



Growing in Faith

- Agnes Raj

This past year we have been celebrating the Year of Faith, a time in which we have been called to deepen our faith and to grow closer to Christ and his Church. For some of us, this has been a time of renewal and grace, yet others this might be a period of extreme trial. I was wondering how we can continue our faith even after the year of faith has come to an end. Most Rev. Michael Barber SJ, Bishop of Oakland diocese during his sermon in our parish gave four points. "Believe, ask for what you want, follow the instructions and give thanks". I was pondering over these points, how they can help us grow in our faith and deepen our relationship with God.

To have faith we have to believe. Without belief there is no faith. Believe in the Lord like Mother Mary. Blessed John Paul wrote of Mary, "Hers was a daring faith...[because] at the Annunciation she believed in what was humanly impossible...Mary teaches Christians to live their faith as a demanding and engaging journey, which in every age and situation of life requires courage and constant perseverance." Today, God calls each of us to follow Mother Mary's example of believing the impossible.

When the blind man in Jericho heard that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" (Lk 18:38). He wanted to see, so he asked for what he wanted. He believed that Jesus will heal him. That faith healed him (Lk 18:42).

In 2 Kings we read Naaman has leprosy and his wife's servant girl tells her mistress that if Naaman would go to Elisha, "man of God" in Israel, Naaman would be healed. Naaman believed that Elisha would heal him and he went in search of Elisha. But Elisha simply told him to bathe in the river Jordan (2Kgs 5:10). Though Naaman refuses to do so at first, he followed the instruction. Since he followed the instruction (obeyed) he was cured.

When Jesus traveled through Samaria and Galilee, ten lepers shouted for healing and when they received the healing, only one returned to thank Jesus (Lk 17:11-19). The other nine were not ungrateful but they were not humble enough to give thanks and praise. Naaman and the leper from Samaria are non-belongers of Holy Land. They both experience being healed through coming to the "Holy Land" of God. Naaman gives thanks by taking some of the soil from the Holy Land back with him and he accepted the Lord as his God. The cured-leper returns to Jesus to praise and thank him.

"What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give

them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (Jas 2:14-17). Faith requires action. If it doesn't move us to do something or say something, it's not really faith at all. We must put our faith into action. We can put our faith into action by donating to a charity that serves those in need, we can supply spiritual reading materials for the jail ministry. Honor someone living or deceased by donating in his or her name. Even small donations given on a regular basis can do great good. Volunteering in the St. Vincent de Paul, food pantry or in the nursing home is also another way to put your faith into action. Simple encouragement is also a means of putting our faith into action. Encourage someone struggling with faith by inviting them to go to Mass with you and pray for them.

At a general audience last summer, the Holy Father called on Catholics to "ask ourselves whether we really have taken some steps to know Christ and the truth of faith better by ... by receiving the sacraments regularly." Praying on a regular basis is an excellent way to show our gratitude for the gift of our faith. Attending regular Mass - not only on Sundays, but during the week, spending time in the adoration, going for confession and practicing the traditional Catholic devotion such as pilgrimages, novenas, processions and celebrations in honor of Mary and the other saints, the rosary, the Angelus, the Stations of the Cross, the veneration of relics, and the use of sacramentals will help us to continue to live the Year of Faith. Study is also an excellent means of growing in faith. Attending the Bible study classes or reading a book on saints or religious magazines and sharing the faith with others will help us grow in our faith. The goal of the Year of Faith, "is to reawaken the faith in Catholics, so we can be better witnesses to the love of Christ and his Church in our homes, workplaces and communities." Though the Year of Faith that was proclaimed last October by Pope Benedict XVI "officially" ends on Nov. 24, the Solemnity of Christ the King, it has actually just began.

"With hearts transformed by Christ and His Gospel, we can change our own lives, and change the world." -- Cardinal Wuerl -Archdiocese of Washington.



Pope Francis caresses a man suffering from a rare disease on Wednesday, November 6, in St. Peter's Square.

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Saint of the Month - St. Gertrude

St. Gertrude was born in Germany on January 6, 1256. No information is available about her parents. At the age of five, she entered the Aluminate of Helfta under the care of St.

Mechtilde, mistress of the Convent. This convent was governed by the Benedictine order. She grew to be a happy, holy nun. Gertrude was likable and intelligent. She did very well in Latin studies. In fact, she did not like the study of religion as well as her other subjects at first. But when she was twenty-six, Jesus appeared to her. He told her that from now on, she would think only of loving him and trying to become holy. Now she began to study the Bible with deep delight. She became very learned in our holy religion.

Jesus appeared to St. Gertrude many times. He showed her his own Sacred Heart. Twice he let her rest her head on his Heart. Because of her great love for Jesus, her divine Spouse, Gertrude tried to correct her faults and become better. She trusted in him with her whole heart and was full of peace and joy.

She wrote many books in Latin. "Herald of Divine Love" contains 5 books and St. Gertrude wrote only the 2nd book, which contains the favors received by her. Sisters from the convent wrote the rest of the books about St. Gertrude's life and other exercises. Sister Gertrude wrote many beautiful prayers. One of her favorite prayer is said for the souls in purgatory. Jesus gave this Prayer to St. Gertrude and He promised that every time it was said, 1,000 souls would be released from Purgatory and allowed into God's Presence.

St. Gertrude had a great devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. She loved to receive Holy Communion often, even though in those days, it was not the custom. She was also very devoted to St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus. After suffering for about ten years, in 1302, she went to join the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who made him her spouse.

St. Gertrude's feast is celebrated on November 16th. During this month when we remember our loving ones who have departed us, let us pray St. Gertrude's prayer so God's mercy may be showered on them.

"Eternal Father, I offer Thee the most precious blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the masses said throughout the world today for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home, and within my family.

- Joe Natar

மூன்றெழுத்து கவிதை

என் வாழ்வில் நான்

எழுதிய முத்தான

முத்த கவிதை- அது

மூன்றெழுத்து கவிதை...

"எத்தனைதான் நினைவுப் பரிசுகள்

கொடுத்தானும்

என் நினைவே பரிசாய்

கொண்டவளே..

உன் உணர்விலும் உன்னை

உயிருக்கு மேலாய் நேசிக்கிறேன்- உந்தன்

உயிரணுவில்தானே சுவாசிக்கிறேன்

இன்று... நான் இப்படி இருக்க

எப்படி எல்லாம் தியாக போராட்டம்

நடத்திய...

உன்னை நினைத்து பல

கவிதைகள் எழுத துடித்த என்னால்

உன் அன்பை நினைத்து ஒரே ஒரு

முத்த மூன்றெழுத்து கவிதை மட்டுமே

எழுத முடிந்தது -அந்த கவிதை

"அம்மா"

என்றும் அன்புடன்

- Anthuvan

UPCOMING EVENTS

CATECHISM CLASS and PRAYER GROUP

Every Saturday (except Second Saturdays) at 856 W El Camino Real, Mountain View CA 94040, 5:30 PM



December Mass

**Dec 14 2013, 6:45 PM
St. Joseph's Church, Mountain View**

Murmuring

- Leenus Rich

Finding faults is an interesting job for all of us. Especially finding faults at others is like eating honey to our heart but it will bitter like a bitter guard when others finding faults at us. We have thousands of reasons to find faults at others similarly we have thousands of answers to justify our own faults. While we are not ready to accept one single reason given by others to justify their faults, we expect others to accept all our justification for our own faults. We are angry when others finding faults at us but we cannot keep ourselves from finding faults at others. We think we help others by finding their faults but we never accept our own faults when pointed by others. How we try to find faults at others today, the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes tried to find faults at Jesus Christ in the olden days, not one time or two times but many times. They tried their best to find a fault at Jesus from His actions and speeches but Jesus who knew the intentions of every human heart knew their intentions before they tested Him with their questions. So He never failed to answer them appropriately.

When Jesus healed the paralytic man saying "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven" the Scribes said to themselves "This man is blaspheming" but Jesus knew their thoughts and said "You may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins". The paralytic man should have been very happy to walk in front of everyone but the scribes did not have a good heart to rejoice with him because they came to find fault. Instead of thanking God they tried to find faults at Jesus.

When Jesus casted out the demon from the dumb man, he spoke and the crowd marveled saying "Never was anything like this seen in Israel" but the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." As we read the crowd marveled by the miracle Jesus did but it did not make the Pharisees happy as they were trying to find faults at Jesus saying Jesus casted out the demon by Be-el'zebul the prince of demons. It means Jesus was also part of the demon family according to the Pharisees.

This time the Pharisees were trying to find faults at Jesus' disciples. At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck ears of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Jesus rebuke them saying "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice". Again the Pharisees came to Jesus to find faults in His talk. So they asked Him Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Jesus gave them a perfect answer "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." We would have said no matter you give to king or government but give everything to God. Jesus did not say like that.

When Jesus entered the synagogue the Pharisees asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" so that they might accuse Him. Jesus knew the intentions of human heart and He healed the man with the withered hand. The point to note here is the man with the withered hand was sitting inside the synagogue along with other Pharisees. So he might be one of the Pharisees. They prevent a good thing to happen to their fellow men with their fault finding attitudes. As all their traps were failing the Pharisees discussed with others how to destroy Jesus. If they would have shut their mouth Jesus would have done many miracles over there to their own people but for the Pharisees they don't want any miracles as they cannot give up their fault finding attitudes. As a result Jesus went away from that place and He healed those whoever followed Him.



All their fault finding attitudes caused them not to receive any blessings from Jesus. Jesus never said to find the faults at others so that they may serve the kingdom of God in a better way. Instead He said "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye". In these days if we think we are not receiving any blessings let us try our best to remove our fault finding attitudes so that He may shower His blessings in our efforts.

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என்ன நேர்ந்தாலும் நன்றி செலுத்துவோம்.....

நம் வாழ்வின் காரியங்கள் தந்தையின் கைகளில்,
அவர் சித்தமானால், பெரிய காரியங்கள் எளிதாய் வாய்க்கும்,
அவர் சித்தமின்றி சிறிய காரியங்கள் கூட தோற்றுப்போகும்!

தேவன் தாம் நினைக்கும் செயல்களை ,
நம்மை கொண்டு நடத்துகிறார் என்ற தெளிவுடன்,
தேவனின் திட்டத்தால், யாவையும் நடந்ததே என்று அமைதி கொள்வோம்!

வெற்றி பற்றிய கவலை, தோல்வி குறித்து பயம் நம்மை தூரத்த அனுமதிக்காமல்,
குறைவில்லா விசுவாசத்துடன் , நிறைவான நம்பிக்கையுடன்
நெஞ்சார்ந்த நன்றிகள் பல செலுத்துவோம்!

காலையிலும், மாலையிலும், இன்பத்திலும், துன்பத்திலும்
வியாதியிலும், வேதனைகளிலும், மனம் கலங்கிய வேலைகளிலும்,
நம்பிக்கை தளர்ந்த நேரங்களிலும், செய்வதறியாத நேரங்களிலும்,
துதியுடன் கூடிய ஸ்தோத்திரங்களை,
இடைவிடாமல் செலுத்தி கொண்டேயிருப்போம்!

குறித்த காலத்தில் நேர்த்தியாக அறுவடை கிடைக்க செய்த தேவன்,
நாம் துதிகளால் அகமகிழ்ந்து ,
நாம் இருதயத்தின் விருப்பங்களை வாஞ்சையுடன்,
நிறைவேற்றி ஆசீர்வதிப்பார்!

- கவிதா ரெமி