

Atmavinte Niravil - 7

HOPE OF ALL THE AGES



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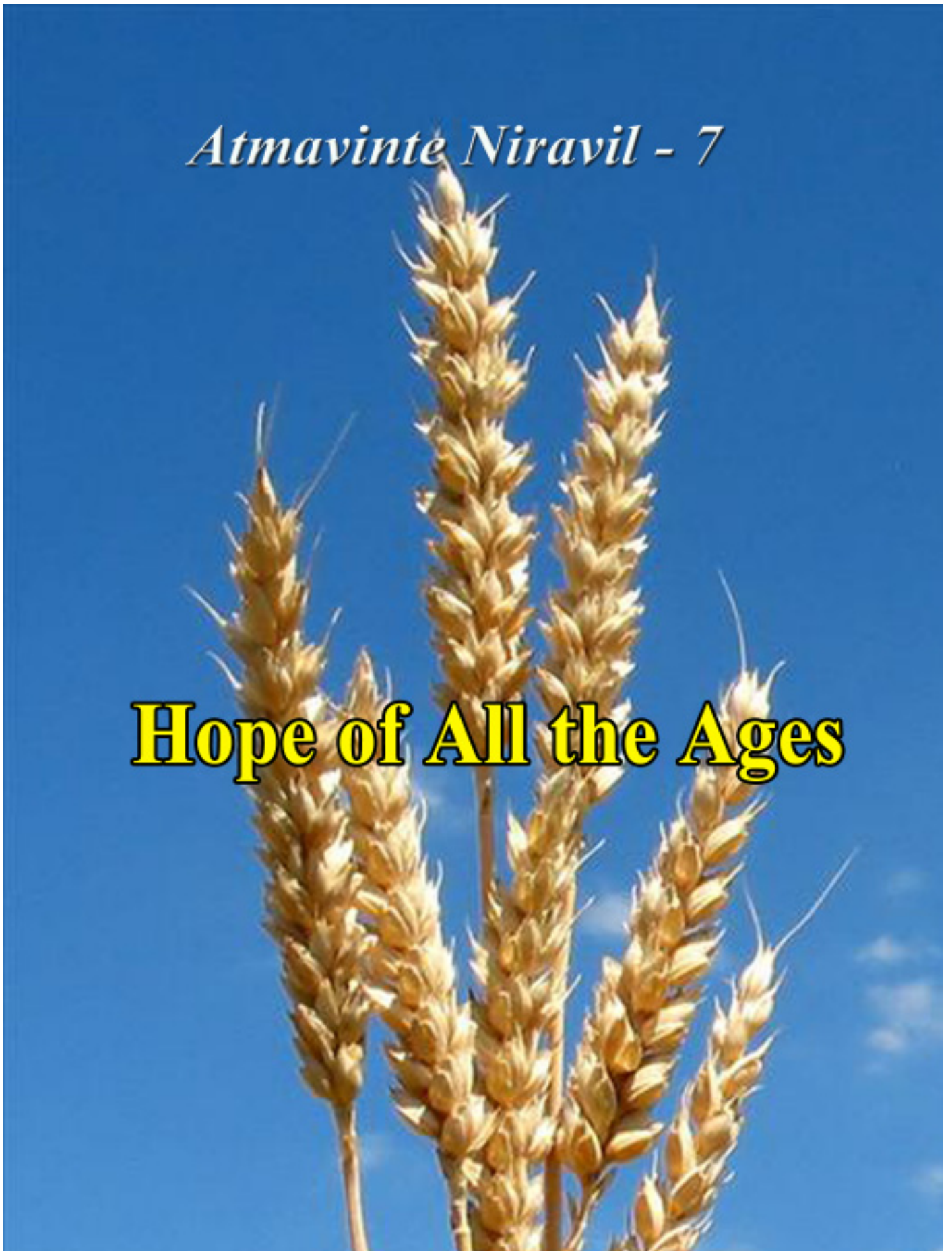
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Atmavinte Niravil - 7

Hope of All the Ages



MESSAGE



Preserving perpetually fresh the command of our Lord Jesus Christ to his apostles “*go into the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation*” (Mk 16:15), the Church always holds in high esteem the Faith Formation, the essential element in the process of evangelization, as a means to keep alive proclamation and transmission of the Word of God to the future generation.

Emphasizing the significance of catechetical ministry, St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, exhorts: “*Quite early on, the name Catechesis was given to the totality of the Church’s efforts to make disciples, to help people believe that Jesus is the Son of God so that believing they might have life in his name and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the Body of Christ*” (CT 1). Catechesis enables the faithful to inculcate God’s grace in their day today lives, to experience the invisible power of God through the celebration of the sacraments within the community and to bear witness to it with self-denial.

Noting the prime and vital role of the catechism texts in the Faith Formation process, KRLCBC’s (Kerala Regional Latin Catholic Bishops Council) Commission for Catechetical took a bold step in forming these texts in vernacular language from standard 1 to XII in the year 2007. The contents presentations of these texts are noteworthy and needs to be appreciated; its presentation is simple and elegant and used modern teaching techniques. Care has been taken to depict true beliefs along with the inclusion of the history of the Latin Catholic Church and the special characteristics of the sacraments. Sensing the need of the modern epoch, these texts are now translated

into English, which further widens the scope of these texts. I pen down my sincere appreciation to the catechetical departments of Archdiocese of Trivandrum and Diocese of Calicut for initiating this venture. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Rev. Dr. Laurence Culas, Rev. Fr. Gracious Tony Nevez and Rev. Fr. Muthappan Appoli and their colleagues who helped in translation, correction, DTP and page layout.

I extend my good wishes to all the children who desire to deepen their faith through faith formation. May you like Jesus ‘grow and become strong, be filled with wisdom and the favor of God be upon you’ (cf. Luke 2:40). Let God’s light shine upon each one of you!

Trivandrum

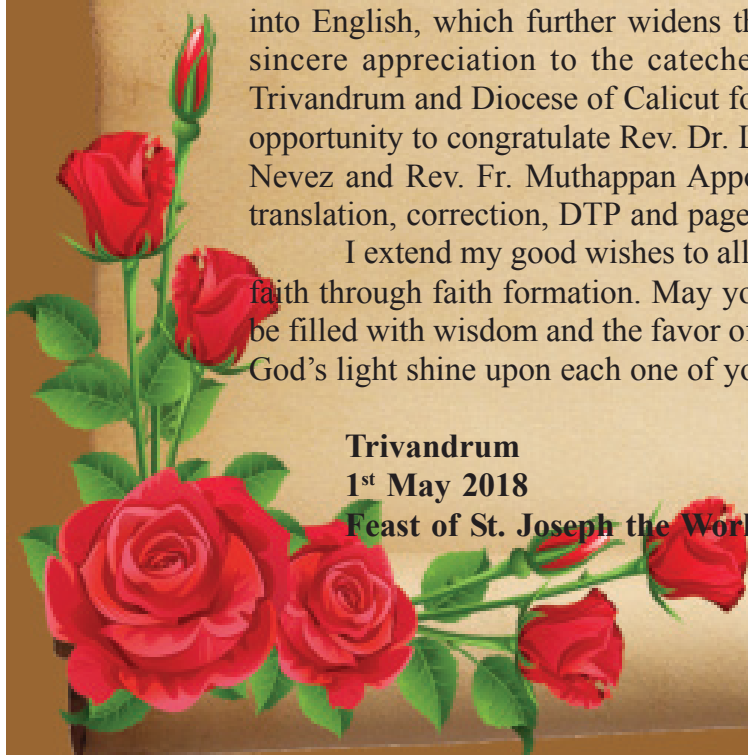
1st May 2018

Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

Archbishop Soosa Pakiam M.

President, KRLCBC

Archbishop of Trivandrum





DEDICATION

All those who believers in Christ are constantly called to deepen their faith through faith formation, the essential phenomenon that molds a mature faith and enables the faithful to proclaim vigorously. Faith formation is indeed the prime and vital mission of the Church and therefore it is an essential moment in the process of evangelization (cf. *General Directory for Catechesis* 63; *Catechesi Tradendae* 18).

None in this cosmos remain as individual entities but as part and parcel of communities. As we are commissioned by Jesus “*to go into the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation*” (Mark 16:15), we just cannot ignore our mission of being the proclaimers and protagonists of the Kingdom of God, which is based on truth and justice. As the members of Christ’s community we are obliged to live an exemplary life according to the Gospel.

Faith formation text books play a vibrant role in the formation of faith in the lives of faithful. Taking into consideration the significance of text books in faith formation, KRLCBC (Kerala Regional Latin Catholic Bishops Council), Commission for Bible and Catechesis did a wonderful work of creating text books in vernacular language from class 1 to XII. Deeming it as the need of the time, the Commission translated these text books into English, which is coordinated by the catechetical departments of Archdiocese of Trivandrum and Diocese of Calicut.

At this juncture, I deem it fit to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Dr. Laurence Culas, Rev. Fr. Gracious Tony Nevez and Rev. Fr. Muthappan Appoli for their untiring works and leading role in carrying on this translation. I also thank all the translators for their strong will power and hard work. Hoping these text books would shape the characters of the students and teachers on the basis of gospel, I present these books happily for the use of everyone.

Kochi
1st May 2018
Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

Bishop Joseph Kariyil
Chairman
KRLCBC Commission for
Catechetics

MESSAGE

“To begin with, it is clear that the Church has always looked on catechesis as a sacred duty and an inalienable right. On the one hand, it is certainly a duty springing from a command given by the Lord and resting above all on those who in the new covenant receive the call to the ministry of being pastors. On the other hand, one can likewise speak of a right: from the theological point of view every baptized person, precisely the reason of being baptized, has the right to receive from the Church instruction and education enabling him or her to enter on a truly Christian life” (*Catechesi Tradendae* 14).

KRLCBC Commission for Catechesis, in its whole hearted efforts owning this mind of the Mother Church regarding catechesis, deemed it necessary to present the Catechism texts in languages more comfortable to the students. So, the translation of the current vernacular text into English and Tamil was included in the decennial plan presented in the Vallarpadam Mission Congress and BCC Convention as one of the primary objectives to be achieved. Moreover, constant plea from the part of students and their parents as well as the teachers necessitated this huge venture.

The great and praise worthy efforts invested by the Pastoral Ministry of Latin Archdiocese of Trivandrum under the direction of Rev. Dr. Laurence Culas and Rev. Fr. Muthappan Appoli and by the diocese of Calicut under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Gracious Tony Nevez towards the realization of this objective have been of immense worth. Their service to the formation of the new generation in the Latin Church of Kerala goes gratefully and proudly marked. This will go a long way to realize the specific aim of catechesis as St. Pope John Paul II says: “to develop, with God’s help, an as yet initial faith, and to advance in fullness and to nourish day by day the Christian life of the faithful young and old...Catechesis aims therefore at developing understanding of the mystery of Christ in the light of God’s word, so that the whole of a person’s humanity is impregnated by that word” (*Catechesi Tradendae* 20).

On behalf of the Chairman of the Commission for Catechetics and its members my heart overflows with great appreciation for and deep gratitude to all those who toiled to make this dream come true. May God bless them and reward them with the joy of seeing the new generations “to maturity to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Eph 4:13).

Kochi
1st May 2018
Feast of St. Joseph, the Worker

Rev. Dr. Joy Puthenveetil
Secretary
KRLCBC Commission for
Catechetics

GRATITUDE

The word Catechesis, derived from the Greek word '*katekheisis*' means 'echo,' implying that as catechists, we echo the teachings of Christ and of the apostles. Catechism texts, playing a vital and inevitable role throughout the faith formation process, must be biblically, theologically and doctrinally reliable and infallible; thus enabling us to proclaim with Jesus, "*My teaching is not mine but his who sent me*" (John 7:16).

KRLCBC (Kerala Regional Latin Catholic Bishops Council), Commission for Catechetics was authorized to consolidate the contents and to formulate catechism texts for the usage of the faithful of Latin Catholic Dioceses in Kerala. The principal task of this commission was to review and evaluate the biblical and theological contents and doctrinal accuracy of the texts for children and youth; as a result of which catechism texts for standard 1 to 12 was formulated in Malayalam and implemented for usage since 2007. Taking into consideration, the dire need of the modern era, now these texts are translated into English for further usage.

With appreciation we place on record our sincere gratitude to Archbishop Soosa Pakiam M, the President of KRLCBC and Bishop Joseph Kariyil, the Chairman, KRLCBC Commission for Bible and Catechetics and Rev. Dr. Joy Puthenveetil, Secretary, KRLCBC Commission for Catechetics. We are indebted to the translators for their competence and hard work, especially Adv. Jessel Rodricks and Dr. Eva D'Cruz for the translation of this text. We are also very thankful to all those who corrected the texts. A special thanks to Mrs. Reena Shabu, Mrs. Sahayamary Delvan, Ms. Francisca T and Mrs. Sophi Godfrey for DTP work, page layout and graphics, and to James Arts Press for their printing.

Bringing the entire nations to Jesus and assisting everyone to have a personal relationship with him will take place only when we, the faithful deepen our faith through faith formation, have a very personal relationship with him, which in turn strengthens us to proclaim genuinely the message of the Gospel with joy and courage; and thus attracting the entire people to him. Let the light of Jesus reflect through these texts and let everyone who use this texts be enlightened by his divine light.

Trivandrum and Calicut
1st May 2018
Feast of St Joseph the Worker

Rev. Dr. Laurence Culas
Rev. Fr. Gracious Tony Nevez
Rev. Fr. Muthappan Appoli



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1

GOD BECAME MAN



Human being is the crown of God's creation. Though our first parents rejected God's love and went far away from Him, God never abandoned them. God told Satan who tempted human being to sin:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

God's people were waiting for a Saviour who would crush the head of Satan and save humankind.

For generations God had been reminding the people, through the prophets, of his promise to send the Saviour of the world.

This is the prophecy of Balaam: "A star shall come forth out of Jacob, a sceptre shall rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17).

Isaiah's prophecy also strengthened their hope in the Saviour: "Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

To reveal the hidden mystery of Jesus, various names like Messiah, Prophet, Son of Man, High Priest, Redeemer, Lord and Son of God can be found in the Bible.

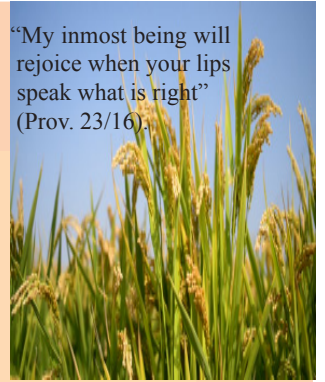
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in him should not
perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

The Annunciation



Hundreds of years passed, the Israelites were under the reign of the Romans. God sent Angel Gabriel to Nazareth to a virgin called Mary, betrothed to Joseph, who was a descendent of David. The angel of God said to Mary:

“My inmost being will
rejoice when your lips
speak what is right”
(Prov. 23/16).



“Hail full of grace,
the Lord is with you!” (Luke 1:28).

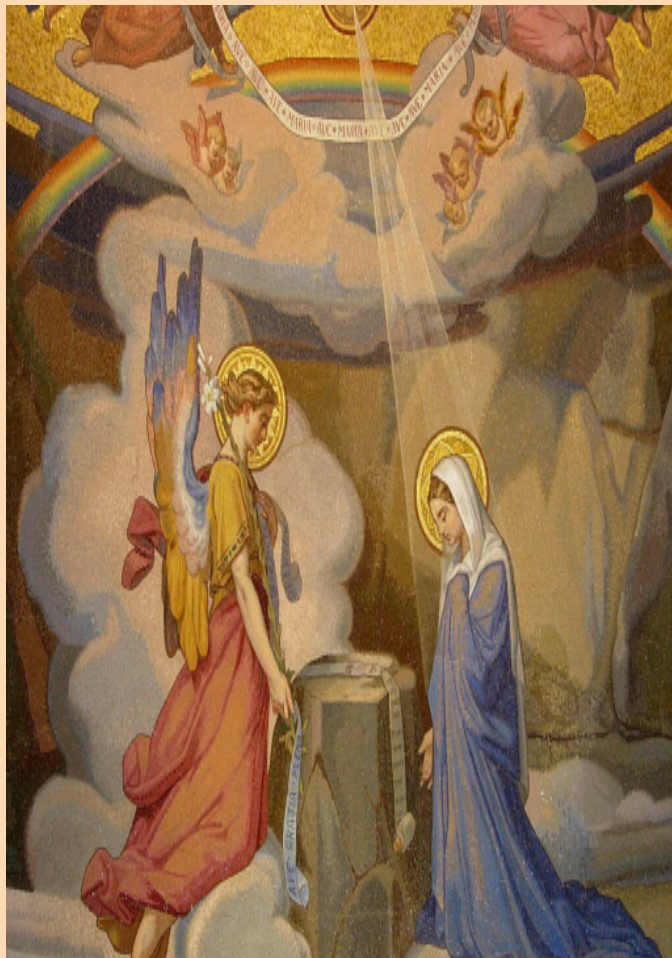
Mary was deeply troubled by the words of the angel and pondered over the words. The angel said to her:

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:30-33).

Mary said to the angel:
“How can this be, since I have
no husband?” (Luke 1:34).

The angel said to her:

“The Holy Spirit will come
upon you, And the power of
the Most High will over
shadow you; therefore the
child to be born will be called
holy, the Son of God”
(Luke 1:35-36).





The work of the Holy Spirit is evident in the history of salvation. The Holy Spirit has spoken to the Israelites through the Fathers of the Church, the Kings and Prophets to prepare Israel to receive the Saviour. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit from the time he was conceived (Luke 1:35). The Holy Spirit participated in the death and resurrection of Jesus (1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:45).

In obedience to the will of God Mary said:

**“Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord;
Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).**

**Mary who obeyed God is a supreme
example for us.**

ACTIVITY



Enact the birth of Samson,
Saul and John the Baptist
in the form of a play.

BIRTH OF THE SAVIOUR

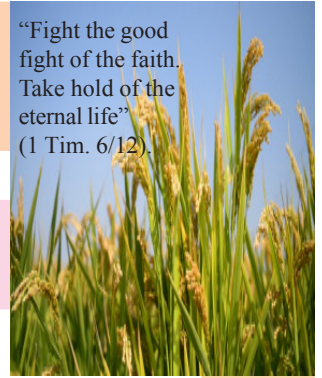


According to the decree of the Roman Governor Caesar Augustus all the people had to go to their own cities to be enrolled. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. He had to take with him Mary who was with child. While they were there it was time for her to give birth. Since there was no place for them in the inn she gave birth to her son in a stable.

“Fight the good
fight of the faith.
Take hold of the
eternal life”
(1 Tim. 6/12).

**There was no room on the earth for
the Saviour of the world to be born.**

THE FORTUNATE SHEPHERDS



No one knew about the birth of the Messiah on this earth. That night in that part of the country there were some shepherds tending their flock. The first to hear the good news of the birth of the Saviour were the humble and poor shepherds. The angel of God appeared to the shepherds and announced to them:

“Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11).

Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews, was born during the reign of Herod in the 4th Century B.C. in Judea which is called Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7).

The Angel of God said:

“And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12).

The Divine Shepherd of Israel is Yahweh (Psalm 23:1-4). Jesus revealed himself as “I am the Good Shepherd” (John 10:11). There is a close relationship between the Shepherd and the sheep. The sheep know the Shepherd and the Shepherd knows the sheep. He called them by name (John 10:1-6). The Good Shepherd is the symbol of love and humility. The first people who were fortunate to hear the Good News of Jesus’ birth through the angels were the shepherds who watched over their sheep. Jesus the Good Shepherd not only protects us from evil but also lays down his life for his sheep.



Find out from the Bible how God reveals himself in the powers of nature.

Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly Host praising God and saying:

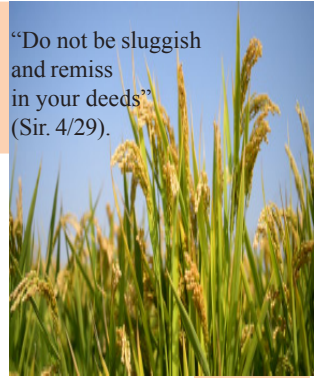
“Glory to God in the highest heaven
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!” (Luke 2:14)

When the angels went away from them, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child (Luke 2:15-17).

God became man
and dwelt
among us.



“Do not be sluggish
and remiss
in your deeds”
(Sir. 4/29).



WISE MEN FROM THE EAST



The Saviour was born not only for the Israelites but for the whole world. A star appeared in the East announcing the birth of the Saviour. The wise men from the East who saw the star rejoiced exceedingly and went in search of the Saviour and reached Jerusalem. The star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. They saw the child with his mother, and they knelt down and worshipped him, they offered him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:1-12).

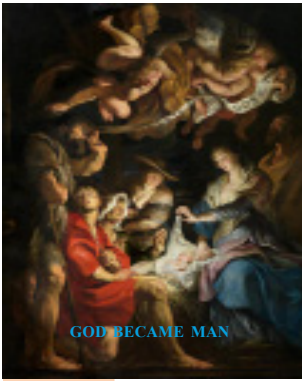
The wise men offered gold, frankincense and myrrh and worshipped the Lord. Find out the significance of these gifts.



SIMEON'S TESTIMONY



According to the Jewish rites, on the eighth day male child had to be circumcised. in the flesh of the foreskins. God had said this in his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Genesis17:10-14). Joseph and Mary offered the child Jesus to God in the temple.



In Jerusalem there lived a righteous and God fearing man called Simeon. He was not to die until he had seen the Saviour. Led by the Spirit, he was in the temple praising God. He took the child Jesus in his arms and blessed God and said:

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel” (Luke 2:29-31).

A prophetess Anna who was a widow of eighty-four year old was also in the temple. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:38).

GOD BECAME MAN



With the birth of Jesus a new era had started, BC indicates a particular number of years before the year when Christ was born, and AD to show a particular number of years since when Christ was believed to have been born (from Latin *Anno Domini*).

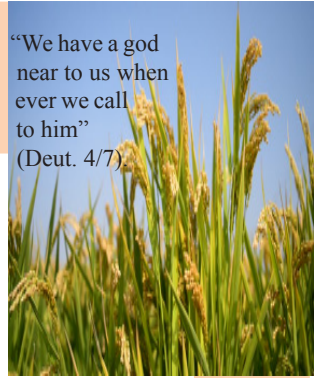
We believe in one God in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity. God has no beginning and end. God is fully human and fully God.

LET'S REMEMBER



- God became man to save us. Jesus suffered, died and rose for our salvation.

"We have a god
near to us when
ever we call
to him"
(Deut. 4/7)



- Just as God gave up his godliness and became one with us we too must contribute to the growth and development of others and rejoice in their prosperity.
- We must always be thankful to God who became man for our sake and glorify him.

DISCUSS



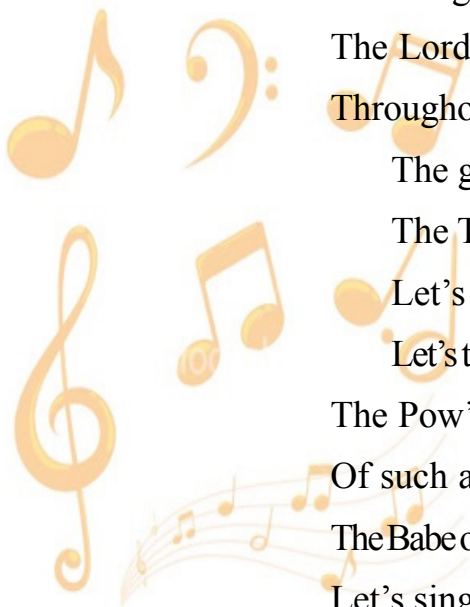
Jesus did not find a place to be born on this earth. Even today there are people who do not have a place to be born or to live in. Think of the people who are homeless in our country. What can you do for them?

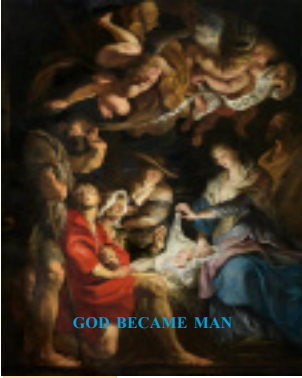


SONG



Let's talk about Jesus,
The King of kings is He,
The Lord of lords supreme;
Throughout eternity.
The great I AM, the Way,
The Truth , the Life, the Door.
Let's talk about Jesus more and more.
Let's talk about Jesus, Let all the world proclaim,
The Pow'r and Majesty,
Of such a wonderous name,
The Babe of Bethlehem, the Bright and Morning Star,
Let's sing His praises near and far.





Answer the following questions:

1. What did God tell Satan for tempting human to sin?
2. To whom did God reveal his plan of salvation? Answer with examples.
3. How did the angel comfort Mary?
4. What was the decree passed by the Roman Governor Augustus Caesar?
5. Who is Simeon, what did he say when he held up Jesus in his arms?

MEMORIZE

A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel (Numbers 24:17).

Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14).

MEDITATE

Mary surrendered to the will of God as the handmaid of the Lord.

ACTIVITY

1. Visit a home for children and render whatever help you can.
2. We might be very talented, but only if we seek God sincerely, with all our heart, can we see Him. This is what we learn from the wise men. What kind of life should we lead that will be pleasing to God? Prepare a speech?

“The meek
shall obtain
fresh joy in the
Lord”
(Isa. 29/19).



LET US PRAY



O, God you became man to save us, teach us to see you in others.

LET US RECALL



“Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

THE NAME OF JESUS



The number of times the name of Jesus mentioned in the New Testament is given below:

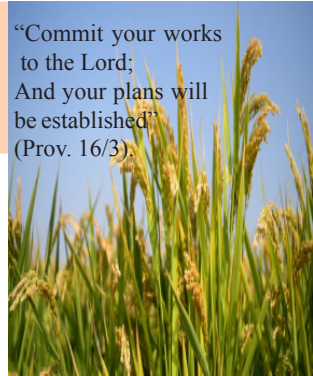
Mt.	Mk.	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Paul	Others
150	81	89	237	68	1213	67





2

CHILDHOOD OF JESUS



“Commit your works
to the Lord;
And your plans will
be established.”
(Prov. 16/3)

The birth of Jesus reveals God’s love for the world. But not everyone accepted the birth of Jesus. The shepherds and the wise men rejoiced at the birth of Jesus and they worshipped him. But King Herod was restless when he heard about the birth of Jesus. Herod sought to destroy the child Jesus. He had instructed the wise men to return and give him all the information about child Jesus. The wise men, being warned in a dream by an angel not to return to Herod, departed to their own country by another way.

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men he was in a furious rage and gave orders that all male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old and under to be killed.

**Godly wisdom is granted only to those
who seek God sincerely.**

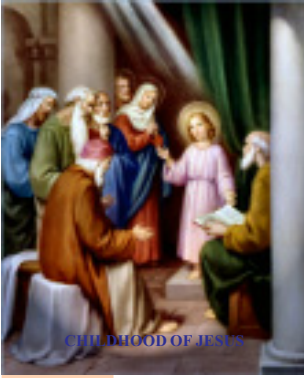
The Escape to Egypt



“An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him’” (Matthew 2:13).

“Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night and went to Egypt” (Matthew 2:14).

**Joseph who saved Jesus from
death is the protector of
the family and of the Church even today.**



The Return from Egypt



After the death of Herod the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him:

“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who seeking the child’s life are dead” (Matthew 2:20).

Obedying the words of the angel Joseph took the mother and child and went to the city called Nazareth and dwelt there. Thus what was spoken by the prophets was fulfilled:

“He will be called a Nazorean” (Matthew 2:23).

In the Father’s House



Jesus grew up in a small family in Nazareth. He increased in wisdom and in stature. When Jesus was twelve years old he went with his parents to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. When the feast was over his parents were returning to their hometown. Supposing him to be in their company they went a day’s journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers listening to them and asking questions; all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

Just as in the time of Jesus there were false doctrines spread among the Jews, a similar situation exists in the Church today. To counter the spread of such false doctrines the Church convenes Councils and Synods.

“Seek the
Lord while
he may be
found”
(Isa. 55/6).



The teachings of the Councils contribute to the clarification of Church doctrines and the spread of true faith.

When his parents found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions they were astonished; and his mother said to him:

“Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety” (Luke 2:48).

And he said to them:

“Why were you searching for me?

Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49).

Jesus went down with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them.

**“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years,
and in divine and human favour” (Luke 2:52).**

Let us Remember



We do not have clear evidence for the hidden life of Jesus till the age of thirty. In the Gospel according to Luke we have just two incidents about the early life of Jesus. The first is when Jesus is presented in the temple at Jerusalem according to the Jewish custom (Luke 2:22). The second incident is when Jesus was twelve years he went with his parents to the Jerusalem temple for the Passover feast and he was found sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions (Luke 2:41-52).



Just as Jesus increased in wisdom and obedience we too must follow his example. Jesus lived a life of obedience to his parents and teachers not only till the age of twelve but till the age of thirty, when his public life began. All his actions were for the glory of God and the good of humankind. The aim of our life too should be to do good to humankind and thus glorify God.

Discuss



The child Jesus lived in obedience to God and his parents. But he never hesitated to ask questions.

Look at the good qualities of the child Jesus:



- Jesus who respected his parents.
- Jesus who joined them in worshipping God.
- Jesus who studied the Word of God and taught it.
- Jesus who grew in divine and human favour.
- Jesus who was in search of the truth.

How can we follow the good qualities of the child Jesus in our lives?

Detect the Herods who are trying to destroy our lives.

- Bad movies, Paan parag, _____
- _____
- _____

"Commit your
way to the
LordP"
(Ps. 37/5).



SONG



To be like Jesus, to be like Jesus

All I ask to be like Him.

All thru' life's journey from earth to glory

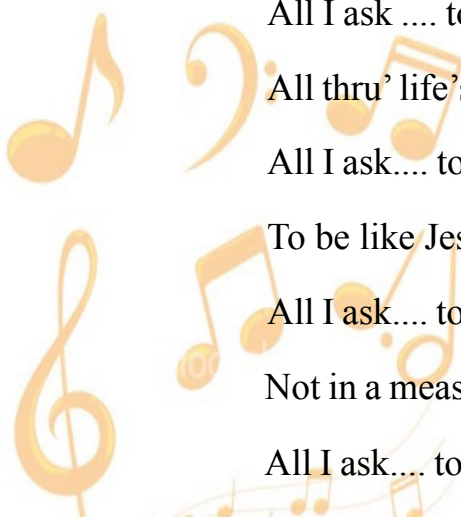
All I ask.... to be like Him.

To be like Jesus, to be like Jesus,

All I ask.... to be like Him;

Not in a measure but in its fullness

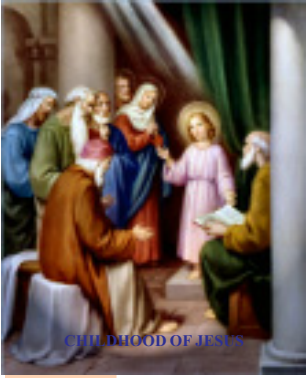
All I ask.... to be like Him.



Answer the following



1. Why did Herod become restless? What order did he give the wise men?
2. Who are the people blessed with godly wisdom?
3. What are the words of the angel who appeared to Joseph in a dream before the flight to Egypt?
4. When Jesus was twelve years old he went with his parents to participate in a feast. Which feast was it?
5. What does the Holy Bible say about the growth of Jesus?



Memorize



Joseph saved the infant Jesus from death. Today also he is the protector of the families and the Church.

Let us Remember



“And he said to them, ‘Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’” (Luke 2:49).

Let us Meditate



St. Joseph was obedient to the will of God.

Discuss



Compare and contrast our families with the Holy Family. What are the values we should inculcate in our families?

Herod sought Jesus to kill him. What do we look for in our relationships with our friends?

Let us pray

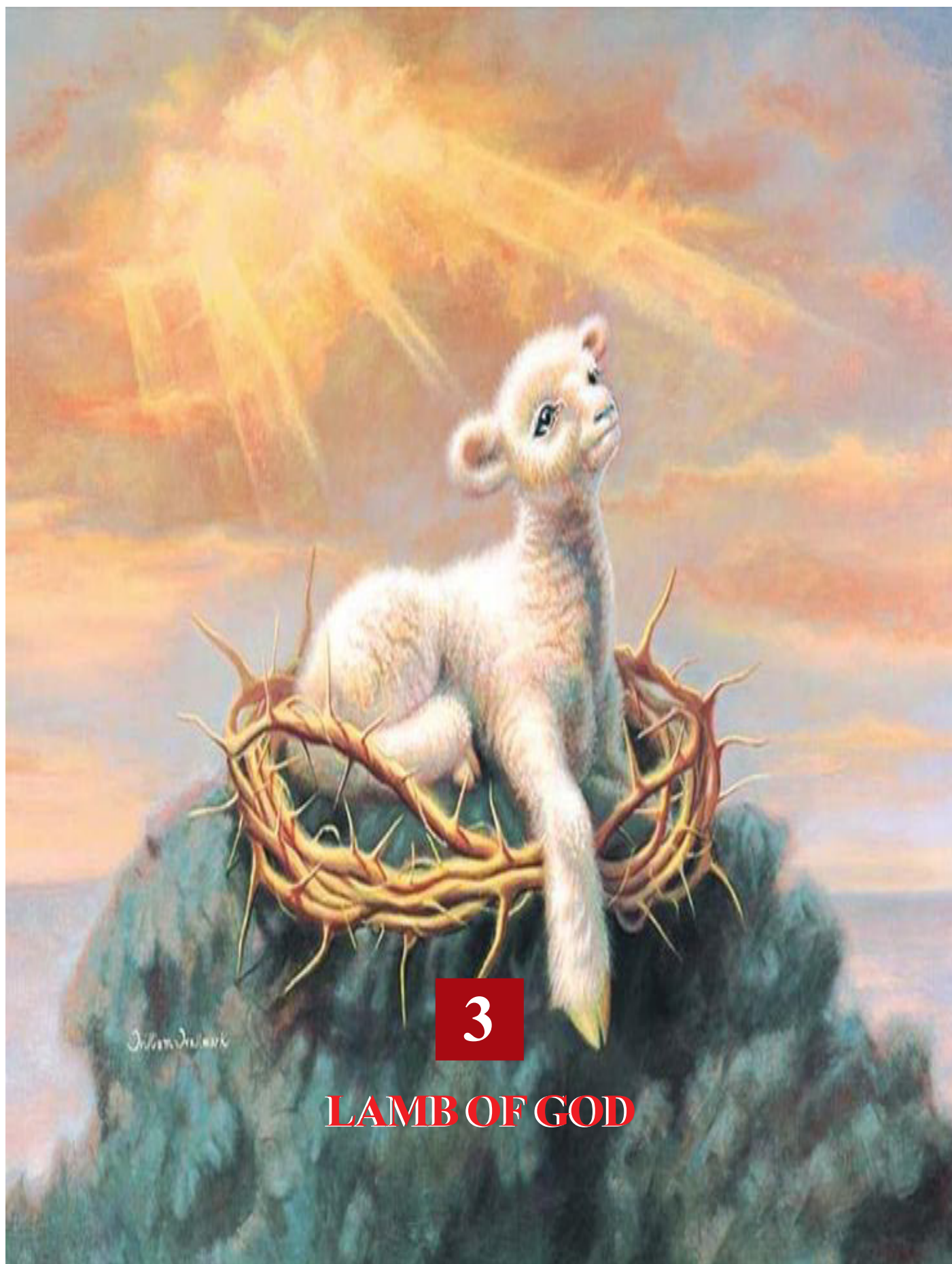


God of love, just as your loving Son lived in the Holy Family at Nazareth, in obedience to his parents, give us the grace to live a life of obedience to our parents, teachers and elders so that we might grow in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour.”

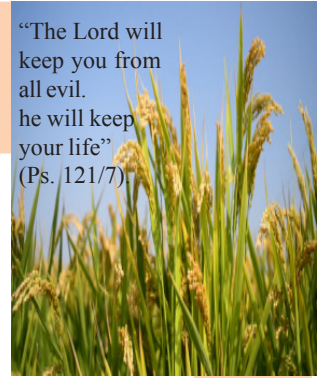
"If my father and
mother forsake me,
the Lord will
take me up"
(Ps. 27/10).



Jewish children were given religious instruction at a very young age. Parents taught them to pray in their early childhood. From the age of five they went to the synagogue to be trained to pray, read and write. They continued to study the Holy Scripture. When they were about ten years old they would study the Sacred Book of Laws very well. From the age of twelve a Jewish youth was ready to take on the responsibilities of an adult. It was a compulsory tradition for a Jewish youth to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. From the age of thirteen a Jewish boy would start working with his father. Jesus willingly helped his father in their hereditary trade as a carpenter. From the Holy Bible we understand that Jesus lived being obedient to his parents. We too must live a life in obedience to our parents and fulfil our responsibilities.



“The Lord will
keep you from
all evil.
he will keep
your life”
(Ps. 121/7)



When humans are separated from their relationship with God because of sin, the merciful God calls them to atone their sins. By offering sacrifice people atone their sins and get reconciled with God once again.

In the Old Testament times, for atonement of sins the people depended on many rituals. One of these were the holy sacrifice to propitiate God. The sins of the believers are transferred on a chosen lamb and it is abandoned in the wilderness. The people believed that they are cleansed of their sins when the lamb is eaten by birds and animals.

The highest form of sacrifice that believers can offer to God is worship.

Jesus the sacrificial Lamb

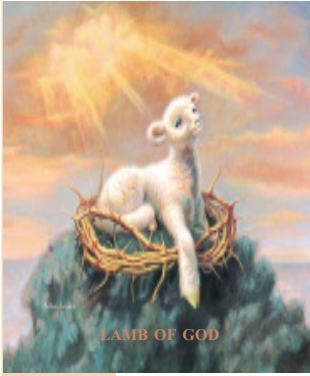


Eventhough people of Israel offered sacrifices in the temples for the atonement of sins, they remained slaves to sins because these sacrifices could not give them ultimate redemption from sin.

God sent Jesus to the world to redeem people from original sin, the sin of Adam and Eve, and to restore them to God's Kingdom and to give them eternal life.

Jesus who had no sin went to the river Jordan with the rest of sinful humankind to receive the Baptism of repentance from John the Baptist. Seeing Jesus who stood with bowed head to be baptised along with the sinners, John said:

“I need to be baptised by you and do you come to me?” (Matthew 3:14)



John would have prevented him from being baptised but Jesus answered him: “Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15).

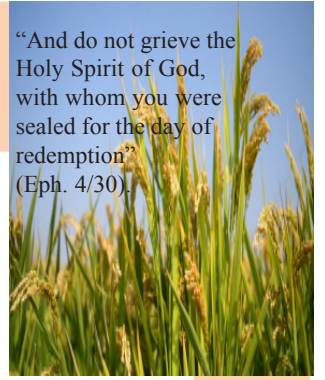
John baptised Jesus.

By receiving the baptism of John, Jesus was prepared to take on himself the sins of all humankind (Isaiah 53:7), thus fulfilling the prophecy that he is the suffering servant and the Paschal Lamb (John 1:29; Luke 3:21-22). His baptism also revealed that the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

Everyone loves a lamb. A lamb is a symbol of innocence and helplessness. Lambs are special objects of the shepherd’s love. To sacrifice a lamb means to sacrifice the most loved one. The most important sacrifice of the Jews was a lamb (Exodus 20:24; John 1:29) as a burnt offering (Leviticus 1:10), as a sin offering (Leviticus 4:32) and as a peace offering (Leviticus 22:21). Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, is seen the fullness of innocence and love. Like a helpless lamb, Jesus accepted the will of God and offered himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of humankind. Let us imitate the obedience, innocence and sacrificial life of Jesus.

We have all been baptised in the baptism of Jesus. In baptism we receive sanctifying grace given to us by the Trinity. We are cleansed of original sin and we become heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, participants in the life of Jesus and we become the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is a rebirth into the life of Christ. It is the foundation of the life of a Christian and it is the gateway to life in the Spirit.

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4/30).



Baptism is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation preparing one to receive the other sacraments worthily. Thus a firm faith is established to conform to the Christian faith. As it is an indelible seal on the soul this sacrament is received only once by members of the Church.

Witness of John the Baptist



John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Jesus. He was very sincere in fulfilling the duty entrusted to him by God the Father. John fulfilled his duty at the right time.

John's voice which was heard in the wilderness made the Jews think. The Jews who were expecting the Redeemer mistook John to be the Messiah. But John witnessed to the truth. He confirmed that he was not the Messiah, nor Elijah or any other prophet but witness to the fact that he was the forerunner of the Messiah who was to come. He made it clear that he was not worthy to untie the thongs of his sandals.

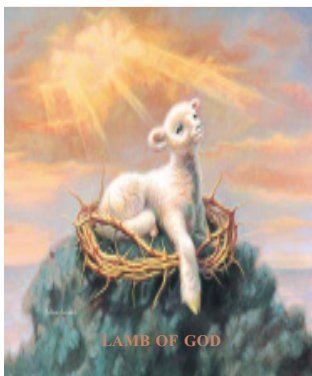
The next day John was standing with two of his disciples and he looked at Jesus as he walked and said:

“Behold the Lamb of God!” (John 1:36).

The disciples who heard him followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “ ‘What do you seek?’ And they said to him, ‘Rabbi’(which means ‘Teacher’) ‘where are you staying?’ He said to them ‘Come and see’” (John 1:38-39).

They went and stayed with him.

‘To stay’ in the Gospel according to John means ‘to believe’. It is our obligation to seek God, who is the truth, till we find him and follow Him and witness to people just as John did.



John the Baptist did not draw people to himself but instead directed them to Jesus.

Similarly we too must be ready to show people the way to Jesus.

Let us Remember



The blind, lame, deaf, poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, prisoners, oppressed, oppressors and dead were part of the world where Jesus lived and preached. Jesus came to give life in its fullness and to teach them to live worthily in the Kingdom of God. Jesus laid down his life to give the world life in all its abundance.

Jesus knew that the Kingdom of Heaven will become a reality only if he lays down his life. Since Jesus realised this he became a sacrifice even during his public life (Mark 14:24). For the advent of God's Kingdom Jesus had committed himself to death on the cross which was inevitable. Though the Jews plotted the death of Jesus, since he conformed to the will of God it was a willing sacrifice (John 10:16-17). Christ's suffering and death was for the salvation of all humankind (1 Cor. 15:3-5).

Jesus exhorts us to support the destitute,
those who lament, the poor and
to work for the upliftment of these people.

Like Jesus we too must sacrifice our life for the downtrodden of society. When we participate in life-giving acts of mercy and struggle for the welfare of humans we become lambs of God.

“Blessed are the
peacemakers,
for they will be
called sons of God”
(Mt. 5/9).



Jesus is the Lamb who came for the blind, lame, deaf, poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, prisoners, oppressed and the oppressors. Jesus became the Lamb of God for their salvation. Our lives too must become a sacrifice for others. We must live selflessly by working for the good of others by consoling and comforting those who weep.

Discuss



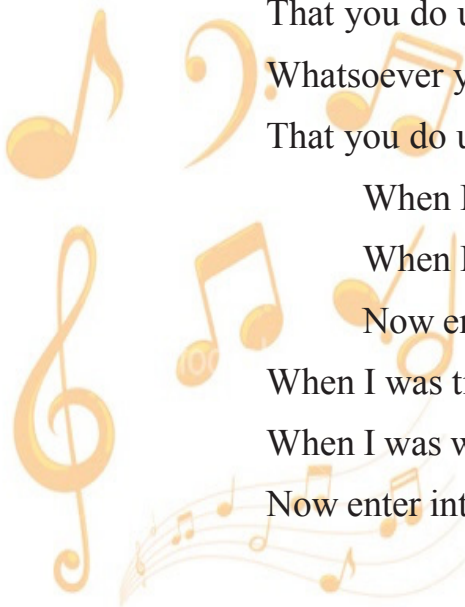
John the Baptist came to introduce a society where truth, justice and prosperity reigned. How can we, who have been baptised, be instruments of such transformation?

SONG



Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers
That you do unto Me,
Whatsoever you do to the least of my sisters
That you do unto Me!

When I was hungry you gave Me to eat,
When I was thirsty, you gave Me to drink,
Now enter into the home of My Fa-ther!
When I was tired you helped Me find rest,
When I was worried you calmed all My fears,
Now enter into the home of My Fa-ther!





Answer the following

1. In the Old Testament times what did the people do to atone their sins?
2. What was the baptism of John?
3. What is true worship?
4. What was the witness of John the Baptist about Jesus?
5. Who were members of Jesus' Kingdom?

Memorize

We too have the duty to seek, to find, to follow and to preach the God of Truth like John the Baptist.

Recall God's Word

"For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

Let's Pray

God our Father help us to live our lives as witnesses to Christ.

Activity

Find out from the Old Testament two situations when a lamb had to be sacrificed. What were the other sacrifices offered to God by the Israelites? Prepare a table to illustrate the data.

Action

What can we do to make our sacrifice acceptable to God? Discuss.



4

JESUS THE SON OF GOD



JESUS THE SON OF GOD

We have seen from the last three lessons that Jesus is the Son of God and is born of the Holy Spirit.

We have also seen that Jesus is the anointed one who came for the salvation of humankind and that he is the Lamb of God.



Witness of the Father



Jesus surrendered himself to God and God's people through his baptism at the river Jordan. "And when Jesus was baptised, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him" (Matthew 3:16). When Jesus surrendered himself the Father was very pleased and said:

**"This is my beloved Son;
with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).**

**Through baptism we become God's children. When
we surrender ourselves to God and in
service to society we truly become children of God.**

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5/10).



To fulfil the purpose for which he came, Jesus was going towards Jerusalem. On the way he went to Mount Tabor to pray. While he was praying he was transfigured and Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke to him. Immediately a cloud came and overshadowed them.

A voice from the cloud was heard saying:

“This is my beloved Son, listen to him” (Matthew 17:5).

The Tabor experience added meaning to his journey to Jerusalem.

We who have become sons of God through baptism have to stay united to God always. We must not lose faith when we face trials and tribulations in our life but hold on firmly till we reach the goal.

Jesus and the Father are One



At the Last Supper Philip told Jesus:

“Lord show us the Father and we will be satisfied”

Jesus replied Philip:

“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (John 14:8-11).



JESUS THE SON OF GOD

I and the Father are one” (Jn. 10:30).

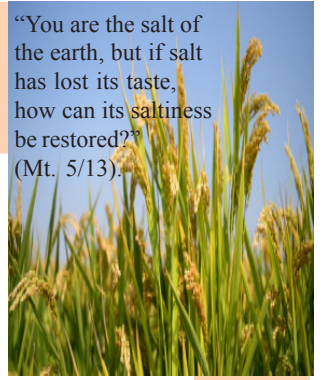
It is in three stages that Christ reveals God as Father:

1. Jesus calls the Father as the Creator and the Originator of all things (Mark 13:32; Luke 11:13).
2. To show the Father-Son relationship Jesus calls God ‘Father’ (Matthew 16:17; Luke 22:29; Matthew 11:27).
3. As God is the Father of all humankind Jesus refers to him as ‘your Father’ also (Mark 11:26; Luke 12:30).

It is through prayer that Jesus established a relationship with his Father. Even when he was in the midst of people Jesus went away by himself to a lonely place to pray.

From ancient times the Israelites considered God as Father. Families gave God the first place as Father. God revealed his love to them as a Father to his children. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity is one God and the Son proceeds from the Father. We read in the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:1-2, 14).

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?”
(Mt. 5/13).



When we have to make a decision we have to sincerely seek God's will through prayer and do the Father's will.

Jesus has taught us how we ought to pray in our personal lives. When the disciples asked him to teach them to pray he taught them the prayer 'Our Father.'

Witness of Peter



Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples:

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said: “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them: “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:13-16).

**We too, who are the disciples of Jesus,
must proclaim Jesus through our life
and deeds like Peter.**

Jesus, through his suffering, death and resurrection, became the only mediator between God and humans says the apostle Paul (1 Timothy 2:4-5).

Let us Remember



Our salvation is only through Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus came to save not only us but the whole world. The salvation of Jesus becomes an experience for others through our actions. Others must realise that we are



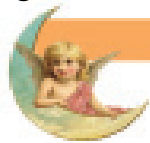
JESUS THE SON OF GOD

people who walk in the footsteps of Jesus, the Saviour. We must avoid sin and situations of sin and we must help others to avoid such circumstances.

Let us Discuss



1. We have heard of many people who were persecuted because of their faith in Christ. How do we face the challenges and sufferings that arise due to our faith?
2. In defending our faith and in living it what are the challenges we face today? Suggest some ways in which we can face such challenges.



SONG



Jesus sets me absolutely free,
Died on Calvary to give me liberty,
Jesus sets me absolutely free,
Praise his Name.

That's enough to make me sing, (2)

My sins are all forgiven,

And I'm on my way to Heaven.

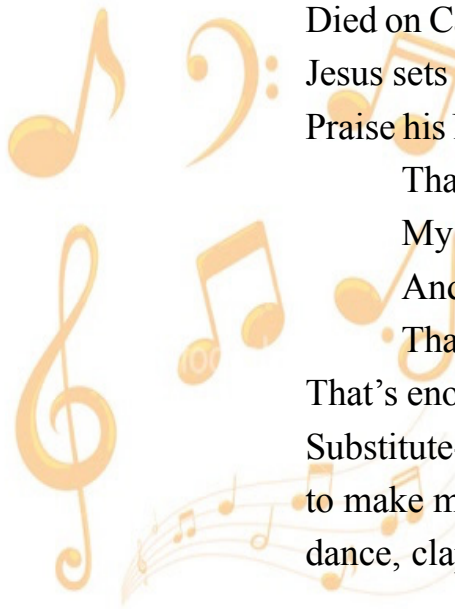
That's enough to make me, (2)

That's enough to make me sing.

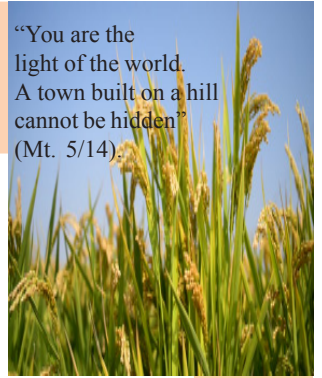
Substitute-That's enough

to make me shout,

dance, clap, leap etc.



"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden" (Mt. 5/14).



Answer the following



1. What happened after the baptism of Jesus?
2. When do we become the children of God?
3. What added meaning to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem?
4. "Who do you say that I am?" asked Jesus. What was Simon Peter's reply?
5. How did Jesus establish a strong relationship with his Father?

Action



- Write down the incidents which reveal that Jesus is the Son of God.
- Pick out the instances when Jesus prayed during his public life.
- According to the tradition of the Church on which occasions are the baptismal vows renewed? Find out.

Memorize



We who have become children of God through baptism, must pray without ceasing, be united with him and experience victory in life.

Let us Remember



"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).



JESUS THE SON OF GOD

Let us Pray



God, our Father, help us to live in the awareness of your presence, to worship you with a pure heart and to converse lovingly with you.

Action



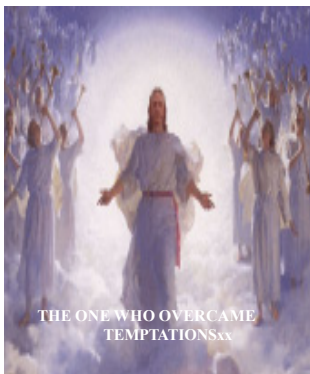
The baptism of Jesus is a sign that he submitted to tradition. Thus we have the duty as disciples of Jesus to respect certain established traditions for the good of society. Find out Christian traditions which are obligatory for us to follow in society.

Since Jesus was the Son of God he called God “My Father” (Mark 14:36, Matthew 11:25). When Jesus says ‘My Father and Your Father’ (John 20:17) the relationship between God our Father and the Son of God indicates a relationship which is distinct from that we share with God. Although we are all children of God Jesus called himself the Son of God. Though Jesus became man, he had the nature of both God and man. As St. Paul says: “Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5-8). “God our Saviour who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and people, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:4-5).



5

**THE ONE WHO OVERCAME
TEMPTATIONS**

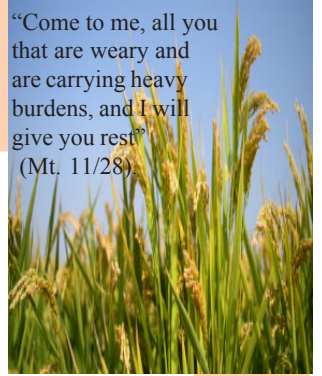


Joseph is the first born of Jacob by his wife Rachel. He was well built and good looking. When Joseph was living as a slave in Egypt under the Pharaoh's employee Potiphar, his wife had a lust feeling for Joseph. She was forcing him to lie with her but he didn't give in. He didn't want to deceive his master by doing a mistake. Not only that he couldn't fall in sin by rejecting God's love. He told her "How can I sin against God by doing such a heinous act." But she who was full of lust went on tempting Joseph to commit sin. At last when Joseph didn't give in to her lust she made false accusation against him in front of her husband. "The Hebrew servant whom you brought, came to me." Potiphar became angry when he heard it and put Joseph in prison. But Joseph didn't lose hope. God was with him (Genesis 39:1-23).

God will not give up those who trust in Him. He loves his people. God is merciful and just. He is close to the saints (those who do good) and far from those who do evil. He is above the human brain and all creatures.

Jesus overcame the temptations of becoming a miracle worker, gaining glory, testing the faithfulness of God and rising to political power and glorify Himself. During the crucifixion He overcame the temptation to disregard the will of God and to save himself. And in doing so, He showed His faithfulness to the Word of God and the responsibility towards his duty. There will be many temptations which will pull us back from doing our duties and responsibilities. Let us depend on Jesus and try to overcome such temptations. He overcame the temptations to escape from God's wish and to save himself from crucifixion. Thus he expressed his fidelity to God's words and the responsibilities to his own duties. There will be lots of temptations to take us away from our faith and responsibilities. We should try to overcome these temptations by putting our trust in Jesus.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest”
(Mt. 11/28)



Humans are prone to temptations. It is impossible not to have temptations. Only when we overcome them we get victory. Those who walk on the path of goodness get more temptations.

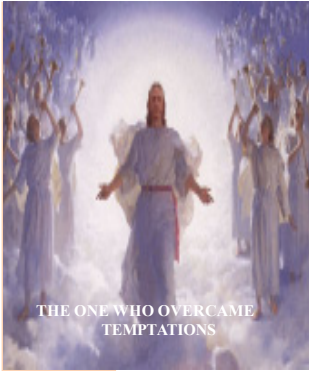
Jesus lived on the earth with the aim to bring His Father's Kingdom on this earth. Jesus travelled through the way of the cross to bring God's Kingdom. Jesus, who worked tirelessly to realize his aim in every place and life situation of the people, was tempted by Satan to achieve His goal through short cuts. Jesus decided to accept the path of suffering instead of shortcuts. “For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life and there are few who find it” (Mathew 7:14).

Jesus' aim was the salvation of all. So he taught the people by parables which is connected with the life style of the common people. The parable of the Good Samaritan, Sowing of the seed, Good Shepherd, Prodigal son, etc. are world famous. Even people of other religions practice the Beatitudes in their day to day life. In each miracle he showed his concern for the poor and sick. His mercy was shown in the miracles. The multiplication of bread for the five thousand, raised of the dead, curing the lepers, blind and paralysed show his mercy for the downtrodden. He walked through the way of the cross and didn't take any shortcuts.

What is temptation?



The evil desires or wishes formed by humans against God's wishes and His love are called temptations.



In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word ‘nasa’ is used to denote temptation. The meaning of this word ‘nasa’ is to test, tempt or to search. In the New Testament, the Greek word ‘peiras’ is used for ‘nasa.’ The meaning of this word is to tempt or to make one to commit sin.

It is natural to have temptations. But those who fall into temptations commit sin and make others also to do it.

The temptations that Jesus had to face



The evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke say about the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness.

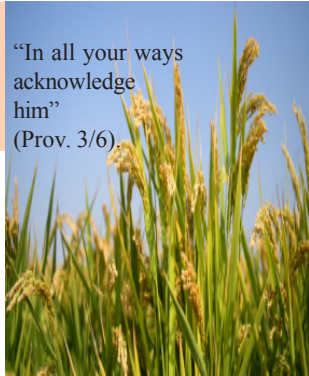
Jesus, full of the Holy spirit, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where spent forty days in prayer and fasting. (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13)

Activity



Find out the three occasions Jesus praying to his Father while he was the people.

Jesus was hungry and tired and satan asks Him to change the stones to bread. “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread”



“In all your ways
acknowledge
him”
(Prov. 3/6)

(Luke 4:3). Jesus declares that using God’s graces for one’s own pleasure, comfort and personal gain is wrong and a sin: “It is written, one does not live by bread alone” (Luke 4:4).

After being satisfied by eating the bread, the people looked for Jesus to make Him their king.

He corrected them by saying that they should look for the one who gives eternal bread. The disciples should follow the path of Jesus who gives eternal bread choosing the way of the cross.

Then satan took Jesus to a high place and told him:

“If you worship me, it will all be yours” (Luke 4:7).

Jesus told satan:

“It is written , worship the Lord your God, and serve only him” (Luke 4: 8).

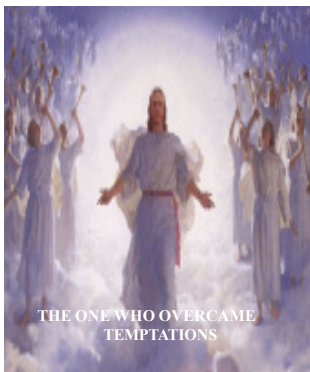
Lord asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” (Genesis 4:15).

Yes, it is my responsibility to look after every human being.

Tenant cannot become master (Exodus 19:5, Leviticus 25:23).

Humans should not feel proud about anything because they receive everything as a gift from God.

- ◆ We should worship God in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).
- ◆ When we lead our lives according to the word of God, justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24).



- ◆ Joining the process of freeing people from the slavery of the things that curb their lives is also adoring God .
- ◆ God does not accept the offering of unjust and blood stained persons. God accepts the offerings of those who cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan and plead for the widow (Isaiah 1:16-17).
- ◆ The act of caring the wounded person, taking him / her to the inn and thereafter to his / her home is an offering to God (Luke 10:25-37).

Thereafter making Jesus stand on top of the dome of Jerusalem temple satan said:

“If you are son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘I will command His angels concerning you to protect and on their hands they will bear up, so that you will not dash your feet against a stone’” (Luke 4:9-11).

Jesus answered:

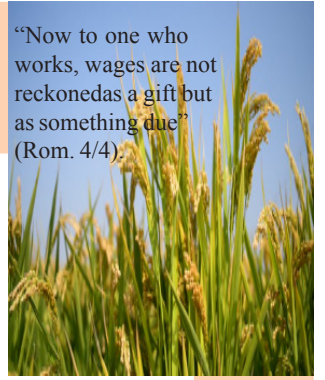
“It is said, ‘do not put your God to test’” (Luke 4:12).

**Through the way of the cross we can bring God’s kingdom on earth. What we earn without labour will never last.
We cannot prove our love without the path of suffering.**

When Jesus was hanging on the cross he was tempted. The thief who was on the left side said: “Come down from the cross. Save yourself and us.” But Jesus by his death on the cross said to the world:

**Cross is the salvation, on the cross is the salvation,
through cross is the salvation.**

"Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due" (Rom. 4/4).



Jesus had a clear vision about his society. He questioned the misuse of power and taught them that power is for serving others. The scribes and the Pharisees were provoked when Jesus questioned their traditions and laws. Hence, they claimed that Jesus said blasphemy and He made himself a king. Therefore he was put to crucifixion by Pilates. An inscription was put on the cross. It read, Jesus of Nazareth the king of Jews (John 19:19).

Like gold in the furnace is tried (Wisdom 3:6), we are cleansed though suffering. The ideal Christian life is to follow the footsteps of the crucified Jesus.

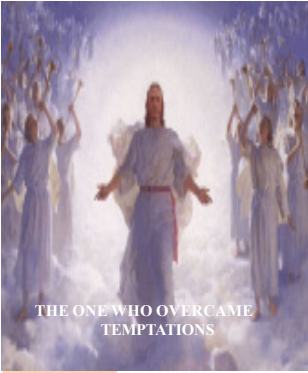
We face temptations in our daily life, it is an occasion to deepen and strengthen our faith.

**You know that the
testing of your faith produces endurance;
and let endurance have its full effect,
so that you may be mature and complete,
lacking in nothing
(James 1:3-4).**

LET US NOT FORGET



It is natural to have temptations in life. But we should be careful not to fall in that. When we face temptations, we should try to move away from them. We should keep away from the situations, talks and people who may cause temptations. Prayer is necessary to overcome the temptations like Jesus did. In case we happened to fall in temptations, we should make the Sacrament of Confession and try not to repeat the sins.



The situations given below may happen in our life. How would you face it?

➤ **Disobedience**

- No interest in prayer
- Not studying
- Being interested in lying
- Desire to see obscene pictures
- Greed for others' things
- Greed for money
- Desire to steal
- Speaking ill of others

What all should we do not to fall into temptations?

- Be awake and pray
- Read good books
- Follow the model and life of saints
- Every now and then receive Sacrament of Confession and participate in the Holy Eucharist
- Say short prayers
- Grow in devotion to Mary
- Gain good friends

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God" (Rom. 13/1).

ACTIVITY

1. To face temptations prepare a prayer seeking Lord's help.
2. It is essential to follow the way of the cross to reach the Kingdom of God. How do you relate it with your life? For example, today at 2:30 PM there is a film on the Television. At the same time, there is a lot of homework to be done. Which one will you prefer more?

song

I must tell Jesus all of my trials;
I cannot bear these burdens alone;
In my distress He kindly will help me;
He ever loves and cares for His own.

I must tell Jesus all of my troubles;
He is a kind, compassionate Friend;
If I but ask Him, He will deliver,
And in my grieves with me He will blend.

Tempted and tried I need a great Saviour,
One who can help my burdens to bear;
I must tell Jesus, I must tell Jesus;
He all my cares and sorrows will share.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING

1. What is temptation?
2. Which are the words used in the Old Testament and New Testament to denote temptation?



3. How did Jesus, led by the spirit, spent the 40 days in the wilderness?
4. What did Jesus respond to satan who said, “ If you adore me all these will be yours”
5. What lesson do we get from the second temptation that Jesus faced?

DISCUSS



Today’s generation depends more on the created things than on the creator, who has given us everything. How would you evaluate this from the point of view of Jesus, who said: “You should adore only the Lord your God.”

MEMORIZE



An idle mind is a devil’s work shop.

LET’S REMEMBER GOD’S WORD



Jesus answered, “It is written, one does not live by bread alone.”

LET US PRAY



Father in heaven bless us and give us the grace to live without falling into temptations.

PRESENTATION



What were the temptations which happened in Jesus’ life? How did Jesus overcome them? Enact it in the light of the Holy Bible.

A dirt road winds through a vast, green field under a blue sky with large, white, fluffy clouds. The road starts in the foreground and curves towards the horizon. The field is lush and green, with some darker patches of vegetation. The sky is a vibrant blue, and the clouds are large and billowing, creating a dramatic backdrop.


6

KINGDOM OF GOD



This is the map of our country. Our country has got a geographical boundary. India's is the largest democracy in the world. Our government is by the people, for the people and of the people. Our country is governed according to a constitution. The constitution was framed for the people to have equality, peace, justice and freedom. We get inspiration from the ancient Indian culture to see the whole world as one family (Vasudeva kudumbakam). This culture aims at the happiness and well being of the world (Lokasamastha sukhino bhavanthu).



“How beautiful are
the feet of those who
bring good news!”
(Rom. 10/15).


All human beings should live as one family is seen in the common festival “Onam” which is celebrated in Kerala.

God is our loving father. Being God’s children we should live in love and fraternity. There should not be difference of caste, creed or colour.

Experience of God’s Kingdom is the coming together of God, universe and brethren in our own home. We experience fatherhood, motherhood, justice, equality, growth, happiness, peace, security in a family. God formed family to experience values of God’s Kingdom.

**Our families should be a tent of love and
unity for each other.**

Children are born into a family. Each child is created in the form of God. Only a person having self-awareness can know and love God. He alone can share God’s life. God created humans for God himself. It is our duty to love and serve the God almighty so that our soul attains the heavenly bliss. Humans should express their love and gratitude towards God by loving and serving their fellow beings. God, who created humans for himself, created all other things for them. As everything was created for everyone, humans should live together by sharing and caring for each other. This is the aim and greatness of creation of human beings.



GOD'S KINGDOM ACCORDING TO OLD TESTAMENT



Through Abraham God called a group of nomads (Genesis 12:4). Through Moses he made them his own (Exodus 19:1-24). He led His own people through the desert to the land of Canaan. The relationship between God and the Israel people was strengthened during this journey through the desert. When the people were in the land of Canaan, they had among themselves freedom, wealth and unity to its fullness. Thus for 200 years people of Israel experienced God as their loving father and they as His loving children and lived among themselves as brothers and sisters.

God had given the Israel people, living in the land of Canaan, rules and regulations to live in the love of God. According to Lord's law, each could use the created things only for their needs.

Look at the collection of your dresses.

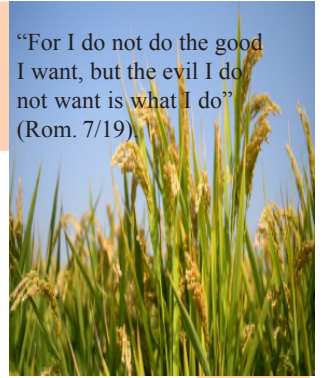
Find out if they are a need or a luxury.

As the time passed, the selfish people forgot their Lord and built Tower of Babel. Through His prophets God wanted His people to come back to the spirit of Sinai covenant. The people did not heed to the voice of God as they had become very hard hearted and faithless.

God's Kingdom is the state in which we are lead by God.

God's kingdom manifests when we completely surrender ourselves, our society and people according to God's desire. The fullness of God's kingdom comes at the end of the world. God's desire must be looked for and not our desires.

"For I do not do the good
I want, but the evil I do
not want is what I do"
(Rom. 7/19)



David's Psalm 15



O Lord, who may abide in your tent?
Who may dwell on your holy hill?
Those who walk blamelessly,
And do what is right,
And speak the truth from their heart;
Who do not slander with their tongue,
and do no evil to their friends,
Nor take a reproach against their neighbors;
In whose eyes the wicked are despised,
but who honor those who fear the Lord;
Who stand by their oath even to their hurt;
Who do not lend money at interest,
and do not take a bribe against the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be moved.

GOD'S KINGDOM IN NEW TESTAMENT

God couldn't give up the universe and the people whom he created in his own image to guide it. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

I have come that they may have life, and have it in all its fullness (John 10:10). Jesus came into world, proclaiming message of God's Kingdom (Mark 1:14-15). When he came to he saw so many rules and regulations, deeds and thinking which were not good for the people. This situation hurt Jesus very much. He called for God's Kingdom where there was equality and all would live together as brothers and sisters in a society.

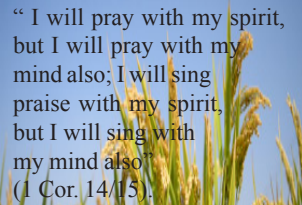


The development that Jesus taught was based on justice, where God's love overflows. Jesus places an action plan where we should work for our daily bread each day. Thus Jesus offered his own life on Calvary to bring forth God's Kingdom, which is filled with the joy, peace and love of the Holy Spirit.

We can live in God's Kingdom by living a holy and model life. The foundation of a Christian life is faith, love and hope. God has bestowed these theological virtues in the hearts of his people. Holy Spirit living in us bears to these virtues. Besides these theological virtues there are four other virtues obtained by holy life, called 'cardinal virtues.' They are prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Besides, there are human virtues. They are empathy, compassion, kindness, generosity, service, loyalty, patriotism and forgiveness. Jesus is the model for these virtues. Apostles became interested in God's Kingdom preached by Jesus. But they also expected a political freedom and liberty like the Jewish people. So they desired to rule over and to sit at the right and left and to fill one's own pocket and to live under the shade of power.

But God's kingdom preached by Jesus is filled with life, love, justice and fraternity. Jesus wants us to love each other by washing the feet, serving by giving up lives, trusting in God like little children and behaving like the Good Samaritan. Thus we can liberate the world.

“ I will pray with my spirit,
but I will pray with my
mind also; I will sing
praise with my spirit,
but I will sing with
my mind also”
(1 Cor. 14/15).



Those who build God's Kingdom and who will enter it.

- The poor
- Those who mourn
- Those who are meek
- Those who hunger and thirst for justice
- Those who have pure heart
- Those who are merciful
- The peace makers
- Those who suffer for justice (Mathew 5:1-12)

SPECIALITIES OF GOD'S KINGDOM



There are four levels in God's kingdom:

1. Divine level

The divine level in God's kingdom signifies God's strength in it.

2. Human level

Human level is the sacrifice demanded by God's kingdom.

3. Present level

It is a reality that God's kingdom still grows among us.

4. Future level

It denotes that we should be watchful while living and be aware of the last judgment.



To establish God's kingdom



Eradication of poverty

Ministering the sick

God's Kingdom can become a reality only when every human being lives together in unity by acknowledging, respecting, loving and sharing.



Song



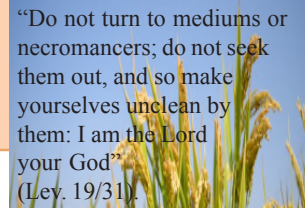
Come, kingdom of our God,
Sweet reign of light and love!
Shed peace and hope and joy,
And wisdom from above.

Come, kingdom of our God,
And make the broad earth yours!
Stretch over the lands and isles the rod
That flowers with grace divine.

Come, Kingdom of our God,
Bless with fruit from life's glad tree;
And in its shade everyone rest,
Children of one family.



"Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19/31)



DISCUSS



What can we do to make our society God's kingdom?

LET US FIND THE ANSWER



1. How did the relationship between God and Israel become strong?
2. Which were the systems and rules that were existing when Jesus came into this world?
3. Why did Jesus sacrifice His life?
4. What are the specialities of God's kingdom?

MEMORIZE



We have the duty to love each other by washing the feet, serving giving our life, depend on God like innocent children and support others when they fall.

LET US REMEMBER THE GOD'S WORD



For God so loved the world that he gave His only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

LET US PRAY



God, give us the strength to live innocently, to do justice, not to harm our friends, not to criticize our neighbours and live as member of God's Kingdom.



ACTION



1. Describe the action of Gandhiji when he took water from river Ganges and washed his face.
2. Describe the meaning of the prayer “ give us today our daily bread”

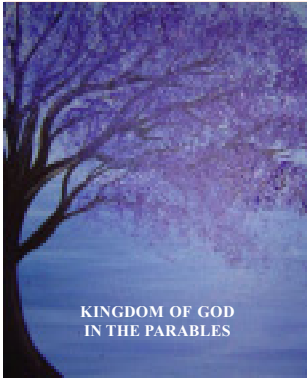
The essence of Jesus’ teachings is God’s kingdom. It would be easier to understand if we say ‘Rule’ rather than ‘Kingdom’. The state when God rules is God’s kingdom. The Gospel according to Matthew uses the word ‘kingdom of heaven’ for God’s kingdom. He used the word ‘heaven’ instead of ‘God’ so that the name of God is not used in vain, and also because he wrote his gospel for the Jews as well. In Hebrew God’s kingdom is called ‘malkuth Yahweh,’ in Greek it is called ‘Basileia tou Theou’. The gospel should be explained on the basis of God’s kingdom. It can be said that the gospel and Jesus are inseparable. Let us see the contents of his first preaching, which says “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:15). The very presence of Jesus is the proof that God rules because Jesus is ‘God with us’- ‘Immanuel’ (Mathew 1:23). We can enter the God’s kingdom by establishing a relationship with Jesus. It can be done by accepting the discipleship of Jesus. Let us see the usage of the term ‘God’s kingdom’ (Kingdom of Heaven) in the New Testament :

Mathew	Mark	Luke	John	Apostles	Paul	Others
55	20	46	5	8	14	16

A large, dark, leafy tree with a thick trunk and many branches, set against a light blue sky. The tree is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its branches extending towards the right. The leaves are a vibrant green, and the overall scene is bright and clear.

7

KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE PARABLES



Jesus taught the secret of God's Kingdom to everyone. He spoke to the people who listened to Him in Araemic language, which everyone could understand.

Jesus, who was a Galilean used a lot of similies , proverbs and parables in his speeches and teachings.

The Greek word for parable is 'parabole.' It is a combination of two words: 'Para' and 'ballo.' 'Para' means 'by the side.' 'Ballo' means 'to throw.' Therefore, parable literally means 'to throw down by the side.' It carries the idea of taking one thing and throwing it down so that it lands next to, or by the side of, something else. The purpose of doing so is to draw a comparison.

COMPARISON



A thing which is not known to the listeners is explained to them by a thing which is well known to them. For example, 'leaven' (Matthew 13:33). There would be no one who doesn't know the use of it.

PARABLE



One thing is explained in a dramatical way. Topic for explanation is imaginative. But the interest will be created in the way it is explained. At the end of the parable the listeners are forced to make the judgement in their mind. Example, Prodigal son, Good Samaritan, The richman and Lazarus, etc.

MORAL STORY



There will be a meaning for every character and every part of these stories. The meaning is explained when the story is said. The story teller

“Everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord
will be saved”
(Rom. 10/13).



explains the way to the reality from the imaginative story.
Example, Reaping the harvest, harvesters, etc.

“Indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable”
(Mathew 13:34).

The central point of Jesus’ teachings was God’s kingdom. He explained the secret of kingdom is a very simple and clear way through things, happenings, stories examples of common people’s life.

The parables which Jesus said was about sparrows, lilies of the field, salt, tamarind tree, grass which fades by evening, Solomon the Great, etc.

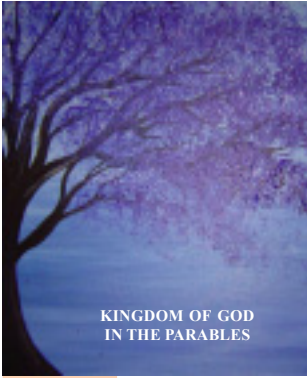
He described the different aspects of the Kingdom of God through parables which were told in a very simple way.

Jesus presented the values of Kingdom of God through parables.

AIM OF THE PARABLES



Jesus wished that the knowledge of God should be equally given to the learned and the ignorant. Moreover, the parables of Jesus were aimed at bringing a change in his hearers, to expose the gravity of their hardness of heart, to bring them to a change of heart and to experience the Kingdom of God. Each parables of Jesus is a challenge to make new decisions. Through each parable a new revelation is given. The revealed realities give way to huge change, leading to new resolutions. Thus, the



hearers have a change of life and are made to enter a new life. This is the aim of Jesus' parables.

Jesus wants to make known the new heaven and new earth through the parables.

GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH PARABLES



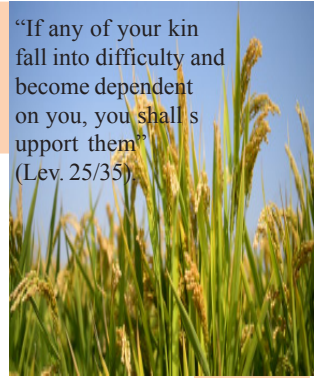
Through parables Jesus revealed various dimensions of God's kingdom. Parables are a major part of the teachings of Jesus on God's kingdom. The growth and spread of God's kingdom is well explained by the parables like mustard seed. God's kingdom is compared to a tiny seed which grows out to be a huge tree, having many branches (Mathew 13:31-33; Mark 4:26).

Every parable should be understood in relation to God's kingdom. The actualization of God's kingdom happens only when we live lovingly, in unity, in togetherness and harmony.

The speciality of God's kingdom is that from a small and humble beginning it grows to a large community which experiences peace and happiness and its fullness will be realized in the future.

The Parable of the Sower makes it clear to us how God's kingdom grows in human hearts (Mathew 13:3-9). God the sower, sows the words in everyone equally. But only in good hearts does the word grow and produce the fruit of God's kingdom.

"If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them" (Lev. 25/35).

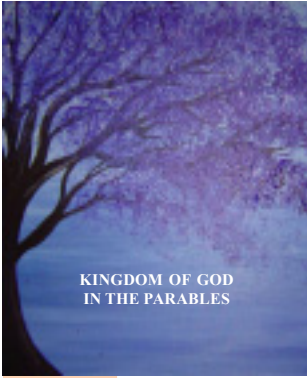


The parables explain as to which type of people enter God's kingdom. Jesus wants us to repent, be childlike, innocent and enter the kingdom of God. We should be ready to do any sacrifice in God's kingdom. We should have the mind of a merchant, who is ready to sell off everything he has to gain the treasure hidden in the fields or a precious jewel for himself.

We also become parables, living message of Jesus by dreaming with God, getting involved with people and aiming life eternal. Based on the central idea parables can be classified into seven types.

Find the chapter and the verses of the parables given below.

TYPE	PARABLE	VERSE
1. Begining of God's kingdom	Parable of the sower	
2. Growth of God's kingdom	a. Parable of seed b. Mustard seed c. Parable of leaven	
3. Mercy of God's kingdom	a. Labourers at the vineyard b. Prodigal son c. Pharasee and the tax collector d. Two debtors	



TYPE	PARABLE	VERSE
4. Opposite of God's kingdom	a. Unfaithful servant b. The rich man and Lazarus	
5. Invitees in God's kingdom	a. Wedding feast b. Talents c. Labourers at the vineyard	
6. Members of God's kingdom	a. Parable of justice and jewel. b. House builders c. Unforgiving servant d. Building tower and King going on war. e. The judge and the widow f. Good Samaritan g. The foolish wealthy man h. Fruitless fig tree	
7. Completeness of God's kingdom	a. Parable of weeds b. Net thrown in sea	

"If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." (1 Cor. 13/3)

Things to be considered while explaining the parables

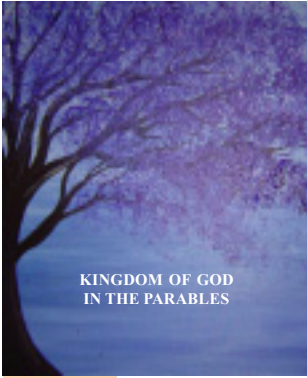
1. Find out what is the main part of the parable. Understand how it has been compared (every detail need not be compared).
2. Understand the background of the incident given in the parable. Become aware of how the hearers of Jesus' parables would have understood it.

Every parable said by Jesus contains great lesson for us. We should read them and learn lessons from them to lead a good life. The parables are beautiful stories which we can tell our friends and young children as well. We should learn these holy verses which Jesus taught and accept them as rules of life.

SONG

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity will one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yeah they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will work with each other, we will work side by side
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yeah, they'll know we are Christians by our love.



DISCUSS



The message we get from the parable of rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).

FIND THE ANSWERS



1. Find the parables said by Jesus from the Holy Bible.
2. What is the meaning of the parable of the sower?
3. What is a parable?
4. What is the aim of the parables?
5. What should we consider while explaining a parable?

MEMORIZE



Only in a good heart the WORD would grow and bring forth the fruits of God's kingdom.

LET US PRAY



God our Father, like the seed which fell on the fertile soil and brought forth hundred fold of yield, grant us that we too may grow to do good to our families, society and the Church.

DEMONSTRATE



Demonstrate the parable of the sower in the class.



8

KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE MIRACLES



We are living in a world of wonders. Beautiful nature and human beings are all wonders. We have heard about wonders of the world.

Phenomena and activities beyond the comprehension of normal intelligence and capabilities of humans are called wonders or miracles.

In the Holy Bible, we read about the many miracles performed by Jesus during His public life. Jesus, who was God and compassionate to humans, performed miracles to help the poor, the marginalized and the downtrodden in society.

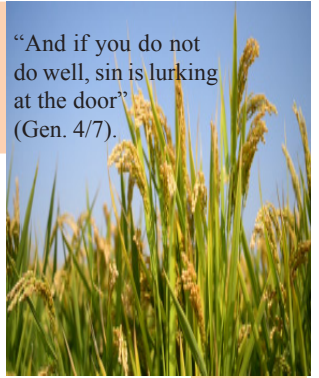
The miracles performed by Jesus, were God's special interventions and signs of God's kingdom.

Miracles are God's special interventions and revelations displayed before us in a natural or supernatural manner. Whatever represents and remains as signs of God's mighty presence in our lives are miracles.

The main objective of miracle is to show to us the victory of good over evil.

Therefore, Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) see miracles as expression of might ('dunamis'). For example, see Luke 6:19; 8:46. But the Gospel according to John describes miracles as signs ('semeion') and as God's acts ('ergon'). For example, see John 9:35-41.

“And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door” (Gen. 4/7).



Miracles: Signs of God's Kingdom



The age of liberation (Messianic Age, Isaiah 35:5-6; 42:18; 61:1), eagerly awaited by the Jews, was begun and revealed through Jesus' miracles. Jesus' world of miracles included the blind seeing, the lame walking, the leper being healed, the deaf hearing, the dead being resurrected and the Gospel being proclaimed to the poor (Matthew 11:5).

All these miracles are the signs of God's Kingdom. Jesus performed all these miracles using His authoritative word. Whenever He performed miracles, He had sought the faith of the recipients in Him. Jesus placed emphasis and insisted on the recipients' faith in God rather than on the act itself, whenever He performed miracles. Miracles had happened because recipients had faith in God.

Jesus could not perform miracles among those who did not have faith. He had performed miracles even when one person declared faith on behalf of another (Matthew 8:1-10).

But Jesus never performed any miracle for Himself or to save Himself. For example, Temptation in the wilderness, Death on the cross, etc.

Leading the public into faith and preaching God's kingdom were the objectives of Jesus' miracles.

Miracles in the Holy Bible



Jesus, in the Synagogue, filled with the Holy Spirit, proclaimed His solidarity and compassionate approach to sinners, marginalized and the outcasts (Luke 4: 18-21) and confirmed it through His miracles.



Jesus' miracles are signs of establishment of God's kingdom. The purpose of Jesus' miracles were to lead the people into faith in God, to give them healing and to reveal that He was the Son of God. He never performed miracles for His own fame. It was love and compassion that prompted Jesus to perform miracles. He proved through His miracles that salvation He preached and promised were available to all. He comforted all without any difference of woman or man, poor or rich, and those in authority or servant. Jesus taught that having faith and prayer, we can also perform miracles in his name, like healing sick, lame and the crippled.

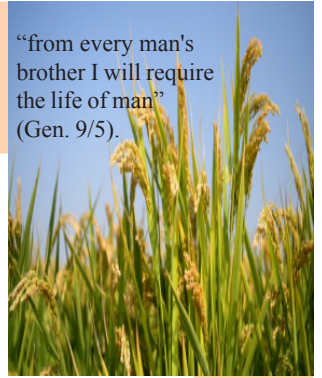
Jesus' miracles are classified into four categories, on the basis of their nature:

1. Nature Miracles: Example, Calming the Storm (Matthew 8: 23-27); Feeding Five Thousand (Matthew 14: 13-21); Walking on the Water (Matthew 14: 22-33).
2. Healing Miracles: Example, Healing the Leper (Matthew 8:1-4); Healing Centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5-13); Healing Peter's mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14-17).
3. Exorcism: Example, Healing the Gadarene Demoniacs (Matthew 8:28-34); Curing a Boy with a Demon (17:14-21).
4. Miracle of bringing back to life: Example, Raising Jairus' Daughter (Matthew 9: 18-26); Raising Son of a Widow in Nain (Luke 7: 11-17); Raising Lazarus of Bethany (John 11: 38-44).

Jesus' miracles are also seen classified into supernatural miracles (9 in number) and healing miracles (27 in number).

Among the supernatural miracles, five miracles are performed at the sea and four at the land, reveal the divine experience of deliverance from nature's cruelty and hunger.

“from every man's
brother I will require
the life of man”
(Gen. 9/5).



- ① Looking at the healing miracles, we see Jesus celebrating victory of God's Kingdom over death. This is evident in three miracles of bringing the dead back to life (Luke 7: 11-17; Matthew 9: 18-26; John 11: 1-44).
- ① Among the healing miracles, eight of them relate to people being healed of various diseases and pain of ailments being removed. These miracles impart the experience of God's Kingdom.
- ① Exorcising demons is performed in six miracles. In these miracles the end of satan's rule and beginning of God's Kingdom is marked.

**The purpose of Jesus' miracles was to lead
people into faith.**

Those who were physically handicapped were healed and led into the joy of God's Kingdom. Jesus' victory over sin and death becomes complete in His resurrection. Jesus' resurrection is the culmination of all His miracles. Since this cannot be compared to His other miracles, Jesus' resurrection is not usually included in the list of His miracles.

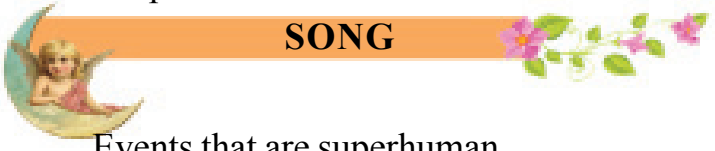
- Ø Exodus from Egypt and the celebration of Passover are the greatest miracles in the history of Israel.
- Ø Miracles are the signs of the Holy Spirit – Saint Paul
- Ø Miracles are the signs of salvation (Hebrews 2:4)
- Ø Miracles are indicators of one being led into faith.
- Ø Miracles confirm the Word of God.
- Ø Miracles can happen only at places where there is faith in Jesus (Mark 2:5; 5: 34; 7: 29; 9: 23; Matthew 8: 10; 9: 23; John 4: 50; 11:40).

All the miracles performed by Jesus were signs of the Messiah. Miracles reveal not only Jesus' divinity, but also His love, compassion

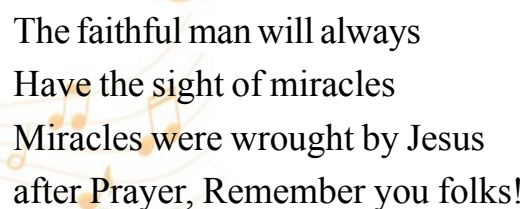


and care for people. Nobody approaching Him with faith will ever be disappointed. We also should approach Him with deep faith. Not only that, we are His dear children, and we also should show love and compassion to others. We should not pretend as though we have not seen their pains. Just as Jesus' miracles were signs of His being the Messiah, our actions should become signs of our being Christ's disciples.

SONG



Events that are superhuman,
Phenomena that are supernatural
are miracles; we should know
Lord Jesus has done by His kindness
Rendering comfort to the grieving
Giving sight to the blind
Bringing life to the dead
Jesus performed miracles, as signs.



The faithful man will always
Have the sight of miracles
Miracles were wrought by Jesus
after Prayer, Remember you folks!

Discuss

Our approach to sinners and to those who are sidelined in the society.

“Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed; for in his own image God made humankind” (Gen. 9/6).

FIND OUT ANSWERS



1. Which was the first miracle performed by Jesus during His public ministry?
2. What did Jesus usually do, before performing miracles and signs?
3. Who will enter the Kingdom of God?
4. What is Kingdom of God?
5. What is the special characteristic that people should have, to be able to experience the miracles of Jesus?

LET US MEMORIZE



Jesus' victory over sin and death becomes complete with His resurrection.

LET US REMEMBER GOD'S WORDS



“The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have good news brought to them” (Matthew 11:5).

LET US PRAY

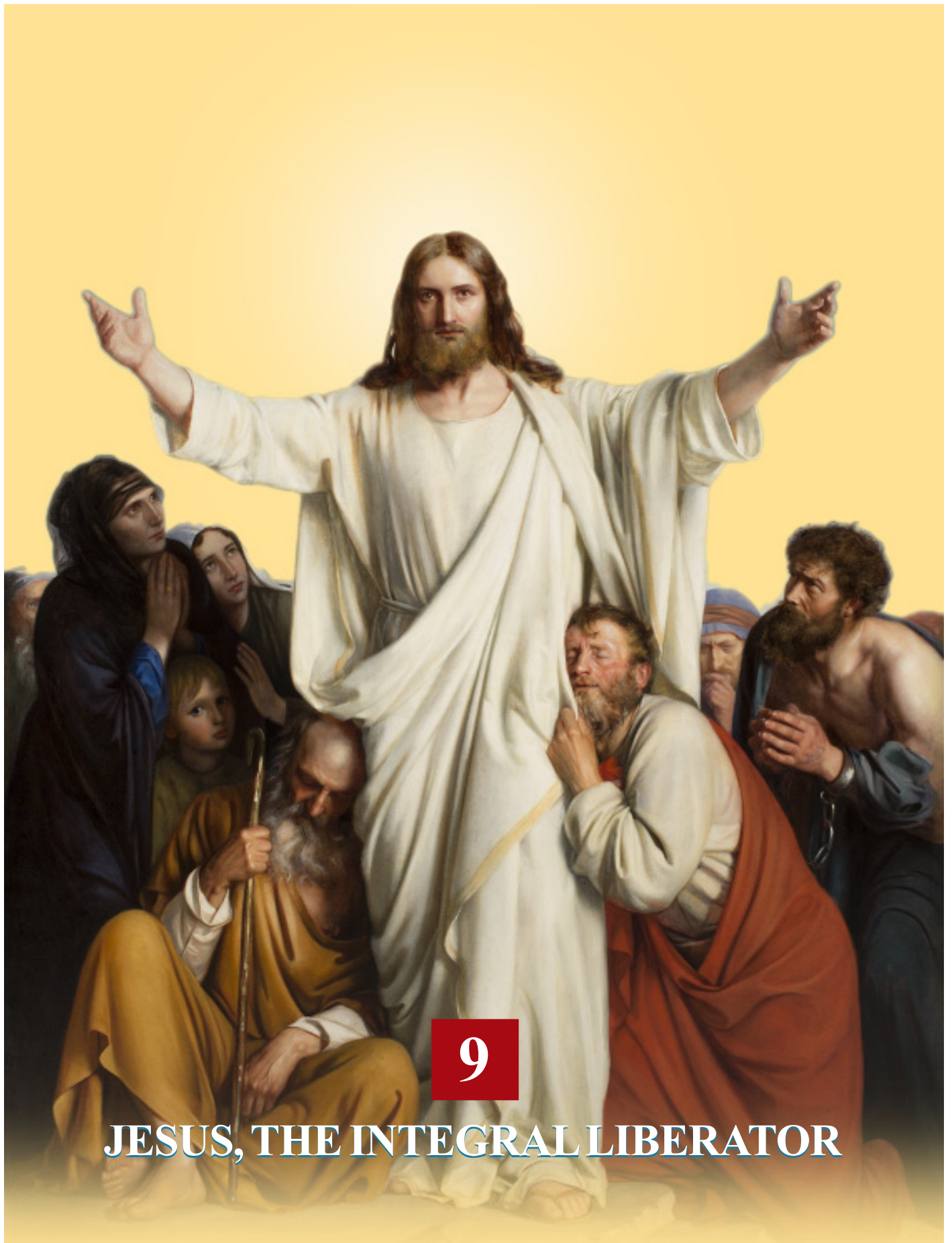


God, who is the light of the world, please give us faith to be able to receive even today, the living Jesus' miracles and signs.

ACTION



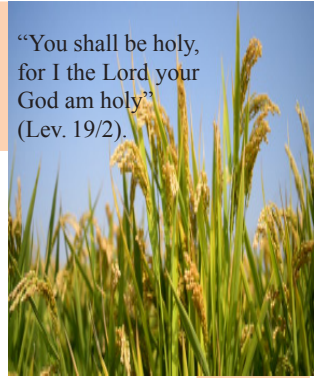
Find out from the Holy Bible, the miracles Jesus performed while at the sea.



9

JESUS, THE INTEGRAL LIBERATOR

“You shall be holy,
for I the Lord your
God am holy”
(Lev. 19/2).



We can see a number of individuals who had worked throughout history, for the liberation of humankind. We are familiar with the names of Gandhiji who worked for the independence of India, Martin Luther King who worked for liberation of the Blacks, Abraham Lincoln who worked for ending slavery, Archbishop Oscar Romero who worked for justice for the faithful of El Salvador, Father Damien who worked for the welfare of the lepers of Morocco Islands, Mother Teresa who worked for the downtrodden in society and Sister Rani Maria who worked for the unorganized and backward classes in North India.

We become Disciples of Christ when we aspire for the good of others and when we live for the benefit of others.

These great persons drew inspiration to work for the good of humankind from life of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the saviour of the entire humankind.

Liberation in the Old Testament



God created humans in His Love, Life and Knowledge (Genesis 1:26). He desired that human persons live with Him. But they misused the free will that they were endowed with (Genesis 3:7). They became slave to sin. Sin distanced them from God.

When they lost contact with God, they went far away from God and lost contact with each other as well (Genesis 3:12; 4:8-10). God called them back to Him through Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4).

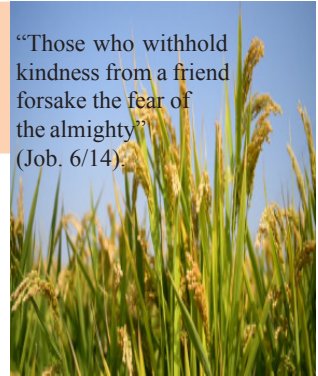
The Book of Genesis in the Holy Bible deals with the time of ancient fathers of humankind. Between B.C. 2000 and 1700 Abraham, who lived in the land called Ur in Mesopotamia, came over to Palestine as instructed



by God, to live there. When there occurred a famine in Palestine, Abraham's grandson Jacob and his children went over to a neighbouring country namely, Egypt seeking asylum. Gradually, the entire family set up households in Egypt. They grew into a force to reckon with over a period of time. The Egyptians became jealous of the growth and prosperity achieved by the Israelites, and they made them slaves and tortured the Israelites severely.

Later on, God exhorted them using His servant Moses, to become a community blessed with equality and freedom (Exodus). God had listened to the cries concerning the sufferings and tribulations of His people, who had become slaves in Egypt, and He came down to save them (Exodus 3:7-8). God remained with them as saviour throughout their journey through the desert filled with various kinds of problems, providing Manna for food, water, shade and light and leading them all along the desert. Israelites lived in the land of Canaan for about two hundred years, expecting integral liberation.

Jesus preached the Gospel of salvation to the poor and destitute among society, provided food to the hungry, healed the blind by giving them eye sight, healed the deaf giving them the power of hearing, healed the dumb giving them the ability to speak, healed the patients afflicted with leprosy and paralysis, raised the dead, healed those afflicted by evil spirits and saved sinners from the bonds of sin. He ate with the poor and outcasts in society whom the upper classes despised and led them into repentance and salvation. In the end, he shed His blood on the cross and liberated humans from the bondage of sin. Jesus fulfilled His mission, the liberation of humankind, in this manner. By liberating ourselves from sin and by saving other people from the trials and tribulations of life, let us also share Jesus' mission of liberation of humankind. Those who do not have proper education, those who are bereft of a house to live in, those who have no food and go hungry, those who are orphans, those who are punished for offences not committed by them, those who do not have peace of mind; all such people need our compassion, help and consideration. Those who ignore such needy people cannot become Christians.



“Those who withhold kindness from a friend forsake the fear of the almighty” (Job. 6/14).

The Israelites, who left Egypt, crossed the Red Sea and assembled near Sinai Hills. This coming together helped them witness two significant events: 1. Israelites violated God’s commandment and later entered into a covenant with Him. 2. Through this covenant, Israelites became God’s own people. It became obligatory for Israelites to obey God’s commandments and to be faithful to God.

The monotheism which was confirmed by the covenant helped Israelites to remain united. Over a period of time, though kings who were expected to lead the people to liberation, got engrossed in selfish acts of infighting and killing their own subjects. This led to exploitation of the people and ultimately led them into slavery. The people forgot God and got immersed in idolatry. They degenerated into a group of idol worshippers and a people who forgot the virtues of life. God, who realized this pathetic condition of the people, sent prophets, to exhort and liberate them. In the fullness of time, God sent His only begotten Son to the world to save the humankind.

**God’s love is everlasting.
His ways are always for our good.**

JESUS THE SAVIOUR



Jesus, who was denied a place to be born, dreamt of a place for everybody to lie down. He desired that every body’s needs should be taken care of. But the society, in which Jesus lived, did not care for God’s desire. Jesus who read scriptures through the tears of people, declared a new age and era at the age of 12 and 30. He blew the trumpet of integral liberation.

At the age of 12 he was “sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46).



At the age of 30, Jesus stood up at the Synagogue in Nazareth and read from the book of Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour’ (Luke 4:18-19). He declared that this scripture is fulfilled here and now, and proclaimed the Good News of Liberation for all, inviting everybody into the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:21).

When Jesus saw the hungry multitude, His compassion multiplied bread (Matthew 14:14-17; 15:32).

It became sight for the blind by the way side (Mark 10:46-52).

It became hearing for the deaf, comfort for the leper, life for the dead.

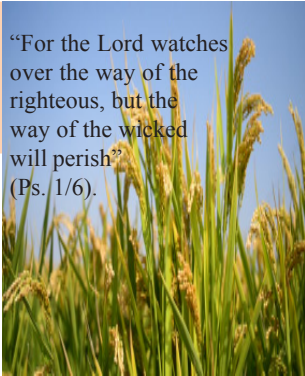
Thus He made integral liberation possible.

Integral Liberation Through Us



We get the message of integral liberation in Jesus’ teachings and deeds. The trumpet of Jesus’ integral liberation is sounded in the prayer, ‘Our Father who art in Heaven,’ and especially where we pray, ‘give us this day our daily bread.’ In order to achieve humankind’s integral liberation, Jesus demanded the re-interpret of practices, rituals, rules and regulations. Jesus was not ready to make compromises on issues like, injustice, immorality and truthlessness. We are called to walk the way Jesus walked. We should not change the course of path for selfish motives.

The life of Christ, our Saviour, should be the centre of our life. Jesus started His public life as a preacher of God’s Kingdom. Jesus selected and prepared a group of twelve apostles to accompany Him in His mission of propagating the message of God’s Kingdom. They had



“For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish” (Ps. 1/6).

belonged to the category of fishermen, tax collectors and such lowly strata of the society. Jesus kept them along His public ministry, training and empowering them to spread the Good News. In today's world, we are expected to spread the message of the Good News of Jesus' Kingdom of God. We can be part of His Holy life by ourselves leading holy lives and doing good actions. We should walk with Jesus and share His love with everybody just like Jesus' disciples did.

Let us not forget

We should see, hear and understand the society in which we live, through the eyes, ears and mind of Jesus. We should be able to see, promote and stand for goodness in our society.

We should hear the cries of our brethren in society, and encourage others to listen to their cries. Love, justice, truth and brotherliness should become our life's hallmarks. Let us join in Jesus' integral liberation programme by empowering the poor, downtrodden and rejected people in society. Let us show enough courage like Jesus to isolate and destroy those who are against Jesus' integral liberation programme.

**Integral Liberation is human beings' all round development.
The Kingdom of God becomes a reality only through integral liberation.**

No one should make the other a slave. All of us as children of God, are equal.



We should not keep anyone outside our circle of love. The act of love we show to others itself is our worship offered to God. Our model and teacher is none other than Jesus who had worked for the liberation of everyone. We should see others more respectable than ourselves. We should not approach anyone with preconceived notions that they are rich or poor, beautiful or ugly. All human beings are the replicas of God. We should work for the liberation of everyone. We should resist all forms of injustice, truthlessness and violence. No one should be tortured.

DISCUSS

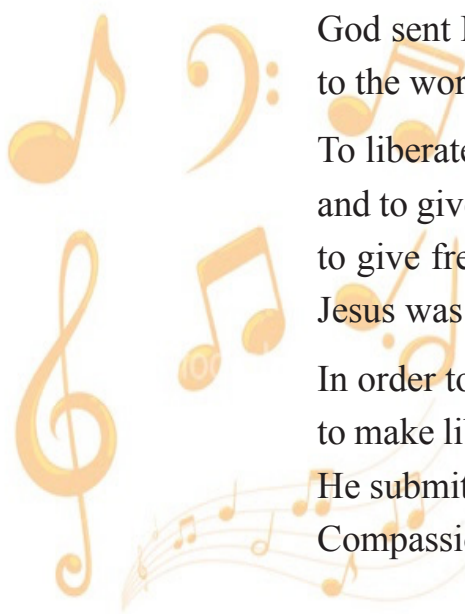


How can you become liberators for your fellow students who are poor in society?

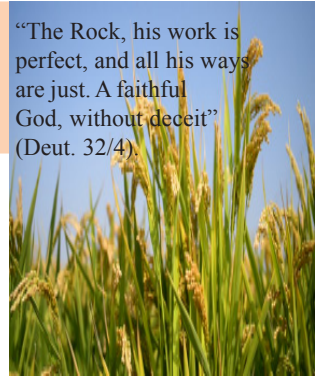
SONG



Through sin humankind has been
led astray far from God
God sent His Only begotten Son
to the world, to save them from sin
To liberate people under bondage of sin
and to give eye sight to the blind,
to give freedom to the oppressed,
Jesus was born on this earth.
In order to untie the bondage of sin,
to make liberation of humans possible
He submitted His own life on the cross
Compassionately, my Master.



"The Rock, his work is perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God, without deceit" (Deut. 32/4)



FIND OUT ANSWERS



1. Write a note on Jesus' integral liberation.
2. State that God of Old Testament is God of liberation.
3. Write in a paragraph on a person whose work of liberation for the people influenced you.
4. What is meaning of the word 'liberation'?
5. How can we participate in the integral liberation of Jesus?

LET US MEMORIZE



We have to listen and make others to listen to the voice of people who suffer and are oppressed in the society.

LET US REMEMBER GOD'S WORDS



"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18-19).

LET US PRAY



Loving God, you have created us giving your love and life. Bless us to remain united with you always.

ACTION



Organize an uninterrupted reading of the entire Holy Bible.



A youth born in a remote village,
Brought up in another village.
He was poor.
He did carpentry work till 30 years of age.
Next three years, He travelled doing good.

He has not written any book.
He has not held any office of profit.
He did not have any place to recline his head.
He did not have a family of His own.
He has not received education from any college.
He was an alien to great cities.

He had not travelled for more than 200 miles
from His place of birth.
He had not done anything that great people do.
He had no authorization letters
Other than Himself.

He attracted public criticism even
when He was a youth.
His friends deserted Him.
He was relegated to the midst of enemies.
He was subjected to a defamatory hearing in court.

He was crucified between robbers.
His only wealth was His loin cloth.
While suffering painful death on the cross
His loin cloth was usurped by casting lots.
He had the good luck to have a sepulchre
only because of the kindness of a good man.
Twenty long centuries are over;

“Therefore do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For he wounds, but he binds up; he strikes, but his hands heal” (Job, 5/18).

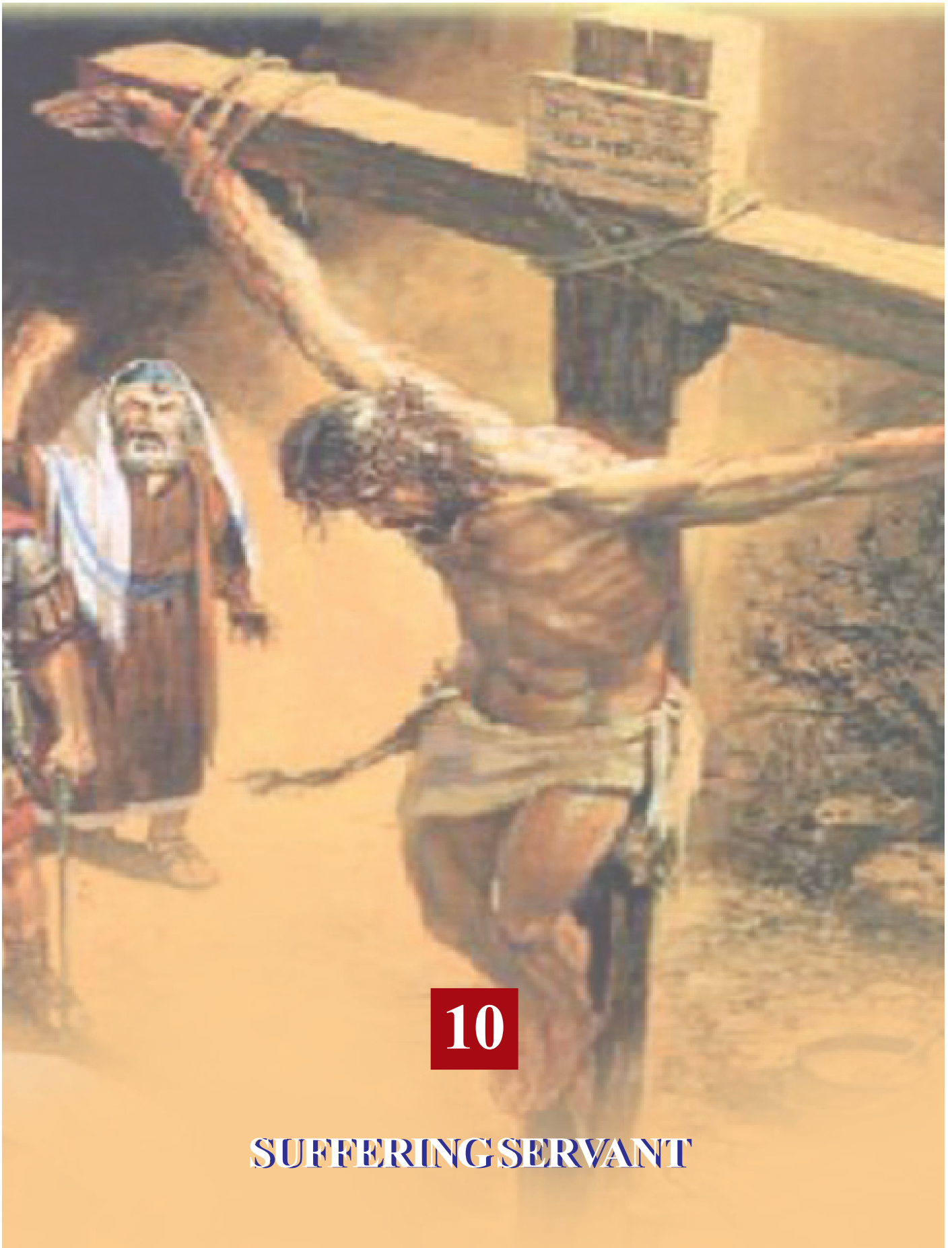
Today He is the central point of humankind.
He is the leader of integral liberation.

All the armies that marched on the earth
All the ships that sailed on the high seas

All the parliaments that held deliberations
All the kings that ruled over nations

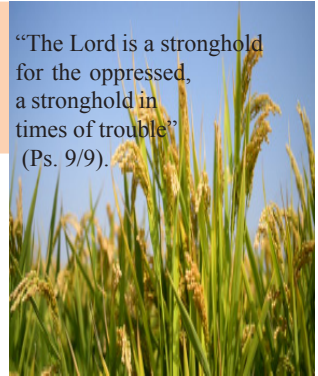
All these put together will never match the influence
This lone traveller exercised on humankind.





10

SUFFERING SERVANT



“The Lord is a stronghold
for the oppressed,
a stronghold in
times of trouble”
(Ps. 9/9).

We have already learned that the blissful life of freedom and good communion in the land of Canaan did not last for long. After the period of judges was over, the rule of kings started. The dictatorial attitude of kings and their pompous life style made the lives of general public miserable. In spite of all these, they lived on, hoping that the liberator, the Messiah promised by God, would come some day to save and give them better days.

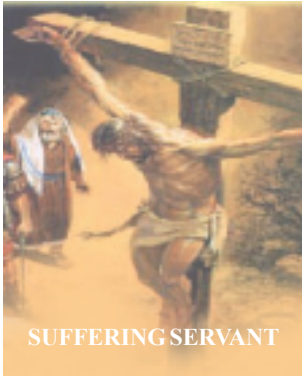
As per the Old Testament perspective, God allows sufferings in order to teach and sanctify His chosen people.

Jewish Perspective of Messiah



Jews continued to believe and hope that God will interfere at the fullness of time, either directly or through a representative. Accordingly, the Israelites believed that a king in the Davidic dynasty will come, he will rule according to God's laws, and thus a period of beautiful reign of equality and prosperity will become a reality for them.

The unique specialty of Judaism is the belief in 'one God' (monotheism). The prayer, 'The Lord our God is the one God' (Deuteronomy 6:4) teaches about the oneness of God. The law says, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might.' (Deuteronomy 6:5). Israel was in wedlock with Yahweh, the one God. Therefore, belief in many gods (polytheism) had no place among Israelites. Even today, Jews believe that a savior will come, to give salvation to all Jews and establish a kingdom of peace where lamb and lion cubs will graze together (Isaiah 65:25). But they do not believe that the Messiah is God the Son, the second person in the Triune God.



The Messiah of Jewish perspective is the incarnation of all might, power, prosperity and glory. Suffering was alien to this Messiah. They were not waiting for a suffering messiah, but a Messiah who would defeat the oppressive Roman rulers, destroy them and achieve victory for Israelites in all facets of their life.

Messiah in Jesus



There will be differences between God's plan and our thinking. What we should do is to understand God's plans through prayer.

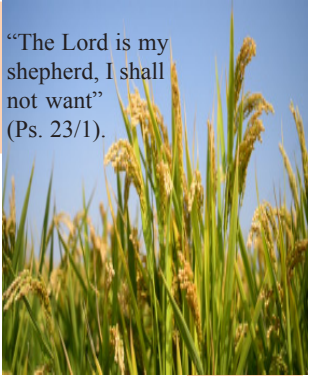
The vision of Messiah we see in Jesus is shaped by love. It is totally different from Israel's view of Messiah. Jesus becomes a suffering servant for those who are left behind and rejected by society's main stream.

Jesus rebukes and asks Peter to stand behind, when he wanted Jesus not to choose suffering (Matthew 16:23). Jesus taught that we should share our food with the hungry, console those who are weeping and share in the sufferings of others. Throughout His public life, He stood for the suffering poor and in the end climbed the Calvary to die for the salvation of humankind.

Jesus Who Wipes Tears



The world of the Gospel is one of those who suffer. All the miracles performed by Jesus were sharing in the sufferings of others. The culmination of His suffering is seen in His final week of suffering at Jerusalem and death on the cross.



“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”
(Ps. 23/1).

Suffering is not acceptable to anyone when we think humanly. Even Jesus falters in the face of suffering. The loneliness and isolation and sweating of blood in the garden of Gethsemane and at Calvary made Jesus restless and persuaded Him to think of keeping himself away from suffering.

Jesus prayed, “Father, if it is your will, remove this cup from me” (Luke 22:42).

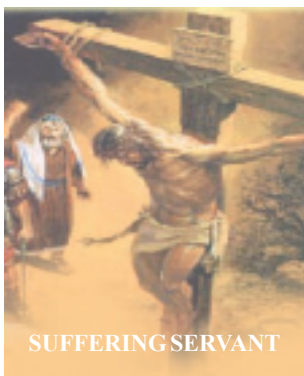
But Jesus’ complete surrender to God and strength from God gave mental power for Jesus to accept the sufferings.

Prophet Isaiah speaks of Jesus, who was deformed by suffering to such an extent that His appearance did not resemble that of human:

“Just as there were many who were astonished at him;
so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance
and his form beyond that of mortals” (Isaiah 52:14).

Four songs in the book of Isaiah are called ‘Songs of God’s Servant’ (Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12). But people were not impressed by this God’s Servant. He did not have noticeable handsomeness, impressive personality or beauty of shape. He was despised and rejected by people. He was filled with sorrows and He was acquainted with grief. They hid their faces from Him (Isaiah 53:2, 3). He suffered for the people (Isaiah 53:4). But they were not able to recognize him. But they were healed because He suffered wounds (Isaiah 53:6). He subjected Himself to suffering and death because of the sins of people (Isaiah 53:9). The servant suffers all these as per the great will of God (Isaiah 53:10).

“The Lord God has opened my ear and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been



disgraced therefore I have set my face like flint and I know that I shall not be put to shame (Isaiah 50:5-7).

This shape of Suffering Servant that Isaiah prophesied is fulfilled in Jesus. Despised by all, killed along with transgressors, Jesus teaches us the finiteness of death. Jesus is inviting us to build a world of love through suffering.

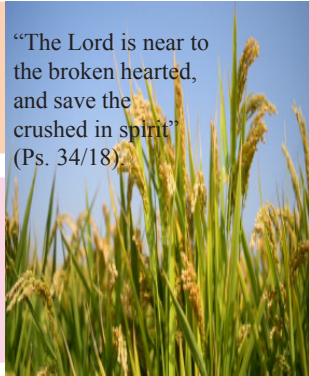
Suffering In Our Lives



Disciples of Christ should follow the path taken by Jesus. They should deny themselves (Matthew 16:24), walk along the path adopted by the Master and live in the hope of coming of God's Kingdom. We as Christians should carry the daily crosses that encounter us on account of living for Christ and for His Kingdom.

During this age when evil reigns supreme, suffering is inevitable (Romans 8:18; Galatians 1:4). A believer in Christ, in his capacity as a member of Church, the body of Christ, participates in the sufferings of Christ, through the sufferings one encounters (Romans 8:31-39; 12:4-21). Christ's style of working was at crossroads with that of the world. Hence disciples of Christ also have to face opposition and sufferings (John 15:18; 1 Corinthians 2:8).

- o We should not blame God while facing sufferings (Romans 5:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 3:3).
- o We should receive sufferings with patience and strength (Matthew 13:21; Mark 4:17).
- o We should not lose hope while experiencing sufferings (Romans 8:20; 1 Thessalonian 1:3).
- o We should be happy to suffer (Matthew 5:12; John 14: 28).
- o We should be able to experience others' sufferings as our own and this needs feeling of oneness and homogeneity with others (Luke 10:29-37; 1 Corinthians 12:26).
- o We should not do evil for evil, but win over evil by doing good in return (Matthew 5:38-45; Luke 6:27-30).



“The Lord is near to
the broken hearted,
and save the
crushed in spirit”
(Ps. 34/18).

When we suffer, we are not alone; Jesus who was crucified also suffers with us. The shortfall in Jesus’ sufferings is being filled up through our sufferings.

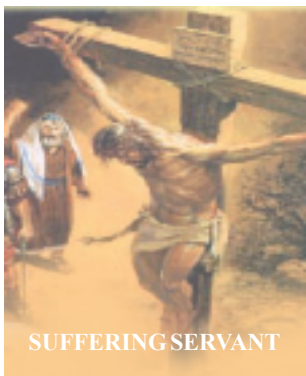
1. We can fulfill the commandment of love by sharing our food, clothes, knowledge, comforts and all such things with the suffering population, by showing compassion to all those who suffer, and by our actions aimed at improvement of their circumstances and environments. Jesus achieved the success of resurrection by passing through the suffering on Good Friday. We can also achieve success in life only through sufferings.

Even when Jesus was misunderstood by rulers, deserted by disciples and subjected to sufferings inflicted by enemies, He had put His dependence on God the Father; and likewise, we should also be able to believe in and rely on God completely without losing heart, when subjected to sufferings.

**Sufferings increase the depth of our love.
We should suffer for others and share the sufferings of others.**

“Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2: 6-11).

Suffering is a part and parcel of human life. It is essential for success in life. Those who achieved success and glory are the ones who tread the paths of suffering. Thorny paths of life should not discourage us. We



should face sufferings with courage. We should encourage and empower those who are suffering. We should also raise our voice for those who are suffering in their fights for justice. We should follow the example of Jesus who suffered for our salvation. When sufferings confront us, we should remember the sufferings Jesus was subjected to. It is a Christian attitude to suffer for others and to share the sufferings of others.



Song



It is for us that Jesus suffered
for saving us from our sin
He welcomed torture, for us
He accepted death, for our salvation
Let us participate in the sorrows of others
Let us extend our hands to wipe their tears
When sufferings line up
Let us confront them boldly
Suffering is the success-way of life
It is the heaven-given saintly path

Discuss



Is suffering a blessing or a curse? Evaluate in the light of the suffering life of Saint Alphonsa.

“Trust in the Lord,
and do good; so you
will live in the land,
and enjoy security”
(Ps. 37/3).



Find out answers



1. What do you understand by the term “a land flowing honey and milk”?
2. What kind of a Messiah did Jews expect?
3. How did Jesus share in the sufferings of others?
4. What should we do when sufferings confront us in our lives?
5. What message is given to us through Jesus’ prayer at the garden of Gethsemane?

Let us Memorize



Jesus is calling us to build a world of love through sufferings.

Let us remember the scripture



“I gave my back to those who struck me and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting” (Isaiah 50:6).

Let us pray

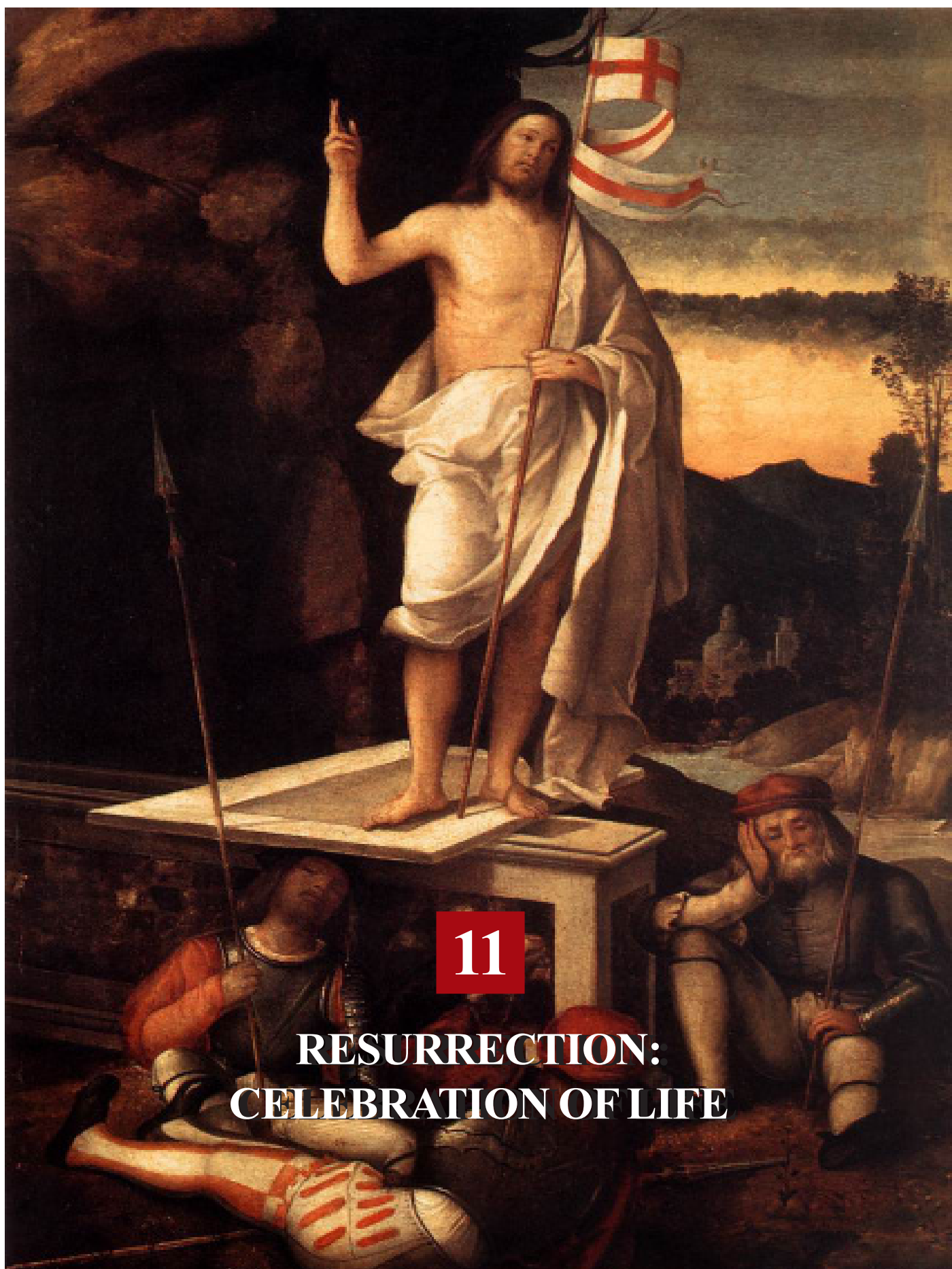


Father, bless us with grace so that we may pray for those who inflict pain on us and may accept with pleasure the sufferings that may come to our lives.

Activity

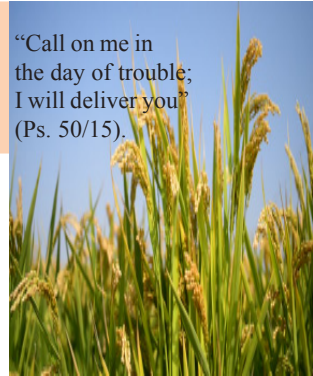


Collect biographies of saints who followed Jesus’ sufferings in their lives.



11

**RESURRECTION:
CELEBRATION OF LIFE**



“Call on me in
the day of trouble;
I will deliver you”
(Ps. 50/15).

Jesus proclamation of God’s Kingdom led Him to suffering and death. His enemies hoped that by eliminating Him, the teachings He had propagated will also disappear. Jesus defeated His enemy, that is death, through His own death and resurrection. Thus he established supremacy over death.

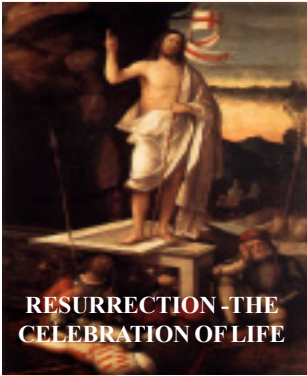
That death is not the end word in relation of life, but an opening to a new life, was shown to the world through Jesus’ resurrection. The wide door to life after death in the Kingdom of God was kept open by His resurrection.

**We do not have to be afraid of death and the dead.
Death is the door opening to eternal life.**

The central point of Christian belief is that all people will resurrect on the last day, just like Jesus had resurrected (John 6:39-40; 5:29). The Holy Bible teaches us that by the power of Jesus’ resurrection those who have done good will rise from dead for eternal life and those who have done evil will come out of their tombs, for their final judgment (Luke 24:34; Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:44).

Jesus’ kiss

“The first kiss that Jesus placed in my spirit was sweet beyond description! That was a kiss of love. It made me feel that He loves me. I replied like this: “I love you; I surrender myself to you forever.” We did not demand anything from each other. There was neither struggle nor, any tension. Jesus and this poor Kochu Thresia had been seeing and understanding each other for long. That day it was not just looking at each other; Kochu Thresia disappeared as though she felt like a drop of water in the great oceans. What remained was just Jesus. He was Guru (Master) and King.” *(Saint Terese of Child Jesus in her book on her first partaking of Holy Communion) .*



The Joy of Resurrection



Jesus' death plunged His disciples and followers in endless grief. Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, some of the women who had followed Him from Galilee came to Jesus' tomb carrying scent. They saw that the stone door of the tomb was moved away. On entering the tomb, they did not see Jesus' body there. The angels who appeared there, proclaimed to them the good news that Jesus had risen from the dead.

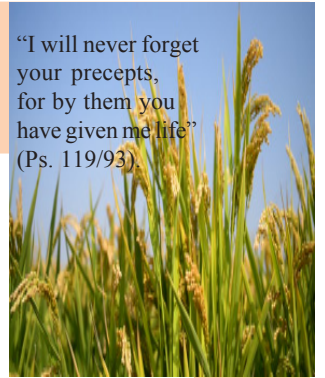
"Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again'" (Luke 24: 5-7).

Eternal abode, Purgatory, Heavenly Jerusalem, being before the throne of God etc. are the terms seen in the Scriptures indicating heaven and life in heaven. Those who are blessed by the grace of God, that is those who are fully purified, will get the opportunity to live eternally with Christ and to see the face of Triune God. Heavenly bliss, therefore, is the opportunity to live with glorified Christ and to participate in the life of the Triune God.

Jesus' resurrection was enough to turn upside down the calculations and thoughts of human beings. Resurrection is the beginning of new life; the beginning of a life without death. It is an invitation to erect God's tent along with human's (Revelation 21: 3).

Resurrection is
the end of seeing people as trees and the beginning of the
opening of eyes for seeing people as human beings (Mark 8: 22-26).

"I will never forget
your precepts,
for by them you
have given me life"
(Ps. 119/93).



Jesus' resurrection is the exhortation to every believer to bring about a new heaven and a new earth in this world.

Results of Resurrection



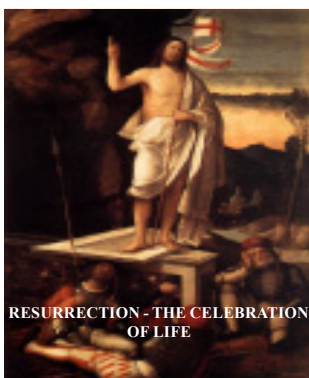
Through resurrection Jesus reinstated humans, who became subjected to eternal death due to his first sin, to the state of children of God. He reinstated not only those who are living, but those just ones also who had passed away before Him (CCC 633).

Those who had been shattered by Jesus' death were brought together by His resurrection. The disciples who were living in utter fear of Jews became filled with courage and power at the sight of Risen Jesus. They came back into the experience of communion.

**We should pray for the dead.
The dead as well as the living should
participate in the happiness
of Jesus' resurrection.**

The experience of the disciples who travelled to Emmaus is significant. The two disciples of Jesus had started their journey to Emmaus in despair and grief. But Jesus, who had joined them half way, explained the Scriptures to them. Later, when He broke bread with them, their eyes were opened. The feeling of despair and disappointment that had gripped their minds disappeared. Thus, Jesus' resurrection made them heirs of new life.

The Risen Jesus appeared to the disciples many times and encouraged them. He entrusted them with the responsibility to go all over the world and preach His Gospel.



“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16).

The experience of resurrection inspired the disciples to go over to the ends of the earth and to preach the Kingdom of God.

The Risen Jesus is always with us.
His presence gives us
power and courage.

For forty days after resurrection Jesus was with the disciples. He ascended to heaven in the presence of disciples on the fortieth day.

Experience of Resurrection in Our Life to Come

Just as Jesus' resurrection gave courage and hope to the disciples, it gives us also courage and hope. The experience of resurrection will get fulfilled in us when we, our families, our parishes and all our Basic Christian Communities rise up and achieve integral growth. We also resurrect along with Jesus.

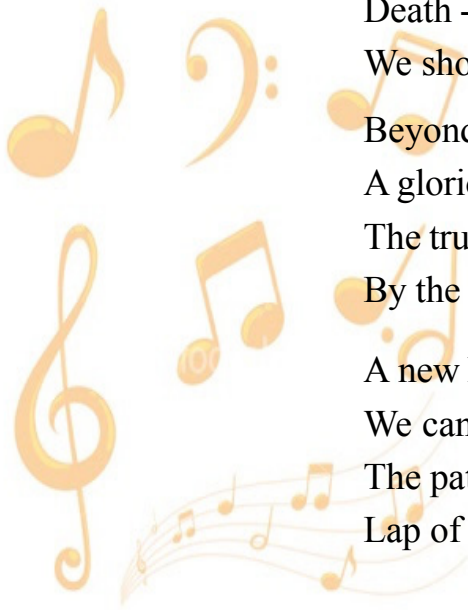
The experience of resurrection will be felt when we anoint those who are lifeless in society with oil and awaken them. Where there is love, there is no darkness. The light of resurrection should spread to all around through our love for one another.

Those who rush with the light of faith early in the morning into darkness, before darkness is removed, receive the experience of resurrection. Resurrected Jesus is the source of new life. By baptism, we become partners in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Resurrection is the foundation of our faith in life after death.

“How very good
and pleasant it is
when kindred live
together in unity!”
(Ps. 133/1).



Song



The last word of life is not death
It is not the falling of the curtain
Death - the golden gate to a new life
We should place our hope in
Beyond death awaits
A glorious heaven
The true and eternal place entered
By the resurrected great Jesus
A new heaven and a new world
We can see beyond death
The path that leads us into the
Lap of God the Father in heaven

Discuss

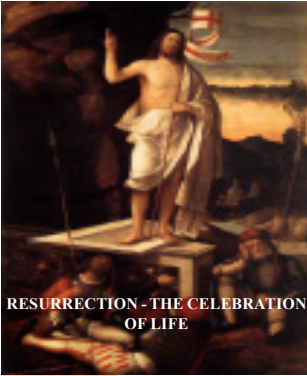


What can you do to give the experience of Jesus' resurrection to those who are living without love for each other?

Find answers to:



1. What did Jesus show to the world by and through his resurrection?
2. What did the women who reached the tomb see?
3. What experience did the disciples who travelled to Emmaus get?
4. When can we become partners in Jesus' death and resurrection?



Let us memorize

Death is not the last word of life. It is the door opening into new life.

Let us remember scripture

“Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven” (Luke 24: 51).

Let us pray

God, you taught us through the resurrection of Jesus that death is the door opening into new life. Open our eyes so that we may see people as human beings.

Presentation

Present in the class room, a skit depicting Jesus’ resurrection and the experience felt by the women who reached the tomb.

12

CHRIST LIVES EVEN TODAY





Jesus' love for us does not end with His death. On the other hand, it gets complemented to the fullest by His resurrection. Jesus said:

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.
In a little while the world will no longer see me,
but you will see me; because I live, you also will
live. On that day you will know that I am in my father,
and you in me, and I in you” (John 14:18-20).

Jesus' sufferings, death and resurrection are signs of
His love for us.

Christ living in the Church

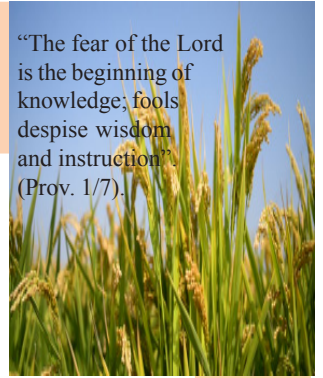


Historically, the Church is continuation of Christ. Church is the lamp lighted on hill top in order to spread the Kingdom of God in this world (Matthew 5:14-16). Not only that Church functions as the leaven used to leaven the world (Matthew 13:31-33), and also as salt which renders good taste to and preservation of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16).

“That which is in the world or the world itself
Is not more beautiful than Christ.
When He appeared like the sun
stars lost their sheen” (Rosanov).

“Neither do I desire to be a philosopher opposing Paul, nor do I want to be an Aristotle defying Jesus, because nothing can save me under the heavens other than the name of Jesus” (*Abelard*).

“The fear of the Lord
is the beginning of
knowledge; fools
despise wisdom
and instruction.”
(Prov. 1/7).



Church is the continuation of Christ.
Church is guided by the Holy Spirit.
We, who are members of the Church, should
love the Church and obey the teachings that
Church imparts.

Christ living in scripture



We can know Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the Father, through the Holy Scriptures. Jesus, the Word, who was in the beginning with God (John 1:2) reveals Himself even today through the Holy Scriptures.

When we read the Word, Jesus interprets the Scriptures to us through His Holy Spirit, just as he interpreted the Scriptures to Nicodemus and the disciples travelling to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-27; John 3:1-21).

Were not our hearts burning within us while he was
talking to us on the road,
while he was opening the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:32).
Jesus speaks to us even today through the Word of God.
We should read God’s Word, understand it and lead our lives
accordingly.

“Had I lived in Palestine, in the days of Jesus of Nazareth, I
would have washed His feet, not with my tears, but with my heart’s
blood.”

(Vivekananda)

“The example of Jesus’ suffering is a factor in the composition
of my undying faith in nonviolence, which rules all my actions worldly
and temporal.”

(Mahatma Gandhi)



Christ Lives in Communion



Just like in the Early Church, Jesus lives even today in communities that live by the teachings of the Apostles, communion, breaking of bread and prayer (Acts 2:42).

All the good qualities of human beings were visibly incarnated in Jesus. Jesus Christ is the never ending source from which humans' thirst for knowing the meaning and purpose of life can be quenched. He showed a bright path for humans who grope in darkness to reach the right path. The Kingdom of Christ is one of love and togetherness. It will last, influencing the hearts of humankind, till the end of the world. (K.P. Kesava Menon)

The empire that will not be destroyed

“Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne
And I have founded Empires;
But on what did we rest
The creations for our genius?
Upon force!
Jesus Christ founded
His Empire upon love;
And at this hour
Millions of men
Would die for him”

Napoleon Bonaparte

"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it" (Prov. 3/27).

Christ Lives in Sacraments



Even today, Jesus' preaching of the Kingdom of God continues through sacraments:

Baptism

Those of us who have received baptism are empowered to suffer for the Kingdom of God and to resurrect with Jesus. Thus, through us, Jesus continues the proclamation of the kingdom of God even today. He included among those who are saved and those who are to be saved.

Confirmation

Through the Sacrament of Confirmation Jesus empowers us by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Kingdom of God. Thus he lives among us even today.

Holy Eucharist

Jesus gives us His body and blood through the Holy Eucharist. This Sacrament enables us to share our lives with others. In that way Jesus lives among us.

Reconciliation (Confession)

Through reconciliation Jesus saves us from sin and invites us into the love of God, the Father. Through this Sacrament, Jesus further gives us the ability to live in the Kingdom of God.

Marriage

Through the Sacrament of Marriage, Christ prepares us to give birth to followers for Christ and to live the holy and faithful covenant between God and His people.



Priesthood

Jesus, who lives even today through priesthood, forsakes everything for the sake of the Kingdom of God, and instills life in us (Mark 10:45).

We experience the love and presence of Jesus through the sacraments. We should regularly receive sacraments, especially Holy Communion and Confession and accept God's blessings and His free gifts.

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

When we justly fight for preservation of human rights Jesus lives among us (Matthew 5: 6). In our goodness and acts of compassion to others Christ lives among us.

“God is love. He who does not love does not know God” (1 John 4:8). Only when we love others,
we become children of God.

We should not exclude any one from our love.

Circumstances in which we meet Christ



Those who are hungry, those who are thirsty, the foreigner, the naked, those who are afflicted by ailments, those who are in jail, the destitute on the road-side ...

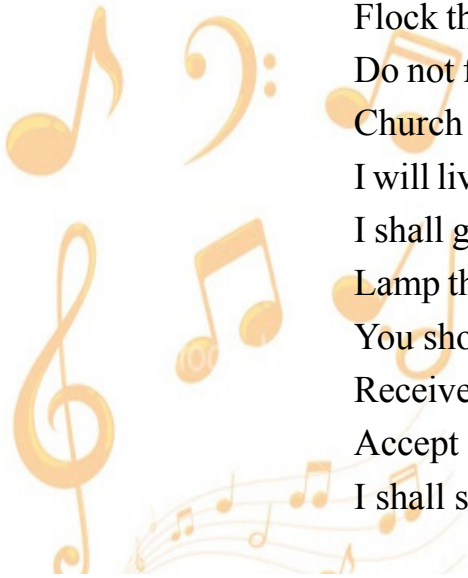
“In as much as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:40).

Each and every person we meet
is the image of Jesus.

“Keep your father’s commandment, and do not forsake your mother’s teaching” (Prov. 6/20).



Song



Till the end of the world, I
Shall be with you
Flock that is small,
Do not fear at all
Church is My true image
I will live in it for ever
I shall guide you as if
Lamp that is lighted on hill top
You should live as per the Word
Receive energy/ enthusiasm
Accept sacraments
I shall support you for ever

Discuss



The occasions we realize that Christ lives among us.

Find out Answers



1. What is Holy Church?
2. How many sacraments are there? Which are they?
3. How does Jesus reveal Himself to us?
4. How does Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of God take place eventoday?

Let us Memorize



Church is the lamp lighted on the hill top to share the Kingdom of God to the world.



Let us remember the scripture



“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

Let us Pray



Loving God, bless us with your grace especially to see Jesus' image in those who are hungry, suffering various diseases and destitute lying on road-sides and to help them appropriately.

Action



Give at least one meal to the destitute lying on road-sides, and to those in hospitals having no one to attend to them.

Saint John Maria Vianney

This remarkable saint, whom the Church upholds as the model and patron of the Diocesan Clergy, was born on May 8, 1786, in the fanatically anti-clerical and irreligious age of the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte. The 4th of six children of devout parents living in the south-eastern part of France, Jean Baptist Marie grew up on an unlettered farmland and at 13 made his First Communion secretly in a farm shed while others unloaded hay to avert suspicion. Due to



lake of primary education, he encountered great difficulties in his studies for the priesthood and only his sterling character and spiritual depth, backed by the special intercession of his Pastor, finally procured for him his ordination in 1815.

Assigning him to the obscure little village of Ars near Lyons, the Vicar General told him: “There is not much love of God in that parish. You will enkindle it!” In fact, the villagers and farmers were living in a state of great spiritual and moral neglect, addicted to drink and an inordinate craze for dancing.

John Vianney set about working quietly among the poor and sick of the parish, and passed many hours a day before the Blessed Sacrament, pleading for the conversion of his flock. For the remaining 40 years of his life he also subjected his body to bloody flagellations and served austerities of every kind in a spirit of penance and expiation on their behalf. He preached in simple language using imagery from everyday life. For the most destitute girls he opened an orphanage, “La Providence”, which was later turned into a school and widely copied all over France. A Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament was also started.

The chief and most successful labour of the “Cure d’ Ars” was the spiritual direction of souls in the confessional, where (stiflingly hot in summer and freezing cold in winter) he regularly spent 14 to 18 hours daily. He soon became known for his ability to read people’s hearts, had supernatural knowledge of unconfessed sins and of things to come, and for his prayers that miraculously healed the sick. Not only was the village of Ars transformed morally and spiritually within a few years, but people started coming to him from all parts of Europe and even America with their problems. “Those who are guided by the Holy Spirit can see things,” the Saint once declared, “and that is why so many ignorant people are more knowing than the wise!” Five extra bus lines had to be introduced and a special ticket window opened in the Lyons railway station for pilgrims to Ars, whose number in 20 years, consisting of the well, the sick, and the afflicted, among them Cardinals and Bishops (usually incognito), besides Priests, religious and lay people from every conceivable walk of life, totaled over 2 million! To care for them all, the Cure was dispensed by his Bishop from attending the annual Priests’ retreats. John Vianney was all zeal and amiability, endless patience and humility; yet, humanly speaking,

the scant food and sleep he permitted himself all through the 40 years of his ministry were entirely insufficient to sustain life. Besides, as witnessed by the villagers, he was for years also tormented by diabolical manifestations. Toward the end of his life he was made honorary Canon of Lyons, and the French government honoured him with a knighthood of the Legion of Honour, though of course he cared nothing for such accolades. He died on 4 August 1859 and was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1925.