



“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 2015: “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord” Jer.17:7

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THEME 2015: BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO TRUSTS THE LORD

Those who love God will have the desire to listen to him, keep his word and trust him. Through the Theme for 2014 “Love the Lord” (*Deut 6:5*) the Lord beautifully led us to love him better. To those who seriously practiced this theme, the Lord showed new dimensions of his love and surely led us to take this love to our neighbor. “Love” is not passive, it leads to action. Can we all say we have tried our best to love the Lord and this was evident in various acts of ours?

One of the first things a person who loves the Lord does is to **trust** him. With the prayer support of the whole community, the elders discerned that the Lord is directing us towards a life of trusting him. This is the theme the Lord gave this year for us here at the Mary Immaculate Praise Community. This theme too, is not just for the year 2015 alone. The Lord wants us to

trust him all our life. He wants us to live a life of trust each moment of our life here on this earth.

The key verse that describes the Theme for the year 2015 is: **BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO TRUSTS THE LORD - Jer 17:7.**

Meaning: This is a simple sentence with profound meaning. The general meaning of the word ‘Trust’ is firm belief in the words, deeds and qualities of a person, confident expectation, etc. A person who trusts the Lord will live a life firmly believing that the Lord is his/her master and follow him wherever he leads him/her. The Lord who is the creator of the entire universe (Ps 89:11), is the object of his/her trust. Indeed, it is a happy thing and a blessed thing to have the mighty God as the object of our trust. Trusting the Lord is a blessing in itself. It is of course a wonderful privilege to trust a God who is the only trust-worthy God. **Trusting means continual obedience to his will.** The one who loves God will be inclined to obey him. Trusting is not just a matter of the heart and mind. It is action-oriented. The one who trusts God is called to show that in life, just as shown by the heroes of the Bible like Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, David, various prophets and so many great men of the Old and New Testament.

Trusting is entirely depending first on the Lord for our needs. Our God is such a caring God; we need to know that he knows all our needs even before we express them (*Mt 6:32*). Isn’t it truly a blessed thing to trust such a God who knows all about us and all about our needs? If the focus is not God but man, then it is nothing short of a curse. “Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals” (*Jer 17:5*).

Trusting God is walking closely with him: Only the one who knows God will trust him and walk closely with him. Therefore, it is expected of us to know him better by deepening our relationship through Prayer, Scripture, Sacraments and enriching our knowledge by the Lives of Saints and the Teachings of the Church.

In simple words, “Blessed is the one who trusts God” means happy is the

one who seeks God and his hope is God. Our God cares for us and loves us so much that he blesses us in countless ways. However, if any need is not met in spite of living a life of trust, it should not be taken as God is not concerned about us. We are called to continue our journey of trust even if we encounter hardships.

Challenges: God in his wisdom sometimes allows challenges to strengthen us. Our trust is often challenged with difficult questions/situations. What would be our response to the following?

- Do you still trust God when you have desert experience in your spiritual life?
- Can you still rejoice in the Lord and praise him when things are not bright as expected, like no raise in the salary, no financial benefits, unfavorable financial situation, encountering adversity in life, etc, etc..

This is the time we need to hold on to the Lord like never before and blessed are we who do it. This is the time we need to show that we are those people who lead a life of trust. We choose to trust God because he:

- is capable of working in any situation – God is my refuge and strength ...(*Ps 46:1*)
- he will supply every need (*Phil 4:19*)
- he will provide all grace and strength to go through any situation.... (*2 Cor 12:9, Ps 32:10*)

The word “**blessed**” does not necessarily refer to material blessings. It means consecrated, revered, fortunate, enjoying divine favor. In the light of this meaning we can say that all **those who chose to trust God at all time truly enjoy divine favor**. Because we have such a trustworthy God, we should be able to say like St Paul, “therefore we do not lose heart” (*2 Cor 4:16*). As we resolve to grow in the life of trusting God at all times, we too should be able to show to those around us that we are those blessed people who chose to trust God, come what may.

- *The Core Team*

DANCING WITH GOD

(I received this email and I thought you might all like it too. I never thought anything about the word “guidance” before. I am glad someone figured it out. Enjoy reading it as I did. It is impossible not to like this one.)

When I meditated on the word guidance, I kept seeing ‘dance’ at the end of the word and I remember reading that doing God’s will is lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement does not flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky. When one person realizes that, and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music. One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another. It is as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness and attentiveness from one person and gentle guidance and skill from the other. My eyes drew back to the word Guidance. When I saw ‘G’ I thought of God, followed by ‘U’ and ‘I’. ‘God, ‘u’ and ‘I’ dance.’ God, you and I dance.

As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life and once again, I became willing to let God lead. My prayer for you today is that God’s blessings and mercies are upon you on this day and every day. May you abide in God as God abides in you. Dance together with God, Trusting God to lead and guide you through each season of your life and **I Hope You Dance!**

- *contributed by Charmaine D’Souza*

90 DAY BIBLE READING CHALLENGE

Based on Jeff Cavins THE BIBLE TIMELINE BIBLE READING SYSTEM, the reading plan divides the Story up into 12 main time periods and then guides us through just 14 of the 73 books of the Bible with several chapters a day for 90 days. Daily Reflections introduce the time periods and provide for each reading.

Consider doing more than simply reading to "get the story and prayerfully enter a conversation with God. One could follow these simple steps to praying scriptures:

- 1) READ through the assigned chapters what one thing stands out to you.
- 2) REFLECT on that portion. What does it say to you?
- 3) RESPOND to God in prayer.
- 4) REST for a moment in God's loving presence.

The colour codes for the 12 historical time periods of salvation... with only 14 narrative books tells the Story from beginning to the end with 30 minutes video by Jeff Cavins followed by group discussions for the group bible study or online discussions in the above **90 days Bible Reading Challenge** has been very enriching and helpful.

Look at each period on The Bible Timeline Chart which groups the stories into the following 12 consecutive historical periods that are colour-coded to help you remember them. By the end of this course, we will all see the narrative thread that runs throughout the Scripture and continue in your own life today:

1. **Early World (Gen 1-11):** In Early World, God created heavens and earth and tested Adam & Eve in the garden. This period is represented by the colour TURQUOISE, which is the colour of the earth from space.

2. **Patriarchs (Genesis 12-50):** In the time of Patriarchs God called Abraham and promised his children: land, royal Kingdom and worldwide blessing. The colour BURGUNDY helps us to remember the blood covenant God made with him.

3. **Exodus & Egypt (Exodus):** In Egypt n Exodus, God freed His people from slavery so they could worship HIM. RED reminds us of the crossing of the Red Sea.

4. **Desert wanderings (Numbers):** God taught Israel to trust HIM through forty years of DESERT WANDERINGS. What better way to remember those miles of sand than by the colour TAN.

5. **Conquest & Judges (Joshua & Judges)**: In Conquest and Judges, God led Israel triumphantly in the Promised Land, represented by GREEN colour for the lush hills of Canaan.

6. **Royal Kingdom (1 & 2 Samuel, 1 kings 1-11)**: There He established Israel as a Royal Kingdom under David, who was promised an eternal throne. The colour PURPLE represents the royal throne.

7. **Divided Kingdom (1 Kings 11-22 & 2 Kings)**: Israel soon split into rival kingdoms and fell into idolatry. BLACK represents the darkness of this Divided Kingdom.

8. **Exile (2 kings 17, 25)**: God punished both kingdoms with Exile; BABY BLUE recalls the children of Judah "singing the blues" in Babylon.

9. **Return (Ezra n Nehemiah)**: Brighter days of Return are shown by Yellow: God brought the exiles home to make a fresh start.

10. **Maccabean Revolt (1 Maccabees)**: Years later, the Maccabees stood up against the threats of Hellenization in the Maccabean Revolt. The colour ORANGE calls to mind the lit oil lamps in the purified Temple.

11. **Messianic Fulfillment (Luke)**: GOLD represents the first New Testament period, the time of Messianic Fulfillment when God at last sent His only Son, Jesus Christ the Messiah, to fulfill all His promises. Remember gold by the gift of the Magi.

12. **The Church (Acts of the Apostles)**: Finally, the Church carries on God's work in the world. It's colour is WHITE, for the spotless Bride of Christ.

(An example of an online discussion on Early World: comment by Heather Marstena year ago)

I also want to know what Enoch did that caused him to walk off with God. May I share something so awesome that I learned? If you use a

concordance you can find the meaning of the names used in this genealogy. If you look up the meaning of the names from Adam to Noah there is a salvation message of Jesus there.

ADAM -mankind

SETH – appointed, to turn the face toward

ENOSH – a mortal, grievous sorrow, calamity

CAINAN -lament, mourn

MAHALALEL – god who is praised

JARED – comes down

ENOCH – to instruct, to consecrate

METHUSELAH – to die, to be sent forth as a prophet

LAMECH – to be smitten, scourged

NOAH – to give rest.

(Resources on www.BibleStudyforCatholics.com)

- *contributed by Libby Gomes*

MY GOD IS ALL KNOWING...HE IS IN CONTROL

It was August 2013 the end of my holidays and I wanted to do a routine mammography check up. I asked my family doctor to advise me where to go. He asked if I had pain or felt a lump I replied in the negative and said I just wanted to do it. My very first mammography showed suspicious finding and was advised by the Oncologist to have the lump (cluster of micro calcifications) removed and send for testing.

I recall going with my results to the doctor and he gave us the news I didn't expect at all. I burst into tears asking the doctor How? Why? He had no answer but said.. you have detected it at the earliest possible stage. The cancer cells were found in the core of the gland (I believe it was God's intervention to help me get treated). I was really shattered and broken and so was my mum. On my way back home, I knew I had to break the news to my loved ones and I didn't know how. My mum was in no state to talk

to anyone. I know I had to be strong. I just called upon the Lord and I remember saying... Lord I believe you are all knowing and you knew this would happen to me, for nothing happens without your permission. So Lord if you want me to go through this give me the strength to accept it. This prayer of surrender to the Lord, filled my heart with peace beyond compare. Even before calling my husband I called my sister in the Intercessory who had been praying for me and she comforted me and assured me of her prayers. I was able to give the news to my husband Savio, who was here in Muscat and I prayed that God give him grace to accept His will. My sister was totally shattered and slammed the phone in shock. She could not take the news and I who am usually an emotional wreck in such situations, was able to comfort her and assure her that God will take care of me.

I believe God was with me right through the treatment that followed after that. I had to go for radiation every day for over two months, My school authorities adjusted my work load, Savio was able to accompany me every day with permission from his boss. My mum came to Muscat to take care of me. With no transport of our own and having to go every morning to the hospital, we needed transport. God provided that through one of my brothers from the MIPC who offered to send his driver everyday with us and he continues to help us at every follow up. I believe God took care of all the minute details that were connected to my treatment.

A year later I went for a follow up and all was okay. The doctor asked me to come a year later and continue the medication. However, I suddenly developed some pain in the left armpit around the treated area, so in December 2014 I went to get that checked even though it was not time for a follow up and the Ultrasound revealed two lumps on the side which was not treated earlier. I was advised to undergo surgery to remove the lumps and send for testing. My cell members and intercessory members were constantly lifting me up to God. The wait for the results was a testing time for me, I did the surgery and went to Goa knowing well that I would get the results only when I got back. I kept calling on the Lord to help me accept his will. The results were negative... all praise and glory to God!

I got back to Muscat in Jan 2015 and on 1st Feb I had a follow up at Royal Hospital as the pain in my left armpit was unbearable and I could feel a lump, so I showed it to the doctor who asked me to do an Ultrasound again and said the pain in the left armpit was nothing to worry as it was a cyst . The Ultrasound revealed another lump on the side, that didn't reveal this before. I had loads of questions for the doctor and even for God. I just felt let down... I was upset that day and couldn't cry, didn't pray, didn't call anyone. Then that night, as Savio held my hand to pray, tears rolled down my cheek and I could only remember the words of this song..... I will sing, I will praise, even in my darkest hour, through the sorrow and the pain, I will sing. I will praise, lift my hands to honour you, because your word is true.....! Sometimes we are so focused on our problem, that we make our God look so small. It was at this time, that the prayer support of my brothers and sisters from the prayer group whose faith, uplifted my broken spirit and took me to the throne of grace.

When Bro Harry called for us to give testimonies, I decided to give glory to God and make him bigger than my problem. Believe me, He took away all the anxieties and like our theme this year... I needed to just TRUST God for all he has in store for me. My doctor in Mumbai advised me to do an Ultrasound after 6-8 weeks. I put my trust in God, who died for me and I believe, by His stripes and wounds I am healed. All praise to God for all that he is doing in my life.

- *Revathi Torres*

TESTED IN A TIGHT SPOT

Whenever David had a problem with persecution or with people, he would run to God. "O Lord my God, in You I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; and deliver me" (*Ps 7:1*). David's enemies were pursuing him, but the first thing he did was examine his own heart. "O Lord my God if I have done this, if there is iniquity in my hands" (v3) He was saying, "If I have sinned, then let the enemy persecute me."

When we are experiencing problems, the first thing we should do is examine our own hearts - not examine my enemy's heart or even God by

saying, "God why did you allow such a thing to happen?" When you find yourself in a **tight spot**, look in the mirror and say, "**Father, is there something in my life You are talking to me about? Is there some area in my life where I am not as yielded as I ought to be?**" Well, one morning I was in such a tight spot... as a teacher in a school, one of my responsibilities is the morning assembly. This particular morning, we had a visitor from our head office to evaluate the functioning of the school. Every detail would be watched under a magnifying lens and then a report would be made.

On a day as this you do not want anything going wrong..... Well to my utter surprise and horror just minutes before the assembly I discovered that the adaptor of the keyboard on which I had to play the National Anthem and some other songs was missing from the case. I frantically looked for it and even asked the helpers but no one had a clue where it was. I could see my principal signalling to start.

That morning I had read the word from (**2 Cor 5:20**) which says that we are Ambassadors for Christ... it is as if the Lord is making his appeal through us. This word really ministered to me and as I began the morning assembly on the microphone, not knowing from where the adaptor was going to come, I sensed the Lord saying "TRUST ME". After all if I was going to be an ambassador for Christ, I couldn't be getting all upset and nervous. This was my chance to trust. Even though the chance of finding the adaptor in the next few minutes was very bleak..... I decided to remain calm and trust the lord.

What followed in the next five minutes was nothing short of a miracle... just when it was time for me to play the keyboard, the adaptor was in its place! And everything went to on smoothly. The Lord was truly my Helper, a Refuge in troubled times. He sovereignly intervened and saved me from shame. He found the missing adaptor and caused it to be in place just in time.

As I pondered over the events of that day, the Lord revealed that all too often I depend on my own ability and organizational skills to see that

everything is in place and sometimes it is a form of pride because I focus on myself and how well I can manage things. That day the Lord made me realize that it is His loving hand that saved me and that I should always give him the glory. As I searched my heart I realized that I need to always be humble and never credit anything to myself.

When God tests you, He is showing you your own heart. You may say, “I know my heart.” But the truth is we do not... “The heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it?” (*Jer 17:9*) Lent is a good time to introspect and search our hearts and say, “**Jesus meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine!!**”

- *Ann Pinto*

(Some insights taken from Prayer, Praise and Promises by Warren W. Wiersbe)

MY GOD IS AWESOME (New Hymn)

My God is awesome
He can move mountains
Keep me in the valley
Hide me from the rain

My God is awesome
Heals me when I'm broken
Gives strength where I've been weakened
Forever He will reign

My God is awesome, awesome, awesome, awesome [x2]

My God is awesome
Savior of the whole world
Giver of salvation
By His stripes I am healed

My God is awesome
Today I am forgiven
His grace is why I'm living
Praise His holy name

My God is awesome, awesome, awesome, awesome [x2]

CHILDREN'S LENTEN QUIZ

1. What was the original meaning of the word "Lent"?
2. What word is never said or sung during Lent?
3. Which is the last Sunday of Lent?
4. How is the ash for Ash Wednesday made?
5. When does Lent officially end?
6. On what day during Lent is there no Mass celebrated?
7. Lent is the 40 day period prior to Easter. What do the 40 days represent in the life of Jesus?
8. Why is Lent said to be 40 days long, when the period from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday is actually 46 days?
9. When Pilate wanted to let Jesus go, the Jewish authorities said he would be (fill in the blank)
10. Where did the first Passover take place?

The Bible Quiz on Christmas received a warm response, and the 2 all correct entries were by **Rhea Yesudas & Yohan Yesudas**. Hearty congratulations to them for this effort.

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.***

**For Private Circulation Only*

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