



*“They are trees planted by streams of water; they bear fruit; their leaves do not wither; in all that they do they prosper.” Ps 1:3*

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**The Theme for 2012: “FRUIT-BEARING DISCIPLE.” Jn 15:8**

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### ENLIGHTENMENT

As dawn was breaking, the sky was awash with light. Nature came back to life. Birds chirping, squirrels scurrying down the trees and the falling of the rain - it was all a beautiful spectacle, a rare sight in a concrete jungle like Mumbai.

I was on vacation and had plenty of time at my disposal (in spite of a drawn out schedule). It gave me a break, to relax, to pause and think - how beautiful God has created

the world! Yet how many of us have the time “to stand and stare” at nature, at the world around. In the surrounding mayhem, we are all caught up for lack of time, busy at work and all that life throws at us.

**In Mathew 11: 28-30, Jesus says "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find**

**rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."**

How true and still some of us are so unwise? We toil so hard to make both ends meet and then again, to have more. The more we have, the more we want. There is no limit. In the end, we are tired, unsatisfied and happiness eludes us. But, Jesus shows us the answer. When we go to Him, He calls us to surrender - our dreams and our aspirations. When we do it, surprisingly, our life's journey becomes easy. He gives us rest. No longer have we to carry the burden of worries, tensions, anxieties, but He carries it all for us.

Our mind becomes free - no longer clogged and confused. Our thinking becomes vivid and crystal clear. When our thinking is right, we have right feelings, which produce right behaviour. Often happiness comes in small packages. When we give, we receive joy, much more, than the person receiving the gift. When we forgive, we are released of all the pain and hurt. And when we show love, especially in the family, we experience life, full of abundance.

It is amazing as to how I saw new light coming to me. What I mentioned above, I experienced in my own life. God's Word always enlightens us, it enlightened me too. When I experienced this, strengthened by His Grace, I surrendered everything to the Lord - my life, family, business, employees, projects - **Total Surrender**. Life is never the same again. It transformed and changed for the better. There came peace - a peace I could not and cannot understand, but only experience.

I emptied my life of all tensions, worries, indecisions and gave it to the Lord. It set my life free and on the road to liberation. My mind opened up to take the right decisions. I am involved in too many things - business, family, church. In the natural way of things, I should have been most stressed. No, I have no stress at all now but peace. This does not mean there are no problems. Problems do come and will continue, but they are no longer problems because I surrender them to the Lord. I know and I believe that when I surrender, He will act. And He is true to His Word. He

acts without fail. Repeated surrender has made me walk on the sea of tranquility.

Once we are enlightened by His Word, we will long to surrender ourselves to the Lord. When this is done, we will not like to go away from the way He shows us because He is the only Way that takes us to our goal. In **John 14: 6** Jesus says, “**I am the Way, the Truth and the Life**”. After surrendering, we walk the ‘Way’. It is the way of the Cross. To reach God, after giving our lives totally to Him, we need not worry, for the Lord is with us and He will take us to the eternal shore. Jesus is the ‘Truth’ because by coming to this world He shows that God is faithful to His promises. He teaches the truth about who God is and tells us that true worship must be "in spirit and truth". He is ‘Life’ because from all eternity He has divine life with His Father. And through grace, He makes us part-takers in that divine life.

May we always have the burning desire to walk in the light of God’s Holy Word so that we continue to walk with this enlightenment and inspire everyone to do the same.

- *Lawrence Lobo*

### **TESTIMONY**

**Mathew 16:17** says, “**For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.**”

Whatever I write here is to only glorify Jesus and not myself at all. On Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, I was admitted in the hospital on account of jaundice. In the hospital, I was put on drips as I was not eating anything. My sister stayed with me in hospital. When my parents came to know about this, my dad told my mom to take the next flight itself to Mangalore. My mom and little brother packed their stuff and they took a risk and bought tickets hoping they could board the flight on Sunday itself. I knew that once my mom would be there, everything would be alright because she would take care of me. And I could play with my little brother, which would help me a lot in my illness.

I was in the hospital for a week. Everyone was scared, the reason being that I had already had jaundice when I was 5 years old. And we all thought jaundice comes once only. So if it comes again, then it is serious. I was hoping that it would be Hepatitis A and not Hepatitis B or C, as these are more dangerous than Hepatitis A. In the hospital, the doctors found out that my bilirubin had extremely high counts, and confirmed that I had Hepatitis A. There came the bombshell! They told me I was supposed to be on a strict diet which meant no non-vegetarian food, oily food, cheese, fried food, etc. Basically, whatever I loved to eat was now a big NO. I had to do this for at least six months.

After a week, I was discharged and taken to my friend's house in Mangalore to stay there, as I used to stay in my college hostel and that would not be a good option, as home food was a must for me. At home, the first month was the most difficult month. Since I was a die-hard non-vegetarian, it was so difficult for me to eat vegetarian food. I was also told that I could not go to college for at least one month. I was shocked at this; the reason being that I loved nothing more than my college and hostel, where I was doing my MBA degree. I had best friends and excellent rapport with teachers and I used to take part in almost all the college activities. I could not take this anymore and I questioned "Jesus, where are you? Why did you do this to me? There are people in my college who hate college and bunk classes and yet among all of them, I who loves college the most, am struck with jaundice. If at all it was your plan that I be struck with jaundice then could you not have waited for another two months and by that time I would be done by college?" I was filled with anger because I was in my Final Year and that was my last month in college before my final exams. I did not want to miss the last month of college. Another concern was that in June, my final exams were taking place and right from childhood, whenever I have studied, I have walked and studied, instead of sitting at one place. Now I did not have any strength in me and I was all the time on the bed. I thought this time 'just pass' marks would be enough.

I was angry everyday with Jesus but I also knew that **I am a youth for Christ and His ways are mysterious**. So every night before sleeping, I would tell God "Please make me accept this illness". And slowly, by His

grace, I started accepting it. Now, when you accept God's plan in your life, the Holy Spirit makes you realize many things. I started thanking God for this illness and in the process I realized things which I did not look at before. I realized that my sister would spend every night in the hospital taking care of me. I realized God made it possible for my mom to come to Mangalore immediately which would not be possible otherwise. My brother was there to make me happy. And dad and all my friends in Muscat were praying for me. I realized that in my two years of college life, I took part in all the opportunities in college and in this last month not much was there to do. I realized that I was so blessed to have home food and my friend's house to stay, so that I could be looked after well. God also made it possible for me to attend my farewell, which I thought I would not make it as I did not have any strength, but he gave me the strength at that time to attend it. The biggest blessing was that when final exams came, he gave me the strength to study every day and that too, in my way i.e. *walking and studying*. Also when I went to the doctor, I came to know that my jaundice count had reduced to a great extent.

Last month my results came out and I achieved a Distinction in my final exams. Today, I see that my jaundice was an illness given by God so that I could realize His love for me in my times of pain. Given another chance, to go through jaundice, in Jesus' name I would willingly go through it, as I know the joy of the Lord will make it worth. **ALL PRAISE AND GLORY BE TO MY JESUS!**

- *Lanston Pinto*

### **THE LORD IS OUR PROTECTOR**

A few weeks after our return from our annual leave, we met up with our neighbour living on the same floor. After a few niceties and inquiring about each other's families, our neighbour threw us a shocker. He is a married bachelor so to speak, his family being in India who visit him off and on during the vacations. So working in Rusayl, he leaves his home in the mornings and only returns home late evenings. This has been his routine for many years without any particular incident. However, one day while we were on leave, he came home to find his home broken into .....door

forced opened and the bedroom doors that he also has a habit of locking, broken down. The wardrobes were forced open and the thieves helped themselves with whatever they wanted. Their preference was mainly small but expensive items like gold, cash, mobile phones (which he liked collecting) and a laptop. The bigger items were left alone. We were shocked and while he was talking, our minds were racing, it could have been our house too, as we were away and they could have had a field day taking even the bigger items with ease, yet it was left untouched!

When we were discussing the event later at home, we realized that Our great and mighty God was in control and protected our home. He must have blinded the thieves or muddled their minds into ignoring our home. There were a lot of give-aways, that we were out for a long time, as there was a collection of flyers and papers around our entrance and dust in the corridor. We thanked God for his protection over our home, and he is ever faithful to his promises. Before we left, even though in a rush, we prayed for our protection and the house we were leaving. As we poured the Lord's precious blood over us, our baggage and our transport, we also covered our home and left it in the protection of Our beloved Lord and his Mother. We also asked St. Michael, his Angels and the Saints to protect our house. And of course, we have a cross on our door, a picture of the Divine Mercy of Jesus, on the inside of our door-post and crucifixes in every room.....so our house is filled with blessed sacramentals which I believe, are instrumental in protecting our house. I recollect the story, of God telling Moses to put the blood of the lamb on their door-post which would protect and save the Israelites, and then again, God told Ezekiel in 9:4-5 "to put the mark on the forehead of everyone who is distressed and troubled because of all the disgusting things being done in the city.....but don't touch anyone who has the mark on his forehead."

I thank God for giving us His precious blood, his sign - the cross and the sacramentals, which protect and save us. We can truly say with confidence, **God is our Protector.**

- *Charmaine D'Souza*

## **WINDOW TO THE PAST WEEKS!**

**July 4, 2012 - Bro. Philip Balfour**

### **Forgiveness I**

The main hallmark of a Christian is to forgive unconditionally. Human as we are, it is very difficult to forgive but with the grace of God, it is not impossible. When God sees the sincere effort in our hearts to forgive, He gives us His grace through the Holy Spirit.

Take the story of E.G. Frank & Elizabeth Morris in 1982 - just two days before Christmas, their 24 year old only son, Ted, was killed by a young drunken driver named Tommy. Tommy was given probation because of his age. Elizabeth was very angry and many times, she planned to kill Tommy by running him over with her car. But as time passed by, Frank & Elizabeth were able to forgive Tommy and this lead him to Jesus.

Terry Anderson, a US reporter was held hostage in Lebanon for seven years under inhuman conditions. The only consolation he had was a Bible. When he was back home after his release 1991, he was asked many questions, but one question that made him witness for Jesus was, "Can you forgive your captors?" He remembered **Mt.5:43-44** and without hesitation replied, "Yes, as a Christian I am required to forgive no matter how hard it may be."

Yes, each one of us has to forgive no matter how hard it is because it will prove that we love God and, Jesus is the Lord of our lives.

**July 11, 2012- Bro. Renato Gomes**

### **Forgiveness II**

When God created the human race on this earth, He created it so that we live in peace and harmony and not forgetting Holiness.

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, Jesus gave them the Lord's Prayer in which **Forgiveness** is the main theme, which we pray most of the time in our life. **Forgiveness is the key to live in peace and harmony.** Jesus taught and demonstrated the same on the cross. Forgiveness is not one time but it is a continuous process- constant/always -24 x 7 (**Mt 18:21-22**). Forgiveness is not lip service but from the heart (**Mt.18:35**). God is not interested in our gifts and sacrifices if our heart is full of bitterness "First reconcile with your fellow brothers and then offer your gifts and sacrifices" (**Mt.5: 23,24**) "Don't let the sun go down on your wrath". Forgiveness is the key for God's mercy and love. It releases God's power in any situation- no matter how great and severe is the sickness or problem. Forgiveness breaks down all the barriers for God's grace and power to flow in us.

Sharing ended with the personal testimony how God worked in his own life and set him free from such a great problem, only after from his heart he forgave his friend, who had created havoc in his life.

**July 18, 2012 – Bro. Xavier**

### **Forgiveness within the Family**

Continuing with the previous weeks sharing on Forgiveness by Bro. Renato, Bro Xavier focused his thoughts on forgiveness within the family i.e. between husband & wife, parents & children, brothers & sisters.

In **Mt. 18:21-22**, we are asked to forgive 70 X 7. Does that mean that having forgiven 490 times, can we then choose to be unforgiving? Is 70 X 7 the maximum limit set to? He explained that in the spiritual sense it means forgiveness is without limits. It demands of us to pull ourselves out of the natural to the supernatural, and forgive unceasingly. Speaking on how a marriage should be successful, he said, it has to be a perfect blend of harmony and forgiveness between the spouses. Forgiveness has to begin at home between the spouses, which the children in turn will learn to follow among themselves.

He further stressed the need of daily personal prayer and reading of the



word of God as the absolute necessity for a family to be happy. In times of trials and tensions and disagreements in the family, family prayers and the knowledge of the Word of God would help to build an attitude of forgiveness and this in turn would help to overcome all problems. With examples of personalities like Blessed Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II, Missionary Gladys Staines, all people of our times, he helped us to understand the great value of forgiveness.

## **July 25, 2012 – Bro. Keith**

### **Repentance**

Brother Keith Netto lead the whole community in a vibrant session of Praise & Worship on July 25th.

The whole session was based on the theme of REPENTANCE, making each one of us to look into ourselves and examine our hearts so that we can truly know for ourselves how very important REPENTANCE is for each one of us in this life. The whole session was very Spirit filled and one could feel the Lord's presence speaking to one's heart during worship.

## **Aug 1, 2012 – Bro. Godfrey**

### **Forgiveness & Inner Healing I**

Br. Mario led us into an uplifting and powerful time of Praise & Worship, which set the foundation for Br. Godfrey to share on “Forgiveness of Others”.

Emphasis was laid on the fact that Forgiveness is a choice we have to make constantly. If we ask God to forgive us then we too should forgive our brethren. Forgiveness is something we do for ourselves, as we are the beneficiaries (Mt. 6:14-15). The world talks of revenge that leads to unrest, resentment and bitterness. God teaches us the way of love and forgiveness and is likened to a windshield wiper wiping away the rain of sin.

Br. Godfrey stressed that our forgiveness should be genuine, as God knows our heart and thoughts. The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (**Mt.18: 23-35**) was given a new dimension when we were reminded that as we have been forgiven an enormous and un-repayable debt by Jesus, we too should forgive others for offences or hurts that are miniscule in comparison. Control of our thoughts, words and actions will help us to forgive others. Let us not look at the speck in our brother's eye but recognize that in trying to walk with the plank in our own eye, we will fall and get hurt badly. Forgiveness draws out the poison that has the capacity to destroy us and affect those around us. Once we forgive, we can recall the hurt but we will not relive the hurt.

We were exhorted to read the Bible as it has many stories on forgiveness. Joseph is an example we can learn from, as his forgiveness of his brothers took him to great heights in the King's palace.

Br. Godfrey concluded by asking us to challenge ourselves during the week by fasting and praying and making an attempt with God's help, to offer genuine forgiveness.

**Aug 8, 2012 – Bro. Godfrey**

### **Forgiveness & Inner Healing II**

After a series of sharings on Forgiveness, Brothers Philip & Godfrey led the community into a session of healing. Unforgiveness is likened to a cancer that spreads and destroys. We were asked to forgive and accept ourselves as God's special creation.

Other areas that were prayed for seeking forgiveness were for Mother, Father, Spouse, Children, In-Laws, Church Leader, Co-workers, Neighbours, Employers, Colleagues, School Teachers, Friends and Professionals. The Holy Spirit used our brothers to touch our heart by bringing to mind situations and incidences where we were holding on to un-forgiveness. The release of hurts was evident as all left with their faces all aglow.

**Aug 22, 2012 - Bro. Freddy**

### **Call to Discipleship**

Jesus is not calling us to become better Christians or just follow Him for a while. Jesus is calling everyone to become His disciples. Mathew is the best example in the Bible. He got up and immediately followed Jesus.

God calls everyone to become his disciples. We need to respond wholeheartedly to him. A disciple is one who follows the lifestyle of Jesus, and this can happen when discipleship, ie: evangelizing oneself, takes place. This will help us to make Jesus the Lord of our lives for the rest of our lives.

To put all this into a nutshell; God calls everyone to become his disciples and we need to respond wholeheartedly to Him.

A Disciple is one who has **JOY**

**J = JESUS FIRST**

**O = OTHERS NEXT**

**Y = YOURSELF LAST**

For a disciple Jesus should always come first. Nothing else should take that place. **Mt 6:33** says, “Seek first the kingdom of God others should come second”. Christianity is others centred. We should be prepared to reach out to others and then yourself last.

**Aug 29, 2012 – Fr. Raul**

### **Talk on Faith / Prayer**

After a brief prelude by Bro Louis Ryan, Fr. Raul shared his thoughts, about an average Christian who always prays for a happy and peaceful death, unlike the apostles, who died a martyrs’ death. The first century Christians were crucified, burnt alive, thrown to hungry lions and were made to fight with gladiators for their faith. They valued their faith in Jesus Christ more than their lives.

Fr. Raul also stressed, that our prayers and good deeds may not be answered, the way we expect them to be. For example, one may pray for good health, and after sincere and prolonged prayers, he may end up with more dreadful disease. Our Lord Jesus is unpredictable, **“His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts”** He may choose to use anyone or anything for the extension of His kingdom and for His glory. The paradox of our faith in Jesus is, our God is loving, forgiving and unpredictable God,

We were encouraged to persevere in prayers, demonstrate unconditional love and frequent the sacraments, with reverence.

**Aug 30, 2012 - Bro. Lawrence Lobo**

### **Night Vigil**

**Romans 12:1** says, “I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” In other words, true worship comes through complete surrender to God.

Surrender is not a popular word. Why? Because, it brings images of admitting defeat in battle, forfeiting a game, or yielding to a stronger opponent, even captured criminals are called to surrender to the authorities.

However, surrendering to God is the Heart of Worship. It is a natural response to God’s amazing love and mercy. Giving unto Him totally not out of fear or duty, but out of love, for it was God that first loved us.

The barriers to Total Surrender are Fear, Pride & Confusion.

Surrender demands a trust on the person and one cannot trust unless you know the person. You develop a fear of uncertainty. But God has proved that we can trust him even while we were sinners. God loved us first by sending His Son to die for us. Pride does not allow us to accept that we are mere creatures and not in charge of everything. The tendency to act as

though we are in total control is a refusal to surrender unto God and allow him to take charge of our life's struggles.

Confusion is another barrier. A. W. Tozer said, "The reason why many are still in trouble, still seeking, still making little forward progress, is because they have not come to the end of themselves. They are still trying to give orders, and interfering with God's work within us".

Jesus is the supreme example of self-surrender. He surrendered himself totally to God's plan. He prayed, "**Father, everything is possible for you, please take this cup of suffering away from me, but your will be done not mine.**"

In our own lives, genuine surrender would mean saying, "Father, if this problem, sickness, pain or circumstances, is needed to fulfill your purpose and glory in my life or that of another, please do not take it away." When we fully surrender, we experience, peace, freedom and God's power in our lives. God uses those who fully surrender unto him just as he chose Mary to be the Mother of God. Surrender means dying to one's own plans and allowing God's plan to take action. For Jesus said, '**If you want to follow me, then you must forget the things you want and be willing to give up your lives daily and follow me.**'

Today we should ask this question to ourselves: **Are we willing to surrender to God's grace, love and wisdom?**

## **YOUTH TALK**

### **Standing up to Peer Pressure and Choosing your Allegiance**

- Don't let the crowd pressure you, stand up for something or you'll fall for anything!

"If only you will obey me, you will eat of the good things of the land" -  
Isaiah 1:19

Standing up to authority has never been easy, even to divine authority, for that matter. But it so happens that, with the grace of God, just about anything is possible. A couple of days ago, while I attended the First Holy Communion service, I couldn't help but notice a bunch of immaculately dressed eight-nine year olds all eager to receive Jesus in their hearts for the very first time. At this auspicious moment, a thought-provoking question popped into my head: It's been quite some time since the day we claimed the safe receipt of Jesus in our hearts, but actually accepting Him in to our hearts? That is something that clearly didn't happen overnight. It is indeed a daily renewal, a lifetime commitment - accepting Jesus' undeniable yet unfathomable presence in our lives, shouldn't, therefore, be misconstrued as succumbing to the tenets of a religion, but rather understood as the surrendering to His will.

Needless to say, we youth of today, face larger and far more serious issues of peer pressure than our ancestors ever did. And hence we are right to assume that they can never fully understand the weight of our issues.

Peer pressure, in my opinion, occurs when we fail to live up to God's standards and look for lower "human" standards to satisfy ourselves. True enough, God's standards are so high that he equates hatred to murder and lust to adultery! Yet in **Romans 12:2**, Paul instructs us not to be conformed to this world. In addition to this **1 John 2:15-17** also tells us to "not love our Father over worldly things, because the latter shall pass away but those who submit to God shall live forever".

The saddest part is that the worst form of peer pressure is when we are not ready to accept that we are victims of the same. It so happens that we realize the seriousness of it only when we are looking at in the face. All sorts of addictions are linked to peer pressure - we succumb to these only because we seek greater comfort in human intentions rather than in divine authority. True enough, our culture presents itself today, as a powerful narcotic, but stronger are the youth who learn how to stay principled. It all just depends on who we are ready to pledge our allegiance to, and how we do so!

The Old Testament is a wonderful witness to cases when man favored human will to God's authority. Such as when Adam ate the forbidden fruit, Jonah refused to prophesy to the people of Nineveh; and when the Israelites brought out of slavery from Egypt were denied entry to the Promised Land. God has in fact, promised us in **2 Peter 2: 9-10** that, "He shall rescue His people from trials and punish the wicked, for the Day of Judgment especially those who follow their filthy bodily lusts and despise God's authority". This is indeed why the Ten Commandments given to Moses are still very much relevant to us even today.

So with sheer faith, we can choose what to let peer pressure do to us. We can turn these negative influences around or simply run away from them (**1 Cor 5:11**). After all, the first step to winning the battle is to recognize the enemy. The more you're worn out, the more Satan tempts you. Temptation to give in to peer pressure can happen to anyone and everyone - even the most level-headed of us, and that too, in the least expected form.

But when we keep Christ in control, rather than surrender to present adolescent traditions, we learn to think for ourselves in newer and more complete ways. In other words, we learn how to prioritize our actions and display raw courage that we had previously assumed we weren't capable of.

Peer pressure comes in the way of our call to Christ; and hence it is imperative not to let it master us; and seek only His approval. Our earthly life is too short to be ravaged by such influences! They can stain us like ink does to white paper. The only way - is to keep on guard and pray it out - a prayer to God to keep us strong while we are in moments of weakness; or when we have already fallen; a prayer to keep Him in the first place, so that everything else falls in place. And a prayer to transform ourselves from fawning yes-men to dedicated fruit-bearing disciples.

- *Melanie Philomena D'Souza*



**PRAY THE 6.30 AM CALL**



***MIPC Prayer Meeting: Every Wednesday at 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall.  
General Intercessory Meeting: Last Monday of every month at 8:00 pm.  
Community Mass: Every Friday at 9.00 a.m. except the last Friday of the month.***

***\*For Private Circulation Only***

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