

Kadosh Marian Voice

Holiness Firmness Truthfulness Faithfulness



April | May | June 2022 Edition



ABOUT KADOSH MARIAN MINISTRIES

“Kadosh” In Jewish thinking, “The Holy One, blessed be He” (hakkadosh, barukh hu) is one of the most commonly used designation for God. **“Marian”** is a given name, the Hebrew meaning of Marian is “the precious one” or “unique from the word” or “Mariam”

Kadosh Marian Ministries is a non-profit organization with its roots across the world. It is also established since 1994 as an approved charitable trust in UK, subsequently in India and New York. Kadosh Marian Ministries obtained approval for the area of operation to include USA, Canada, Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa with the following objectives: -

- Conducting certificate oriented theological courses duly awarded by Catholic Dioceses, and various international accredited universities.
- Conducting Charismatic Renewal services to revive the trooping spirit of the flagging faithful.
- Administering Sacraments by ordained Catholic Priests and Bishops.
- Promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- Conducting guidance, counselling and healing through deliverance services to the needy, lonely and the afflicted ones.
- Participating to feed 200 poor people daily.
- Participating to provide pension to 75 widows monthly.
- Participating to provide scholarship for 302 children annually.
- Visiting refugee camps and providing food, clothes and medicines.
- Contributing to build five homes for poor families in a year minimum.

We welcome you to join us, slake the thirst, and enjoy the abundance of Spirit of the Sovereign Lord – Immanuel. All the above charitable activities are routed in consultation with Catholic Priests and Bishops.

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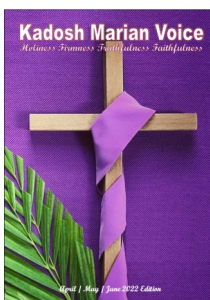
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A portrait
of the
passion week
of
Jesus

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The grace of our Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

After the Second Vatican Council, His Holiness, Pope Francis has announced a unique vision aimed at the spiritual reinvigoration of the Global Catholic Church. His Holiness, overwhelmed by Holy Spirit, has lit the beacon for a spiritual revolution that is the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, in 2023. Contrary to the conventional approach, Pope Francis with this convocation has graciously declared that the upcoming Synod will not be just for the Bishops, but for the entire people of God



**Rev. Fr Joseph Xavier
(Managing Editor)**

Pope Francis, in the wake of Synodality, calls upon the entire church of the third millennium to be a Synodal Church. His Holiness urges the Synodal Church to reflect on values namely Communion, Participation and Mission, that is decisive for its life and mission. This Synod of the Global Catholic Church is enriched with many specialities, the main ones being detailed below.

Regard this Synod as a pathway strengthened by devoting to the Divine providence in paths of social dialogue, healing, reconciliation, inclusion and participation, the reconstruction of democracy, the promotion of fraternity, regenerating relationships and social friendship. The slogan of this Synod portrays the beautiful picture of harmony in equality, which is achieved through recognizing, accepting and appreciating the participatory ways of the proclamation of the Gospel. The responsibility of the process of rejuvenating Christian life is a collective one. Discussions, meetings and deliberations are conducted on universal, regional, national, local and family levels regarding the same. The Synod, without any prejudice aims on the decision to initiate processes of listening, dialogue, and community discernment, in which each and every person can participate and contribute. The Catholic Church, undergoing continual reformation, is exploring and evaluating various facets of the “journey together” with Jesus Christ, by evaluating her experience, thereby shedding light on how to live in fraternity, facilitating participation and receptiveness into evangelisation. For achieving this, we must journey together with Jesus Christ, alongside accepting and incorporating his way into our lives. We, the followers and the people of God should understand and accept the calling of the Catholic Church and we must be ever vigilant in our participation in a fraternity, called upon by Jesus Christ and powered by the Holy Spirit. It is this path of Synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.

Let’s get enlightened about the main objectives of the Synodality of the Church declared by His Holiness, Pope Francis:

- A recollection as to how the Holy Spirit has guided the journey of the Church through history.
- Ensuring that participation in the ecclesial process that is inclusive of everyone.
- To identify the gifts and charisms bestowed to one by the Holy spirit and give befitting recognition and appreciation to them.
- To uphold responsibility in the proclamation of the Gospel by employing a participatory approach.

- To examine and evaluate how power and responsibility are handled in the Church and its associated structures.
- To construct and promote fraternity and social friendship amongst members of Christian community.
- To lovingly welcome and unite the marginalised, down trodden and the outcast ensuring their participation.
- To harbour in depth fraternal love in the light of the Gospel.
- To be compassionate with an open heart, without any prejudice what so ever.

It is my fervent prayer and aspiration for the growth and prosperity of Kadosh Marian Ministry that we, its members, should have an openness to accept with bona fide visions, teachings and recommendations proposed by the Holy for a Synodal Church. Concluding with a humble request to each one of you to observe and follow there recommendations. Let us not be ignorant that we are called for a journey of togetherness with our Lord Jesus, irrespective of discriminations based on caste, creed, age etc. We all are children of God. We have our salvation coming through the Holy Scripture, our Spiritual Strength from the Holy Eucharist and our inspiration from the Holy Spirit. Let us follow the attitude of Jesus in our journey to Heavenly Jerusalem and accommodate the wounded, marginalised, down trodden and sinners without domination and suppression, while upholding communion, participation and mission, justifying the dreams of our Lord Jesus.

So, let us pray...

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.
Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.
All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever.

Amen.

God bless you all.



Human and Divine Righteousness



Rev. Dr. Jacob Prasad, S.S.L., S.T.D.

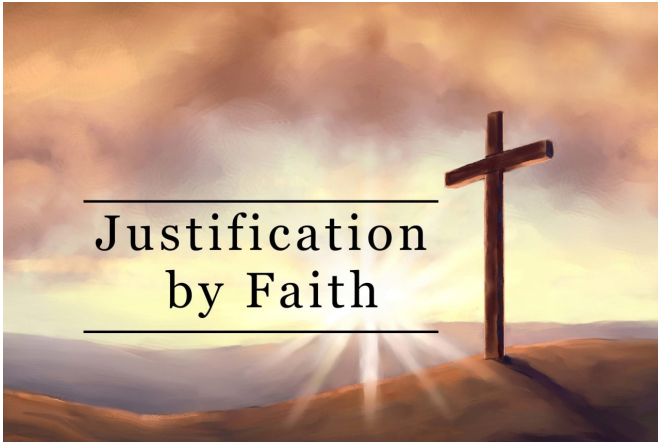
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It has always been asked as to what exactly is the core or heart of St. Paul's teaching. Many have pointed to "justification by faith," i.e., a person is justified only by faith. But justification is not an easy concept to be comprehended.

In fact in two of his letters, to Galatians and to Romans, Paul treats at length this concept. In the letter to Romans the main theme is enunciated in

1,16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jews and then to the Greeks, for in it the righteousness of God has been revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'the person man lives by faith.'" And in 3,28 Paul says further, "For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law." In Gal 2,16 Paul argues, "Yet we know that a person is justified not by

the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.”



In order to understand the concept of “justification by faith” we need to first of all see what “righteousness of God” means because the two go together. We know of Paul’s understanding of the “gospel.” He saw that the gospel is part of a plan thought out by God for a new form of human salvation, to be revealed and realised by his Son, Jesus Christ. Then, describing the qualities of God, Paul singles out “the righteousness of God.” “The righteousness of God” or “the uprightness of God” appears as a quality of God in Rom 1,17; 3,5.21-22.25-26; 10,3 in contrast to “the wrath of God” (Rom 1,18), which frightens people. In 2 Cor 5,21 the righteousness of God is conceived of as a special gift to human beings. In the early books of the OT righteousness of God expresses the quality by which Yahweh, depicted as involved in a lawsuit with his rebellious people, judges Israel and displays his righteousness (e.g., Isa 3,13; Jer 12,1; Micah 6,2). That means it describes his legal or judicial activity; he judges with righteousness (Psalms 9,9, 96,13; 98,9). In the post-Exilic period, however, “righteousness” as a quality of God assumes an added meaning: it becomes the quality by which he acquits (sets free) people, manifesting towards them his gra-

acious salvific activity in just judgment. See for this Isa 46,13 where “my righteousness” and “my salvation” stand in parallelism. (Parallelism is a technique used, especially in poetry, in which the second line repeats in an interpretative way what is said in the first line). The translation of the New American Bible (NAB) is clear in this regard, “ I am bringing on my justice, it is not far off, my salvation will not tarry.” The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) has taken justice (righteousness) as “deliverance,” which makes the parallelism to be lost. See also Isa 51,5-6.8 56,1; 61,10; Psalm 40,9-10.

Paul’s understanding is that through the Christ-event God has judged the world, not to condemn it but to redeem it in his mercy, for God did not send into the world his Son to condemn it but to save it (cf. John 3,17). In fact, if we are to stand before God’s judgment seat we can stand only condemned for as the Psalmist sang, “If you were to count our sins, Lord who would survive!” (Ps 130,3). Even the just man sins seven times a day (cf. Prov 24,16). While knowing our sinful situation, he acquits us.

Our poet Tagore has put it beautifully in a few lines: O my God, when my life is ended shall I stand before you, face to face, alone and speechless.” This is the human situation. But we have an intercessor or advocate before the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, who pleads for us, and we will be set free in God’s mercy. Thus we are held justified (set free although undeserved before God) through Jesus Christ. This benefit is there for every human person, as Christ died for everybody. One appropriates this grace of justification by putting one’s faith in Christ. And that is “justification by faith.”

Question: What do we feel about our situation, when we should stand before God’s throne of judgment? Do we not require his mercy? Exercise: Read the texts cited in the write-up.





SYNODAL LIFE OF EARLY CHRISTIANS A PARADIGM FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

Two significant passages from the Acts of the Apostles illustrate the synodal life of early Christian community. The first passage is 2:42-47. It highlights the unity and intimacy of the early Christian community. Their unity was marked by a commitment to apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking of the bread and prayer. Commitment to Christ was demonstrated by the voluntary outpouring of resources and free distribution to all in need. The end of the passage relates how the interior *joie de vivre* resulted in numerical growth. The second passage is 4:32-37. It clearly echoes what is seen in the former text: unity, generosity and spiritual vibrancy of the recent converts and the authority of the apostles. Luke, however, presents a specific individual among the community, namely, Barna-



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bas, as a voluntary and joyful response to one's personal conviction of the Gospel. Luke presents in these passages the spirit and vision of synodality present in the life of the early Christian community.

1. Communion

Both these texts reveal the communion (*koinōnia*)

character of the early Christian Community: “They had all things in common” (2:44; cf. 4:32). It remains the most remarkable portrayal of the early Christian Community. The transforming presence of God’s Spirit unites the different believers into a common *koinōnia*. In considering “all things in common,” the believers show a deep regard for one another’s spiritual and physical happiness as a community of friends. The most distinctive character of communion, depicted in the texts, is the emphasis on the togetherness of the believers: “one heart and one soul” – *kardia kai psyche mia* (4:32). They live together as loving neighbours. They express intimacy of close friendship, which leads them to share all personal possessions. In this regard, an edifying example of a member – Barnabas called Joseph – is highlighted as a sign of *encouragement* to the other members (4:36-37). Luke here expresses the life of a community, where all its members adopt an attitude of mutuality, sharing their individual material possessions with one another as fellow members of the household of faith.



The synodal life envisages communion, a total communion with each other, keeping everything in common and distributing the same to those in need. It remains a challenge; yet it is fundamental for a synodal church. The communion character challenges the killer-culture of fragmentation, the tyrannical regimes of communalism, casteism, racism and war against ethnic groups and nations. Communal living can definitely encounter the maddening expressions of the human refusal to the divine call to become a People of God.

2. Solidarity

The life of the early Christian community reflects

solidarity.



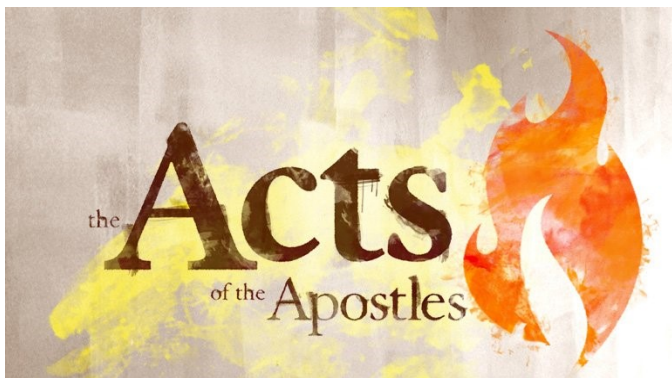
The distribution of proceeds from sold property (2:45) and its result that “there was never a needy person among them” (4:34) demonstrate the solidarity of the early believers. It represents that God’s kingdom reflects solidarity and mutuality rather than a class system. Synodality prompts us to journey in solidarity with those in the peripheries. “Solidarity finds concrete expression in service, which can take a variety of forms in an effort to care for others. And service in great part means, ‘caring for vulnerability, for the vulnerable members of our families, our society, our people’” (FT 117). The mission of the Church, therefore, is to engage in the process of availing our spiritual and material resources to the needy. We need to strive together for an inclusive church of fellowship and solidarity, thus become ardent practitioners of the infectious love that destroys fear, privilege and exclusion.

3. Spontaneity



The Early Christian Community living reveals that all giving was a voluntary and joyful response to the Gospel. The ‘selling and distributing’ (2:45) did not transpire instantaneously nor were they imposed by the apostles. Rather they were progressive and voluntary as the community became more sensitive to one another’s needs and more convinced

of their common bond in Jesus Christ. Therefore, such a transaction has to be seen as “a sign of their unanimity and their oneness of mind with the rest of their Christian *adelphoi*” (J.A. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 1997, 314). What is truly extraordinary is the freedom and gladness with which the believers gave their possessions. There is no suggestion that believers were forced or pressed to give up or sell their possessions. The spirit of synodality envisions a spontaneous or voluntary, not a compulsory, sharing of resources among the believers. The term ‘spontaneity’ or ‘voluntary’ should not be taken to mean that giving is not expected of Christians. But generosity is a concrete mark of one’s allegiance to synodal church.



4. Ministry of the Apostles

In the Early Christian Community the apostles played a pivotal role in the growth of the community. Primarily, “with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus” (4:33). This is an *aide-mémoire* that the church was born out of conviction in the historicity of Christ’s resurrection. At the same time, Luke postulates the nature of apostles’ witness: “with great power” (*dunamei megalē*). Their testimony was not like the present-day academic argument for the reality of the resurrection, but the great power exerted by God in raising Jesus from the dead that bore witness to the reality of the resurrection. The proclamation of Jesus’ resurrection occasioned a notable proliferation in philanthropy: No one among them had any need because those who had property sold them and brought the income and “laid it at the apostles’ feet” (4:35) who,

in turn, distributed to the needy. The specification “apostles’ feet” reiterates the ministry of the apostles in the community, who act as administrators of the dole.

In the synodal church proper exercise of ministry by pastors is crucial in the formation of the believing communities. Their ministry, most importantly, is the proclamation of the Risen Christ. It has to be exercised in a way that their proclamation inspires trust and reverence and prompts the believers to live in solidarity and fellowship. “They are also the distribution-centre of the community’s life; they are in a position to know all who have need and they have the maturity to discern what an equitable distribution of goods entails” (R.W. Wall, “Acts,” *NIB* 10, 101). Hence, the position of ministers or pastors in believing community is “not the privilege of an exclusive position of power and separation but the grace of an inclusive ministry of blessing and fellowship” (PD 28).

Conclusion

In these two texts, Luke describes early Christian life as an ideal characteristic of all Christians. This challenging description highlights the elements that should be part of genuine Christian life: fellowship, concern for those in need, spontaneity in sharing of resources, proclamation of the Risen Lord and recognition of ministers’ role. Such a synodal life has to become the hallmark of Christian communities.

Today parish is a Communion of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs). Primarily BCCs aim at living the spirit and vision of early Christian community. BCCs can guarantee deep level faith sharing and improve interpersonal relationships within the community. More importantly, BCCs can live in a communitarian agape or fraternal communion. They can easily adopt an attitude of affinity to each other and share their individual resources with one another. Hence, synod on synodality offers a very good opportunity to strengthen BCCs to live the synodal life of early Christian communities.





Mark 6:1-6

Rejected By Humanity Empowered by God

One of the greatest negative feelings we will ever experience is that of rejection! It is something we all experience at some point. It could be the most painful experience when we are rejected by our own family or by our dear ones. We know the difficulty of belonging to a family who rejects our beliefs. Yet, it is a repetitive event in our human history. People have been rejected by their children, their parents, their spouses, their relatives, their teachers, their friends, their fellow workers, their fellow church members, and a host of others! There have been founders of religious organizations who were humiliated, who were denied and who were rejected by their own people. The most heartbreaking rejection of all is when we reject Jesus, our Lord! The gospel of Mark (6:1-6) warns us that we, Christians, may have to undergo this experience if we are real disciples of our Master, Jesus Christ. In our text, Jesus visits his hometown and is rejected!

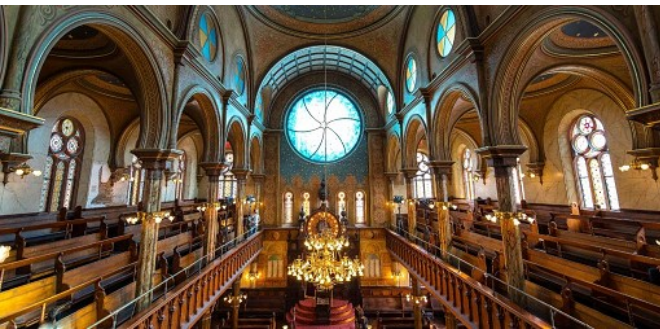
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The experience of rejection is also a recurring theme in the prophetic literature in the Old Testament. Ezekiel, for example, was sent to a rebellious people, who had chosen to discount God's will for their selfish ambitions (Ezek 2:2-5). It was not easy for him to give them a message they did not want to hear. But the Spirit of God led him and strengthened him to stand up to them.

Jesus, the true prophet, had to face this experience of rejection during his earthly ministry. According to St Mark, Jesus had been preaching and working miracles in Galilee for many days. It is not clear how long it had been since Jesus left home, but we do know about Jesus' mission had spread all over the region (Mark 3:7, 8). And we are also aware that the reports about Jesus had also reached Nazareth when the evangelist narrates that His family back home heard about the things He was doing (3:21). He had spent most of the time in towns and villages around the sea of Galilee. Before leaving Galilee, he decided to pay a visit to his home-town Nazareth where he was met with disappointment. He went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day and began to preach there. His fellow townspeople had heard of the amazing miracles he had worked around the other towns of Galilee. They had also heard of the huge crowds that followed to hear his preaching.

In the gospel of Mark, Jesus' message and activity in the synagogues had been growing less impressive when we consider what was happening actually including the latest rejection in 6:1-6. Synagogues, the cradle of the established religious traditions and authorities, were not always open to the new ideas and visions that might have hidden in Jesus' Kingdom preaching.



The evangelist also mentions about Jesus' cousins, who are named here and called "brothers": James, Joses, Judas and Simon. All of this indicates to us that the people of Nazareth were actually addressing of someone they knew very well. Jesus' companions recognize the wisdom of Jesus' teaching, and accept that he has performed the extraordinary things – yet they rejected him! Why? To be plain, the inhabitants of Nazareth knew Jesus well, but they knew him only in a human manner. They could not trust him. They could not trust that he spoke for God, or could perform the things that he claimed to do.

Many of those who now heard him for the first time in their own synagogue, were dumbfounded at his wisdom and learning. How did he get this wisdom? He had not studied to be a rabbi. All these years, they knew him. The audience's "astonishment" (exēplēssōnto) at Jesus' "wisdom" (sophia) – could be a reference to his parables, and it would remind us of the first synagogue appearance in which the people were "astounded" because "he was teaching them as one with authority unlike the scribes" (Mark 1:22).



What was he? A local carpenter! (In Mt 13:55, Jesus is also called "the carpenter's son", and Luke and John do not mention his profession). The Ancient Greek noun *tektōn* is a common term for an artisan/craftsman, in particular a carpenter, woodworker, or builder. The underlying Greek *tektōn* could mean a builder or craftsman in any kind of material, which in Palestine would generally refer to stone or brick. Whether Joseph was a wood working carpenter or a stone mason is not specified in the gospels. Probably, because they knew Him as a carpenter like His father Joseph and they did not expect Him to become a prophet or teacher. They bring God down to their own small size, so that they can no longer open to the divine wonders. They knew his mother and his relatives.

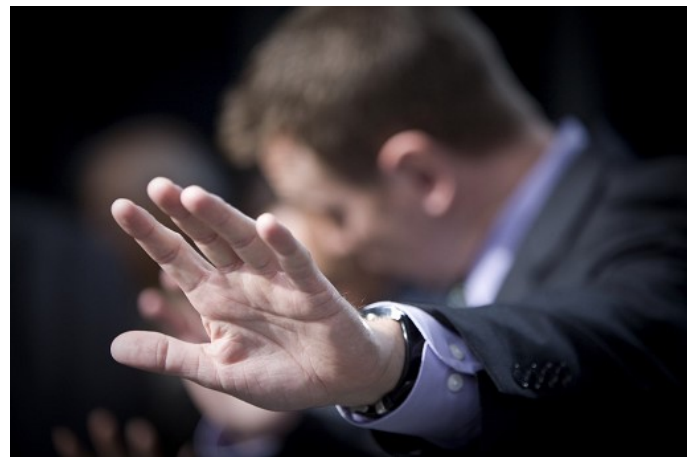
Jesus might sound impressive, but there is something wrong with this picture. He must be getting this from someone else. He is one among us because we watched him grow up. Above all, this is the carpenter who fixed our yokes and repaired our chairs; he is Mary's boy, he is the brother of James, Joses, Judas and Simon. We know this man. He's one of us. In conclusion, he could not be the Messiah.

Therefore, Mark 6:1-6 we read of a serious breakdown in communication between Jesus and his townspeople. Their closed minds and lack of faith prevented Jesus from doing any “mighty works” there. This is one of the shocking statements in all the gospels – that Jesus could not perform miracles. Is there anything impossible with Jesus? Well, that’s not exactly true because the second half of verse 5 does tell us Jesus performed a few healings there. But how is it, that in general, he could not perform any miracles? Probably the Evangelist highlights people’s inability to believe more than Jesus’ ability to perform miracles [The language hinting at Jesus’ inability due to lack of faith was apparently too difficult for Matthew who altered these words to emphasize Jesus’ volition: Jesus “did not do” (Matthew 13:58)].

Jesus’ failure to do miracles in Nazareth could only be explained when we remember that Jesus’ miracles took place in the context of faith. Before describing the rejection experienced by Jesus, in 5:25-34 we find that the woman with the hemorrhage received the healing power of Christ with her faith in him. Undoubtedly, Jesus did not carry out signs in order to make people believe. He came to call people to faith and reward those who responded in faith. But here in Nazareth, it appears that only a few sick people believed in Jesus. The people of Capernaum took offence at Jesus for his inability to perform miracles among them. The vast majority of people were offended by his seemingly pretentious claims. Thus, he could do no miracles there because there was no one seeking a miracle; there was no one coming to him. Instead they rejected him, probably even those who desperately needed his healing touch. Do we also sometimes wonder at God’s silence and apparent inactivity in a world of war, corruption and injustice? When we blame God for doing nothing while we suffer all things here below, does God perhaps blame us for our unbelief that has made it impossible for Him to act?

As we are the followers of Jesus Christ, we all are invited to share in his prophetic role and mission: to proclaim the word of God to the men and women of our time. Have we not, then, look forward to face opposition and even rejection? All of Christ’s followers will be rejected. True Christians cannot be shocked if they are verbally mocked by oth-

ers. Christians will be persecuted and rejected, 2 Timothy 3:12: “Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted”. We will be hurt, slandered, passed by, ignored, ridiculed and mocked for our faith. If we do not bearing the scorn of others, then the question that comes spontaneously is whether we do not become blind by natural and earthly selfish ambitions. Cardinal Newman commenting on the words of Jesus “If the world hates you, it has hated me first” (Jn 15:18) challenges us as to why it is that the world often does not oppose us. Is it because we become one with the world? Do we not too often, conform to the world’s standards and values in our attitudes? Rejection, in one form or another, is perhaps the examination of the sincerity of our Christian faith and life.



The experience of rejection tends to leave us with a sense of discouragement. The temptation then is to give up our hard work and go with the flow of life. But Christ did not give up. In fact verse 6 adds, “And he went about among the villages teaching”. Jesus was rejected not only by his family members and community, but by his own disciple, for example, Peter, who professed his love and commitment to Jesus more ardently than other apostles, would reject even an association with him in a matter of hours. The human heart is capable of confessing God in his great beauty and of rejecting him. Indeed, all of us are capable of such betrayal of Peter, as our sin testifies. Paul, the great Apostle, had great apostolic ambitions and enjoyed sublime mystical experience. But he had to suffer a similar experience of rejection on his missionary journeys. Perhaps, this was the humbling, frustrating ‘thorn in the flesh’ (2 Cor 12:7-10). Like Paul, we also will be able to face opposition in our witness to

Christ, if we find our support and strength in him in our faith and prayer.



Rejection can damage our self-worth and ruin our lives, if we let it. Rejection causes us to question our identity. When God rejected Cain's offering (Gen 4:1-16), Cain was not only angry and disappointed (and some envy) – he was unsure of who he was anymore. Left unresolved, rejection can, therefore, lead to tragedy. A rich young girl from Europe left a note in her sports car for her parents, before jumping to her death on a mountainside, "I have tried everything in life. But I haven't found happiness. I am stopping my life, goodbye". There is a very famous painting of Holman Hunt drawn in St Paul's Cathedral, London. It illustrates Jesus the Good Shepherd knocking on a door without a latch. He explained that the door of our heart can only be opened from the inside. God does make no forcible entry into our lives. The decision to admit Him into our hearts is ours. The rich girl had tried everything but not God. And because she never tried God, she could not find meaning and the courage to face the difficulties of life. Let us remember the meaningful lines of the Irish poet, "He had the knack of making men feel as small as they really were, which meant, as great as God had made them". Do I attempt to pull people down to my own low level, or do I assist them to experience as great as God has made them?

Their reaction seemed to surprise Jesus. Such "faith," or the lack thereof (apistia, "unbelief" in 6:6), amazes even Jesus! But Nazareth, where Jesus was rejected, was the beginning of a new road for Jesus. Jesus continued to move on - he did not dig in and insist on convincing those whose minds were closed. Surprisingly, the rejection at Jesus' hometown synagogue did not hinder the mission at

all. In fact, it might have given impetus to the commissioning of the twelve for their first assignment (Mark 6:7-13). Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was the occasion for a whole new way of looking at God and himself. And when we admit our limitations and flaws, then we can mark the beginning of a new understanding.

Rejection is a significant source of pain for many of us. This story is a reminder that rejection by others is a part of serving God. Even by friends and family: "and a man's foes will be those of his own household" (Mat 10:36). But what can man's rejection do to us if Almighty God is ultimately for us? Just like Jesus instructs the disciples, we are also exhorted to wipe off the dust from our feet, and keep going even when we are rejected. Jesus was rejected and became one with us so that we might be raised to the standing of the dear ones of God.



He shared our human nature with us so that we could share his divine nature. He was crucified on Calvary so that we could have an eternal life in heaven. Let us, therefore, renew our loyalty to Christ today. We have to repeat the phrase from Saint Augustine: "I am afraid of God, of the Lord, when he passes by". But, Augustine, why are you afraid? "I am afraid of not recognizing him. I am afraid that when the Lord passes by: Timeo Dominum transeuntem. We do not recognize him, we are scandalised by Him, we think with our hearts about the divine reality. As we participate in the Lord's meals every day, let us also pray to the Good Lord to keep us ever on the road of truth, the road of Christian humility which leads to the eternal home which Christ has won for us by his incarnation. Remember always that "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man!" (Lk 6:22).





Lent

A holy season to get into oneself and to overcome temptations and addictions through fasting and prayer

Lent- a holy season to get into oneself and to overcome temptations and addictions through fasting and prayer.

Miracles can happen in the lives of those who really want to have a turning point from the unhealthy life style; which has various kinds of vices.

In the Lenten season, on the first Sunday, the Catholic Church invites the faithful to reflect and ponder upon the Three Temptations that Jesus had to face. It is because, we who are vulnerable when facing the temptations of various kinds, may do the necessary reparations during the Holy Season of Lent and be transformed persons to celebrate the Easter mystery and to continue living in the presence of the Lord.

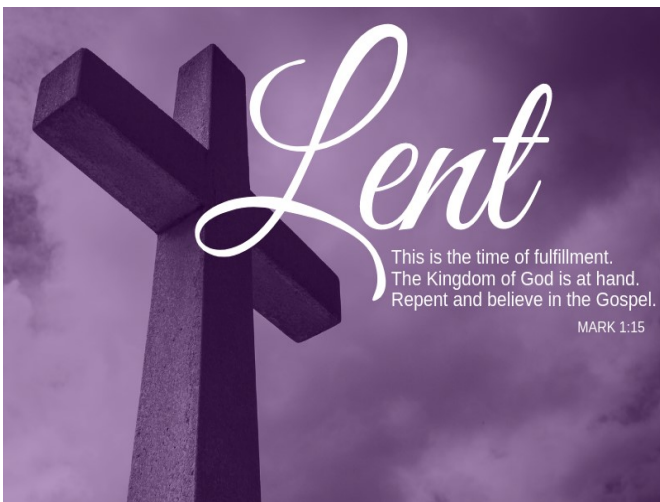
Rev. Fr K.V. Joseph msfs
Mission In-Charge,
On behalf of the Mission Team
at Bara Durgapur



In Luke 4;1-14, we have the account of the 3 Temptations that Jesus had faced. Jesus did not give way to the traps and tricks of the Satan who applied different methods to make Jesus fall. But Jesus became stronger and stronger before the evil technics of the Satan. Because His only focus was doing the Heavenly Fathers will. And heavenly father did not want His Son to fall victim to the traps of Satan.

Fasting is a weapon to remain spiritually strong. No other weapon is as strong as fasting to fight against the Devil, who is very active around us during the

Lent and other days. Any person, who intends to make changes in their life for good, during Lent, will have more temptations. The fasting with prayer is the effective solution to remain strong like Jesus. Jesus was filled with the Holy spirit during the 40 days he spent in the desert fasting and praying. "He returned to Galilee, powered by the Holy Spirit." During the forty days of fasting, the power of Satan was strong, but the power of the Holy spirit was so strong that Satan couldn't win over the power of the Holy Spirit. So, fasting can bring deliverance and victory.



The season of lent is an open invitation for everyone to fast from all kinds of addictions and vices. Today most of the youth in the world need deliverance and victory over various kinds of addictions and evil practices. They need to fast from all what is bad in their lives. I knew a young man, (James) who used to drink occasionally. Later it became a habit and on account of it, his attention towards his wife and kid came to a standstill. His wife brought him to me one day and asked me to advise him. I requested her to spend some time in the church, while I could speak to him personally. I spent an hour with him in the parish office and made him aware of the consequences of alcoholism. Towards the end of the dialogue, he cried a lot and made a very beautiful confession and

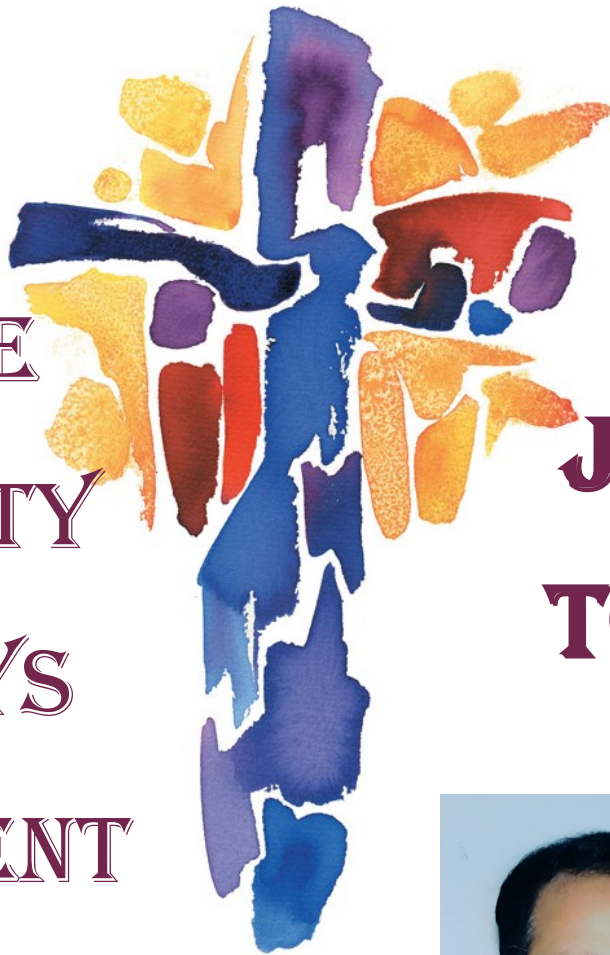
promised that he would not drink alcohol and that he would take care of his family thereafter. It happened to be the first week of lent. He started coming for daily mass, and on Fridays for the way of the cross etc. He was looking very joyful and his wife thanked me for changing his lifestyle because he had become a very caring person in the family. One of his friends seeing James as a changed man, decided to fast from drinking alcohol during lent and started living happily and responsibly in the family. After the Easter celebration in the church, reaching home, he had everything that he had given up during the lent, because he failed to listen to the whispers of the Holy Spirit, but entertained the temptations and thoughts of the Satan who could easily make him a slave to drinks. Had he continued his fasting from drinks, even after the Lenten season, the whole family would have lived happily. James also must have been tempted by the evil spirit, but he did not give way to the temptations, because the fruitful Lenten observances powered him strong to say no to the evil tendencies. May many more James be reborn in the world, especially in the catholic church during this Lent.



I wish all the readers a very meaningful Lenten season and a very happy and joyful Easter.



THE FORTY DAYS OF LENT



JOURNEY TOWARDS

This is a unpretentious endeavour to specify and stipulate the significance of Lent and the mystical journey of a devotee, who submits oneself and undergoes all the ups and downs of his/her life, yet tirelessly he/she dreams of a new horizon of sunshine every day in his/her life with thanks to the sweet scent of Easter that fills and spreads in the atmosphere and every fibre of his/her blood stream. And this is possible only to the one who sees the Resurrection of Jesus beyond the Passion and Crucifixion.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the Resurrection of the Lord at Easter. When I was young, the dates regarding Lent often had a perplexity and ambiguity to comprehend the duration whether was it 40 days, 47 days or 50 days? The church in Kerala calls Lent as 50 days of fasting (*50Noimb*), though there are 46-47 days during



Rev. Fr Jackson Sebastian

Lent including all Sundays, but later I discovered that those Sundays in Lent are not counted as the days of fasting, instead they are celebrated just as all other Sundays in the liturgical year.

During Lent we make certain resolutions, such as giving up of smoking, drinking alcohol, eating meat or fish etc. Thus, Lent teaches us the value of penance and repentance. The spirit of the Lenten season is seen as similar to that of the Old Testament people who fasted and repented in sackcloth and ashes (Jeremiah 6:26, Daniel 9:3).

‘Forty’ is symbolic of a life-time generation. The people of Israel walked in the wilderness

for forty years (Dt 8:2). Practically, it was a new generation that entered ‘the Promised Land (Num 32:13). The number forty symbolises a time of prayer, as the duration that Moses spent in communion with God on Mount Sinai (Ex 24:17-18; 34-28). It symbolises every person’s journey to the mount of God as Elijah “walked for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, God's mountain” (1Kings 19:8).



It is this journey that the Season of Lent reminds us of, and as we are in the season of Lent, a time meticulously given in preparation for the celebration of the Easter. Therefore Lent, is an occasion of moulding one’s mind, body and soul and to practice restraint and self-control. So that this grace filled season is spent in fasting and penance and alms giving.

In the Bible there are many events that happened chronologically and numerologically. It doesn’t mean that every number in the Bible has a special meaning and message. Moreover, the numbers in the Bible are just as numbers. There is nothing concealed and in need unlocking the numbers in the Bible.

God does not call us to search for secret meanings, hidden messages, or codes in the Bible. There is more than enough veracity in the simple words of Scripture to meet all our desires and make us “complete and thoroughly equipped for

every good work” (2Timothy 3:17). There are certain numbers that occur in the Bible quite often, two of them are numbers seven and forty. The number seven is considered a perfect number by Jews. It is often called God’s number. In the book of Genesis 7:2-4 and Revelation 1:20 we treasure such outcomes. (Revelation 4:5; 5:1.5-6).

Let’s check the importance of Number 40 in the pages of the Bible. It is often called the number of probation or trial, because The people of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty long years (Deuteronomy 8:2-5), Moses spent 40 days in the mountain of the Lord (Exodus24:18), for the conversion of the people of Nineveh God sent prophet Jonah and told him to announce if they don’t repent their city will be destroyed after 40days and they believed the words of the Prophet and repented (Jonah3:4).



When God decided to destroy the earth with water, He caused it to rain forty days and forty nights. (Genesis7:12). Soon after the killing of an Egyptian Moses escaped to Midian and lived there for 40 years tending to flocks (Acts7:30). Later when God called him and appointed him as the Leader and Liberator of Israelites, God called him to Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights to be with Him(Exodus 24:18).

In the book of Deuteronomy we read another incident where Moses intercedes for the people of Israel for 40 days and 40 nights

(Deuteronomy 9:18, 25) The Rule stated a maximum number of lashes a man could get for a crime, setting the limit at 40 (Deuteronomy 25:3). The Israelite detectives took 40 days to spy out Canaan (Numbers 13:25).



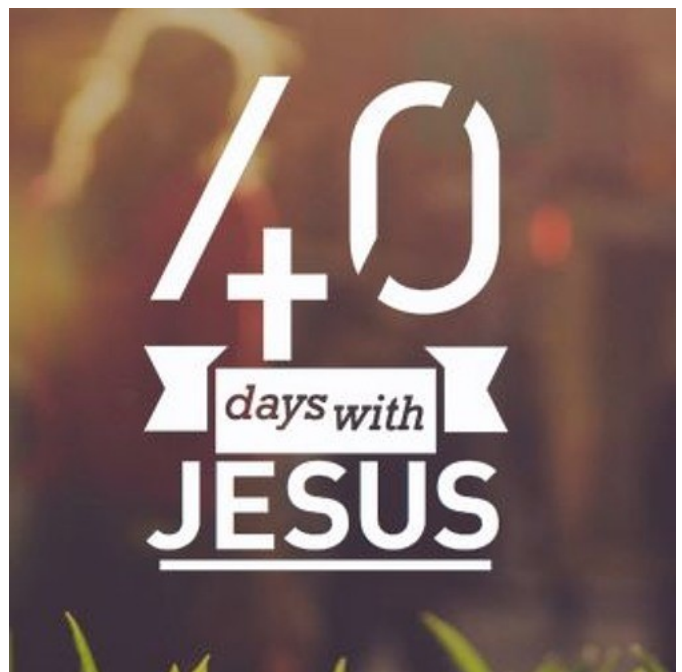
The Israelites wandered for 40 years because of their hard heartedness and disobedience to God (Deuteronomy 8:2-5). Before Samson's relief, Israel worked for the Philistines for 40 years (Judges 13:1).

Goliath taunted Saul's army for 40 days before David arrived to slay him (1 Samuel 17:16) When Elijah fled from Jezebel, he travelled 40 days and 40 nights to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8) The number 40 also appears in the prophecies of Ezekiel (4:6; 29:11-13), Jonah (3:4).

In the gospel of Mathew 4:v2, we read that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights before his public ministry (Mathew 4:2). The event of Ascension took place after forty days of Resurrection (Acts: 1:3). According to Stephen, Moses' life is divided into three 40-year segments, separated by his growing to adulthood, fleeing from Egypt, and his return to lead his people out (Acts 7:23,30,36).

In assumption, as I was reading an article of Sharon Basaraba regarding "A Guide to Longevity Throughout History-Increases in Life Span from Prehistory through the Modern Era". The article speaks about the average life span of man

in the course of history has been progressing from 30 years to 40, and at present is about 72. From the 1500s onward, till around the year 1800, life expectancy throughout Europe hovered between **30 and 40 years** of age. Today most industrialized countries boast life expectancy figures of **more than 75 years**, according to comparisons compiled by the Central Intelligence Agency. (<https://www.verywellhealth.com/longevity-throughout-history-2224054>, referred on 26th March 2022).



Now we are in the twilight of yet another post-modern age of science and technologies and the unconquerable embellishment in the field of medical science have made man to live longer and longer. The concept of understanding of 40 days and 40 years in one's life must be associated with our transcendent relationship with God. Therefore let this forty days of rather short journey encourage all of us to tune our spiritual ears to the tempo of the liturgy of the season and abide with the norms and requirements of self-discipline pave-way for all of us to achieve and celebrate a glorious Easter Sunday.





Married Saints

It is good to know something about **married saints**. There are plethora of biographies about married saints approved by the Church in the history of hagiography. I will name a few: Saints Peter, Monica, Elizabeth Canori Mora, Frances of Rome, Margaret of Scotland, Perpetua and Felicity, Bridget of Sweden, Elizabeth of Hungary, Elizabeth of Portugal, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Isadore and Maria, Thomas More, Edward the confessor and so on.

There is book entitled “**MARRIED SAINTS**” by **JOHN F FINK**. It is an American publication. The book deals with a few profiles of married saints. It is indeed exciting and insightful and all catholic should read and reflect on it to draw inspiration from it.

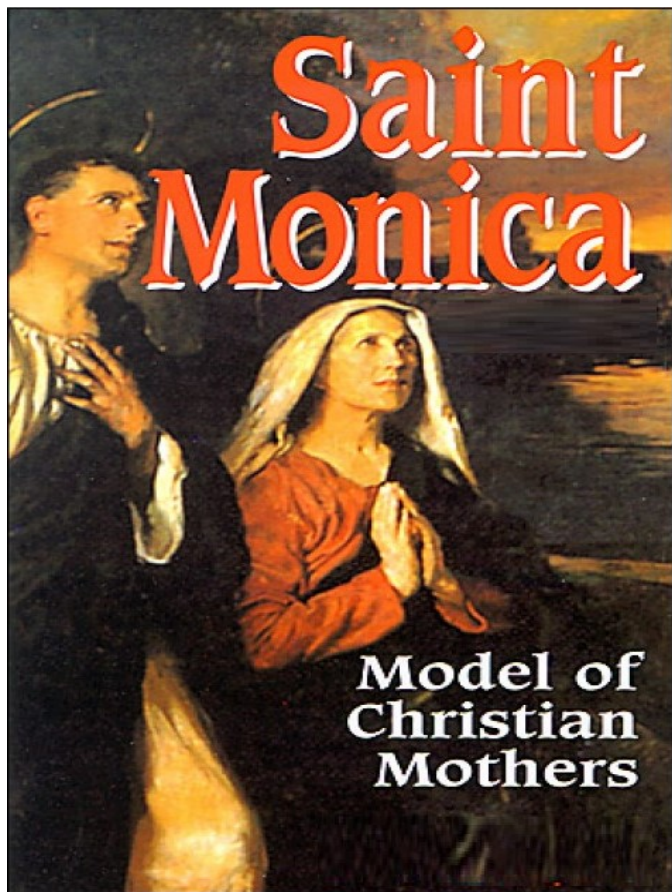
It is appropriate to use the terms “**married saints**”. It is neither a fallacy nor an oxymoron to use these terms. Because some Catholics often misunderstand



**Adv. Earnest Peter
Kandathil**

that one has to be a priest or a nun or a brother or a sister to be a saint. The names mentioned above are only a few examples of married couples becoming saints. For a person to be a saint he or she need not be a missionary, working in jungles or in remote part of the world, preaching and converting the souls for the Lord. As a matter of fact, raising children in a modern society is a very difficult task

especially with the teenagers who are allured by drugs, sex, pornographic media and peer pressures. Profiles of married saints can be a good reading material which will encourage the couples to lead a saintly life despite worries stemming from managing the youth in the present day world. No doubt brief anecdotes from the life of married saints can provide powerful inspiration to married couple.



We all know the life of **St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine**. How powerfully fervently and strenuously the mother prayed for the conversion of Augustine for such a long period of time –almost 18 years and the end result was, as expected, **conversion** so much so that he became a doctor of the Church. His licentious life was done away with. He turned over a new leaf and started working for the Lord--- **all due to the supplications of a mother who was very much concerned about the welfare of her son**. All mothers of the present age should learn a lesson from this and follow the example to contain the youth, that have gone astray.

Submit the problem to the Lord with a hopeful heart for a positive response with entreaties to the Lord and wonders will gradually follow like that of St Augustine for sure.

Another powerful profile is that of **the parents of**

St Theresa of Lisieux - Louis and Marie. They had nine children, four out of them died in infancy.



All the surviving children became Nuns for the glory of God including St. Theresa who is fondly known as the Little Flower. The parents too became saints on their own merits and rights. **According to the words of Pope Francis: “the holy spouses Louis Martin and Marie Azevedo Guerin practised Christian service in the family, creating day to day an environment of faith and love which nurtured the vocations of their five daughters“**. Here in the family context, **the parents became role models** and the children were unknowingly influenced by their piety, devotion and good conduct – all these correspondingly led to a true Christian life which is worthy of commendation as well as emulation.

Another profile worth reading and inspirational is that of **Elizabeth Canori Mora**. She was born on 21st November 1774 to Tommaso and Teresa Primoli . Theirs was an aristocratic family and profoundly Christian. Her parents were concerned to give their children a good and sound Christian education. As for Elizabeth she was very diligent in her studies too. She and her sister were educated with the Augustinian nuns in Umbria and it was here that her faith in the Lord deepened. She “loved to dwell on the things of God”. In her early years she thought she had a calling for a religious life. But with the onset of teen age days, her bend of mind changed and started enjoying social life and thus fell in love with a law student, Christopher Moro. They got married in 1796 and they were in the first few years were “happily married couple”. He was very proud of her beauty and enjoyed the admiration she provoked at parties and social gatherings. After some time, he became jeal-



ous of her. But as years passed by, the affectionate attitude of Christopher towards Elizabeth started dwindling and as a result he took a mistress, forsaking Elizabeth and their two children. He entered into some business deals and all of them turned out to be utter failures. He had taken to gambling also. This inevitably led the family onto the verge of poverty. She used to sell her belongings to keep up her family and to save her husband from prison on account of debts incurred by him in business deals. Elizabeth made sure that the children did not have any aversion or dislike towards their father. On the other hand, she advised them to pray for his conversion. Meanwhile her spiritual life deepened and intensified. She thus became a lay member of the Trinitarian order (third order) and worked with the least concern to her own health, for the sick, poor and prostitute, while remaining in love of the Lord for others. Elizabeth fervently prayed for the conversion of her husband and for all sinners in the daily Mass she attended. She spent an hour daily in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Her children followed her faith. One of the daughters became a religious sister and the other got married. On 5th February 1825 while being cared by her two daughters, Elizabeth slept in the Lord entering gently in to the

light of the Holy Trinity. She is buried in Rome in the Trinitarian Church of San Carlino Alle Quattro Fontane. Shortly after her death, as she has predicted, her husband experienced a profound and lasting change of heart. From being an adulterer and a gambler with the passion for doubtful business deals, he turned in to a new creation and with due penitence and remorse he was reconciled to the Lord, (this is, no doubt, due to the efficacy of prayer of Elizabeth and their children); he joined the Trinitarian Third Order and later became a priest of the Conventual Franciscan. He died on 9th September 1845 and is buried in the conventual Franciscans' church in Sezze. Elizabeth must have rejoiced in her heavenly abode at the repentance and conversion of her husband. The short life of Elizabeth and the second part of the life of Christopher Moro after conversion, like that of St Augustine, should be a model for every married Christian family for emulation.

ELIZABETH WAS BEATIFIED BY POPE JOHN PAUL 11 IN 1994. **Every catholic family should seek her intercession in times of family troubles especially when the head of the family has side-tracked and is on the verge of rack and ruin. The Lord will work out miracles and bring about a U turn in the life of the couples, all thanks to the efficacy of prayer.**



We need not speak at length about the saintly life of married couples. Let's go finally to the case of parents of **Mary. Ann and Joachim** and to the parents of John the Baptist Elizabeth and Zachariah. They are still inspirational role models for couples who would like to live a happy, holy, peaceful and prosperous married life.





Berachah



Lara J M
Bangalore, India.

Is any of our sacrifice greater than Yeshua's on the cross?

Berachah is translated as "blessing," ("blessing" is derived from the Old English word meaning "to consecrate in blood.") The supreme one time bloodshed sacrifice of Yeshua on the cross is the only expiation that can restore the covenant relationship between man and God. Heb 10:17-19 says, 'And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where the remission of these is, there is no more offering (blood sacrifice) for sin. Have therefore, brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus Christ.'

In the light of the above passage, we can enter the holy of holies through the blood of the lamb; and declare boldly: we are the righteousness of Christ Jesus – consecrated in His blood – blessed to be a blessing.

God gave us new direction, a promise He fulfilled when He said in Isaiah 43.19 'Behold, I will do a new thing now, it shall spring forth : shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.'

Jesus Christ, Yeshua hamashiach, God became man and demonstrated how we could share in the fellowship of His great loving sacrifice. As in Luke 22:20 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you" (synonym for covenant is "testament" or new direction); reiterated in Mathew 26:28 and Mark 14:24. The Lord raises the cup and tells us to do the same in remembrance of him. Reminding us to look up and be healed replacing the old promise in Numbers 21.9. Jesus Christ ransomed us by His innocent bloodshed and became our Saviour.

The stations of the cross, remind us of the Holy Journey that Yeshua (in Hebrew means saviour) took for the remission of sins, for all mankind – so that the new covenant between man and God could be established by His blood. It was a fulfillment of the promises of God to His people – Isaiah 43:3 says, For *I am* the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Saviour.

Blessings in the Bible suggest an intimate relationship between the blesser and the blessed. A blessing from God marks an intimate relationship between God and man, serving as proof that he finds himself in God's favor.

There are three types of blessings, let's look at an example for each:

God to man

Gen 1.28 says God blessed them and said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it."

Man to God

According to 2 Chron 20:1-30, Jehoshaphat gathered his people together and prayed to God for de-

liverance. God answered his prayer by stirring up the enemy to kill each other. By the time Jehoshaphat and his army entered the valley, the enemy had completely destroyed themselves. The army took three days to collect the valuables of their enemies including gold, silver, and precious jewels: hence the valley was called "The Valley of Blessing/Berachah".

Man to man

Blessings between men as in the priestly blessing in Num. 6:22–27.

In Job 1.21, he said, "Naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. Yahweh gave, and Yahweh has taken away. Blessed be the name of Yahweh."

God tells Job in Chapter 39, Don't try to make sense of My world. Human intellect is too limited. Job knelt and blessed the Lord (despite his wife's prompting). His trajectory of blessing that stemmed from his temporary hopelessness was greater than the former glory. He prospered multi-fold.

The name Beracah comes from the verb (ברך *barak*), meaning either to kneel or to bless. Can we in the words of Lenny Leblanc, kneel and bless our Lord and Saviour, praying:

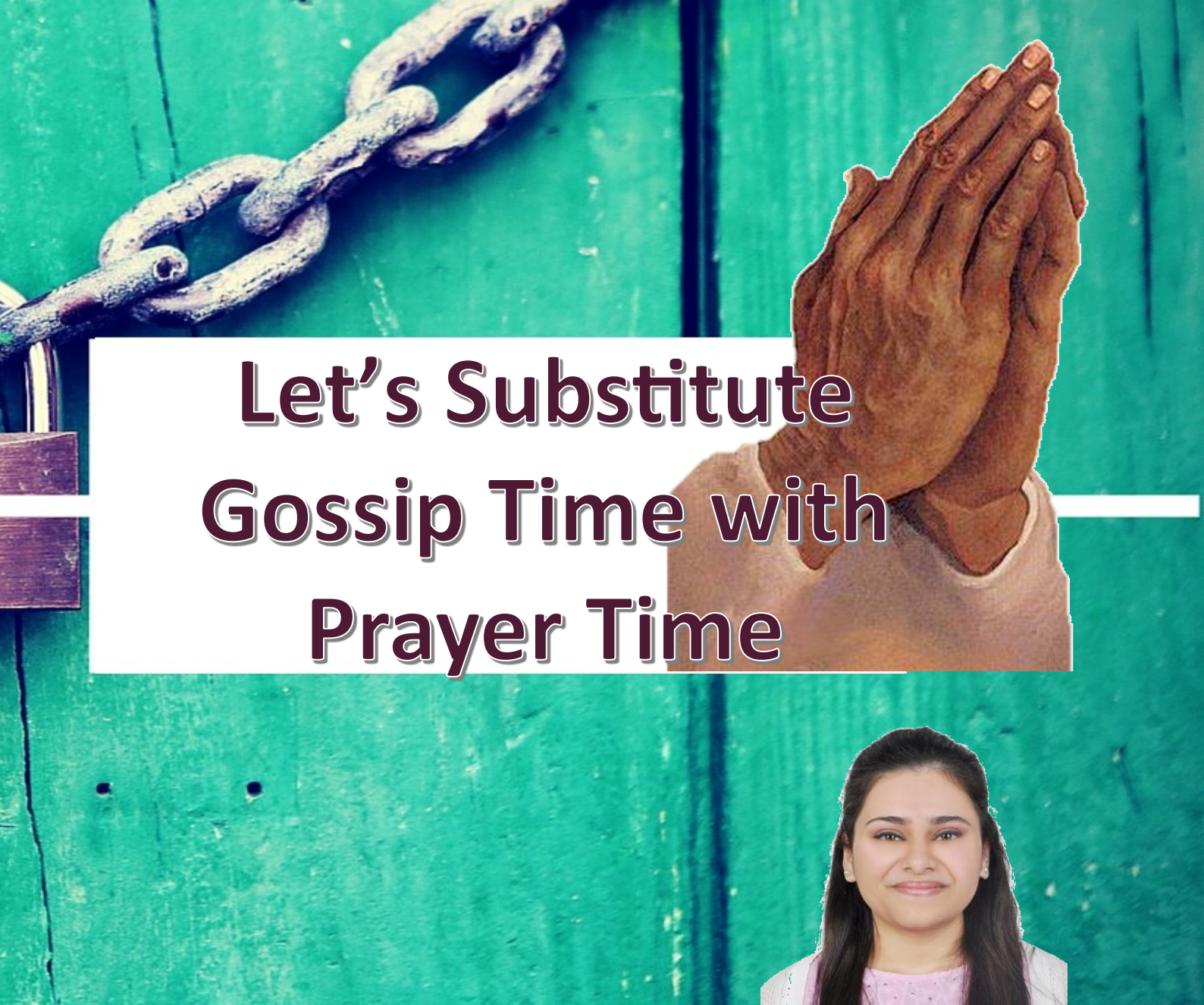
*Let me be a shadow of Your light
Just a small reflection of a greater love
Let me be a shadow in Your light
That falls on the lost and the lonely*

*All that I am I lay at the cross
No sacrifice too great a cost
So down on my knees
Lord I ask You please*

Let me be a shadow in Your light

For the Holy Spirit reminds us in 1 Thes 5.18, 'In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.'





Let's Substitute Gossip Time with Prayer Time



James 1:26 “If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless.”

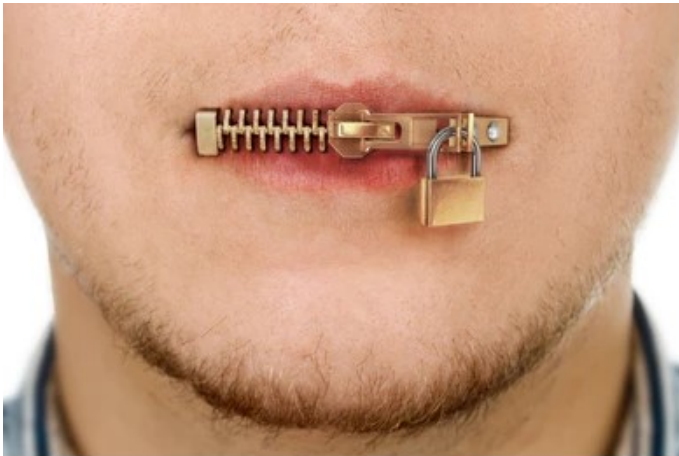
Pearl Rodrigues

Gossip is like a secret craving. We say we don't like it, but when it's within reach, we almost can't resist it. We get a sudden appetite to know what we don't know about something or somebody. We may think that we are not into sharing the secretive and personal details about a person's life just for fun. But gossip comes in many flavors, and it involves listening as well. Overcoming the spirit of gossip is very difficult but there is a solution and that is Love. When we filter our attention on others through love instead of judgment, prayer will replace gossip. We are social creatures and we like to contemplate the world and the people in it. The desire to embrace others with our thoughts can be extremely beneficial when sub-

mitted to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Instead of using our words to destroy, we can **replace gossip with prayer** and use our words to build up. When we have the urge to gossip, our hearts and minds are telling us there is new information to analyze and assimilate into our understanding. In a brief moment, we have a choice of two paths – blessings or curses. We can show mercy and offer blessings to others or we can show judgment and offer a curse. The choice is ours. **We can gossip or we can pray.** Tear down or build up. It's all in our hands. When we see something we don't like in someone, we should first go to God in prayer. We can pray for that person and

the situation and ask God for clarity. That way we will have stopped ourselves from gossiping, and we won't reap the negative fruit it produces. Before we speak to anyone else about our thoughts, we should always turn to God first. The Holy Spirit will convict us if we are showing judgment instead of mercy.

The tongue is literally a weapon that can be used for good or evil. There is no in-between. When we gossip, our tongue is used for evil. When we pray, our tongue is used for good.



Once we learn to wield this weapon for good, we can reap the benefits. We can transform our desire to gossip into a force for good by praying. As we get better at replacing gossip with prayer, our life will experience massive positive results. When we replace gossip with prayer we will enjoy life more. We don't realize it, but when we spew negative words about others, we too become covered with negativity. However, if we learn to transform our words of judgment to words of mercy, our days will become good and joyful. We will not be held down by the words of destruction we have spoken aloud. When we turn to the Lord in prayer in times of crisis, instead of judging the person who offended or hurt us, we will always have an answer. We may not know everything, but God certainly does. When He can trust us with our words, He will open up His wisdom and release it on our lives. The void left behind after we overcome the spirit of gossip will be replaced by God's righteous words of wisdom. Gossiping is like a fire that can't be quenched (Proverbs 26.20). We will stress ourselves out

overthinking about people and situations, and our hearts will be robbed of satisfaction. When we gossip, we become the person speaking out of turn in the courtroom who will eventually be removed. When we pray to God instead of gossiping, we are pleading in the ears of the Judge whose verdict is final.



**Rash words are
like sword thrusts..**

Proverbs 12:18 rightly promises us with healing when it says **“Rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”** Our words will not only bring healing to others, but they can also bring healing to us. The power of Jesus Christ is found in mercy. When we speak words of mercy in prayer instead of gossiping, we are surrounding ourselves and others in an atmosphere of healing. Our bodies, minds, and hearts will all benefit from the healing power around us. My dear Brothers and Sisters, no money in the world can buy true peace. Peace comes to us each day because we replace our thoughts and words of gossip with prayer. Our words can free us or enslave us. When we pray instead of gossip, we surround ourselves, our homes and our relationships with God's unending peace. All we need to do is learn to pray instead of gossip.

May Jesus Christ be praised at all times.





The Passion of Joy

As Lent draws to its culmination and we await easter morning, let us contemplate three different types of joy the Lord Jesus experienced in his passion. The joy in service, the joy in humiliation and the joy in suffering.

In the readings of Maundy Thursday, the institution of the eucharist and priesthood are accounted for, we hear how the Lord made himself a servant by washing the feet of the disciples. This act fortifies



Ida Titus

the earlier lessons of Jesus that whoever wants to be first must be last. Furthermore, it is a visual reminder of the teaching in Isaiah where the coal

from the seraphim touched Isaiah and made him holy and atoned for rather than defiling him. By letting their master wash their feet, the disciples were made a part of Him.

From Judas' betrayal of Jesus in the garden of gethsemane to the completion of his passion on the cross, we are shown the greatest display of joy in humiliation and suffering.

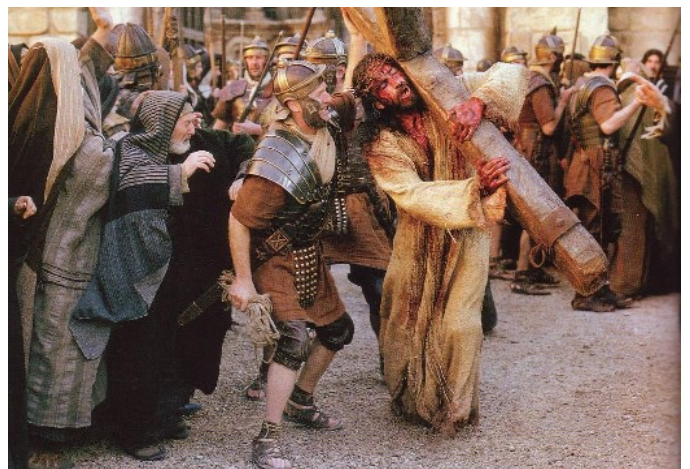


Let us take a moment to consider the humiliation Jesus experienced:

- Betrayed by one of his closest companions for material possessions despite the many miracles and provisions Jesus provided over three years.
- Abandoned by the rest of his disciples when the guards come to arrest him.
- The King of Kings mocked by soldiers.
- Stripped of his garments, exposed and vulnerable in front of multitudes of people.
- Despised and rejected for a notorious criminal to receive freedom instead.
- Physically and mentally tortured as He was made to carry His cross, His death sentence, to the place of crucifixion while being hurled insults in front of those whom he had taught and helped.
- Seeing His mother's extreme sorrow as He carries his cross, unable to comfort her, realising the humiliation she experienced too as her only

son is mocked in the streets.

Though joy in suffering seems to be a juxtaposition, we read in Hebrews 12:2 that Jesus 'endured the cross, scorning its shame for the joy set before Him. This verse alone shows the depth of His love for us, He thought it a joy to suffer complete humiliation, to be scorned and whipped, jeered at, and crucified, all for our relationship and standing with the Father to be restored.



The Passion of Christ is the greatest example of selfless love. The fact it was endured with joy provides the hope we have to bear our crosses without complaint, knowing that 'We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honour beside God's throne.' Hebrews 12:2





The Synod on Synodality is a two-year process of listening and dialogue beginning with a solemn opening in Rome on October 9 and 10, 2021 with each individual diocese and church celebrating the following week on October 17. The synodal process will conclude in 2023.

Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: “It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.” This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church’s “renewal” proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which processes can

help Her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open Herself to mission.

What is Synodality?

Synodality denotes the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel. Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church’s ordinary way of living and working.

Synodality, in this perspective, is much more than the celebration of ecclesial meetings and Bishops’ assemblies, or a matter of simple internal admin-

istration within the Church; it is the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the Church, the People of God, which reveals and gives substance to her being as communion when all her members journey together, gather in assembly and take an active part in her evangelizing mission.

What is the aim of this Synod?

This Synod is intended as a Synodal Process. The aim of this synodal process is not to provide a temporary or one-time experience of synodality, but rather to provide an opportunity for the entire People of God to discern together how to move forward on the path towards being a more synodal Church in the long-term.

A basic question prompts and guides us: How does this journeying together allow the Church to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the mission entrusted to Her; and what steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?

The Theme of this Synod

Communion



The communion we share finds its deepest roots in the love and unity of the Trinity. Together, we are inspired by listening to the Word of God, through the living Tradition of the Church, and grounded in the *sensus fidei* that we share. We all have a role to play in discerning and living out God's call for his people

Participation



Participation is based on the fact that all the faithful are qualified and are called to serve one another through the gifts they have each received from the Holy Spirit in baptism. In a synodal Church the whole community is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God's will

Mission



Our mission is to witness to the love of God in the midst of the whole human family. This Synodal Process has a deeply missionary dimension to it. It is intended to enable the Church to better witness to the Gospel, especially with those who live on the spiritual, social, economic, political, geographical and existential peripheries of our world.

Further information, please visit <https://www.synod.va/en>

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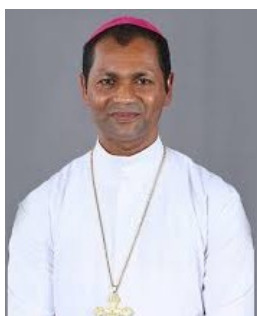
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