



“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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LIFE OF HAPPINESS

“You show me the path of life. In your presence, there is fullness of joy; in your right hand, happiness forever.”- Ps. 16:11

Happiness is a positive and pleasant emotion that ranges from contentment to intense joy. It is an emotional or mindful state of well-being. Various approaches have been arrived to define happiness and to identify its sources. Catholic faith teaches us that at the end of

our existence, which is life after death, we will experience great happiness. In Latin this means “Blessed Happiness” described by the 13th century philosopher and theologian St. Thomas Aquinas as a blessed vision of God’s essence in the life to come. Human beings have complex reasons and notions that can produce happiness, however such forms of happiness is only limited and last for a brief moment. Beautiful or perfect happiness as complete well-being is to be attained not in this life, but in the life to come. All we need to do is work towards it by training our Will to make a Spiritual and not a worldly choice, by contemplating on God.

A woodcutter had to struggle hard to earn two meals a day. He met a monk and explained his pitiable condition. The monk advised him, “Don’t stop at the edge of the forest, go right in. One day’s work will fetch you one month’s food.” The woodcutter followed the advice. Deep within the forest, he found sandalwood trees. He was very happy. He expressed his gratitude to the monk.

The monk advised him again, “Take the risk of going still deeper into the forest. A day’s work will fetch you food for six months.” This time he found a silver mine. He thanked the monk again. The monk said, “If you trust me and go still deeper into the forest, one day’s work will be able to fetch you food for a lifetime.” This also turned out to be true, for he found a gold mine.

The woodcutter wondered, “Why then does the monk still stay at the edge of the forest and not venture into the forest, as he has been advising me?” He expressed his doubts to the monk. The monk replied, “If you want to be eternally happy, sit under this tree and I will teach you to go within. Then you will be eternally happy.”

To be an outer winner, one has to explore the outer world. To be an inner winner, one has to go within oneself. The balance between an outer winner and being an inner winner is what would make us feel good.

The realization of happiness happens only after experience of pain. If we desire to blossom like a flower in the garden of life, then we must learn the art of adjusting our life with thorns, pains and struggles. Sowing the seed is always painful but reaping the harvest is always a happy event as beautifully explained in the Psalm 126:6. The joy that comes after enduring pain is such an overwhelming experience, that our Lord likens this experience to that of a woman in labour pains and her joy, that has no bounds, when she sees the newborn she brought into the world – Jn 16:21

Happiness means contentment, cheerfulness, charm, bliss, delight, ecstasy, excitement, enjoyment, joy, gladness, high spirit, thrill, satisfaction and wonder. The key to “Happiness” is not that you never get angry, upset, frustrated or depressed but it depends upon how fast you come out of it.

Happiness for a Christian: Generally happiness is understood as a perfect situation that is without any problems, a situation without trouble or pain. We don't like pain, troubles or hardships. This is the worldly understanding of the word 'happiness', but in practice it is not so. Life is rarely without any problems or pains. For a Christian the meaning of happiness is different. A Christian's 'Happiness' comes from fearing the Lord and walking in his ways – Ps 128:1. “Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law they meditate day and night” – Ps 1:1-2.

A disciple of Christ draws happiness from reading, studying, meditating and building his / her life on the Eternal Word of God which is the Rock – Matt 7: 24-27 (house built on the rock). Happiness lies in trusting God – Prov. 16:20 and obeying God – Jn. 13:15-17.

Happy people of the Bible: The great people of the Bible were those who trusted God's promises and allowed God to fulfil them by obeying and trusting him. People like Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and so many others, lived a happy and victorious life by not allowing themselves to be defeated by the tests and trials they faced but rather by conquering them by complete trust in God's promise. In spite of the suffering and the persecution they faced they were rejoicing. The beautiful example of St Paul, rejoicing and praising God even in a difficult situation like prison, is something that shows it is possible to praise God even when things go wrong. In fact when we believe that our Lord has the power to work in any situation, we draw great strength from him and rejoice in him. Happiness is mentioned in the Holy Bible 102 times. May we experience divine happiness always.

Happiness for you and me: It is easy to be happy when life is smooth sailing. Our Master does not want us to be sad when life is tough or difficult. That is why he said “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. Matt 5: 11-12.

Whenever life is hard and peace is eluding, the best promise to hold on to is the assurance of our Lord Jesus saying “..... and **remember I am with you till the end of the age**” - Matt 28:20

May this be said of us “**Happy are those who live in your house ever singing your praise**” – Ps 84:4

- *Keith Netto*

TESTIMONY – POWER OF PRAYER

Peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you dear brothers and sisters,

As always, I periodically service my car at one of the famous service centers. When I left the car, I am expected to take all the valuables out from the car, since it remains with them, for over half-a-day. I took my rosary that was on the rear view mirror, my telephone charger and a few other things. Unfortunately I forgot to remove things like my Bank debit card with its pin-code (...how negligent of me, but not anymore), substantial cash, my resident card, driving license, insurance card and some other bank papers.....

One of their cleaning staff, who noticed these things in my car, put it in an envelope and gave it to their superiors. When I went to collect my car back from the service, to my great surprise, an envelope was awaiting me, with all these valuable belongings of mine.

May be it sounds very trivial my dear brothers and sisters, but it is certainly a miracle.....why?

Because every time I leave my car for service, I pray in the morning, for everything to go well, I bless everyone who will be involved in the servicing of my car. I strongly believe, as a result of the prayer, my living Lord not only protected me but everything that belonged to me as well!!

A week after this incident, I was told by the service station authorities, that they had a small get-together to honour the honesty of this man. He has

also been given a certificate for honesty by his superiors - Praise God for His Mercies.

This is just one of several incidents I am sharing with you all. This testimony is basically to witness / edify, how the power of prayer works wonders irrespective of who you pray for...God takes care of everything that belongs to you. Praying and blessing others with faith is equivalent to asking Blessings on ourselves, which I firmly believe, after this particular incident.

The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy –Psalms 111:7

- *Flavia Pereira*

WINDOW THROUGH THE PAST WEEKS!

Sept. 4, 2012 – Fruit Bearing Disciple I (Harry Rasquinha)

On Tuesday 4th Sep 12, after Praising and Thanking the Lord, Harry shared his views on the **Theme for the year –FRUIT BEARING DISCIPLE**. Mt 25:20-26 was referred to highlight the reward and the condemnation - (“**well done, good and faithful servant.**” Vs 21, “**you wicked and lazy servant ...**” Vs 26). Periodical review / evaluation of our spiritual life is very important to identify what needs to be done to keep to the theme for the year.

The Word of God says when we tend to have less love for the Lord than we used to have, (Rev. 2:4) we become less serious about keeping His Word. Some Scripture verses to help are: “It is terrible to fall into the hands of the Lord” (Hebrews 10:26-31), “The Lord is not slow to act ... but He gives us time to change” (2 Peter 3:9).

When we are on the path to become perfect just as our heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:48) and when our light shines (Mt 5:16), we are sure to bear fruit. Whatever we do - be it study, work, service or even things like prayer

or study of God's Word, it should be done perfectly so that it can bear fruit. That is why St Paul reminds us to do everything in the name of the Lord, giving glory to God through Lord Jesus Christ in Col. 3:17 and 1 Cor. 10:31. Therefore, "**FRUIT BEARING DISCIPLE**" is a theme for our entire life here on earth. In short it means 'to be a better Christian'. Just to check our progress in this regard, we can ask ourselves some questions like – have I become more tolerant than last year? Have I become more charitable, truthful, considerate, sensitive, grown in purity, holiness etc...??

How much fruit we are bearing for Christ can be very easily seen in areas like – spiritual, family, work place and society. If we are finding it difficult to bear fruit for the Lord in every area of our daily life, then St Peter has this to offer us – "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, discipline yourself, set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed." 1Pet 1:13

Sept. 12, 2012 – Fruit Bearing Disciple II (Henry Sanjivi)

Many MIPC members, during the workshop conducted early this year, requested that sharing's on the following topics be given, **Humility, Total forgiveness and the Word of God**. In response to the request of the community, and in line with the theme for 2012, Henry shared from John 15:8 (***By this*** my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.)

By what? Verse 7 says, that "If we **abide in Him and His words abide in us...**" One of the keys to being a fruit bearing disciple is, to abide in Him and His word in us. This was supplemented with John 8:31-32, "Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

The Word of God should be given the same importance and reverence, as given to the Holy Eucharist. Jesus is the Word of God (became flesh) as in John 1:14. Hebrews 4:12 talks about the **Power of God** and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 talks about the **PURPOSE OF THE WORD**, examples of the

power and purpose of the Word were also shared.

One of the ways to remember the word of God, (which is the sword of the Spirit) that comes to our aid in time of temptations and trials, is writing down the scripture verses (making small posters / placards) and reading it over and over again, till it becomes part of us. The word of God has the power and ability to free us, protect us and bless us – IF WE BELIEVE. If a strong **relationship** is built with Jesus, than the love and longing for the word of God, will automatically increase!

Sept. 27, 2012 – Night Vigil - Relationships in Marriage – (Ryan Pinto)

Often in marriage, we tend to take our spouse for granted, and over the years, the marriage is reduced to a mere contract, rather than a **holy sacrament** which GOD intended it to be.

The following areas were highlighted in the sharing:

- Dealing with unmet expectations and disappointments.
- Motives – Why must I love my spouse unconditionally?
- Concern v/s Fear and the need for surrendering to GOD.
- Bringing down idols and the ego.
- Need to communicate and show honour and respect to the other.

This vigil was a mini Marriage Enrichment Programme where each one was encouraged to reflect on his / her own marriage and challenged to once again recommit their lives to the other through the sharing and time of prayer.

The book of Ecclesiastes 4:12 says “**A chord of 3 strands is not quickly broken**”. When **JESUS is number one in our marriage** then we will be able to live out our calling. Today marriage and the family are under siege like never before so let's be very vigilant and resist our

real enemy – Satan, with the weapons of HUMILITY, FORGIVENESS, PRAYER and THE WORD, **making every effort to walk in love.**

Oct. 3, 2012 - Philip Balfour (Bro. Victor's teaching – 1st Day)

Need for Self Introspection

Philip took us back to what Bro. Victor shared on 15th September; to look into ourselves and know the condition of our hearts. When we look at the gospel of St. Mark 4:3 onwards, Jesus tells us the parable of the sower - God's word is the seed and the soil is our heart.

Each one of us may have one of these hearts: Dead heart, Disturbed heart, Distracted heart, Diseased heart & Damaged heart.

Are we able to look into ourselves, know the condition of our heart and then admit to God and self that we are wrong and are willing to experience the grace of God. **Change is painful but not harmful.** This change can come about when our hearts long to know God and what Jesus means to each one of us. If this is our deep passion, then with the help of the Holy Spirit, in spite of hurdles, bearing fruit a hundred-fold becomes easy.

Bishop Fulton Sheen in his book "IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME" writes these words that Jesus says to all humanity:

"You give me your humanity, I will give you My Divinity
You give me your time, I will give you my Eternity
You give me your bonds, I will give you my Omnipotence
You give me your slavery, I will give you my Freedom
You give me your death, I will give you my Life
You give me your nothingness, I will give you my All"

The consoling thought throughout this whole transforming process is that it does not require much time; it requires only much love; love for God and love for one another.

Oct. 10, 2012 – Louis Ryan (Bro. Victor’s teaching – 3rd Day)

Dealing with Crazy Makers

There is one thing that God hates in human beings and even in angels and that is pride, but at the same time God never ever fails to respond to a broken and contrite heart; and it is precisely for this reason that God has put **crazy makers** in our life. They reveal the condition of our heart. God’s purpose for our life is our holiness and not so much our happiness.

How do we deal with crazy makers?

If we look at St. Paul’s example, we see that he remained joyful even in prison. The reason being he kept his focus on Christ. Let our identity and our focus be upon Jesus. Let us learn to rely on the Holy Spirit. Let us remember to press the **pause button** when angry.

Oct. 23, 2012 – Henry Sanjivi (Bro. Victor’s teaching – 2nd Day)

Cultivating our souls

Henry did a recap on what Bro. Victor shared with us on 16th September. “Change of heart is essentially a pre-requisite, for being a “fruit bearing disciple”.

We were reminded of the 5 “P’s” ie (a) Change is **Personal**, (b) Change is **Possible** (c) Change is **Painful** (d) Change is **Profitable** and (e) Change is a **Process**. We are called to identify the areas in our life and apply the above.

After the change happens, we should not remain stagnant, but grow by **Cultivating the soul or soul growth** - this was the key text of the 2nd day of Bro. Victor’s seminar. As much as our body needs to be nourished, so also does our soul need to be fed constantly. Cultivating the soul, is our part – “what God can do, we cannot do, what we are called to do-God will not do”.

In order to cultivate, we are called to (1) Till the ground (2) Sow the seed (3) Water the seed (4) Fertilize the seed (5) Prune the plant and (6) Wait patiently for the fruit.

1. Tilling the ground was referred to “Introspection”, cleaning the inner man by confession and removing all that obstructs the growth.
2. Sowing the seed is nothing but feeding ourselves with the WORD of GOD.
3. Water the seed - the Word of God, requires the support of the Holy Spirit (which is likened to water) in order to understand and apply the same in our lives.
4. The stench of the Fertilizers are obstacles that come our way, they help us to grow better – we are to look at problems in life, as opportunities and not obstacles.
5. Pruning is done by God, which at times, can be painful, but pruning is necessary in order to bear more fruit.
6. Patiently wait for the fruit (Isaiah 40:31)

YOUTH TALK

Relishing God's Creation in Silence

"The heavens declare the Glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork "-Psalm 19:1."Teach me and I will be silent, make me understand how I have gone astray"- Job 6:24-25

The clouds may hide the sunshine, but they can never banish the sun. The same is with our God! All things bright and beautiful around us, is just His awesome way of making His presence known. Too often in life have we just forgotten to unwind; the pressures of life deny us a meaningful break. But as we should all note, if we can walk with the Lord, so can we rest with Him!

To actually meet the Lord is a journey that can be best accelerated by basking in the very glory of the stillness of nature. Mother Teresa famously substantiated this by saying that we need to find God and He cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature, trees, flowers and grass grow in silence. See the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence. We need silence to be able to touch souls. How right she was!

Respecting the Lord of sea and sky in His own right, helps us to recognize that He is Creator King indeed. Therefore, understanding creation is a school of thought that deals with being receptive to our surroundings as God's vessels of grace. It comes about with comprehending life and existence and accepting His creation as His expressions of love.

Obviously we cannot expect God to send us signs of nature as He did for Noah, Moses and Jonah; in the forms of a dove with a leaf, a burning bush and the tree and the worm, respectively! But as youth, we must understand that like all things sacred, nature too, is a mystery; best experienced through our senses, which is why our sensuality needs to be taken very, very seriously.

Many of us fail in this respect, as in our young and busy lives, we don't really pay attention to the way we were fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps139:13-16). Very few of us actually, consciously view creation as God's gift. And hence to accomplish this, silence seems to be the ideal method.

In order to recognize God's role as host and healer in our lives, we must occasionally unplug from our hectic schedules and find those perfect moments for introspection and realize where we've gone wrong. It is good to remember that your retreat is God's resort. We need to take solace in natural surroundings in order to view life in His eyes and realize that we were created in His likeness for His pleasure! Yes indeed, we were carved in the palm of His hand to be loved by Him. He thus moulds like a potter does, reworking us to His desire- and hence all we have to do is just accept it and more importantly realize it!

When we practice solitude, we renounce everything, to be alone with the Lord just like the apostles did in Mark 6:31-32. Such solitude helps us to interact with nature in the way God intends! Mitch Albom, the writer says, "Scenery without solace is meaningless. That is the greatest gift God can give you - to have your life explained, while you search your peace".

True enough, the Lord speaks to us in the silence of our hearts and so we need to surrender to silence in order to hear Him speak.

Fr. Paul Vaz S.J, Director of the XIMR, who conducts the extremely effective S2S (Surrender to Silence) Earth-Centered Healing Retreats, explains that this can be achieved by meditating in the scriptures, journaling, reciting quiet breath prayers daily as well as sending prayer vibrations to those in need. He also advises us to look out for our own companion in nature as a spirit friend to relate to; and to strive to be more ecologically responsible in the long run.

For all nature is God's wealth that abounds in plenty - we just have to take time out to be one with it. The Creator's eternal power is visible through each and every product of His - including you and me; Sirach 43 truly exemplifies this very fact! And since He has counted every hair on our head, we must attempt to use ourselves to emanate His glory and remind each other that we are of intentional design.

"Be still and know that I am God." - Ps 46:10

- Melanie 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.***