



CAUSE OF OUR JOY

In days gone by, wise men had foretold that a maiden would be chosen to be the mother of our Saviour. So in the palaces where a girl child was born, wise men were summoned to teach and train the young princess in the scriptures, so that the daughter would be chosen to be the mother of Jesus. But when the angel Gabriel was dispatched from heaven, he flew past the mansions and households of the rich and went to a little humble abode in the outback, where lived Anna and Jokhem with their daughter Mary. She had grown up in the silence of the outback with her parents.

One sunny morning, as was the custom, Mary went to trim the altar lamp and was kneeling in prayer. All of a sudden, there was an outburst of bright light within the altar and the angel of the Lord appeared unto Mary and said, "Rejoice, O Blessed One, the Lord is with Thee! Blessed art Thou among women!" announcing to her the mystery of the conception of the Son of God. Mary spoke with a query, "How can this be done as I know not a man." The angel explained that she would conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit, and at this Mary obediently answered, "Be it done to me according to thy word".

Mary was a courageous young girl. Any other 13 year old would have run away in fear at the appearance of the angel and it is because of her courage that today, we are blessed with a Saviour by whose blood we are redeemed and who has opened the gates of heavens to us. Mary was a humble woman who went about with her eyes cast down in an attitude of prayer.

Mary our mother has suffered more than any other human being. She got pregnant before marriage. Her son was born to her in a stable and she had to run away from the sword of the king Herod. She then lost her dearly beloved son in the temple while he was just 12 years old. . Which other mother would have the courage to stand at the foot of the cross and see her only son shed his last drop of blood?

Even today she stands at the altar as a loving mother with a closeness and warmth. Whatever our age, whether young or old, we run to Mary our mother to recite the rosary and never fail to find the solace, comfort and courage that we seek from her. Mary's eyes are always turned towards us. We are her children.

Blessed are those who suffer with Mary our Mother. Mary always remained calm but strong because she possessed an inner strength and so she was assumed body and soul into heaven.



At this I am reminded of a small experience quoted by Fr. Kumar. "It was a late, strong breezy night. I had almost retired to bed, when I heard footsteps outside my room. I wondered 'Who could it be at this hour?' As I went outside my room I saw our Rector reciting the rosary while pacing up and down the corridor. Shocked I asked him 'Why are you reciting the rosary at 2 in the morning?', to which he answered, 'Nothing gives me more comfort than reciting the rosary during troubled times'".

Mary appeared as an apparition to three children in Fatima, Portugal, beginning on May 13, 1917," Rev. Robert G. Lynam said. "Pope John Paul II was shot in St. Peter's Square in Rome on May 13, 1981. He himself stated that it was a motherly hand that guided the path of the bullet. He believed that Our Lady of Fatima protected him that day."

One year later, Pope John Paul II made a pilgrimage to Fatima and placed the bullet in the crown of the shrine at the site where Mary appeared to the shepherd children.

Mary our mother loves us so much that she will never allow any child of hers to get lost. This is exactly why hundreds of people from different faiths and religions visit her shrine on the 8th of September to pay homage to her. On Our Lady's birthday the Church celebrates the first dawning of redemption with the appearance in the world of the Saviour's mother, Mary. The Blessed Virgin occupies a unique place in the history of salvation, and she has the highest mission ever commended to any creature. We rejoice that the Mother of God is our Mother, too. Hence, we often call upon the Blessed Virgin "Cause of our joy", one of the most beautiful titles in her litany.

I would like to conclude by recounting what my mother used to tell me as a young child "Always pray to Jesus through Mary our mother as he never disobeys or denies her"- So intimate was the bond between two of my most favourite role models Jesus our Saviour and Mary our mother.

A Parishioner

**“Joyful Noise” and Archdiocesan Family Commission are organizing:
Glory 2008 - The Gospel Music Talent Contest.**

Age Groups: 1st 16 - 20 years. 2nd 21 and above

Categories given in the Entry Form available in the parish office.

Prizes from Rs. 2000/- to Rs. 8000/- plus Gospel music CDs.

Eliminations: 26th Oct. at St Joseph's Convent, Bandra.

Finals: 1st November at St. Andrew's Auditorium, Bandra.

Last date for submission of forms is 26th September.

Winners will glorify God at a 'Festival of Christian Music' on 17th & 18th January 2009 at St. Pius Xth College Grounds, Goregaon



THE PENITENTIAL RITE

Conscious of our inclination to sin and our unworthiness to come into God's presence, the petition for pardon comes naturally to our minds. Surprisingly, the Penitential Rite is not so much a proclamation of our sinfulness and asking God for pardon, rather, a joyful acclamation that God has forgiven us freely and generously in Jesus Christ. One of the approved forms in the Missal should convince us: "You raise the dead to life in the Spirit, Lord... You bring pardon & peace to the sinner, Christ.... You bring light to those in darkness, Lord..."

God's unconditional love & mercy. The Penitential Rite invites us to reflect carefully on the question of God's mercy as Jesus revealed it to us. By the coming of Jesus into this world God has freely and graciously forgiven all our sins, something worth rejoicing over. Yet oddly, we believe we must first feel miserable at our sinfulness in order to rejoice at our forgiveness. Our sense of guilt haunts us. Reflecting on God's goodness and love following us even as we sin will make us rejoice knowing that God continually forgives and welcomes us back home, almost as if nothing had come between us. Of course, this does not mean we can take advantage of God's goodness and keep on sinning. No one who tastes His forgiving love can consciously and with a hard heart offend him again.

Christian Living:- A response of Love. So all through our lives but especially at the Eucharist we praise and thank God for His immense forgiving love so freely and readily given each time we fail Him. So, at the Penitential Rite we don't cry out like condemned people pleading for mercy even though we pray: "Lord have mercy". The meaning of that phrase is: "Lord, you are so merciful and generous with your love in spite of our sinfulness that you welcome us back with tender compassion." This should be reflected in our tone of voice.

Christians:- Reconciled and Rejoicing God does not just forgive us an external debt, as it were, but He transforms us, renews our relationships. So, the test of having received His generous forgiveness is seen when we in turn generously forgive others.

"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us". Think of the parable of the unforgiving

servant. Hence, at the Penitential Rite we also ask ourselves; "have I really forgiven the hurts others have caused me?" "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother/sister has something against you..." (Mt.5/23)

Positive attitude towards our failings. We are not to be obsessed with our sinfulness. At mass we are not a group of sinners come to share in the perfect and timeless rites of the one true Church. Rather, we come together as a sinful, yet graced people to share in actions that are limited and with defects as we are limited and full of defects, yet graced as we are graced. To be positive towards our failings does not mean approving of sin and licentious living. It means that we stress our God given capacity to respond in love, rather than on our proneness to fail.

At our next Eucharist let us ask ourselves: Have I really accepted God's gracious gift of forgiveness of my sins? Secondly, is there anyone whom I need to forgive now even as I praise God for His gift of forgiveness to me? Am I in the habit of keeping score of the wrongs others have done me?

Finally, let us recall this fact. At the Eucharist the Father begins the celebration of our home coming. Would the thought that we are forgiven sinners make a difference in the way we live our Christian life for the rest of the day?

(If you have an Internet connection click on to our parish website: <http://www.geocities.com/olpschurch> and on the 'notice board' you will get all the parts of the mass explained)

Fr. Osie D'souza





WHAZZUP YOUTH!!!

If there is one person to be congratulated for the ever-enthusiastic youth of our parish, it is Fr. Aldrin. From motivating every youth to participate in the church choir and various other inter-parish and deanery level activities to organizing games and workshops for both deanery and church level, Fr. Aldrin has been a great support and friend to each one of us, unitedly exclaim the youth. The latest events were the Deanery Youth Day and Rainbow conducted by Holy Family Parish.

I personally feel it is a great learning experience and a brilliant opportunity to network with youth from other parishes. It is a platform, whereby you are allowed to showcase your talent as also interact with new people. This year we had two buses full of youth going for the DYD which was conducted in Jerry Merry. Our Parish had the largest turnout. Here we were welcomed with Chandan on our foreheads. There were excellent ice-breakers which got us to know our team-mates better. OLPS was in charge of games. Along with 15 volunteers from our parish, we organized three fun-filled, enjoyable games for the youth. There was also singing with an excellent band. Apart from this, we were introduced to a Gujarati and a Buddhist who experienced the presence of our Saviour very strongly in their lives. They narrated to us how living Christianity had truly brought about a visible change in their lives.

The day ended with what most of us absolutely look forward to in every deanery level activity - The Socials. There was a lot of dancing to the excellent tunes of the DJ. It was a brilliant break many of us got from our studies and daily routine activities.

Neha Sebastian

A TEACHER'S PRAYER

Father God, I wish to praise and thank you, for this call to the teaching line, which I consider more as a Vocation than a Profession. Lord, give me the light to see in every child entrusted to my care your image and likeness. Give me a special love Lord, for the mentally challenged, the physically handicapped, and above all the slow learners. I wish to praise and thank you Lord, for having chosen me among millions, and entrusted me with this holy work of moulding young minds and hearts. I promise you lord, that I will never stagnate in this holy work, but try and discover new methods, by which I can present teaching material to children, in a pleasant and attractive way. Above all, I promise you lord, that I will not only mould their minds, so that they become worthy citizens of the future, but also instil noble values in their hearts, so that they may one day, people your kingdom of heaven. Amen.

Olive Da Gama.



धन्य तु स्त्रियांमध्ये!

एका स्त्रिद्वारे जगात पापाने प्रवेश केला होता. आणि संपुर्ण स्त्रि जगताला कलंकित केले होते. शैतानाच्या मोह पाशात स्त्रि कशी फसू शकते? हे सैतानाने सिद्ध केले होते. मानव जात ह्या पापाच्या आणि शापाच्या अंधकारात चाचपडत होती. सैतानावर मात करण्यासाठीच देवाने एक योजना फार वर्षांपासून केलेली होती. देवाने सुद्धा ठरविले होते, की जर एका स्त्रिद्वारे पापाने जगात प्रवेश करून स्त्रि जगतालाच नव्हे तर संपुर्ण मानव जातीला पापाच्या अंधकारात टाकले होते. तर मी एका स्त्रिद्वारेच संपुर्ण मानवजातीला ह्या पापाच्या अंधकारातून बाहेर काढीन.

देवाने योजनेनुसार जोखीम व हन्ना ह्या अत्यंत वयोवृद्ध, धार्मिक व गरीब कुटूंबात मारीयेचा जन्म झाला. मारीयेचे जीवन हे परमेश्वरी योजनेला अनुसरूनच अगदी प्रार्थनामय व आज्ञाधारकपणाचे होते. ती एकदा अशीच प्रभूच्या प्रार्थनेत मग्न असतानाच तिला देवाच्या दुताने निरोप दिला. त्या दुताने तिला देवाच्या वतीने अभिवादन केले. "नमो हे कृपापुर्ण स्त्रिये!" देवाच्या दुताने पापी जनांच्या तारणाची योजना प. मारीयेला सादर केली. ही योजना म्हणजेच तिच्या संपुर्ण कौमार्याचे समर्पणच होते. स्वतःच्या सर्व मनोकामना, तारुण्य, इच्छा आकांक्षा ह्या सर्वांची ती एकअ इतकीच होती. 'तुग भवतीह शीलव तुड्याद्वारेज गाचा तारणारा जन्माला येईल.' हे शब्द एकताच ती संभ्रमात पडली. कारण त्यावेळी तिची फक्त मागणी झाली होती व लग्न अजून बाकी होते. तिला पुरुष ठाऊक नव्हता. समाज काय म्हणेल? होणारा पती माझा स्विकार करील काय? असे अनेक राक्षसी प्रश्न तिच्या समोर उभे राहिले होते व दुसरीकडे तिच्याचद्वारे पापी जनांचे तारण कार्य जन्माला येणार होते. अशा द्विधा अवस्थेत ती होती. पापी जनांचे तारण, की स्वताःचे जीवन? हा प्रश्न तिच्या पुढे उभा राहिला होता. तारणाची योजना हो-नाही-तराजूमध्ये डळमळत होती. परंतु मारीयेला पापी जनांचा कळवळा आला. तिने तारणाच्या योजनेला होकार दिला. त्या देव दुताला तिने उत्तर दिले "पहा मी प्रभुची दासी आहे तुड्या शब्दा प्रमाणे माड्या ठायी होवो." प. मारीया देवापुढे नम्र झाली. तिने तारण कार्यात स्वतःला समर्पित केले.

देवदुताने मारीयेला दुसरी एक आनंदाची बातमी दिली की, 'तुझी नातलग एलिसाबेत हीला म्हातारपणात पुत्रगर्भ राहिला आहे व तिला आता सहावा महीना आहे.' हे एकताच मारीयेला फारच आनंद झाला व ती त्वरे एलिसाबेतच्या भेटीस निघाली.

कारण अशा परिस्थितीत एलिसाबेतला मदतीची गरज होती हे तिने ओळखले होते. म्हणून ती तिच्या भेटीला धावत गेली. आपण देवपुत्राची माता आहोत असा गर्व किंवा अभिमान तिने बाजुला ठेवला, आपला मोठेपणा ती विसरली व धावत जाऊन दुरवरचा पायी प्रवास करून ती एलिसाबेतला भेटली तेव्हा एलिसाबेतने तिला अभिवादन केले. "धन्य तु स्त्रियांमध्ये आणि धन्य तुड्या उदराचे फळ, माड्या प्रभुच्या मातेने मजकडे यावे इतकी मी भाग्यवान आहे का?"

प. मारीयेने येशुचे बाळपणापासूनच देवाच्या योजनेप्रमाणे संगोपन केले होते. येशुच्या ठायी असलेले दैवी सामर्थ्य तिला ठाऊक होते. म्हणूनच तिने काना गावी लग्न प्रसंगी त्याला त्याच्या सामर्थ्याची जाणीव दिली व त्याच्या कडून पाण्याच्या द्राक्ष रसाचा चमत्कार करवून घेतला.

तिने तारण्याचा कूस येसुच्या जन्माअगोदरच आपल्या उदरात स्विकारला होता. तिच्या काळजाच्या तुकड्याने तिच्या डोळ्यादेखतच भारी कुस वाहीला होता व तिच्या समोरच त्याला कुसावर खिलले होते. परंतु तिने एकही शब्द काढला नाही. कारण तिने म्हटले होते. "पहा मी प्रभुची दासी आहे."

प. मारीयेने आपल्या जीवनाद्वारे स्त्रित्वाला सम्मानित केले आहे. एका स्त्रिद्वारे पाप जन्मले होते, तर पुन्हा स्त्रिद्वारेच पापाचे तारण जन्माला आले. प. मारीया एक सदगुनी व अतिसुंदर स्त्रि होती. असे कोणते अलंकार तिने चढविले होते की ज्याद्वारे ती एवढी सुंदर होती? आज्ञाधारकता, नम्रता, सहनशीलता, सेवाभावीवृत्ती व प्रार्थनामय जीवन ही अतिमौल्यवान अलंकार तिने परिधान केलेली होती. आणि म्हणूनच ती सर्व स्त्रियांमध्ये धन्य झाली.

सप्टेंबर महिन्यात आपण प. मारीयेचा वाढदिवस साजरा करतो. तिच्या दर्शनाला जाताना फुले, हार, मेणबत्त्या इ. धिंता करण्या ऐवजी ह्या सदगुनरूपी अलंकारांना अंगिकारून जर प. मारीयेच्या दर्शनाला गेलोत रप .म मारीयाफारप्र सन्नहोईल. व आमच्या मुखातून पवित्र आत्माच्या प्रेरणेने ते गौरवाचे शब्द उमटतील. 'धन्य तु स्त्रियांमध्ये!'

धन्यवाद!

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HOLY SEE DECRIES ANTI- CHRISTIAN VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Vatican is speaking out against a wave of anti-Christian violence in eastern India, which has already caused perhaps as many as eight deaths.

In a communiqué today, the Holy See formally appealed for an end to the violence against Christian communities in India, which intensified over the weekend after a Hindu political leader was killed. Authorities suspected communist rebels for the death of Swami Laxmananada Saraswati, but Hindu hardliners are blaming Christians.



The eastern Indian state of Orissa has long been plagued by Christian-Hindu violence, as Christian missionaries work with poor tribal peoples of the region and Hindus accuse them of forcing or bribing conversions.

Saraswati, a leader of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad or World Hindu Council, was active in the campaign to stop villagers from converting to Christianity or to win them back.

Bishop Thomas Thiruthalil, president of Orissa's Catholic conference, harshly condemned the murder. "We, the Catholic community of Orissa, profoundly condemn the terrible event, and express our profound sympathy to the deceased's loved ones," he said in a statement

Solidarity

A note published by the Vatican press office expressed the Holy See's solidarity with the local Churches and the congregations affected in the wave of attacks.

The statement said the Vatican condemns these acts that are "against the dignity and liberty of persons and compromises peaceful civil coexistence."

At the same time, the Vatican appealed to all "so that, with a sense of responsibility, an end is put to all violence and a climate of dialogue and mutual respect is re-established."

L'Osservatore Romano describes the news from India as "extremely worrying."

POPE PRAYS FOR REFUGEES

Benedict XVI will be praying this September for the protection and defense of the rights of refugees.

The Apostleship of Prayer announced the general intention chosen by the Pope, "That those, who because of war and totalitarian regimes have been obliged to leave their homes and country, be supported by Christians in the defense and protection of their rights."

The Holy Father also chooses a missionary intention for each month. In September he will pray, "That all Christian families, faithful to the sacrament of matrimony, will cultivate the values of love and community, so that they will be a small evangelizing community, open and sensitive to the material and spiritual needs of their brothers and sisters."



TEND THE FLAME : KEEP THE ROMANCE ALIVE

This was the theme of the evening of 26th July 2008, when the Family Cell of OLPS Church organised their first major function for all married couples of the parish on the ground floor of Sevadaan. Our Parish Priest, Fr. Paul Julius celebrated the Holy Eucharist and preached a very meaningful Homily using examples from daily family life wherein he drove home the point that Loving Couples will be able to bring up their children better. There were special moments during the Eucharist when couples had to hold each other's hands and think about how those very hands had worked hard and struggled during several years of married life.

The end of the Eucharist saw a line of waiters serving everyone piping-hot samosas and Frootis. This led to the smooth transition to the next part of the evening which was an Input session by Mr. Jeevan D'Cunha, an MA/MA, from Boston College, USA and a Counselling Psychologist. He is a Counsellor at the Snehalaya Service Centre and Rane Hospital. As Mr. D'Cunha was born, baptised and did his schooling in OLPS Parish, he was a little nostalgic. He began his talk, by throwing a Question to all those present, "What is the secret of a happy marriage?" However, before anyone could answer it, he gave us the answer himself which he says, he got from a married man. The answer was, (hold your breath!) "The secret to a Happy Marriage is eating out 4 times a weeks, I eat out on Mondays and Wednesdays and my wife eats out on Tuesdays and Thursdays."

Commenting on the inflation in the Indian economy, D'Cunha said that in married life too, spouses face a similar situation and so all married couples should open an account in the Love bank and keep making deposits and not withdrawals. These deposits would enhance the relationship, whereas withdrawals would do just the opposite. He then touched upon the following areas which are important in every married couple's life:

- 1) The Definition of Affection in terms of behaviour is different and should be clearly understood by both partners.
- 2) Sexual Fulfillment
- 3) Conversation
- 4) Financial Support
- 5) Recreational Companionship

6) Role of in-laws, family and friends

7) Need for honesty and openness. (After all, none of us is a magician)

He said that the day a wife becomes a mother she starts looking after her baby 24/7 and neglects her "Big Baby", which may lead to further problems. This should be avoided. When the baby grows up into a teenager, again it is the wife who finds it hard to separate from her teen and has to suffer. At this stage too, the couple has to work on its own relationship. His advice to every couple was that we should find out the things that made us happy in the beginning of our relationship and keep doing those things to bring back the spark. After all, all couples are first and foremost spouses and then parents. Sylvie Coutinho then proposed a vote of thanks.

The next session began with every couple waltzing to the groovy tunes of DJ Mark. The younger couples of course almost danced cheek to cheek, whereas the older ones had to make do with stomach to stomach (or should I say paunch to paunch). It was wonderful to see the moves of some of the female dancers, who could any day compete with Shakira and her famous hips, not to mention the males who I'm sure could give any Bollywood film star a run for their money.

The Master of Ceremonies, Karl Pereira, constantly kept everyone in splits with his "Couple Jokes" and hilarious games, which again centred around the theme of the evening. "Standing Housie" and a variety of Spot Prizes ensured that a sizeable number of people walked home with a prize in their hand.

Finally, it was time for dinner and Fr Gregory Noronha, in his inimitable style, said the "Grace before Meals". Over a simple but sumptuous dinner by caterer Roy and some soulful waltz numbers including "Nothing's Gonna Change my Love for You", everyone present enjoyed an evening that was significant not just because it was Parents' Day, but also because a good time was had by one and all. Kudos to the Family Cell, who gave their time, energy and talents to organize this memorable evening and we look forward to similar functions in the future.

Nichola Esteves



Kuch Kuch Ho Raha Hai...Community happenings !! (June 2008 to August 2008)

We thank you all for your valuable collaboration towards the Small Christian Communities. Very soon you will be reminded to submit your quarterly report for the period July 2008 to September 2008, which has to be submitted to the parish office latest by 7th of October 2008.

Following is the brief report of the activities in all our 21 SCCs for the period June 2008 to August 2008 :

1. Holy Hour in the Church for the months June to August were conducted by the appointed SCCs on the First Friday of the month.
2. In June, the 21 SCCs came together to conduct the daily Liturgy of the Novena to Our Lady, whose Feast was celebrated on 27th June. The theme of the Novena was “Your Personal Encourager, Jesus the Lord”, and for each day of the Novena the SCCs prepared banners and had creative inputs to make congregational participation more meaningful. The Cultural programme which followed the celebration of the Eucharist on the evening of the Feast Day was an entertaining production of creativity, drama and fun, enthusiastically participated by all SCCs in the Parish.
3. Prayer service in preparation for the “Rite of Acceptance” for Confirmands in July, also presented the dove-shaped card “sent forth in the spirit”.
4. Visitation of the sick & aged in community
5. Parent's Day celebrated in SCC.
6. Conducted enthronement in June & July in one SCC.

Wilson U. Patrao

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

'Reverend,' said the young man, 'I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.'

The minister chuckled, 'I know what you mean. It's the same in my business.'

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