



*“They are trees planted by streams of water; they bear fruit; their leaves do not wither; in all that they do they prosper.” Ps 1:3*

**VOL XIII – ISSUE 42**

**JAN – FEB 2019**

**The Theme for 2019: “GROW IN HOLINESS”**

**Heb:12:14**

### **CONTENTS**

- *Grow in Holiness– Theme explained*
- *24 weeks Bible Study – Walking with God*
- *12 tricks anti-christ will use to destroy Christians as laid out by Ven. Fulton J sheen*
- *Quiz*

### **Grow in Holiness**

Once a young man was giving a car driving test. He drove well and the official who took the test told him "you have passed". While moving out of the vehicle he heaved a sigh of relief and said, "Thank God, I don't have to drive like this anymore". Most of us are like this young man we put on mask before others. We are different with different people at different places. Well, God does not want us to be like that, he wants us to be the same everywhere. At the same time he wants us to be different from others in the way we live, think, talk and that is why he gave us a new theme. Every year's theme takes us a step closer to God and leads towards personal sanctification.

The key verse for our theme this year “Grow in Holiness” is Hebrew 12:14 - "Strive for peace with all and strive to be holy, for without holiness no one will see the Lord".

The Greek word used is "hagios" which means set apart/holy/different/sacred/ sanctified/saint. Some articles are considered hagios because they are set apart from the normal uses of everyday life. The word "hagios" is used 235 times in the New Testament and 524 times in Old Testament. Some examples that the Bible describes as hagios: Ground is described as hagios (Ex:3:5). Your faith is sometimes called “hagios”. Conversation - conduct is sometimes called “hagios”. A city, a place, a covenant, a commandment, and the scriptures, have all been called “hagios” in the Bible. The reason why all these things and places are called hagios (holy) is because of God’s presence. In the Old Testament we read that whenever the Israelites obeyed the Lord in holiness, they experienced victory. The moment they sinned they lost. If you want God to be in your side, you have to be Holy. If you are not striving to grow in holiness in the sight of God, you need to examine whether you know Christ as saviour at all. Crucified Bridegroom seeks a Crucified Bride. Holiness means separated from the things that displease God.

When we look at three reasons for desiring holiness. We will say, "at least if not for God’s sake, for my own sake let me become holy".

1. For God’s sake. – 1Pet 1:14-16 - Like obedient children, do not return to your former life given over to ignorance and passions. Imitate the one who called you. As he is holy so you, too, be holy in all your conduct, since Scripture says: Be holy for I am holy. Lev 20:26.
2. For other’s sake – To be witness- You are the only Bible which some people read.
3. For your own sake – To have God on your side, to meet God.

There are a lot of ways and means which help us to grow in holiness. Some of them are: Daily Personal Prayer, Daily Mass, Daily Reading of the Word of God, Daily seeking of Spiritual Direction, Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once in a month, Devotion to the Saints & to the Blessed Mother. As we devoutly practice these, the fruit of the Holy Spirit

will be more visible in us, leading us to grow in holiness. The answers to the following questions will indicate whether we are growing in holiness or not. Are we patient with our children, spouse? Do we persevere in faith? Are we becoming meek? Are we bold in living out our faith, not afraid to proclaim the Good News? Do we have joy and sense of humour in all circumstances? Are we making efforts to build our community, do we desire to pray and read the Word constantly? The positive and affirmative answers to these questions will be the sure signs of our walking in holiness.

Finally my dear brothers and sisters it is good to know what are the obstacles that can prevent us from growing in holiness, so that we can handle them wisely.

1. *Mortal sin- A grave action that is committed in full knowledge of its gravity and with one's full consent and will.*
2. *Deliberate venial sin- you know it is wrong to tell lies, but you still do it.*
3. *Lack of generosity in doing good works - Selfish*
4. *Lack of worthy reception of the Holy Eucharist – missing obligation Mass*
5. *Lack of spiritual reading- not reading Scripture or Christian books*
6. *Lack of personal prayer*
7. *Lack of Interior/exterior mortification- I remember, as a youngster I could not overcome one sin which I constantly fell, I pricked my finger with needle and wrote with blood, "I will not commit this sin".*

*It is said, that St. Francis de sales used to use whip, rod or lash to beat himself for mortification. Exterior mortification is not desirable, but surely interior mortification is helpful.*

In conclusion, let us reflect on Mathew's Gospel Chapter 5: 48 which ends with "Be perfect, just as your Heavenly Father is perfect". This chapter starts with beatitudes, if you live the beatitudes, then you will become perfect (holy) just as the Heavenly Father is holy. A holy person is one who is poor in spirit, who repents of his sins, who is meek, who hungers and thirsts for righteousness, who is merciful, who is pure in heart, who pursues peace, who is bold even in persecution

and who is joyful always. Let me end with this prayer from 1Thes 5:23 for each one of you, “Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again” Amen.

- *Louis Ryan*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **24 Weeks Bible Study – Walking with God**

The Great Adventure, The Bible Timeline, the story of salvation – 24-weeks Bible study with Jeff Cavins and MIPC members - Oh what a marvellous gift to learn the Word of God, to know Him and to understand his ways. Great effort ! Blessed are the MIPC animators who organized this Bible study for us to benefit and to inspire us to share this god news with others. The Bible study was all action packed which included praising God, praying together as a community, group discussion, presentation and video lessons - an amazing experience and a " must learn" for every Catholic.

For me, it was a marvellous experience to track of the story of salvation right from the book of Genesis to the New Testament period. The very beginning of this study taught us that the Bible is a library of seventy three books. Running through them is a story that ties them all together and makes sense not just of them but of our lives as well - a big picture, God’s loving plan. The twelve periods of Bible study tell us the story right from Genesis (One Holy Couple) to the Acts of the Apostles (One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church). This Study teaches God’s love, his mercy, forgiveness and more. The way those great people obeyed and trusted God has been a strong motivation to do the same.

Attending these classes week after week, reading the prescribed portion of the Bible and answering the given questions truly increased my desire to learn more of the holy scriptures. In each session there were points to take home. Some of the points were very challenging. I am daily pondering over these questions and trying to live out what I learnt.

The main questions that enable me to grow in Christian life are:

1. Do I trust God? .. It is very clear that my lack of trust and disobedience will land me in trouble just as it happened with Israelites.

2. Do I teach my children to trust God? .... God wants my whole generation to be happy. This is possible when I pass on my Christian faith to my children. I need to teach my children also to trust and obey God and keep His precepts.
3. What way can I be a channel to bring God's blessings to those around me? This is possible when I show Christ in me to the world. Yes, I am called to make a difference in this world so that all experience God's blessings by being members of the world-wide family that loves Him, trusts Him, obeys Him and worships Him.

- *Virginia Fernandes*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **12 tricks anti-Christ will use to destroy Christians as laid out by Ven. Fulton J. Sheen.**

It's been said that the greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist. In a similar vein, the greatest trick the anti-Christ will pull will be to convince men he is the savior of the world instead of its destroyer, according to a powerful radio sermon given by Venerable Servant of God Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in 1947. While Sheen's description of the anti-Christ was given almost 72 years ago, his words may be more pertinent in our own times than they were in his. His prophetic message is absolutely crucial for every sincere Christian who seeks to be faithful to Christ to the end. He states:

The anti-Christ will not be so called, otherwise he would have no followers. He will wear no red tights, nor vomit sulphur, nor carry a spear nor wave an arrowed tail as Mephistopheles in Faust.

Nowhere in Sacred Scripture do we find warrant for the popular myth of the devil as a buffoon who is dressed like the first "red." Rather is he described as a fallen angel, and as "the Prince of this world" whose business it is to tell us that there is no other world. His logic is simple: if there is no heaven there is no hell; if there is no hell, there is no sin; if there is no sin, there is no judge, and if there is no judgement then evil is good and good is evil.

How will he come in this new age to win followers to his religion? [Signs of the anti-Christ:]

- He will come disguised as the Great Humanitarian; he will talk peace, prosperity, and plenty, not as means to lead us to God, but as ends in themselves.
- He will write books on the new idea of God to suit the way people live.
- [He will] induce faith in astrology so as to make not the will but the stars responsible for our sins.
- He will explain guilt away psychologically as repressed sex, make men shrink in shame if their fellowmen say they are not broadminded and liberal.
- He will identify tolerance with indifference to right and wrong.
- He will foster more divorces under the disguise that another partner is “vital.”
- He will increase love for love and decrease love for persons.
- He will invoke religion to destroy religion.
- He will even speak of Christ and say that he was the greatest man who ever lived.
- His mission, he will say, will be to liberate men from the servitudes of superstition and Fascism, which he will never define.
- In the midst of all his seeming love for humanity and his glib talk of freedom and equality, he will have one great secret which he will tell to no one; he will not believe in God. And because his religion will be brotherhood without the fatherhood of God, he will deceive even the elect.
- He will set up a counter-Church, which will be the ape of the Church because, he the devil, is the ape of God. It will be the mystical body of the anti-Christ that will in all externals resemble the Church as the mystical body of Christ. In desperate need for God, he will induce modern man, in his loneliness and frustration, to hunger more and more for membership in his community that will give man enlargement of purpose, without any need of personal amendment and without the admission of personal guilt. These are days in which the devil has been given a particularly long rope.

Sheen states that he raises his concerns about the anti-Christ, not because

he fears for the survival of the Catholic Church, but because of the devastation the anti-Christ will bring upon those who have no faith.

“It is not infallibility we are worried about, but the world’s lapse into fallibility; we tremble not that God may be dethroned, but that barbarism may reign; it is not Transubstantiation that may perish, but the home; not the sacraments that may fade away, but the moral law.”

Sheen has confidence that since the Church has survived other great crises in her centuries of existence, “she will live to sing a requiem over the evils of the present.”

“The Church may have its Good Fridays but these are only preludes to its Easter Sundays, for the Divine Promise shall never be made void: ‘. . . and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.’ (Matthew 28:20) ‘Whosoever shall fall upon that stones shall be bruised.’ (Luke 20:18).”

*Source :lifesitenews*

*To be continued.....*

### **QUIZ CORNER - QUIZ ON HEBREWS Ch. 1 to 4**

Tick (√) the right answer

**Refer the Catholic New Revised Standard Version Bible**

1. From which chapter and verse the theme for 2019 for MIPC is taken?
2. Who is the author of the Letter to the Hebrews :?  
A. St. Paul    b. St. Peter    c. not known
3. In Ch. 1 who is mentioned as being the footstool of Christ?  
a. Devil    b. enemies    c. Sinners
4. In Ch. 2: through what the Pioneer of our salvation was made perfect?  
a. Obedience    b. Rejection    c. Sufferings
5. According to Ch 2: what is Jesus not ashamed to call those who are being sanctified ?  
a. brothers and sisters    b. Disciples    c. Apostles

6. According to ch. 3 Jesus is worthy of more glory than .....?
  - a. Moses
  - b. Abraham
  - c. Elijah
7. Whose descendants does the author say in Ch.2 Jesus came to help?
  - a. Abraham
  - b. Adam
  - c. Moses
8. According to Ch. 3: what turns us away from the living God?
  - a. evil and unbelieving heart
  - b. sinful heart
  - c. deceitful heart
9. According to ch. 4 what rest still remains for the people of God.
  - a. God's rest
  - b. weekly rest
  - c. a Sabbath rest
10. According to ch 2: what is Jesus now crowned with because he suffered death?
  - a. crown of glory
  - b. Glory and honour
  - c. everlasting crown
11. In Ch. 4 to what does the Word of God compared ?
  - a. two-edged sword
  - b. life giving
  - c. eternal way
12. According to Ch. 4 how are we called to approach the throne of grace?
  - a. prayer and fasting
  - b. with boldness
  - c. devoutly

### **ANSWERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

- 1) c. advent    2) c. 12    3) a. Nazareth    4) b. right    5) b. Quirinius    6) c. Baptism of the Lord  
 7) b. 359    8) a. Hark the Herald Angels sing  
 9) b. We three kings    10) c. KFC    11) a. Bethlehem.

**Hearty congratulations to Juliet D'Souza and Susana Pinto.** We also appreciate Ethel Fernandes and Perpetual Fernandes for participating.



***MIPC Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday at 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall.  
 General Intercessory Meeting: First Monday of every month at 8:00 pm.***