

*“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 2010: Live By the Spirit (Gal 5:16)

### CONTENTS

- *The Pope Speaks.*
- *The Faith That Heals.*
- *Give Thanks at all times.*
- *Do Catholics Read The Bible?*
- *A Touch of Humour*
- *Children’s Bible Quiz #44.*
- *Children’s Essay Writing Competition.*
- *How I will use the Gift of Healing.*
- *How I will use the Gift of Tongues.*
- *A Testimony.*

### The Pope Speaks: - Priests Are a Gift For The Church and For the World

VATICAN CITY, 13 JUN 2010 (VIS) - The Year for Priests, which came to an end last Friday at a Mass attended by some 15,000 members of the clergy, was the theme of the Holy Father's remarks before praying the Angelus this morning.

"The Year for Priests came to an end on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which is traditionally the 'day of priestly sanctification', and this time it was especially so", the Pope told the faithful gathered below his study window in St. Peter's Square.

"The priest", he went on, "is a gift of the Heart of Christ, a gift for the Church and the world. It is from the Son of God's Heart, overflowing with charity, that all the good of the Church comes, in particular the vocation of those men who, conquered by the Lord Jesus, leave everything to dedicate themselves entirely to the service of Christian people, following the example of the Good Shepherd.

"The priest is moulded of Christ's own charity, that love which impelled Him to give His life for his friends and to forgive His enemies", the Pope added. "This is why priests are the primary builders of the civilisation of love. At this point my thoughts go to many priests, the well-known and the less well-known, some raised to the glory of the altars, others whose memory remains indelible in the minds of

the faithful, perhaps in some small parish community. This was the case in Ars, the French village where St. John Mary Vianney worked his ministry".

The Pope also mentioned Blessed Jerzy Popieluszko, the priest and martyr who "generously and courageously practiced his ministry along with those committed to freedom, to the defence of life and its dignity. His work at the service of goodness and truth was a sign of contradiction for the regime that then governed Poland " he said. "Love for the Heart of Christ brought him to give his life, and his witness was the seed of a new springtime in the Church and in society".

The Holy Father went on: "If we look at history we can see that many episodes of authentic spiritual and social renewal have been written with the decisive contribution of Catholic priests, animated only by their passion for the Gospel and for man, for his true religious and civil liberty. How many initiatives of integral human promotion began with the intuition of a priestly heart", he concluded.

*Source: Vatican Information Service*

### **The Faith That Heals**

Imagine having to endure a painful and embarrassing illness for twelve long years. Going to doctors, given endless treatments that did not help, add to that the crushing weight of endless medical bills. Wouldn't it be tempting just to give up and accept a life of misery. But this isn't how one woman described in the Gospels reacted. Known to us only as the "woman who was afflicted with an issue of blood," she did something bold and even scandalous – and she was rewarded for it! She pushed through a crowd of people surrounding Jesus and reached out to touch his robe. And in an instant she was cured.

Jesus turned round and through the jostling crowd knew there was one person who had made contact with the power that was within him. Now came the moment of truth and she decided to stay and own up. The same faith that moved her to reach out to Jesus now compelled her to testify to her miraculous healing and she was greatly rewarded as Jesus assured her that her healing was authentic and permanent: "Daughter," he said, "your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."(Mk 5:34)

We too can have this great faith that this woman had – a faith that brings us in touch with the power of God.

In addition to the physical obstacles, this woman faced internal obstacles as well.

Like the Jewish law considered any woman in her condition to be ritually unclean and anything or anybody she touched became ritually unclean as well.( Lev 15:19-33) Facing all obstacles, she believed that none of the obstacles could withstand Jesus and his desire to do good. “If I but touch his clothes,” she reasoned, “I shall be cured.”(Mk 5:28) And she was right.

We can learn a lot from this woman. No matter what challenges we face, what the medical facts of illness may be, no matter what the history of a wounded relationship may be, no matter how many times we have succumbed to a particular pattern of sin – there is always room for Jesus to work. The problem is never too big, and the timing is never too late. He can turn around the most distressing of situations, soften the hardest of hearts, and cure the most ravaging of diseases.

The touch of this woman registered with Jesus on a much deeper level because it was combined with **Faith and Trust** and she was transformed.

This is not to say that everyone with faith gets the exact healing they ask for. And neither it is to say that people who do not get healed are weak in faith. We don't know why some people are healed, while others are not. But we do know that everyone who turns to Jesus is answered. The answers are surprising, and far surpass the physical healings we ask for. But whether healing is physical, spiritual, or emotional, the truth remains the same as St. Paul told the Romans, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’(Act 2:21).

Jesus loves to listen to us. He loves to spend time with us, letting us pour out our hearts to him in faith and trust knowing He can help us.

Story after story in the Bible tell us about the way Jesus can intervene in our lives and restore our hope, our dignity, and even our health. Jesus spoke the same words he spoke to the hemorrhaging woman: “Your faith has saved you,” and to so many others in the Bible. The blind beggar Bartimaeus (Mk10:46-52), to the sinful woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and anointed them with perfume (Lk7:48,50), to one of the ten lepers who went back to Jesus to thank him (Lk17:19), and so many others.

Jesus wants all of us to have the same faith that these people had. He wants to see us respond to him in the wholehearted way that they did.

Have you felt God moving in your heart? Perhaps at Mass, in confession, or in the course of your everyday life. Then be like these people and press in to find Jesus. Don't be afraid to take a bold step. They are invitations to seek the face of Christ –

the love of Christ – and not just his healing touch. Push through the obstacles, you will find Jesus offering you the same promise he offered these people: “Your faith – your persistence, trust, and surrender to me – has saved you.”

Written by Mary Joe in “The Word among Us.”

*Article Contributed by: Louisa Cordeiro*

## **Give Thanks at All Times**

Often there comes a time when we think, ‘Why is God putting me in this situation? It’s too difficult and I cannot cope with it! I may not be the best person in the world but I’m certainly not the worst either, so why do these troubles and tribulations keep coming my way’

Growing up, these questions kept niggling at the back of my mind, but then I had a moment of clarity. We are extremely blessed that we have a God we can call our own. He is ever so generous. Then I thought of all the things I felt were problems and realised that they were all a part of life’s lessons- lessons God wanted me to learn so that I grow both mentally and spiritually.

God presented it to me to show me I have the ability to make my way through any situation in one piece. I can remember how glad I was when I solved my problems and everything went well or when it took a turn for the worse and I got through that situation too.

We should thank God for each situation he puts us in because I believe everything happens for a reason. We may not understand those reasons now but it will present itself once the time is right.

We should thank God for the amazing support system he has built for us. He has given us our parents, brothers and sisters, daughters and sons, friends and other family members to support us through our troubles. We should also thank him for our guardian angel, for giving us someone that can nudge us towards the right direction.

I was once told this joke that, while funny, had an element of truth in it. One day God was visiting his angels so he went to the first room and he found the angels there extremely busy, it was the room of prayers of what people were asking from God. He didn’t want to disturb the busy angles that were hard at work so he moved on to the next room, to his surprise he saw only one angel with few papers in front

of him. God asked "what happened here is something wrong" the angel replied "Lord, nothing is wrong, I'm in charge of all the thanks that is given in your name"

The future is unpredictable; I thank and praise God for every day that we are alive and well because the life we are living is God's gift to us and its time we thanked him for it.

**THANK YOU JESUS**

*Amanda Fernandes*

### **Do Catholics Read The Bible?**

The independent Evangelical church I went to as a boy gave me a fantastic amount of Bible knowledge. As I got older I ended up going to a Christian University where Bible study was part of our everyday schedule and listened to long Bible sermons. Our Christian home wasn't particularly anti-Catholic, but some of our preachers were, and the general impression I got was that Catholics not only didn't read the Bible, but that they weren't allowed to. How could Catholics believe the Bible if they didn't read it and study it like we did?

Its true that many Evangelicals know their Bible upside down and backwards, and compared to them Catholics sometimes seem ignorant of the Bible. But that's only an appearance.

The truth is simply that Catholics and Evangelicals use the Bible in different ways and therefore have different kinds of Bible knowledge. Evangelicals use the Bible as a source book for doctrine and right moral teaching, and that's good. 2 Timothy 3.16 says the Scriptures are 'useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.' Evangelicals also use the Bible for personal devotions and inspiration. This too is Biblical. Psalm 119.27 says, 'Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then will I meditate on your wonders.'

Ordinary Catholics might not be so adept at quoting chapter and verse, but they do know and use Scripture regularly. Its just that they use it in a different way. For a Catholic, Scripture is not so much a book to be studied as a book to worship with. (Ps. 119.7) For Catholics the Bible is almost always used in the context of worship. The Catholic service was almost 30% Scripture. When the same writer checked his local Bible-based Evangelical church and was surprised to find the total amount of Scripture read took just 3% of the service.

When Catholics go to mass they hear a reading from the Old Testament, they say or

sing one of the Psalms, then they listen to a reading from the epistles, then a gospel reading. The whole structure fits together. Catholics follow a three year cycle of Scripture reading so a Catholic who goes to church faithfully will-- over the three years--hear almost the entire Bible read. Furthermore, the responses, and the words of the communion service are almost all from Scripture. So a church-going Catholic does know and use Scripture--its just that he uses it primarily for meditation and worship (Ps.119.48)--not for personal information and instruction.

Of course, like Evangelicals, Catholics also use the Scripture to determine doctrine and moral principles--its just that the Catholic lay person or pastor doesn't do so on his own. As Paul gave Timothy the apostolic authority to 'rightly divide the word of truth' (2 Timothy 2.15), so Catholics believe their bishops have inherited the authority of the apostles to teach doctrinal and moral truth faithfully. They base this on Paul's clear instructions to Timothy, 'the things you have heard me say ...entrust to reliable men so that they may in turn teach others.' (2 Timothy 2.1-2) Therefore, it is the bishops—living, praying and working in a direct line from the apostles--who use the Bible to determine Christian doctrine and moral principles. Try reading any official Catholic teaching documents and you will find they are--and always have been-- permeated and upheld with Scripture.

Nevertheless, memories are long. Some extreme Protestants like to say that the Catholic church not only forbade people to read the Bible, but they deliberately kept the Bible in Latin, chained it up in churches and even went so far as to burn popular translations of the Bible. Its true Bibles were chained in churches. Before the days of printing presses books were precious items.

They were chained for security reasons—the way a phone book is secured in a phone booth—to make it available to everyone. The Catholic Church allowed translations into the vernacular from the beginning. The earliest English version of the Bible for instance, is a paraphrase version of Genesis dating from the year 670. In a few places the authorities did burn some translations of the Bible which were deliberately faulty or which carried heretical notes, but this was an attempt to preserve the purity of the scriptures, not to keep it from God's people. Remembering that in the Middle Ages most people were illiterate, the pastors and teachers of the Catholic Church instructed the people about the biblical stories in many creative and dramatic ways. But in saying all this, ordinary modern Catholics could learn a few lessons from Evangelicals about Bible knowledge.

We Catholics need more Bible scholars amongst our pastors and more resources for personal Bible reading. We need to understand the Scriptures better to see how our faith is rooted and grounded in the Bible. Our own official teachings encourage us to read, study and learn the Scriptures. If we have lessons to learn from

Evangelicals, many Evangelicals could learn fresh ways of using the Scriptures from us too. Singing the psalms in worship is something Catholics can share with Evangelicals, using a lectionary helps pastors choose Biblical readings which harmonise Old Testament and New Testament, taking the congregation on a logical process through each year of worship. Finally, using chosen readings from the Old Testament, the epistles and then the gospels helps focus the worship on Jesus Christ. Using the Scriptures like this is a practical way for the whole word of God in Scripture to point to the Word of God in the flesh-- our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

*Dwight Longenecker*

Contributed by Richard Mascarenhas

### **A Touch of Humour**

God looks down and notices that Adam is all alone while all the animals have companions, so he decides to create a companion for Adam as well.

He comes to see Adam and says to him, "Adam, you are my greatest creation and therefore, I am going to create for you the ultimate companion.

She will be called woman. She will worship the very ground you walk on. She will long for you and no other. She will be highly intelligent. She will wait on you hand and foot and obey your every command. She will be beautiful. She will be all these wonderful things, Adam, but it's going to cost you an arm and a leg."

Thinking about this for a few long moments, Adam finally replies, "God, what would I get for a rib, instead?"

### **Children's Bible Quiz #44**

Adults are encouraged to attempt the Quiz though there's no need to submit your answers! Try first without opening your Bibles. Then check your answers!

#### **Answer the Following Questions from the Gospel of John.**

- 1) According to John who has seen God? (Hint: Read chapter 1)
- 2) Simon Peter was given this name by Christ?
- 3) What miracle did Jesus perform at a wedding?
- 4) Jesus told Nicodemus that a person would not see the kingdom of God, unless he did what?
- 5) Jesus was tired and sat by a well, he then asked a woman for a drink. Why was this an unusual thing to do?
- 6) Why were the Jews angry that Jesus healed a lame man?

- 7) A woman who had committed a serious sin was brought before Jesus for judgment. What was her sin?
- 8) Jesus said: 'You will know the truth, and the truth will..... '
- 9) When Jesus fed the five thousand, what did he use to feed them?
- 10) After having fed them, what was gathered up in baskets?
- 11) What pool did the blind man have to wash himself in to be healed?

**Children, please submit your Answers before 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

### **Children's Essay Writing Competition:**

The **MIPC** youth were challenged to participate in an Essay Writing Competition to showcase their literary skills and talent. The Theme was, "If I had the Holy Spirit's Gift of ....., this is how I would use it."

Seven of our youngsters submitted entries and these precious few are to be highly praised and lauded for having set aside the time, despite all the pressures and duties in their young lives, to set pen to paper in glory of God the Holy Spirit. May God bless you all abundantly for your diligence and immeasurably refine these skills that you are using for His greater Glory.

All seven Essays exhibited unique flair, tremendous creativity and clearly evident inspiration from on high! The evaluators were hard-pressed not to award the maximum marks to every young contestant!

We also wish to specially acknowledge and compliment these youngster's parents for their obvious encouragement and for inspiring their children to maintain a proper spiritual perspective despite the myriad pressures of modern life. Indeed, as the Holy Word says, Ps 84:10 "One day in the Lord's presence is worth a Thousand Years in other pursuits!"

May these parents and our precious children who participated be hugely blessed for their efforts.

**The Winner of our Competition is Samantha Pinto (11) and the Runner-up is Alfred Menezes (12).**

**Hearty Congratulations to our budding 'Pulitzer Prize' winners!! Keep it Up!**

In this Oasis we have published Samantha's and Alfred's Essays. The other essays will feature in subsequent Publications.



In token of their deep appreciation for these seven children who contributed, the Core Team has decided to award every one with a Prize for their Participation!!! Three Cheers for the Core Team as well!!

### **If I am blessed with the Gift of Healing, this is how I will use it**

The Lord has sent his Holy Spirit to give his special gifts to several people. To one, he has given the Spirit of Wisdom, to the other the message of Knowledge by the means of the same Spirit, to another the gift of Faith by the same Spirit, to another the Gift of Healing by the same Spirit. (1 Cor 12: 8-9)

The Holy Spirit comes in various forms. He comes in the form of wind, water, oil, clouds, fire, the seal, the hand, the fingers, the dove. The twelve gifts of the Holy Spirit are Discernment, Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Good Counsel, Strength, Faith, Hope, Healing, Working Miracles, Extreme Zeal and Prophecy. These gifts, result in life and peace.

From all the above gifts, if I had the gift of Healing, I would use it in such a manner such that it would benefit people all over the world who need it. I would use it like Jesus to heal the sick. The reason is that I do not want to see people suffering. When people fall ill and have no medical cure for it, they often go to priests or people who have the power to heal them. Sometimes, people say that God cannot heal them but all these ill sayings must be removed from our minds because God is free to do as his wishes. According to me, The Spiritual Gift of Healing is the ability to call on God to heal the Sick through various means for revealing God and his Love. With the gift of Healing I only trust God that only he can heal the sick and I should only pray in faith for the physical restoration of those in need. People normally see healing as a sign that God uses to reveal his power to people so that many will come to believe in Jesus. The power to heal comes only through the Holy Spirit of our God. In Mt 4 :23-24, Jesus calls all his apostles and gives them the authority to heal every disease and sickness. With this healing power, I can go from place to place, to different hospitals and heal many people from being blind, deaf, lame and people with leprosy. I've heard people say "It's God's will" or "I will leave it up to God" when faced with a serious illness or tragedy. Don't fall into that trap. God wants us to pray to him for help. In Luke 18:1 Jesus told his disciples that "they should always pray and not give up" And then Jesus asked ".....will not God bring about Justice for his chosen ones who cry to him day and night?"

I pray to God from my heart for the gift of healing. I will not stop. I will not give up. God wants me to ask him for the gift of healing to help others. He loves me.

**Samantha Pinto**

Age – 11 years



### **If I am blessed with the Gift of Tongues, this is how I will use it**

Gifts are generally received free, not earned but deserved often. I have received many gifts from my friends, family and relatives. Most of the gifts are either used, broken or lost. I really felt happy and joyful when I received those gifts, but only for while. After some time I have forgot about it.

God's gift and talent is not same as earthly gifts and talents. They are precious, given for a purpose and to help and bless others. With God's gift, I must bless others and the gift has to be of use to some if not all who are around me. I must cherish it and use it so that the gift and talent can multiply by itself and can be made use for greater purpose.

If I had the gift of tongues as mentioned in Romans 8: 26-28, this is how I would use it. I would use it for praising and thanking God in every situation of my life and for all that he has done and will be doing. I would also use it in my personal prayer. When I grow up I would use it for deliverance of all sorts of things for others. The gift of tongues is used because we praise and thank God in a language only known to Him. Also this gift is used to pray for others and self and only I and my God understands what is in my heart and what is God's will for me in that particular situation that I'm praying for.

I pray that God blesses me with his grace to use the gift of tongues to pray continuously as we see so many reasons to pray today. There are troubles and trials all over, people are sick, persecuted, in bondage, live in sin, tempted, murder, terrorism etc., etc. and the one of the ways to solve all these problems is prayer and that too pray in tongues at all times and everywhere. I can pray silently and I can pray loudly in tongues which others may not understand except my God and Savior. I can use this gift while going to school, when I have free time, when I travel to church or football field, when I have free time, while walking on the road, while playing and even while resting. There is no specific time or place that is required to use this gift and I sincerely desire this gift who my God would bless me with freely.

I will use this gift to lead others to Jesus and Salvation. I will use this gift to heal

the sick, to resolve disputes, wars, strikes and hatred. I will use this gift to heal broken marriages, relationships, forgiveness in the family, in the society. I will use this gift for many unbelievers to come to our Lord Jesus for Salvation. I will use this gift to eliminate poverty in the world. I will use this gift for us to study well in the school and grow up to God fearing children and that we become instruments of God wherever we go. When I'm in difficult situation I will use this gift that God may guide and lead me.

Above all, I will use this gift to bring God's kingdom here on earth so that all of us when on earth may be able to live in peace and harmony and loving one another. When God blesses me with this gift of tongues, I will also ask him to bless me with patience and endurance to use it effectively and fruitfully to build and not to break, to plant and not to uproot, to lead everyone to the Light and not to darkness. Above all, I will ask God that I myself may remain faithful to Him and be a good example while using this gift.

Thank you and God bless you.

*Alfred Menezes*  
*12 years old.*



## **A Testimony**

“Praise the Lord my soul, and do not forget how kind he is” Ps 103:2

“When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you.” Is 43:2

On 15<sup>th</sup> April 10, my father felt very sick, he could not walk properly. He complained of heaviness in his chest and swelling on his feet. ECG and Ultrasound gave normal report but his blood test showed his hemoglobin was very low i.e. 6.6. Then doctor asked us to do a stool test which showed the presence of occult blood. In spite of this doctors wanted my father to be admitted on Monday because Saturday and Sunday was weekend. But we insisted and told him what if his hemoglobin goes lower than that and something else happens. That moment I asked my Lord Jesus to cover my father's whole body and soul by his precious blood, (every organ as well as his whole system) and see that nothing goes wrong with anything. My Lord is so faithful; He opened the way and made it possible for everything. We admitted him on Sunday, instead of Monday. My father had gastro intestinal bleeding due to ulcer.

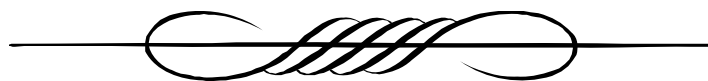
Doctor told us that my father needed 2 pints of blood, now the question was who would be the donor?? I believed my Lord Jesus is my provider and he would provide. Somehow we managed to get 1 donor for 1 pint of blood and the second one we got too through prayers. I only prayed that the person who is in charge at the Blood Bank would not ask for the donor at all and really same thing happened.

All went well; my father was discharged on the fifth day in the evening. That night, I counted the tablets that were to be given to him after dinner, they were all together 7 types of tablets and 2 syrups. We had no idea for what some of these tablets were given for. Again I prayed and said, “Lord, you bless them and that no harm will take place”. That moment, I remembered the scripture verse from Mk.16:18, as if Lord Jesus said it to me – “If they pick up snakes or drink any poison, they will not be harmed” and I claimed it.

At 12.20 midnight we found that my father was not responding, we did not know what to do, kept on praying, because I knew if I take him back to the hospital, doctor will put him in the I.C.U. My Lord was so gracious to us that my father recovered and came to his senses and back to normal. We, truly, praised and thanked the Lord Jesus for his goodness and wonder! Later, we came to know through one of our family doctor, that it had happened because of the overdose of the sleeping pill by 1 mg. Sometimes, we cannot understand what the doctors are doing is right or wrong. But Keep trusting the Lord and in His promises. “If God is for us, who can be against us? Who then can separate us from the love of Christ?”

I thank my God once again for answering our prayers and being faithful to us at all times. I, also, thank all my brothers and sisters who prayed for my father’s recovery. Indeed, all our prayers formed a protection shield over my father’s body and soul.

***MIFA GOMES***



***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.***