



“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

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The Theme for 2019: “GROW IN HOLINESS”

Heb:12:14

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The Holy Spirit is our Teacher

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you".

Here we have a twofold work of the Holy Spirit, *teaching and bringing to remembrance* the things which Christ had already taught. We will take them in the reverse order.

I. The Holy Spirit brings to remembrance the Words of Christ.

This promise was made primarily to the Apostles and is the guarantee of

the accuracy of their report of what Jesus said; but the Holy Spirit does a similar work with each believer who expects it of Him, and who looks to Him to do it.

The Holy Spirit brings to our mind the teachings of Christ and of the Word just when we need them. **Matt:10:19-20** "But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say." For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Many of us could recall occasions when we were in great distress of soul or undergoing a situation of not knowing what to answer at workplace or elsewhere, or loss of words while trying to lead someone to Christ. Also to help and at that exact moment the very Scripture we needed came to our mind which perhaps we had not thought of for a long time and never thought would help in this connection. Who did it? The Holy Spirit did it. He is ready to do it even more frequently, if we only expect it of Him and look to Him to do it.

Once a man complained he could not memorize the Scriptures. "After finishing studies, I am into business now. Hence I have gotten out of the habit of study and I cannot memorize anything." His friend replied "Don't be discouraged, Take your Lord's promise that the Holy Spirit will bring His Words to remembrance, learn one passage of Scripture, fix it firmly in your mind, then another and then another and look to the Holy Spirit to bring them to your remembrance when you need them."

Listening to his friends' advice he went on with his preparation. He trusted the Holy Spirit. Afterwards he took up different trade where he found a lot of opportunities to be a witness for Christ. People would gather around him on the street like bees and he would give them God's Word trusting in the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance the passages of Scripture that he needed. His adversaries were filled with confusion, as he met them at every point with the sure Word of God, and many of the most hardened were won for Christ.

II. The Holy Spirit will teach us all things.

John 16:12-15 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine.” That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

1 John 2:27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

The anointing that was given to believers enables them to discern the truth so that they can differentiate the right teaching from the erroneous teaching. In fact, John says that there is no need for anyone to teach others. Here John is not denying the importance and place of human teachers. He is focusing on the privilege of each believer in Jesus Christ "being taught by God". This, of course, does not mean that we may not learn much from others who are taught by the Holy Spirit. If John had these thoughts that he would never have written this epistle to teach others. ***The man who is the most fully taught by God is the very one who will be most ready to listen to what God has taught others.*** I recall an anointed priest who would come with his Bible and notebook for a prayer meeting to listen to lay brothers and sisters sharing God's Word. But while we may learn much from men, we are not dependent upon them. We have a Divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

John was concerned about the false teachings the heretics of his day were spreading among the people. That is why he wrote (1 John 2: 26) that there were men trying to deceive or misinform others. All deceivers are children of the devil, for there are only two kinds of people: the children of God and the children of the devil (1 John 3:10). The children of the devil have as their father the “father of lies” (John 8:44). As those who have rejected Christ and the sound teaching are antichrists who are envoys of Satan. *“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the*

world". (1John 4:1) masquerading as messengers of light while teaching lies.

John's warning is also relevant for the Church today. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Christians are called to discern what the sound teaching is, what is right and what is edifying. If we are on sound footing in the Church we will not easily give into the deceptive teaching.

The Church needs today people who preach the Word of God not just verbally but more importantly by their life. The world is in need of such witnesses who are living the "Bible" that anyone and everyone can see and read.

To conclude, as the Spirit leads us "into all the truth" let us grow in holiness and be more teachable so that we grasp all that he teaches us step by step each day, week and year.

-Core Team member

The lessons that we can learn from Sts Peter and Paul

On June 29 the Church celebrated the feast of Sts. Peter & Paul who are also the patrons of our parish. As early as the year 258, there is evidence of an already lengthy tradition of celebrating the solemnities of both Saint Peter and Saint Paul on the same day. Together, these two saints are the founders of the See of Rome, through their preaching, ministry and martyrdom there.

Could a fisherman from Bethsaida ever imagine he would find himself in Rome? From the shores of the Sea of Galilee to being killed in Nero's circus and buried on Vatican Hill. From completely unknown to having one of the most glorious churches in the world built over his grave. From a sinful, rash, passionate man to a saint in heaven, who is celebrated two thousand years later.

Likewise Saul, an observant Jew, a promising scholar of the Law, never would have dreamt while studying at the feet of the famous Gamaliel that he would be accused of betraying Judaism and be killed for preaching a

new Way (Acts 24:14). Zealous against this new religion, Saul was an unlikely candidate to be the greatest preacher the Church has ever known. But thus was the call of Christ (Gal 1:13-15).

Let us glance at the Holy Apostles, it is clear that the two apostles represent two distinct worlds, or to put it better, they present to us two very important biblical personalities. Each enjoyed particular virtues with which they especially shined.

The Apostle Paul was especially distinguished by a trio of virtues and the Apostle Peter was equally endowed with another trio of virtues.

Starting with the Apostle Paul, we easily notice through the texts of the New Testament that the Apostle Paul was distinguished by three characteristics that fundamentally helped him in the success of his mission and labors.

1. He was a Roman citizen. This meant that he possessed unique civil and political rights. He repeatedly took advantage of them whenever the need arose for this. For example, we can point to the incident of his being freed from the jail in Philippi once he announced that he was a Roman citizen.

2. Paul was adept in Greek language and philosophy. For this reason God saw him as “a chosen vessel” and sent him to the gentiles. By means of the Greek language, he was able to capture the great and civilized Greek world of that time for Christ. He put into the service of God’s Word the power of philosophy and linguistic knowledge as a means for dialogue, encounter, and communication. Here we may contemplate the role of knowledge and philosophy.

3. Paul possessed a third characteristic, his Jewish, Hebrew religion. He was one of the Jews of the diaspora. He himself took pride in being a Pharisee who had studied with Gamaliel.

On the other hand, we notice a trio of virtues with the Apostle Peter.

1. Jesus named Peter as a shepherd. When Peter responded in the affirmative to Jesus’ question, “Do you love me?,” Jesus sent him to tend the sheep. So love is pastoral service.

2. Peter confessed to the most important truth. The most important and defining event in his life was his startling confession, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” This is the truth that the Lord considered to be the rock upon which His Church would be built.

3. Peter was distinguished by zeal in love. We easily notice in the texts of the New Testament that he always wanted to demonstrate his zeal for the love of Christ more than the other apostles. This zeal caused him to promise Jesus that he would follow Him even to death, to cut off the ear of the high priest’s slave, to immediately cast himself into the Sea of Tiberias in order to meet Jesus first when He had risen from the dead. So the Apostle Peter was distinguished by righteous zeal.

Indeed, these two trios complement each other when we combine each of them. Yes, authority must be pastoral, philosophy true, and religion burning zeal.

It is true that the true meaning of authority is to shepherd people. “Whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all” (Mk 10:43-44).

Indeed, true philosophy is Christian truth, just as true knowledge is found in the Christian faith. Truly, religion without the zealous flame of love loses its vitality and becomes simply dead, formal, static Phariseism.

Indeed, “the way” is shepherding in authority, “The truth” in philosophy, and “the life” in religion. This is what is symbolized in the image of the embrace of Peter and Paul. That is, authority with Paul embraces shepherding with Peter. The sciences with Paul meet the truth with Peter. Finally, religion with Paul is realized in zealous love with Peter.

The embrace of Peter’s virtues and Paul’s virtues, when these two worlds are intertwined and the characteristics of each saint meet, Jesus’ rock is realized in practice: “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

St. Peter and St. Paul did not seek their fame. They weren’t seeking to be remembered in 2019 in a faraway land called Oman as the patron

saints. And yet they are remembered to this day.

Peter did not run for office. If anything, he ran from office. The Romans have a beloved story where St. Peter, fleeing the city of Rome and the wrath of Nero, meets Christ on the Via Appia. Christ is headed in the opposite direction, towards the city. Peter asks. *Lord, where are you going?* Christ responds that he is going to Rome to be crucified a second time. This was strong enough to make Peter return to Rome.

These two men could not have known the future—but they knew the present. And they knew that Christ would give them strength for the future, even if it was a future they had not chosen for themselves.

Nero thought he had won, when Peter was crucified upside down and Paul was beheaded. Instead he had crowned them with the glorious crown of martyrdom.

May we have the courage to accept the unknown future and the trust to accept the call of Christ!!.

Catholic sources

Wherever He leads us we will go.... A Testimony

Twenty years ago in mid-August 1999, all the branch Accountants of my husband's Company had received the notice saying that only two accountants out of 6 would be kept back and the rest would be terminated. Hearing this, initially, we were awestruck not knowing what's to be done, as our children were very small, besides having other financial commitments. But our hope was in the LORD; and we said 'Wherever He lead us, we will go'. Every day during my personal prayer my Lord would assure me of His love and care through the Word of God. He proved to me that His Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (Ps 119:105). Ps 118:8 says "It is better to trust in the Lord than to depend on man....." We only sought God's assistance in this matter. As it says in Is 46:4 – 'I am your God and will take care of you until you are old and your hair is gray. I made you and will care for you; I will give you help and rescue

you". The Word of God was strengthening us day in and day out. Another scripture verse that made us strong was Is 22:22 "..... He will have the keys of office; what he opens, no one will shut, and what he shuts, no one will open". Thus, we firmly believed whatever that takes place will be according to our God's plan and we will accept it as God's Will for us.

After 2-3 weeks, my husband was retained and posted to a better place with better facilities, the most important being the transfer from Barka to Muscat office. The seed of faith that was planted in Barka started growing with the help of various opportunities like the MIPC Prayer Meetings, Cell Meetings, Fellowship and numerous Retreats. This truly strengthened us to face the trials in a more matured Christian way.

To cut it short, as it is said above in Is 46:4; indeed, my God took very best care of my husband and his job till now that his hair is turned grey.

Now it was time for my husband to retire but the Lord has been so gracious that he is still asked to continue. This is truly a great blessing from the Lord.

- *Mifa Gomes*

A DAILY LIFE - FULL OF GOD'S PRESENCE

By the power of the precious blood of Christ, it is possible for a Christian to live moment by moment in God's presence. **July** is the Month of the Precious Blood. During this month, we remember our special devotion to the Most Precious Blood of Jesus poured out for us on the cross. The Blood of Christ is the price of our salvation; no other sacrifice could win for us atonement for our sins and eternal life. Having a devotion to the Precious Blood reminds us of our total dependence on God's mercy and calls us to humble personal atonement.

What do we understand by the worship of or devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus? St. Paul clearly attributes a power to the Blood of Christ. What is this power?

After all, blood separated from a body is just a material substance, and it corrupts very quickly unless preserved under very careful conditions; it's hard to see how it could have any real power by itself. Not only that, blood is also generally regarded with horror when shed or spilt, so that it is not uncommon for even grown up people to be queasy or squeamish at the sight or even the thought of blood.

On the other hand, blood even when it has dried contains an almost unlimited amount of information about the person who shed it, so much as to provide science with all kinds of useful knowledge.

Blood has been important throughout all of salvation history. The Letter to the Hebrews, says "Hence not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood" (Heb: 9:18). It also explains why Christ's Blood is the perfect sacrifice:

But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. (Heb: 9:11-12)

The root of the Church's devotion to the Precious Blood of the Lord is very simple, but also mysterious and profound. It is essentially the mystery of the Incarnation of God taking to himself a human nature in its entirety: body, blood, and soul, along with his own eternal, divine Person.

Did you ever wonder about the Body and Blood of the Lord after the Savior's death? The fact is—and it is a very important fact for our faith—that even though as a man Christ could undergo bodily death (that is, the separation of soul and body), and even though he did in fact undergo death, it still remains true that his divine nature (that is, his divine Person), never subject to death, was never separated from the parts of his humanity that were divided in death.

This means that the soul of Christ in death, his body in the tomb, and his shed blood were all united to the Person of the Son, the Word. Thus his

blood was worthy of adoration, as it was poured out on the way of the cross and as it was taken up again in his resurrection.

The devotion to the Precious Blood reminds us that it is by Jesus' sacrifice, in His Blood poured out for the many, that we are saved. The pouring out of Jesus' Blood is a striking sign of just how real our sin is, and an indication that true sacrifice is needed for our salvation, not merely a symbol of sacrifice. His Blood washes us clean, just as Revelation tells us, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev 7:14).

As we accept God's mercy in the perfect sacrifice of his only-begotten Son, let us reflect on the words of St. Catherine of Siena who was devoted to the Precious Blood:

"Precious Blood, Ocean of Divine Mercy: Flow upon us!
Precious Blood, Most pure Offering: Procure us every Grace!
Precious Blood, Hope and Refuge of sinners: Atoned for us!
Precious Blood, Delight of holy souls: Draw us! Amen."

- *Compiled*

The Power of Tithing and Almsgiving

Stewardship, time, talent, treasure and appeal. Those words are often merely associated with pleas to raise money. But if we understood the biblical concepts of stewardship, tithing, and almsgiving, it would revolutionize the way we look at charitable giving.

The Christian is called to be a "faithful and wise steward" in Christ's kingdom (Lk. 12:42). In Scripture, a steward managed the affairs and finances of a large household on behalf of his master (Lk. 16:1- 8). The patriarch Joseph, for example, became a steward for his Egyptian master, Potiphar, and was put in charge of all that his master had. Joseph later found himself in an honourable position ruling over the house of Pharaoh when he was made second in command of the kingdom of Egypt, administrating the affairs of the Pharaoh (Gen. 41:40-45).

It's important to note that the wealth, possessions, and land managed by

the steward were not his own. The master or king was the true ruler and owner. The steward managed his household in his stead and for his purposes.

Stewardship for the Christian certainly has a spiritual dimension. We are stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1-2) and of God's grace (1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2). But stewardship also involves the time, possessions, and gifts that God has entrusted to us. This biblical understanding reminds us that all we possess is not our own; it has been entrusted to us by the Lord. We are stewards called to manage the Lord's gifts faithfully and wisely, so that they can be put to good service for His household, the kingdom of God.

In this light, charitable giving is not so much about giving up "my" money to help other people. All I have has been given to me by my master, the Lord, and I am called to manage these gifts wisely as His steward. My wealth is not my own to use selfishly the way I please. When I give to the Church or to the needy, I am simply being a good steward of the Lord's blessings, using them as He desires.

We will consider two ways we can exercise our stewardship: tithing and almsgiving.

To be contd.....

QUIZ CORNER - QUIZ ON Acts Ch. 1 to 10

Tick (✓) the right answer

Refer the Catholic New Revised Standard Version Bible

1. The men gathered at Christ's Ascension in Acts ch one were called "Men of..... ." (a) Israel (b) Galilee (c) Judah
2. When the time for Pentecost had come from heaven there came alike the rush of a violent wind. (a) fire (b) sound (c) dove
3. The lame man was sitting to ask for alms at the gate of the temple called "the Gate" (a) Golden (b) Sheep (c) Beautiful

4. According to Acts ch 4, the meaning of the name “Barnabas” is
(a) son of encouragement (b) son of thunder (c) a Levite
5. Stephen was working great wonders and signs among the people filled withand.....,
(a) spirit & wisdom (b) grace & power, (c) spirit & grace
6. According to ch. 6, the name of the synagogue where an argument arose between Stephen and others is:
(a) the Freedmen. (b) Israel. (c) the Believers
7. As per ch 8_ buried Stephen and made a loud lament over him. (a) Disciples (b) Apostles (c) Devout men
8. According to Acts 9, theplotted to kill Saul in Damascus
(a) Hellenists (b) Jews (c) Israelites
9. As per ch. 10, the name of Cornelius’ Cohort is:
(a) The Palestinian (b) The Judean (c) The Italian
10. According to Acts 9, in Jerusalem the tried to kill Saul
(a) Jews (b). Israelites (c) Hellenists

ANSWERS FOR THE QUIZ ON HEBREWS Ch. 6 to 13

1) b. hope 2) d. no more 3) c. once a year 4) c. shedding of blood 5) e. to fall into the hands of the living God 6) b. confidence 7) b. by faith 8) d. assurance 9) d. impossible 10) b. disciplines 11 a. peace and holiness 12) c. marriage

Hearty congratulations to Brenda Netto, Jessie Fernandes, Reuben Cardoz, Juliet D’Souza, Susana Pinto and Ethel Fernandes for the correct answers.



***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.***