

BAY AREA TAMIL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

இனிய தமிழால் இறைவனில் இணைவோம்



THE HOLY FAMILY

PRAY TO THE HOLY FAMILY

MONTH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, like you we are members of the Father's family. We pray that our family love may reflect his love on its openness to all people. May we forgive even when not forgiven, and be patient with others' weaknesses."

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT - SAVING TREASURES IN HEAVEN

We all live in a world where everyone needs money from birth to death. For that reason we save money to take care of ourselves and our children. Jesus tells us below how and where we should to save money. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

How do we store our treasures in heaven? By giving it to poor. As Jesus said "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." I would like to share a real incident. It is not a story. A family consists of father, mother, child and other relatives living together in a remote part of India. After a while the father and mother were affected by leprosy and were rejected by other family members. So they were helpless, living on the streets and rescued by a Christian organization. The lepers were taught to do some hand craft works so that they can take care of their daily living needs.

For several years the couple worked very hard with their decess and bought a small piece of land with the money they have earned for the only reason that their daughter should not suffer the way they are suffering. They hoped for that their daughter should become a nurse and should take care of similar patients.

One day the organization announced that they are looking for land to build a church. The couple went to the chairperson of the organization and said we have a piece of land and we are donating it to build the church. The person was shocked and he refused to take

their land because he knew how hard and how many years they worked to buy that land. They said to him that they prayed over it for ten days and made their decision. The person refused again and finally they convinced him.

After few years the church was built and worship started. By the time their daughter finished school and ready to go for higher studies. They applied for a nursing college and their daughter was invited for interview. She went to the interview and the principal asked her what is your father and mother doing? She said they are lepers. After a few minutes of silence the principal said I give you free admission and we will take care of all your expenses until you finish your course. We may not be there tomorrow to take of our future needs but God will take of it from what we have saved in heaven. Are we saving our treasures on earth as the rich fool did?

"The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:16-21). Let us examine ourselves whether we are rich toward ourselves or rich toward God.

Yours in Christ, Leenus.

IN THE NEWS

BATCC congratulates our new choir co-ordinator Mrs. Suganthi Natar. Below is a message from Sugathi.

Dear friends in Christ,

With great pleasure I want to introduce myself as the new Choir Coordinator for BATCC. As quoted by St. Augustine, "Singing is praying twice", so let us all join hands to praise and worship the Lord with songs and music.

If you are interested in singing or playing a musical instrument, please send an email to suginatar@yahoo.com and I will assign you a group.

I am looking forward to a great year of prayer and worship.

God Bless,
Suganthi

CALENDARS

Our 2011 Calendars are now available. Please do not forget to get your copy. Thanks to Mr. Antony Babu and Fr. Singarayar for helping us get the calendars on time.

LENTEN RETREAT

We are still working on having a Lenten retreat. This retreat would be lead by Rev. Fr. Lawrence Joseph during the Lent season. We will keep you apprised of the details.

TAX DEDUCTION

BATCC is a registered Non-Profit Organization in Bay Area [501(c) (3) Organization]. Any contribution you made to our church is tax-deductible. Donations given in year 2010 to BATCC can take a deduction on their 2010 tax return.

CONDOLENCE

Fr. Singarayar's mother passed away on Jan 30, 2011 at the age of 87. We express our condolences to father and his family members. Let us remember her in our prayers.

If you are not registered on our yahoo group kindly register following the URL <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BayAreaTamilCatholic/> to receive more info about our community.

THE CALL

"He appointed Twelve, whom he also named Apostles, that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (MK:3:13-17)

Jesus calls each of us in the same way he called his apostles. Do we pay attention to his call? Many times, No. He might have called us during our prayers, during the Mass or through someone. In the Bible, both Old and New testament, God called his people a number of times for his mission. Let us recall some of these people who God call for his mission from the New Testament.

The first one that comes to my mind is Mary. He called her to be the Mother of God (LK1:26-38). Mary accepted his call and said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord" (LK1:37). The second one is His (Jesus) first disciples, Simon, Andrew, and James. They left everything and accepted His invitation and acted without questioning him (MT4:18-22). The third one is Zacchaeus. When Jesus called him he accepted and welcomed him to his home. His call was to be fair and not to be fraud (LK19:1-10).

The fourth one is the Samaritan woman to whom Jesus asks for water (Jn 4:39). Her call is to testify about the Messiah. She did her part. She and her people accepted Jesus. The fifth one is the woman caught in the adultery (Jn8:1-11). Here Jesus calls her by forgiving her sin. The sixth one is the Ethiopian Eunuch (Act8:26-40). He was called through Phillip.

When Philip proclaimed the good news to him by explaining the Scripture passage that he (Ethiopian Eunuch) was reading. He accepted the call and was

baptized. The seventh one was a woman named Lydia (Act16:11-15). She was called through the preaching of Paul. She and her household got baptized.

Even today He calls us. We need to find out what the call is for, may be to love, to forgive, to heal, to welcome a stranger, to work for peace and justice, or to spread the gospel.

To hear his call we need to pray. Strong prayer life comes into play to accept God's call. God speaks and guides us through our conscience. We are invited to listen to the deep voice within us. Jesus is our model for listening. Jesus left the crowd and went alone to be with his Father before he begins his ministry and before his journey to Calvary (Mk1:7, Mk3:32).

In the last month's newsletter, I wrote about the New Year resolution. If we had not taken one, it is not too late. Let us take steps to improve our relationship with God. Let us withdraw from our busy schedules and remain in silence with God. May be we can go for Adoration, extra mass other than the Sunday Mass, or attend a retreat. Let us ask Jesus to help us hear his call and grant us the courage to accept his call.

"If Today You hear his voice harden not your hearts" Psalm 95:7-8

Yours in Christ,
Agnes P. Raj

BIBLE CORNER

Meditate on this Bible verses during the month of February and always...

My child, treat yourself as well as you can, and bring worthy offerings to the Lord. Remember that death is coming for you some day, and you haven't been told when that will be. Before that day comes, be kind to your friends; be as generous as you can. Don't deny yourself a single day's happiness. If there is something you want to do and it is lawful, go ahead! Some day all that you have worked for will be divided up and given to others. So be generous; but also be willing to receive from others. Enjoy yourself, for you will not find any pleasures in the world of the dead. The human body wears out like a piece of clothing. The ancient law decrees that we must die. Human beings are like leaves on a spreading tree. New growth takes the place of the fallen leaves; while some of us die, others are being born. Everything made by human hands will decay and perish, along with the person who made it.

- Sirach 14: 11- 19

ALTAR SERVERS' RETREAT ON "DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS"



When did we last review our path to eternal salvation? St. Ignatius of Loyola introduced a tool called "Discernment of Spirits" to facilitate this process. This tool was extensively used by Jesuits, but is now being followed by Christians all around. These are the seven stages which can enlighten anyone

who is open to God and God's ways:

1. To know oneself: A constant awareness of one's likes and dislikes.
2. To know why do I like what I like and why don't I like what I don't like.
3. To be transparent to parents regarding what disturbs them and what brings them joy / happiness.
4. **Distinguish** - The type of actions one considers devilish and the type of actions considered as Godly. Through drawings, these can be depicted.

Discern - Keeping the person as the center.

5. Before judging, getting into another person's shoes. Why do my parents tell me to do what I do not like to do? Looking at from parents' perspective.
6. In every decision, keep God at the center, (sometimes not even parents), for God is the one who is going to be with you ALWAYS.
7. Constant awareness of God's grace working in and through us - through minor incidents, through peers, elders, occurrences.

Fr. John Rose, S.J. who gives Spiritual Guidance to the students of Santa Clara University, has been offering this technique to them for the past two years. He kindly agreed to educate our BATCC Altar servers on these techniques. It was a very informal session with all of us sitting in the backyard and fully enjoying the spiritual exercises. Mr. Michael Sekar assisted Father with keeping things in perspective. Due to the time constraint, yoga and meditation were moved to the next session.



The students learned collectively how the good or bad spirit influences us in our daily lives and how we need to consistently choose LIFE towards God (not Death). The students exercised their minds and came up with their weak points to improve this year. Father concluded the session with a Holy Mass dedicated to the children. Everyone enjoyed a hearty potluck after the mass.

We wish to thank Father John for the wonderful retreat and the Eucharistic celebration. Thanks to all the parents for taking time to bring their kids to this retreat.

Sincerely,
Joe Natar

