ago, I was distraught because of public humiliation brought a very important person in my life (and this took place in church, the very place I felt safest, and grew up in). To make matters more difficult, I was rostered to Lector for the 10.45am Mass the following week. There I was, thinking to myself, ‘how do I lector in this parish, when so many people here have so little respect for me and my family?’ I was filled with nothing but negative emotions, and at that point, my fellow Lector on duty with me saw how much hurt I was carrying. She gave me the most comforting hug I had ever received in my whole life just before the Mass started, and I softly sobbed in her arms, as she repeated the words ‘I know it hurts, it’s okay.’

She couldn’t have possibly known the pain I was feeling, but at that moment, the love I felt from her was so real, and it was exactly what I needed. She didn’t know it at the time, but her small gesture was just the strength I needed at that point in time. The love, the amazing love I felt from her was something I could not comprehend, but was something so necessary, and I will forever be grateful for that moment, and for her.

This Lent, I strive to give love; to show love through my words and my actions, and to never forget that a little bit of love shown on my part can possibly go a long way in another’s life. I choose to work on loving those near and far – those who are close to me, as well as those who are not on the best terms with me.

For love is the only thing in this world that can make anything seem better. Not just any love, but God’s undying love. He is the One who gives us the strength to love, especially to those who make it seem impossible to love.

May the power of God’s love be evident in all our lives during this season of Lent.

The Paschal Mystery

by Patricia Ang

The key to staying happy is to love and to be contented with the simple things in life. God sent His beloved Son Jesus to die for our sins because He loves us unconditionally. When things are going smoothly, we credit it as our hard work or luck. However when things go bad, we blame God. Do we have a personal encounter with God? What does the season of Lent mean to you? Where is God in your life?

We pay particular attention to what Jesus Christ has done for us through His passion, death, resurrection, and ascension in the liturgy of the Church, the celebration of the Sacraments, and the seasons of Lent and Easter. The Paschal Mystery is the process of dying and rising, death and new life. We see this all around us and in our own lives.

We see the process of our own dyings and risings in our own lives. For instance the death of family member or a birth of a child. There are instances when situations are less obvious. An experience of dying might be when you have an argument with a close friend that leaves you feeling upset, or being frustrated with your family member who always see negativity in things, and hence being helpless in the situation. An experience of rising might be reconciling with your friend after a period of silence; spending time with your family member by just listening and being there for her. These are some of the dyings and risings that we experience every day.

Dying to oneself could be dying to our ego and our pride. In our daily life, we have expectations of the people around us. At work we always have to be on top form in order to get into good books of the bosses or to get the promotion. When we constantly mind people's opinions of our life, we are never ever going to be happy in life. Knowing that we are children of God and we are made in the image and likeness of God is something we are assured of. God will never leave us alone to fend for ourselves. His graces are sufficient daily if only we have the faith to trust in Him.

My eye incident was one of my rising experience or rather a new life of sight. The thought of going blind never dawned on me, but there was that possibility. From then on, it has taught me to walk closer to God and to be thankful for

each day of sight. I make an effort just to soak in the sights daily and in particular when I travel. In my photography, I attempt to frame each picture to tell a story.

Jesus Christ's passion, death, resurrection, and ascension are the ultimate events of dying and rising, of death and new life. We learn from Jesus that new life can come from death. We can find meaning in challenging times and know that there is indeed light in the darkness. Indeed all life has this rhythm of dying and rising and that God is with us in good times and in bad as it is reflected in the sacrament of marriage. When the couple exchange their wedding vows it is a choice to love each other and to be each other in good and bad times. Christ's experience of suffering, death, and new life has forever changed us and given us a different way of living. Death no longer has the last word. When we encounter tough times, we have the comfort of knowing that God has "been there, done that" and the power of hope that new life will come from death. When we are conscious of our own dyings and risings, this helps us have a greater sense of compassion for others and a greater willingness to reach out.

Think about your own life. What is a dying or rising that you have experienced today, this week, this year? Reflect on that experience in light of the event of Jesus Christ's passion, death, resurrection, and ascension.



If We Only Remember That We are but Dust

by Isadora Lee

I mentioned in an earlier post that I didn't bother to set out any resolutions for the year 2018. But I did make an effort to adopt some good habits.

For one, I have set aside more time to read, with the aim of finishing one book every month (so far, I have been on target). And I thought I could perhaps tie in a book reflection - my favourite book currently - with the Lenten season, since by the time this article gets into print, it would be right smack in the middle of Lent.

This book, *“When Breath Becomes Air”*, beautifully written by Paul Kalanithi, is his memoir about his struggle with cancer, and I love it because it serves as a distinct reminder of what life and living is about.

In this season of Lent, which starts off with Ash Wednesday, our foreheads are marked with ashes, as we “remember, man, that you are dust and to dust you shall return”. During this time that you are on your pilgrimage on Earth, how will you spend your life?

In one part, Paul Kalanithi wrote about his conflicting aspirations - that if he only had a few years left, he would pursue becoming a writer; if he had more time, he will continue to be a neurosurgeon. I remember feeling perplexed by the train of thought. Then, he had already found out that he had cancer and needed treatment. It was uncertain if he would survive. It was clear to me, as a reader, that he was more captivated by the world of literature than medicine, why was he still so bent on being a doctor?

And that got me thinking about myself, what would I want to commit my life to, if I knew my days were numbered? This is a morbid question, I know, and my traditional Chinese parents would have literally slapped me for articulating such thoughts. But trust me, it is a good yardstick. It is, because, if you give that question some serious thought and reflection, you will be able to hear your heart’s deepest desire. I say that because I tried it.

At this juncture when my work is not going as smoothly as I have hoped, when I have found myself constantly not being at peace, I have tried reflecting on different questions. What gives my life meaning? What do I believe in doing? What are my core values? The answers have been haphazard and settled on different things. There was no conclusion. Until I asked myself, what will I really want to do in my end days, did I find the answer.

The fact is, our vision of life can be clouded by many things, such as life’s circumstances, our loved ones’ views, or even our own underlying beliefs on what life should be. In my case, my perception of who I am has become warped, because I go about living out my life based on what I do for a living. “I” become nothing more than an occupation. I then fail to live according to the deepest desires of our heart.

We need to constantly find time to listen to this inner voice that God has placed in each of us, so that we can will for ourselves what God wills for us. And we can only do this by constantly putting in the effort to pray, to be quiet, to contemplate.

And this is my hope for you, and myself, this Lenten season: that we fight off the temptations of busy-ness and be able to spend a little more time with God in prayer, so that we can live our lives not influenced by worldly perceptions, but by Christ's standards. So that we live out our lives the best we can, in full remembrance that, we are but dust, and to dust one day, we shall return.



A “Teaching Mass” - the Eucharistic Celebration Explained *by Conny Fernandez*

This is 2nd in the series of articles about the Eucharistic Celebration (Mass) as taught by Fr. Terence Pereira at a “teaching Mass” which he celebrated at St. Michael’s Church. The 1st article was published in the February Spotlight.

In the last article, I shared what I learnt about how we should (ideally) prepare ourselves for Mass, as well the preparation *during Mass* for the Liturgy of the Word. We stopped at the priest (Presider) praying the *Collect* and will continue from there in this article.

After the Presider prays the Collect, he sits down and the congregation should only sit ***after the Presider sits down***, as a matter of courtesy and decorum. We are to remember **Who** the priest represents.

Up to this point we are preparing to listen to the Liturgy of the Word. Now the Liturgy of the Word begins. We should prayfully and carefully, listen. Fr. Terence reminded us that the Lord wants us to grow and He gives us His Word to enable us to do so.

He also highlighted that the ***oral tradition*** is the *first tradition* of the Church. The ***written tradition*** is the second. The Liturgy of the Word is first and

foremost an oral tradition and we need to train our ears to hear the Word and try and refrain from reading (from our devices, screen etc.) It may be a more difficult for those who are more visual but that's where the preparation before Mass comes in (by reading beforehand).

Catholics are privileged to be able to receive so much of the Bible at Mass. There is a 3-year cycle for Sunday Masses (Year A, B, C) and over three years, we would have listened to almost the entire Bible! We are currently in Year B. For weekday Masses, it is a 2-year cycle (Year 1, 2), as we complete it faster over the six weekdays. We are currently in Year 2.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

“Liturgy” means the ***“work of the people”***. The work of the people is to praise and glorify God.

1st Reading It is always about God calling us; the salvation and promise made by God. So as we listen, we are encouraged not to get too caught up in the details but to try and ascertain what the promise is and which dimension of the promise is being offered by God to me, this week. There must/ should be a period of silence between the readings. Take time – time belongs to the LORD.

Responsorial Psalm This our response to the 1st reading, from the Book of Psalms.

2nd Reading From the New Testament, often from St. Paul's letters. It teaches how people lived or should live, because the promise has been fulfilled (in the Lord Jesus).

Alleluia This should be sung with gusto, a trumpet fanfare, exuberant, because the Lord Jesus Himself is coming, in the Gospels! Fr. Terence also taught that cantors are not to announce *“please stand for the Alleluia”*, or *“please stand for the Gospel Acclamation”*. We do not stand for the “Alleluia” or the Acclamation. We stand for the Gospel. In fact, no such “announcement” should be made as it is not part of the rubrics.

Gospel This is the promise being fulfilled. The Lord Jesus Himself.

Homily This too is part of the Liturgy of the Word and should be paid attention to.

Credo (The Creed) This is our response to the entire Liturgy of the Word (all the readings and the homily). Now that we have heard God speaking to us through His Word, the Church is asking us, each of us, individually, what is my response? Do **“I believe”** what God has spoken through His Word. (*Note : Prior to 2011, it was “We believe” but the Church went back to the original “I believe” as this requires an individual response from each one of us.*)

This ends the 1st part of the Mass – the Liturgy of the Word.

Similar to before the *Liturgy of the Word* where there is a period of preparation, before the 2nd part of the Mass, the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*, there is also a period of preparation.

PREPARATION BEFORE THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The presentation of the gifts and the collection As the people are walking up with the gifts, we must also, individually, offer up gifts to God for that week. Fr. Terence highlighted a very interesting point; at every Mass, we (individually) are either giving the offering of Cain or of Abel – the choice is ours. Like Abel, we are asked to offer the best to God. *“Lord with this bread and wine, I offer You my forgiveness, my money, my day, my week, etc.”* The money we put out into the collection is also part of our offering. We were reminded that no one can outdo God in generosity so we are encouraged to “risk” being generous with God with the collection.

In the next issue, we’ll continue with the Liturgy of the Eucharist.



The Light

by Fr Remi

On February 2nd, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, also known as *Candlemas* or *Feast of the Light*. It was originated in the East and took a Greek the name *Ipapante*, meaning encounter. This feast that is celebrated 40 days after Christmas ends the Christmas season, and opens the way towards Easter.

We commemorate the moment when Jesus was presented in the Temple. God who came to earth as a human baby was being presented to God. How is that as a logical statement? I would say that it has the same mind-boggling quality as the concept of Trinity. How do we understand this?

It took my logical mind a long time to come to term with this, but I tell you that it pales in comparison¹ with some the Old Testament part of the Bible that literally had made me stop reading the Bible for a while; such as when God is portrayed as a cruel punisher of people.

At that time I was a newly baptized Catholic who had decided to read the Bible from cover to cover. I had to see the University chaplain to share my inner conflict of accepting a cruel God. The priest explained that the Bible should not be understood literally; need to be seen in context and its entirety. He encouraged me to read on.

I had to force myself to continue reading. It was not until I came to the New Testament part that my inner conflict began to find its consolation. It was in Jesus, in His teaching, in His words that I was able to see the real face of a loving and merciful God. I can easily identify with the symbolism of the light in today's Feast, because Jesus gives me the light to see the true face of God.

But that is not all. Jesus also gives me the possibility of a real encounter with God which brings concrete meaning to the word "faith". Stuart Dauermann, a Jewish man who discovered Jesus as the Messiah (like Saint Paul), gave a testimony of his moment of discovery.

¹ Pale in comparison = to seem much less serious or important when compared with someone or something else:
Eg. I thought I was badly treated but my experiences pale in comparison with yours.

One day a friend of mine invited me to a discussion group. She said, “Look, it is about the New Testament. I know you are Jewish, you might have some interesting opinions.” When I crack open the New Testament, I came up with the Passover which was rather surprising. I did not expect to find anything Jewish in this book, but I did... I remember reading when Yeshua said that it is not what goes into man that defiles him. It is what comes out of his heart that defiles him... (Mk 7:15) I remember when I read that, it made so much sense to me... And it was extraordinary to me that Yeshua’s words directly addressed my own felt need... He said, “I am a door.” Now, many people treat Yeshua like he is an exit from Jewish life. I think that’s wrong. He is the door. To me, and for a more passionate engagement with Jewish life, and also a total passionate engagement with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...

Christian faith is about this personal encounter with this Person Jesus that brings light into our darkness. Amen.



Who’s To Be Blamed *by Ronaldly*

Whilst we may not be able to play a game of Chess or Ban-Luck (Blackjack) nevertheless we are born with that innate instinct to play this one game – The Blame Game. This game is now played everywhere in our daily lives, in the family, in the office, in our social life, in fact anywhere when things can go wrong.

Since early in God’s creation, Adam and Eve were hiding in the Garden as they were afraid because they had done something wrong. They gave the game away when they replied they were afraid to come out because they were naked and so they hid. “Who said you were naked? Have you been eating of the tree I forbade you to eat?” (*Gen.3.11*) In asking that question, God was actually

trying to elicit a confession from them of their wrong doing. Unfortunately, God not only got a confession but also the blame for their disobedience.

Adam's reply to God though amusing, borders on to insolence. "It was the woman You put with me; she gave me the fruit and I ate it." (*Gen.3.12*). Yes God, if you didn't create woman in the first place, none of this will have happened.

Then God asked the woman "What is this you have done?" I didn't do anything wrong was her denial. "The serpent tempted me and I ate it." she said as a matter of fact. (*Gen.3.13*). Come to think of it, the fruit was quite nice and sweet. The serpent had insinuated that God had hidden something from them. It said to Eve, you will not die if you eat from that tree, conversely your eyes will be opened and you will have knowledge and wisdom to know good and evil." (*Gen.3.5*)

God did not ask the serpent, nor the serpent volunteered an explanation, otherwise he would lose his job. The serpent's (the devil) job is to sow disaccord between humanity and God, between husband and wife, children and parents, between neighbours, between humanity of one country with another, threatening wars between them all the time, between brothers living in the north and the south of the same peninsula, with one threatening to activate his nuclear weapons against his brother and its allies.

Is this the end for mankind because of the first sin and disobedience of Adam and Eve against God? Luckily for us there is hope in which we find in Salvation History.

For two thousand years the prophets have been prophesying the coming of the Messiah and the last and closest prophet to do so was John the Baptist, a cousin of Jesus. God then decided to come down to earth in human form as Jesus the Christ.

"Your sins are forgiven, get up and walk." He said to the paraplegic. "Your sins are forgiven you, go and sin no more." He said to the woman caught in adultery.

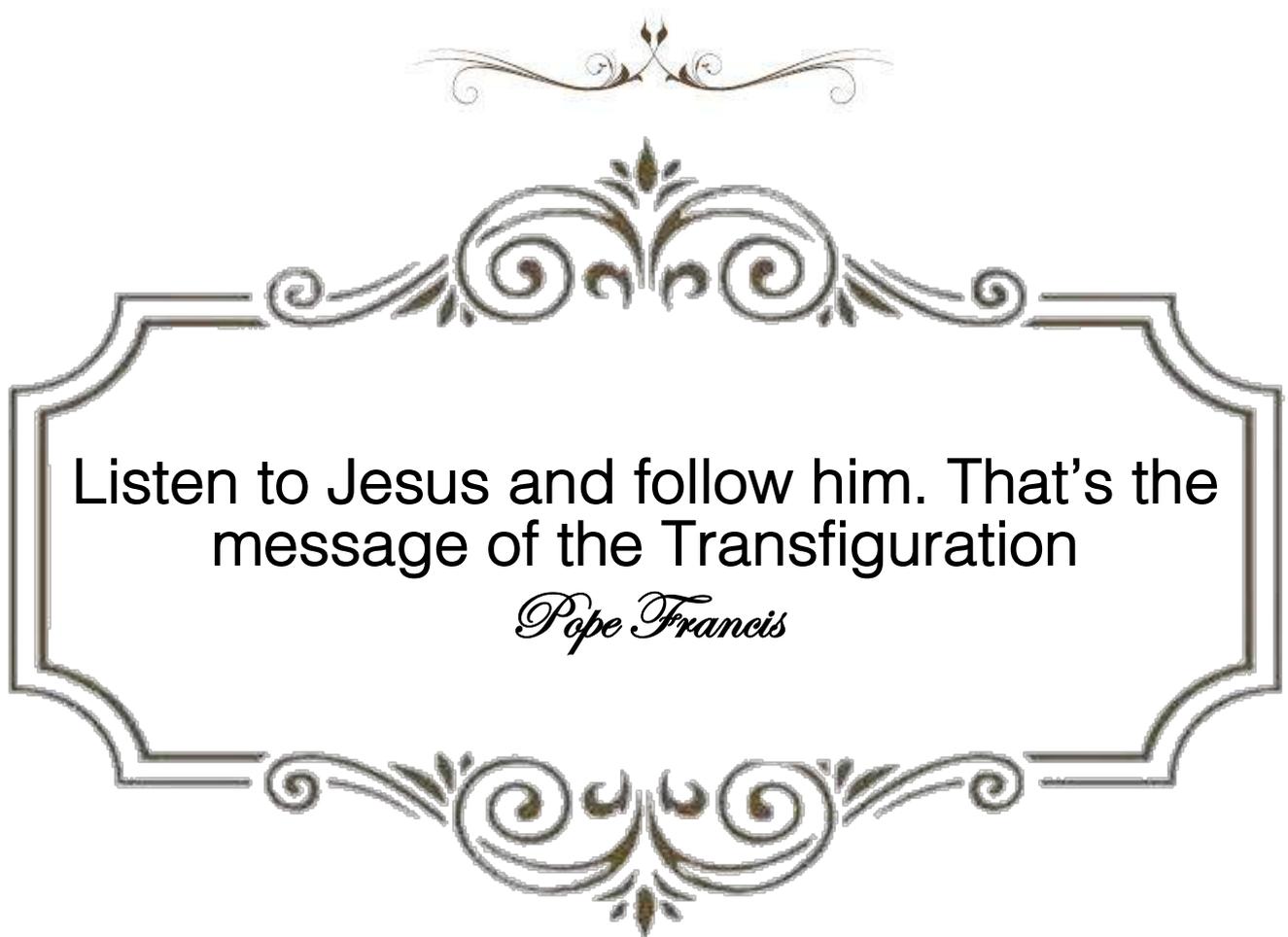
After His resurrection Jesus Christ returned to His Father in Heaven, otherwise the Holy Spirit will not come to live in us. Then who is going to forgive our sins? Before departing, Jesus Christ gave this authority to Peter his first

disciple and his subsequent priests and said “*Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, whose sins you shall retain, they are retained*”.

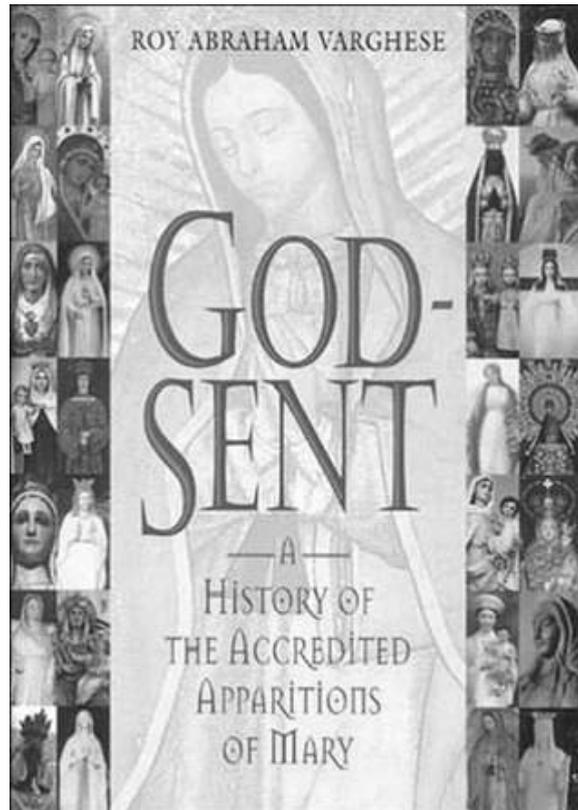
At my age, I have been automatically upgraded to super-grade in the Blame Game. It’s time I move on. I have decided to learn the board game of “GO” – Wei Ji in Chinese. This game was started in China during the Zhou Dynasty though the origin is still unknown and now widely played in China, Japan and Korea.

The game is played on a 19x19 grid board with one side using the black stones and the opponent the white stones. You are to completely surround your opponent until he cannot move to win the game. That is why they called it a friendly game.

In time to come and with practice, I hope I can upgrade myself to a humble Dan 2 (about Primary 2) out of a possible Dan 9. After the holidays, it will be all systems ‘Go.’



Book Review



Collecting the 34 known and accredited apparitions of the Virgin Mary, this study applies an intellectual clarity, precise scholarship, and overall rigor so often absent from Marian studies.

Offering detailed evidence, supported by thorough theological and scientific investigation--including the circumstances of each apparition and their legacy--this entertaining and provocative resource gives validation to each event, while connecting their significance to civilizations past, present, and future. Marvelling at each phenomenon deemed most holy--often calling on to humanity to pray, do penance, or predicting cataclysmic events--mainstream Catholics and seasoned Theologians alike will find reassurance and guidance in each account of real life miracles.

Also included are a chronology of the officially sanctioned apparitions and the exact text of the words spoken by the Virgin to the mystic or seer who bore witness.

- *Publisher*

Congratulations to our winners for last month's issue: **Timothy S Mali**. For a chance to win a special gift, please submit your entry to the church office by the 12th of this month. (For children 12 years & below - not for the Spotlight team & their families.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact No. _____

The Transfiguration

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" Matthew 17:5 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 17:1-9



D Q E A A R J Z X Y V T H D M
 G P Y C S L P P J O H N E Y Y
 X P O J A F X B D Y Y C M R D
 J T K F H E H F M U I I I Q K
 T S V G W A W J U O C Y U C R
 U V I J J H E N V M M G E G N
 D H D I A V I J B O O L O T T
 G X L A O M O T Y U S A W O Z
 S E S L Y X E V E N E U D F D
 Q M Y G J S Z S O T S I I R M
 A P P E A R E D D A S G E X S
 Q Q Q Z V O R S G I K T X C C
 B R V W H T Q V L N E D B X H
 R O S I X K D L Q P I G R K V
 N U L W I T P G C L O T H E S

SIX	PETER	CLOTHES	VOICE	JOHN
LOVE	MOSES	GOOD	WHITE	ELIJAH
JAMES	DAYS	APPEARED	MOUNTAIN	HIGH