



“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 X – ISSUE 26

MAY – JUN 2016

The Theme for 2016: “Seek and Serve the Merciful LORD” Josh:24:15

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Is my soul satisfied?

All of us have ambitions, goals and we strive to achieve these aspirations in our own way or by taking the advice of someone who has better know-how, or from people who have experienced life in its fullness. There is also a longing deep within our souls which most of us are not aware about this quest. Some struggle to meet this longing in the soul, some attempt aimlessly and some ignore and sleep over it.

How do we know what this quest is for? How do we quench this thirst? Can we meet this goal with our own strength? Can this be bought with a price?

Our worldly "temporary" ambitions can be met, of course by the Grace of God supplemented by disciplined, hard work and determination.

Pray the 6.30am call daily

We read in **1Thes 5:23** "*May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may **your spirit and soul and body** be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" which is our Trinitarian God who created us "Spirit, Soul and Body". So the longing in the inner man should be dealt Spiritually.

One of the famous sayings of St Augustine of Hippo "You have made us for yourself O Lord, and **our** hearts are restless **until they rest in you**". God's will to be done God's way only and not with our own intellect and strength.

Let us examine these 2 incidents in the Holy Bible:

2 Sam 6:2-7 "*David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Ba'ale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim. And they carried the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abin'adab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahi'o, the sons of Abin'adab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahi'o went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel were making merry before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah **put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled.** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God". We understand the intention of Uzzah was not wrong, but this was not as per the law of the Lord.*

Again we see in **1 Sam 13:8-14** *Saul waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from him. So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him and salute him. Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and*

that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down upon me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of the LORD'; so I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering." And Samuel said to Saul, **"You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God,** which he commanded you; for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be prince over his people, **because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.**" In a similar way, even the search to quench the thirst of our soul has to be met only in God's way. Too often we spend all our time seeking God for answers to our problem, when what we should be doing is JUST SEEKING GOD.

Seeking the Lord means seeking His Holy presence – Seeking His presence is seeking His face. In a way we are always in His presence, because God is Omnipresent and therefore always near everything and everyone. Secondly He is always present because of His covenant commitment to always stand by us **"Behold I am always with you, till the end of time"**

There is sense in which God's presence is not with us always, because of our deeds, disobedience, there are times we give no thought and neglect God and do things on our own and so on. For this reason, the Holy Bible repeatedly calls us to seek the Lord..... Seek His presence. Specifically to us MIPC"ites as God has given us this theme for this year.

There may be endless obstacles which we must get around in order to see Him clearly. We must flee spiritually dulling activities – All of us are aware what these things are!! We are intelligent and mature people, if we want to avoid certain things WE CAN, similarly if we WANT TO seek the Lord WE CAN SEEK HIM DILIGENTLY. Time and again, we hear this verse Isaiah 55:6, which says **"Seek the Lord while He may be found and call on Him while He is near."** Does this mean, there may be a time when we seek Him, He may not be found? What can we do without His Holy presence in our life? We will be incomplete without Him, for **He is the vine and we are the branch** John 15. The branch cannot survive on its own, it will dry up soon and thrown into the fire. So, WHY NOT SEEK

HIM NOW WHEN THINGS ARE MORE FAVOURABLE/
CONDUCTIVE.to be continued

- Henry Sanjivi

Mercy & forgiveness

Mic 7:18 *God delights to show mercy.* When we were still sinners Jesus died for us. All He wants is that we come to confession with a repentant heart and a genuine desire to fall less. During this jubilee year of mercy let us not hesitate to go for confession at least once a month and examine our conscience daily. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to show us where we fall. Awareness and Acknowledging our sin is the 1st step to victory over sin. (Listen to what we think and say, analyzing our reactions in the tough spots will help us to know ourselves better.)

A jubilee year is a year when debts were cancelled and as God cancels our own debts He wants us also to cancel debts of others. Mercy and Forgiveness is always given to those who do not deserve it. We are an Easter People we received the forgiveness of God and now He wants to pardon and forgive those who have hurt us (Parable of master and slave) *Matt 18:33-35.*

When people hurt us we react in either red hot confrontational anger or a cold suppressed anger which wants to have nothing to do with the other person. The Lord however tells us to turn the other cheek. This means He wants us to continue to stay in relationship with that person and work it out amicably. He does not want us to run away from the situation. Turn the other cheek means stay in relationship even though it will mean exposing yourself to hurts even in the future. When we have a genuine desire to do what is right in God's eyes, He will give us the wisdom we need [situations of abuse have to be handled differently].

The Lord's Prayer says "forgive us as we forgive". If we do not forgive those who hurt us, we are tying up God's hands to forgive us too. Those sins of unforgiveness become barriers to the graces and blessings God wants to shower on us. It hinders our prayers from reaching the Lord. One of the reasons for various sicknesses like cancer, chronic anxiety and heart problems recent studies have proved is unforgiveness. We are quick to see the splinter in our neighbour's eye and we fail to see the log in our own eye

since sin is down played and we justify our own wrong doing.

Love overlooks a multitude of sin. Once we have dealt with the issue we must let go of it and not bring it up again. When I keep going back to it, bitterness takes root in me which will affect other relationships too.

There may be situations and people in our life who require our constant forgiveness. Hurting people often hurt other people. St Paul had a thorn in his flesh but the Lord told him that His grace was sufficient for him and also for us. God wants us to show such people acceptance and love because we are all made in His image and likeness. He wants us to value people more than things.

PRACTICAL STEPS IN FORGIVENESS:

1. Make a decision to forgive (it must be an act of your will even if you do not feel like it).
2. Take it to the Lord in prayer.
3. See if the Holy Spirit is nudging you to talk to the person.
4. Keep blessing your enemy.
5. Pray for the person who hurt you.

Very soon forgiveness will reach your heart.

- *Carmen Fernandes*

Happy are the Merciful

“Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy”. *Mt. 5:7*

The Holy Father Pope Francis has declared this year 2016 as the ‘Year of Mercy’. What is the Year of Mercy? The Year of Mercy is an invitation – an invitation to love, kindness and unbounded generosity, Pope Francis is offering us the opportunity to encounter the incredible mercy of God. Encountering mercy means encountering God, it can transform our lives, our relationships, our work and our ability to embrace all of life.

To paraphrase this Beatitude, we might say, “They which have obtained mercy from God are so happy that they are merciful towards others”. If we have no mercy towards others, this is one proof that we have never experienced God’s mercy. But our God from the very beginning of time has always been merciful to mankind; starting from Genesis when He was

merciful to Adam and Eve in spite of their disobedience, right through the Bible you will see God's mercy at work.

Look at the world around us, we are living in a merciless world where egoism, prejudices, pride, avarice and selfishness are rampant, where 'love thy neighbor' is replaced by 'love thyself'. The world today has a few Good Samaritans – Are you one? Our attitude towards our fellow men is a more accurate gauge of our religion than all our religious ranting.

Jesus summed up the whole matter of genuine Christianity when He said: "If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'". ***Jn 7:37-38***. Christianity is, first, a coming to Christ – an inflowing of the Living Water; second, it is a reaching towards others – an out flowing. It is to be shared in love, mercy and compassion to others. If we think of Christianity as our experience, our joy, our faith with no desire to share mercifully with other – we can only boast of stagnation. Not living, vital flowing Christianity.

In this Beatitude, which we could term as the 'out flowing' Beatitude, Jesus is emphasizing the fact that we are to be unstoppable channels through which His love and mercy flow out to the people. If the Christianity which we are living by fails to condition our attitudes towards our fellowmen we become spiritual introverts, then we do not know Christ who spoke this Beatitude. Satan does not care how much you profess to know Christ but he opposes vigorously the way you live Christ – the way you become an instrument of mercy, compassion and love through which He manifests Himself to the world. If Satan can take the mercy out of Christianity, he has killed its effectiveness. The Gospel of Christ can come into full blossom only when the seed of the Spirit is buried in the rich soil of human mercy. Jesus said it is first an in-taking then out-giving, in our out-giving we would find true happiness.

What are some of the areas in today's world where we can show mercy? i) Caring for the needs of others, ii) by doing away with our prejudices and iii) by sharing the Gospel of Christ with others. If we sincerely make an effort to do this and let the Holy Spirit rule our lives and God's will to be

done; we will be channels of God's mercy flowing into this merciless world where people are longing for love, mercy and compassion – we will be giving Jesus to the world. When we meet our Savior at the end of our lives here on earth – He should say to us: “ Well done good and faithful servant, Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world “. **Mt. 25:34**

Mercy is compassion plus action. “Happy are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy”.

- *Philip Balfour*

WHY YOU SHOULD PRAY IN THE MORNING?

And in the morning; rising up a great while before; He went out, and departed into a solitary place and there He prayed Mark 1:35.

Jesus prayed in the morning! What is so important about morning prayers? Prayer in the morning is so important because you meet God before you meet the Devil.

You meet God before you meet the circumstances of life.

You talk to God before you talk to many people.

You fellowship with God before you fellowship with other people.

You listen to His voice before you hear other voices.

You hear news from Heaven before you receive breaking news from India today, Doordharshan, CNN or BBC.

You sit before God before you sit before other people.

You kneel before God before you kneel down before men.

You honour God before you honour people.

You sing before God before you hear rotten music.

You get into His Presence before you get into the presence of people.

You eat at His table before you eat any junk food and dead carcasses.

You feed your Spirit before you feed your body.

You call Jesus before you call all other small names.

You wash yourself with water- the Word of God before you wash yourself with water from city council.

You see Jesus Christ before you see yourself in the mirror.

You sweep your heart before you sweep your yard!

- *Dr. Darley Mammen*

IT STARTS AT THE TOP

It is said that the fundamental Rule for creating a service culture, or any culture for that matter, is this: ‘it starts at the top!’ It starts in the head and the heart of the leader and is passed on from one team member to the next. There is no other way it can happen.

“Culture,” it is said, “cannot be taught – it can only be caught while seeing someone significant living it! One has to experience it...to share it...to show it.” These are words paraphrasing the philosophy of Brent Harris, a top executive for Nordstorm, the retail chain known for legendary service. To change any culture, in any company, the people at the top have to live it! Because words without deeds mean nothing!

Founder of JetBlue

When Dave Neeleman started the airline JetBlue, he certainly knew the importance of leading from the front and of letting his actions speak louder than his words. His mission in this position was to create a customer service culture, and he knew all eyes would be watching every move of his. A few years ago, there was a story put out in the INC magazine written by Norm Brodsky. In it, Brodsky recalled being on a JetBlue flight when Neelman was on board. As all were buckling up getting ready for take-off, Neeleman stood up to introduce himself, “Hi everyone, I am Dave Neeleman, the CEO of JetBlue. It is my privilege to serve you today and I’m looking forward to the pleasure of meeting every one of you before we land.” As he was later handing out snack baskets he made it a point to stop for a brief chat with everyone. When it was Brodsky’s turn he told Dave that he thought it was a great idea to service his customers first-hand, and asked him how often he was able to do it. Expecting him to say once or twice a year, he said instead, “Not often enough...I get to do it about once a month.” Out of curiosity, Brodsky watched him interact with almost every other passenger. In several instances, Dave was seen taking notes and listening intently to what they had to say. In a few cases when he could not answer the question, it was that he would request a business card from the customer and say, “Someone will be in touch with you in the next 24 hours.” Even at the end of the flight, there was Neeleman, in his blue apron, leading the squad collecting the trash from the seat pockets.

“Good servants must first become good servants” runs a quote by Robert

K. Greenleaf and somehow this truth has been substantiated by all great leaders – even by the greatest, God’s own Son Jesus, when he came to earth in human form. Of him, Paul says, *“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” Phil 2:5-11*

Spiritual Sphere As Well

If this is true in commercial circles, how much more true would it not be in the spiritual sphere? Jesus advised his disciples about this important truth in the context of the Last Supper itself: “The Kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves” *Lk 22:25-27*.

It is about two thousand years ago that Jesus gave us this teaching. Looking at our track record in the Church in this regards down the centuries, today one wonders whether most Christians, even those in the highest rungs of ecclesiastical power have really even heard this advice, leave alone trying sincerely to practice it. And yet, there is no gainsaying the fact that this is the secret of all true service culture.

Eucharist is the Answer

Presuming that we want to accept this wholesome advice of experts as well as Jesus himself, where would we have to begin in this matter? It all becomes so simple when we start with our weekly or daily Eucharistic celebration in which we consciously mean what we say and do. Each Eucharist invites us to “do the memorial of Jesus” which is to make his life giving gestures our very own all through the day. As Jesus broke the bread

and gave it to his disciples, he was conveying to his Father his readiness to break his will of not wanting the cruel death of the Cross looming before him. And he remained faithful to this commitment of his to the very end. For as **Hebrews 5:7-9** puts it, “*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.* Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him...”

We therefore celebrate Eucharist precisely to express our genuine readiness to accept whatever the Father works out for us in the course of the events of each day, be it to serve another or to accept a humiliation – all in obedience to the Father’s will. And once we see ourselves joining Jesus himself in his redemptive ‘sacrifice’, nothing becomes too difficult or repulsive. This is especially true when we see our little services contributing to the benefit of others, making them happier and cheerful people.

So, having primed ourselves to join Jesus at the Eucharistic celebration itself, and then endorsing our resolve as the occasion presents itself during the day, we would find ourselves being carried along by Jesus all through the day. And further, in order to do this, we do not have to be the founder of any great innovative improvement – we are in fact, collaborators with the most fundamental and basic remedy of all the ills of human kind. For when we join Jesus in making the Eucharist truly meaningful we are united with the greatest leader of all time. And we can almost hear Jesus saying what he said when his disciples returned from their mission rejoicing, “*I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*” At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “*I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.*” **Lk 10:18-21**

Passion for the Kingdom

The most important point seems to be that each of us needs to be fired with a passion to make a deep and lasting impact wherever we are and on whomever the Lord sends into our lives. Once we have formed the habit of seeking Gods kingdom in the form of offering the other something higher and better in life, we would find ourselves just sailing along, often not even aware that we have offered the receipt of something tremendously valuable for his/her entire life. When that happens, then we can be sure that our giving is truly selfless and unself-conscious.

Finally, when it is our turn to appear before the judge on the Last Day we would certainly hear him say, "*Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.*" Then we will answer him.' Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer, Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me!' (Mtt 25:34-40)

-Fr. Erasto Fernandez, SSS

Quiz on Sts Peter and Paul

Tick (✓) the right answer

1. What was Peter doing when Jesus first saw him?
a. *Collecting taxes* b. *Casting a net into the sea.* c. *Fishing*
2. Which prophet did Peter quote from on the day of Pentecost?
a. *Amos* b. *Joel* c. *Isaiah* d. *Jeremiah*
3. Where was the lame man that Peter healed when he was on his way to the temple to pray?
a. *In the porch of the temple outside the city gate* b. *sitting with the lepers*
c. *At the gate of the temple called Beautiful* d. *By the pool at Bethesda*

4. Where (in what region) were Jesus and Peter when the latter had the startling revelation that Jesus is the Messiah?
a. Caesarea Philippi b. Samaria c. Jerusalem d. Galilee
5. What was the name of the man who had been bedridden for eight years but was healed by Peter in Lydda?
a. Aeneas b. Malchus c. Nicanor d. Barsabbas
6. What was the name of the girl who greeted Peter at Mary's house when he miraculously escaped from prison after being arrested by King Herod during the Feast of the Unleavened Bread?
a. Agila b. Tabitha c. Dorcas d. Rhoda
7. In what city the Apostle Paul was born?
a. Ephesus b. Tarsus c. Damascus d. Samaria
8. Paul was sent to preach to:
a. The Gentiles b. The Jews c. The Romans d. The Arabs
9. Who did the people at Lystra think Paul and Barnabas were?
a. Moses and Elijah b. Jupiter and Mercurius c. Gabriel and Michael d. Casper and Wendy
10. Why were Paul and Silas thrown in a Philippian prison?
a. For preaching against the Jews b. They were falsely accused of stealing c. For healing someone on the Sabbath d. For casting out an evil spirit.
11. In what city did Paul speak on the Areopagus, or "Mars Hill"?
a. Rome b. Athens c. Alexandria d. Tyre
12. Who fell out of a window when Paul was preaching?
a. Tychicus b. Syntyche c. Eutychus d. Crispus

Answers for the Easter Quiz:

(1) Commandment (2) Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (3) Aloes and Myrrh (4) 3 (5) The empty tomb (6) over 500 (7) false (8) lunisolar calendar (9) True (10) truly He is risen (11) 50 days (12) Pentecost Sunday (13) Pope John Paul II (14) Chile (15) It comes from a shell buried in the earth and emerges.

We appreciate **Susan Pinto** and **Ivy Pacheco** for participating.

Brothers and sisters, the response for the Quiz is not encouraging. We urge all to participate. Also requesting parents to motivate your children.



MIPC Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday at 8:00 pm in the Parish Hall

General Intercessory Meeting: third Monday of every month at 8:00 pm