The Catholic Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception Parish Bulletin

Feb. 14 Ash Wednesday

February 2018 (Year B) Vol. XVI No. 2

Liturgy

Meditation

The Pope

Reflections

Parish News

LITURGY — SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2018 (YEAR B)

Fifth Sunday of the Year – 4 February 2018

First Reading (Job 7:1-4.6-7). Wrestling with the problem of why the innocent should suffer, Job takes a rather pessimistic view of life.

Second Reading (1 Cor 9:16-19.22-23). St. Paul tells how he has made himself all things to all people in order to bring them the Good News of salvation.

Gospel (Mk 1:29-39). In the midst of his work of teaching and healing, Jesus finds it necessary to escape to a lonely place to pray.

Sixth Sunday of the Year – 11 February 2018

First Reading (Lev 13:1-2.45-46). Lepers were considered ritually unclean and were compelled to live apart from the community.

Second Reading (1 Cor 10:31-11:1). St. Paul urges us never to do anything offensive to anyone but to do everything for the glory of God.

Gospel (Mk 1:40-45). This tells of the cure of a leper by Jesus.

First Sunday of Lent – 18 February 2018

First Reading (Gen 9:8-15). This tells of the friendship-agreement (covenant) which God established with Noah and his descendants after the Flood.

Second Reading (1 Pet 3:18-22). The waters of the Flood of Noah's time were a type of the waters of baptism by which we are saved.

Gospel (Mk 1:12-15). After his baptism Jesus spent forty days in the desert, during which time he was tempted by Satan.

Second Sunday of Lent – 25 February 2018

First Reading (Gen 22:1-2.9-13-15-18). This reading shows how complete was Abraham's obedience to God.

Second Reading (Rom 8:31-34). Since God is on our side, we can face anything.

Gospel (Mk 9:2-10). On Mt.Tabor three apostles of Jesus got a glimpse of the glory that was his as the Son of God.

Liturgy - Relevant Websites:

- *For meditation, prayer, spirituality* – Bible, Prayer & Homiletic Resources (www.frtommylane.com)
- *For on-screen prayer guidance & everyday scripture readings* – Sacred Space (www.sacredspace.ie)
- *For Bible Study Tools* – Scripture in different languages plus more (www.biblehub.com)
- *For Parish info., Parish Bulletin details, visit the Cathedral website*: (www.cathedral.catholic.org.hk) or call: (852)2522-8212 or fax: (852)2521-7957 or email: cathedral@catholic.org.hk

MEDITATION
LECTIO DIVINA

by Dr. Renu Silvano, OCV

OPENING PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, deepen my faith in you as I read and meditate on your holy word today and everyday in this New Year 2018. May I experience your word to be "spirit and life" for me. (Jn 6:63)

READING: (Matt 14:22-33)

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side. After sending the crowds away, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a headwind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered, 'Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come,' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water; but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?" And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

MEDITATION:

A. Understanding the Text:

(i) "*Jesus went up into the hills by himself to pray*": Jesus' personal prayer is a model for all Christians. Besides prayer in common we also need periods of silent personal prayer, even outdoors while surrounded by nature, as Jesus did. (ii) "*The wind was against them*" (RSV) / "*the boat ...was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a headwind*": Here the *wind/headwind* symbolizes the hostile forces of the world. (iii) "*Jesus went towards them, walking on the lake*": In the Old Testament, it was known that God overcomes the waves of death: "Thy way was through the sea, thy path through the great waters..." (Ps 77:19); "Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters..." (Is 43:16, etc). Jesus continues this work in the New Testament. (iv) "*Peter ... walking towards Jesus across the water*": Peter is given prominence by Matthew here as in other places also (see 16:17-19; 17:24-27). Peter's behavior shows a combination of impulsive love and faith weakened by doubt, seen also in the case of Thomas later (see John 20:28-29).

B. Actualizing the Text. What does this Scripture text mean for me?

(i) How often have I made the effort to be alone to pray, after I have experienced some success and popularity? What do I usually do when such things happen in my life or the life of my loved ones?

Do I give credit to God? (ii) Imagine you are in the boat with the disciples when they see Jesus coming towards them walking on the waters. Honestly acknowledge your own reaction? Would their fear influence you too? (iii) How might I have felt on hearing Jesus' voice carried by the wind and the waves saying: "Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid." Do I respond to these words in today's times of trouble and fear with joyful faith? (iv) Picture the scene and find out with what voice Jesus said to Peter, "Man of little faith, why did you doubt?" Did he do it sternly, or with a mischievous smile?

PRAYER:

Stay with us, Lord Jesus, be our companion on our way throughout 2018! Inflame our hearts and raise our hope, so that we might always recognize you in the scriptures, and in the breaking of Bread. Make us experience that we are truly your "co-heirs" (Rom 8:16) and partners in your mission in today's secularized world, Amen.

CONTEMPLATION:

Pick out a phrase from the text. Repeat it softly, and re-live the scene. For example:

Jesus went up into the hills by himself to pray.
Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid. Lord! Save me!
You of little faith, why did you doubt?

Conclude with the Our Father prayed slowly and with devotion.

WORLD DAY OF PEACE 2018

"Share the Journey"

Pope Francis' message is the most recent
in a long history of messages for the
World Day of Peace
beginning with Pope Paul VI in 1968.

Building on his September launch of the "Share the Journey" campaign in support of migrants and refugees, Pope Francis' Message for the 51st World Day of Peace (January 1) invites Catholics to embrace those who endure perilous journeys and hardships in order to find peace. He urges people of faith to turn with a "contemplative gaze" towards migrants and refugees, opening our hearts to the "gaze of faith which sees God dwelling in their houses, in their streets and squares."

In his Message, Pope Francis echoes St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, pointing to war, conflict, genocide, ethnic cleansing, poverty, lack of opportunity, and environmental degradation as reasons that families and individuals become refugees and migrants.

Four "mileposts for action" are necessary in order to allow migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and trafficking victims the opportunity to find peace. These include:

1) Welcoming, which calls for "expanding legal pathways for entry" and better balancing national security and fundamental human rights concerns;

2) Protecting, or recognizing and defending "the inviolable dignity of those who flee";

3) Promoting, which entails "supporting the integral human development of migrants and refugees"; and

4) Integrating, by allowing migrants and refugees to "participate fully in the life of society that welcomes them." Doing so enriches both those arriving and those welcoming.

Find out more at http://bit.ly/jan-1-peace-day

"Share the Journey"

A global Catholic campaign of compassion & support for migrants & refugees

PRAYING FOR THE POPE'S MONTHLY INTENTION (FEBRUARY 2018)

Universal: Say "No" to Corruption

That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.

REFLECTIONS

ASH WEDNESDAY AFTER VATICAN II

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) called for the renewal of Lent, recovering its ancient baptismal character. This recovery was significantly advanced by the restoration of the catechumenate mandated by the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (1972). As Catholics have increasingly interacted with catechumens in the final stage of their preparation for Baptism, they have begun to understand Lent as a season of baptismal preparation and baptismal renewal.

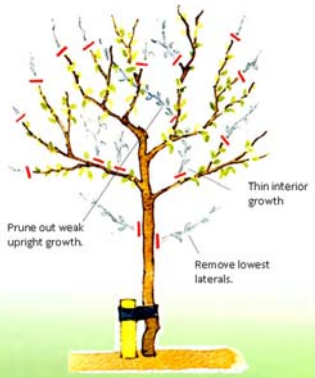
Since Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, it naturally is also beginning to recover a baptismal focus. One hint of this is the second formula that is offered for the imposition of ashes: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel." Though it doesn't explicitly mention Baptism, it recalls our baptismal promises to reject sin and profess our faith. It is a clear call to conversion, to that movement away from sin and toward Christ that we have to embrace over and over again through our lives.

As the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday calls us to the conversion journey that marks the season. As the catechumens enter the final stage of their preparation for the Easter sacraments, we are all called to walk with them so that we will be prepared to renew our baptismal promises when Easter arrives.

SEASON OF LENT

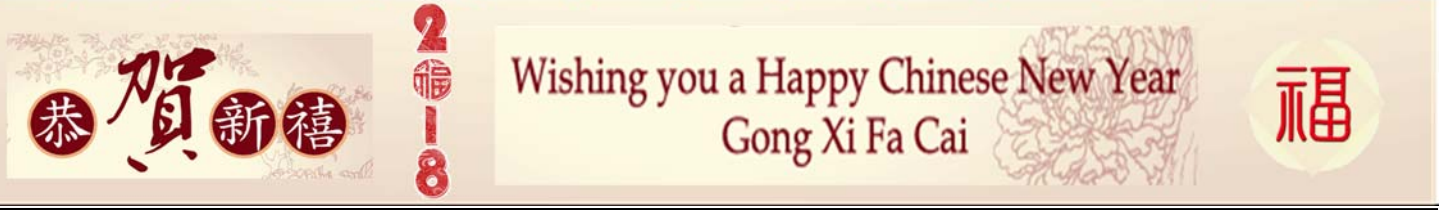
Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ's victory over death. This season urgently calls us to conversion. Christians are asked to return to God "with all their hearts" (*Joel* 2:12), to refuse to settle for mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord. Jesus is the faithful friend who never abandons us. Even when we sin, he patiently awaits our return; by that patient expectation, he shows us his readiness to forgive.

Lent is a favourable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply.



In pruning a fruit tree,
the aim is not to inflict damage on the tree,
but to rid it of dead or superfluous branches,
so that it can produce more and better fruit.

Lent is a kind of spiritual pruning time.
There may be things in our lives that sap our energy,
and diminish our spiritual fruitfulness.
What do we need to prune ourselves of this Lent,
so that we may become more fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine?



捐血救人　有你同行

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO GIVE BLOOD

捐血日期 / BLOOD DONATION DATE

20.5.2018

時間 / TIME : 9:15AM - 3:00PM

地點 : 明愛大廈五樓公眾會堂

VENUE : COMMUNITY HALL, 5/F, CARITAS HOUSE

查詢 / ENQUIRY : cathedral.blood.drive@gmail.com

天主教聖母無原罪主教座堂
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Cathedral Blood Donation Day
20 May 2018

In view of constant low blood inventories in Hong Kong Red Cross recently, the Annual Blood Donation Campaign of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception will be held earlier this year on 20 May 2018. Please save the date, be a blood donor !

Some of the criteria to be a blood donor :

- Enjoying good health
- Weighing 41Kg (90 lbs) or above
- Between 18 – 60 years of age
- **Not** a carrier of Hepatitis viruses
- **Have not** spent 3 months or more cumulatively in the U.K. from 1980 to 1996
- **Have not** spent 5 years or more cumulatively in France or Europe from 1980 to present
- Interval between 2 consecutive blood donations :
  For gentlemen : no less than 75 days (75 days before 20 May is 6 March)
  For Ladies : no less than 105 days (105 days before 20 May is 4 Feb)

(for detail, please refer to HK Red Cross website http://www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/hkindex.asp)

Travel history :

- After travelling to Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam etc. (areas affected by Zika Virus), allow an interval of 28 days from the date of departure from the above areas
- After travelling to North America (areas affected by West Nile Virus), allow an interval of 28 days
- After travelling to Malaria affected areas, allow an interval of 12 months