

October - December 2017

Pallotti Notes



"Hail Holy QUEEN MOTHER of MERCY"

Wish You A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year 2018



**May the Babe in the Manger Bring Peace, Joy
& Happiness in your Lives & Enrich your Families
with the Blessings of Christmas!!!!**

**Season's Greetings from Fr. Charles, Fr. Balraj,
Fr. Jerry & Fr. Lawrence !!!!**

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A Bimonthly News Bulletin of **St. Vincent Pallotti Church**

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From the Editor's Desk

HAIL HOLY QUEEN “MOTHER OF MERCY”

Each Christmas comes to remind us of the triumph of God's merciful love over the wretched sinful humanity. It proclaims of the unceasing love of God for the world. Out of his “Merciful Love” he sent his only son to save this wretched world. God's mercy is the reason for our celebration. Pope Francis too affirms that Christmas is a sign of God's Mercy to us.

It is the incarnation of God's Mercy. God's Mercy takes “Form” in Jesus Birth. It is at Christmas where we witness the Mercy of God in Human Flesh and Blood. Jesus became man like everyone of us. God became like us in all things but sin. But to carry out this plan of God he needed an instrument. In the entire Humanity God found only Mary Our Mother to be a fitting instrument. A proper Channel which could help in letting God's Mercy flow in this world.. She allowed herself to be used by God to bring Salvation to the entire humanity.

Through her affirming “YES” she became the Mother of God. She played a vital role in drenching the world with God's Mercy. Realizing this greatest privilege, a singular grace which God gave her, she sings the Praise of God. “**Magnificat**”, a song of Praise by Mary, is an expression of her “gratitude” for God's act of mercy.

In the Gospel of Luke we read how Mary recounts the “Mercy of God” has shown his people. God remembered his mercy which he promised to his people, says Mary Our Mother. From that moment on we witness how merciful Mary acted in her life.

As soon as she experienced the bountiful Mercy of God she takes on the journey to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She continued in her merciful nature which makes her so peculiar and different from others. Out of Mercy for us, she sacrificed her only son on Calvary. She allowed her son to carry the cross and die a painful and excruciating death. Even after Jesus left the world today she continues to appear in many and various places.

She calls for repentance of heart and union with her son. Her incessant and loving intercession helps every one of us to become close to her and her son.

Every time we pray the rosary, we affirm Mary our mother to be a mother of Mercy in the prayer, Hail holy queen, Mother of mercy. She continues to be the face of God's Mercy to her Children. The mother church also teaches and believes that never was it known that anyone fled to your protection was left unaided.

Mary still promotes the Mercy of God as always. It is for us to realize her Merciful nature and come to her for her loving protection. May our Mother bless us and our families in this Christmas Season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2018 to you all !!!!!!!

Fr. Balraj. SAC



LAST EVENING, THIS MORNING, THAT CHRISTMAS

Last evening, Church carols came singing
Lead singers in chorus chore ringing
Quotas in songs and smiles to every home
And merry making cheers for honeycomb

Last evening, seated on Church benches
Old women traded woeful punches
With the young, for an out of turn hearing
To confess to priests, sins and their rearing

Last evening, the charity purse string
Of the gentleman loosened to bring
His show of generous heart running river
Donated thirty pieces of silver

Last evening, the mom prided her kid
For the tableau showed him stage mid
So many talents did vie for the role
But for her hubby's clinking glasses dole

Last evening, wearing old apparel
At solemn midnight Mass with carol
The fate stricken girl greeted her neighbor
Drew a response feeble with great labour

This morning, the chill moistened the eye
On the Christmas Crib did the drop lie
Then did the message dawn, that far away
From the cacophony of power and pay
It was not the well heeled or well oiled
To the Lady presumed to be soiled
by the Carpenter who with a donkey,
Wise men, shepherd and animals levee
that the first Christmas invite was sent
at a venue in a stable lent.

MARIA PALLIKUNNATH

BECOMING GOD'S ANAWIM

I am reminded of the Speaking Tree which usually speaks well through its quotes. A recent one by J. Rumi reads, "Raise your words, not voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder."

This is exactly what Pope Francis did during his recent visit to Myanmar and was under the digital spotlights and sound bites whether he would utter the word, "Rohingya." He had been advised against its usage in the larger interests which he has respected.

And so without using the word he has highlighted the need for supporting the refugees, the marginalised and those who are denied of their human rights. And while in Bangladesh as he encountered some of these refugees hearing their stories and bruises, he echoed, these are our brothers and sisters who have not lost their hope. They believed God is intervening in their lives.

This probably became the very reason that he called these refugees "the image of the living God," and urges humanity not to look the other way. He went prophetic when he added, "The presence of God today is also called Rohingya".

I think it is meaningful in the context of this beautiful season of Advent, awaiting the great feast of God visiting our planet that we rediscover the story then being replayed in our world today. For even the pregnant Mary and Joseph were refugees who had to flee and found a world telling them that there is "no inn" for them and the baby (life) to be born.

And so we can add safely that "the Presence of God then was called Mary." Like the Rohingya now, Mary already then 2000 years ago exhibited great dependency upon God. She emptied herself and placed great surrender into being the handmaid of God.

And the expression used in scriptures for living out such faith and attitude is the **"anawim of God."**

Usually this expression is translated as "the poor of Yahweh", but it is more than just the poverty. And this changes the rules of the game we apply in life. The spirituality of the "anawim", reflecting the mentality of Jesus, is characterised mainly by dependence and openness with regard to God.

The "anawim" are simple and sincere, they spontaneously cling to God, are empty of self. Their ego is nowhere visible. With childlike simplicity they have recourse to God in all their needs: **material and spiritual.**

God has become their own "Abba": a living and loving Father. All their relations with God are pervaded by a quiet trust and trustful confidence. All these particular virtues are in reality the result and flowering of a remarkably deep faith. Spiritual writer Bermejo, in his book, "Alone with God alone" offers us some noteworthy insights.

Such faith is like the hidden root of a tall, healthy tree that produces a variety of flowers and fruits:
the virtues of the "anaw.

The visible fruits of the tree are conspicuous testimony of the strength of the root. He says, this spirituality goes to the heart of the discipleship preached by Jesus produces people who are open to God, confident trustful, poor and lowly in their own eyes, dependent on God, simple, childlike, joyful, peaceful, restful, unperturbed. The “anaw” cannot boast of their own achievements, for they know they owe everything to God. Perpetual receivers who are ready to be filled by God! When everything is said and done, the “anaw” is a person caressed by God, and the caresses of the “Abba” make them genuinely humble and deeply grateful.

Mary, the “anaw” lived out her “Yes” to the Father’s plan in response to the annunciation by the Angel Gabriel. When we look at Mary we see this dependence on God and we discover that she surrendered even though she did not fully comprehend the entire picture.

This we extract from the scriptural verse in the Gospel of Luke which says, “Mary pondered all these things in her heart.” She responds with her being, “I am the **Handmaid of the Lord.**”

It is beautiful to see deeper that Mary realised that she is raw ingredient and is being shaped personally as a potter shaping. And she submits because she is aware that, she is Hand made by God. Too many of us believe in mass produced, factory and machine made.

Not so Mary who knew she was Hand made by God. And hence Mary is a model as the anawim of God.

This enables us to reach out to others, like Mary reached out to Elizabeth. We too are called to reach out to the Poor.

Pope Francis recently said, “The poor are our passport to paradise”. What a telling metaphor as we all know that without a passport, leave alone enter another country, we cannot even enter an airport. Each of us is to be inspired by this into becoming the anawim of God which spontaneously lends us to reach out to the poor.

And while I think we as a community haven’t yet got this passport, I must add our applications for it have been accepted by God. And I say this because we have celebrated the first world day of the poor. And it is with joy that I encourage you for being witnesses as you stepped forward to reach out to the poor of our vicinity.

The response received towards the “Stay Healthy Kit” and the “Take Care kit” is a blessing to our poor.

Our charity towards our brethren brought joy and relief to about 170 families. This is not meant to be an annual event in the life of the church or our personal lives but meant to be an everyday beatitude.

And I feel sure that as a community and as persons we will strive to be creative, joyful, successful and professional in our modern world. To these we also add becoming the “anawim of God.”

May God who became poor in a stable in Jesus become the reason for the season for even Jesus is “**God’s anaw**”: life of total dependency on his Father!!

Fr. Charles Fernandes. SAC

THE MYSTERY OF INCARNATION

We are waiting to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God! The immense and infinite God, the God whom the universe cannot contain made Himself small, a tiny Babe, confined in the womb of a young maiden, cradled in her arms, sleeping in her warm lap, sheltered in a stranger's stable. Two thousand years ago He was born in a stable, in a lowly manger, in an insignificant town and yet even today we recall with awesome wonder His birth; the Incarnate mystery of the Word becoming flesh is re-lived even today.

At this moment let us reflect on 3 questions:

1. In what situation was Jesus born?
2. What is this mystery of Incarnation? Why did God become a human being like us?
3. What is the message of Incarnation for us today?

To the 1st question – In what situation was Jesus born – the Gospels present to us a very rosy picture about a silent night and the bright star light and baby Jesus lay cuddled in the swaddling clothes. Yet Fulton Sheen in his book 'The Life of Christ' narrates very beautifully the real circumstance in which Christ was born and I quote:

“Mary and Joseph searched in vain for a place where HE, to whom the heaven and earth belonged, might be born. Could it be that the Creator would not find a home in creation? In fact, there was room for anyone in the inn who had a coin to give the innkeeper, but there was no room for Him who came to be the Inn of every homeless heart in the world.

And Thus In The Filthiest Place In The World, A Stable, Purity Was Born.

A stable would be the last place in the world where one would have looked for Him.

The Creator came among His creatures and was ignored by them, God came among His own but was not received by His own – God became homeless at home and lied in the manger where they didn't expect Him. And that is just why it missed Him. **** For Divinity is always where one least expects to find it.”

To the 2nd question – Why did God choose to become man? – We read in the Gospel of John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son ...” – Yet we rationally cannot understand how God can become man? How the infinite can become finite and how the eternal and the temporal, the creator and creature become one? It is an absolute paradox of bringing together two things which are most unlike that is God and man. However it is the gift of faith which makes a person to believe this incomprehensible fact.

Søren Kierkegaard, a philosopher explains this mystery very nicely by narrating the parable of 'The King and the Maiden.' There was a very powerful king. Every statesman trembled before his power. No one dared breathe a word against him, for he had the strength to crush all opponents. And yet this mighty king was melted by love for a humble maiden who lived in a poor village in his kingdom. How could he declare his love for her?

If he brought her to the palace and crowned her head with jewels and clothed her body in royal robes, she would surely not resist – no one dared resist him. But would she love him? She would say she loved him, of course, but would she truly? Would she be happy at his side? How could he know for sure?

If he rode to her forest cottage in his royal carriage, with an armed escort waving bright banners, that too would overwhelm her.

He wanted a lover, an equal. He wanted her to forget that he was a king and she a humble maiden and to let shared love cross the gulf between them. For it is only in love that the unequal can be made equal. The king, convinced he could not elevate the maiden without crushing her freedom, resolved to descend to her. Clothed as a beggar, he approached her cottage with a shabby cloak. This was not just a disguise – the king took on a totally new identity – He had renounced his throne to declare his love and to win hers.

That is exactly what Jesus did for us by His Incarnation. In the Gospel of John we read: ***“I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. (Jn 15:15)*** Thus the answer to the mystery of Incarnation, about how could God become a human being like us is LOVE.

To the 3rd question - What is the message of Incarnation for us today? We read in the Gospel of Luke the message that the heavenly chorus of angels sang at the birth of Jesus: ***“Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on earth.” (Lk 2:14)***

Glory to God in the Highest – The birth of Jesus was just the beginning; for by His life Christ would give glory to His Father. St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians says: Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God - a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God

has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2: 5-11)

Peace to His people on Earth – The birth of Christ brought peace to the people on earth. The Shepherds with their flock hurried towards the manger; the wise men from furthest kingdom came to pay homage to the tiny babe. Their hearts might have been filled with peace looking at the serene face of the tiny child. This same child would bring peace to millions of people – starting with the married couple of Cana, to the sick, the lame, the deaf, the blind Bartimeus, to the distressed heart of the widow of Nain by raising her Son to life and finally Jesus would say to His disciples: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.” (Jn 14:27) That is the message of Christmas to all of us – That we may, by our lives give glory to God and be instruments of peace in this world torn apart by hatred and love.

In filthiest place in the world, purity was born. Thus we are called to be vigilant to find Jesus in the unexpected events and people of our life. And we are called to do this by remembering the Love that God has for us, just like the king had it for the poor maiden. And all this is possible only if Jesus is born in our hearts today. For what if Christ is born a thousand times in Bethlehem, but if He is not born in our heart?

Let us pray for this grace during this Christmas season, that Christ may be born in our hearts and that we may be able to give glory to God by our life and become people who sow the seeds of peace in our homes, families, our church and the society. Let's have a Reason to celebrate this Joyful Season!

- Fr. Jerry C. De Costa. SAC

Let's Walk in the Footsteps of Mary

People try to imitate those whom they love and admire. They try to imitate the styles and mannerisms of the film stars, cricket fans and the other political leaders.

All of these, including our desires possessions to which we display so much importance and spend our precious time. Could we Christians have a better model than Mary, the Mother of Jesus?

For all Christians here is the person par excellence, a prized Jewel, a treasure to uphold and possess. She would be the way for all of us to Jesus, a bliss that we would enjoy which no person on Earth or a thing can give us. Earth is a temporary shed and all that it contains is just passing and fading.

A desire for that which is above and eternal, at the same time our eyes fixed on Mary our Mother for her kind assistance, for sure she would never send us back empty handed. Mary, the mother of Jesus, stands before us as an example of hopefulness. She is the model of all that the church seeks to be. She is open to the will of God, compassionate to the needs of others and hopeful about all that life challenges her to believe.

Mary is a woman who deeply believed in the transforming power of God's word "Blessed is she who hoped that the Lord's words to her would be fulfilled (Lk 1:45). Faith in God animated her life. It filled her with joy and it carried her in moments of sorrow. She trusted confidently in God's presence and help.

Mary has an honoured place within Christian devotion. She is holy and special but not because her life is supernaturally different from ours.

She is special precisely because she walked the very road that the Gospel is inviting us to walk.

If Mary our Mother could sacrifice her life in doing the will of God, then why would she not help us in our needs or on the road of that awaiting reward prepared for all. Taking a few instances from the life of Mary, we could observe that she brought to life every word that preceded from above.

Mary the Mother of Jesus was the first and best follower. In the Annunciation we have the angels greeting to Mary, "Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee". Here we have God breaking into the existence of an ordinary, simple girl from Nazareth, choosing her to be the mother of His Son. Questions, doubts, fears crowd the mind of Mary but her passionate love for her God and deep trust in his ways, brings her response, Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done to me according to thy word. Mary invites us to think about ways to be like Jesus and to change for the better. What better way can we do it than by looking back at her life and following in her steps



After Marys encounter with God at the Annunciation, she goes with haste to visit her cousin Elizabeth. It tells us that service is a natural outflow of an encounter with God.

Mary, we are told went as quickly as she could. Forgetting herself and her own needs she hurried through the hills and valleys to help Elizabeth who was also expecting a baby. Mary knew herself to be the mother of Jesus yet it was in this ordinary action, she fulfils her extraordinary mission. She calls us to reach out to others as she did.

The mockery, the scourging, the crowning with thorns were over. Jesus was led to carry the cross. Mary goes out to meet Jesus as he heads his way to Calvary where our redemption will be wrought.

As she accompanies her son to the cross, she shared in spirit the pain of each step along that path. Though others had fled she could not leave the side of her Son. So deeply did she love him, his pain was her pain. She was filled with sorrow but she continued to believe in the face of unbelievable sorrow and this hope came from trusting God.

This sacrifice of Calvary is what we commemorate at our Eucharistic table. Calvary was dark. For three hours it grew darker. Mary stood by the cross to share his crime. That crime was loving us too wildly. Mary alone knew that this ashen face streaked with spittle and with blood was the very face of God. She knew that Jesus was hanging from those nails to make reparation to God the Father for all the sins of the world.

She would stand there and make reparation for the world to the Son. And as she stood there and experienced his death once again she spoke her "YES" to God.

Mary was important not only for the coming of Christ but also for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It was with her, as the book of Acts tells us that the apostles persevered in prayer.

The disciples were living in fear, hiding away in Jerusalem in that upper room. Yet they were able to renew each hour their faith in Jesus because they found each day in his mother patience and ever living hope. She prayed with them to the one whom her son would send, comforted them in their troubles, calmed their fears through her own serenity. Her attitude was like a balm to them, deeply consoling and strengthening.

Many of us lack hope. But Mary shows us how to face the difficulty and pain of human experience with confident hope. To have Christian hope is to look to the resurrection and believe that even in the battle of death, Jesus brings life. To have Christian hope is to believe, with Mary that Jesus can and will bring that same new life to the areas of death and emptiness within our own experience. Every action of Mary revealed her confidence that God would not abandon her.

Fr. Juston Simoes, SAC
Asst. Incharge, Daman Missions

A DIOCESAN YOUTH TESTIMONY...

7th Asian Youth Day, Indonesia – My Journey into ‘Knowing Jesus’

The Journey for Asian Youth Day 2017 did not begin on 29th July 2017 as per the official sources. But rather, months earlier in March 2017 when I was selected as one of the delegates from the Archdiocese of Bombay. The excitement bottled up till the day of departure with mixed feelings but ONE HOPE to know and experience Jesus. I was in an alien country with people from diverse cultures throughout Asia but never for a moment, did I feel out of place. The love of Jesus was the sole factor that united multicultural youth as one Asian Holy Catholic Church.

On reaching Palembang, we Indian delegates were given a warm welcome at the Airport with their traditional dance and a Shawl for the ladies and Crown for men by the Archdiocese of Palembang. This really refuelled our spirits after a tiring journey of four connecting flights. We then headed to St. Peter’s Church.

As we stepped down at the venue, we saw hundreds of youth and lay person from the parish awaiting our arrival in their midst. We felt like Bollywood celebrities as the crowd welcomed us with the loudest of cheer and placards saying ‘Namaste India’ and ‘Aapka Swagat Hai’ along with dancers in ethnic attire heartily performing indigenous dances leading us into the parish. We were served authentic Indonesian cuisine of their staple food rice and a wide range of meat (beef and chicken), noodles, dumplings and soup, accompanied by visual entertainment through a cultural programme.

The evening mass at St. Peter’s Church where the message to ‘*Know Jesus*’ was emphasized on, than to ‘*Know about Jesus*’. Post mass, we had an opening ceremony for the Days in Diocese (DID) and then departed to our respective parishes.

I was sent to Hati Kudus (Sacred Heart). As we reached, our foster families were waiting to welcome us not only in their homes but hearts as well. My brother David, son of Antoni & Yuanita never left any stone unturned to make me feel comfortable.

Apart from the sightseeing and fellowship, one of the activities in DID was to prepare Indonesian delicacies like Pempek and Tekwan with our foster families in our parishes. It was a unique experience altogether. I made Pempek- boiled fish balls. It tastes good but different as compared to Indian dishes. Spice is not their taste, so even a little spice in the chutney was regarded as very spicy.

That’s when I realised why in the old days, the foreign traders came to India – specially for our spices! With so many events and activities, I succumbed to an injury with a swollen ankle, sad and in excruciating pain as I surrendered myself to Jesus during the final day of the Days in Diocese at Hati Kudus Church, Palembang.

Then the Lord worked in His time, in His way through Erni and Olap, my Indonesian friends massaging my foot and giving me relief. The parish priest gave me a balm, Geygey got an icepack and one of the parent Mr. Victor Salim rushed to the pharmacy and bought me a painkiller.

These acts of care filled my heart with joy and I was deeply moved by their actions as I thanked Jesus for all the blessings in disguise. I kept up my spirit and tried to make the most of my time with them. We had games followed by the mass which marked the beginning of the end to the DID (Days in Diocese) programme. As we departed with fond memories, DID was just a starter from the menu, the real main course was the Asian Youth Day, Yogyakarta.

On landing at Yogyakarta, four smiling faces were ready to welcome us – Aby, Nindia, Rosa and Beta. Right from the beginning till the end these were the ‘Fantastic Four’ for the delegates of India. Have a problem? They’ll find the solution. The JEC- (Jogja Expo Center) was a fantastic venue to house more than 2000 youth from all over Asia. Youth speaking different languages, culture, ethnicity having absolutely nothing in common except for their love for Jesus all under one roof united and singing His praise. This sight mesmerized me and I believe that it’s possible only because of Jesus. We began interacting with each other and more than finding similarities, we enjoyed knowing each other’s differences and uniqueness. There was learning and exploring at every step, right from the opening ceremony with the cultural performances from every country (I was one of the performers for India) to the Workshop stalls wherein every country displayed their uniqueness, from the Exposure, where we visited different places and interacted with the local churches in Yogyakarta, to the dialogue exchange and talks from esteemed personalities.

Even though I was exhausted at the end of the day, there was a burning desire in my heart to make the most of this experience. The Taize prayers followed by confession transformed many youth as I saw them

surrendering all of their pain, troubles, insecurities, and offering their hearts to Lord Jesus.

As so many events were being unfolded and transformation happening within everyone, I pondered ‘How can we love each other in spite of so many differences’ and then ‘**The Holy Trinity**’ lit up in my mind and I realized that Jesus loves the uniqueness in each one of us as God The Father, The Son and Holy Spirit are three unique persons living in perfect harmony and its love that unites them. And as written in the scripture that ‘We are made in His image and likeness’, so we are bound to be diverse and unique, it’s in our DNA. Hence, the Trinity is the perfect example of Unity in Diversity. I started looking at the world with the eyes of the Trinity and Yes! All I can see is **LOVE**. This is one feeling from the heart that I wish to share with you – stop looking at diversity through the lens of pride, selfishness and hatred. Remove it off and see the diversity in our world with the lens of the Trinity and you will be amazed to realize that guided by love, unity in diversity lies in the heart of the Trinity which is the reason for the diversity in our world.

My whole perspective about our world has changed, a tiny bell rang in my heart reminding me that during the evening mass at St. Peter’s Church, Palembang, the message of getting to ‘**Know Jesus**’ rather than ‘**Knowing about Jesus**’ was preached. And indeed at the end of the AYD 2017, I can say that ‘I know Jesus a little bit more.’

Note: The entire event was live streamed on YouTube, just type ‘Asian Youth Day 2017’ and ‘Days in Diocese, Palembang’ to experience the magic yourself.

Darryl Dmello
St. Vincent Pallotti Church, Marol
Archdiocese of Bombay, India.

Mary - Mother of Mercy

As a child, my mother inspired me to do greater things! I saw her work relentlessly to support the family not just financially but also spiritually bringing up my siblings and I with a strong foundation in faith.

She firmly believed in the power of prayers and Mother Mary was her role model.

Mother Mary is indeed a source of inspiration and strength to all. She was loving and kind, attentive to God's Word, and obedient to His will. With such a firm foundation, Mary was so favorably disposed to God that she did not hesitate to reply to archangel Gabriel with her words "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:31,38).

Being the Mother of God's only child, Mary performed her duties with obedience and love. She is the epitome of mercy; we most lovingly address her as 'Mother of Mercy' each time we recite the prayer of *Salve Regina, Mater Misericordiae...* (Hail Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy...). In the words of Pope Francis, 'Mary has experienced the divine mercy, and has hosted the very source of this mercy in her womb: Jesus Christ.

Mother Mary has shown to us that being merciful is the way we can reach out to one another and spread love to all those around. We see her acts of mercy, for example, at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11).

In the wedding, when Mary noticed that the banquet has run out of wine, she told her son Jesus about it. Mother Mary was caring and saw the need of others; she reached out to them. She prompts us to be there when your community needs you, to help those who are in need of it. Another instance where we strongly see Mother Mary as the Mother of Mercy is the Lamentation of Christ. After Jesus was crucified, his body was removed from the cross and his friends mourned over his body.

One specific type of Lamentation depicts only Jesus' mother Mary cradling his body; known as *Pietà* (Italian for 'pity'). Mary shows us how strong and firm in faith she was, to offer forgiveness to the people who scourged and caused pain and finally death to her only son, Jesus. She believed in God's plan for her family.

Mother Mary continues to bless us and intercede for us even today. Her apparitions at Fatima also have given hope to the children and the world of her love for mankind and through this, her devotion only grows stronger.

The world of today need more of Mother Mary.

May we all follow Mary's footsteps in promoting a merciful culture and spreading love around you.

Rancy D'Souza
Infant Jesus Community

...AND THE EMMAUS JOURNEY CONTINUES...

The Confirmands were led on a spiritually uplifting experience at their **E3 (*Ego Eimi Emmaus*) Retreat** at Carmel Oasis, Karjat from 16-18 October 2017. The Emmaus journey of discovering the '**I AM**' received a full house endorsement of the fact, that their initial idea of a 'Retreat' scaled a paradigm shift. They say...

"I heard everyone say retreats are for the old but the truth is, it's for all, young and old...it's a place where you find peace, happiness and joy, most importantly, patience to be with God."

"Everything there was so beautiful and meaningful... every moment spent there was a moment spent in God's presence."

"All sessions brought a new realization about ourselves. The E3 journey will always be in my book of best memories."

"Initially, I thought this 'retreat' would be lifeless, tiresome, irksome and boring but quite contrary to my belief, it was lively and spiritually enriching! It gave us a chance to peep into ourselves and 'Know who we are'."

"The sessions conducted by Deacon Ivan were fantastic! Amazing! There was a lot to learn from him as to who we are and what we can give to this beautiful world."

"We all pray to the Lord for things, but this experience was different. The perfect blend of disciplined prayer as well as innovation is what made me connect to God on a whole different and new level."

"It was heart touching for me when each catechist prayed over each of us individually. A personal prayer meant only for me."

"In the spirit of testimony and honesty, the days prior to the retreat were filled with regret, indifference and prejudice toward the whole concept. But, it was an extremely well planned and well executed retreat and I loved every single minute of it. I wish it was more than 2 days."

"The prayer services were so meaningfully conducted... The 1st one made me cry a lot and helped me realize how important it is to value my family and my close ones. The 2nd one made us walk in darkness alone and showed us that on the darkest days, Jesus' light will shine for us."

"Deacon Ivan is a dedicated man who follows God's ways and he loves his youth."

"Fr. Lawrence was the best. He just didn't leave that guitar and made us all join him in the praise and worship."

"The E3 was a spiritual and prayerful journey with Jesus in the most creative and sophisticated way that I had never even imagined."

"After leaving the retreat centre, I felt like I was a new person walking out of the gates, ready to face challenges because I knew I had God by my side."

Confirmation Candidates (2017-2018)

MARY: MODEL IN PROMOTING THE CULTURE OF MERCY

Our Lady is our heavenly mother. Today she offers mankind the message of her son, that it should live in our hearts and that we spread it to all, without pomp, in all the little things of our lives. This message is eternal life and our Lady is offering us this gift through the message of Mercy, that she may lift us up, help us with our burdens and “begin anew” and look to her as our guide through the darkness of this world to the light of heaven.

Our Lady's message of Mercy to the world is that even though we think we are wounded beyond repair, it is not so. Mother Mary leads us through the path of purification to her son Jesus. She tells us pray, and pray without ceasing, simply put your trust in me and everything will be accomplished. She tells us 'By my motherhood to you, you are mine, surrender yourself to me, thus you will be made strong.' Mary is truly our mother of tender compassion, our “Mother of Mercy”. First of all, Mary is mother of Mercy through her Immaculate Conception, God fashioned her to be the created masterpiece of his mercy in the world. She is the one through whom the mercy of God flows into the otherwise parched world. She gave her free “Yes” to God's will through her whole life, but particularly at the incarnation and at the foot of the cross. She was the means by which mercy and the love of God towards sinners entered the world.

Mary is a model for each one of us and for the whole church. From now on all generations shall call me blessed – this Marian prophesy (Luke 1:48) every faithful is fulfilling when he prays the Hail Mary. Again we read in (Luke 1:41, 44) Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth who had conceived in her old age.

When she heard the voice of Mary's greeting, she and the baby in her womb were filled with Holy Spirit.

At the wedding feast at Cana, she showed her mercy towards her loving children. Devotion to Mother Mary is a spiritual diamond tool which makes impossible things possible. The Rosary was given from heaven to reduce the wrath of God and to ask for the intercession of Mother Mary. Genesis 3:15 – I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers, he will strike your head.

When Mother Mary appeared at Fatima, she gave the following message “Beloved, pray for the conversion of sinners all over the world”. Mary is the one who obtained mercy in a particular and exceptional way as no other person has. Blessed John Paul II gives us the greatest example of how to be a vessel of mercy by teaching us how to live under the mantle of our lady. What we need in the world today is both a love for Our Lady and a culture of mercy. Through Our Lady, people can learn how to love and forgive. We all need mercy and God wants to give it to us in abundance. He needs vessels to do it. We must become vessels of mercy like Our Lady. Let us then, run to Mary like little children and cast ourselves into her arms – with great confidence, for it is she who will take care of all our needs by interceding for us. Let us learn like Mary to surrender to God's will in every circumstance of our life, especially our pains and ailments, so that we experience healing. May each one of us become with Mary a sign and a sacrament of the mercy of God, a God who always forgives everyone. Let us grow in the devotion to the Rosary and like our mother, grow in holiness. Let this piety and holiness fill our hearts as well.” If we want to be Christian, we must be Marian.”

Clara Coelho
St. Sebastian Community

SENIORS DAY OUT

The VPSC Committee organized a picnic for the Senior Citizens of our parish to West Palm Resort Vasai. The Committee felt that a platform for interaction between senior citizens should be created, so that seniors interact with others and get exposed as a group to environment and enjoyment. So, on Nov. 12, 2017, an excited 50 members of our parish assembled in the church compound, all looking forward to a fun-filled day. The bus left at 7:15 a.m. after Fr. Charles came to bless us and prayed for a safe journey and an enjoyable day. Along the way we prayed the Rosary and sang hymns. On reaching West Palm Resort, Vasai, we were served a hearty breakfast which everyone enjoyed.

Members were excited on seeing the pool. So, after breakfast we played some games where groups of five and ten sat around a table and solved puzzles and a quiz. It was good to see the excitement and enthusiasm from all members participating in all the games.

After an hour and half of games, seniors were eager to enter the pool where they stayed until lunch.

Those who stayed out, enjoyed a game of cards and cheers of being together. We then proceeded for a tasty meal. After a short rest, it was back to games and celebrations. We were then asked to introduce ourselves so that we could put a name to a face.

Two senior members were celebrating their birthday/wedding anniversary that day. The committee had thoughtfully organized a little celebration for them. This was followed by a game of Housie which everyone enjoyed. Soon it was time to return, so after a cup of tea and biscuits, we left for home at 5:15 p.m. having had an enjoyable day with fellow senior citizens. We thank God for providing us an opportunity to have an enjoyable day together.

Julie Antao

Grow in the knowledge of God ...

Be a part of our Bible Quiz

Venue: St. Vincent Pallotti Church, 2nd Floor Hall.

Date: 4th Feb- 2018

Time: Written Test @ 4.00pm

Final Round : 6.45pm



DIFFERENT ROLES GRANDPARENTS CAN PLAY

Kids might constantly be on their cellphones or playing video games or watching their most interesting cartoons on the TV.

But that does not mean you can't get their attention to do something non-tech oriented.

My experience with my grand daughter has revealed that kids often love, more than anything is learning something new. Grandparents play a vital role in establishing the child's basic mindset, beliefs and cultural ideas. Grandparents are a goldmine of knowledge, experience, advice, talents and skills. Spending time together not only allows grandparents to teach specific skill but also talk together, listen, give advice and share experience and ideas.

My granddaughter enjoys being with me in the kitchen, wanting to help in all possible ways. The time we spend together specially baking a cake or something new have taught both of us many lessons. She is quick to bring a note book and take down the recipes with quantities and the method. She likes to do the mixing of ingredients and at the same time taught me to take a video of all that she does. As a little child she has seen us playing the game of cards, puzzles and scrabble on weekends and has developed great interest in playing such intelligent games.

I will never forget the time we spend together playing scramble and other board games, but in all the games she had to be the winner. Here are steps- in the advice of the grandmother that there should be joy in playing together a fair game and this will make everyone a winner.

Another area where my grand daughter loves to spend time with me is when she has to do her school projects on different subjects. The time we have spent together doing projects will be unforgettable, I am sure for both of us.

Grandparents always has their grandchildren's best interests at heart but that does not mean that they are always right. Parents should be open to a grandparent's point of view and grandparents should be discreet when they bring up such matters. If grandparents are not staying with their grandchildren, parents should make sure that kids need to be in touch with them at least through regular phone calls, video calls, forwarding photographs etc. We need to value the vital role of grandparents in child development and respect their ability to sweeten our children's lives tremendously.

DIFFERENT ROLES GRANDPARENTS CAN PLAY.

Guide in all areas, Wisdom.

Role building

Activity participation

Narrating family stories.

Dancing and sing-song

Playing Games

Ambitions, ancestral and historical stories

Relationship building.

Example of manners and morale.

Nurturer, providing help when needed.

Talent sharing

Spiritual and religious guide.

Mrs. Margaret Vas

Senior Citizen's Association

UP COMING EVENTS

Christmas Mass Timing

(On 24th December)

Tableau.....9:20pm
Christmas Mass10:00pm

Christmas Mass Timing

(On 25th December)

Morning.....7:00am,8:00am, 9:15am, 10:30am (Tamil)
No Evening Mass

Christmas Week Program

(On 26th December)

Christmas Tree Celebration By Youth at 10am Mass & A Program for
Sr. Citizen (Registration Rs. 50 at the Parish office)

(On 28th December)

Christmas Tree Celebration By Legion of Mary

(26th To 30th December)

Live Crib By Altar Servers

(On 31st December)

Thanks Giving Night Vigil By Prayer Group

(On 31st December)

Adoration By Prayer Group at 10pm & Mass at 12:00 Mid Night

(On 1st January 2018)

Morning.....7:00am,8:00am, 9:15am, 10:30am (Tamil)
Evening Mass.....7:00pm

(On 21st January 2018)

St. Vincent Pallotti Feast

(On 4th February 2018)

Bible Quiz