



“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

VOL IX – ISSUE 16

JUL-AUG 2014

The Theme for 2014: “LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD” *Deut. 6:5*

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COMPLACENCY – A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

Two persons in love with each other will be ready to do anything for each other, but when they get married the very same thing that they did earlier they refuse to do, because complacency creeps in.

We hear about so much war and violence taking place in the world, but it does not affect us, because we are complacent. Take the case of our prayer group dwindling membership; has it in any way affected us? Each one of us is responsible for this, because we have grown complacent. We believe and sing that familiar hymn.... “It’s you, it’s I, it’s us who build community....”

The greatest danger of a believer in Jesus is to become content with inferior standards than what God wishes for you. The danger is to become

unenthusiastic in living the Christian life. Two symptoms of complacency are as follows:

1. Satisfaction with the way things are.
2. Rejection of things as they might be.

This is so very true of us. We are not only satisfied with the circumstances of our prayer community, but also content with the way we live, move and our relationship with God.

In Genesis, when we read about Jacob & Esau, we always think that Jacob cheated Esau of his blessings, but the actual truth is that Esau lost his blessing, when due to his complacency he sold his birthright for a handful of porridge. He was so complacent that he did not care about God's plan for him. God has a much better plan & purpose for our life and our prayer community. May be, due to our complacency we have lost it. It is never too late to realize and come out of this complacency, knowing that God's Word is a double edged sword. Regarding this, ***Revelation 3:16*** says, "You are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold so I will spit you out of my mouth." He does not want us to be lukewarm (complacent). We must understand that if we continue in our complacency, then like Esau we may also lose our blessings like the liberty to praise & worship him without hindrances.

Let us introspect our life and examine the areas where complacency has crept in. May be, it has crept in our prayer life, or our study of the Word, or even in our prayer meeting - it is highly contagious. But so is Enthusiasm & Zeal for the Lord. So if we all put an end to complacency and replace it instead with Enthusiasm, burning with desire for the Lord, then it is sure to catch on both within and outside our community, thereby leading us all to be able to LOVE the Lord our God, with all our heart, all our soul and with all our mind (***Mt 22:37***) as God wants us to love Him with our entire being, not just in words, but also in action. I hope and pray that God awakens us from our complacency and we start living the life that God wants us to live.

- *The Core Team*

PEACE NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH

Every year January 1st is known as “World Day of Peace” and September 21st is celebrated as “International Peace Day”. Why the concern for peace? What does peace mean? What does the world look for when it asks for peace? More importantly, what does God mean when he offers us His peace? The word Peace, can mean different things to different people and different things to the same person, depending on different circumstances. Life is sometimes difficult.... with physical pain, financial hardships, death of loved one, family members who misunderstand us..... times when we find it difficult to pray.

Today, hardly anyone can say that he or she is not stressed or anxious. In this modern day we are over-connected, over-worked, over-stressed as we constantly live busy lives. It is because we are so busy, we hardly have time to think how our busyness is having an effect on our spiritual lives. Stress and anxiety is the devil’s way of taking us away from God and we lose our peace. At the end of the day, we are checking and replying to messages on our phones and laptops rather than listening or checking out the Bible for messages from God.

When Jesus appeared to his apostles after rising from the dead, He greeted them with the word ‘**Peace**’. After the betrayal, arrest, and execution of Jesus the apostles were terrified and were in great need of peace which could only come from their Master. They had to be reconciled to Him. Jesus was offering them this peace and it was the beginning of a new life for them and for the Church.

Jesus of Nazareth....the Prince of Peace, is the only One who can give us unshakable peace in a world of turmoil. As someone said, “There will never be peace in the individual heart or at the peace tables of the world, until the ‘Prince of Peace’ reigns supreme in the hearts of men.” Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid” (*Jn 14:27*). He also said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (*Mat 11:28*). True peace comes to the

person who is at peace with God, with himself and with others.

What kind of peace does He give those who trust in Him? It is a quiet confidence that, since our sovereign, loving, all-powerful God is in control, we have nothing to fear. Jesus gives us **peace with God** through the forgiveness of sin. He shows us how to have **peace with man** by teaching us how to love others. When He is in control, no situation, heartache or sorrow can ever disturb that peace. Faith in God is all we need, allow Him to be the Captain of your life. Jesus has done everything necessary for us to be friends with God (*Col 1:21-22*), and when we are with true friends there is no anxiety.

St. James tells us, it is our greed which causes war. People fight over property and quarrel with those in authority. We may want peace, shout for it, and work for it, but the best way to obtain peace is to pray for it, as it is a gift from God. When our lives are fully yielded to Jesus and His Will becomes our desire and goal, when He is our security and we do not have to rely on the things of the world for happiness, then we have the Peace that surpasses all understanding. We are surrounded by sin and where there is disunity, quarrels, factions, hatred we cannot enjoy peace. If we do not have a peace within us, how can we hope to pass on peace when we in the MIPC greet each other the “Peace of Christ”.

Our world is very badly in need of peace. There are wars, strife and armed conflicts in many places, there is lack of peace in many homes and families. There is a lack of peace in many hearts. Let us turn to Jesus and plead with him to grant us His peace....a peace beyond all understanding. O Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, grant us that peace. One of our favourite Psalms, is the Lord is my Shepherd (*Ps 23*). If we mean the words of the Psalm, then we should be enjoying peace, but we have so many worries and wrinkles on our forehead. Our faces speak volumesfor from the look on our face, people can tell if we are at peace or otherwise. Is the Lord truly our Shepherd?

We say glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of goodwill. We are all called to be Peacemakers, but we can only be Peacemakers, if

we have God's peace in our hearts. To make this possible, we have to believe that God is in control of our lives and that He works out all things for our good. This is easier said than done, for when we are in the midst of a problem or people refuse to listen to us, there is no peace in our hearts. In fact, there is a burning desire to get even or make them pay for what they have said or done to us. It is easy to be angry, grit our teeth and live in bitterness. However, St. Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord always (*Phil 4:4*)

It is when we are in prayer that there is a deep peace, because in humility we trust God and believe that His guidance will see us through difficult situations. There is a friendship with Jesus and knowledge that He is a true friend. Spending time with the Lord in prayer, every morning, and seeking His face gives us joy, security, peace and the ability to trust Him. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (*Mt 6:33*). Does what we seek, lead to peace?? Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (*Mt 5:9*).

We are on the threshold of the 3rd Gulf Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference, where the theme is **Peace**. Let's pray that we accept the peace of Jesus and that it may spread in our lives, families, homes, Church, and the entire region. "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand" (*Rom 5:1-2*). The theme for the Conference was prophetically chosen more than a year back, and its relevance today is a sign that the Holy Spirit is in control. If we allow Him to have the first place in our life, we can look forward to the **Fruit of Peace**, so that we can share that much desired peace with all those around us, in this troubled and war-torn world.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you PEACE!"

- *Godfrey D'Souza*

HOLINESS

To be holy is to be sacred, to be dedicated, to be set apart for a special / noble purpose - eg. a holy vessel like a chalice is not used for an ordinary purpose.

When God touches our lives and we experience his love, He sets us apart. He says you are my people. (*Eph.1:3*) “Thus He chose us in Christ before the world was made to be holy and faultless before him in love”.

St. Maximilian Kolbe gave a simple formula for becoming a saint, which is W+w = saint. The “W” is God’s will + “w” is our will = sainthood. In everything we need to align our will to the will of the Father to attain holiness. We can ask the help of our Mother Mary and consecrate ourselves to her and ask her for grace to walk in holiness, as she was pure and holy and remained pure and holy.

To remove darkness we need to turn on the light, so in the same way to remove sin, rather than concentrate on the works of the flesh, let us focus on the works of the spirit. *Rom 12:1* says “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice dedicated and acceptable to God.” What I receive through my eyes and ears will either feed my flesh or my spirit. Today the serials that we watch, the movies and advertisements that we see are all feeding the flesh. The more I watch, slowly and subtly, my standards of morals are getting lowered. So often we compromise and think it has a good story line and action, so we are willing to take in the steamy scenes. It is like fishing for something good in a garbage can. What I watch read and hear will all either strengthen my inner spirit or weaken it. This ultimately will lead to action – good or evil. Thus we need to make tough decisions and we can do it with the grace we receive from the Holy Spirit and our Heavenly Mother’s intercession, who is full of grace.

Sex is defined by psychologists as one of the basic needs like food, clothing and shelter, but different in the sense, that it can be abstained from. Since it is a basic need, sexual urges are strong and since as young Christians, they cannot be fulfilled before marriage, very often Satan will

use sex as a powerful tool of temptation. For women, attraction is more through the emotions. Women tend to concentrate more on all the sweet talk which stirs up emotions and are even willing to compromise on character. For boys, they are more attracted by what they see. A beautiful girl provocatively dressed attracts them easily. They become easy prey for pornographic addiction, however, not just boys, but even girls can become prey to it. For e.g. everyone today wants to be a hottie, be it a young lady or a mother. Viewing the wrong movies / pictures can lead to one getting over obsessive about vital statistics. Very often, young girls start over-obsessing about their physical bodies and are dissatisfied at how they look, they succumb to the lies of the enemies, that their life partner will only be satisfied if they have the perfect figure...This leads them to excessive dieting and workout and diseases like bulimia, anorexia, etc. Boys on the other hand can begin to believe lies of the enemy that their life partner must have a perfect figure, look like a Greek goddess and not give importance to godly character or desiring a prudent spouse.

Even in the aspect of sexuality, we can invite the Lord, and make him Lord of our sexuality. The Holy Spirit, along with Mother Mary will give us the grace to stand firm against all temptations and will lead us to a holy life. **(Gal.5:24)** “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.” Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

- *Carmen Fernandes*

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

The Voice of Christ :

“Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you” **(Mt 11:28)**, says the Lord. “The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the World” **(Jn 6:52)**. “Take and eat; this is my body, which shall be given up for you; this do for a remembrance of me” **(1 Cor 11:25)**. “He

who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me, and I in him” (*Jn 6:57*). “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (*Jn 6:64*).

With What Great Reverence Christ Should Be Received :

1. Disciple – These are your words, O Christ, the eternal Truth, though not all said at one time, nor written in one place. Since, therefore, they are yours, and true, they should all be received by me with gratitude and faith. They are yours, and you have spoken them; and they are also mine because you have uttered them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from your mouth, that they may be more indelibly impressed in my heart. Words of such great tenderness, so full of sweetness and love, encourage me; but my own sins frighten me, and my impure conscience holds me back from receiving so great mysteries. The sweetness of your words attracts me, but the large number of my offences, bear me down.

2. You command me to come to you with confidence, if I wish to have part with you; and to receive the food of immortality, if I wish to obtain eternal life and bliss. “Come,” you say to me, “all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (*Mt 11:28*). O sweet and lovable word to the ear of a sinner, that you, O Lord my God, invite the poor and the needy to be the Communion of your most sacred Body! But who am I, O Lord, that I should venture to draw close to you? Behold, Heaven and heavens cannot contain you, and you say, “Come you all to me.”

3. What does this most loving condescension and so friendly invitation mean? How can I dare to approach, who knows that I have done no good on which I can hope? How shall I admit you into my house, I who have so often offended your most benign presence? The Angels and the Archangels stand before you in reverential awe; the Saints and the just tremble; and you say, “Come you all to me.” Except that you, O Lord, did say it, who could believe it to be true? And except that you command it, who could dare try to approach?

4. Behold: Noah, a just man, worked a hundred years to build the ark, in order that he and a few others might save themselves; and how can I, in the

space of one hour, worthily prepare myself to receive with reverence the Creator of the world? Moses, your greater servant and particular friend, built an ark of incorruptible wood, which he also covered with most pure gold, in order to place therein the tables of the law; and shall I, a corrupted creature, dare so easily to receive you, the Maker of the law, and the Giver of life? Solomon, the wisest of the kings of Israel, devoted seven years to building a magnificent temple to the praise of your name. And for eight days he celebrated the feast of the dedication thereof; he offered a thousand victims as peace offerings, and brought the Ark of the Covenant with great solemnity into the place prepared for it, with sound of trumpet and rejoicing. And I, the most unhappy and the vilest among men, how can I admit you into my house, I, who know hardly how to spend one half-hour in devout prayer? And it would be good for me if I had at least once spent less than one half-hour as I ought!

5. O my God, how much they tried to please you in all they did! Alas! How little it is that I do! How brief a time I spend in preparing myself to receive Holy Communion, being rarely entirely recollected; very rarely free from all distraction! And yet in the salutary presence of your Divinity, no improper thought should occur, nor anything created occupy my mind; for it is not an Angel, but the Lord of Angels whom I am about to entertain.

6. There is, furthermore, a very great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with its relics and your most pure Body, with its unspeakable virtues; between the sacrifices of the law, which were figures of future events, and the true sacrifice of your Body, which is the fulfilment of all ancient sacrifices.

7. Why, then, do I not become more inflamed in your venerable presence? Why do I not prepare myself with greater solicitude to receive your sacred gifts, seeing that the ancient holy Patriarchs and Prophets, and also kings and princes, with all the people, demonstrated so great affection of devotion towards your divine worship?

8. The most pious King David danced before the Ark of God with all his might, as he remembered all the benefits bestowed in times past on his

fathers. He made musical instruments of various kinds; he composed psalms, and ordered them to be sung with happiness, and he himself often sang them upon his harp, inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit. He taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and to glorify him every day with unanimous voices. If so great a devotedness was then manifested, and such solicitude to praise God before the Ark of Covenant, how great should be the reverence and piety which I and all Christian people should now have in the presence of this most holy Sacrament, and in receiving the most august body of Christ!

9. Many go to diverse nations to visit the relics of the saints, and they are surprised to hear of their noble church buildings, and kiss their sacred bones enveloped in silk and gold. And behold, you are present to me here on the altar, my God, the Saint of Saints, the Creator of men, and the Lord of Angles. Many times men are moved to see these things from curiosity and the novelty of the sight, and, therefore, little fruit of amendments is derived; even more so when the persons run here and there without being moved by true contrition for their sins. But here, in the Sacrament of the Altar, you are entirely present, O my God and man, Jesus Christ, where also the fruit of eternal salvation is copiously gathered, each time that you are worthily and piously received. To this Sacrament we are not drawn by any lightness, curiosity, or voluptuousness, but by a constant faith, a devout hope, and a pure charity.

10. O invisible God, Creator of the universe, how admirably you deal with us! How sweetly and kindly you act towards your chosen ones, to whom you offer yourself to be received in this Sacrament! This goes beyond all human understanding. This especially attracts to itself the hearts of the devout, and inflames their affection. For your true faithful, who spend their entire life to amend themselves, often receive from this most august Sacrament, the great grace of fervour and love of virtue.

11. Oh, admirable and secret grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithful of Christ know, but which unbelievers and sinners cannot experience! In this Sacrament, spiritual grace is bestowed; lost virtue is restored in the soul; and beauty marred by sin comes back again. And

sometimes this grace is so great that, from the fullness of the devotion that is received, not only the mind, but also the fragile body experiences an increase of strength.

12. Nevertheless, we must feel sorry for and greatly mourn and bewail our lukewarmness and negligence, because we do not go with greater fervour to receive Jesus Christ, in whom rest all the hope and merit of those who wish to save themselves. For he is our sanctification and our redemption; he is the consolation of pilgrims and the everlasting happiness of the Saints. It is therefore greatly to be bemoaned that many regard so little this to be salutary mystery, which delights Heaven and conserves the entire world. Oh, blindness and hardness of the human heart, which does not more highly value so ineffable a gift; and which it neglects to the point of inadvertence, receiving it from habit!

13. For if this most holy Sacrament were celebrated only in one place, and consecrated by only one priest in the world, with how great a desire, do you think, men would wish to go to that place and to that priest of God, in order to see the divine mysteries celebrated? Now, instead, there are many priests and Christ is offered up in many places, so that God's grace and love for man may appear the greater, the more this Holy Communion is distributed throughout the world. I thank you, O good Jesus, eternal Shepherd, because you have deigned to feed us poor exiles with your precious Body and Blood: and you deign to invite us to partake of these Mysteries by words of your own mouth, saying, "Come to me all you who labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (*Mt 11:28*).

REFLECTIONS

The renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them afire. From the liturgy, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a fountain, grace is channelled into us.

(Contributed by Richard Mascarenhas from the book 'Imitation of Christ')

DEUTERONOMY BIBLE QUIZ

We are repeating the earlier quiz on the Book of Deuteronomy, and we urge our teachers and parents to encourage all children to participate in greater numbers for this quiz.

1. What was the name of Caleb's father?
2. Which king of Hesbon would not let the Israelites pass through his land?
3. How many tribes inherited land on the east of Jordan?
4. Where did the Lord speak to the Israelites out of the fire?
5. How many cities of refuge were on the east side of Jordan?
6. Which tribe of Israel received no inheritance?
7. Which living creatures in the water were deemed unclean?
8. Which of the following birds is deemed clean?
9. Of what three things should a king not have multiples?
10. When Moses blessed the tribes before his death, to what animal did he compare Gad?

Please drop your answers in the “All Purpose Box” or hand them over to any of the CT members or leaders.

PRAY THE 6.30 AM CALL



***MIPC Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday at 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall.
General Intercessory Meeting: Last Monday of every month at 8:00 pm.
Community Mass: Every 1st and 3rd Friday at 8.30 a.m.***