



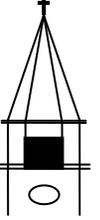
THE CHURCHMAN

THE ST. MARY'S CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ST. MARY'S CHURCH (C.N.I.), 1A Sholapur Road, Pune - 411001

Presbyter-in-charge: *The Revd. Sumesh Jacob*

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Dear Family of God at St. Mary's,

For us in our church we move this month after a gap of ordinary Sundays from the Season of Christmas into the next season. We begin the Season of Lent from Ash Wednesday on 13th which is a period of 40 days (excluding the Sundays which are considered as little Easters) till Easter Day. In some church traditions the Season of Christmas extends till the 2nd of February which is the festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple 40 days from his birth as it is part of the Nativity Narrative in the Gospel according to Luke. Luke is the only gospel-writer who gives glimpses of Jesus' early years and because of his thoroughness in reporting the facts, most biblical scholars believe that he may have got this detailed information from Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The Season of Lent is a time of preparation before Easter, similar to the Season of Advent before Christmas. As we observe the great festivals of our faith each year, which are commemorations of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus, we rejoice for what God has done and is doing for the world and his people through his Son. But there can be no true celebration without true thankfulness and gratefulness which comes through repentance and faith. Therefore Christians from the time of the Early Church have observed these periods of preparation so as to truly draw closer to God and that their faith would matter to their lives. However, in a set pattern of worship and observations like this there is always the danger of involvement in a way that is mechanical without any sincerity and meaning. Therefore, there are certain church traditions which do away with such periods or seasons emphasizing that only what is important is our faith. Now this is very good but without making any judgments on whether they are right in their perspective (read Romans 14:1—15.13), the answer to the periods and seasons being meaningful and not just an empty ritual for us is not to do away with them but to keep them with greater faith. We should take the opportunity of such patterns of our worship as discipline of faith but at the same time we need to be careful that we do not make them an end in itself but a means to know Jesus more clearly, to love him more dearly and to follow him more nearly day by day.

On Sunday 10th we shall observe at the 8 am. and 6 pm. services as Healing Ministry Sunday when we will specially remember and pray for all those who are instruments of healing to those in ill-health in body, mind or spirit. We shall pray for hospitals and centres that provide the service of healing in various ways. We shall also take a retiring collection at the end of the worship services which will go towards our organizing a health program that we will decide upon and in which we can be involved as a church. On the 13th which is Ash Wednesday we shall have worship services at 8 am. and 6.30 pm. On Sunday 24th we shall give thanks to God for the life of the Apostle Matthias who is often confused with the Apostle Matthew. This Matthias was selected after the ascension of Christ to replace Judas Iscariot who had betrayed Jesus so as to complete the number of apostles (Acts 1:15-26). He was most probably one of the other disciples chosen by the Lord during his time on earth to go ahead of him to various places to share about the Kingdom of God (Luke 10:1-24). From being one of the unknown disciples of Jesus during his lifetime on earth, Matthias was chosen to be one to take over the apostolic ministry. This is a wonderful testimony of God's grace on one's life along with one's persevering to be a witness for the Lord. May we be inspired by his life and the lives of many others like him to deepen our devotion to our Lord in the coming month and Season of Lent. God bless you!

Revd. Sumesh Jacob
Presbyter-in-charge

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Leteisha Henderson, Agnes Narella.
- 2 Alice Unni, Aarti Phillip
- 3 Sabita Tate.
- 4 Millind James, Brynelle Kunju.
- 5 Smita Farande, Anandita John, Aarush Shelke, Mallika Salve, Joel Swamy, G. Meghanath.
- 6 Donovan Singh.
- 7 Joyce Jacob.
- 8 Mrs. Issac (Gophne), Corrine Singh, Naimesh Shah.
- 9 Renshaw Dennis, Pratibha Gangle.
- 10 Vaishali Gangle, Sophiya Jently, Unmil Pathak.
- 11 Alan Anchan, Jai Gangle, Kenneth Vastrad.
- 12 Gary Simon, Rahul Simon.
- 13 Renuka Bhalerao, Sampada Chopde, Ritesh Gangle, Nitin Prabhune, Rashmi Paul, Beena George.
- 15 Edward Charles Wood, George Tharakan, Sandra Wood.
- 16 Nalini Jadhav, Barbara O'Connor
- 17 Kiran (Dahitule) Pandit, Shaina Joel, Janice Lahori, Neela Onawale, Aarnav Pathak, Francis Singh.
- 18 Diana Chatterjee, Nitin Panhalkar, Usha Prabhune, Ratnakar Patole, Anosh Rogers.
- 19 Trisha Eduljee, Cdr. K.K.C. Menon.
- 20 Kiran Kotak, Patrick Crawford.
- 21 Ashish Kale, Jasmine Anchan, Sunita Gophne.
- 22 Keira James, Anil Sathe.
- 23 Priyanka Kale, Rachel Anchan, Sneh Karkaria.
- 24 Rachana Angre, Antoinette Borade.
- 25 Leora Mani.
- 26 Kenneth Dason, Heather Wilson.
27. Rosemary Heysmond, Susan Mathew, Sheena Singh. Swarali Londhe

Wishing you all a Very Happy Birthday !!!

On the lighter side.....

A minister was completing a temperance sermon and with great emphasis he said, *"If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*

With even greater emphasis he said, *"And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*

And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said, *"And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*

Sermon complete, he sat down...

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing, *"For our closing song, let us sing Hymn 365, 'Shall We Gather at the River.'"*

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Aswin & Kavidha Pillay
- 4 Manas & Rashmi Patra.
- 7 Melanie & Karl Lobo.
- 8 Vijay & Vanita Salvi.
- 9 Abhishek & Nikita Prasad; Sampath & Nirmala Raj ; Abhay & Aruna Shelke.
- 10 Stephen & Kalpana Herbert.
- 16 Deepak & Vineeta Rawani; Reuben & Priyanka Kale.
- 19 Rachael & Naimesh Shah.
- 20 Edward Robert & Pamela Wood.
- 21 Sulbha & Rajesh Silimkar.
- 22 Animesh & Sumita Topno.

Wishing you all a Long & Happy Married Life!!!

A BIG THANK YOU!!!

The choirs of CANTABILE, founded and conducted by Fereida Havewalla for an awe inspiring program "Who would imagine a King" held in our Church on 22nd December 2012. With about 70 choristers from tiny tots to the much older, it was an evening to remember.

The 'GRACE' String Orchestra, conducted by Abhijeet Roy, who regaled the audience with some beautiful classical music in our Church on 25h January 2013. The singing by some of the members of the Morning Stars choir made us wish the evening didn't have to end.

All those who were fortunate to attend these programs, which were held as a fund raising for the Organ Restoration, were blessed with the beautiful music and singing.

PRAYER – don't give God instructions, just report for duty.

Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass – it's about learning to dance in the rain.

The Will of God never takes you to where the Grace of God will not protect you.

Sunday Worship Services Schedule for February 2013

Date	Worship Services	
Sunday, 3 rd February <i>Eighth Sunday before Easter (Sexagesima)</i>	8 am. & 6 pm. The Lord's Supper Service Theme: <i>Only by the grace of God can our hearts be made pure.</i>	Old Testament: <i>Jeremiah 17.5-10</i> Psalm: <i>51.10-17</i> Epistle: <i>Romans 7.14—8.4</i> Gospel: <i>Mark 7.14-23</i>
	11 am. Contemporary Service (Holy Communion) Conducting and Preaching by the Clergy.	
Sunday, 10 th February <i>Seventh Sunday before Easter (Quinquagesima)</i>	8 am. & 6 pm. The Lord's Supper Service Theme: <i>Brokenness to Healing.</i> Healing Ministry Sunday	Old Testament: <i>Isaiah 61.1-3</i> Psalm: <i>6.1-9</i> Epistle: <i>Romans 5.1-5</i> Gospel: <i>Mark 14.1-9</i>
	11 am. Contemporary Service	
Sunday, 17 th February <i>Sixth Sunday before Easter (Lent 1)</i>	8 am. & 6 pm. The Lord's Supper Service Theme: <i>The victory of Jesus when tempted helps us when we are tempted.</i>	Old Testament: <i>Deuteronomy 6.10-17</i> Psalm: <i>95.6-11</i> Epistle: <i>Hebrews 4.14-16</i> Gospel: <i>Luke 4.1-13</i>
	11 am. Contemporary Service	
Sunday, 24 th February <i>Fifth Sunday before Easter (Lent 2)</i>	8 am. & 6 pm. The Lord's Supper Service Theme: <i>The compassionate love of God gives confidence to his children.</i>	Old Testament: <i>Hosea 14.1-8</i> Psalm: <i>103.8-14</i> Epistle: <i>Romans 8.31-39</i> Gospel: <i>Luke 7.36-50</i>
	11 am. Contemporary Service	

Special Days of the Church Calendar in February 2013

- 2 Feb - **The Presentation of Christ in the Temple**
- 5 Feb - Martyrs of Japan (1597)
- 6 Feb - **Titus, Companion of Paul & Evangelist**
- 10 Feb - *Healing Ministry Sunday*; Narayan Vaman Tilak, Convert (bap. 1895)
- 12 Feb - Alexander Duff, Educationist & Evangelist (1878)
- 13 Feb - **Ash Wednesday**; Christian Fredrick Schwartz, Evangelist (1798)
- 15 Feb - **Stephen, the First Martyr**
- 18 Feb - Martin Luther, Theologian (1546)
- 24 Feb - **Matthias, Apostle**
- 28 Feb - Kalicharan Bannerji, Convert & National Leader (bap.1864); Brother Lawrence, Monk & Mystic

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES & LENTEN DEVOTIONS

There will be worship services held on **Ash Wednesday**, 13 February, at **8:00 AM** and **6:30 PM**.

Lenten Devotions will be held every **Wednesday** thereafter, at **6:30 PM**. The speaker for these devotions will be **Rev. Sumesh Jacob** and the theme - '**Places of the Passion**'.

BUILD A BETTER WORLD

Build a better world said God,
And I asked how?
The world is such a vast place and so complicated now.
I am small and useless.
What can I do?
God in all His wisdom said, "Just build a better you."

LENT- A TIME OF REPENTENCE AND FAITH

The period of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday that falls on February 13th this year. The word 'lent' comes from the old English word *lencten* which means 'spring' and also refers to lengthening of the days. In Latin 'lent' means 'forty' and so this period of Lent is forty weekdays between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Sundays are excluded from this period.

The word 'lent' is not read in the Bible nor is there any commandment for the observation of Lent. All the synoptic gospels record that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for forty days just before the commencement of His earthly ministry. However in most denominations lent is observed as a period of reflection and renewal of our faith as a preparation for the day of resurrection, a period of introspection and renewal. As Paul writes, ***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new" (2 Cor.5:17).***

The three pillars of Lent are almsgiving, prayer and fasting. Jesus explains these acts of worship in Matt.6. While condemning a public display of these acts He teaches that they must be done in secret and with a right attitude.

- By Dr. Nitin Joseph

Helping hands

A mother, wishing to encourage her son's progress at the piano, bought tickets to a performance by the great Polish pianist Ignace Paderewski. When the evening arrived, they found their seats near the front of the concert hall and eyed the majestic Steinway waiting on the stage. Soon the mother found a friend to talk to, and the boy slipped away.

At eight o'clock, the lights in the auditorium began to dim, the spotlights came on, and only then did they notice the boy - up on the piano bench, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." His mother gasped in shock and embarrassment but, before she could retrieve her son, the master himself appeared on the stage and quickly moved to the keyboard.

He whispered gently to the boy, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in the bass part. Soon his right arm reached around the other side and improvised a delightful obligato. Together, the old master and the young novice held the crowd mesmerized with their blended and beautiful music.

In all our lives, we receive helping hands - some we notice, some we don't. Equally we ourselves have countless opportunities to provide helping hands - sometimes we would like our assistance to be noticed, sometimes we don't. Little of what we all achieve is without learning from others and without support from others and what we receive we should hand out.

Are Your Potatoes Heavy ?

A teacher once told each of her students to bring a clear plastic bag and a sack of potatoes to school. For every person they refuse to forgive in their life's experience, they chose a potato, wrote on it the name and date, and put it in the plastic bag. Some of their bags were quite heavy.

They were then told to carry this bag with them everywhere for one week, putting it beside their bed at night, on the car seat when driving, next to their desk at work.

The hassle of lugging this around with them made it clear what a weight they were carrying spiritually, and how they had to pay attention to it all the time to not forget and keep leaving it in embarrassing places. Naturally, the condition of the potatoes deteriorated to a nasty smelly slime. This was a great metaphor for the price we pay for keeping our pain and heavy negativity! Too often we think of forgiveness as a gift to the other person, while it clearly is for ourselves!