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Binitha shares her quest of FINDING PEACE IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING

Sapna Tracy

A CHRISTMAS IN HEAVEN!

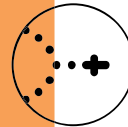


Mission Talk with
Shelina Guedes



MARY MY BELOVED MOTHER

Mama Mary, we ask that you may intercede for the war torn regions of the world, for anxious hearts and for all Christians to experience peace that surpasses understanding. Queen of Peace, pray for us.



EDITOR'S



DR. CHACKOCHAN J. NJAVALLIL

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Peace in Turbulent Lives

I needed to complete this editorial on peace, and the deadline was fast approaching. However, with my to-do list getting longer with many critical things, I was losing my mental peace, getting easily irritated, losing my temper, using harsher words, and responding without any thought or reflection. Every fresh phone call was answered with annoyance as it increased my work, demanding even more of my time and attention. Suddenly it dawned on me

– here I am planning to write about peace and I am experiencing exactly the opposite in my life. In Luke 8, we read about Jesus falling asleep on the boat while His disciples were panicking when the storm struck. It's easy to read this in the Bible and share reflections and insights about it in prayer meetings and bible study groups. But is it actually possible to maintain calm and remain in peace when we are surrounded by several issues, which seemingly threaten our very existence. The sickness of children and the struggles with their education, the difficulties of the teenager at home and its chaotic effects on the family, the often unreasonable demands from relatives, the rather stressful work situation, the feeling of helplessness, the stress and pressure of being in a leadership position, the awareness of our personal spiritual stagnation, temptations and personal failures, financial difficulties, broken commitments – the list goes on and on! In the midst of all these, is it really possible to live a life of peace?

As I am writing this, I am reminded of two of my past experiences. I was an undergraduate student and one of the active members of the prayer group in the college. It so happened that I published a note on the college notice board, but a couple of other student groups opposed it and soon it became a huge issue in the campus. A few supported me, but even they feared that there could be more trouble with even the possibility of physical attacks. The Principal and the faculty were trying to support and give me confidence. But it was interesting that even at the height of all the issue, I was not at all feeling any fear or emotional strain. In retrospect, I realize that it was the strong hands of the Lord that were covering and protecting me.

In the nineties, it was rather difficult to find employment in India. I was very much active in Jesus Youth at that time holding leadership positions in the movement. At the same time, I was working part time in a low paid job to support myself financially. Then I got a teaching position in a college – a respectable position and I was extremely excited. However, due to some unexpected turn of events I ended up losing this job. Looking back, even after more than two decades I still don't understand how I could accept that situation peacefully! One of the worst crises in my life, and I never felt its severity at that time. Of course, later it was proved that this was also part of the greater plan our loving God.

The secret of experiencing peace in such turbulent times is to become more aware of the loving presence of our dear God with us. The essence is thus to believe and to have deeper conviction that there is a God who always loves, cares and protects us. He knows us in and out. He has got a great plan for us. Nothing will happen in our life without His knowledge. I have gone through many difficult struggles in my life for which I don't have an explanation till date, but I believe that it was all part of His plan for me, and this keeps me at peace. I wish and pray that you would experience God's Peace in the turbulent storms of your life too.

-Peacefully Yours

Chackochan J. Njavallil

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THE SECRET OF EXPERIENCING PEACE IN TURBULENT TIMES IS TO BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE LOVING PRESENCE OF OUR DEAR GOD WITH US.



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And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:7

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MARCH 2018

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IN FOCUS

THAT THEIR JOY MAY BE COMPLETE

JOSEPH ANTHRAPER

ASK

FR. BITAJU



Fr. Bitaju Mahew, O.S.S.T., belongs to the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of the Captives (Trinitarians). He serves as the Secretary Vice Provincial of the Order in India and is currently the Chaplain of the Jesus Youth International Formation Team.

Q. Why do we as Catholics have sacramentals like the Holy water, Holy Oil & scapular?

Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church to prepare us to receive the fruit of the sacraments and to sanctify the various circumstances of our lives (CCC 1677). A sacramental is anything set apart or blessed by the Church to excite good thoughts and to enhance devotion. It is through the prayers of the Church offered for those who make use of these sacramentals, as well as through the devotion they inspire, that they convey and obtain God's grace and blessings (CCC 1671-1674). Sacramentals obtain for us the following graces: i) Actual graces, ii) Forgiveness of venial sins, iii) Remission of temporal punishment, iv) Health of body and material blessings and v) Protection from evil spirits. Anyone who incorporates the use of sacramentals into their daily lives can experience a richer, more textured Catholicism. For instance, a young father sprinkles holy water around the beds of his children and prays for protection against nightmares – a problem in their house. Or a mother uses blessed salt when she bakes bread for her family. Or before setting out on a long trip, a youth group blesses its cars with holy oil for a safe journey. Personally, I have experienced peace during difficult times by kissing or holding the rosary in my hands as a reminder of the loving protection of my heavenly Mother. The list could go on. The main difference between Sacraments and sacramentals is that the latter do not produce sanctifying grace which is a power that belongs to Sacraments alone. Further sacraments were instituted directly by Christ, while sacramentals were instituted by Christ through His Church. Sacramentals should never take the place of sacraments. Do we have to use sacramentals?

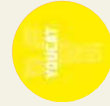
Strictly speaking, no. The sacraments are necessary for salvation; the sacramentals are not. Nevertheless, sacramentals often serve as a means to salvation. As Christ was the invisible God made visible, so sacramentals like sacraments are visible signs of His invisible grace, sanctifying daily life. These passages support the use of sacramentals: 2 Kings 5:10, 2 Kings 15:20-21, Mark 6:56, John 9:6-7, James

1:26-27, and 1 Peter 4:11.

Q. Why do we keep holy pictures and statues in our Churches and homes?

We use statues, paintings, and other artistic devices to recall the person or thing depicted, just as it helps to remember one's mother by looking at her photograph, so it helps to recall the example of the saints by looking at their pictures. We also use statues and pictures as teaching tools. It is only in the recent past that literacy has become common. In the past pictures were especially useful for the instruction of the illiterate. At times, the question of idolatry arises in the minds of some. There is a difference between the statue of a saint and an idol. An idol is something that someone believes to have power, which someone believes to be inhabited by a god or goddess (CCC 2113). A statue is a work of art and is not worshipped. It depicts someone, something, or an idea, held in high esteem. This is the case with the statues in our homes and Churches. We human beings, unlike angels, are designed to see and feel things. The pictures and statues, among other things, provide this – the sense of sight and touch. The Bible encourages such use of images and statues in Ex. 25:18-20, Num. 21:8-9 and Ezek. 41:17-18.

Please send your questions to askfrbitaju@kairos.global and your questions will be answered here.



YOU CAT 311

WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity. [cf Gal 5:22-23] [1892]

In the "FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" the world can see what becomes of people who let themselves be adopted, led and completely formed by God. The fruits of the Holy Spirit show that God really plays a role in the life of Christians.

POPE TALK...

Dr. Kochurani Joseph Animator, National Professional Ministry, India



You Can't Have a Closed Heart if You Want to Understand Jesus

In order to really understand Jesus, Pope Francis underscores, we cannot have a "closed heart," and rather, need to follow the path of forgiveness and humiliation. To illustrate what it means to really have faith, the Pope turned to the people of Capernaum, who were ready to do anything to get closer to Jesus, taking whatever risks may have come their way. So confident they were in Him and His healing, they overcrowded and surrounded the home where the Lord would heal. He also reminded them that the roof had to be opened for the paralyzed man to be lowered into the home. There is need for Courageous,

Don't 'photoshop' your heart – be who you are:

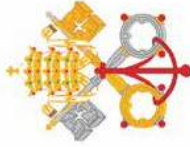
Jesus doesn't want disciples who have been "photoshopped" to perfection, but like the great saints of the past, God calls people to follow him with trust and enthusiasm, despite their weaknesses. When Jesus looks at us, He does not think about how perfect we are, but about all the love we have in our hearts to give in serving others. With technology it's easy to digitally enhance photos to make them look the way we want, but this only works for pictures. We cannot 'photoshop' others, the world, or ourselves. Color filtering and high definition only function well in video; we can never apply them to our friends. These pictures might turn out nice, but they are

Respect silence during Mass

Don't neglect the moment of silence during Holy Eucharist and hence Pope asked priests not to be in

a hurry in celebrating the Eucharist. Pope focused on the 'Collect', the moment in Mass when faithful are called to present their individual intentions and needs to God and think about why they are there. Silence is not reduced to the lack of words, but in

voices, that of our heart and especially, the voice of the Holy Spirit. The nature of silence in liturgy changes depending on the moment it takes place representing an opportunity to collect during the penitential act and the call to prayer, a chance to meditate after the readings and homily, and a moment for praise after Communion. Perhaps we come from days of challenges, joy, pain, and we wish to say this to the Lord, invoke his help, ask that he be close to us; we have family and friends who are sick or going through a hard time; we wish to trust the faith of the Church and the world



PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH

Formation in Spiritual Discernment

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.

Pope Francis says...

- ▶ Liturgy is a true school of prayer
- ▶ Church needs you, Be the saints of the 21st century
- ▶ Economic models should be centred on human dignity
- ▶ Faith is a grand adventure, one that gives young people the inspiration to overcome difficulties and dream big.
- ▶ The world needs stable families by sustaining

TALK

WITH SHELINA GUEDES

Interview with **Shelina Guedes** about her mission in Canada

Q. Hi Shelina, wonderful to have you share your mission experience with us. To start off, tell us a bit about yourself. Who is Shelina?

I'm originally from India, but currently living with my family in England. I am a Pharmacist by profession. I would describe myself as one who has been blessed to have experienced the love of God - a God who is 'Faithful', a

Q. Well, that sounds interesting. So I presume this Faithful God also planned your mission year in Canada?

Indeed. However, when I was initially told that I will be spending the year in Canada honestly, I felt quite disappointed. As far as I was concerned, mission was all about helping the poor and to be a 'proper missionary', one had to go to a third world country! In that sense, I could not foresee what mission I would do in a country where there was little material poverty. To tell the truth, I was quite disappointed and confused until the day of our Commissioning. During the Commissioning

I THANK GOD FOR PUTTING ME THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE, BECAUSE HAD I NOT EXPERIENCED THOSE DARK MOMENTS I WOULD NEVER HAVE LEARNED TO FIND COMFORT IN GOD.

Mass, I earnestly prayed with my whole heart for clarity. And my God who is ever faithful, not only provided the clarity but also filled me with a deep conviction that He was sending me to the place He has chosen, and that only I could

Q. Did you feel ready to take up this mission that God had so faithfully entrusted upon you?

From the beginning, I knew this was going to be a challenge. Having been raised in U.K, I know how hard it is to have an open conversation with people about Christ, as most in our society do not feel the need for God. Most of us lead very busy lives, and often we have enough and more to satisfy our materialistic necessities. But I was sure that as the mission was God's,

Q. Tell us about your time in Canada - what were some of the challenges and blessings awaiting you there?

This was the first time a Full-timer came to JY Canada. So initially there was a bit of confusion about what I was supposed to do. Naturally after a few weeks, I began to feel a bit frustrated and anxious as nothing much was happening in terms of programs or activities. And doubts crept into my faith when faced with loneliness, boredom and despair. Although this was a difficult time, I must admit that it was during this time I felt God closest to me. I thank God for putting me through this experience, because had I not experienced those dark moments I would never have learned to find comfort in God. I also discovered my potential in music and song writing. I started composing songs that spoke about God's love and mercy. Through that initial spare time, God could work in me. It was beautiful as I spent the first 3 months of my mission in a convent learning about myself, where I stood in my relationship with Christ and working to improve that by practicing the six pillars.



Q. What are some of the things that God has accomplished through you during this time?

The second three months of my full-timership, I spent in the coldest part of Canada in two Provinces. In both places, I was blessed to help begin a music ministry and introduce to young people the culture of worshipping God through music. Coming together for fellowship and prayer in various homes helped build a strong bond of trust between the youth and the families. They now meet up often to practice and pray, and this is helping each of them grow spiritually as well as musically. Also, I have regularly been following up with some of the youth on their spiritual journey. God has also provided me many opportunities to share my testimony in churches, youth groups and even

witnessed first-hand the deadly power of evil - how drugs, alcohol, rape, depression and suicide destroys people's lives. My greatest joy was telling them about how I experienced God's love and how He brings us happiness by overcoming evil. I was humbled by their openness to receive the Word of God. I saw how much they yearned for someone to reach out to them and make them feel human and loved. I do not know if I changed them, but being amongst them changed me; I started to see my family, friends, job, home and everything else which I once took for granted, as a gift from God. I realized God's plan for my life has always been for my good and never to harm me. My journey continues and so does my mission to give Christ to whoever I meet in my

Q. What has been some of the joys of your mission year?

Our outreach mission was to the First Nations



Shelina Guedes

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Shelina Guedes is a 2018 Kairos International Full-Timer who did her Year-long mission commitment in Canada

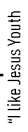
JESUS IS THE

Dr Edward Edezhath, A pioneer of the Jesus Youth Movement gives us a glimpse of the growth of the Movement.



A path to walk in Spirit

A joyful pathway to walk in the Spirit



"I like Jesus Youth because they pray a lot," said a Sister who was trying to express her appreciation for the movement. But I thought perhaps that was not a best way to describe this movement. Of course, prayer is the first of the six pillars of Jesus Youth and prayer meetings and other lively forms of prayer make the movement quite distinct. Yet if we miss the word 'mission', then the core of the movement is lost. Jesus Youth is a movement focused on bringing the joy of the Gospel to today's generation and challenging them to a missionary lifestyle. And without the Holy Spirit, no genuine mission is possible.

Where and how does one live a life of mission? It all begins when the Holy Spirit comes alive in you. Every active Jesus Youth will have a little or big story to narrate when he or she embarked on a life of mission. Personally for me, a big leap forward happened with a week end seminar I attended just before I joined college. This new found spirit was sustained and deepened in a friendly and active weekly fellowship group. This friendship circle and its gatherings

taught me to 'walk in the Spirit': to be joyful, to learn habits of prayer, to really belong to a loving fellowship, and to step out in mission.

A Nursery to walk in the Spirit

Jesus often used the image of river or water to refer to the working of the Holy Spirit. He speaks of two important dynamics with this imagery. First, you come to the river and drink, then, you become a spring from which a river flows out for the benefit of others. "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink... Of his heart shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:37-38). This twin dynamic is at the core of Jesus Youth.

A thirsty reception of the refreshing drink from the Lord becomes first a turning point in a person's life. Then it becomes a daily habit, taking time to rest at the 'green pastures'. That thirst also becomes an ever-widening search for the immeasurable abundance of inner life that only the Lord can give, especially through an active participation in the life of His Body, the Church. In a specific way, the first three of the six pillars of Jesus Youth lifestyle, namely; prayer, word of God and Sacraments, become healthy habits for a thirsty reception of the Spirit.

One of the dangers of spiritual life can be self-centeredness. Gradually, a kind of spiritual selfishness can creep in and, occupy the centre of our inner life. When people take spirituality only as a way to get material benefits and personal success is it not a sign of such selfishness? On the contrary, a measure of your progress in your walk with the Spirit is the love flowing out of your life. It can't be in small measure; but 'rivers of living water' flowing from life. If someone asks why he or she should be active in a movement like Jesus Youth, the answer would be 'to receive help to be an active Christian who allows the Spirit to flow out effectively'. In the movement, the final 3 pillars focus on this missionary commitment. A Jesus Youth fellowship is a very effective tool to challenge a person towards a fruitful life. This outflow of mission is firstly in an effective witnessing and finally in the commitment to the service to the needy and poor. In brief, the movement becomes an effective training ground for helping a person to grow in the spirit and to go out in mission.

Led by the Spirit in richness and joy

In a college, where Jesus Youth Campus Network is active, a professor started quizzing me on the movement's secret on making even those extremely shy youth into such motivated missionaries. I couldn't easily put into secular language the real secret, and so I explained the simple steps of preparation and, the sending forth of these ministry leaders. What I really wanted to tell him was that Jesus Youth helps people to open their lives to an active life in Christ and, to an accompaniment of the Holy Spirit. Thus, they discover a marvellous new life and, a very rich and fruitful one at that.

Nowadays they speak of best practices in institutions. A best practice is a method or approach generally accepted as superior to any alternatives. It might be interesting to reflect on the Jesus Youth best practices in the area of walking in the



Jesus Youth

First, you come to the river and drink, then, you become a spring from which a river flows out for the benefit of others... This twin dynamic is at the core of Jesus Youth.

is lively singing and, friendly and playful chats.

5. Another key ingredient facilitating maturity in Spirit is the Word of God. Encouragement and example evoke a keen interest to delve into the Word and, also share it with others.

6. There are various avenues of faith formation in the movement which among other things help the person understand and exercise Charisms of the Holy Spirit.

7. Motivation for mission is the heart of the movement, which when undertaken with ample guidance of the movement and clear context of the Church becomes the best bet for maturity in the Spirit.

In the collection of Jesus Youth

Prayers, the 10th prayer has the famous poem of St Francis Assisi. He praises God for Sister Water so humble, precious and clean. Like the water the Holy Spirit moves so gently and beautifully, inspiring people to smile joyfully, reach out with a touch of love and do great things in such informal ways. Where Jesus Youth movement is at its best, simple men and women moved by the Spirit build God's kingdom with tenderness and joy.

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Dr Edward Edezhath, One of the pioneering leaders and animators of the Jesus Youth movement, a senior lecturer in St. Albert's College, Ennakulam, India lives with his wife, Audrey in Cochin, India.

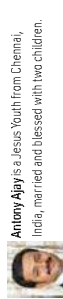


BEING TRANSFORMED

Ajay Antony explains how to embrace the Divine will and place our hope and love in God.

Every Christmas, along with family, I usually have a sumptuous meal with wine, but as we did not have any wine this time around, I decided to make some wine. With my experience of having tried this once before, and with some additional research on this subject, I set out on my task. The most important and difficult task was to ensure that everything was absolutely clean – as bacteria could contaminate the jar and turn grapes into vinegar, instead of wine. So, once I filled the ceramic jar with hand crushed grapes and yeast, I had to ensure that it was covered with a clean cloth, which would prevent dirt, but allow oxygen to pass through, thus helping the grapes ferment. This process made me reflect on the idea of how we the grapes being fermented into tasty wine – especially in the crushing situations of

Allow me to explain. The yeast is the Holy Spirit, who not only transforms us into another Christ, but also makes us witnesses for Him. The dirt here is hatred, greed, despair, lust, pride, and envy. During the crushing moments of our life, we ought to ensure that none of the dirt from our surroundings comes into our lives. These, instead of transforming us to be Christ like, would convert us into vinegar – something which Christ rejected even while on the Cross. The Word of God says in Isaiah 45:7, "I am the Lord and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness. I make well-being and create woe, I am the Lord, who does all these things". God is not the cause of evil, but permits man to exercise his/her will freely. When the messenger came to job with the news that the Sabceans and Chaldeans had plundered his goods and slain his children, his response was, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away." He did not say, "The Lord gave me my children and possessions and the Sabceans and Chaldeans have taken them away".

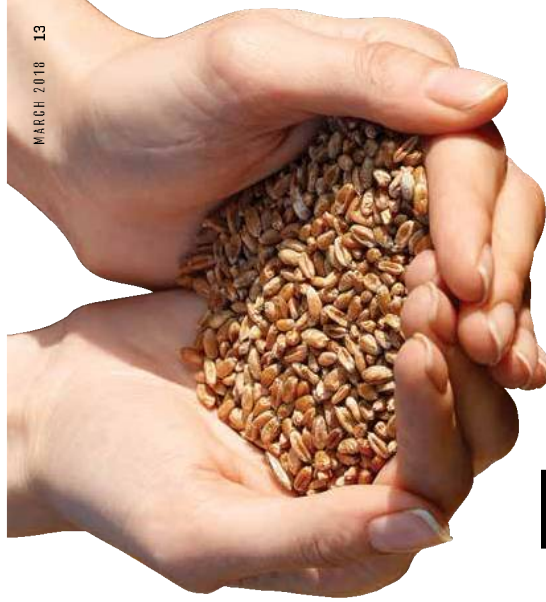


Antony Ajay is a Jesus Youth from Chennai, India, married and blessed with two children.

will of God. Therefore, Job adds, "As it has pleased the Lord, so is it done. Blessed be the name of the Lord".

God wills only our good – God loves us more than anybody else can or does. His will is that none should lose his/her soul, but rather, everyone should sanctify his/her soul and be saved. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance" (2 Peter 3:9). "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess 4:3). God has made the attainment of our happiness, His glory. Since He is by His nature infinite goodness, and since as St. Leo says, "Goodness is diffusive of itself", God has a supreme desire to make us sharers of His goodness and happiness. If then He sends us suffering in this life, it is for our own good. "All things work together unto good". The essence of perfection is to embrace the will of God in all things – prosperity or adversity. In prosperity, even sinners find it easy to unite themselves to Divine will, but it takes saints to unite themselves to God's will when things go wrong and are painful.

What we want to become is our choice. As fallen human beings, our natural inclination is to allow sin to take control of our life. However, a life filled with obedience to the gentle promptings of the Holy Spirit – who guides us in the path of holiness, will enable us to be true, tried, tested, and humble witnesses for the Lord. Let us imitate what Habakkuk said when he faced difficulties in his life: "Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD. I will rejoice in the God of my salvation" (Hab 3:17-19). Finally, let's make the prayer of mother Mary our own prayer. "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to thy will" (Lk 1:38). Though she did not understand, she most perfectly embraced the Divine will in her life. Though we do not fully understand, or like the current situations of our life, let us move forward in faith and place our hope and love in God. We will slowly but surely be transformed by the Holy Spirit, who acts as the yeast, making us into good wine; another Christ here on earth.



Tithe

Doesn't Belong To You. It Belongs To God

In this article **Cyril Abraham** highlights the "Why, When and What's in it for me" of tithing.

(Bible References - Genesis 14:20, Genesis 28:22, Number 18:26, 2 Chronicles 31:4-5, Deuteronomy 12:5-6, Proverbs 3:9-10, Nehemiah 10:35-37)

I had huge issues around tithing. I didn't understand the concept let alone sparing money for God. I never thought I would get over the issues and come around to tithing. And yet today, I am convinced that it is the healthiest thing to do for me and my family. I am a very happy 'tither' and love to invest in God's awesome plan for me. In modern terms, it is the perfect investment, yes, better than any investment plan available out there. Not tied to the volatile financial markets of this world, you can be rest assured of your investment even when the Dow and Nasdaq are crashing down

causing havoc in shares and values. Your investment is absolutely safe in heaven and will fetch you returns in ways you could have never planned or imagined (1 Corinthians 2:9). However, it is quite natural to be skeptical and have questions in our minds on giving tithe – especially because it concerns the one thing

Why should I give tithe?

Well, the answer might belong in the counter question – why shouldn't you give tithe? Remember the title – tithe doesn't belong to you. It belongs to the Lord. All tithes of the land, whether in grain from the fields or in fruit from the trees, belong to the LORD; they are sacred to the LORD (Leviticus 27:50).

We belong to God, so does our money.

The sooner we realise this, the better. I am not writing on the Biblical references of giving 1/10th of your labour's fruits to God – I assume you would already know that. In case you don't, please check the below references. Instead it is about the why, the when and what's in it for



So, when you keep something that doesn't belong to you, you are stealing from the actual owner – and in this case, God. It is like paying taxes. When you are not paying your taxes – you are stealing from the government. You may further ask – can anyone steal from God? Listen to what the Lord says through prophet Malachi, “Can anyone rob God? But you are robbing me! And you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ - Of tithes and contributions! You are indeed accursed, for you, the whole nation, rob me” (3:8-9).

Many years back, our family went through a huge financial crisis. During the time, I thought that it was due to the wrong financial decisions made by my parents, naively wishing to lead a better life. However, having had the chance to look through the eyes of faith, God revealed to us the lack of tithing in our life. Oh, don't get me wrong – I am not saying we didn't put our small share into the collection baskets circulating in the church on Sundays. But this is not tithing. We did not religiously give God what belonged to him. And thus, robbed HIM. And by robbing GOD, we robbed ourselves.

It was only 8 years after encountering God in my life, I decided to start giving tithing. It was initially hard to see a healthy amount being taken away from the monthly income. Many a times I resisted; but thankfully the Holy Spirit and my wife had the better of me and it slowly became a habit. Just like the many other things we do, we must all strive to make it a habit. And for us, at one point we became the highest tithing givers in our church, although we certainly were not the richest in the community. Our Assistant Parish priest told this in secret and it felt great. Things started to bloom. I changed jobs, was more satisfied at work and our incomes increased drastically. We bought a house, moved to Australia without an educational loan, and by the grace of God are in the process of being debt free. And I believe, all this began when we started to give and give happily. As the beautiful words of St. Francis of Assisi attests, “For it is in

When should I give tithing?

As soon as we have an income – however little, we should give and give joyfully. The joy of giving when you have little can be found



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in the Gospel of Mark 12:41-44, “He sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, “Anen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.”

I experienced the joy of giving from the little I had while in Australia. We went through struggles to find a job, with often having hardly anything to get by. Yet, we never lacked anything and God took care of even the smallest of our desires in mysterious ways. Which brings me to the Golden rule: **If you won't give when you have little, you won't give when**

What's in it for me?

The million-dollar question of today's age is, ‘What's in it for me?’. Well, the answer comes through the prophet Malachi again, “Bring the whole tithing into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, and see if I do not open the floodgates of heaven for you, and pour down upon you blessing without measure!” (3: 10). Try me, says the Lord of heaven and earth. I dare you to TRY HIM and see for yourself.

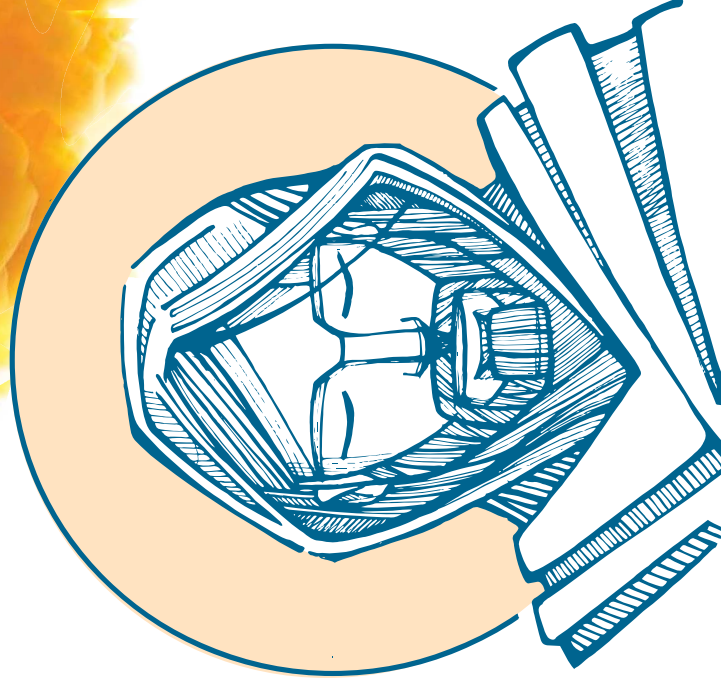
Lastly, always keep in mind what St Paul says, “Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

BODY AND SOUL

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY SERIES

LAYING THE CORNERSTONE (PART 2)

Maritta Martin continues to explain the concepts of Theology of the Body in a simple and practical way in this second article of the series.



Handshakes, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for the church. This passage and specifically this verse had always caught my attention because it compelled men to be loving and sacrificial as Christ. It also made the claim that the church is the bride. For some reason Jesus romanticizing the church didn't create a very endearing picture in my mind. It was hard to imagine a deep, intimate, fruitful love between Christ and His bride the way I imagined a deep, intimate, fruitful love between a husband and wife. However, as I kept persisting in my Theology of the Body adventures with St. John Paul II, I then truly understood what the Church meant when it said Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride. Little did I know that Mother Mary was also representative of this bride. As we move along in our TOB ventures, in this issue we will discuss

this innocent joy vaporized to give way to shame and guilt. Instead of seeing each other with eyes of love, they saw each other with eyes of fear; fear they might use each other instead of loving each other. And so, they covered themselves up. Next, we see that after the fall, they hid from God, afraid that their guilt might be exposed. This was in stark contrast to how they walked with God. And when God questions them, Adam accuses his bride of giving him the fruit. The blame game starts and Adam is the first to point fingers at his Bride and disown responsibility for their guilt. The people Adam and Eve have become after their fall – fearful, shameful, selfish, irresponsible accusers was in blatant contrast to how God had originally created them or their relationship with each other to be. Their relationship after the fall did not leave much room for a romantic idea I guess.

Nevertheless, even in their self-abasement and pitiable state, God promises them redemption. This redemption comes as the protoevangelium or the first Gospel. God says, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel". This is called the first gospel because here we find the first direct reference from God about the coming of Christ and the blessed virgin Mary to save humanity from its fallen nature – the first good news. Here, we see the foretelling of the second Adam and Eve to come; Jesus and the blessed Mother Mary. Because Satan tricked Eve, God puts an enmity between Satan and the new eve, Mary. The enmity is extended to her offspring which is the Church universal. So here, in this passage we see, Mary as the new Eve, symbolizing the bride the Church, with Christ as the bridegroom. When this truth clicked, I was finally able to see Christ laying

Although man falls from his divine nature due to sin, he is restored by Christ back to the glory he was created in.



Moving on, St. John Paul II beautifully narrates the restoration of man after the fall. Fast forward to the new testament, the Angel Gabriel approaches Mary and asks her permission to carry and nurture God Himself. She deliberates, but answers with her Fiat and humble submission to God's will. This is in humble opposition to Eve being greeted and tricked by Satan, with her choosing to be like God in her pride. When Mary conceives the fruit of her womb Jesus, to protect her from shame and undue guilt, Joseph is chosen by God to be her protector and defender. Much different from the shame and guilt Adam and Eve experienced after eating of the fruit of the tree and being isolated from each other and God. Moving along, at the wedding in Cana, Mary convinces the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them to do, hence taking a different approach than Eve who convinced

Adam to do what the devil tricked her into doing. Furthermore, as the salvation story unfolds, Jesus although was guiltless when he was led to slaughter did not complain or accuse but took responsibility for his bride's sins and sacrificed his life to save his bride the church while Adam complained and pointed fingers at his bride for their due guilt. When Adam and Eve experienced fear and nakedness after eating of the fruit of the tree, Jesus was raised up naked and nailed to a tree and liberated his bride from the chains of sin. When a deep sleep was cast on Adam, and out of his side Eve was created, Jesus was condemned to the sleep of death and his side pierced out of which blood and water flowed – signaling the birth of his bride the church. All this being witnessed by Mother Mary, the only woman who can ever say of Jesus her son "the bone of my bones, the flesh of my flesh". Together, the second Adam and Eve restore to man the original glory they were created in. They undo what the first Adam and Eve did in their sin and make return to man their former glory of being created in love.

In conclusion, although man falls from his divine nature due to sin, he is restored by Christ back to the glory he was created in. Mother Mary with her free, faithful, fruitful and total submission to God, receives God himself into her. And God the Son in his free, faithful, fruitful and total self-giving love, restores his bride the Church. When I finally understood this is what Christ did in his love, then it made perfect and absolute sense when I re-read "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for the church". With this, Christ is the cornerstone to understanding theology of the body and His love the model of love between a man and a woman. ■



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how in the relationship between husband and wife, the love between Love Incarnate and His Bride is imitated, with Love Incarnate being the Cornerstone.

So where does Christ and His Bride fall into the picture of the love between a man and a woman. Let us backtrack and go back to Genesis and start with the fall of Adam and Eve to better understand Christ and His Bride. Genesis says, right after they ate the fruit, Adam and Eve became aware of their nakedness and sewed clothes from leaves to hide their shame. When Adam first saw Eve he had exclaimed "At last, the bone of my bones and the flesh of my flesh". It was an exclamation of having found his beloved, an ode of pure joy and satisfaction. But now, after sinning, when they saw each other,



Sapna Tracy

The Modern Woman

Shalini George attempts an interpretation of the life of Sapna Tracy, whose life and death is a testimony to all. Especially to modern women about the choices she made as a working mother, a loving wife and a professional.

When I was asked to write about Sapna, I agreed without hesitation not because I knew her. My eagerness to write about her stemmed from the fact that her life gave me a certain perspective and a particular inspiration. As someone who experiences the constant demands and confusing signals that our current culture places on us, I found Sapna's story to be like a calming wind. It came with the promise of rest that comes when one relies on the will of God, like she did.

It was in early 1997 that Sapna came into the Jesus Youth Movement. Sapna was very active in the movement and was the coordinator of the Nurses ministry. Not many remember her as an orator or exceptional leader, but what she was remembered for, was the personal one-on-one care she bestowed on those around her. She would risk anything to be with the exploited and afflicted, strengthening them through her prayer and presence. During the first eight years of her career as a nurse at the 'All India Institute of Medical Sciences', she was posted in the post-surgical ICU. As she went about her duties as a nurse, she also took great pains to minister to the souls of the dying. Be it the elderly or children or even the unborn, she was deeply concerned about the state of the souls. She believed that even the non-Christian souls were entitled to heaven and they did not know Christ because of negligence of the faithful or, due to the lack of life-witness of a Christian. She passionately and fervently prayed for the redemption of these souls. Sapna was anxious about the fate of unborn children who were tragically and cruelly

terminated in the very place that was supposed to be their safest and most nurturing environment; the womb of the mother. With a heart burdened for these unborn children, Sapna was motivated to become a champion of the unborn and an ardent pro-life activist. It was an interesting turn of events in the life of a young man Joji, an educationist by profession, who decided to take Sapna as his life partner. His dedication to the missionary ways had him believe children and family could become limiting for him in his work for the kingdom of God. But later, through marriage, the Spirit of God convicted him with the persuasion that children and family were truly gifts of God and raising a truly Christian family was perhaps, the number one and most important step for any genuine evangelist. While they were still betrothed, many people would tell Joji how lucky he was to marry a saintly person, Sapna. But being the pragmatic man that he was, Joji used to wonder if having someone like Sapna who trusted so easily and who saw only the good of people, would

be good qualities for a wife. Little did he know that these would be the very traits that would bond them together as a family later on. It wasn't for nothing that the heavens conspired in bringing these two people together, filling them with fervour – not just to win souls but with a compelling vision to raising a truly Christian family. And through their 14 years of marriage, God chose Sapna and Joji to make them parents and custodians, to seven precious lives.

It is indeed rare to find, modern Catholic families with more than two children now-a-days. Sapna juggled her roles as a working mother, a loving spouse, a professional; a modern woman in all aspects, with a high stress job of a nurse in one of the busiest hospitals in the whole of India. She did not mull about her choices or consider making life a little easier with a more planned parenthood. There was a different plan that she followed – it just wasn't constantly sought. She embraced her life situations with the simple 'let it be unto me according to your will', as her only guideline. Sapna's faith did not stop with simple trust. What set her apart, was an unbridled surrender and obedience to Him. It was not just about believing in God, but about letting Him take control of her life. Allowing Him to do anything He chose with it. They say God gives only as much as you can take. But that's not really it. God only gives as much you surrender, allow or let Him. To every person thinking in worldly terms alone, the way Sapna and

Have we perhaps denied the world a fervent missionary, a leader, an inventor, an artist or, simply a life well lived to be a witness to the divine mercy?



Jojo conducted their lives may seem irresponsible. Imposing upon themselves the burden of raising seven children in one of the most expensive cities in India and that too, with Sapna as the sole bread-winner and with Jojo working as a full-time missionary. In this day and age, it is far too easy to complicate our existence with the absurdities of modern life. Many a times, regarding luxuries and worldly aims as necessities and entitlements for ourselves and our children, Catholic families have chosen to become smaller – with just one or two kids and striving a lifetime to give them the best that the world can offer. In Sapna's case, even though she was only entitled to two paid maternity leaves, Sapna received each gift of the womb that God the Father bestowed on her with open arms. The hardships or financial strains that would follow, when there is one more child to take care of was never a deterrent for her. The beauty was in her concept of life – she believed she was a temporary resident in this world and her permanent home was the eternal abode in heaven. So the

hardships she faced here were never perceived as such, but viewed as mere bumps on this journey. Even when her children sometimes pointed out that they had no house of their own, Sapna was quick to remind them that they were all temporary residents on earth and their eternal home was heaven, and that their focus should always be on building their permanent home. She encouraged

her children to perceive every struggle and hardship as rose flowers which they had to collect to decorate their permanent home in heaven. This simple illustration was an all-encompassing summary of her faith and the way she looked at her life.

Contemplating on Sapna's life gives us important insights into our own life conditions. When we introspect, what

The role Sapna played is humbling, self-sacrificing and powerful, all at the same time... the theology was simple- to do what Jesus wants of her.

comes up are these questions: When it comes to building families, are we denying the possibilities that comes with a new life God has destined for this world whenever we seek our plans alone? Are we cooperating with the bigger picture? Have we perhaps denied the world a fervent missionary, a leader, an inventor, an artist or simply a life well lived to be a witness to His Divine Mercy? Perhaps it would've been these very lives that would've otherwise fulfilled God's design for a community or a nation? Sapna, by allowing God to work in her life, putting His will above hers, cooperated with God's bigger picture and greater plan. Sapna's convictions were carved on solid rock. When one's life is focused on what Jesus wants, these convictions usually result from an unwavering devotion to Him. So also in Sapna's case.

Her intellect and her emotions were united in all the way she conducted herself. While she was pregnant with her eighth child, along with the good news came a shocking news that, she has been diagnosed of breast Cancer. All the well-meaning doctors and friends urged her to terminate her pregnancy, with a well sounding justification that she needs to be around healthy and alive for the rest of her seven children. But here too, for Sapna the plan of God for her life was crystal clear. What others might have misconstrued as meaningless stubbornness was actually for her, a reasonable surety. While still in the womb she named her child Philomena. She said, 'in all of the world only I can nurture my child in the womb and give birth to her and that is my duty. Anyone can look after her after she is born.' The wisdom was inspired and the justification, rock solid.

Sapna refused to undergo treatment or do anything that would harm the unborn child. She carried her baby to full term refusing all treatments for Cancer. It was only after the baby was born, that she began chemotherapy and underwent surgery. Later on the cancer advanced and spread to her lungs. Her condition continued to worsen and her



health deteriorated. Through it all, there was hardly any foreboding fear of death. She accepted it and was convinced that God was calling her home. Jojo who was worried about the state of his own soul was comforted by his wife's confidence; she had no doubt about where she was going. She had fought the good fight and run the good race. Therefore she prepared her spouse and her children to accept it as one more rose flower to adorn their heavenly home. And finally, on Christmas day, Dec 25th, 2017, Sapna breathed her last and said goodbye to the world. What I found most curious about Sapna was, the uncanny resemblance to the life of St. Gianna Beretta of Italy. Like St. Gianna, Sapna too was a mother, a wife, a medical professional; a modern woman in all aspects. Sapna too did not seem to be confused about her choices, nor did she find the need to assert her position in her social milieu. There was no gender role confusions nor

fierce independent assertions. Sapna's life speaks simply to young Christian women. It answers questions modern Christian women confront everyday of their life. The role of a nurturer, custodian and keeper of life is not to be taken flippantly. The ability to give life, to the extent of denying oneself is Christ-like. It is indeed an incredible gift and power that God has bestowed upon us. The role Sapna played is humbling, self-sacrificing and powerful all at the same time. But to her, the theology was simple – to do what Jesus wants of her. She made what may seem a heroic choice to us, but for her it was simply living her life of faith fully. By choosing to be pregnant even to her death, her life unfolds as one of the most heroic and inspiring tale of a truly modern Christian woman. Her life is a testimony to all, especially to modern women, about the choices she made as a working mother, a loving wife and a professional.

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UP CLOSE

FR MARIUS O'RILEY

Ponny Sebastian chats with Fr MARIUS the chaplain of University College, Cork, Ireland on his journey to finding his calling.

On a cold winter's evening in January, I walked into the IONA building that houses the Catholic chaplaincy at the University College Cork, Ireland. I was welcomed by smiling faces, loud chatter, and even got offered pizza and the chance to play the human bingo game that was in full swing. The place was packed and a pizza party was just starting off. Oh! I was tempted to join in - I felt like I had gone back in time to my own college days and the fun we used to have at the chaplaincy. However, I had to politely decline as I was on a tight schedule, and I looked around for the much respected and loved chaplain, Fr Marius O'Riley. We had been introduced during the preparations for the World Youth Day 2016, in Poland. Fr Marius and a group of students from the chaplaincy had journeyed with the Jesus Youth from Ireland. All who got to know him were very impressed by his silent, joyful presence and above all his deep rootedness in Christ.

I was led to the back of the building, to wait in Fr Marius's office. I looked around through the connecting door at the mix of people there representing many nationalities. It was as if everyone had something to say, and everyone seemed to be having such a grand time. I wondered how so many of them had turned up at the chaplaincy; was it the lure of free food and company or, were some of them on the search for something deeper? I didn't get much time to get lost in my thoughts as Fr Marius walked in with a big smile. He looked very much in control and was right at home, a part of the crowd and belonging fully, even while wearing his black outfit and priest's collar. He led me up a set of stairs to a quieter office where we could chat peacefully.

Father told me that he had studied at UCC, completed his Bachelors in business there. He recounted that, his time as a student helped him to understand the student life there and to connect with the students. My curiosity piqued, I jump in to find out more about him.

? **If I were to meet your best friend in College and ask him to tell me three things about you, what would he say?**

I was very much into sports, I played sports, watched sports and talked a lot about sports. I had a good focus. I wanted to be a successful businessman like my father and hence I was focused and worked hard. I was very worldly too, I liked big groups and didn't want to be on my own, I knew of the chaplaincy but I never went to mass there. I still went to Sunday mass, as I used to go back home during weekends and, attended our parish church. Somehow going to Sunday mass was important to me, even when I went on holidays with friends, I wouldn't miss a Sunday mass. I used to wonder about a calling to priesthood now and then but, I didn't entertain it at all. I had many friends and how they saw me, mattered to me a lot.

? **Other than Sunday mass and the occasional thoughts of priesthood, how was your prayer life?**

I didn't have much of a prayer life in College; confessions now and then, That's all. I used to pray the rosary growing up, we used to pray the rosary together as a family daily and, I liked praying the rosary on my own too during my teens.

? **Anything else that stands out to you from your childhood, related to faith?**

You see, I was the youngest of five in my family and there is a seven year gap between me and the second youngest. I would say I had the privilege to be at home when my parents started to practice their faith more ardently and they also had more time to pass it on to me. They passed on a wonderful Marian devotion. My father had a business that arranged Marian pilgrimages from Ireland. Thus, I had the opportunity to visit all of them. These were great experiences. Also praying for holy souls, this too I learned from my parents,

? **Father, would you say that this witness that your parents gave, was what sowed the seeds of faith in your heart and, still kept you going to Sunday masses when everything else about your faith was dead?**

Indeed, it is very important for children to see their parents practicing their faith. *The role of parents in children's faith formation is vital and Fr Marius also feels deeply about the importance of family and the fathers' role in families. He even finds time to minister to fathers at the Fathers of St Joseph, a men's group that reflect on St Joseph as a man and father. He is also thinking of bringing together fam share their faith.*



Continuing on with his journey, Fr Marius tells me that after finishing his degree at UCC he completed his Masters at the Smurfit Business School in Dublin. He then travelled to London and set up an extremely successful business.

2 **So where was your faith at that point?**

I was still attending Sunday mass and eventually I started going for daily mass. It was actually a girlfriend who encouraged me to do so.

3 **So you were attending daily mass, doing well at your business. Were you still getting thoughts about priesthood?**

Attending daily mass slowly started to change me, my prayer life improved. I started praying the rosary again during my commutes, reflected more on daily readings and yes, I was still getting thoughts about priesthood. Hence, I decided to take a break from the relationship I was in at that time and find out more about this call. To be a good businessman I had read all these books about business. Now it was time for me to find out about my Catholic faith. If I was to commit fully to it, I needed to understand it more, so I started reading more.



2 **I think it's beautiful to note how the Lord can use the people in your life to nudge you in the right direction. Also till this point, there was no one else really supporting you in this journey or encouraging you. It's the Lord doing His work slowly and consistency inside of your heart, and of course you allowed him by participating in daily mass and taking the time you needed by ending the relationship, in order to reflect more on your call.**

No one else knew, but I am sure my parents were praying for me. My father had mentioned to one of his friends that I may have a vocation to priesthood. I came to know about it after I had joined the seminary and, my father had passed away but, even then it was an encouragement.

3 **How did you proceed with your discernment process?**

The Lord was preparing my heart to experience His mercy and love in a new way. My father had given me Saint Faustina's 'Diary' a while back. I picked up this book and started reading it. It was a profound experience for me. I got to know the Lord's love for me and above all, His mercy. After experiencing this, I needed to share His mercy, and I realised that it is by being a priest that I can do this effectively. So, in March 2008 I decided to become a priest and peace descended into my heart. It was supernatural peace, that confirmed that I was on the right track.

4 **Did you receive spiritual direction? Yes, that is an important aspect, once I had made the decision to become a priest I needed direction as to where next. It's best to discern this through spiritual direction as you need to understand yourself as a person, your strengths, your own compatibility to a community life or parish life. I came to the conclusion that I was best suited for diocesan ministry.**

2 **Can you tell us about your seminary life?**

It was a wonderful all-round formation. I think openness and honesty are two important factors that has helped me especially during spiritual direction.

3 **You are based at the chaplaincy now, could you tell us about your ministry here?**

The main thing is our presence here. There is a team that works together with me, that includes two youth workers. We organise many open-door events throughout the year. I journey with many students who are at different points in their faith. Also, I make it a point to be seen. So I have my lunch every day, in the café on campus. Students see me around and they recognise me too, so they know that we are here and, the rest is in the Lord's hands.

4 **Any special devotions or prayers that you rely on during difficulties?**

The rosary, scripture. Knowing and reflecting on the scripture is very important. I spend time in adoration, not to gain anything but, because I love Jesus and wants to spend time with him.

5 **What does the future hold for you? The Lord alone knows and, I trust him completely.**

Fr Marius has been transferred from the University College, Cork and is currently serving as chaplain at the Mercy University Hospital in Cork.



Fr. Marius is a Jesus Youth living in Cork on the beautiful island of Ireland, with her husband and three small children. She loves spending time with her family, books, travels and of course, the Lord.

IN FOCUS

DISCERNMENT & PEACE

writes
on how to confirm
discernment through peace.

We all make choices at times. Some are simple, everyday ones and require common sense or choosing according to our preferences but sometimes we need to make more serious choices. For that, a process of discernment is needed. We have to think carefully and pray for the guidance of

One way of confirming that discernment is through the sense of peace we find in making the necessary decisions. We look at the positive and negative reasons to choose one way or another. Do we find that sense of peace or are we uncomfortable, anxious, uncertain?

HERE ARE SOME GUIDELINES

- 1** Make a list of the possible choices - with the reasons for and against.
- 2** Go through each reason - which seems the better option?
- 3** Am I at peace with that one or do I need to look again at the opposite option
- 4** When I find peace with that choice I move on to the next reason and stay a while with it until I know I am on the right track.
- 5** A pattern begins to emerge and I find the answer is beginning to show itself.
- 6** When I feel ready to make the choice I wait for that sense of peace to grow and affirm me.
- 7** If I am still feeling uncomfortable I might need to

Sometimes we see that the final choice is not what we like or would have chosen in the first place, but we asked for the guidance of the Holy Spirit - have we been open to it? We do need to be honest with ourselves. We know he knows and loves and cares us and wants what is best for us.

Serious decisions should not be hurried into. There are other criteria to be considered and a sense of peace found there, too. It is important to take the necessary time until that peace of the Spirit mingles with our own feeling of peace and certainty, which does come eventually. Often things happen which confirm our choice or perhaps lead us to pray and think again. Something from the Bible seems to fit; we hear something that someone says that stays with us; an opportunity occurs that we might otherwise have missed. Look for these signs of confirmation and others. Does our choice align with Scripture, Church teaching, conscience, our own God-given gifts and talents? Will the fruits of the Spirit be evident as we carry out our decision and will they be able to grow, especially love, joy and peace?

"... and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4 v7).



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PEACE is a longed-for treasure. A cry expressed by every human heart. In the world around us, we see the thirst for peace in the chaos and turmoil of our times. Peace can be defined as the absence of trouble or

disturbance, but the Hebrew word for peace, Shalom, provides a deeper meaning. Shalom expresses a state of completeness, soundness: health, prosperity or wholeness in relation to both man and God. This proposes that the fullness of peace has less to do with circumstance and more to do with the inward condition of the soul. This may explain why, even when our circumstances are good, we become discontent or worry without cause.

So how can our souls find peace in our daily activities?

Finding Peace in Daily Activities

Wakunyambo Faith Maboshe how to be peaceful especially by rooting yourself in Christ.



1 CHOOSE YOUR FOUNDATION

A steady building needs a steady foundation. What we build our peace on, sets the stage for whether or not our peace can withstand the trials of life. Sometimes we build peace on our skills, abilities, loved ones or leaders. What happens when those things fail us, do we simply live in unrest? Jesus invites us to look beyond ourselves for peace:

"During a short boat journey, Jesus remained asleep in the boat when a sudden storm raged across the lake. The disciples with Him, fearful of death frantically woke Him up; almost accusing Him of not caring about the danger. However, Jesus calmly woke up, told the wind and waves to be still, and turned to the disciples to ask them why they were so afraid. The disciples probably gave the response most people would give, but Jesus expected them to have stayed calm. He asked them "Have you still no faith?" In that storm, the boats could not save them, nor could their skill, but with them, they had God. Their eyes were fixed on the wrong things." (Mk 4:35-40)

It is not wrong to have confidence in our skills, but because our competence comes from God (2 Corinthians 3:5), we trust in the skill-giver not the skill.

2 SEEK THE SOURCE OF PERFECT PEACE

The Lord is Peace (Judges 6:24) and He keeps those whose minds are stayed on Him in perfect peace, because they trust in Him (Isaiah 26:3). Anxiety is like a large tree that obstructs the rivers of peace from quenching our souls. Jesus said "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28). Jesus does not promise a life without trouble but encourages us that He has overcome trouble and His peace will guard our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7).

Let all who are thirsty go to Him in prayer; God can and will fill us with His peace when we ask but we must also make room for peace by prayerfully casting out fear, exposing and uprooting the roots of guilt and distress and planting seeds of peace.



3 EXPOSE THE ROOT OF DISTRESS:

The bible encourages us to search our hearts and be silent (Psalm 4:4). This, when coupled with the light of God's Word, exposes the dark roots of distress.

4 UPROOT GUILT

Distress can be caused by our actions and mistakes. God moves us into repentance, reconciling us to Himself and to others. He is faithful to forgive us (1 John 1:9) and uproots guilt and shame from within us. God revealed His Gospel (good news) of peace by taking upon Himself the punishment for our sins. Now we have peace with God through Jesus (Romans 5:1) and can enter His rest.

5 FORGIVE OTHERS

Unforgiveness also distresses our souls. It is toxic; making us slaves to anger and resentment, and putting us out of sync with God. Forgiveness releases others and creates room in us to receive God's gift of wholeness and healing. Let go, breathe and let His light shine upon our hearts.



6 PLANT THE SEED OF PEACE

The full measure of grace and peace can be ours through our knowledge of God (2 Peter 1:2-4). Jesus knew who He was, His purpose and His Father. God's Word reveals to us who God is and who we are. He will never abandon us. We are His children and must no longer be fearful like slaves (Romans 8:15), but be confident that we can access our Father. His help, wisdom and discipline. Memorising such truths through the Word of God will be as seed planted in our hearts, bearing crops of peace and confidence for any circumstance.

7 FELLOWSHIP AND PEACE AS A FRUIT

Ultimately, peace is birthed out of an authentic walk with God. It is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and striving after it alone will prove burdensome—a chasing after the wind. With the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we can fellowship with God at any time through prayer and worship.

Each encounter transforms us from the inside-out into having a peaceful predisposition.

The pursuit of peace is not only a desire for global peace. It is humanity's cry for peace with its creator. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and will reconcile all of creation to God, ushering the shalom that the whole world craves. If peace is part of God's nature, then what we are searching for is found in Him. Surely the best way to find peace is to seek God in everyday life. ■



Wakunyambo Faith Maboshe, a PhD student at the University of Aberdeen, UK was born in Zambia and moved to the UK along with her family during her teens. Her deep faith is revealed in her joyful and peaceful nature.

FINDING PEACE IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING

Biniha Mathews shares about her miscarriage and how the Lord's presence in her life consoled her.

I breathed a soul into a seed, made it grow and called it forth." I got the roses for me when we knew we were expecting another baby. Our family was growing and our joy knew no bounds. But the roses had not even begun to wither when the white chrysantheums were placed next to them as a gesture of consolation for our loss.

We had only just begun to make the changes to lifestyle that one makes when they find out they're pregnant. No fizzy drinks. No runny breakfast yolks. Of course, no skipping breakfast. Stacking up on crackers and cheese. Mental note to buy ginger biscuits... Decaf and decaf only. Fruit-

one must eat fruit - of course no pineapples or papayas. Spinach is the new salt of the household. Celebrating the most bizarre cravings...the multivitamins...the folic acid. Friends jokingly chide Jo to make sure he takes good care of me. He sheepishly grins but, beams at the same time. But after all that frenzy, suddenly there was silence. A dead, eerie, stillness.

We rushed to get to the Early Pregnancy Assessment Clinic in the early hours of the morning. "The clinic opens at 8.30 am but I would get there at 7.30 am, if I were you" the clinician at the ED tells us. It did not matter that we got there before everyone else. The news would still be the same.



Nevertheless, the last thread of hope even in this utterly hopeless situation propelled us forward. Waiting in the queue for the clinic with these other women felt weird. My eyes nervously took a quick glance. Were they all here for the same reasons as me? Behind me sat a distraught couple. The partner consoled the woman gently. Further down the hallway, a lady happily played with her child... Was she really happy, I wondered, or was she here in fearful anticipation as well? Was she having to pretend everything was okay, for the sake of her child? Ann planted a kiss on me. I held her tightly. Shortly after, the doors swung open. The brightly lit hallway led down to the reception. Neutral colors. Perhaps they were being careful not to sow seeds of hope and expectation. My

The lady called us in and explained what they would be doing. They would test again for pregnancy and perform a scan to see what was happening. With my symptoms though, she said, it did look like an early miscarriage. Tears were quickly finding their way down my cheeks and she was quick to console saying it was only a possibility.

Once the tests were done and she returned and assumed that typical pose of a bearer of bad news. "You may want your partner near you" she says. I knew what she was going to say. "The baby is gone. It could have been anything. We will never know why". I handed me a tissue. There was nothing left to do. We quietly made our way back to the car. I felt like I was drowning. The famous depiction of Peter sinking into the waters and Jesus holding his arm flashed across my mind.

God is still in control, I thought. But it was still dreadfully painful.

I didn't think I could recover from it then. I don't think I ever fully will. I wanted to do something for my child, to be remembered forever. To be very much a part of our family in the years to come and not simply a memory. To be a reality.

And then I came across this:

Miscarriage prayer by Mother M. Angelica.

My Lord, the baby is dead!

Why, my Lord, dare I ask why? It will not hear the whisper of the wind or see the beauty of its parents' face. It will not see the beauty of Your creation or the flame of a sunrise.

Why, my Lord?

"Why, My child, do you ask why?"

Well, I will tell you why.

You see, the child lives. Instead of the wind he hears the sound of angels singing before My throne. Instead of the beauty that passes he sees everlasting beauty. he sees My face. He was created and lived a short time so the image of his parents imprinted on his face may stand before Me as their personal intercessor. He knows secrets of heaven unknown to men on earth. He laughs with a special joy that only the innocent possesses. My ways are not the ways of men. I create for My Kingdom and each creature fills a place in that Kingdom that could not be filled by another. He was created for My joy and his parents' merits. He has never seen pain or sin. He has never felt hunger or pain. I breathed a soul into a seed, made it grow and called it forth."

I am humbled before you, my Lord, for questioning Your wisdom, goodness, and love. I speak as a fool, forgive me. I acknowledge Your sovereign rights over life and death. I thank You for the life that began for so short a time to enjoy so long an Eternity.

For the life that began for so short a time to enjoy so long an eternity. How wonderful for God to even create my unborn child and allow him to exist, even briefly in my womb, just for the sake of His love. So, fly away my little Angel, to the heart that loved you more than mine. To the place that is truly real and alive. To the hands that knit you in my womb. And to the love that carried you safely home.

We named our baby in heaven Joshua although we don't know if it was a boy or girl. We are now blessed with a baby boy; his name is Noah Gerard George and is 4 months old. Noah is our miracle baby; he was conceived immediately after we lost Joshua and born only a month later than the month Joshua was expected. Noah is testimony to Romans 5:3-5 "And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."



Biniha Mathews is a Jesus Youth living in Chippenham, UK with her husband Jomy George, daughter Ann Cecilia and son Noah. She enjoys sharing her testimony of the grace that she has been given from God through both suffering and joys

LIVING LI

LIVING LIFE IN

Peace

Peace is knowing that "God my Father", infinite in His wisdom, knows more than I ever can. Peace is acknowledging the unconditional love that "God the Son" had for me when He sacrificed Himself for me. Peace is accepting that "God the Spirit" is in control of my life and not me. And I experience this peace meeting my Lord daily in the few moments I spend in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

Bejay Jayan
Dubai

In my daily life, the Word of God constantly reminds me of His love and helps me stand up straight while going through life's invariable highs and lows. When I feel troubled or in low spirits, the Holy Spirit gently reminds me of this verse, "I am with you and will watch over you." (Gen 28:15). And when I'm having a good time and enjoying myself, I think of the Holy Spirit, and I know that He is right beside me. Through good and bad times, I can experience peace because of God's promise, "Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Levin George
Ireland

Peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. We, as children of God, are to carry the Holy Spirit and produce His fruits in our life. The world presents us with chaos and frustrations, but Jesus wants us to be peaceful and he always tells us - "Peace be with you." After the crucifixion of Jesus, his disciples were frightened and locked themselves up in a room. Jesus came and stood among them and offered them peace. We know how these some disciples transformed the world by offering Jesus' peace. In John 14:1 the Lord is telling us not to be afraid but to trust in Him. The risen Lord is present in the Eucharist and he offers us the same peace he gave to the disciples, moulding us troubled people into holy people.

Elizabeth Sibi
Australia

We search for peace everywhere but find it nowhere. Without Christ we cannot find lasting peace because we are the temple of the Holy Spirit and the temple of peace. As a teenager, leading a life relying solely on my abilities, I unsuccessfully searched for peace in a lot of places. However, after having had an encounter with Christ during the retreat at YIFT '08, I realized how important it is to be guided by the Holy Spirit. I now know that it is better to rely on the power of the One who created you than relying on yourself. "To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6)

Ayyaz Gultzar
Pakistan

Peace is something the whole world yearns for. We often talk about world peace and pray for the same, especially as we hear of the many things happening around us. But looking at our own life and being at peace with ourselves is what we are called to first - receiving the peace that surpasses all understanding. There have been times when I get so busy doing the Lord's work through music, that I sometimes feel that 24 hours is not enough for a day. But through it all, His Grace always carries me and my family along. Yes - there are many things that disturb me and get me complaining, but at the end of it all, it was invariably the same question that keeps coming back to me - "Who am I doing all this for?", and the answer is for none other than my dearest Christ Jesus. This knowledge brings a peace that is far beyond words.

Bilal Soloman
UAE

FAMILY IN FOCUS

KEEPERS

Jexin and Bindhu shares with Raifiel Cyril how they weathered a storm and how it helped them take some radical decisions to help others.

Jexin and Bindhu lived in the UK before moving to Canberra, Australia in 2011. They have two children, Angelina (11yrs) and Tom (9yrs). Jexin is an IT Business Analyst and Bindhu is a Clinical Development Nurse. They are Jesus Youth and involved with the Family Ministry & Intercession ministry. This faithful family weathered a storm when Tom developed Leukaemia a few years ago. As they depended on God to receive peace that surpassed human understanding in these circumstances, they came out healed, closer, stronger and with a deeper revelation of God's love. The experience of suffering made them take some radical decisions to bless others.



How did you come to know about Tom's illness?

Bindhu: Through prayer, we had an inkling that something was about to happen to our family. One morning I noticed Tom limping slightly. The GP insisted there was no cause for worry but, finally agreed to do an ultrasound, which revealed a collection of fluid. The orthopedic surgeon who looked at the report also insisted it was normal but, seeing my incessant tears, gave me a blood form. The limping and the fluid had nothing to do with it but, the blood test did confirm Leukemia

How did you respond to this news?

Bindhu: I didn't know much about Leukemia except that it was very serious. They recommended that we take him to Sydney for treatment. It was hard to pray or make sense of this whole situation at the time. We left for Sydney the next day and offered mass on the way. We were in one room as a family for a month receiving treatment. Now when we look back we knew we couldn't think beyond our selves and were in a sort of cocoon during that time. After a month, we started stepping out of the curtains of our enclosure and, realised that the other children in the ward were suffering so much more. We could see the children and knew that some of them didn't look like they could survive so, we knew how blessed Tom was. The doctors told us we had more than an 80% chance

Were you able to see God's hand in this situation?

Bindhu: Our Perunmal was on Feb 7-8 during which, Tom was very sick. He was admitted on 24th Dec due to the complications after Angelina left on 18th Dec for Kerala. He was in the hospital for 46 days with no food or water and had to be fed with a tube going into his intestine through his nose. Between Leukemia and Pancreatitis, the doctors were unsure what to do. It was good Angelina wasn't there, as it was a very traumatic time. She was supposed to reach Australia on 10th Feb. On 7th Feb, quite miraculously coinciding with the Perunmal, Tom's temperature suddenly started coming down. He

Angelina landed and all three of us went to pick her up. This is a miracle that no one can explain. Tom's consultant said, 'I don't believe in God but, Tom is a miracle boy. God really planned everything perfectly for us. Also, even though I was not working for a year, I was paid for every single day. God really

How did it impact your marital relationship?

lexin: Through those 46 days, Tom was unable to sleep on the bed because of intense pain. For most of those days he lay curled up in Bindhu's lap and she hardly ever slept. This process really helped us to grow as a couple. We knew each other since we were teenagers but, this trial really bonded us like never before.



As a family it is our desire to serve God and others because that is what we believe life is all about.

How did your faith get impacted during this trial?

Bindhu: I never thought why God allowed this in our lives. But I was unable to pray or do anything about it initially. A lot of people asked me to just surrender but I couldn't. It's easy to say 'give things to God' but really hard to do. My attitude was that I wasn't willing to give what was mine. But later, I reached that point where I realised, 'No Bindhu it's not yours. Tom's not yours. You are just the keeper'. There were some days when I would want the doctors to come with some good news about Tom's condition, but they never did. That's when it struck me that only

it and raise money through the site. A lot of people requested me not to shave my hair and offered to support the cause but I wanted to do it. The message I also want to give through this step is that hair is not such a big deal and, we must stop giving it so much importance. I know of a family in India who committed suicide because their daughter had cancer and they couldn't bear the thought of her going bald. People are so beauty conscious today that they seem to value it more than life itself. I really wanted to give the message that your

Were you able to raise money through this?

lexin: Bindhu just wanted to shave her head more than raising money so she registered her name on the website and kept a small target of \$250 as she didn't want to publicise it too much. But a few people came and told us that this is something we must share with others and encouraged us to keep a target of \$10,000. But that seemed too much to us so, we put a target of \$5,000. We easily crossed that and then changed the target to 6,000, then 8,000, and then finally 10,000. So far, we have already raised more than \$15,000. In the western world, people with serious illnesses are often isolated and abandoned by their loved ones. In such cases this

In what other ways is God using you?

lexin and Bindhu: We also make sure we keep in touch with those who are going through a similar situation and provide emotional and prayer support. God is really using us in the lives of many families in this manner. During Tom's illness we were very isolated and lonely. A lot of people were praying but no one could relate much to our situation. Now we understand what families are going through and are glad to be of help



What would you say to those who are going through trials and sufferings in their lives?

Bindhu: In nature there are calamities and life will always have struggles. Apart from God no one can help you. If you walk away, you will be walking away into more troubles. Just go through it and allow it to purify you. In daily mass, I simply give all my worries and sorrows to God and after I receive the body and blood of Jesus, it is all forgotten. That peace cannot be found in anyone else.

There is great beauty in facing troubles together as a family. I am from Wayanad and, the ground there is often slippery due to the rains. When Tom was diagnosed I felt I was on slippery ground and we could slip very easily. But by holding and supporting each other, we could walk through with God's help, without falling. Tom recovered completely by God's grace. We often remind Tom to value the gift of life he has received and to be a good human being. As a family it is our desire to serve God and others because that is what we believe life is all about.



Ruffiel Cyril is settled in Canberra, Australia with her husband Cyril. She is a Writer, Counsellor and Musician.

Stronger And Closer Despite Distance

FAMILIA

Hazel Matthias shares about her experience of being apart from her husband and offers practical tips on how to maintain a healthy relationship during times of unavoidable separation.



Not all couples are blessed with the gift of staying under the same roof at all times. In today's life involving work, sickness and in our case, staying at my parents' home (which is in a different city from where my husband was working) for the deliveries of our two children; are some reasons that could keep spouses physically apart for a length of time. In addition, different time zones, clashing schedules and inquisitive children (yelling in the background and begging for the phone while you talk!) are all real challenges to staying in touch. Here are a few pointers that can help us spouses go through such a time and, God willing, emerge stronger and closer to

PERSONAL PRAYER

Our daily walk with God affects everything, and is particularly important when spouses are apart. In prayer, the Lord empowers me to be patient and understanding in communication with my spouse. Here, I am consoled when I miss him. From here I also gain strength to forgive when misunderstandings arise. All this helps me to be the best I can and maintain a healthy

COMMUNICATE

We are blessed to be living in a time when technology provides us with many modes with which to communicate. When a spouse may be at work, or when you need to be quiet because your toddler is sleeping next to you, texting is a great means to stay in touch. Video calls are of much help too, especially for the little ones who miss seeing the parent that is away. Actively utilizing these tools works to the benefit of

PRAY TOGETHER

There were a few instances when, for a couple of days in a row, my husband and I were unable to pray on the phone together. Almost always we would notice friction developing in our conversations. "When two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20). Praying together brings in God's peace, grace and protection from evil over a couple's rapport. It is very much like cement, which holds their hearts together, helping each other love unconditionally. So, try your best to pray together, even if it be a short prayer like

UNDERSTANDING HER

Most wives, when separated, may have different needs when compared to husbands. We may seek support and understanding by talking about all our daily joys and struggles. Having a husband who can be patient and listen, and offer reassurance and understanding words, can help a wife feel rejuvenated and cared for. A short, loving conversation, on a regular basis, can make all the difference for a wife. Opened ended questions, such as "How was your day?" followed by a listening ear, can help one feel important

SHARE WISELY

Being physically apart prevents us from seeing our spouse's facial expressions. Hence its best to bear in mind that I could always misunderstand my spouse, or be misunderstood. Don't take it personally and blame it on the distance! For this reason, it's helpful to discuss important or touchy issues, face to face as much as possible, rather than on a call or by

CELEBRATE REUNIONS

Celebrating times when one meets their spouse after a gap is a wonderful way to express to your love for them and demonstrate that you don't take them for granted. Just the two having a good home-cooked meal, a quick dinner out or even a quiet long walk, helps maintain the 'spark' in the spousal relationship, and shows your spouse that you are putting effort into helping your marriage thrive.

Suggestions such as these can go a long way in maintaining a happy marriage, even when spouses are apart. With God's help, may the lessons learnt therein help husbands and wives to cherish and love each other even more, when they finally come together again.

UNDERSTANDING HIM

Most husbands respond differently to living alone when compared to wives. Work, stress and exhaustion might sometimes leave them wanting to retreat into a 'shell', and not wanting to talk much or display emotions. Some might handle loneliness by not having detailed conversations or talking about feelings much, lest they miss their dear wife even more! As women, in such situations it is possible to feel abandoned or not as loved as before. All we want to do is question our husband even more about what's going on, why are they not talking etc. With God's strength though, if one could give their husband the space they needed for a day or two, it helps them come out of their 'shell' sooner and on a positive note, rather than feeling guilty or accused by their wives. Sending a message to one's husband saying something similar to "I missed talking to you yesterday but I can understand you must be tired/busy...let's catch up when you are feeling better/free" makes him feel understood and loved, and



Hazel Matthias lives in Hyderabad, India with her two little boys & husband Nishan. A passionate Catholic & Jesus Youth since college, she has been actively serving the Lord for many years, especially through music ministry in India and

CULTURE OF LIFE



Infertility

Also a Gift From God



Sherin Alexander shares from experience on the gift of infertility from God.

Fertility is a gift from God. It is a joy to accept this gift; family and friends freely join in to proudly ogle at the adorable fruitfulness of the couple. It is not so with infertility. Then, is infertility a gift? Isn't it the lack of the gift of fertility?

A Painful Blessing

Each month starts with hopeful expectation and ends with painful disappointment. Announcement of new pregnancies in close circles can lead to a mix of emotions: a sharing in their joy and a sad reminder of not being able to share such a news with others. The series of doctor visits, blood draws and invasive tests can take a toll on the couple: physically, mentally, spiritually, and financially. In some cases, repeated encounter of questions from people can make it difficult for the couple to be in social settings. Joyful days like Mother's Day and Father's Day could trigger sadness as others celebrate their blessedness. As time passes on, the couple can easily slip into depression, loneliness, insecurities, irritations and maybe even marital problems.

While the pain can be so deep, this time can also call for a greater trust in the Lord. As Abraham was asked, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14) Saint Josemaria Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei, explains, "God in his providence has two ways of blessing marriages: one by giving them children; and the other, sometimes, because he loves them so much, by not giving them children. I don't know which is the better blessing. In any event, let one accept his own." With a rooted personal relationship in Christ, the couple can grow in peace about the Lord's providence in allowing this in their lives at this time.

Biblical View

Children are blessings from God. "Certainly sons are a gift from the LORD, the fruit of the womb, a reward" (Psalm 127:3). This verse emphasizes the giftedness of fertility. It, however, does not imply that the opposite is a curse.

All-powerful, all-loving, life-giving, and generous God sometimes delays the gift of fertility for certain couples. Father of faith, Abraham, prayed and waited for a son for almost 100 years. Against all medical odds, in their old age they had Isaac. Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah, gave birth to John in their late age as promised by God. God allowed these women to remain childless for years; in his time and according to his purpose, they gave birth. May those in similar struggle



God in his providence has two ways of blessing marriages: one by giving them children; and the other, ... by not giving them children.



continue in their hopeful prayer, trusting that the Lord is aware of the deep sadness of the hearts and the emptiness of the womb. "Raise a glad cry, you barren one who never bore a child, break forth in jubilant song, you who have never been in labor... Do not fear, you shall not be put to shame; do not be discouraged, you shall not be disgraced.." (Isaiah 54:1-4).

Spiritual Fruitfulness

I imagined that during the wedding ceremony, God gifts each couple with a nicely wrapped invisible gift that reads "Fertility". After long months of not becoming pregnant, I started to wonder if we did not get that box. In prayer I realized, God did give us a box; it read "infertility" instead. Saint Josemaria Escriva's quote, which I came across soon after that prayer further comforted my heart: "Often God does not give children because He is asking them for something more....There is, then, no reason for feeling they are failures... If the married couple have an interior life, they will understand that God is urging them to make their lives a generous Christian service, a different apostolate from the one they would have fulfilled with their children, but an equally marvelous one... God, who always rewards, will fill with a deep joy those souls who have had the generous humility of not thinking of themselves."

As we persevere with hopeful anticipation, being generous with the time, energy and availability helps us to be fruitful. Through our involvement in different ministries, we are able to experience the joy of spiritual parenthood.

Community of Believers

Being part of a close community of faithful Jesus Youth has been very helpful. Just as priests and religious sisters remind us of our heavenly destinies, we remind the community that children are truly a gift from God. Fertility is an unmerited gift from God and not an entitlement. Children are to be accepted from God's hands with gratitude and they are to be led back to God.

Fertility is a gift from God. Infertility is also a gift from God. The blessedness of each gift is manifested differently. Being rooted in prayer can help the couple to feel peaceful and help motivate them to pursue fruitfulness in different ways as they wait for a child or discern about adoption.



Sherin Alexander, A Jesus Youth, A Physician Assistant in a family clinic, is the wife of Daniel W. Alexander, a medical missionary. She and her husband live with her husband in Chicago, USA.

MODERN SAINTS

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla



Born in Magenta: 40
Died: - April 28, 1962

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla was an Italian medical doctor and a saint for our modern times. Her life is a witness of a faithful Catholic, successful working woman, devoted wife, and loving mother of four.

Gianna Beretta was born in Magenta, Italy as the tenth of thirteen children to Alberto Beretta and Maria de Micheli, both members of Third Order Franciscans.

With daily Mass and family rosary as integral part of their family life, it is no wonder that there would be two priests and a nun from her family – with one of her brothers being Servant of God Enrico Beretta. She was an active participant in the parish life of Saint Peter and Archbishop Mario Righetti played an active role in her spiritual formation.

In 1942 she began her studies in medicine in Milan. Outside of her schooling she was active among the youth of Catholic Action and St. Vincent de Paul Society. Gianna later received a medical diploma from Pavia College in 1949. She opened a medical practice, where she gave special attention to mothers, babies,

the elderly and the poor, and these initial years of medical practice inspired her to specialize in Pediatrics at the University of Milan in 1952.

Gianna hoped to join her brother – a priest in the Brazilian missions – where she hoped to offer gynecological services to poor women. However her chronic ill health made this an impractical dream, and she had to be content with continuing her practice. Gianna never charged patients who could not afford to pay her fees. Often, senior citizens found money in their health card after leaving her office.

In December 1954, she met Pietro Molla – an engineer, and the two got engaged and later married on 24 September 1955 at the Basilica di San Martino in Magenta. They went to Saint Peter's Square as part of their honeymoon. They had three children – Pierluigi, Mariolina and Laura.

In 1961, during the second month of her fourth and final pregnancy, Gianna developed a fibroma on her uterus. Following an examination, the doctors gave her three choices: an abortion which would save her life and allow her to continue to have children, or a complete hysterectomy which would preserve her life, but take the unborn child's life, and prevent further

pregnancies or a risky surgery to remove the fibroma and continue with pregnancy to save the child's life, but putting her own life in grave danger

Gianna opted for the removal of the fibroma since she wanted to preserve her child's life. She pleaded with the surgeons to save her child's life than her own. She sought comfort in her prayers and her living faith. After the operation, complications continued throughout her pregnancy, but Gianna spent the remainder of her pregnancy with unparalleled strength and consistent dedication for her tasks as a mother and a doctor. A few days before the baby was to be born, Gianna prayed the Lord take away any pain from the child. She realized and understood that she may lose her life during the delivery, but she was ready. Gianna was quite clear about her wishes, expressing to her family, **"If you must decide between me and the child, do not hesitate: choose the child! I insist on it. Save the baby."**

On 21 April 1962, Gianna Emanuela (named after her mother) was born via Caesarean section. The doctors tried many different treatments and procedures to ensure both lives would be saved. However on April 28, 1962, a week after the baby was born, Gianna passed away from septic peritonitis.

Her daughter Gianna Emanuela still lives and is a doctor of gyneciatrics. Pietro Molla often told Gianna Emanuela that her mother's choice was one of conscience as both a mother and a doctor.

"A woman of exceptional love, an outstanding wife and mother, she gave witness in her daily life to the demanding values of the Gospel. By holding up this woman as an exemplar of Christian perfection, we would like to exalt all those high-spirited mothers of families who give themselves completely to their family, who suffer in giving birth, who are prepared for every labor and every kind of sacrifice, so that the best they have can be given to others."

Pope John Paul II

Quick Facts:

1922

Born in Magenta on 4 October 1922
Baptism at the Basilica di San Marino on 11 October 1922.

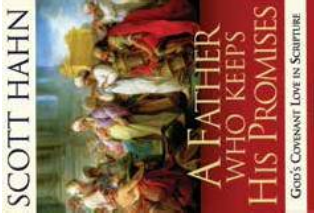
1928

First Communion in 1928
Confirmation in 1930

2004

Died - April 28, 1962
Beatified by Pope St. John Paul II on April 24, 1994
Canonized on May 16, 2004.
Feast day - April 28

SOUNDREPLY



800 K

A FATHER WHO KEEPS HIS PROMISES: GOD'S COVENANT LOVE IN SCRIPTURE

Even for people well versed in scripture, it's easy to miss the Big Picture – especially the unity of the Old and the New Testaments, and how the "New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New" (CCC 129). The Old Testament can be a particularly hard nut to crack and in the case of a young person trying to make his/her way around it – with its labyrinth of characters and their tales of treachery, anger, revenge, infidelity and murder – it is easy to wonder how all this makes sense! Making sense and "conveying the 'big picture' of the Old Testament, which has been lost to many readers of Scripture in our day" is precisely what Scott Hahn undertakes in his book "A Father who Keeps His Promises".

Scott Hahn is one of the best known Catholic theologians in the world today. His talks and writings are engaging and insightful, as well as deeply scriptural. One of the central themes of Hahn's work over the last two decades or more, have been the centrality of Covenantal Theology in understanding Salvation history. And in his book, "A Father who Keeps His Promises: God's Covenant Love in Scripture", Hahn explores the Father's plan of Salvation unfolding through the Old Testament, with special emphasis on the Pentateuch.

Hahn begins by introducing the concept of covenant and the intrinsic connection between God's covenants and His desire to lead his children into the fullness of His love. As he puts it, "The basic message God wants to convey by a covenant is this: 'I love you....I am your father, and you are my family'". Once we understand this 'covenantal law' of love, our eyes open to the mystery of God's fatherly love for the human race, displayed in page after page of the sacred scripture.

In chapters two to eleven, Scott Hahn explores the major covenants God made with His chosen ones in the Old Testament, taking us through the "highlights of this divine drama" and bringing this drama alive to the reader with remarkable clarity and warmth. The jigsaw of covenantal love is put in place beginning with God's 'first covenant with Adam in the form of a marital bond', leading to the covenant 'with Noah and his household', through Abraham and Moses, leading to the fifth 'covenant with David, under the sign of the everlasting throne of the Son of David'. However, after each covenant, God's chosen people fell into sin, pride, injustice and violence' and each time, the faithful Father, true to His promise, starts again, working through the mess of human sinfulness and weakness, 'to reconcile all of us to himself'.

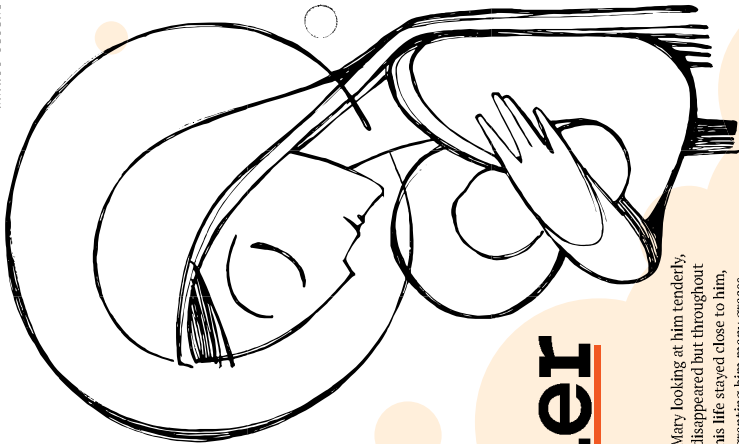
In the penultimate chapter of the book (chapter 12), Hahn delves into the New Testament and shows how Jesus brings this jigsaw into completion. It was quite enlightening to read how

The basic message God wants to convey by a covenant is this: "I love you....I am your father, and you are my family"

Hahn explains Jesus' Passover meal in the light of first century Jewish Passover liturgy (seal meal), and how through His passion and crucifixion Jesus transformed the old and initiated the New Covenant. Hahn ends the book echoing St John Paul II, with an exhortation to "Make yourselves saints and do so quickly", for "the crisis of the Church today is not a crisis of good catechists, liturgies or theologians, but a crisis of saints".

"A Father who keeps His promises" is littered with the trademark "Scott Hahn puns". Although some might view it as a distraction, I for one quite enjoy his puns and how he connects the main themes through his clever use of them. "A Father who keeps His promises" is a remarkably refreshing, deeply scriptural and an enriching read - highly recommended for all who would want a better appreciation of God's plans through Salvation history. Making sense of the Old Testament – it sure does!

quite enlightening to read how

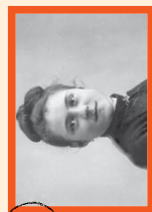


Mary Mother of Jesus And My Mother

When young St Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, lost her earthly mother before she turned five, although she felt a deep emptiness in her heart, she immediately turned to her heavenly mother. After her first confession at the age of Six, she promised to love her heavenly mother, Mama Mary even more, and today we have a young saint who loved Jesus and listened to Him and did what He told her to do. Jesus gave his Mom to us to be our Mom. She will always lead us to Him.

Nobody would have thought that the young Raymond Kolbe (aka St. Maximilian

Kolbe) would become a great saint. One day, his mother, so frustrated at his behaviour, yelled at him "Raymond, what will become of you?!" This was a wakeup call for him. With sad eyes, he turned to Mama Mary and asked her, "What will become of me?!" Later, when he went to church and repeated his question, Mama Mary appeared holding two crowns - one coloured white and the other red. She looked at him tenderly with love and asked if he would like them. White crown meant that he would remain pure and red crown meant he would be a martyr. He answered yes - that he wanted those crowns.



St. Maximilian Kolbe



St. Raymond Kolbe



Naina Thomas, a Jesus Youth and part of the National Youth team, Ireland is doing her degree in chemical engineering. Her passion for the catholic church and her teachings, coupled with her adventurous and active nature adds to her active involvement with the different ministries in Ireland.

Mary looking at him tenderly, disappeared but throughout his life stayed close to him, granting him many graces.

Often when we are confused and lost we can turn to our heavenly mother. She carried Jesus in her womb for nine months and lived with Him for thirty three years. She knows His heart very well and she can help us to follow His will for us every day. My mom always tells me that even when she can't understand me, our heavenly mother can understand me. Just like in this world we have a mother to feed us, clothe us and look after our needs, we also have our heavenly mother to look after our spiritual needs, to clothe us with many virtues, to strengthen our faith,

deepen our love. She also keeps us safe under her blue mantle. The many people who have consecrated themselves, - that is given themselves to Mama Mary, have become great saints doing the most ordinary things. We too are called to be saints and Mama Mary will help us become one. Let us love Mama Mary and ask her to help us listen to Jesus and to do as He tells us.

"Dear Mama Mary, I give myself to you completely with all my heart. Please set my heart on fire with love for Jesus. Help me to listen and do the will of God and give glory to Him."

SHUFFLED STORIES FROM THE BIBLE

EACH SLIDE CONTAINS PICTURES RELATED TO A BIBLE STORY

- ▶ Identify the bible story
- ▶ put the pictures in correct sequence
- ▶ give the bible portion



QUIZ TIME

LIFE OF JOSEPH

Arrange The Following In Chronological Order :

01. Works As Potiphar's H IKES
02. Meets The Cup Bearer Of The King
03. Joseph's Family Comes To Egypt
04. Jacob Presents Joseph With A Robe Of Many Colours
05. Joseph Sees The Dream Of "Bundled Grains"
06. Joseph Interprets The Pharaoh's Dreams
07. Gets Impriisoned
08. Becomes Minister (Vizier) Of Egypt
09. Brother's Become Angry At Joseph And Plans To Killing Him
10. Sold Into Slavery
11. Joseph Sees The Dream Of "Sun, Moon, And The Stars"



BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

L	S	P	C	S	P	W	M	G	L	R	E	K	U	L
R	Q	N	O	H	M	R	A	L	E	J	J	W	L	K
B	O	M	A	I	R	L	O	V	A	Z	D	E	J	Z
P	A	B	C	I	A	O	A	V	E	S	V	Z	R	L
Z	H	A	A	T	S	L	N	P	E	I	P	Q	V	V
K	H	I	I	D	A	S	H	I	T	R	B	L	T	M
Q	S	A	L	T	I	A	O	I	C	S	B	O	B	Y
D	N	U	I	E	N	A	C	L	W	L	X	S	J	D
S	W	O	D	I	M	U	H	E	O	M	E	N	M	B
M	N	I	A	O	S	O	R	P	S	C	X	S	J	J
M	K	H	S	B	X	B	N	J	T	Q	O	Q	K	
K	R	A	M	D	E	J	R	G	T	H	Z	B	P	
P	Q	V	B	H	O	T	P	Q	Z	N	E	Y	P	
M	R	B	M	R	Q	M	P	G	N	Z	R	W	R	

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FEEDBACK



PILOT ISSUE

In this technology era, where there are so many tools/know-how's that get us caught up with unnecessary nitty gritty's, and subtly diminish our relationship with God, I would see this magazine as a combat tool, helping us to be alive in our spiritual life. It is a powerful resource for my family that would help enrich faith, foster great values, know about the life style of Jesus Youth. I could not take my eyes and mind off it until I read through and through. Soul searching articles and impressive design! Thank you and Hats Off to the team behind it, and our hero, Lord Jesus Christ!!

Pretty Kurian, - Dallas, Texas, USA

I really enjoyed reading the pilot issue of Kairos Global. It was warm, refreshing and inclusive. I particularly enjoyed Ashi F. Bitaju's section on God's plan which was informative, succinct and easy to superimpose. There was something for everyone in the magazine and a vast range of subjects had been touched upon - spirituality, mission, career, vocations, conversion, and the list goes on wonderfully. The Soundbites section was a stimulating addition that encourages one to look for different kinds of spiritual enrichment resources. I would welcome more of raw, personal and inspiring stories coupled with practical advice that can motivate people to implement the JY spirituality in their daily lives. It would also be nice to read how JY's across the world are using their talents and abilities to glorify God in their own unique settings. Kairos to a great start and earnestly waiting for more!

Binitia Mathews - Chippenham, UK

Just read the Pilot Issue I sourced after attending ProNicous '17 and I'm literally left awestruck. All the colourful graphics and the lucid writing were a visual treat to the eyes, as were the content to the soul. Couldn't believe that I'd just finished reading a magazine

regarding faith, religion and parish life with so much interest. Kairos to the editorial and layout team for all the efforts! Eagerly looking forward for the next issue.

Cyril Cherian, - SIKET, Palai, India

It was a joy to see and receive the pilot issue of Kairos Global Magazine. The magazine gives a holistic view of Jesus youth life style from all around the world. There is something in it for all of us - family, youth and kids. We all have a story to tell on how the Lord has touched us and it's more joyous to hear witness stories of a youth. A good tool for youths to evangelize and touch life of other youths. This will be blessed asset for all Jesus Youth, especially for the youth to see how the Lord is actively working and guiding the movement and all our lives. The magazine does a good job of bringing Jesus Youth experience into our living rooms. It's a privilege for my family to have subscribed to this magazine.

Millon Jose, - Dallas, Texas, USA

Choosing life on a culture of death - I feel Francis. These days, people promote pro-choice just because of financial constraints. They fail to understand that children are blessings rather than a burden. Ultimately everything is God's plan. Nothing is neither accidental nor unexpected.

Sharon Mariya Jose, - Loyola College, Chennai, India

NewsWatch



CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM 2017

JITTO JOSEPH, KERALA, INDIA

Cultural exchange program 2017 was a "celebration" of the multilingual and multicultural richness of India. It brought together youth from different backgrounds and cultures - including tribal, rural and urban youth from different states and different languages across India with a view to enrich their faith through mutual sharing and a common "focus on evangelization". The vision of the Cultural Exchange is to let young people encounter and appreciate different cultures, so that the Holy Spirit would open doors to new cultures where Jesus can be proclaimed.

Cultural exchange 2017 began on 16th December with a 5-day retreat at Divine retreat center, Muringoor. The 270 participants were then accommodated in various IY families - living with

them and experiencing the culture as well as the beauty of family life as lived by these families. After celebrating Christmas with their host families, the youth came together at St. Mary's Forane church in Thanky, a famous Marian pilgrim center. The gathering was inaugurated by Most. Rev. Francis Kallarackal, Archbishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Verapoly. The presence of Most Rev. James Anaparambil, the coadjutor Bishop of Diocese of Alleppey, was a source of blessing and joy for all. The participants had the opportunity to showcase their culture before the parishioners and the program concluded with a concert from 'Cross talk', the Jesus Youth band from Kerala.

Bishop James Raphael Anaparambil Coadjutor Bishop of Alleppey Diocese

Bishop James Raphael Anaparambil was consecrated as the Coadjutor Bishop of Alleppey diocese on 11 February 2018. He was the Animator of the Jesus Youth International Council from 2005 to 2011. He has contributed immensely in the development of the Jesus Youth Prayer, Youngest of five children of parents Raphael and Brijji, Bp Anaparambil has come up from a very humble economic and social background. A simple lifestyle, available to all, a priest rooted in prayer, an ardent devotion to the Eucharist and devotion to Mother Mary Bishop was born in 1962 and has completed 51 years of priesthood.



National Assembly Australia

RAJEEV CHILAKA, AUSTRALIA



Jesus Youth Australia gathered for their National Assembly from 26th to 28th January at the Edmund Rice Centre in Melbourne. Apart from electing the new National Council, time was spent reflecting on the work that was being carried out in each region. Bishop Donald Lippert from Papua New Guinea graced the event with his presence and input sessions. Auxiliary Bishop Mark Edwards celebrated the commissioning mass. Jesus Youth's International Coordinator, CG Joseph animated the event and spent time encouraging the leaders. Several priests who support Jesus Youth joined the gathering and participated actively. Jento Joy was elected as the National Coordinator of the newly elected council which will serve for the next 3 years.

TAKE OFF

BIO CURRUC, INDIA

Jesus Youth Professionals Ministry conducted the first national conference, "Take Off" for professionals from January 26th to 28th at Chennai, India. 250 professionals from different regions of India participated in this conference. Reg Youth Director of Tamilnadu, Rev Dr. P. Marianus Isaac inaugurated the conference. Most Rev Abraham Viruthakulangara, Archbishop of Nagpur & Ecclesiastical adviser of Jesus Youth and Rev. Dr. Lawrence Plus, Bishop of Dharmapuri blessed the occasion. Sessions were handled by professionals who are pioneers in their professional life. The event was hosted at Montfort Secondary School, St Thomas Mount, Chennai.



FRIENDS OF KAIROS

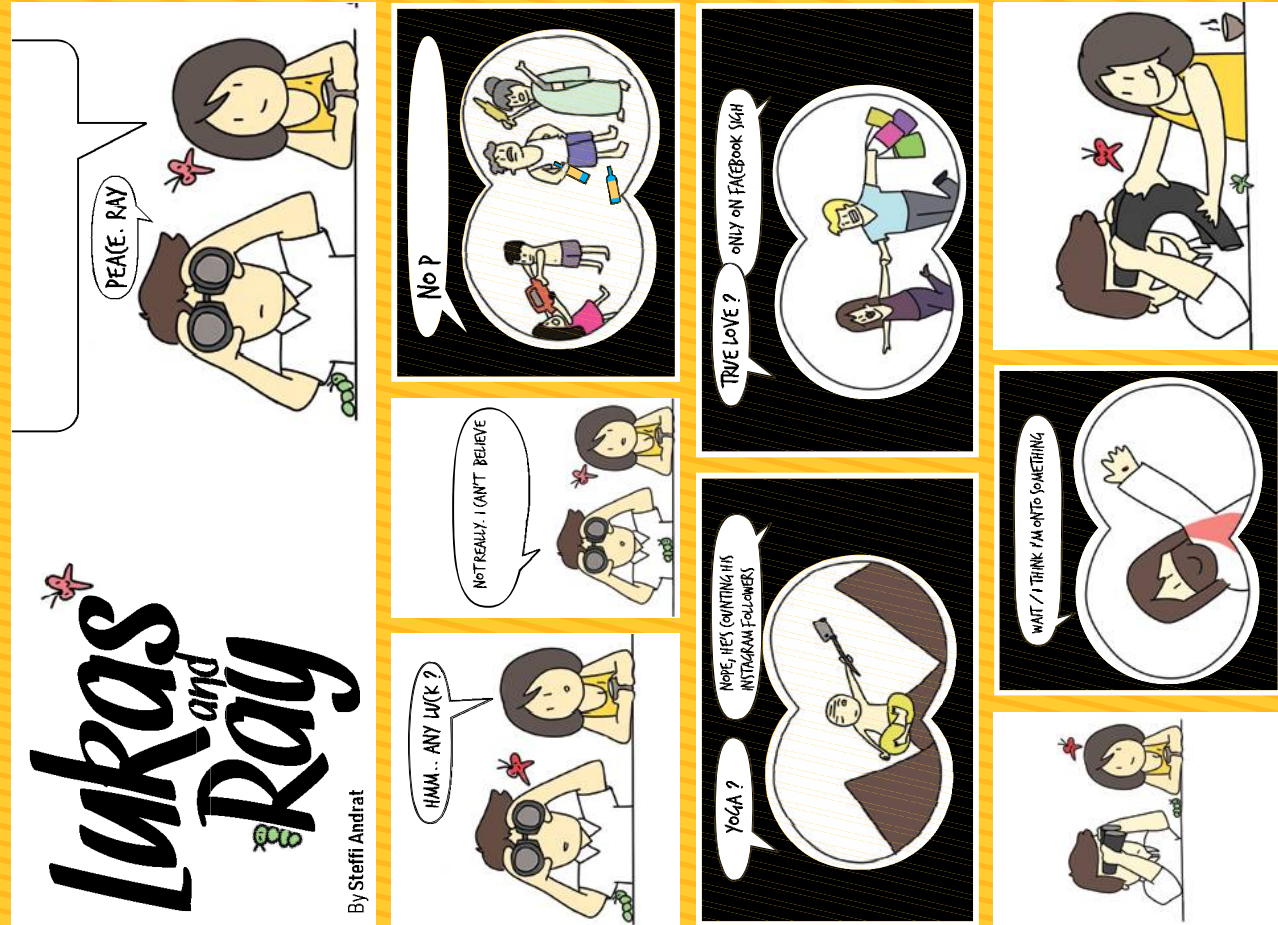


KAIROS MEDIA is the mass media initiative of Jesus Youth, reaching out to young people around the world using modern means of communication - inspiring, supporting, encouraging and building each other up on our spiritual journey and helping establish God's kingdom, one youth at a time.

With the rising production costs in media technologies, it is the love and support of so many - the "Friends of Kairos" that financially sustain the mission of Kairos. KAIROS MEDIA wouldn't exist without our "Friends of Kairos". With a grateful heart, we lovingly remember and offer continuous prayers for our many friends who support Kairos every month through regular monetary contributions. For we know that the "one who calls us faithful" and "his power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ever ask or imagine". If the Holy Spirit is inspiring you dear Kairos reader, we invite you to join and support this evangelisation initiative by becoming a Friend of Kairos with your prayers and support. May God bless you! You can make your contributions online through

Lukas and Ray

By Steffi Andrat



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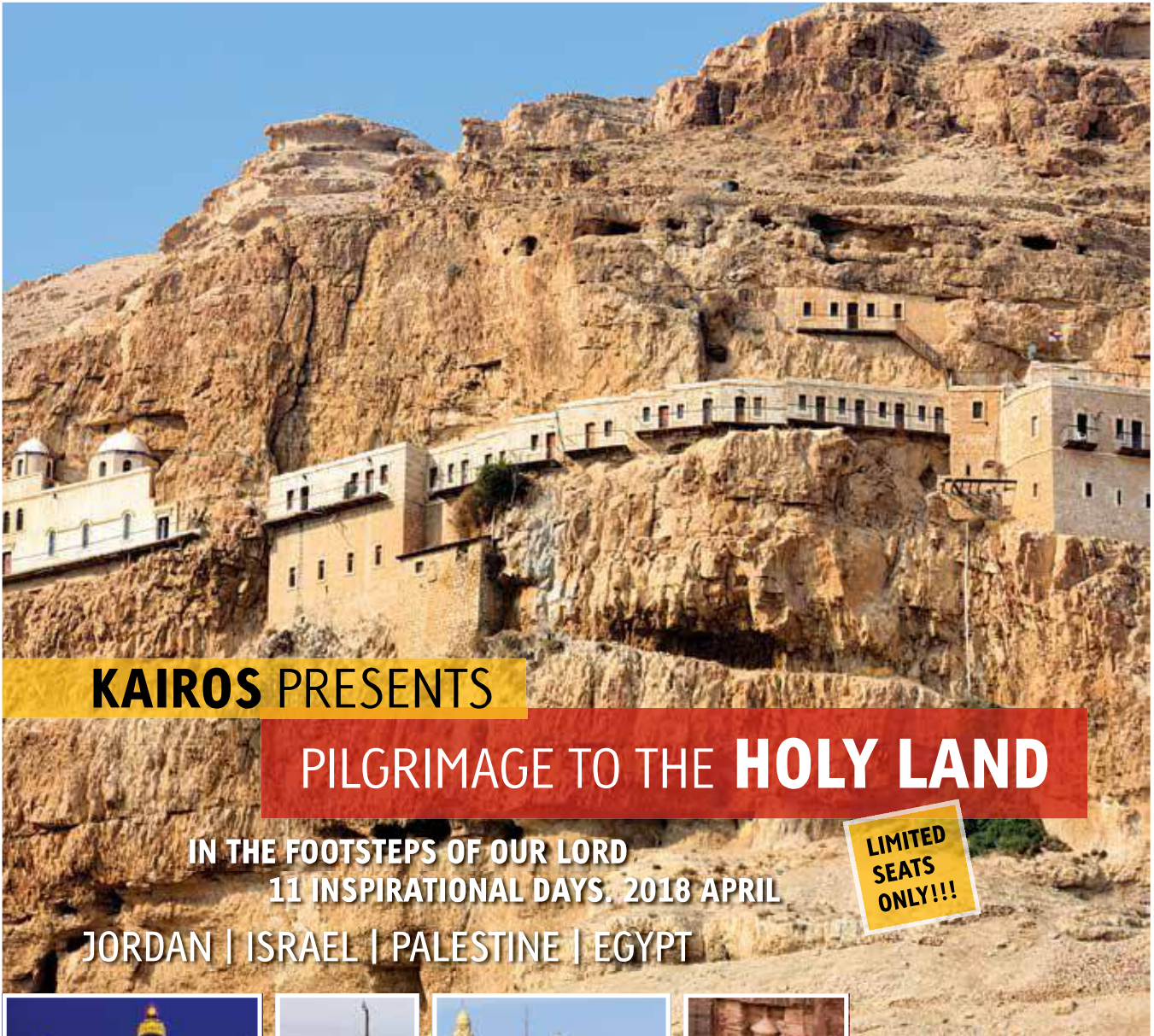
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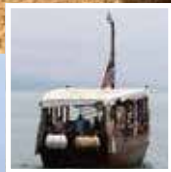
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