

The family is the hub of all human life, radiating, touching and influencing all human society. The family is God's gift to humanity to nurture life, to protect life, to facilitate the growth process, to heal at every stage. It is the cradle, the nursery, the first school and the first church for us. The late Pope John Paul II refers to the family as the "sanctuary of life". A sanctuary is a sacred place dedicated to God, where God dwells, and where human beings encounter God. It is a place where prayer is frequently offered, a place of holy sacrifice, where we receive so many blessings. Sanctuary also refers to a place of refuge and safety. How rich and expressive and how awesome this sacred gift of family to our world!

In a functional family the full complementarities between spouses can be expressed. Here spouses confidently express their love and draw

others into their love. Here life is shared with the next generation. Here siblings learn to relate to one another, and family members learn to sacrifice, deepen their ability to love.

We see a different scenario today. We see the sanctuary of life desecrated in so many ways. The life-giving womb, which should be the safest place for the child, has become a tomb; the nuptial bond is broken or bartered at the altar of ego, career, pride, revenge, and unforgiveness. Similarly, changing lifestyles, media, work patterns and pressures, the ever increasing pursuit of pleasure and the need for instant gratification have led to the increasing breakdown of marriage and family. In our daily lives, too, we tend to take the gift of family for granted. As children we are not fully aware of the constant self-giving of our parents, as spouses we tend to be unaware of our vocation to "be love" – which is a journey together in holiness. As parents of young adults we refuse to 'let go', afraid of the 'empty nest' and the life that lies ahead. We rarely pause to be thankful to God for our families, our homes, and our marriages.

These threats to family life and these ground realities call for new answers, so as to empower with grace every family to live out its life-giving

(contd on pg 2)

The Rector, the Redemptorist community & the Parish Team wish all our parishioners a Hope-filled experience of the Resurrected Christ.

"Happy Easter"



As this year is dedicated to the Eucharist and the Family, this issue of Perpetual Quest focuses on issues relevant to the Christian Family.



Life giving Families: A Challenge (contd. from pg 1)

mission. Listed below are three points to reflect on with regard to a life-giving family:

1. A life-giving family is one that is conscious of being 'called' by God to be His presence in the world. In such a family, members find the grace to forgive and bear with each other, be subject to each other out of reverence for Christ, and minister to each other, while, hand in hand with one heart and mind, they strive to find God not as individuals but together.
2. A life-giving family is one that looks on family life as ministry – team ministry, comprising of parents, children, grandparents, who commit themselves to express love and care for each other and mutually support each other. Their mutual love is expressed through warm embraces, acts of love, rituals that connect, family celebrations, table fellowship and family prayers. Here both spouses accept willingly their responsibility to be life-givers to each other through renewed intimacy and then give life to their children through affirmation, appreciation and praise.

3. A life-giving family is one in which both parents accept the awesome responsibility to be the "guiding light" in the lives of their children. They lead by example. Their parenting is uplifting, warm, compassionate, constantly seeking and discovering hidden potentials in their children. Their children encounter the "Divine" in such parents who lead them on to discover God and themselves.

Well aware of their responsibility, life-giving families draw their strength and grace from the Eucharist. Not content with just rituals, they live the Eucharist in which we celebrate Jesus' offer of life in all its abundance. So too we must strive to celebrate our life, our communion with God and in and through our relationships in family. May the Holy Family be our model and guide drawing us into deeper communion with the Triune God as we seek to live our mission, on earth, through the Eucharist, His memorial of love to us!

- Dr. Yolande Pereira

ENCOURAGE THE FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO RECITE THE PRAYER DAILY.

Prayer for the Family

We thank you God, Father of mercy and author of life, for sending your own incarnate Son to become part of a family so that, he would experience the joys and worries of Life in a family. Protect and watch over our family, and grant us the priceless gift of your peace.

To you, Mother Mary, we entrust our family and our home. Help us to make our family a sanctuary of peace, love and joy, like the Home of Nazareth.

We ask you, Father, to keep our 'domestic church' united and inspire us to live the Eucharist in our daily lives. Help us to be accepting,

affirming, and forgiving of one another. Encourage us to share openly our joys and sorrow. Help us to accept our differences and grow beyond our conflicts.

Give parents the wisdom and patience to nurture their children with love. Instill in children self-respect and right values to become the best that You have made them to be. Keep our minds open to recognize the reality of each other's goodness and beauty. Give us hearts full of love for You and for our family. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

...Leaders Link No. 55, Jan-Feb '06





The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

Families had many traditions with regard to prayers and religious observances. Many homes had an altar with holy pictures and a votive light. But is God present when a home is devoid of love? The family rosary was recited. But how do we strive to live the mysteries of the rosary? A picture of the Sacred Heart was enthroned. But is Jesus, really the Lord of our home and of our lives? Have we discarded these practices because we lost the meaning behind them? Have we substituted some other practices that enshrine these values? There are conflicting values in today's society which sometimes coexist in our hearts without a second thought.



Tradition comes from the Latin word *tradere*, which means to hand over. We hand over something that is alive and is of value. What values would we as a Christian family deliberately choose from among alternatives offered us by the media, to which we are all over-exposed? If I spend many hours watching television, on the Internet, reading magazines and newspapers, without critically examining what I see and hear, I am subtly brainwashed by worldly values. By contrast how much time goes in reflecting on God's Word?

Families can pray together without praying. They can recite a lot of pious formulae on their knees while their minds and hearts are far from God. If there is hatred, enmity, jealousy, pride and unforgiveness amongst them, is it prayer? If it is hypocrisy to pray in such a state, the answer is not to discard prayer, but to be reconciled as members of the family.

Is the family gathered together in His name, in His presence, for His glory, to praise, thank, adore and ask Him to unite them in love? The picture on the wall should help us to see Jesus present in each one of us.

This calls for self-emptying and dying daily to ourselves (reflect on Phil 2: 1-11). Prayer is not

mechanical. The minds and hearts of family members are united by the Word and the Spirit, when we come together in faith and love.

"When you pray, do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think their gods will hear them because their prayers are long" (Matthew 6:7). Many people pray in formulae. They cannot pray in their own words and speak to God as Abba.

Prayer is also listening to God and listening to one another. When we share what the Spirit is saying to each one after reflecting on the Gospel, God speaks to us through each other. But we should not sermonize. Rather share how we ourselves need to change or improve.

"If you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done" (Mt 6:14-15). Unforgiveness and keeping grudges and hurts alive in our hearts are a real obstacle to family or couple prayer. No healing or reconciliation can take place as long as we stubbornly cling to being right and acting self-righteous.

Recall the story of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. Whom do I resemble in my attitudes? "Not everyone who calls me Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do. When the judgment day comes, many will say to me, "Lord, Lord! In your name we spoke God's message; by your name, we drove out many demons and performed many miracles! Then I will say to them: 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you wicked people!'" (Mt. 6:21-23)

What is my Father's will for me as a husband, wife, parent, child, brother, sister, employer or domestic worker, today in this home? The Holy Spirit will reveal this to me, if I ask Him to do so and listen to him speaking to me, through the

(contd on pg 4)



The Family That Prays Together Stays Together (contd. from pg 3)

Scriptures, Church teachings and through each other. He will give me the strength to obey him. We share these inspirations of the Holy Spirit in an interactive way, in our family prayer.

Prayer is closely connected with Mission entrusted to couples, parents and families. What is the mission statement of your domestic or home Church? God's kingdom has already entered into our homes and lives and world. It is not a future event after we die. All of us are called and empowered to build this kingdom of justice, mercy, love and unity, everyday. God gives each member of the family certain gifts, and opportunities to use those gifts for the building up of the Community.

Many of us today may have more formal education, money and facilities than our ancestors. We are exposed to many sources of information that can make us more available and of service to others. They can also make us more vulnerable to temptation and self-seeking. How do we use the gifts and opportunities that God invests in us, to usher in the Kingdom of God into our world right now?

Mother Teresa was a woman of prayer. So was Mahatma Gandhi. What do they have to teach us? Without prayer: personal, couple and family

prayer, we are left to our own resources, which are meager. But when we plug in to God who is the powerhouse of prayer, we are enlightened, strengthened and equipped by the Holy Spirit to do works that would be impossible to people like us with limited intelligence, insight and creative ability.

We are living in uncertain times. We worry whether our pensions and insurance policies will suffice. Everything is changing so fast around us, we are confused and unable to keep up with the pace of change.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar with his Art of Living is drawing thousands of people to seek inner peace or how to deal with stress. Yoga, Vipassana and various strategies to handle one's emotions are popular today. We Catholics believe that Trust in God's providence is all the more necessary. Prayer helps us to turn to God with child-like trust. It helps us to walk humbly with our God. It helps us to overcome temptations and strengthens us when we are put to the test. Our God is there to deliver us from evil.

We ask Mary to help us pray as a family in the way she did, so that we may live united in faith and love.

Fr. Peter deSouza

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Committee

In the Archdiocese of Mumbai, we have a Committee known as the Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Committee (PEACE). Fr Erasto Fernandes is the Promoter of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration with the permission of Cardinal Ivan.

What is Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration?

It is the extension of the Eucharistic celebration or Holy Mass. This means that Jesus wants to remind us of His Love, of His desire to reach out to every human person and make them channels of His peace. So we come not just to continue

enjoying His Presence and adore Him, but that He may transform us and actively continue his redemptive mission in our surroundings. Once we can genuinely do that, then we will find that we can 'see' Jesus everywhere and in every person we deal with.

With this understanding, please offer yourself to HIM for one hour a week, specially from 12 noon to 8 00p.m. in the chapel near the parish office. Kindly give your name, address and telephone no. To Cecilia D'Souza. Tel. 25206489.



The Warlis of Talasari

The Late Holy Father John Paul II, when announcing the International Year of the Eucharist (October 2004 to October 2005), proposed the experience of the disciples on the way to Emmaus and their insistent invitation to the Lord "Stay with us", as the focus of our reflection on the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Through what followed in that episode, the disciples were led to experience the depth of the mystery of the Eucharist in all its dimensions. These dimensions, the Pope reminds us, come together in one aspect which more than any other makes a demand on our faith: the mystery of the "real" presence.

Thus, we are invited not only to celebrate the Eucharist with dignity but also to worship the Eucharist within and outside Mass and to contemplate on its missionary summons. We are therefore invited to commit ourselves in a particular way to respond to the many forms of poverty present in our world. By our love and concern for those in need, we will be recognized as true followers of Christ. This is the criterion by which the authenticity of our Eucharistic celebration is judged.

To this end then, the students of OLPS Parish Sunday School undertook a journey to Talasari to familiarize themselves with the life and challenges faced by the Warlis living there. An exhibition on aspects of their visits was very well appreciated as could be seen from the comments and opinions from those who visited it.

- 1) Matilda Martins – Excellent! It was wonderful to hear the little ones explaining.
- 2) Clifford Pinto – Good to see children trying to identify & communicate problems / situations outside of their day-to-day existence.
- 3) Lenny – Very informative and presented very well by the little children. Organized well, the theme was excellent. More such exhibitions are needed.
- 4) Fr. James D'Costa – An excellent way of educating our children in the faith experience and making all of us aware of the needs of our society. Congratulations students & teachers.
- 5) Dr. Dominic D'Silva – Suggest follow up to maintain interest in the subject. Would like to help – medical angle.



Kuch Kuch Ho Raha Hai..... community happenings

We are sincerely grateful to all SCC coordinators, Animators & members for their dedicated services and involvement in parish activities. Bishop Bosco Penha, in his letter dated February 15 2006 to our Parish Priest, has warmly congratulated all our SCC coordinators & animators for the excellent service that they have been rendering.

Here is the brief report of the happenings in our 22 SCCs for the period December 2005 to February 2006.

- § Holy Hour in the Church was conducted by different SCCs on every First Friday of the Month.
- § In December 2005, all communities warmly received our parish carol singers in their respective communities. Most SCCs had Christmas get-togethers in their areas beginning either with Mass or prayer services followed by games, snacks & dinner. Some communities organized carol singing from home to home. One community visited NASEOH and another SCC visited the Home for Abandoned babies and children where they sang carols for non-Christian inmates.

- § In January, all communities had the Presentation of the Creed for the children receiving Confirmation this year.
- § One community visited Ashadaan and distributed eatables & clothes and also helped them financially. Another community celebrated Republic Day with flag hoisting on 26th January 2006. Another community had Gospel sharing during the Christian Unity Week from 18th to 26th January.
- § In February, some communities visited the Shrine of Infant Jesus at Nasik. A couple of communities visited their members who were sick and hospitalized.
- § A community had a sharing on the theme of "Healing at Home" based on St. Mark's Gospel Ch. 1:29-34.
- § Visits to the families of the communities by the Parish Clergy were organized during the last three months by the SCCs.

Wilson U. Patrao



Women's Day – 8th March 2006

The OLPS Parish witnessed a happy, thought-provoking and successful celebration of women on 8th March – International Women's Day. The long tradition of women's active participation in social welfare programs in the parish was revived due to the initiative of Dr. Jeanette Pinto, who as active parishioner as well as an ardent worker of the Pro-Life movement was the main organizer. The solidarity among women was visible in the large number of enthusiastic women present.

The topic for discussion was "Women – Changing Role in Changing Times".

Ms. Leela Moraes, mother and teacher, highlighted the complexity and challenge of the role of woman as mother today.

Ms. Shirley Pereira, a Materials Manager in HPCL, spoke on the career woman. She advocated gender equality at the work place and that there should be no limit to professional achievement for women with capability and determination.

Ms. Mary Joseph, principal of Lokmanya Tilak School, gave a statistical account of the gender & caste bias against women in India today.

We have to thank Mr. R. Shridhar, well-known speaker and writer, for consenting to address a mainly feminine audience. Undoubtedly, he had everyone's attention for both his courage and his eloquence. He posed a challenge in his effective talk "What women can do to make a difference". The secret behind every successful woman is vision, leadership and strategy, he said while pointing out that important political women leaders have made significant efforts to improve the lives of women in India.

Dr. Jeanette Pinto was an experienced and effective moderator. Members of the audience posed a few questions to the speakers.

The evening ended on a happy note with a soft drink and dinner for all, generously hosted by the parish priest, Fr. Paul Julius. His enthusiasm & organization of the arrangements at Sevadaan helped to make the evening a success. Our thanks also to Dr. Jeanette Pinto & the group of ladies behind the scene for their effective participation.

Patsy Athayde

Questions Catholics Ask.

If God created us to be happy why does He allow so much evil and suffering especially of the innocent?

This is one of the mysteries of God's plan for this world. It is true He created us to be happy. Yet we must remember He created us with a free will. This is our dignity as human persons. We can make choices for good or evil. God respects our free will. This means He allows us to act evilly and bring suffering on ourselves and on others. He permits but does not wish evil. His wisdom lies in finally bringing good out of the very evil we do. This is exactly the meaning of the Passion and Death of Jesus. His Resurrection is the answer. In faith we believe that God will bring about a new heaven and a new earth.

(From Holy Spirit Interactive)

Please send in your questions.

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The Empty Egg -- The Empty Tomb

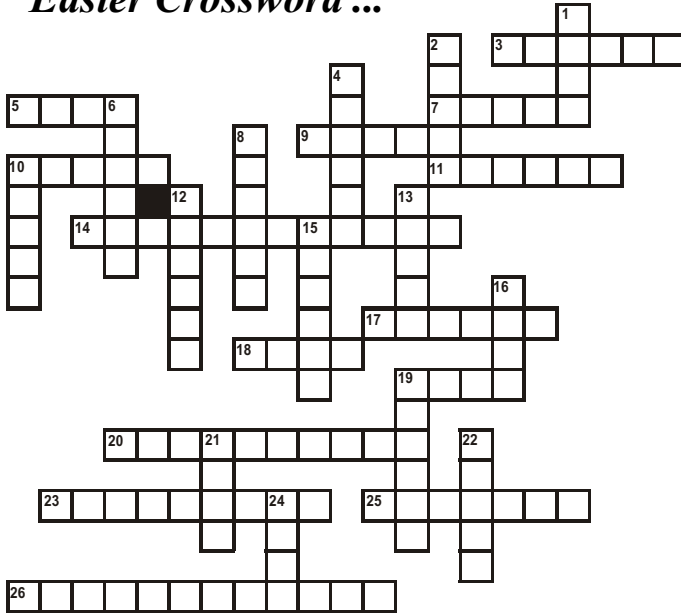
Jeremy was born with a twisted body and a slow mind. At the age of 12 he was still in second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, drool, and make grunting noises. At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy just irritated his teacher. One day she called his parents and asked them to come in for a consultation. As the Forresters entered the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five year gap between his age and that of the other students." Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know he really likes it here." Doris sat for a long time after they had left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying? As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. Here I am complaining when my problems are nothing compared to that poor family, she thought. Lord, please help me to be more patient with Jeremy. From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him. "I love you, Miss Miller," he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-why that's very nice, Jeremy. N-now please take your seat." Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg. "Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?" "Yes, Miss Miller," the children responded enthusiastically- all except for Jeremy. He listened intently; his eyes never left

her face. He did not even make his usual noises. Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them. That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for groceries, iron a blouse, and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents. The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs. In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground, we know that spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg, Miss Miller," she called out. The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that's new life, too." Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine." Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life. Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom, "My daddy helped me," he beamed. Then Doris opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty. Surely it must be Jeremy's she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents. Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another. Suddenly, Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?" Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy, your egg is empty." He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too." Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?" "Oh, yes," Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up." The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the schoolyard, Doris cried. The cold inside her melted completely away. Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket, all of them empty.

From the Internet



Easter Crossword ...



ACROSS

- 3 Something you march in.
- 5 Another name for sheep.
- 7 Animal that delivers Easter goodies.
- 9 Winged celestial being.
- 10 Symbol of the Crucifixion of Jesus.
- 11 Name for Resurrection.
- 14 When Jesus came back to life.
- 17 Day Christ was crucified
- 18 Sacred
- 19 Something painted at Easter Time
- 20 Small sugary tidbits.
- 23 Special candy
- 25 A New beginning
- 26 A bakery good served at Easter.

DOWN

- 1 You do this asking God for his blessings.
- 2 Scriptures and gospels fill it.
- 4 Something one wears on their head in the Easter Parade.
- 6 Winged celestial being.
- 8 Where religious ceremonies are held.
- 10 Sweets.
- 12 Day of the week Easter is celebrated.
- 13 What we do with eggs.
- 15 Something you may light in church.
- 16 Holy ceremony.
- 19 Sunday Jesus arose from the dead.
- 21 An Easter Flower.
- 22 A baby chicken.
- 24 Where Jesus was laid.

This crossword is for children below 12 years. Please submit your answers at the Parish Office. Winners will be declared in the next issue of the Perpetual Quest.

Christmas Word Game - Answers (Dec. 2005 issue)

TRUE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in a manger, as there was no room at the local inn. His parents were Mary and Joseph. The good news was brought to the shepherds by angels. He was born during the reign of King Herod. Subsequently, three Kings from the East came to pay him homage.

Christmas brings us the message of love, hope and sacrifice. We decorate our homes at Christmas with a star as a symbol of Jesus being born in our hearts. We sing carols to spread peace, cheer & happiness in the neighborhood. Traditionally, Santa Claus brings us gifts during the Christmas season.

Winners:

- 1) Richard Kotian – Perpetual Resort
- 2) Lathika Moraes – St. Anthony's Road
- 3) Sharon Dickson – Central Avenue

Congratulations !

Please collect your prizes from the Parish Office.

WHEN THE POWER OF LOVE OVERCOMES THE LOVE OF POWER THE WORLD WILL KNOW TRUE PEACE.

- JIMI HENDRIX

THOSE WHO BRING SUNSHINE INTO THE LIVES OF OTHERS CANNOT KEEP IT FROM THEMSELVES.

- JAMES. M. BARRIE

TO GIVE PLEASURE TO A SINGLE HEART BY A SINGLE ACT IS BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HEAD-BOWINGS PRAYER.

- SAADI



Spreading the Joy of Christ

Since 2000, Christmas parties have been organized for the under-privileged children of all communities. This has been initiated by a group of OLPS parishioners who have made and continue to make it their aim to ensure that these children have as good and joyous a Christmas party as the rest of our children. Many of these children are tutored by members of this group throughout the year.

We would like to mention that we are able to carry out this effort through the generous contributions of a few charitable donors, both Christian and non-Christian. For the last 2 years, the children have been entertained at McDonald's, which needless to say thrilled them to the core.

If anyone would like to join this praiseworthy work by giving of your time and / or money, please do contact the Parish Priest.

A Disciple is a person who has a Passion for God and a Passion for Humanity

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus? When Jesus calls a person to follow him he calls him to do two things: 'to be with Him'-to share his life; 'to be sent out' - to continue his mission of preaching, teaching and healing in his name. People have described these two aspects as the mountain-market place experiences. The God experience on the mountain. The market place experience to share the God experience. We can express them as a 'passion' for God and 'passion' for humanity'.

A Christian disciple draws his inspiration from His Master, Jesus. The passion of Jesus for humanity is captured in practically all the gospels. In St Mathew's Gospel we read: "When he saw the crowds he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd". There is not a single incident where Jesus remained indifferent to any situation. He gets involved. He acts giving hope and life to people.

Many Christians have followed the example of Jesus and have served humanity with a similar passion. Mother Teresa, for example, worked tirelessly for the dying and destitute of Calcutta. She not only prayed and felt satisfied within herself, but her deep love for God motivated her to see Jesus in the dying destitute. She had a passion for God and a passion for humanity. Like her, we are challenged to be like Jesus. He believed that His God experience was not just for himself but had to be lived out in the midst of people faced with emptiness and agony. We cannot be different from our Master. We need to be

one with Him in prayer and serve others as he did. The passion for God and the passion for humanity must go hand in hand or else our spirituality and religion can be warped.

There are many parishioners who are trying to live as disciples of Jesus. A group of women who sell snacks and coffee every Sunday so that poor children may have at least one decent meal. There are several others who are involved as catechists, song leaders and readers at mass, in the parish council, as S.C.C. animators, in the S.V.P., as altar servers, the choir-the list is endless. Your passion to proclaim and heal this wounded world is commendable.

But there is a vast majority of people who are quite content to be Sunday Catholics. They are prayerful people but lack a passion for suffering humanity. There is no excitement to get involved in the pains and struggles of society. Our spirituality has got to be Incarnational. It means a spirituality of involvement.

A couple of questions : Those of you who have shown the desire to serve and get involved need to ask what more they can do? Those content with Sunday Mass need to ask themselves if the Lord expects more of them? "How can I be involved and be of service in this parish and society ?" We need to find answers to these questions so that we can respond to Jesus who has called us to be partners in His mission. May His passion for God lead us to His passion for humanity.

Fr. Gregory Noronha.



Why is Confession not popular ?

Many of our Catholics are becoming allergic to this sacrament – just once a year; quite a few, once in two years. Like other practices of the faith, they have a poor knowledge of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In the 1st place, there is a diminished understanding of sin. This is the result of being influenced by the media. We are being bombarded by permissiveness to such an extent that we feel what everybody is doing is O.K. Sin is just a 'mistake'. In this way people rationalize or make excuses for their behaviour. They do not realize the consequences of this so-called 'mistake' for themselves and for others. Depression and suicides are some of the long-term effects of sin for the individuals concerned. For others, one can observe the deep physical and shattering emotional suffering of the victims. Hence, to begin with, we have to own our wrongdoing.

Others feel that they have been brainwashed in their childhood years to believe that this or that manner of acting is a sin. That the Church has instilled into them the fear of God's judgment and hell. Now as modern people they have outgrown those fears. After all, they say, God is love and understands our circumstances. They are convinced they act according to their conscience. Generally speaking, people put off making their confession through downright carelessness and only confess for important events or feasts.

An excuse that many give for not confessing is that nothing changes in their life. They fall into the same sins over and over again, of losing their temper, abusing, giving into feelings of jealousy and hatred, lust etc. They have confessed with sorrow and resolved not to commit those sinful acts. There is no improvement. So what is the use of going to Confession? What they fail to understand is that momentary sorrow is not enough. A change of heart or attitude is needed. A new way of looking at and dealing with people or situations. The priest can offer them appropriate advice.

Coming to an understanding of the sacrament: We rightly call it Reconciliation. Sin is not just an impersonal breaking of a commandment but a rupture, or at least a cooling off a love relationship we should have with God and our neighbour. Every sin no matter how private, offends not only God but also the members of the Body of Christ. We weaken that Body. So this sacrament helps us to make up, to restore, to strengthen that relationship. From a

selfish and self-centered way of life to becoming other-centered.

Another consideration: To confess is not just to do away with our sinful past. That's a negative idea of the sacrament. Confession is meant to put us on the forward track. The whole idea of repentance is to make an about turn. The special grace of the sacrament is given to help us grow in our relationship with God and neighbor. We could think of the sacrament as a tonic to overcome our spiritual weaknesses and advance in virtue. So even though one may have only venial sins to confess, to come at regular intervals is beneficial. In this connection, to make progress in overcoming one's faults, just keep to two or three habitual sins, leaving out the occasional smaller ones. Here, it is good to think of the sins of omission. The many good deeds we fail to do because of our selfishness, laziness.

Going further, the sacrament of reconciliation is also called a sacrament of healing. "The Church speaks of the wounds of sin and presents the sacrament of penance as bringing varied healing of the multiple wounds of sin. The wound of sin is an inner wound. The person is wounded in his/her self-esteem or self-image, relationships and memory.

The inner healing experienced is the healing love of God in which the person realizes that: -

He/she is loveable - healing of the self-image

is capable of loving and forgiving someone – healing of relationships

is capable of gracefully accept some past event – healing of memories"

(Jim McManus, C.Ss.R.)

What follows? True peace and joy that the prayer of absolution brings about.

In conclusion, we all need that faith to believe we are encountering that same Jesus whom Peter, Mary Magdalene, Zacchaeus and the Samaritan woman met. A loving, compassionate Saviour who shed his precious Blood to cleanse and set us free from all the evil in and around us. To facilitate such a personal encounter we encourage people to confess across the table in the parlour. May we all avail of this sacrament of growth at least four times a year? The more often, the more blessed!

- Fr. Osie



Holy Week Programme

April 9th (Palm Sunday)

7.15 a.m. Blessing of palms in the School Quadrangle

April 10th (Mon) to April 12th (Wed)

6.00 p.m. Confessions.

April 13th (Maundy Thursday)

5.00 p.m. **In the Church** - Eucharist for children, the sick and the aged.

7.00 p.m. **Playground** - Solemn celebration of the Lord's Supper, followed by procession to the Altar of Repose.

Vigil in the Church

8.30 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. Marathi
 9.00 p.m. - 9.30 p.m. Tamil
 9.30 p.m. - 10.00 p.m. Konkani
 10.00 p.m. - 10.30 p.m. Malayalam
 10.30 p.m. - 11.30 p.m. English
 11.30 p.m. to Midnight All in silence

April 14th (Good Friday)

Way of the Cross (in the Church)

6.30 a.m. English
 7.30 a.m. Konkani
 8.30 a.m. Marathi
 8.30 a.m. Malayalam (outside the Church)
 9.30 a.m. Tamil
 6.00 p.m. Celebration of the Passion of Christ (Playground)

April 15th (Holy Saturday)

8.00 p.m. Easter Vigil followed by the Eucharist (Playground)

April 16th (Easter Sunday)

Masses at 6.30 a.m. / 7.30 a.m. / 8.30 a.m. / 9.30 a.m. & 10.30 a.m.

No evening Mass.

Easter Zonal Masses

Monday, 17th April 2006

- Crusaders** Elizabeth James
Cross Roads, Gaothan, 15th Road,
Kamlesh Bhavan, Manohar Villa, Postal Colony,
BARC & Sarvodaya, Gama Grandeur.
- Ave Maria** Shirley Fernandes
Lotus / Convent View, Waman Apts.,
New Borla, Sangam Apts.
- OLPS Tamil Seva Sangam** Edwin Anthony
Tembe Nagar & Saibaba Nagar

Tuesday, 18th April 2006

- St. Francis of Assisi** Annie Xavier
Assisi Ngr, Gautam Ngr, Limboni Baug
- Torch Bearers** Theresa Fernandes
St. Anthony Road (N) & Central Avenue & 5th Road
- Shri Nagar** J.R. Lobo
Lokhande Marg
- Perpetual Resort** Michael D'Souza
- Stars** Sheila Pereira
St. Anthony Road (S) & RBI
- Divine Providence** Cajetan Fernandes
Swastik, Naka, Shivpuri, Apurva, Sindhi Society.

Wednesday, 19th April 2006

- Good Shepherd (A)** Margaret Fernandes
Bldg. 1 - 15,
The Archangels (B) Camillo Fernandes
Bldg. 16-27, 29 & 30
The Madonna (C) Anthony Pinto
Bldg. 36 - 46
Disciples (D) Annie Mascarenhas
Bldg. No. 31 - 35, 47-56, 283
& Saraswati Colony
St. Anthony Avon D'Sa
Amir Baug

- St. Francis Xavier** Anita Rodrigues
Old Barracks / RC Barracks
- Jeevan Prakash** Yvonne Miranda
13th, 2nd, 3rd & 21st Roads,
Khandari Colony, N.G. Acharya Marg.

Thursday, 20th April 2006

- Our Lady of Victories** Gracinda Rodrigues
Twinkle Star, Seema Society,
Greenfields, Uttam Society,
Sai Nagar, Sachatma, Mumbadevi,
Sai Nidhi.
- Harmony** Margaret Fernandes
Madhugiri, Atur Park, Fairlawns,
Maitri Park, Bharat Tirth, Sunder Apts.,
Panorama, Dreamland, Gulab Baug,
Chadwa Apts., Maska Chawl &
Borla Society
- Emmanuel** Maria Steed
Edel, 11th & 12th Roads, Marian Mansion.
- Dilkush** Effie Acharya
14th, 16th, 17th, 18, 19th Roads,
Emma Towers & Anchorage

Friday, 21st April, 2006

- Shellites** Geraldine Monteiro
Shell Colony, Sahakar Ngr, Thakarbappa
- Morning Star** Karlas Kasbe
- Sangam** Chitra Paulson
Ghatla, Moti Baug, Duke, Amar Nagar
& Khardeo Nagar

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Website : www.geocities.com/olpschurch * E-mail : olpschurch@yahoo.co.in * Parish Tel : 25212396 / 25215708