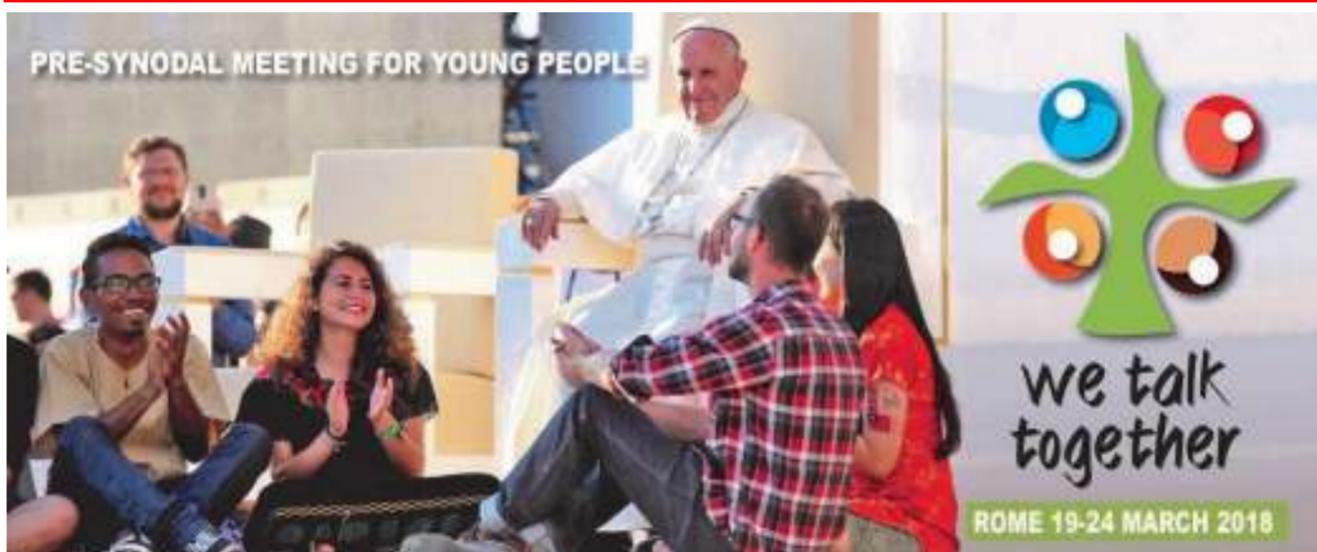


World's Young People can participate in Pre-Synodal Meeting in Rome next week

-Some 300 from five continents will attend, but all can participate from home



A pre-synodal meeting is going to take place in Rome from March 19-24, 2018, in the Vatican ahead of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October on the topic: **Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment**.

Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, of the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, presented the initiative in Rome recently along with Msgr. Fabio Fabene, of the Synod of Bishops; Stella Marilene ([please turn to page 2](#))



Participants of the Confirmation Retreat at Shulinab reflect on God's gifts in their lives ([please see page 6](#))

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Fifth SUNDAY IN LENT

Bishop's Engagements

Sunday March 18th

09:00hrs - Pilgrimage in Berbice

Tuesday March 20th

17:00hrs Peace Building Meeting

Wednesday March 21st

15:00hrs AEC Web Meeting

17:30hrs Reconciliation Service St. Teresa

Sunday 25th March

PALM SUNDAY

07:30hrs Distribution of Palms and Mass at Cathedral



✠ Francis Alleyne OSB



Aishalton Youth prays for her Village

and nurture their children properly from a young age.

I would also like to place my community Aishalton into your hands, Lord. The villagers and especially its leaders for the good Lord to continue blessing them in all their endeavours, that their leadership be guided by the Holy Spirit, for the common good of everyone in the community.

For those who are going through hardships at their homes in the interior and in Guyana. Especially families suffering from broken homes and children suffering from not getting the love and care of married parents but parents who are living together.

For those who do not have jobs to maintain their families. For those old people, for care to be given to them and for children who are left to be

cared for by grandparents. I pray for all these people who face difficulty for the good Lord to assist by sending generous persons to help them.

Finally, I would like to pray for the people of Santa Rosa who will be celebrating their bicentenary on the first of April 2018. Thanking God for Catholicism for all this time in that community.

I pray that the people from Moruca be blessed abundantly for embracing the faith.

I learnt that the Catholic Church in the Rupununi had its initial assistance from the people of Moruca. I would like to thank them and pray for God's blessing on them as they celebrate their bicentenary on April 1st next month.

In the Lord,

Marlyn St. Hill, Youth of Aishalton

EDITORIAL

Pope Francis' five years of remarkable papacy

The fifth anniversary of the election of Pope Francis on March 13, 2013 was a time for reflection on this remarkable papacy. Pope Francis' humble and practical ways surprised us from the day of his election. He continues to surprise, challenge and delight with his wisdom and with his knowledge of people, gleaned from his many years of pastoral experience.

When he gave his four-minute speech during the general congregation just prior to the conclave he said that "the Church is called to come out of herself and to go to the peripheries, not only in the geographical sense but also to go to the existential peripheries: those of the mysteries of sin, of pain, of injustice, of ignorance and of religious indifference, of thought, of all misery". He has remained true to that statement, and like all good teachers he regularly returns to this theme which means we have to make it front and centre in our personal lives and in the life of the Church.

Pope Francis has made some structural changes and introduced a welcome decentralisation in the Church, including moving towards a more collegial, synodal Church, but his real focus has been on changing hearts and attitudes rather than structures. I think often of all the themes he has put before us which serve as guides for spiritual growth and Christian action:

- Humility to know ourselves as sinners, and not to judge others;
- Mercy and welcome for those who struggle with the Church's teaching in their lives;
- Forgiveness as an act of love and acceptance;
- The primary place of the poor and marginalised in our prayer and action;
- Wars and deprivation which drive people from their homes;
- Love for creation as "our common home";
- The strength and the fragility of the family;
- Deep concern about violence and inequality, and the effect they have on ordinary people.

As a pastor I find that Pope Francis has affected so many people, and not just Catholics. He is truly a global leader, the conscience of the world. In an interview, Helen Clark acknowledged how he had affected her: "I look, for example, around the world at who is providing a sense of inspiration and hope at the moment. It's the Pope. I am not a Catholic, but I recognise in this man tremendous goodness. A voice of sanity in a troubled world, often speaking what we all feel but could not express as eloquently."

Regularly reading the words of Pope Francis gives me hope and encouragement, because he understands the messiness of our lives. He often speaks strongly in a very direct (and sometimes humorous) way, which challenges us to look at ourselves

Dear Editor,

During this Lent its good to remember the people of the interior who are striving to live a Christian life. We should especially remember many of the youths who are engaging in not too edifying activities in their villages. We should pray for them to put their young minds and thoughts on positive things to grow as a good Christians.

Pray also for parents who are the first teachers. For them to be inspired from the good spirit to grow

GAWU looking forward to improved relations with SPU

Dear Editor,

The Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) has noted the contents of an article titled 'Ex-Rose Hall workers refuse to take up jobs at the estate – SPU accuse union of undermining interests' which appeared in the March 10, 2018 Kaieteur News. We found the comments that are attributed to a senior SPU official as unfortunate and surprising.

Our Union during an engagement with the SPU on March 09, 2018 raised the concerns of the Rose Hall workers. During that meeting, the GAWU told the SPU team that it was unaware of its plans to re-engage workers. We reminded the SPU representatives that the Unit had

previously committed that it would keep our Union abreast of its plans. In response the SPU team informed that, at that time, no contract/s were formalized to engage workers and the Unit undertook that it would advise the GAWU when such arrangements were finalized.

It should not be forgotten that the Rose Hall workers, like other workers, have a right to accept or not accept what is being offered to them. In fact we did share with the SPU that there is a point where workers would choose to stay home and starve than to work and starve. It was against this background that our Union's President expressed the workers concerns as the Kaieteur News reported. We must say too that we have urged the SPU to take account

of such factors as expressed by the workers and take this opportunity to publicly urge that it does so.

While the GAWU recognizes that the Union and the SPU may not always see eye-to-eye, we sincerely believe, we both must be frank with each other in the interest of promoting good and positive relations. We were, therefore, disturbed that the SPU did not express its concern, as was outlined by the Kaieteur News article. We nevertheless look forward to strengthening and improving the fruitful relations we have with the SPU as we work in the interest of the sugar industry and the thousands dependent on its operations.

Seepaul Narine

General Secretary, GAWU

Young People can participate in Pre-Synodal Meeting (From Page1)

Nishimwe, a young woman from Burundi; Filippo Passantino, a young Italian; and Greg Burke, Director of the Press Office.

The purpose of the meeting, the Cardinal explained, is to provide the opportunity for young people to produce a document, which expresses their view on the state of things, their ideas, their feelings and their recommendations, to be presented to the Synodal Fathers. Some 300 people, representing young people from the 5 continents, are expected to participate in this preliminary gathering. Bishops' conferences, religious congregations, and other Vatican dicasteries were

and how we act. He is not afraid to call out those who oppress or take advantage of others, or those who control processes which lead to great inequality or contempt for the earth. But he also speaks with great compassion and understanding, with a deep understanding and personal experience of the mercy of God. He always conveys hope. Because he is Pope I think we often see him as different in some way to ourselves, but I am sure that he does not see himself as in any way different to us. — **John A. Cardinal Dew, Archbishop of Wellington.** ❖

involved in selecting the young people who will participate.

On March 25, on Palm Sunday, the input from this meeting will be delivered to the Pope. It will be among the various items taken into account in the working document to be used by the Synod fathers.

How Young People Can Participate From Around the World

Expressing the Vatican's desire that young people all over the world can also engage in these discussions, the Italian prelate stressed they are encouraged to do so, by means of social media.

How can young people take part in the meeting? Young Italian Filippo Passantino pointed out the available instruments on the social networks.

Filippo, who is part of a group of young people, invited to the heart of the Synod's Secretariat, to promote participation on the social networks, hoped that "the Church can speak the language of young people." So the group created a Facebook page, multilingual Twitter and Instagram accounts with "a young look to speak to other young people."

He explained that it's about "transforming the social networks into a forum open to all," so that

numerous young people can take part in the Pre-Synodal meeting, in addition to the 300 young people who will be there. Young people are invited to share their stories, their questions on these social networks. "We have received many messages from the whole world," said Filippo. The common hashtag on these international networks is: **#Synod2018**.

The young Italian said that he expected from the Synod words of encouragement on the way young people "can be happy today, in a demanding and competitive world, which seems not to leave a place to the human dimensions and to authentic relations." Young people want to "sow seeds of hope in today's world" and "the Synod might be a precious occasion to invite all those responsible not to close any door to young people," he added.

For young people, a Facebook page has been created: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pre.synodal/about>

The Synod's official site published, in English, with useful instruments for the Pre-Synodal meeting:

<http://www.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en/pre-synodal-meeting.html> ❖

Pope chooses 2019 Synod of Bishops on Amazon theme, appoints Council

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis has chosen the theme and appointed members of the preparatory council for the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon region, which will take place in Rome in October 2019.

The theme, the Vatican announced March 8, is "The Amazon: New paths for the church and for an integral ecology."

The pope also named 18 members for the pre-synod council that will collaborate with the secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops in preparing for the special assembly next year.

A synod council usually prepares an outline and list of questions, which bishops' conferences and other interested groups in the church respond to. The responses are then compiled and analyzed before a synod working document is prepared.

The synod will seek to hear the voice of those living in the Amazon region and identify new paths of evangeliza-

tion, especially for indigenous people who are "often forgotten and left without the prospect of a peaceful future, including because of the crisis of the Amazon forest," which plays a vital role in the environmental health of the entire planet, the pope has said.

"We have to break with the historical paradigm that views Amazonia as an inexhaustible source of supplies for other countries without concern for its inhabitants," he said when meeting indigenous people in Peru in January 2018.

Rich in biodiversity, natural resources and cultures, the Amazon rainforest is the largest in the world, covering more than 2.1 million square miles in South America. The rainforest spreads across Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, Suriname, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Guyana and French Guiana.

Among the 18 new members of the

synod council are three cardinals, 13 bishops, one nun and a layman -- the majority of them are from countries in the Amazon region.

Council members include: Msgr Karel Martinus Choennie, bishop of Paramaribo (Suriname); Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes, president of the Pan-Amazonian Church Network (REPAM); Ghanaian Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; Mexican Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes of Mexico City; Sister Maria Lopes Dos Santos, a member of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and delegate of the Confederation of Latin American Religious; and Mauricio Lopez, executive secretary of REPAM; Vice President of the Red Eclesial Panamazónica; and Archbishops from Paraguay, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. ❖

Upcoming Events

Saturday March 17th

Lenten Retreat for Men

9am-4pm, St. Joseph Ursuline Chapel, Camp Street, Georgetown. Please call 226-4469 for details.

Sunday March 18th

Berbice Lenten Pilgrimage

Berbice parishes will be gathering for their annual Lenten Pilgrimage at Black Bush Polder on March 18th at 9:00a.m. Please see details on page 7.

Bible Quiz Finals

All are invited to the finals of the Bible Quiz for the Junior and Senior categories, as well as the Young Adult Bible Quiz on Sunday March 18th, from 1:00 pm at Marian Academy.

Wednesday March 21st

Reconciliation Service at St Teresa at 5:30pm.

Tuesday March 27th

Chrism Mass

All are invited to the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, March 27th at 5:00 pm at the Cathedral.

Saturday May 5th

Camp Kayuka Fun Day

All are invited to the annual Camp Kayuka Fun Day on May 5th. Tickets cost \$500 (children of primary school age free), obtainable the Bishop's Office, the Piety Shop or your Parish.

"I am deeply disturbed by the growing exodus of Venezuelans from their country, many of them in search of access to food and basic services," he added.

A Reuters Special Report published last week followed a group of migrants as they fled Venezuela on a bus ride through five South American countries in a quest for a better life. ❖

U.N. seeks inquiry into killings in Venezuela, says poll not credible

GENEVA (Reuters) - The United Nations human rights chief said on Wednesday, March 7, that crimes against humanity may have been committed by state forces in Venezuela and voiced alarm at "the erosion of democratic institutions" in the Andean nation.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein said his office had received credible reports of "hundreds of extra-judicial killings in recent years, both during protests and security operations".

"I encourage the Council to consider mandating a Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations in Venezuela," Zeid told the U.N. Human Rights Council, holding its main annual four-week session through March 23.

Venezuela is among the 47 member states of the Geneva forum, where it enjoys support from allies led by Cuba, but it has been criticized by the United States and other Latin American countries for shrinking democracy and a food and health crisis.

Venezuela last week postponed its upcoming presidential vote to May 20 in a move cementing an opposition split as socialist incumbent Nicolas Maduro seeks re-election despite an economic crisis and global censure.

The main opposition coalition is boycotting the poll, saying it is a farce intended to legitimize a "dictatorship."

The context for the presidential poll "does not in any way fulfill minimal conditions for free and credible elections", Zeid said.

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Where Experience is Always at Your Service

A Christian Perspective on Social Issues



Rev Billy Graham - one failing that leaves a lesson for local church leaders

By GHK Lall

America's Pastor, a pastor famous and heralded throughout the world has died. Rev Billy Graham just recently departed this earthly pale for the mysteries of the great beyond. What was his legacy? What was the enduring failure of this man of God? What is the lesson left waiting to be learned, begging for the living, by church leaders everywhere, and especially local Christian ones?

Rev Graham's record is long, impressive, and studded with Christian gems well lived; gems of proclamation, of spirituality, and of good and great works that reached the high and those near. A hundred men-nay, a thousand taken together-may not be able to compare with his prolific and splendid works, his matchless gifts, his special spirituality. This much should be beyond question, beyond reproof. But Rev Graham failed, and he did so rather miserably, in one particular glaring area. It is an area sensitive, significant, and spiritually sublime in the teachings of Jesus, in the call of sacred scripture.

That area is neither immaterial nor occasional nor whimsical. It is the heart of hearts of Christ's presence, Christ's call, Christ's life, and Christ's sacrifice. This is best summed up in three glorious majestic words, three words only: Love thy neighbor. This is the awesome simplicity, the close embrace, and the powerful reach that aligns seamlessly also with the scriptural golden rule; and with one of the two great commandments from the lips and heart of the Son of God. From Almighty God himself, for "God loved the world so much that..." And representative of the pinnacle of the self-sacrificing through the laying down one's life for ... It starts with, and culminates in: love thy neighbor.

Regrettably, Rev Graham succeeded in most other things; but he failed terribly at this one all-encircling exhortation, teaching, commandment that transcends all the rest. How can there be love of God with all, when love thy neighbor is present only in its distinctive undeniable nonexistence? The good pastor may have cared (and loved) at some private secret level for the harrowing plight of minorities, the afflicted, and the virtually enslaved. But when public condemnation, and unflinching unambiguous repeated stances were called for - indeed demanded-he withered on the vine. He withered in distinguishing silence; he lagged through great self-inflicted, and self-protecting distancing; and he stifled his conscience, and his influential speech, on what amounted to great abominations, and even greater evils.

Jesus' heart was filled with compassion (that comes from love) for the spurned and discriminated against in his time and environment. There

should have been that same stirring in the heart and soul of Pastor Graham as he beheld and discerned the loveless inhuman circumstances of the colored flock at large. He had eyes, but preferred to avert his gaze and not see; he had ears, but insisted upon blocking them, so he would not hear the cries of the poor and the hurting, God's children too. Rev Graham also had a clear mind that he darkened because he did not want to overturn the carriage of the biologists, the supremacists, and the arsonists, most of whom were of his world, if not his friends. He failed; Rev Graham failed when he could have been-should have been-the embodiment of what is truly Christian, and unapologetically godly, when it mattered the most.

In the Reverend's failure, there is a simple lesson for all church leaders here in embittered racially gangrenous Guyana. It is particularly relevant and pointed at those leaders immersed in the Christian tradition, and on whom the heavy responsibilities of stewardship have been graced. Local Christian leaders (including Catholic ones) must call to truth. Call things the way they are. Call out friends and congregation. Call the way all should be. They must neither retreat nor cower. They must stand with Jesus, and for Jesus, against that which has devastated the peoples of this broken nation and its possibilities. They must condemn clearly and consistently that which is degrading and decimating the church of God. Church leaders must labor continuously to combat by word and posture and deed that which made this society lose its soul. The message is simple: love thy neighbor. Then search in this time of Lent and later for fulfillment, however partial, however imperfect. ❖

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Admission Requirements:

AGE: 18 ½ to 35 years of age

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- Must have completed at least 5 subjects at CXC General Certificate of Examination in no more than 2 (two) sittings with a grade of 1, 2, or 3 (Grades 1 & 2 are preferable)

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- English Language A
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Sunday Scripture

March 18th - Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year B

**FIRST READING**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

I will make a new covenant and never call their sin to mind.

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel (and the House of Judah), but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks - since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 50

Response: A pure heart create for me, O God.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. *Response*

2. A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. *Response*
3. Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me, that I may teach transgressors your ways and sinner may return to you. *Response*

SECOND READING

Hebrews 5:7-9

He learnt to obey and became the source of eternal salvation.

During his life on earth, Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

GOSPEL

John 12:20-33

If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest.

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put his request to him, "Sir, we should like to see Jesus." Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus.

Jesus replied to them:

"Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life.

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- John 12:24

If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled.

What shall I say:

Father, save me from this hour?

But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour.

Father, glorify your name!"

A voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; other said, "It was an angel speaking to him." Jesus answered, "It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

"Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself."

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die. ❖



By: The Diocesan Stewardship
Council of Guyana

Easter Sunday is but two weeks away (April 1). In our First Reading from the prophet Jeremiah, we hear God tell us, "I will forgive their evil-doing and remember their sin no more." To affirm that forgiveness, St. Paul has this to say in the Second Reading: "He (Jesus) became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him." There is a connection between these two statements which present forgiveness as the way to salvation.

The Lenten season is one of penance, reflection, prayer, almsgiving, and fasting, perhaps even in that order, so

we can better prepare ourselves for Easter Sunday and beyond. Lent reminds us that God is gracious and merciful. God's divine mercy is a central theme of Lent.

One might say that the priceless gift of God's mercy is highlighted and celebrated in the Church in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession). That should be a key part of our Lenten journey. As mentioned only two weeks remain on that journey so getting to reconciliation is important if we have not done so already.

Sacramental confession allows God's loving mercy and His grace-filled absolution to be confirmed to us through a priest. God sees us with love, mercy, and an abundance of forgiveness. Christ, through the priest, helps us to let go of anything that gets in the way of our relationship to God. St. Isidore wrote, "Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin. All hope consists in confession. In confession there is a chance for mercy." ❖

[<http://www.catholicsteward.com/blog/>]

Gospel Reflection



By Fr. Michael Barrow SJ

JESUS' MOMENT OF GLORY

A bit of a puzzle in this Sunday's Gospel. Some Greeks ask to see Jesus and then Jesus goes on talking about something quite different. They came to see Jesus because by then he was a celebrity, someone famous whom they could not approach directly but hoped to get an introduction. They didn't even ask for an interview - they just wanted to see him. Then when he started talking they must have thought they had come just at the right moment because he said, "Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified!" They had obviously arrived at an important time and would see something spectacular.

They saw Jesus as a celebrity. A celebrity is one who depends on popularity, relying on what other people think of them. But the real Jesus was not a celebrity in that sense. For Jesus his moment of glory was when he could sacrifice himself totally for the sake of others. His image of a grain of wheat taking root in the ground was a good description of that: if the grain dies and disintegrates then other grains come to life and flourish. Jesus' moment of glory was when he was so taken up with love of others that he had nothing left that he could call his own, not even a good reputation.

What is the moment of glory for a celebrity? On stage welcoming everyone's applause? Coming off the stage and sitting contentedly basking in the feeling of being adored? Or going home and becoming totally absorbed in someone who is ill and in need and perhaps out of his mind?

What would be your moment of glory? Like a celebrity basking in popularity? Or being content with what people may think of you? Or, like Jesus, completely and totally taken up with your love and care of someone in need who sometimes drives you mad? ❖

Sixty-five youths make Confirmation Retreat at Shulinab



Reflecting on God's gifts in our lives

From: Collette Fernandes, Anika Fredericks, Marial Lewis & Ann Peters

A Confirmation Retreat for the villages of Shulinab, Potarinau, Baitoon, Katur and Parikwaranau was held from March 2nd-4th at Shulinab Village. It was led by Fr. Ronnie and Fr. Edwin and around 65 young people attended.

It was a very important moment in our lives. We learnt many new things which will help us to be more prepared for confirmation.

We understand a Confirmation Retreat as a time for reflecting on our lives and thinking about what we have done. We saw the retreat as a way to reflect on a very important sacrament.

We heard the Pope encouraging us to pray, receive the sacraments and help others.

It was interesting to learn more about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The question was asked to all the confirmation candidates: What are the gifts of Holy Spirit and how do you understand them in your lives? We said that:

- (1) Wisdom is the ability to see things as they are in an open-minded manner.
- (2) Understanding is a heart that accepts, cares, understands, listens and forgives.
- (3) Knowledge is the ability to comprehend the truths of the universe and God's laws.
- (4) Right judgment is the ability to make good and wise decisions
- (5) Courage is the strength to do what is right in spite of challenges.
- (6) Reverence is a deep respect for God, for others and for all creation.

Finally,

- (7) Fear of the Lord is a sense of the greatness and the majesty of God coupled with a deep realization of his nearness.

Collette reflected after the retreat, "As a youth leader for my Church in the village of Potarinau, I always tell youths that they have talents and gifts. Furthermore, they should use these gifts and talents to build up and better the community. The gifts of the Holy Spirit will help us to be strong as we go about spreading the good news".

To conclude, we would like to say that youths are the future leaders. We ask you to pray for us during our preparation for Confirmation. Thank You! ❖ (Photos: Fr. Edwin)



Echoes of Faith training at Meadow Bank



On Saturday March 3rd, the Echoes of Faith Training for Catechists commenced at Our Lady of the Mount Parish, Meadow Bank. It was the first of eight modules for Part One. The session began with a personal reflection on each individual's journey as a catechist.

A deeper understanding of the vocation and examination of the various qualities of each catechist were discussed. Some other topics were: Finding Jesus; Growing as a Catechist and Becoming an echo of faith. The training will be ongoing on Saturdays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. ❖

Living Water celebrates 15 years in Barbados



June Ann Pinkerton (left) and Elaine Hewitt, members of LWC Barbados, renewed their promises to live consecrated life

The witness of Living Water Community (LWC) for the past 15 years in Barbados has touched many areas of life in that country, said Apostolic Administrator of Bridgetown, Archbishop Jason Gordon.

In his homily at a Mass at the LWC Centre in St David's, Christ Church, Archbishop Gordon said "Living Water" has flowed to its members, the diocese, the wider society, the poor and Catholic media in Barbados. He added that ecclesial movements like LWC represented a new wave of missionary zeal, a new manifestation of a way of living for Christ, "another way of being Church".

The 15th anniversary celebration of LWC's Barbados Mission coincided with its annual Covenant Night Mass on January 26. Covenant Night is when members renew their commitment to the Community, new members are welcomed, and

persons make/renew their promises to live consecrated life.

Among other things, LWC's Barbados Mission is involved in ministry to the poor and homeless; runs groups for women, men, children and youth; offers counselling; and visits homes for the elderly, shut-ins and two youth detention centres. The Mission is also pursuing the construction of a cancer hospice in collaboration with other groups and individuals.

Rose Jackman, LWC Co-Foundress and Director of Missions, said: "We give God thanks for all those persons who have made our Barbados Mission possible and who help sustain our ministries."

In interviews with Trinity TV, a media ministry of LWC, several persons spoke about the impact the Barbados Mission has had on them. Andrew Foster said community life gave him the

opportunity to "stretch". He explained: "If you don't stretch, you stay in one position all the time. By getting involved in a ministry...it gives you the opportunity to stretch yourself and that stretch brings growth."

Allison Pile said Living Water brought her back to the Catholic Church and now she was very active in her parish. Diana Moe, meanwhile, recalled how LWC came to Barbados just at the right time to help build the community of Catholics that had been forming in Beulah, St Philip. That community grew into the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish.

The congregation at Mass included LWC Director and Co-Foundress Rhonda Maingot, Assistant Director Rosemary Scott, who helped start the Barbados Mission in 2003, as well as some Ursuline and Franciscan Sisters. Mass was followed by dinner. ❖

Journeying with the Word of God



MAKING THE WORD OF GOD YOUR OWN

Step 1: Look at today's Readings prayerfully.

1st Reading: The prophet Jeremiah tells a broken people that God has not forsaken them but will soon make a new and more intimate covenant with them.

2nd Reading: By his life of obedience and suffering, Christ has become a source of salvation for those who follow his example.

Gospel: Jesus sees his upcoming death as fulfilling God's purpose as this will bring life to those who follow him.

Step 2: Applying the values of the Readings to your daily life.

1. Jeremiah says that God will write a new covenant on the hearts of his people. What does this covenant mean for you today?
2. Jesus says that anyone who loves his life loses it. How are you called to "lose your life"?
3. In what ways are you fearful or reluctant to die to yourself in order to follow Jesus?
4. Each day we create our own death by the way we live. What is this statement saying to you?

Step 3: Accepting the message of God's Word in your life of faith.

Jesus' life was not taken from him. He gave it freely and willingly. He gave it out of love for God and for us. To love is to accept that one has to die to self, to all that keep us from being able to share ourselves, our skills and talents for the good of others. It is because people have always been prepared to die to self-interest that the most precious things humanity possesses have been born.

Step 4: Something to think & pray about

1. Our church community must be a ministering one. Share with the others how you can be a part of the ministry of your parish community?
2. Reflect on the gifts you possess that can be of use in a ministry in our community. How do you intend to develop and share those gifts?
3. Think of someone you know or have read about whose efforts have helped in some way to make this world a better place. What do you think it is that has caused them to make a difference? ❖

[From: *Journeying with the Word of God*, The Religious Education Department, Diocese of Georgetown, Guyana]

Annual Black Bush pilgrimage on this weekend

By Leon Suseran

This Sunday will prove to be quite a spiritual journey for the hundreds that will participate in the annual Lenten pilgrimage of the Berbice Parishes. As usual, the event will be held at Black Bush Polder, Corentyne and will see the involvement of communities from Palmyra, New Amsterdam, Port Mourant, Springlands, Hopetown and of course, Black Bush parishes. According to one of the organizers of the event, Mr. Joseph Torrezao of Port Mourant, the experience will start at 9:00am with a procession of witness

from the Borah Bus Shed. There will be praying of the rosary, singing of hymns and Stations of the Cross, along the way towards the Holy Name R.C. Parish Church, Mibicuri, BBP.

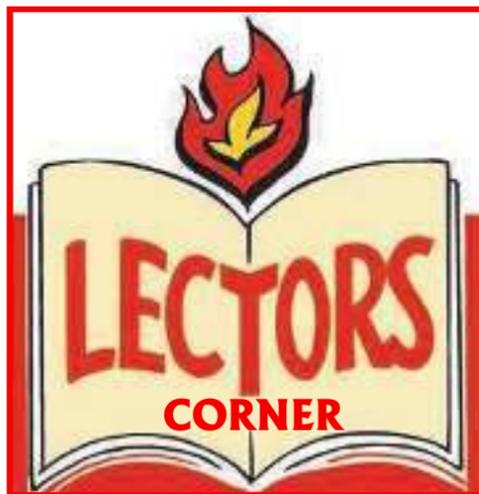
His Lordship, Bishop Francis Alleyne OSB is expected to once again grace the event with his presence. He will be the chief celebrant of the 11am Mass. He will be assisted by Fr Anthony de Sousa, SJ and the new parish priest of Port Mourant church Fr Stephen

Brother Joseph also stated that the Charismatic group from

Georgetown will also be there as they have been for the past years and hold an afternoon spiritual session of song and prayers.

Pilgrims attending will also have the opportunity to go to Confession.

Parishioners at their respective parishes are therefore urged, at least those who have not yet made plans to attend, to contact their respective parishes and leaders to arrange to attend this grand event which has been a part of the calendar of activities in Berbice for several years. ❖



Proclaiming the Word of God

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life
-1Sam 3:9;Jn 6:68

March 18th: Fifth Sunday of Lent (B)



"If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest"

The Word This Week

In the weeks of Lent so far we have followed God's work of salvation: we have seen the Covenants he established with Noah, Abraham, Moses and the people of Israel after the return from Babylon. Now we come to one of the most significant parts of the Old Testament: the promise of a brand new Covenant, which will be different from all those that went before. This Covenant will see God and Man living more closely together. For the ratification of a Covenant, something was always sacrificed as a sign of the new relationship – normally man would offer some animal offering to God. But the New Covenant will be ratified not with the death of sheep or bull, but by the death of Jesus Christ, God and Man. In this perfect sacrifice is the source of our eternal salvation.

Notes for Readers

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

God is so enthusiastic in this reading! It's the enthusiasm of someone who sees the way of solving the problems of the world, of making things work

properly again, of achieving something that has been longed for. Three times in this reading we have the words "it is the Lord who speaks" just to remind us where this comes from. It begins by outlining for us what went wrong in the past – how the Houses of Israel and Judah broke the Old Covenants. The turning point is the word "No": this announces that God is doing something new. Everything up to "Deep within them..." is by way of introduction, so save yourself until this point. From here on, allow your reading to be very clear and deliberate. Try to get into the frame of mind where you are entrusted with an important message, which must be delivered in a way the people can receive and understand it.

Second Reading: Hebrews 5:7-9

This is a very short and simple reading, but no less profound for that. This is the Garden of Gethsemane, and the prayer of Jesus the night before his passion. There is a very deep paradox in this reading, which you should be aware of: it states that Jesus prays to be saved, and that God heard his prayer: does this mean that God should have prevented Jesus' death on the cross? Look at the words more closely: "Jesus prayed to the one who had the power to save him out of death" This "out of death" is important, since it is not about avoiding the cross, but passing through it to something more glorious. Thanks to Jesus being "obedient even to death on the cross, therefore God raised him high, and gave him the name which is above all names." You have to take this reading slowly and reflectively. Be very careful about reading exactly what is written – there is quiet a rich meaning contained within this short passage. Try to picture in your mind everything from Holy Thursday to the Ascension – since that is what is contained in these few short lines.



March 25th: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (B)



"Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord."

The Word This Week

On Palm Sunday the long reading of the Passion dominates the celebration, and in a sense its meaning is obvious. Do not allow this, however, to detract from the other readings, which give the vital context necessary for understanding the Passion as more than just a long story. It is our story – the tale of how God achieved

OUR salvation by the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Notes for Readers

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

This is one section of a great block of readings that comes in the third section of the book of Isaiah, and is commonly called the "Song of the Suffering Servant". It has always been interpreted by the Church as referring to the inner attitude of the Lord Jesus in his Passion, and so is a vital reading today: it lets us into Jesus' mind, and tells us the story of the person behind the events we hear in the Passions. It is the voice of the Lord in his silent suffering. And what is the word he speaks? "Obedience." The servant trusts completely in the Lord, who provides even the words he speaks. Whatever comes, he will trust in God, because if one is faithful to God, then one will know no shame. Allow this reading into your heart, so that it can find its way into others' hearts as you read it. Make it much more than just "a reading before the Passion" – these two readings are the very meaning of the Passion. Also remember it's a poem, and that must

make a difference in the way you read it.

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Before the sacrifice of the cross was the sacrifice of the Incarnation. In other words, even before he came to Calvary, Jesus had already sacrificed so much for his people. This is the theme of this great hymn of the "self-emptying" of the Son of God. He leaves behind all his glory and equality with God in order to become a slave – even going further to accepting a terrible death. But even as we proclaim his emptying, his lonely death, we proclaim that God raised him higher than any other. This reading starts almost mournfully, but by the end is a triumphant hymn of victory through sacrifice. Begin reading slowly and quietly, pausing after each short line (as printed in the Lectionary), but increased the pace and grow a little louder from "But God raised him high..." onwards. Aim to end triumphantly with "...the glory of the God the Father." ❖

[From: Office for Liturgy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford <http://www.salfordliturgy.org.uk/>]

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ALL ARE INVITED TO THIS WONDERFUL LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE OF EMPOWERMENT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT



Children's Page

"My Soul Is Troubled"

Dear Girls and Boys,

Just a few days before he was to be crucified, Jesus said, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" Jesus knew that he was going to die on the cross. He could have asked God to save him. Instead, he only asked that his Father's name would be glorified.

Why do troubles come into our life? We believe that troubles come for the very reason that Jesus said -- so that God's name will be glorified. There have been people who followed the example of Jesus when they faced trouble in their life. There have even been people who faced death with such courage and faith that God's name was glorified. Wouldn't it be pleasing to God if all of us faced trouble in such a way that His name is glorified?

Dear Father, we all face trouble in our daily life. Instead of asking you to take them away, let us ask that you help us to face those troubles in such a way that your name will be glorified. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen. ✨

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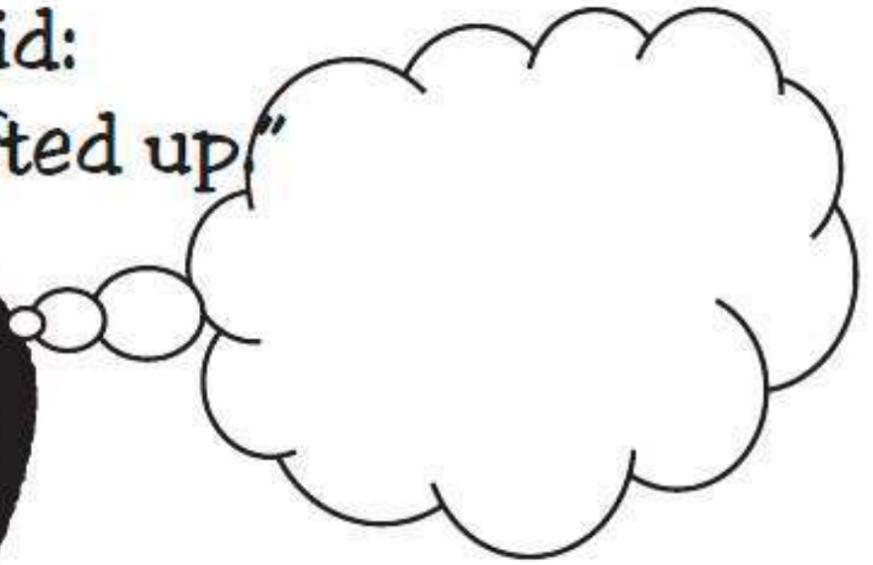
WORSHIP	FESTIVAL	WHEAT
BETHSAIDA	SINGLE	SOUL
VOICE	THUNDER	ANGEL
SENTENCE	PRINCE	DEATH



JESUS KNEW HOW HE WAS GOING TO DIE ...

He said:

"I will be lifted up"



What was Jesus thinking of?
In the thought bubble draw a picture of how he was put to death.

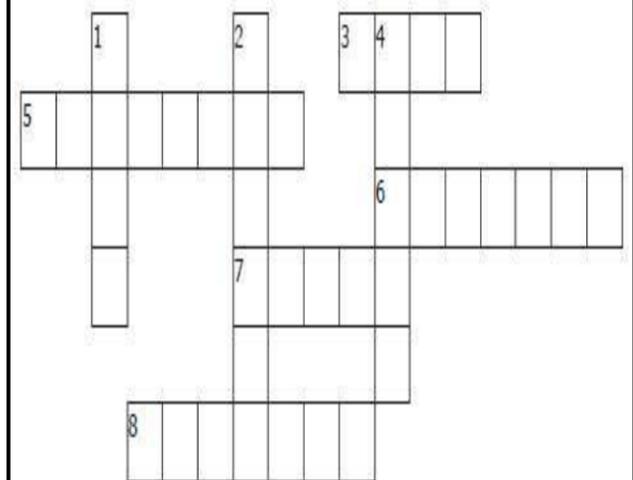
TODAY is the FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT



Colour me!



"Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" No it was for this very reason I came to this hour." *John 12:27 (NIV)*



ACROSS

- 3. To rescue from danger
- 5. To have problems or difficulties
- 6. To honor or praise
- 7. The sound people make when they speak or sing
- 8. A booming noise that follows lightning

DOWN

- 1. The spiritual part of a person that continues to live after the body dies
- 2. The home of God and the angels
- 4. A heavenly being who serves God

GLORIFY	ANGEL	THUNDER	HEAVEN
TROUBLED	VOICE	SAVE	SOUL

We had a very private, and emotional, lengthy discussion with a young lady recently. We were walking, after Mass a few months ago, towards the car, minding our own sweet business, when she came up to us and asked, "Could I talk to you for a few minutes?" Sure, why not, we responded?

She migrated from Guyana about 5 years ago. She came to us to tell us how much she appreciated the many bits of advice we shared through our weekly articles, and she wondered if we could share with her our thoughts on abortion.

She told us that she had two abortions in her past, and so she had been refraining from going up for communion. She is now engaged and her fiancée ensured her that all she had to do was to go to confession and she could go up for communion again. So, before she approached our priest, she wanted our advice. Which, of course, we are more than willing to give, in whatever way we can.

What did we do, or rather, what did God do through us, to become instrumental in this woman's healing without even knowing it? Apparently it all boils down to one simple thing: we make an effort, every time, to somehow acknowledge the pain of the women who have experienced it.

We think it's sometimes easy for us, in our little Catholic bubbles, to assume that the reality of abortion is far from us and the odds must be slim that anyone within earshot of our Catholic setting has actually been involved or had an abortion. But when we think about the numbers a different picture starts to emerge. According to a poll in the US, every year 2 percent of women between ages 15 and 44 have an abortion. Two percent doesn't seem like a lot. But bear in mind that's only one year.

Before you speak, empathize



By Chris & Noelma Lam

We're not statisticians, but it seems to us that if a woman's reproductive life lasts roughly 30 years, and every year 2 percent of those women have an abortion, then over the course of the average woman's child-bearing years, the odds of her having had an abortion would climb to something more like 60 percent. Of course, that's assuming one abortion per woman, while we know that some women have multiple abortions. But still, the numbers are staggering. When we factor in the fact that each of those babies had a father as well (who in many of those cases was aware of and even agreeable to the abortion), grandparents who may have known about their prenatal grandchildren, etc., we start to realize the enormity of the toll.

So what are the odds that, in any random conversation we're engaged in, that we may be directly or indirectly speaking to someone who has experienced abortion personally? We'd say they're pretty good.

The Church is full of women who have had abortions. Some of them have repented, some haven't. Some have

processed the pain, some haven't. Some have just buried the pain so deep in their subconscious that they wouldn't know how to access it if they wanted to.

We don't know about them. Women who've had abortions, and the family members who were complicit in them, don't wear signs. They don't talk about it. Especially in a Catholic setting, they would obviously be more inclined to keep quiet. They listen in silence, wondering how they would be judged.

Sometimes these women have repented and come back to the Church. Sometimes they have kept the pain buried so deep they don't know how to.

What do we do about that? Keep quiet and avoid offending anyone? Of course not. But it suddenly becomes a little more important to think about what we're saying. WE need to listen to ourselves. Before we speak, place ourselves in the shoes of someone who has experienced abortion personally. How would our words sound to them? Would what we're saying be more likely to move them toward God and His Church, or away from it?

Abortion is a horror show for many women, a complete emotional and spiritual train wreck. An act of unspeakable violence happens inside their bodies. Millions of women are walking around wounded. The God of all love and consolation wants to reach out to them and heal them. Sometimes, He needs us to be His presence.

Let us keep them in mind next time you get to chatting, or arguing, about abortion. We need to remember that, while it may be an important issue to us, it could also be a private, personal trauma to someone else. ❄️



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TitBits

-- This Week's Reflection:

How can we have more faith; is it something that we can ask God for? The answer is an absolute YES! To have faith is to believe. The apostle Paul preached "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." - (Romans 10:9)

The apostles were rebuked by Jesus several times for their lack of faith, and they asked Jesus to increase their faith. Jesus responded by saying, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." - (Luke 17:5-6)

Faith is something we can ask God for; He will not deny us!
 God Bless You! Have a Great Week!

-- This Week's Bible Question:

Q. How many years after Paul's conversion did he visit Peter in Jerusalem?

-- This Week's Teaser:

Q: What type of dress can never be worn?

-- Today's Bible Verse:

We walk by faith, not by sight.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:7

-- Today's Marriage Tip:

Every night ask each other forgiveness for the things you did wrong or if you've offended each other.

-- Humour:

It had been raining steadily for four days, so Little Johnny asked his mom where does the rain come from. "God makes the rain, and causes it to fall."

She responded.

"Well." Said Johnny. "Please ask him to turn off the tap. He's wasting too much water."

-- A Card Hallmark Would Never Print:
 I smile because I don't know what the heck is going on with you.

-- This Week's Truism:

Don't count the days, make the days count.

-- Actual Hilarious Signs:

In a Bangkok temple:
 It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner if dressed as a man.

-- Answer to Bible Question:

3 years - see Galatians 1:18
 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

-- Answer to Teaser:

An address. ❄️

Mind Puzzler Corner

Our Last Brain Teaser was:

I drift forever with the current down these long canals they've made. Tame, yet wild. I run exclusive, multi-tasking to your aid. Before I came the world was a darker place. But though I might make living easy, I'm good at killing too.
 What am I?

The answer: Electricity.

This Week's Brain Teaser:

A girl has as many brothers as sisters, but each brother has only half as many brothers as sisters. How many brothers and sisters are there in the family?

Look for the answer next week

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Enemies of Peace Viewpoint

by Vibert Parvatan

"The human tragedy reaches its climax and sacrifice of hundreds of millions of people and of the victories of the righteous cause, we have still not found peace or security, and that we lie in grip of even worse perils than those we have surrounded." - WINSTON CHURCHILL

The lives of millions of people in various parts of our world are plague by conflict situations which destroy their peace and may result in all sorts of tragedies.

Conflicts which in many ways adversely affect the lives of people can be heard of and be seen regularly. The many forms of conflict jeopardize the well being of many persons be it physical, emotional, mental, financial or otherwise.

People's struggles for a better way of life and in some cases for survival may sometimes propel them into a more confrontational mode.

The social, economic, political, personal, family and other issues which demand their attention push them into being less tolerant with a fighting mood surfacing which fans flames of conflict. Such responses whether impetuous or calculated destroy not only good relationships which are necessary but affect the well being and tranquility of those involved.

In our world, full of lofty ideals, religious teachings and vociferous outpourings on subjects of love, harmony, compassion and understanding, the forces of conflict seem to be getting stronger and overshadowing peace.

Instead of searching for common bonds of unity to face such problems as poverty, disease, hunger and want and focus on organisational and national goals, the tendency is to create and promote conflict.

Every person will state acceptance of the need for peace whether in the homes, schools, work place, nationally or in the world. Yet too few are prepared to be instruments of peace. We seem to forget the Biblical statement **"BLESSED ARE THE PEACE MAKERS FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD"**. The question may be asked – what should the conflict lovers be called? Would the answer be children of the devil? Surely none of us would like to be so categorised, although we may sometimes place ourselves in that group.

Writing on vision of a better world Sir Peter Ustinov stated:

"Ideally men should be judged by their actions not by their beliefs. his is still sadly far from being the case. Whereas religions have succeeded in elevating mankind to wonderful isolated examples of spiritual strength, their message of love, concord, or even tolerance has been tragically ignored by those who used as something by its very nature divisive, exclusive and true to the detriment of other truths. And yet, despite these threats to the world's peace of mind, enormous changes in our sense of values are thrillingly discernible...."

The quicker ideas of victors and vanquished are relegated to the sports arena, where they belong, to satisfy the chauvinistic diehard streak in all of us, the better. In the forward looking terms of future coexistence, these criteria have no place...."

Our prosperity is as indivisible as our hard times".

In our own society we see conflict in so many areas of daily activities.

Some actions and events, however, good may be the intentions, accentuate divisions, adversely affects commitment and motivation, and raises the ugly head of accusations of partiality and discrimination of all which undermines purposeful unity.

The need for promoting peace is self-evident. In this regard, we have a role to play in our homes, offices, neighbourhoods, communities and country.

The Italian Poet Petrarch writing on Peace stated: **"Five great enemies to**

St Francis Xavier parish begins 2018 feeding programme

By Leon Suseran

The parish of Saint Francis Xavier in the Portuguese Quarter, Port Mourant, Corentyne, through its Saint Martin de Porres Society, has led the way in providing meals for hundreds of school children in the area over the past years. Earlier this month it held its first feeding of school children for the year.

According to Joseph Torrazo, President of the St Martin de Porres Society at St Francis, "Special thanks are due to our sponsor, Mrs. Sandra Singh of New York. It's a kind and loving way of commemorating her son Andrew Singh's birthday! May God abundantly bless this family. Thanks also to all those who had helped, May God bless all".

Special thanks to the chief cook, Nalini Persaud-Torrezao and all who prepare the delicious foods and work tirelessly in the kitchen and other areas behind the scenes.

Overseeing the feeding programme over the years were parish priests Fr. Mark Lakra SJ and Fr. Joseph Raj SJ,



sadly both of whom have been re-appointed to Georgetown and the East Coast parishes respectively. They depart Port Mourant soon. Father Joseph will be at Plaisance.

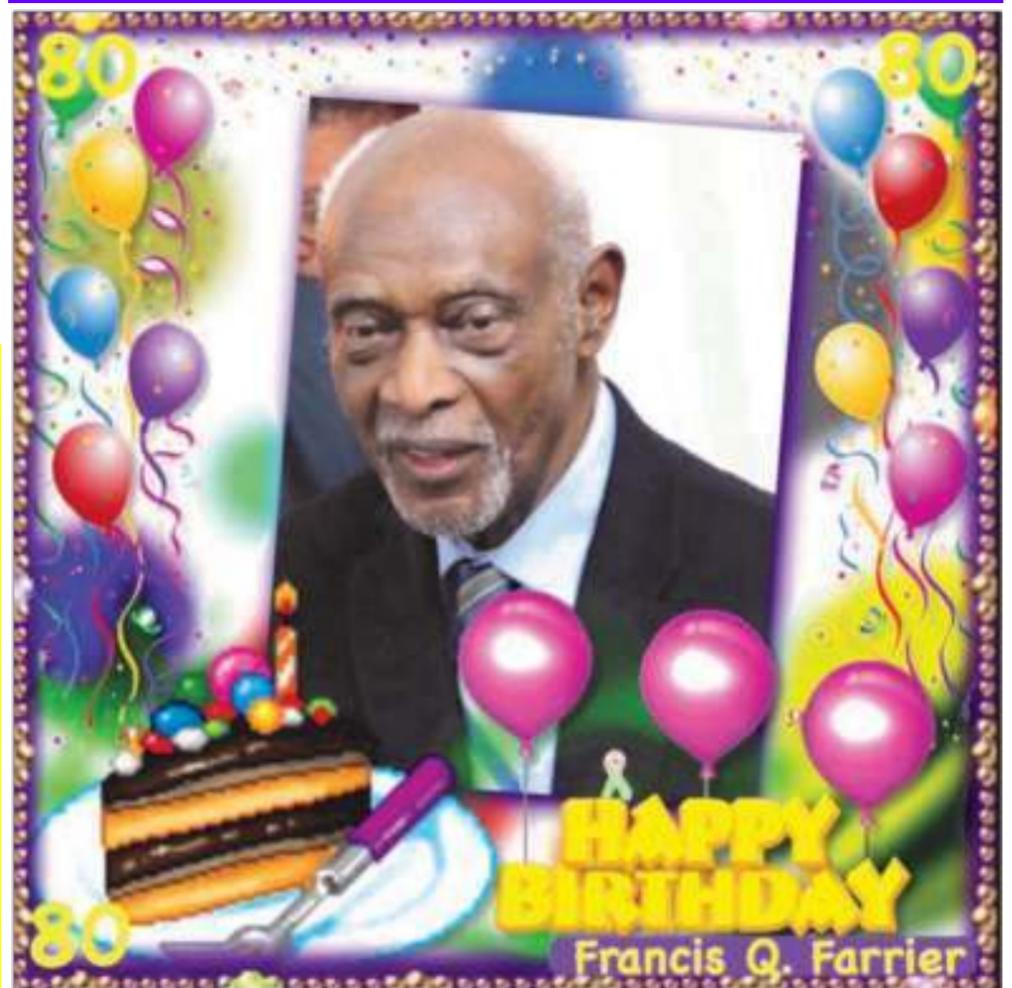
Saint Francis Xavier, Port Mourant will be welcoming their new Jesuit priest Fr. Stephen very soon. ❖

peace inhabit with us viz Avarice, Ambition, Envy, Anger and Pride. If these enemies were to be banished we should infallibly enjoy perpetual peace."

My view is that we must seek peace within ourselves. We must pray that the Lord will lift up His countenance upon us, grant us peace and make us instruments of peace.

As Francis Fenelon, a French Archbishop observed: **"Peace does not dwell in outward things, but within the soul; we may preserve it in the midst of the bitterest pain, if our will remain firm and submissive. Peace in this life springs from acquiescence, not in an exemption from suffering."** ❖

Francis Farrier scores 80



Congratulations are extended to a devoted Catholic and regular contributor to the Catholic Standard, Mr. Francis Farrier, someone who has done so much good for so many during his eight decades, from all of us at Catholic Media. ❖

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Successful, motivating Mission at Parfaite Harmonie



A few years ago, a handful of Catholics in Parfaite Harmonie found each other in that new housing area and began meeting on a regular basis for fellowship.

They were very aware of Pope Francis' constant reminder that all who are baptised are called to be evangelisers, to invite others to an encounter with Christ. However with their small numbers and other personal commitments, outreach in that large and expanding housing area seemed to be an overwhelming and somewhat daunting task to effectively respond to that call of Pope Francis.

Ms. Roxanne Douglas and other leaders in the group discussed this situation with parish priest from Institute of the Incarnate Word, Father Humberto Villa, who was at that time responsible for that area.

He suggested inviting some young University students from the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) group in the United States, to conduct a mission in the area while they

were on Spring break in the U.S.

FOCUS is an outreach of Catholic university students in the U.S. whose mission is to share the hope and joy of the gospel with others. Trained in Church teaching, prayer, sacred Scripture, evangelization and discipleship, FOCUS missionaries, through Bible studies, outreach events, inspire and build up others in the faith, sending them out to spread the good news and to live out the Great Commission: 'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations' (Mt. 28:19).

A group made up of a Franciscan Brother, a Sister of Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará Institute (SSVM) and 13 youths from the FOCUS outfit arrived in Guyana on March 3 for the Mission which began the next day with Mass said by Bishop Francis.

All of the visitors were in Guyana for the first time.

The activities of five days of the Mission followed a simple pattern.

The mornings began with

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament followed by house visits.

In the afternoon one group of missionaries continued the house visits while a second group held sessions with children. A third group met with youths and adults all inviting them in different ways into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to pursue lives of virtue and excellence.

Every afternoon there was an outdoor Rosary procession which was followed by Mass.

Each evening a campfire was held where there were skits, singing, and videos about faith-formation.

Some of the visiting missionaries were accompanied by Guyanese laity and youths who are themselves preparing to conduct a similar 'Youth On Mission' exercise later in the year.

The missionaries were all very pleased and excited by the experience. They were able to speak and pray with Catholics and non-Catholics alike who were all said to be very welcoming and hospitable. Many of those called on also said that it was probably the first visit from Catholics on a religious outreach mission and that they were unaware that there was a group of Catholics who met regularly in Parfaite Harmonie.

The parish mission renews and revitalizes faith, commitment and attachment to the Body of Christ present in their faith community.

After the missionaries departed on Saturday 10th there was a packed congregation at the next worship service held in Parfaite.

Church leaders say their main post-mission plans are to continue home visits and build the community which they hope will soon turn their attention to one of their main goals which is the building of their own church. ❖

Saint of the Week



March 19th—Saint Joseph

Everything we know about the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus comes from Scripture. We know he was a carpenter, a working man. We know Joseph was a compassionate, caring man. When he discovered Mary was pregnant after they had been betrothed, he knew the child was not his but was as yet unaware that she was carrying the Son of God. He planned to divorce Mary according to the law but he was concerned for her suffering and safety. He knew that women accused of adultery could be stoned to death, so he decided to divorce her quietly and not expose her to shame or cruelty (Matthew 1:19-25).

Joseph was man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him without knowing the outcome. When the angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him the truth about the child Mary was carrying, Joseph immediately took Mary as his wife. When the angel came again to tell him that his family was in danger, he immediately left everything and fled to a strange country with his young wife and the baby. He waited in Egypt without question until the angel told him it was safe to go back (Matthew 2:13-23).

Joseph loved Jesus. His one concern was for the safety of this child entrusted to him. When Jesus stayed in the Temple we are told Joseph (along with Mary) searched with great anxiety for three days for him (Luke 2:48). Joseph respected God and followed God's commands. Saint Joseph is patron of the universal Church, fathers, the dying, carpenters & social justice.

We celebrate two feast days for Saint Joseph: March 19th for St. Joseph the Husband of Mary and May 1st for St. Joseph the Worker. ❖

East Coast parishes in 'Day of God experience'

By Fr. Anil Tirkey SJ

Thanks to God for His blessings on us. We had a prayerful one-day Lenten Assembly for the East Coast Parishes in Buxton on March 11th.

The community leaders from the different parishes came together to arrange for the success of this day.

The theme for our assembly was "Lord, Let Me See."

His Lordship Bishop Francis Alleyne OSB was the main celebrant of the Holy Mass. Concelebrating were Fathers Anil, Paul and Joseph.

After the Holy Mass, Fr. Paul Chempa gave the input reflection which helped the congregation to meditate on how a true believer must be able to see and experience the Lord in our daily lives.

The other main events of the day were group sharing on the theme, parish reports, the Stations of the

Cross, sharing lunch with one another and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The pilgrimage day was concluded with a prayerful Benediction.

Thanks a million to Bishop Francis who remained with us the whole day, which was a blessing for all of us.

The whole congregation deeply felt that we all should meet more than once to have this kind of prayer experience. ❖

On the Lighter Side



"This week's sermon is about how we all need to simplify our lives. Unfortunately, I lost the whole thing when my computer crashed."