



SIMBAHAY

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ST. JOHN BOSCO PARISH CHURCH, MAKATI CITY, PHILIPPINES

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2012

SEPTEMBER 8, FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Mama Mary, Our Greatest Aid to Salvation

By Anita S. Meily

The first word a little child learns to say is usually “Mama”. Even in our adult years, we cry out, “Mama, Mom, Mommy or Nanay” whenever we are in pain, or in deep emotional turmoil.

In fact, a friend of mine, in the midst of intense suffering in her dying hours, continuously whispered, “Mama! Mama!” There is no sweeter, more comforting word in the world than “Mama”. Mothers are heroines in their own ways – faithfully standing by their children loving unconditionally until the very end.

The lady, whose birth we celebrate on September 8, is the most perfect mother of all – our own “Mama Mary”. She was the pure vessel where the Infant Jesus resided and grew until it was time for His Mother to deliver Him to the world. Mother Mary cuddled, nurtured and brought up her Son to become the Savior of the world. And what a close relationship exists between Mother and Son!

At the Wedding at Cana, when Mary told her Son, “they (the wedding couple) have no more wine”, Jesus seemingly rebuffed her by saying, “My time has not yet come.” Nevertheless, so confident was the Mother that her Son would follow her wishes that she simply told the stewards, “Do whatever He tells you to do.” And Jesus did produce the wine!

At the foot of the cross, Mary never left her Son until He breathed His last. And it was there where her dying Son gave His Mother to us as His most precious parting gift! Hence, our endearing name for her “Mama Mary” is so apt!

“To Christ through Mary!” has been the battle cry of so many embattled human beings. Countless accounts have been recorded of how Mama Mary came to the aid of people who sought her intercession. For how can her Beloved Son refuse anything to a mother who faithfully cared for Him and steadfastly stood by Him until the very end of His life?

On a personal note, I chose Joe to be my husband because of his deep devotion to Our Lady. For 10 years, he conducted the Rosary Hour over radio DZPI every evening, rain or shine. He was also actively involved in the Rosary Movement all his life. Surely, I thought, such a man would be good husband material! And so he was, for the 40 years of our togetherness!

Christ is our King! But the Blessed Mother is the Queen of Heaven and of our hearts who will lead us to her Beloved Son!

A devoted wife and mother with a gift for words, Anita Sayoc Meily received the Gintong Ina Award for Journalism in 1983 and the Catholic Authors Award in 1989. Her book, “And Life Goes On,” collects her articles, including the ones from the column she shared with her husband, Joe Meily, “Joe and Annie: Husband and Wife Speak”. – from the website featuring 100 Outstanding Scholasticans.

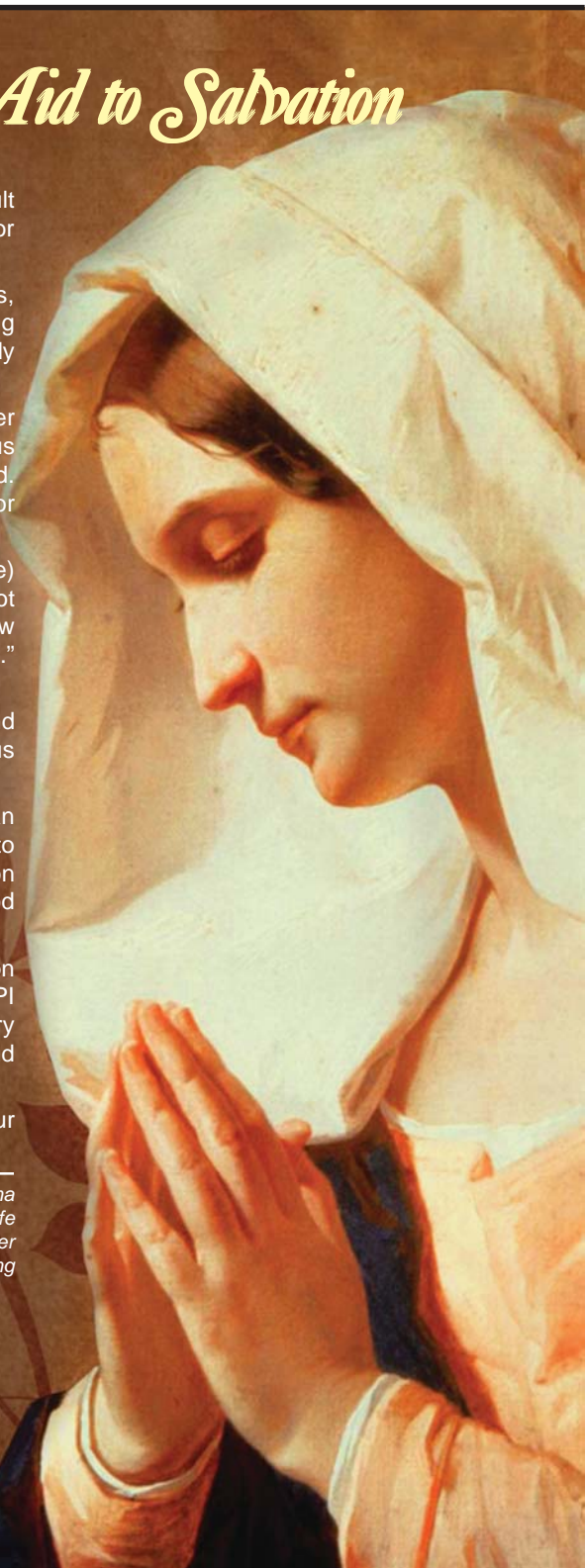
She shares this prayer to the Blessed Mother for those who are growing old.

Take my hand, O Blessed Mother,
Hold me firmly lest I fall,
I grow nervous when I am walking,
and to thee I humbly call.

Guide me over every crossing,
Watch me when I’m on the stairs,
Let me know you are beside me,
Listen to my fervent prayers.

Bring me to my destination,
With you safely – every day,
Help me with each undertaking
As the hours they pass away.

And when evening falls upon me,
And I fear to be alone,
O my dearest, Blessed Mother
Take my hand and lead me home. AMEN





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SCHEDULE OF MASSES

Monday to Friday:

6:30am • 7:30am • 12:15pm • 6:00pm

Holy Hour every Thursday after the
6:00 pm Mass

Saturday:

6:30am • 7:30am
6:00pm (Anticipated Mass)

Sunday:

6:00am • 7:15am • 8:30am • 10:00am*
11:15am • 12:30pm • 4:00pm • 5:30pm
7:00pm • 8:30pm

*with sign language interpreters

Confessions are available during all
the Masses

Adoration Chapel - open daily from
7:00am to 8:00pm

PARISH OFFICE & RELIGIOUS STORE HOURS

Monday to Friday (except Thursday)
8:00am - 11:30am • 12:30pm - 6:00pm

Thursday:
8:00am - 11:30am • 12:30pm - 4:00pm

Saturday:
8:00am - 12:00pm • 1:00pm - 5:00pm

"It's more fun in the Philippines!" This is how our tourism propagandists promote our country to attract foreign, fun-seeking tourists. Indeed, we are a fun-loving people and there are so many fun-filled places and activities that our country can offer. But the devastation wrought by the floods and earthquakes in recent weeks, have caused people to reconsider the applicability of this slogan.

Not that floods and earthquakes, among other calamities, are new to us. Each year, at least 20 typhoons visit the Philippines. Our country also belongs to the famous "ring of fire", the area in the Pacific with frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. But when mere monsoon rains brought devastating floods to Metro Manila and nearby provinces, and three weeks later, unusually powerful earthquakes destroyed parts of Samar and Bukidnon, many were surprised with the unexpected severity. Several theories and scenarios on what really happened came out.

With the raging debates over the RH Bill, many interpreted these calamities as signs of God's displeasure. But many Filipinos are against the proposed bill, why should they have to suffer too? In turn, environmentalists blame the unabated destruction of natural resources and the unmitigated use of toxic materials, which damage our surroundings. But then again, more and more citizens are becoming aware of their responsibility for the environment. And the government seems dead-serious in its waste management programs. Also, through scientific study and diligent preparation, concerned agencies are making more accurate weather and calamity predictions, thereby reducing the risks brought about by the same. Given all these, how do we understand natural calamities, especially from the Christian perspective?

Naturalists consider calamities as part of the "circle or cycle of life", where the totality of

UPDATES ON THE GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL

APOSTLE'S CREED – "I BELIEVE IN GOD"

The Profession of Faith is one of the most important parts of the Mass because it is an expression that we, as a people and as individuals, accept what we have just heard in the readings and profess all the fundamental truths of our faith. Here in the Philippines we recite the Apostle's Creed instead of the longer Nicene Creed. There are a few changes in the new translation but let us remember that although the words and phrases have changed, our faith stays the same. Now, we confess "He descended into hell" instead of the previous "He descended to the dead". "Hell" here does not refer to the place of the damned, the place of eternal punishment. It refers to the "lower realm of the universe" where ancients believe the dead from the time of Adam and Eve resided while awaiting the

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH PRIEST

DIVINE LIGHT AMONG DARK CLOUDS

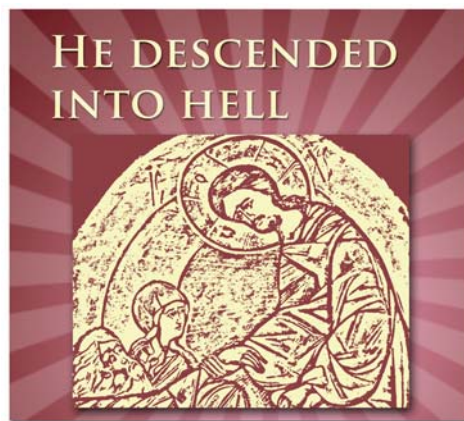


human experience, both good and bad, birth and death, destruction and development are part and parcel of human existence. From the Catholic point of view, this is called "the paschal mystery" – creation's participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. As Christ's sacrificial death led to His glorious resurrection or participation in the new life of God, so we are called to see in these negative events like floods and earthquakes, occasions of life and goodness.

We are NOT denying their destructive and negative nature; even as the Creator does not prevent these calamities from wreaking havoc. But He allows them to happen only for the sake of **goodness and salvation**. *Goodness*, because, in occasions of need and danger, the genuine goodness of people comes out in compassion, charity and solidarity. *Salvation*, because these occasions can "force" many people to think of God, pray to Him and ask for His assistance, when, otherwise, in better times, they would simply ignore Him.

And so even in the midst of destruction and seemingly wasteful encounters with nature, we see a ray of hope and enlightenment. Our God is not a vengeful master but a compassionate Father who extends His love and assistance to the needy by provoking the courage and generosity of His people to help other people. Because we are a God-fearing nation, despite the many calamities which descend on us every year, we survive and even thrive and that makes it truly "more fun in the Philippines"!

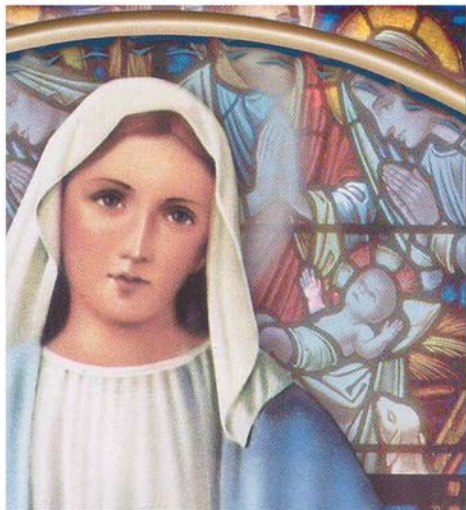
— Fr. Ting Miciano, SDB



coming of the Savior. On Holy Saturday, we believe that Jesus descended "into hell (the abode of the dead)" to rescue all the souls there and bring them with Him to heaven. This tells us that Jesus is the Savior of ALL mankind.

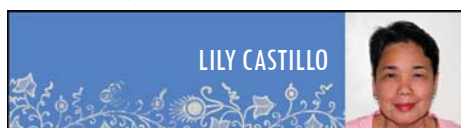
MAMA MARY, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Compiled by Rescy S. Bhagwani



As we celebrate the birthday of Our Blessed Mother, this month, it seems best for us to assess how meaningful this occasion is to us, as a gauge of the depth of our affection for our Mother.

Let us take a glimpse of how some parishioners, who I personally know to be avid fans of Mama Mary, nurture a deeply personal relationship with her. I “ambushed” each of them with the question, **“Who is Mama Mary to you, in a most personal way?”** Unexpectedly, their sincerest replies made me realize how shallow my love for Mama Mary is in comparison.



I felt goose bumps as Lily related how Mama Mary has been her dearest mother, most especially during those times when her own mother was not well, and her source of inspiration and strength, during difficult trials.

“The barren wife bears seven sons” (1 Samuel 2:5) was the clear message for Lily during a private retreat. This, along with a dream where she gave birth to many children, led her to retire early from teaching in order to focus on her volunteer work for our Parish’s PUGAD Center for Street children. Lily, who remained childless, has sustained this apostolate for over 20 years.

“Mother Lily”, as she is popularly known, is now the House Mother of the *Ang Ating Familia* Foundation, which shelters children from poor families. Without becoming a biological mother, Lily has embraced motherhood for the Foundation’s 14 wards, ages 7 to 18. Lily finds deep joy in passing on to them the motherly love she constantly and generously receives from Our Blessed Mother.



When asked about Mama Mary, Bubut’s otherwise serene facial expression lit up and transformed instantaneously into that of a happy child raving about her favorite person in the world! She talked with such infectious animation, joy and affection about the Blessed Mother.

Bubut has been a member of the Legion of Mary since she was 12. This got her involved in many catechetical works, including those for children, and those in need of the sacraments, mainly, baptism, confirmation and matrimony.

Through her devotion to our Blessed Mother, Bubut has drawn closer to Jesus. Thus, she attends Mass, receives Holy Communion and recites the rosary daily. She says the Blessed Mother occasionally appears smiling in her dreams as “Mary Help of Christians”, asking her to continue praying fervently for world peace and to humbly endure her sufferings.



Her mother would always have the young Ging accompany her to church for mass and for Marian devotions, such as praying the rosary and the novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help. In her high school years in Butuan, she would join the annual procession, trekking to the chapel on top of the hill for the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, their town patroness.

Since Ging started working in the parish in 1981, she has been assigned to weddings and in finding priests to administer the various sacraments to parishioners, such as Masses and anointing of the sick. She acknowledges Mama Mary’s constant help in her daily work. She knows in her heart that the Holy Spirit, thru Mama Mary, always guides her in her task; such that, there has never been an instance when she was unable to find a priest, when needed.

Ging’s work is not as simple as it seems, as she deals mainly with people of varied personalities and moods, priests included. She draws strength and inspiration from Mama Mary, her model of loving service, humility, patience and understanding as she deals with impatience, sometimes arrogance, and on a few occasions, desperation. She considers her work as an immense opportunity to serve the Lord by helping make the sacraments available.



Gentleness is one trait of Mama Mary which Cynthia’s parents prayed she would have when she grew up. Everyone feared that Cynthia, the only daughter among four children, would grow up to be boyish and rough. Their prayers were answered.

Cynthia started her devotion to the Blessed Mother from childhood as both her parents were strong Marian devotees. Her mother always saw Mary as a protectress who spared her from injuries from a vehicular accident; she was praying the rosary at that time. Cynthia’s father, on the other hand, required all members of the family to come together every 9 p.m. to pray the Rosary. No one was excused. One of Cynthia’s fondest memories is that once a year, their whole family would pray the rosary on air via DZPI with Joe Meily.

At seven, Cynthia got very ill, and she saw herself on the bed inside the mosquito net, wondering why she seemed to have 2 bodies. When she recounted this to her mother, it was clear that she had a near-death experience and Mary’s powerful maternal protection was re-affirmed.

Today, Cynthia considers Mama Mary to be her primary mother, so much closer to her than to her own mother. She approaches Mary for all her needs. She considers her as model when she relates to her four daughters whom she constantly reminds, together with her grandchildren, to continue their devotion to the rosary and pass this on to the next generations.



Marivi is a parishioner, who serves as a CEFAM counsellor. She joins the daily Rosary prayer after the 6:30 AM Mass. For Marivi, Jesus and Mary are always together, which is why she is so drawn to the Twin Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Mama Mary is her role model who constantly draws her closer to her Son.

Marivi has long been a Marian devotee, but last year’s visit of the pilgrim image of Our Lady of Fatima to our Parish, allowed her to have a much deeper love for and understanding of the Blessed Mother. It was then that she was able to get a copy of the book on “St. Louis de Monfort’s Consecration to Mary” written by Helmut Libietis – a must read for Mama Mary’s admirers.

SUNDAY MASS REFLECTIONS

Simbahay features the Sunday Mass Readings' themes from Fr. Sal Putzu's "Exploring God's Word".

These themes are part of a systematic approach to study and have a good knowledge of the Biblical passages which will be used in the coming Sunday Masses and to relate these readings to our lives.

Listen to Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB (General Manager and Editor, Word and Life) at *Bisperas sa Veritas* 846 AM, 5pm Saturday.



23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

Grandparents' Day
September 9, 2012 Readings

*Is 35:4-7a – The miraculous signs of the presence of God's salvation

*Jas 2:1-5 – Discrimination against the poor should have no place in a real Christian community.

*Mk 7:31-37 – The healing of a deaf-mute by Jesus arouses the enthusiasm of the people.

Theme: BUSTING THE MANY FORMS OF DUMBNESS AND DEAFNESS

Being unable to hear and speak is a serious handicap that isolates a person from the rest of society, walling him/her up in a world of silence and incommunicability. But even worse than the physical forms of deafness and dumbness are the spiritual forms of this "handicap" – the inability or the unwillingness to hear God's Word and to respond to it, or the refusal to hear the call of our neighbor and respond to it with love.

Jesus, who was able to restore the gifts of hearing and speech to the deaf and dumb man, can perform the even greater miracle of healing the spiritually deaf and dumb among us. But for this miracle to happen, we have to approach him with humility and faith, and the readiness to obey him. Then will wonders happen: we will be able to hear God's Word clearly in our hearts, and this will move us to respond to the call of our neighbors with generous readiness and to proclaim His glory by words and deeds.

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

September 16, 2012 Readings

*Is 50:4-9a – The Servant of the Lord endures all trials trusting firmly in God.

*Jas 2:14-18 – Only a faith accompanied by appropriate deeds is genuine and brings salvation.

*Mk 8:27-35 – Jesus foretells his forthcoming death and resurrection and proclaims the demands of real discipleship.

Theme: HUMAN "MESSIAHS" AND GOD'S MESSIAH

The Jews expected a glorious and victorious messiah – one who would set them free from all foreign dominations and would lead the Jewish nation to days of prosperity and power. Such was the connotation of the title "Son of David" popularly attributed to the awaited Messiah and Jesus himself.

But in God's plan, the Messiah, though really a descendant of David had very different features and a destiny that was dramatically foreshadowed in the third and fourth Songs of the Servant of the Lord – a destiny of humiliation and suffering, followed by a unique glorification that could be perceived only through faith. It would be through such suffering that the Messiah would set free not just one nation but all the peoples of the world from the servitude of sin.

This image of the Messiah was very clear to Jesus and He intended to remain faithful to it, in spite of its "bitter taste" and the shock that consequent "disappointment" would cause even to the closest of His disciples. We, too, must learn to accept God's mysterious way, believing that "He knows best" and that we will find peace only by accepting and doing His will.

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

September 23, 2012 Readings

*Wis 2:12.17-20 – The wicked plan to get rid of the just man

*Jas 3:16-4:3 – James exposes the root of all disorder and strife in the life of man.

*Mk 9:30-37 – Jesus foretells again his death and resurrection and teaches that authority is service.

Theme: LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Jesus' disciples were wrong on account of their expectation of a triumphant Messiah. They were even more wrong in their craving for some position of authority in the kingdom they expected such a Messiah would establish. Jesus set out to rectify their wrong concept about the Messiah by

emphasizing that He would be delivered into the hands of evil men and would be killed before rising from death. He likewise curbed their ambition by teaching them that, in God's Kingdom, those in authority are expected to be the servants of all, in imitation of Him who came to serve to the point of offering His life for the whole world.



26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

National Seafarers' Day
September 30, 2012 Readings

*Nm 11:25-29 – The Lord gives the spirit of Moses to 72 elders of the people.

*Jas 5:1-6 – A very strong indictment against the rich who have oppressed the poor

*Mk 9:38-43.45.47-48 – Jesus curbs the jealousy of the Twelve and exhorts all to value the Kingdom more than anything else.

Theme: OUR GOD IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD OF ALL

The temptation to be narrow-minded and exclusive is always lurking. "Church people" are not exempted from the tendency to be "parochial" and to consider the Kingdom of God as their exclusive "property," and their role in it as "untouchable." Today's first reading and Gospel challenge all of us to be broad-minded and generous toward others. Jesus, in a special manner, reminds us that the Kingdom is a much greater enterprise than what we can accomplish, and that God is free to invite others to contribute to it, each in his/her own way.

But while inviting us to share in God's broad-mindedness and generosity, with regard to participation in the Kingdom and working for it, Jesus also demands that we be strict with ourselves when it comes to vital choices in life. There are, indeed, situations and choices that are incompatible with the priorities of God's Kingdom. When faced with such alternatives, a disciple should have no uncertainty as to what to choose, even if this can entail being very demanding with oneself. The Kingdom is worth even the highest renunciation.



27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

October 7, 2012 Readings

- *Gn 2:18-24 – The creation of the woman as a suitable partner for the man
- *Heb 2:9-11 – Jesus Christ became totally similar to us that he might redeem us through his suffering.
- *Mk 10:2-16 – Jesus restates the sacredness and indissolubility of marriage.

Theme: THE MASTERPIECE AND MIRROR OF GOD'S CREATIVE LOVE

The family is the first and basic institution of human society. Its nature and purpose is inscribed in the very physical and emotional make-up of man and woman. They are incomplete in themselves, and therefore necessitate the help of "the other half" to actualize their full potentials and satisfy their emotional, affective, and physical needs. It is God Himself who wanted things to be this way from the moment of creation, and we will be happy and at peace only for as long as we follow His plan.

Unfortunately, the family has been one of the first victims of sin from the very beginning. Sin has sown in the hearts of husbands and wives the seeds of division, distrust, recriminations, jealousy, unfaithfulness, and break-ups without end. Jesus, who came to restore all aspects of our life to its original integrity, today tells us that the remedy to all these ills is not divorce but to live in fullness God's plan for the human family.

SEPTEMBER 2012 CALENDAR

02 Sun	22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
03 Mon	St. Gregory the Great
05 Wed	Blessed Teresa of Kolkota
06 Thu	Birthday of Fr. Chris Kennedy, SDB
07 Fri	1 st Friday Vigil Adoration after 6pm Mass
08 Sat	Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary
09 Sun	23 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
12 Wed	Holy Name of Mary
13 Thu	St. John Chrysostom
14 Fri	Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross
15 Sat	Our Lady of Sorrows
16 Sun	24 th Sunday in Ordinary Time
20 Thu	St. Andrew Kim Taegon & St. Paul Chang Hasang & Companions Birthday Bro. Tony Caspellan, SDB
21 Fri	St. Matthew
23 Sun	25 th Sunday in Ordinary Time
27 Thu	St. Vincent de Paul
28 Fri	St. Lorenzo Ruiz and Companions
29 Sat	Sts. Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, Archangels
30 Sun	26 th Sunday in Ordinary Time/ National Seafarers' Day

Sick Visitation – Thursdays 9AM

Holy Hour – Thursdays 6:30PM

Medical & Dental – Sundays 2:00PM

Street Mass – Saturdays 7:30PM

Visit our website for the complete Sept 2012 Calendar
<http://sjbmakati.com/parish-events.html>

Cross.

A portion of the True Cross was kept in Jerusalem in a basilica built by St. Helena. Another big portion was presented to the Emperor in Constantinople, while smaller parts (relics) were sent to various important Christian communities, which encased them in reliquaries, usually in the form of a cross. Many of these reliquaries were made from wood or precious metals and adorned with precious stones.

Another great boost to the veneration of the Cross came with its return to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. In the beginning of the seventh century, the Persian Emperor Chosroe had carried it away when he sacked Jerusalem. In 628, Emperor Heraclius was able to defeat the Persians and recover the revered Relic, which was then taken first to Constantinople and then to Jerusalem, in the spring of 629.

SEPTEMBER 14, THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS



The Exaltation of the Cross is one of the twelve great feasts in the yearly Church cycle. It commemorates two historical events: first, the finding of the True Cross and second, its recovery from Persia in 628.

THE DISCOVERY AND RECOVERY OF THE "TRUE CROSS"

An excerpt from "The History of the Cross" by Mario Collantes, Messenger of Divine Love (Vol 5, Nbr 2) available this coming October, 2012

A great boost to the dissemination of the Cross was the discovery of the cross of Christ (called "the True Cross") in Jerusalem at the time of Queen Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine. Tradition holds that while excavating the area of the tomb of Christ, three wooden crosses were found, which were thought to be the ones

on which Jesus Christ and the two thieves had been crucified. Queen Helena was obviously interested in knowing which of the three, the Cross of Christ was. But no external sign distinguished it from the other two.

Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, had the inspiration to have the three crosses carried, one after another, to the bedside of a dying woman. Touching the first two crosses did not produce any special effect in the woman, but when she touched the third, she was miraculously cured. The obvious conclusion was then drawn that it was the cross on which Jesus Christ had died. It was thence called "the True Cross" and became the object of great veneration. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross was established to celebrate the discovery of the



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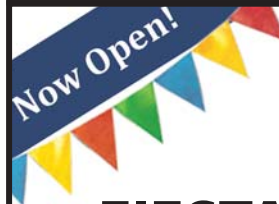
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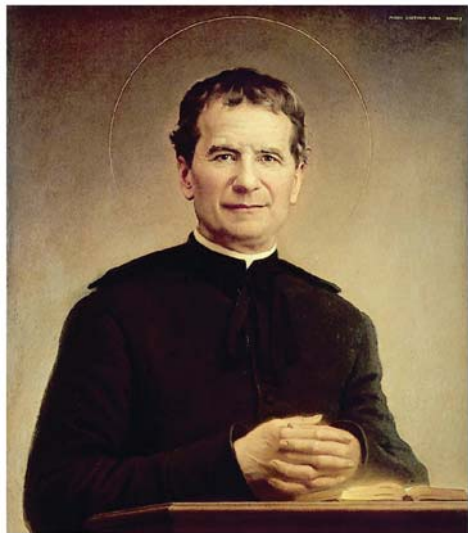
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DON BOSCO ENCOURAGES US TO PRAY

By Fr. Chris Kennedy, SDB



One of the great questions put forward by those who opposed Don Bosco's cause for canonization concerned his prayer life. "With all that he did in life, when did Don Bosco have time to pray?" was the question put to Salesian witnesses to his sanctity. The real answer came later: "When did Don Bosco NOT pray?" A fuller answer is given in the book, "Don Bosco: Union with God".

All of this, however, had an inauspicious beginning. We already know of him learning his first prayers from his mother. It was also known that he prayed a lot while working in the fields, often caught out even if he tried to be discreet about it.

A further interesting story is of John Bosco

when he was working on the Moglia farm. It was his custom to ask permission on Saturday evenings from the family to go to the nearby town on Sunday morning. Mrs. Moglia wondered why John would take the arduous journey Sunday morning after Sunday morning. One Sunday she decided to find out for herself. She left the house earlier than John was accustomed to do and made her way into town. She saw John making his way to the Church where he prayed for some time, then she observed him as he went to confession before the Mass, and finally she saw him go up to the altar rails to receive Holy Communion. Mrs. Moglia was impressed. When John got home she approached him and told him. "You do not need to ask for permission on Saturday evenings to go to town. You have permission to go every Sunday from now on."

It was a sincere recognition of the special kind of person John was modelling at that time. On top of his hard work he had time for God and he was not ashamed to show it. Later when he would talk to his boys about prayer, he was talking from his own experience of combining work and prayer in a real sense. He only insisted on short regular prayers, raising the mind and heart to God as often as one could in the day. He would invite his young charges to make the most of short, frequent visits to the Church and the Blessed Sacrament as they went to their classes, to work or to play. He copied the idea of the Oratory structure, where the Church was in the center of everything from

the saint of the Oratory, St. Philip Neri.

In our daily undertakings, too, we can find some time for God no matter how busy we may be. I often recommend to people praying in traffic instead of allowing the futility of the situation to take over in forms of anger and stress. Those who do it regularly not only pray but find peace and calm in the process as well. Many people spend a lot of time travelling and yet admit to having no time to pray. Would it not be wise to get into the habit of saying a few prayers on the way to and from work so that we cannot accuse ourselves at the end of the day of having no time for God? Very often the things we see on our way to and from work can suggest prayers – the poor who are begging need our prayers as much as our alms or irritability. The housing we notice may suggest a prayer for decent housing for all. Instead of gawking at scenes of accidents we can raise a prayer to God for those injured or affected by the accident. There are lots of ways of turning our minds and hearts to God.

St. Patrick, another popular saint, turned to the Lord in prayer, when he was kidnapped as a teenager, brought to Ireland and enslaved as a shepherd:

After I came to Ireland – every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed – the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was so moved that in a single day I would say as many as a hundred prayers, and almost as many at night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountain; and I would rise for prayer before daylight, through snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm.

RAIN – A DIVINE INTERVENTION

By Maris Katigbak-San Juan

Rain in the months of August and September is not unusual. It can even be forecasted and expected. But on a clear and sunny day in January of this year, a sudden and quick fall of rain was unusual. Let me share this short rain story with you, hoping that just like me, you will feel the amazing love of God touching our lives in the most unexpected, blessed ways.

One afternoon, I had to get a gift in Greenbelt for a nephew's wedding. Little did I know that minutes after I left, a traumatic episode would unfold in my household.

Jean, my household helper, received a call from "me" informing her that I met an accident and needed her cooperation and immediate help in getting my valuables. "I" told her, "force open my drawer, if you need to, but do it discreetly and fast, then wait. Jean fell into the trap.

When Jean was not around, by the time I

got home, another helper thought of calling her through her cell phone. Thank God, the call came through. Nervously, Jean revealed "my" predicament and that she was somewhere in Taft Avenue to help me. "But Ma'am is here looking for you", she was told. The gift of time – time enough for Jean to realize that she was a victim of a scam caller.

From across the street, the scammer, who was observing her, called Jean again and instructed her to cross the street to hand over my valuables. She was in near-panic when, wonder of wonders, a heavy downpour suddenly fell and gave her the chance to scamper away and quickly escape with all my valuables safe and sound.

I believe with all my heart that God let the rain fall that afternoon. Unusual? For January, yes, but not for the God of sun and rain and time! It was divine intervention, a small miracle from the heavens, assuring us of His presence in all places at all times.



"that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for He makes His sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. "(Matthew 5:45)

NEWS BRIEFS

MAMA MARIA – OUR MAMA MIA!

By *Mary Grace Gueriba*

“Kakaibang Marian Celebration” – a different Marian Celebration

Last August 26, the Youth Ministry opened the Marian Sports Fest with the theme **Mama Maria – Our Mama Mia**, a two month celebration in honor of our blessed Mother Mary. On September 8, we celebrate the Blessed Mother’s birthday and every October, we honor her as Queen of the Most Holy Rosary

It is a sports fest with a twist: boys will play volleyball and girls will play basketball. Each organization was asked to form a team. Unlike the usual sports fests, this one encourages participants to play for fun, rather than to play to win.

It was a prayerful opening ceremony, beginning with a performance by the SJB Rondalla. Next came the Ampons with a

touching interpretative dance of the song “Who Am I?”. An image of Mary Help of Christians, the Games’ muse, was then carried in procession and brought on stage. Everyone prayed five Hail Marys before and after forming small groups and sharing their experiences. Fr. Favié Faldas, SDB of SCYM gave a short talk on Mary Help of Christians. Then Fr. Rector Chris Kennedy, SDB blessed the participants and the sports equipment, after which, Fr. Dennis talked briefly on the coming sports fest.

As a surprise, DBYC leaders facilitated “Salesian Volleyball” which was like regular volleyball but with as many players and balls, as desired. Everyone had a good time hitting and dodging balls.

The sports fest started on the 1st Saturday of September and will end on the last Sunday of October. The schedules of games are posted outside the Youth Ministry Headquarters in the DBYC Gymnasium. The games will be scheduled from 5:00 - 8:30 PM on Saturdays and 1:00 - 5:00 PM on Sundays.



NOTHING UNUSUAL: OUR BEATO PEDRO CALUNGSOD

By *Pam T. Roldan*



On October 21, 2012, San Pedro Calungsod will join the Roll of Saints as the 2nd Filipino Saint, during canonization rites in the Vatican.

Visit this website for the canonization activities of BL Pedro: <http://www.cebuardiocese.org/Cebu/events-activities/>

There was nothing unusual about the life of soon to be San Pedro Calungsod. Nothing was unusual about a young man leaving family and friends to volunteer to join some missionaries in some far flung island, in the 17th century.

San Lorenzo Ruiz, our first Filipino saint, had almost the same fate. Both men were sent to foreign lands working with missionaries: Lorenzo in Japan, Pedro in Guam. Lorenzo was tortured to renounce his Christian faith and died hanging head down in a pit, yet hanging on to his faith in God to the end. His feastday is on September 28.

So little is written about Pedro, he was from the Visayas, and nothing more is known about his family. He was among the young catechists trained by the Jesuit missionaries who took them along to the Ladrones islands in 1668 (then a part of the old Diocese of Cebu), to evangelize the native Chamorros.

Life in the jungle island was hard; provisions for the mission did not arrive regularly. All these did not deter the missionaries; the mission grew and many were converted. The first church was built in Agana, in Guam. Landrones islands were renamed Mariana, in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

But some natives mistrusted the missionaries and accused them of causing the death of sickly Chamorro infants with poisoned baptismal water. On April 2, 1672, Pedro accompanied Padre Diego Luis de San Vitores, the Jesuit Superior of the Mission, to secretly baptize a native child with the consent of the Christian mother. The father, who violently opposed the baptism, and another native threw spears at Pedro, who being young and agile, could have evaded the attack and escaped, even defeated his aggressors. But he wouldn’t leave Padre Diego behind, nor did he have any weapons as Padre Diego forbade his missionaries to carry them; in the end, Pedro was killed. He was about 17 years old.

As Padre Diego was giving Pedro his final absolution, he too, was killed. Both men were then stripped, tied with heavy stones, and their bodies thrown into the sea, never to be found.

After more than 300 years, in October 6, 1985, Padre Diego was finally beatified on

the 20th anniversary of the diocese of Agana. Through the priest’s beatification, the unusual story of the life and bravery of his youthful companion in martyrdom was discovered. Fifteen years later, on March 5, 2000, Pedro, too, was beatified “Blessed Pedro Calungsod” by Pope John Paul II. His feast day is on April 2.

In the homily of the beatification, Pope John Paul II said: “In a spirit of faith, marked by strong Eucharistic and Marian devotion, Pedro undertook the demanding work asked of him and bravely faced the many obstacles and difficulties he met. In the face of imminent danger, Pedro would not forsake Fr. Diego, but as a ‘good soldier of Christ’, preferred to die at the missionary’s side.”

This much we know of Pedro: that he listened, he believed, he obeyed, he endured, and died. Our Beato Pedro himself would have agreed that indeed there was nothing unusual about his life and what he had done. To commit to God’s love and plan is expected of any follower of Christ.

As we celebrate the ordinary life of Blessed (and soon, our Saint) Pedro Calungsod, let us all be unusually simple like him. Let us all be unusually faithful like he was. Let us all be unusual followers of Christ our Lord.

As I write this, a simple, honest, hardworking, beloved government official had just passed away. Jesse Robredo’s life, seemed too short-lived, considering his many other possible contributions. Like Pedro’s, we may regret his short life but we trust that God works in mysterious ways. And just like Blessed Pedro, whose purpose we slowly begin to understand, with his simplicity, obedience, humility, charity, generosity, suffering, may Jesse be a model of an unusually good man for all humanity to follow.