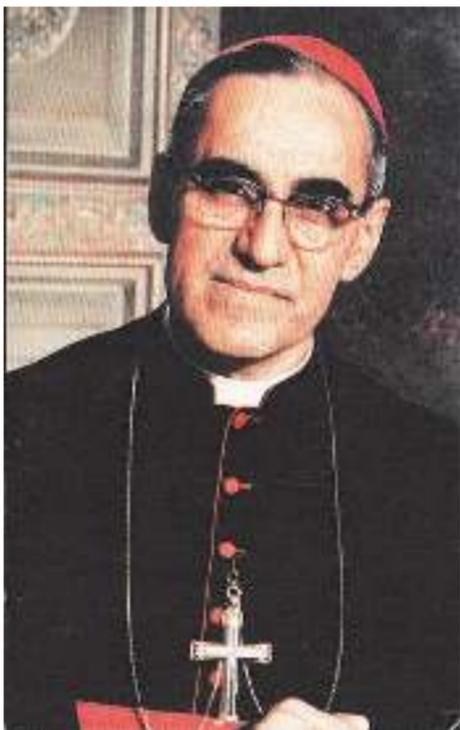


Slain Salvadoran Archbishop Romero to be made a Saint



Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, a champion of the poor who became a human rights icon in Latin America when he was killed by a right-wing death squad in 1980, will be made a Roman Catholic saint.

A statement on Wednesday said Pope Francis had given final approval to several sainthood causes, including Romero, and the late Pope Paul VI, who reigned from 1963 to 1978. Francis personally announced Pope Paul's canonization last month.

Romero's path to sainthood had stalled under two previous popes, reflecting concerns by some that he was overly political. It was revived by Francis who is also from Latin America and has made defense of the down-

trodden a hallmark of his five-year pontificate.

Romero, who had often denounced repression and poverty in his homilies, was shot dead on March 24, 1980, as he celebrated Mass in a hospital chapel in the San Salvador, the capital of the impoverished Central American country of El Salvador.

"The long delay in recognizing the obvious fact that Romero was obviously a martyr was shameful," said Father James Martin, an U.S. author of and editor-at-large of the Jesuit magazine America, adding that many saints had not been understood in their own times.

In a Tweet, Martin called the pope's decision "an immense step forward for the Church."

[\(please turn to page 7\)](#)

Pope establishes new feast of Mary as 'Mother of the Church'



The restored icon of Mary "Salus Populi Romani" (Salvation of the Roman People) is pictured at the end of a Mass celebrated by Pope Francis at St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2018. (Credit: AP Photo/Gregorio Borga, Pool.)

ROME – (Crux) Pope Francis, whose devotion to Mary is well-known, on Saturday March 3rd established a new feast for the Catholic Church devoted to Mary as the "Mother of the Church," to be celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost.

The decision was announced in a decree by the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, released on Saturday by the Vatican Press Office. [\(please turn to page 4\)](#)

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Bishop's Engagements

- Sunday March 11th**
08:00hrs – Pilgrimage to East Coast Demerara
- Wednesday March 14th**
17:00hrs – Reconciliation at Our Lady of the Mount, Meadow Bank
- Saturday March 17th**
07:00hrs – Pilgrimage to East Bank Demerara
- Sunday March 18th**
09:00hrs - Pilgrimage to Berbice



✠ Francis Alleyne OSB



The greatest drama ever staged

EDITORIAL

This Man Nicodemus...

This man Nicodemus had a half-open mind as regards Jesus. He was moved by his teaching and miracles. He defended him when his companions were out to have Jesus arrested. He helped to have him properly buried when his enemies had him put to death, but that was as far as he went, apparently. There is no mention of him in the first Christian community of Jerusalem. What held him back, what kept him from giving himself fully to Jesus who spoke so kindly and told him so clearly that he himself was indeed a teacher who had come from God, that he had been offered by God as the sacrificial victim who would save the world? All Nicodemus had to do was to accept his word, "believe in him" and be baptized and he too would have eternal life.

Why did he not do this? The answer is given in the beginning of his story "He came to Jesus by night." He was one of the leading Pharisees and evidently was afraid of what they would think of him had they seen him associating with Jesus. How much more so did he dread what their reactions would be had he become a follower of him whom they called "this impostor." Nicodemus had only half of his mind open to the truth, the other half was closed and barred by his fear of what his own class—the leaders of the Jews—would think of him. He risked his own future happiness in order not to lose the present respect of his sinful associates.

What a foolish man we would all say! Yet, are not many of us often like Nicodemus, when it comes to living up to our following of Christ? There are Catholic men who would like to, and should, go much more often to Holy Communion but are afraid of what their fellow-parishioners, who receive but rarely, would think of them. There are many, far too many, Christians who will not defend or stand up for their religion when it is insulted and attacked in their place of work or in a saloon. There are Christians who stand idly by, and give at least tacit approval, when grave injustices are being carried out by individuals or by local or national groups. These and many more like them are Christian types of Nicodemus, who through fear of losing the approval, the worthless esteem, of their sinful associates, are prepared to forfeit the esteem of God and their own eternal welfare.

Nicodemus probably thought he had made reparation for his lack of openness to Jesus when he assisted at his burial. What value, however, had that work of mercy for one of his frame of mind? There are amongst us today, humanists, most of them ex-Christians, men and women who make assisting their neighbor, while excluding

Dear Editor,

They crucified him (Mark 15:23). Jesus died on Good Friday. Why did he die? We this Holy Week are seeking some answers, trying to enter afresh into understanding the meaning of the cross. I am quite sure we are called to penetrate the mystery of it, as far as we can, here and now. But it is mystery. Only in Jesus' presence in glory will we fully comprehend.

One strand of truth about the death of Jesus, however, needs no speculation. It is so obvious that we might pass over it. Jesus died as he had predicted at the hands of men. Yes, he died for men but also he died because of men, by their desire and design. "They crucified him." The Wondrous Cross is the consummation not only of the accepted suffering of the Lord, but the way of the world with Jesus. The world did him to death.

Let us look then, at the sorry part men played in this "greatest drama ever staged". This was brutal fact and history. This was real life – and real, bitter, shocking death. Recall, first the way of the crowd.

They had heard him gladly for almost three years. They had flocked to his healing and his teaching. They were there in their multitudes to cheer him into Jerusalem. And they that went before, and they that followed cried saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest Heavens!"

We turn a page or two in the Gospel record and we read, "And they cried out again Crucify Him, - Why what evil had he done? And they cried out more exceedingly, crucify him". The

Christ and God, the essence of religion. While the assistance the neighbor receives will benefit him materially, what spiritual or religious value can it have for the humanist who excluded God and our Savior Jesus Christ?

Humanism or concentrating on our neighbor to the exclusion of God, is an imitation of religion and a very false imitation at that. Helping our neighbor because he is a son of God is part of our true religion, and the second of the two great commandments of love; but helping a neighbor from whom we have effaced the image of God has not and cannot have any religious value or significance whatever. It is as meaningless as lighting a candle before the photograph of a wife one has deliberately deserted... ❖

(Adapted excerpt from *The Sunday Readings*, Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.)

two crowds- granted would not be identically the same. Yet this point is still legitimate. The mass of the common people had welcomed him with palms and songs of joy and homage on that Sunday, and on the Friday of Holy Week the mass of the common people, crying like savage animals, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him."

Yes, there had been 'got at' by the Chief priests, but that is a feeble excuse. They let themselves be swayed. The crowd was criminally content to be "a mob", a multitude ready to behave like sheep under any kind of leadership, however villainous.

Then, the way of the traitor, the way of Judas. We know what Judas did but why did he do it? Was it sheer treachery in his heart or again, was Judas the "odd one out?" If so when his trick utterly misfired, when he saw his master taken unresisting, and learned of his yielding to the indignities of Sanhedrin and Temple guards, when Jesus clearly was not even then going to be driven out of character, and will most certainly die, can we wonder that Judas went out and hanged himself? Judas stands alone in history as the disciple who – without anyone else's pressure upon him - betrayed his Lord to the enemy, and did it with a kiss. "He has betrayed to death innocent blood. He crucified him".

Let's look at the military authorities for example, the Temple guards with swords and clubs arresting the unarmed and unresisting Jesus. See them in the High Priest's palace, spitting upon him, covering his face, buffeting him, and shouting "Come on now, prophesy, who struck you?" Playing a kind of ghastly blind-mans'-buff with the savior of the world! And the Roman soldiers. See them flog Jesus at the governor's command, then torment him further with a crown of thorns upon his head and the mockery of a royal robe around him, bending low

before him with the derisive cries of, "Hail King of the Jews!" Soon they lead him away to Golgotha, there they nailed him to the cross to die. And as the Prince of Glory dies the soldiers gamble for possession of his clothes.

They crucified him.

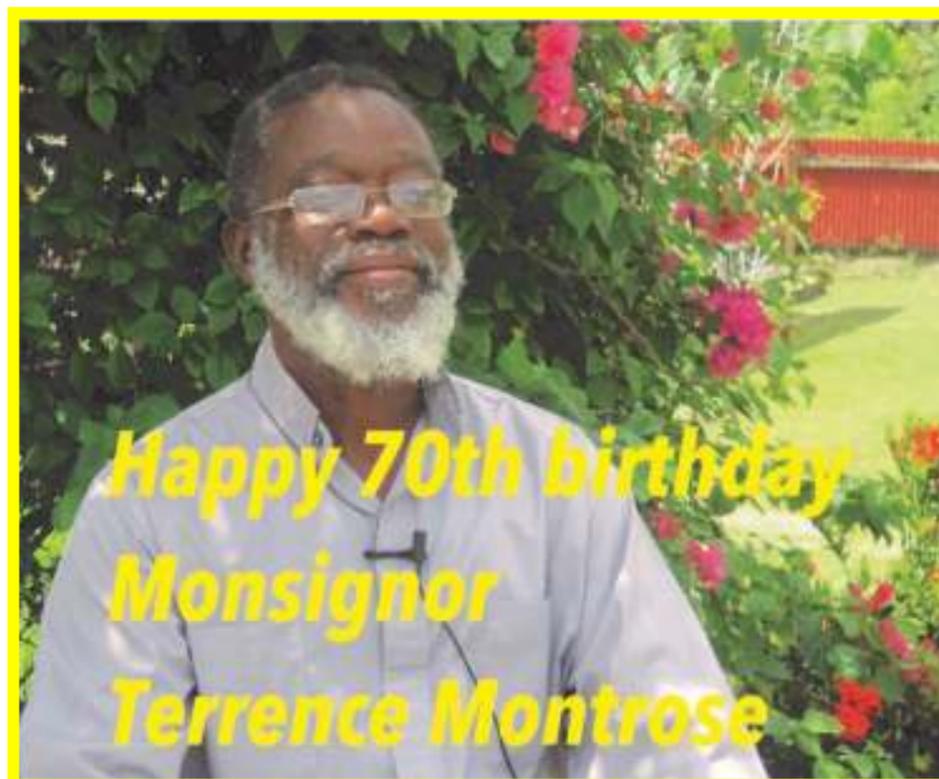
Let's look at the top religious leaders Caiaphas and his associates, the Chief Priests the Scribes and the Elders. Caiaphas takes it upon himself to trap Jesus into fatal admission. The High Priest put a second question to Jesus. "Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed one?"

Jesus said I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven. The High Priest tore his robes and said, "What need of witness have we now? You heard the blasphemy. What is your finding?" And they all gave their verdict. He deserves to die. They did it out of envy.

How could they envy someone born in a stable, reared as a carpenter, who went about the countryside with not even a place to lay his head? Envy of the popularity Jesus enjoyed with the common people? Maybe so. They certainly did not enjoy it. They envied someone who was himself the truth and the very incarnation of goodness. Out of envy the authorities could not bear to let him live. "They crucified him". Pilate said "I have found no case against him that deserves death". Pilate clearly knew that Our Lord was innocent and yet consigned him to crucifixion, a just man, party to the greatest miscarriage of justice the world has ever known.

He took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man.

Leon Jeetlall, Lay Minister



Catholic Church aids migrants crossing from Venezuela to Colombia, Brazil



Migrant child has lunch at the Casa de Paso "Divina Providencia" in Cucuta. Credit: David Ramos/ACI Prensa.

(ACI Prensa) As thousands continue to pour across the border from Venezuela to Colombia and Brazil the local Catholic Churches are helping meet the needs of those who have been displaced.

"In total, we are providing about 8,000 hot meals a day to our Venezuelan brothers," said Bishop Victor Manuel Ochoa of Cucuta, Colombia.

He added that the local Church is working to "help those who also need medicine and hospitalization," as well as providing pastoral care including Mass, the recitation of the rosary, and catechesis.

Bishop Ochoa spoke with EWTN News about the Church's ongoing assistance to Venezuelan migrants who are fleeing their homeland, facing

severe food and medicine shortages amid the economic crisis under President Nicolas Maduro.

Each day, thousands of people from Venezuela are entering Colombia via two bridges that cross the Táchira River.

This traffic, Bishop Ochoa explained, has increased "a great deal in the last month."

President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia recently announced new measures to decrease the flow of migrants across the border. Venezuelans must now have a valid passport to enter Colombia, rather than a border cross pass obtained online.

Additionally, the president has sent thousands of soldiers and police

forces to border entry points.

Bishop Ochoa said these measures have led to a "fairly significant slow-down in the ability of Venezuelans and Colombians to go back and forth."

This has resulted in greater order, he said, but also "creates some hardships for people who go to the city for health or medical reasons."

For the Church, however, assisting migrants has not changed.

Meanwhile, in the last 45 days more than 18,000 Venezuelans have arrived in Roraima, it is estimated that between 300 and 400 people arrive every day, with a great desire to continue their lives with dignity. "They leave Venezuela because of a humanitarian necessity, and it is our duty to reach out to them and welcome them". Thus Mgr. Mário Antônio da Silva, Bishop of Roraima, comments on the meetings that as from March 1, a group of 19 people will minister in the area of Boa Vista and Pacaraima, in the state of Roraima. The initiative, which will take place under the name "Misión frontera Venezuela", is coordinated by the Episcopal Commission to tackle human trafficking (CEPEETH), of the Bishops' Conference of Brazil (CNBB).

The Bishop adds: "it is dramatic to see that Venezuelans come to our state in need of food, help, hospitality and even integration into the labor market. "This is why the Pastoral Care of Migrants together with the Social Pastoral Care - Caritas and the Center for the orientation of migrants and human rights are trying to do everything possible to help them.❖"

Upcoming Events

Sunday March 11th

Lenten Assembly for the East Coast Parishes in Buxton

8:00am - 4:00pm, Church of Saint Anthony of Padua, Buxton. Please see details on page 11.

Wednesday March 14th

Reconciliation Service at Meadow Bank at 5:00pm.

Saturday March 17th

Lenten Retreat for Men

Please see details on page 8, or call 226-4469.

Sunday March 18th

Berbice Lenten Pilgrimage

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

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 the Marian Academy Auditorium.

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

The Diocese will be holding a Family Fun Day at Camp Kayuka, on Saturday May 5th, a public holiday. More details will be provided later.

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A Christian Perspective on Social Issues



Oil – one last word

By GHK Lall

It can be posited that more than enough has already been said, written, and positioned in either objectivity, or fury and, or sometimes, regrettably, with not much sensibility in reference to oil discoveries and the mouthwatering bonanzas waiting. At this time, there is little interest in weighing the strengths or weaknesses of those arguments for or against one or the other aspect of the oil deal finalized.

To begin with, it should be said that the Exxon agreement has its merits, its contexts, its realities, and its deficiencies. In terms of deficiencies, there is much that can be said on the qualitative side. Also, it does not matter how the deal shapes up when compared to the CGX one negotiated and executed by the previous administration. Such analysis and posturing neither reverses the clock nor un-rings the bell. On both occasions there arguably could have been a marginally better deal with more favorable terms for this country. Again, that is oil under the mud, and does not matter in the bigger picture of things to come.

What does matter is this: where does this country go from here forward? How do citizens position themselves to obtain the clearest most accurate understanding as to what benefits may be coming to them and what should? How do the leaders in the driving seat act and react when the oil starts to flow and the oil revenues gush inward? And what does matter is when the register starts ringing how much will trickle down to citizens across the many tiers and congregations in this land? Will there be fairness? Will there be anything? Or will there be the usual enriching selfishness and porous denials?

Clearly, the peoples of this country have to move beyond the dead letter of that uneven and sometimes disturbing agreement and look at themselves sharply, wisely, and constantly. In addition to who will get what, how much is really there? Has all of it been fully disclosed? What will the money be used for? Do the sure-to-be ambitious projects that will be banded about make sense? Do they offer this country the best choices, and the best returns, from what will be an array of competing must-haves? Are they pipe dreams or pet whims? In all of this, how to hold, and keep holding, the feet of the political powers to the fire?

They have volunteered and raise their hands for the weighty responsibilities involved with leading and ruling. There is an obligation to be different from the ugly secrecies and

Pope establishes new feast of Mary as 'Mother of the Church' (From Front Page)

Together with the decree, the liturgical texts for the Mass, the Divine Office and the Roman Martyrology were published in Latin. The Episcopal

financial depredations of the past. Therefore, their every action must be subject to the severest scrutiny. Stated more expansively, their very lives, in all of its nuances, cannot be curtailed or considered private, but must be open books, and public testaments of integrity. Declaration of assets is not enough; so, too, are ethical certifications. Those are nice, but not worth the paper written on, given the history of this country and its politics.

All the snaky tendrils of relationships must be tracked, dissected, and interpreted. In terms of the latter, this means the most skeptical scrutiny and least favorable light; if not this country is contributing to setting itself for a hard fall. Relationships - be they commercial, family, romantic, seemingly innocent, or other-can be used, (as is now the norm) as channels to splurge, divest, or conceal monies not legitimately belonging.

Everyone has a responsibility - indeed an obligation to be critic, skeptic, troubleshooter, whistleblower, and investigator. This is the only way that there can be real transparency and complete honesty in all oil. More winks and nods, and looking the other way because of tribal loyalty will hurt the tribe ultimately. Every citizen must indoctrinate self, in his or her little way, to believe that there is an irreversible ownership interest.

Anything less would lead to disinterest and distance, which would be sure to encourage temptation and failure. Negligent Guyanese would have contributed to their impoverishment at the hands of the well-positioned few. This is what must be guarded against; this is where the focus must be; this has to be the priority of the present and the future. And this is the last word from this source on oil. ❖

Conferences will now proceed to approve the translations.

The decree observes that the veneration of Mary as Mother of the Church has ancient roots in Catholic tradition, reaching back to St. Augustine and St. Leo the Great. The title, the document says, is rooted in New Testament accounts about Mary.

"She became the tender Mother of the Church which Christ begot on the cross, handing on the Spirit," the decree said.

"Christ, in turn, in the beloved disciple, chose all disciples as ministers of his love towards his Mother, entrusting her to them so that they might welcome her with filial affection."

In 1964, at the close of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), Blessed Pope Paul VI formally declared Mary as the "Mother of the Church," and invited Catholics to invoke Mary's help under that title.

During the jubilee year of 1975, the Vatican produced a special Mass, called a "votive Mass," for Mary under the title of "Blessed Mary Mother of

the Church," and also approved inserting the title into various prayers in honor of Mary.

With the new decree, devotion to Mary as Mother of the Church now becomes an approved feast for the universal Church.

"Having attentively considered how greatly the promotion of this devotion might encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety, Pope Francis has decreed that the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, should be inscribed in the Roman Calendar on the Monday after Pentecost and be now celebrated every year," the document said.

The decree stipulated that the feast should appear in all calendars and liturgical books. It also said that once translations of the texts for the new feast are approved by bishops' conferences, they will be published. ❖

NOTICE

St Joseph Mercy Hospital

School of Nursing entry requirements for self-sponsored and company sponsored persons desirous of being trained for the Registered Nurse Program at SJMH commencing September 2018.

Admission Requirements:

AGE: 18 ½ to 35 years of age

QUALIFICATION:

- 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*)

The following CXC subjects are required

- English Language A
- Mathematics
- Science (*Only Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Human and Social Biology or Integrated Science are accepted.*)

For entry to the Nursing School candidates are also required to be successful at the School's interviews, aptitude test and medicals.

Kindly call 223-5450 / 225-4841 for further clarification.

Send application to:

**Human Resources Manager
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CLOSING DATE: MARCH 31, 2018

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Jesus is Lord

Sunday Scripture

March 11th - Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year B

FIRST READING 2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23
The wrath and mercy of God are revealed in the exile and in the release of his people.

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, "Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation."

And the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: "Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up.'"

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 136

Response: O let my tongue cleave to my mouth if I remember you not!

1. By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept,
remembering Zion;
on the poplars that grew there
we hung up our harps. *Response*
2. For it was there that they asked us,
our captors, for songs,
our oppressors, for joy.
"Sing to us," they said,
"one of Zion's songs." *Response*



3. O how could we sing
the song of the Lord
on alien soil?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither! *Response*
4. O let my tongue
cleave to my mouth
if I remember you not,
if I prize not Jerusalem
above all my joys! *Response*

SECOND READING Ephesians 2:4-10
You who were dead through your sins have been saved through grace.

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through

our sins, he brought us to life with Christ - it is through grace that you have been saved - and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

GOSPEL John 3: 14-21

God sent his Son so that through him the world might be saved.

Jesus said to Nicodemus:
The Son of Man must be lifted up
as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,
so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.
Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost
but may have eternal life.
For God sent his Son into the world
not to condemn the world,
but so that through him the world might be saved.
No one who believes in him will be condemned;
but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already,
because he has refused to believe
in the name of God's only Son.
On these grounds is sentence pronounced:
that though the light has come into the world
men have shown they prefer
darkness to the light
because their deeds were evil.
And indeed, everybody who does wrong
hates the light and avoids it,
for fear his actions should be exposed;
but the man who lives by the truth
comes out into the light,
so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is
done in God. ✠



By: The Diocesan Stewardship
Council of Guyana

Today, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, is what is called Laetare Sunday. *Laetare* means "Rejoice" in Latin. In the entrance antiphon) it begins *Laetare, Jerusalem* ("Rejoice, Jerusalem!")

The actual midpoint of Lent occurred this past Thursday, and this day has traditionally been viewed as a day of celebration, when we sort of lessen the soberness normally attached to Lent. You may notice some changes in the church itself in terms of environment, and priests and deacons have the option of wearing pink or rose vestments rather than purple or violet. This Sunday has a corresponding day during

Advent called Gaudete Sunday. The point of both these days is providing us with encouragement in the midst of our penitential seasons.

As part of this more upbeat attitude and approach to our celebrations of Mass this weekend, there is a focus on salvation and redemption, which is the reason we have to "rejoice."

St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, our Second Reading, reminds us "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God." What a reason to rejoice. God loves us even when we are not

lovable. He loves us even when we do not give Him a reason to do so.

We are also reminded that God created each of us. In this same reading St. Paul declares, "for we are his (God's) handiwork." In the original Greek the word translated as "handiwork" is *poiema* (ποίημα). Another meaning of the word is considered by some scholars to be "masterpiece." What a joyous thought for us to consider and appreciate! We, each and every one of us, are God's masterpiece, His poem. That is a reason to celebrate, but it is also a reason for us to be doing things during Lent to make us more that way. ✠

Gospel Reflection



By Fr. Michael Barrow SJ

The first thing you see when you go into church is the crucifix above the altar – unless you have got so used to it that you hardly notice it. Look up at the crucifix and ask for healing.

Jesus compares it with Moses holding up a serpent he had made out of metal. In the Old Testament (Numbers 21.9) the people had sinned against God by their lack of trust and as a result, were bitten by deadly serpents. In asking for healing Moses instructed them to look at a statue of a serpent. The meaning of the Old Testament story was not really physical serpents that destroyed them but their own sinfulness. They harmed themselves by their lack of trust and deadly serpents were a symbol of that. So in asking them to look at the serpent Moses is asking them to look at their own sinfulness. Obviously looking at the statue doesn't heal, but the admission of their sinfulness which it symbolised is healing.

If we look at the crucifix with faith and admit our own guilt and our need of mercy, we will be healed. The crucifix is an image of something horrific, the price of our sins. Christ died to heal us of all that is wrong, but he can only heal us if we recognise our need for it. It is difficult to treat a person who will not accept that they are ill. When Jesus went back to Nazareth one day it is said (Mark 6.5) he could work no miracle because of their lack of faith. Like the people in the Old Testament looking up at the bronze serpent, we look at the crucifix and we are healed, not by the crucifix itself, but by our faith in God's mercy. "And when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in, that of the cross my burden gladly bearing he bled and died to take away my sins." ❖

Reconciliation and Healing

Lent is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces our Lord offers us. Like all religious experience, it takes preparation.

Preparing

Reconciliation is what God does. We prepare for it by opening ourselves up, by reflecting upon the areas of darkness in our lives into which God so deeply desires to shine a light. It might begin with the simple question: Where might God be offering me forgiveness and healing?

If my answer is, "I don't know," then I have some reflection to do. I can examine my life - what I have done and what I have failed to do - and see what graces are offered me there. If I've come through that "era" of saying that any guilt, anything that makes me feel bad about myself, is a bad thing, to be avoided at all costs, then I might have a difficult time coming to genuine sorrow for my sins. If this is the case, I need to "go to work" on my reflection, asking God to rouse a sense of embarrassment, leading to deep sorrow, for any way I may not have been faithful, honest, loving, self-less or generous - in my relationship with God, with my family, with others. I can look at each of my responsibilities - as a citizen of a city and a country and the world, a neighbour, an employee, a member of a parish or congregation, as a parent or a spouse or as a son or daughter. God will always shine light into these important parts of our lives, to help us experience remorse and a genuine desire for forgiveness and healing. The point here is not ultimately to focus on ourselves. God always reveals us to ourselves, so that God might reveal to us our need for a Saviour. The focus is on God's reconciling, healing love. As John says, "God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but God's love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven." 1 John 4:9-10

It may be that I have experienced troubling guilt - coming out of deep childhood trauma or a long-standing sense of shame. This may plague my ability to feel good about myself at all, and therefore to be able to reflect upon my sins - the ways I fail at loving. I can still prepare for genuine reconciliation by preparing to better trust God's love for me, based upon two convictions: First, God's love is un-conditional. It is not conditioned on my being better, or my overcoming anything, or even my being good at all. God just loves me. I am always precious in the eyes of the One who made me and desires to embrace me with the gift of complete freedom, in everlasting life. Secondly, God knows everything, including what I'm struggling with or suffering under. And, the God of all compassion understands me and loves me. It may be that my greatest sin - the place where I need the greatest sorrow and desire for forgiveness and healing is my lack of

trust in God's complete and un-conditional love for me. We can be certain that that is a gift God deeply desires to offer me.

It may be that when I ask myself the question about where God might be offering me forgiveness and healing, I might first come up with a single thing that seems "big" to me. I might say, "I feel sorry for how I treat my spouse or my children." I might focus on a long established habit of self-indulgent sexual fantasy, pornography on the internet or masturbation. I may feel most sorrow for what I fail to do - all the "good intentions" that never make their way into action. It is so important not to stop there. None of the "big" things about which we might immediately feel sorry for sums up all



of who we are before God and others. They may be very important in giving some clues or some leads in identifying some larger patterns. For example, if a "big" thing that worries me is that I tend to be "loose" with the truth, at times, I can ask what that means, what it reveals about me. I may discover that the real pattern of sin has to do with a deeper dishonesty or lack of integrity: hiding from God; leading a double life; not being who I really am called to be; trying to manage my life on my own terms; manipulating others for my own needs and desires. When the Light of God's love shines into this level of self-awareness, then I am touched by a powerful experience of reconciliation. Even here, in a place I might be most embarrassed and feel most naked, God is loving me and offering me wholeness and joy.

Celebrating Reconciliation

Reconciliation is what God does. Receiving it and celebrating it is what we do. For those of us who are Catholics, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a most natural way to celebrate God's

reconciliation. We used to think of this sacrament as only about "confession" - that it was like a dumping ground for my sins, where I got forgiven, and I had to "pay a toll." One of the great recoveries in our Christian history is to re-discover the meaning of this sacrament.

It is God who forgives sins. And God forgives us the very moment that we come to the experience that we need forgiveness (which itself comes through God's grace). At that moment, I feel sorrow and a desire for forgiveness and healing. In that moment, I am reconciled with God. The reunion, the bond, the connection, the joy are all there. Three more things remain: to receive it deep within my heart, to celebrate it, and to participate in the healing process.

When I experience God's forgiveness and love, I am invited to savour it and let it touch me deeply. Experiencing compassion, patience, understanding, and forgiveness is itself transforming. If I fail to appreciate what I have just received - freely and undeserved - then I will take it for granted and risk moving on without a real healing happening.

Then, I need to celebrate the reconciliation I have received. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation - individually or in common - I have the wonderful opportunity to ritualize that celebration. In the Sacrament, my personal journey is joined with the mystery of God's saving love, as seen in the scriptures, and in God's desire to save us all. There, in ritual form (even if it is just me and the priest) I "step forward" and admit that I am a sinner, express my sorrow, and I name the places in my life where God is shining a Light into what I have done and what I have failed to do. Then, God's forgiveness is proclaimed "out loud" - for me to hear and rejoice in: "May God grant you pardon and fill you with God's peace."

An integral part of the reconciliation involves the healing process. If I sprain my ankle, the doctor will offer me a number of therapies for healing - ice, for the first 24 hours to reduce the swelling, wrapping it, elevating it, and then gradually and carefully using it, until it is healed and strong again. Part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to seek and practice a "remedy" or "medicine" for the healing I desire. Often that will simply be prayer. Often, expressing my gratitude to God is one of the most important steps on the road to recovery from my independence from God. Sometimes, I will need to practice a therapy that is more carefully planned - making choices about what I can practice doing and what I can practice avoiding.

May our Lord grant us all the gift of reconciliation, and may we all receive it and celebrate it well in the holy days ahead. ❖

[From: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/reconciliation.html>]

The Living Rosary Apostolate being promoted

Journeying with the Word of God



The founders of the Living Rosary Apostolate in order: Glenda La Fleur - Trinidad and Tobago, Roger La Fleur Olsson - Sweden, Genevieve Mamai- Kenya, Frank and Trudy Bonack- USA

Ms. Glenda La Fleur arrived in the country on Wednesday for a two-week visit during which she will present The Living Rosary Apostolate just before the last blessing at our weekend Masses.

The Living Rosary is the entire Rosary but it is prayed in a different format. It invites parishioners from different parishes to pray and meditate on the same decade of the Rosary daily for one month. It is not necessary to meet in a group. Anyone can pray it anytime of the day or night but couples and families can pray it together if they so desire.

Interested persons will be invited to come together in a spirit of hope and fellowship to hear more about Ms. La Fleur's personal journey with the living Rosary and how anyone can participate in its simple message of peace and how it can bring us closer to the eternal Father's love.

During World War II at a Lenten retreat in Poland, servant of God Jan Tyranowski a Catholic layman, was asked by Salesian Priests to organize Living Rosary groups since all priests were targeted by the Nazi regime. Groups were composed of

fifteen devotees each meditating upon one of the fifteen mysteries daily.

This ministry became a cornerstone for the Catholic underground in 1940. From these original devotions came ten men into the priesthood. At St. Stanislaus University in Krakow, Jan was the youth leader and central figure in the spiritual formation of the young Karol Wojtyla. Karol attended these meetings entitled the Living Rosary which fostered many vocations including Fr. Karol Wojtyla who in turn became Pope John Paul II. ❖



MAKING THE WORD OF GOD YOUR OWN

Step 1: Look at today's Readings prayerfully.

1st Reading: Although the Jews were exiled through their own fault, God, out of his great love, brings them back to their homeland.

2nd Reading: The message here is that when we are dead because of our sins, God raises us up and gives us new life with Jesus.

Gospel: John tells us that in his love for us, God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn us, but to save us.

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

1. "God does not pass judgement on anyone. It is people who judge themselves by their response to God." Do you agree with this statement?
2. There is darkness in each of us. What would you say is one 'darkness' you have to cope with in your life?
3. "For the Christian, it is not just a matter of believing, but of living according to that belief." What is this statement saying to you?
4. Many people feel that it is impossible for a generous, fair-minded and compassionate person to exist today in this world of ours. What is your opinion?

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

Christ did not come to judge people but to save them. He came bearing a light – the light of goodness, truth and forgiveness from sin. Some welcome the light but others reject it because it shows up the evil in their lives. The challenge for us all today is not to give in to our own darkness but to let the light of Christ shine into our lives so as to bring out the goodness that is in all of us.

Step 4: Something to think & pray about

1. Reflect on your own life. What are some of the areas of darkness there? Is it hopelessness, crime, misery, alcoholism, spouse or child abuse? How do you intend to turn such darkness into light?
2. Do you really believe that you are loved by God? What difference does this belief make in your life, here and now?
3. When you pray, ask for forgiveness for the times you have condemned others without trying to understand them and for the times you thought you were better than others. ❖

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

Archbishop Romero to be made a Saint (From Page 1)

Romero's murder was one of the most shocking of the long conflict between a series of U.S.-backed governments and leftist rebels in which thousands were killed by right-wing and military death squads.

The civil war claimed some 75,000 lives before it ended with a peace agreement in 1992.

No one was ever brought to justice for his killing but last year a Salvadoran judge reopened the case. The main suspect is a former soldier whose case was reopened after the country's constitutional court repealed a previous amnesty.

Romero was beatified, or declared a "blessed" of the Church, in 2015 after a ruling that he was a martyr killed in hatred of the faith. That ceremony in San Salvador brought together former Marxist guerrillas and their former enemies.

Francis ruled that Romero could be declared a saint after a Vatican theological and medical commission approved a miracle attributed to him.

The Church teaches that only God performs miracles but that saints who are believed to be with God in heaven intercede on behalf of people who pray to them. A miracle is usually the medically inexplicable healing of a person.

No date was given for the sainthood ceremony, which is expected to take place this year, most likely at the Vatican.

Though no date has yet been announced, both Paul VI and Oscar Romero are expected to be canonized together during the Synod of Bishops in October.

Born as Giovanni Montini in 1897 in the town of Concesio in the Lombardy region of Italy, the future Pope Paul VI was ordained a priest at the age of 22. He served as Archbishop of Milan

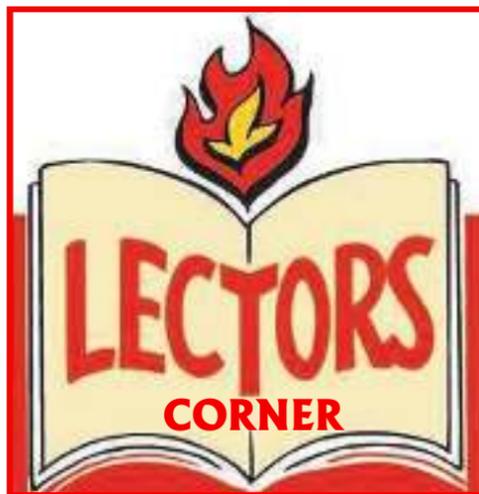
prior to his election as Bishop of Rome in 1963.

As pope, he oversaw much of the Second Vatican Council, which had been opened by Pope St. John XXIII, and in 1969 promulgated a new Roman Missal. He died in 1978, and was beatified by Pope Francis Oct. 19, 2014.

Pope Francis himself unofficially confirmed the news of Paul VI's canonization during his annual meeting with the priests of Rome Feb. 17. However, the Vatican's announcement makes it official.

Apart from his role in the council, Paul VI is most widely known for his landmark encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which was published in 1968 and reaffirmed the Church's teaching against contraception in wake of the sexual revolution. This year marks the 50th anniversary the historic encyclical, making the canonization of the author all the more relevant. ❖

(Reuters & Catholic News Agency)



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 11th: Fourth Sunday of Lent (B)



The Word This Week

There were two remarkable moments in the story of the Old Testament where God saved his people; one was in the escape from Egypt – we'll keep that for the Easter Vigil. The other was the end of their second exile, this time in Babylon, which we hear of today. Of course there was an even greater moment when God saved his people: the work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God – and we hear Jesus tell Nicodemus about that today. So today's theme is "salvation": but to understand "being saved", we must ask "What from?" Saved from slavery, from exile, from human enemies – these are all clear. But the last and greatest salvation brought by Jesus is harder to understand: saved from sin and death. These threaten us as much as any other enemy, and our salvation in Jesus is as real as any other.

Notes for Readers

First Reading: 2 Chronicles 26:14-16.19-23

This is a short summary of a lot of history! There are three "moments" in the reading: the description of the infidelity of the people; the attack of Nebuchadnezzar and the deportation to Babylon; the decree of Cyrus allowing the people to go home. In preparing this reading you must consider how your tone will differ for each section – certainly how will you move from the gloom of exile to the joy of return in the last two sections. In the first section, the reading emphasises that God keeps trying with his people – take this as your emphasis too. There could almost be a sense of sadness when "the wrath of the Lord

rose so high..." – God did not want to go so far. The middle section is the disaster: let your tone be slow and flat for this. Don't worry about the king's name – it's pronounced as written: Ne-byu-kad-NEZ-zar. Leave a longish pause after the word "desolation" at the end of this paragraph, before perking up for the happy ending – the story of salvation from exile. In the final paragraph, build up to the joyful "Let him go up!" This is indeed a happy ending for the people – think about what it means to be exiled from your own country and suddenly to be allowed to return: enter into the story, so that your congregation can be part of it too. The name of the king of Persia is pronounced Si-rus.

Second Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

Since this weekend we are reflecting on Salvation, we have this short passage from Saint Paul to guide us. Here we see that our salvation in from the eternal enemies – sin and death. Paul emphasises that this ALL comes from God, and is in no way the fruit of our own efforts – it is not even simply the result of faith. It is a gift from God. To emphasise this passage correctly, head for the line "...it is by grace that YOU have been saved through faith." and address it directly to the people sat in front of you. Everything either side of this line springs from it. We begin with a reminder of what Jesus did – this will lead to the Gospel reading today, and also to our celebration of Easter in three weeks. The point of this reading is to stress God's "goodness towards us in Christ Jesus." – emphasise the word "infinitely". Paul stacks up the point in the second half of the reading, with the repetition of "it is by... not by..." This builds up to a wonderful phrase, "you are God's work of art", which you should allow people a moment to think about!



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 some-

thing 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. ✝

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

Bible Quiz Finals Postponed

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Finals for the Junior and Senior categories of our 14th Annual Bible Quiz Competition have been postponed from March 11th to March 18th at the Marian Academy Auditorium.

Winners will be declared on each team's performance at the final round, there will be no accumulative scoring from previous rounds.

The Young Adult competition will also be on the same day. The event commences at 13:00hrs sharp. The order in which each category will compete may be subject to change.

All teams are reminded to make every effort to be on time.

Please note that there will be three finals and we would like to finish in a timely manner to allow out-of-town participants to get home safely.

We regret any inconvenience these changes may cause. ✝



Most Rev. Francis Allyene OSB,
Bishop of Georgetown,
and the Catholic Men's Ministry
invite all men ages 16 and over to a



Lenten Retreat

FOR MEN

which is aimed at helping men renew their minds,
transform their hearts and lives for Christ. (Rom 12:2)

Theme:

"Prayer is necessary"



Day: Saturday 17th March, 2018
Place: St. Joseph Ursuline Chapel
Camp Street, Georgetown
Time: 9:00am to 4:00pm
Registration required

Catholic Men's Ministry, Diocese of Georgetown, Guyana
27 Brickdam, Stabroek, Georgetown. Tel: 226-4469.



Children's Page

The Greatest Gift of All

Dear Girls and Boys,

What was the best gift you have ever received? In today's Gospel, we read about a gift that is, without question, the greatest gift ever given.

What is that gift? It is the gift of eternal life. It is the gift from God and it is given to anyone who wants to receive it. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." The greatest gift of all is for us.

When someone gives you a gift, it is never polite to ask, "How much did it cost?" But in this case, the Bible tells us how much God's gift cost -- and the cost was great. It cost God his only Son. Can you imagine how much God loved us to send his one and only Son to earth to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life? Can you imagine how much Jesus loved us to be willing to die on that cross so that we could have eternal life in heaven?

Eternal life -- what a gift!

Thank you, Father, for the greatest gift of all. Thank you for Jesus, who loved us so much that he paid the price for our sin to give us the gift of eternal life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. ❖

Eternal Life



The greatest gift of all!

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 (NIV)

Jesus said to

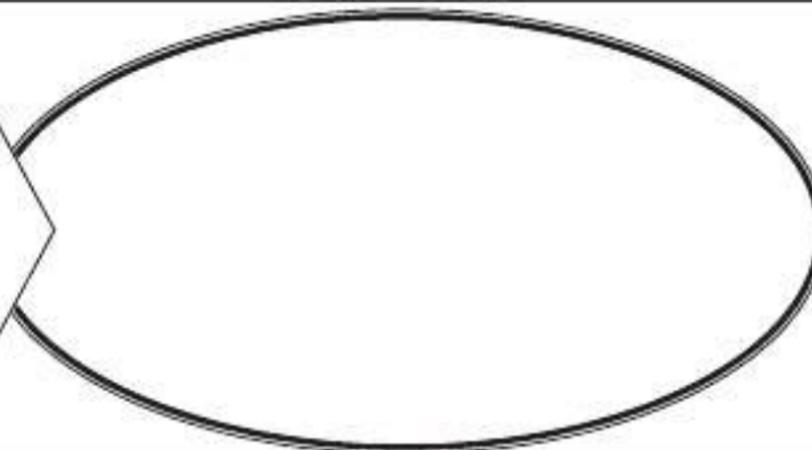
NICODEMUS

"GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD ... HE GAVE US HIS OWN _____."

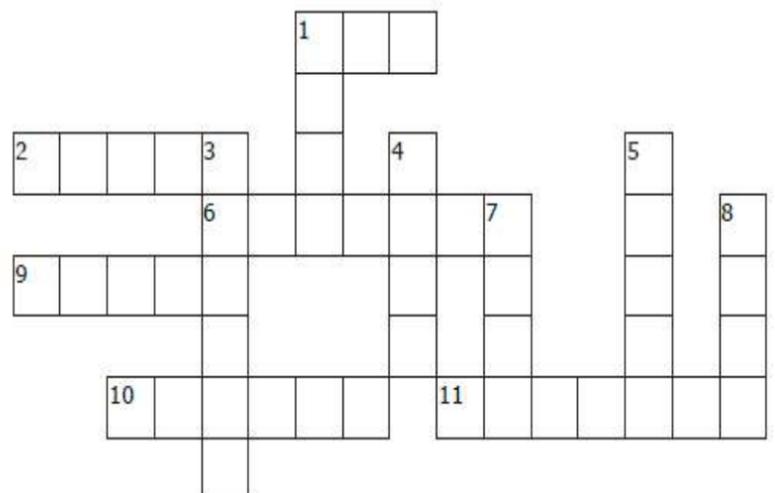


Who is the Son of God?

Draw a picture of this special gift God gave the world.



TODAY is the FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT



ACROSS

- 1. A male child
- 2. The earth with its inhabitants and all things upon it
- 6. Lasting forever, without end
- 9. Received the ten commandments from God
- 10. To die or be destroyed
- 11. To accept something as true, genuine, or real

DOWN

- 1. To rescue from danger or harm
- 3. Hot, dry area of land with few trees or plants
- 4. Alone in its kind, nothing like it
- 5. A serpent or reptile)
- 7. To care very deeply for someone
- 8. The period of time from birth to death

| | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|-------|
| BELIEVE | SON | ONLY | WORLD |
| ETERNAL | DESERT | PERISH | SAVE |
| LOVE | SNAKE | MOSES | LIFE |

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| N | A | C | E | T | D | E | V | A | S |
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| E | G | M | R | D | E | M | U | S | E |
| T | I | N | E | N | A | V | I | V | R |
| N | L | M | S | N | A | L | I | V | A |
| E | U | E | V | E | I | L | E | B | E |
| S | S | E | N | K | R | A | D | B | F |

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| NICODEMUS | SERPENT | DESERT |
| LIFE | CONDEMN | SAVED |
| REFUSES | SENTENCE | LIGHT |
| DARKNESS | EVIL | TRUTH |



A few months ago, we celebrated our 45th wedding anniversary. These last 45 years together have been some of the best years of our lives. Best? Yes! Easiest? Not so much! Before we got married, we were warned that marriage is hard. That's just a plain old fact. After 45 years, it's safe to say that we've had our fair share of highs and lows. Because, just like any other relationship, ours is far from perfect.

Yet, we have overcome these challenges together and that has moulded us into the people we are today. Being married has taught us a lot about life, love, and simply living.

Recently, here in Florida, we were paid a visit by a couple who we had known since the early years of our marriage. They had migrated and were happy to see us here in Florida. It was lunch time by the time we had each shared on a number of topics, so we invited them to have a meal with us.

As it is customary with us, after we had said the grace before the meal, we kissed and whispered "I love You."

Our friends smilingly looked at us and expressed an opinion that "after all these years we should have outgrown it. After all, we must know that we love each other to still be married after 45 years." On enquiring if they do not express their love to each other in suitable words, at least once in a while. They responded that their love for each other does not require those "petty things" anymore.

Do you remember the song lyrics that whispered: "Have I told you lately

Have I told you lately that I love you



By Chris & Noelma Lam

that I love you. Have I told you lately that I care?" It is a powerful song. And when we apply these lyrics, to spouses, parents and children, it becomes even more so.

Do you ever tell your children, "I love you?" These three little words can bring healing, comfort and hope - even when all seems lost.

Some mothers and fathers tell us that they themselves never heard these words from their own parents. And they are not comfortable saying "I love You" to their children, especially their older children.

They explain: "The kids know I love them. I pay their bills, I give them rides in the car, I give them clothes and food, and so many other things. They know I love them. I don't need to tell them." Our reply to this is: "You do need to say I love you to your

sons and daughters. It lets them know you really care for them."

Other parents tell us: "My son is on drugs" or, "My son is failing in school" or, "My daughter is living with her boy friend" or, "My daughter won't talk to me." Yes, these problems are in many families. We do not accept their improper conducts, yet, if we can put aside that in our minds, it can help. It is much like the idea of: "I hate the sin, but I love the sinner."

So, let us put aside the behaviours and still say "I love You." This will probably surprise your sons or daughters. Nevertheless, every day make time to say "I love You." Sometimes, these little words of affection was what they were really missing in their lives and, hearing it said openly, could be the trigger to help them realise how much they are hurting you.

Yes. "Have I told you lately that I love you. Have I told you lately that I care?" These powerful words "I love You" are the best therapy in the world. We have heard of families who have grown closer because of these words. "I love You." "You mean the world to me."

Yes couples, parents. We urge you to give it a try, for a day, a week, a month, a year - forever. We love our children when they are good, and we should also love them when they are bad. We don't accept bad behaviour, but our love is unconditional. It is always there for them. Keep loving, and keep on expressing this to your loved ones openly, in words that we feel sure they would love to hear. God bless you all. ❖

Lent IS A TIME TO GROW CLOSER TO JESUS

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TitBits

-- This Week's Reflection:

A lot can happen in the forty days and forty nights of Lent. More useful things will happen if we enter into this period of sweet discipline with open hearts and minds, with conscious attention. It's not about succeeding, however, but it's about simply being faithful. That's when the most interesting, enlivening things happen. It is then that our sense of God is opened, transforming everything. God Bless You! Have a Great Week!

-- This Week's Bible Question:

Q. What did Moses make the sons of Israel do with the golden calf that Aaron had made?
 (Answer below.)

-- This Week's Teaser:

Q: Why did Little Johnny put his bed near the fireplace?
 (Answer below.)

-- Today's Bible Verse:

Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. — Hebrews 10:24

-- Today's Marriage Tip:

Praying together as a couple and a family has carried us through some tough years. Always try to attend Mass together.

-- Humour:

While taking a routine vandalism report at a primary school, a policeman was interrupted by five year old Little Johnny.

Looking up and down at his uniform, Johnny asked, "Are you a cop?"

"Yes," he answered, and continued writing the report.

"My mother said if I ever needed help I should ask the police. Is that right?"

"Yes, that's right," he said.

"Well, then," Johnny said as he extended his foot toward him, "would you please tie my shoe?"

-- A Card Hallmark Would Never Print:

God must love stupid people; He made so many like you.

-- Signs Found at Church:

Have trouble sleeping? We have sermons - come hear one!"

-- This Week's Truism:

Love is like a precious plant, you've got to keep watering it.

-- Actual Hilarious Signs:

On a Septic Tank truck in Texas. Yesterday's meals on wheels.

-- Answer to Bible Question:

He burned it, ground it to powder, scattered it on water, and made the children of Israel drink it. - see Exodus 32:20-21

Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it.

-- Answer to Teaser:

He wanted to sleep like a log! ❖

Mind Puzzler Corner

Our Last Brain Teaser was:

A woman shoots her husband, then holds him under water for five minutes. Next, she hangs him. He is very pleased with the results, and then they have a lovely dinner. How can this be possible?

The answer: She took a picture of him and developed it in her dark room.

This Week's Brain Teaser:

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?

Look for the answer next week

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Lenten Retreat at Linden



Parishioners of Saint Joseph the Worker parish in Linden, took part in a one-day retreat on Friday March 2nd, at St. Joseph the Worker church.

The day's events commenced with the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 08:00 hours.

During this time other members of the parish community along with visitors from Georgetown continued arriving to participate in our Retreat.

At the commencement of the retreat over one hundred participants were present. These included members from St. Joseph the Worker; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Wismar; Our Lady of Lourdes, Silver Hill; and members of the Charismatic Renewal Group from Georgetown.

At the start of the Retreat our Church coordinator Mrs. Anna Bridglall welcomed all on behalf of the parish.

A praise and worship session followed, led by Sister Gail Vincent and the team of singers from Georgetown.

The first session was a presentation on the theme "Unity" which was done by Brother Andrew James.

The second session, which was done by Brother Kent Vincent, was also on the theme of Unity but there was special emphasis on relationships and forgiveness.

With the arrival of Father John Packiaraj SJ, confession commenced around 12:00pm and ended just before our lunch break.

At 2:00pm we resumed with a praise and worship session, which was closed by Bro. Kent Vincent doing some stirring prayers, supplications and songs to close the period.

At 3:00pm the Stations of the Cross was prayed by members processing around the church compound.

The closing Mass commenced at 4:00pm and was celebrated by Parish Priest Fr. Berchmans.

The day ended with a thank you to all by Sister Anna Bridglall. It was truly an inspiring and moving day of our Praise and worship.

Special thanks to our Parish Priest Fr. Berchmans for organizing this event. ❖

Lenten Assembly for the East Coast Parishes in Buxton

Place: **Church of Saint Anthony of Padua, Buxton**

Date: **Sunday March 11th**

Time: **8:30 am to 4:00 pm**

Theme: **"Lord Let Me See"**

Programme

Morning

8:30: Registration

9:00: Holy Mass (Bishop Francis Alleyne OSB)

11:00: Talk (Fr Paul Chemparathy SJ)

11:30: Group Sharing

Afternoon

12:30: Lunch Break (Please bring your lunch packs, drinks will be provided)

1:30: Group Reports / Parish reports

2:00: Stations of the Cross

2:30: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (Confessions will be heard during adoration)

3:30 – 4.00 Benediction (Father Anil SJ)

Departure

Pope's Intentions

March Monthly Intention:

Formation in Spiritual Discernment

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels. ❖

The Midpoint of Lent (From Back Page)

experience how much God loves us at a new and more personal level. These graces prepare us to keep our eyes focused on Jesus in the weeks ahead - to learn from him, to fall in love with him more deeply and to be drawn to imitate him more completely. If I am (we are) just getting started with our Lenten journey, renewing our desires for these graces will be all I(we) need to begin with a renewed openness. God does not need a lot of time to convince us of his love for us.

This is a week about God's love for us and our call to love others the same way. It is a week to keep our daily focus on naming a desire each morning. The day ahead will shape what we ask for as our feet hit the floor in the morning. Pausing to thank the Lord for this day and to ask for the grace to let our mind and heart be renewed in the concrete circumstances, relationships and obligations of our day.

Throughout the day, I (we) can then return to those desires in background of our awareness. My (our) request for the Lord's help is always there and our consciousness of it will help us make the choice we desire to make, to let go of what we need to let go of, to add what we need to add. This will take us deeper and deeper into self-awareness and a sense of our need for a Saviour, who is right there to embrace us and give us the graces we ask for. ❖

[Edited from: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent>]

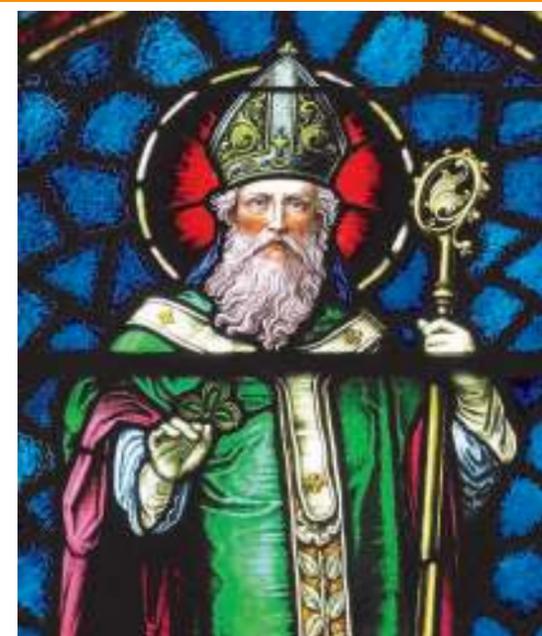
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Diocese joins in Street Pastors Guyana project

Saint of the Week



March 17th: Saint Patrick (387- 461)

St. Patrick of Ireland is one of the world's most popular saints. He was born in Roman Britain and when he was fourteen or so, he was captured by Irish pirates during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. At the time, Ireland was a land of Druids and pagans but Patrick turned to God and wrote his memoir, The Confession. In The Confession, he wrote:

"The love of God and his fear grew in me more and more, as did the faith, and my soul was rosed, so that, in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers and in the night, nearly the same. I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain."

Patrick remained a slave until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from God in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain and was reunited with his family.

He became a priest, and after being made Bishop for Ireland he was untiring in preaching the Gospel and converted many to the faith. ❖ [www.catholic.org & www.salfordliturgy.org.uk]



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Georgetown has joined with other Christian denominations in Guyana in the recently launched Streets Pastors-Guyana project.

Street Pastors is an initiative of Ascension Trust, a U.K based, Christian inter-denominational network organisation with a goal of mobilising and empowering volunteers to work together within their local community and nation, to contribute positively to society and to improve the quality of life of the disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable.

Training for Street Pastors-Guyana took place from February 12th to 23rd at the Catholic Life Centre, Brickdam. Bishop Francis attended the launching ceremony and said the opening prayer. The trainers were Eustace and Sharon Constance from Ascension Trust in the U.K. Along with conflict management and counselling, the

training emphasized that the essence of their ministry is not about preaching the gospel or judging/condemning others but rather having a reassuring presence in local communities, showing concern for society, listening, caring and helping – working in an unconditional way - especially the excluded and marginalized.

The Street Pastors were also taught to be at all times prepared to provide some material support and to help and care for people in practical ways. They are also encouraged to look at collaborative ways of engaging the police, local government and other statutory agencies.

For example, having been assured of the support of the Ministry of Social Protection, the Street Pastors can gather and furnish the information of someone they might encounter who would like to come off the streets.

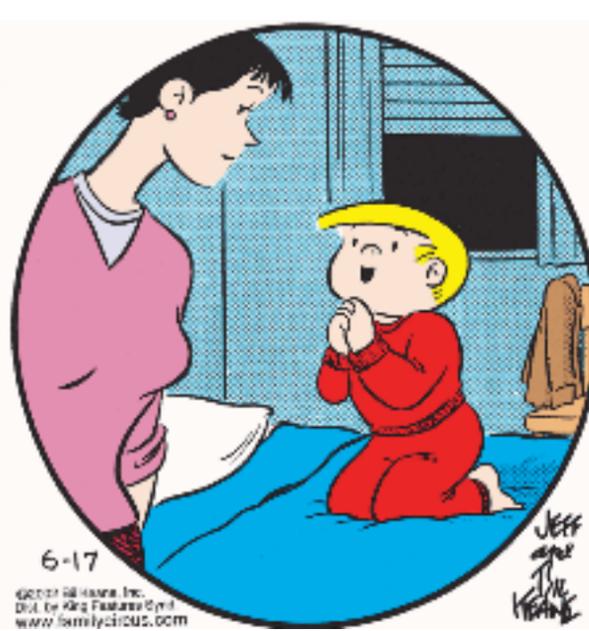
Over 30 pastors from a number of Christian denominations took part. They included Joel and Shelly-Ann Freeman from the Catholic Community.

Street pastors wear a blue uniform, with the term 'Street Pastor' visible in white. They patrol in teams of men and women, usually at nights, to care for, listen to and help people who are out on the streets. The local group comes under a governing Board which is headed by Pastor Shane Moses.

All member churches donated funds for the travel of the trainers to Guyana and for the pastors uniforms. However ongoing fundraising is one issue the new board will be discussing.

The enterprise is international and is now being operated in many countries including Jamaica, Antigua & Barbuda and Trinidad & Tobago. ❖

On the Lighter Side



Saying 'Amen' is like pressing the 'Send' button for your prayers.

The Midpoint of Lent

From Fr. Godfrey Veerasammy SJ

What if I'm at the midpoint of Lent and not much is going on? Or the opposite is true ... lots seem to be going on in preparation for the Pascal feasts - ...praying the stations, participating in the community liturgical celebrations, accompanying others, listening... and such like...

I am certain this is brings some kind of satisfaction and peace that all is going well... in my preparation

What is the Lord saying to me? What signs have been given to me over these last few weeks? Am I being accompanied, listened to?

Am I sensing that I am in a good place this lent? What are the things which invite me to the place of gratitude? (Peace, consolation) or am I feeling overwhelmed/ distant, desolation, frustration, anger, lethargic by my own limitations in light my journeying? Are there parts of my journeying which need God's intervention? [Grace, affirmation, reassurance...]

What specific grace(s) do I need at this stage of my journeying this lent?

A restart

I (we) can solidify the patterns I (we) have begun or I (we) can make a new start, if I (we) haven't

been able to get started yet. If I (we) have begun to recognize what needs realigning in my life and have begun to fast and abstain from some things that get in the way of our relationship with the Lord, then I am (we are) engaging in a struggle. Then I am (we are) likely uncovering resistance and experiencing our personal sinfulness face-to-face.

This is all preparing us for a deeper conversion, a readiness for reconciliation with God and the graces that will allow us to be a source of reconciliation with others. This is the time when we begin to see and ([please turn to page 11](#))