



Koinonos

Magazine of the Cathedral Of The King

Volume 35 Issue 1

February
2016
Seasons of
Epiphany and
Lent

*That Great Thing
called*
Pag-ibig
from the heart of the Father

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Koinonos

The Most Reverend
Ariel Cornelio P. Santos
Bishop, Cathedral Of The King

Gerry Ramos
Head, Holy Society of the Chroniclers

Fr. Roberto Jorvina
Sis. Norma Lai
Advisers

Fr. Gary Thurman
Marilie Thurman
Consultants/Technical Advisers

Cielo Caubalejo
Shekaina Ingrid Diaz
Ignatius Norberto Go
Nimfa Grace Jorvina
Editorial Team

Emee Abalajen
Danelle Paula David
Dra. Maribel Develos
Lala Espina
Deacon Ritche and Charisma
Jandayan
Alice Mandocdoc
Lyrach and Stefani Quintos
Mia D. Santos
Fr. Gary Thurman
Marilie Thurman
Contributors

Koinonos is a community
publication of the
Cathedral Of The King

2F EMRAM Bldg., Km 15, West Service
Road, Bicutan, Paranaque City.

Tel. No. 8348649, 8348668, 9358253
email: cotk@cathedraloftheking.org



editorial

Pag-ibig in the Time of Epiphany and Lent

God loves the world so much with that great thing called *Pag-ibig*, which comes from His very heart! The closest meaning of *Pag-ibig* is LOVE, but really, this word beggars definition and description, because it comes from the heart of the Father. No one can ever fully grasp or fathom His heart, and God so continuously and joyously reveals to all creation His love. His heart beats constantly and endlessly with great love. The buzz is indeed true... *may forever!*

This issue is packed with messages of hope and inspiration. The front cover suggests the flow of the Father's love and blessings for His children. He is love, and this is revealed in the Church's journey through Epiphany and Lent. This love inspires Bishop Ariel to write about the wonderful work of God, emphasizing that "one cannot have knowledge of Him without a desire to make Him known."

I like how Sis Alice Mandocdoc makes the readers reflect on the manifestation of God in man through principles and lessons on God's love and how His people can make Him known, closing with a beautiful universal prayer. Father Gary Thurman, with his signature wit and humor, gives priestly advice as he writes on TKG&MHK, a mission so possible! Mia Santos's heart as a godly woman, wife and mother, is revealed in her broken bowl moments and in finding the "need to find one's own Gethsemane." Deacon Ritche and Charisma Jandayan inspire the youth to see how God can use them to make a difference in this world, just as He has used young men and women of old to display His power and glory!

A truly GASPI moment comes when Lala Espina proudly talks about how she and Deacon Solomon, her then fiancé and now husband, had their first baby (OH MY!) even before they even got married! This baby plays a significant role in the Church's stand on the sanctity of life. I greatly appreciate the research done by Marilie Thurman on St. Valentinus, who many do not know is "the patron saint of betrothed or engaged couples, happy marriages, lovers, and young people." She points out the sacredness of his feast day and provides a new and better perspective of Love and what is commonly called Valentine's Day.

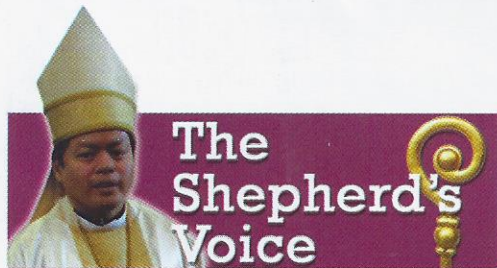
Lyrach and Stefani Quintos lovingly send their greetings from across the seas. The account shared by Emee Abalajen on the Masbate mission gives a picture of the Church at work- deacons from the Cathedral of the King collaborating with clergy from the Southern Luzon churches to bring God's hope, love, and provisions to the helpless and the needy! Dr. Marie Develos wisely presents the connection between spiritual and physical exercise as well as the benefits of both.

The back cover features **Fasting and Feasting**, an opportunity to the Body of Christ to respond to His great *pag-ibig*. As the journey through Epiphany and Lent continues, I pray that we will experience a greater knowledge of Him and an even greater determination to make Him known!

In His Love,

Nim

Nimfa Grace Jorvina



AND THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE...

Nothing gives a clearer, more meaningful definition of eternal life, the kind of life God intends for us to live, than Jesus' own words when He said, "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." (John 17:3) However, a clear indication of knowing God is a natural desire to preach Him and make Him known. Knowing God

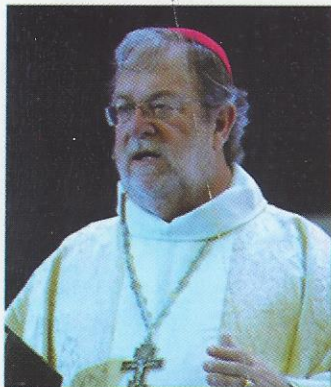
One cannot have that knowledge of Him without a desire to make Him known.

and making Him known are two concepts that are joined at the hip. One cannot have that knowledge of Him without a desire to make Him known, for desire is a step beyond principle or command. It is metaphorically much like the vertical and horizontal beams of the cross which form one didactic whole—our relationship with God is reflected in our relationship with our neighbor. Or, in the words of John in his first epistle, "The one who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." God gives grace to people and chooses to reveal Himself to them. But there is a reason for this, and that is so they can in turn be sent. Mark 3:14 affirms this: "And He appointed twelve so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach." This pattern can be seen in John 7:29 which

says, "I know Him and He sent Me." This is the wonderful work of our God. He takes on something or someone that is without form, without hope or without life, and puts His Spirit within them and breathes His breath into them; not only so that they can have His life, but so that through them as His ambassadors, His salvation which was first granted to them may reach to the end of the earth, and may also be experienced by others. This is the case Isaiah presents in chapter sixty-one where he talks about those who formerly were afflicted, broken-hearted, and imprisoned, after being brought the good news, becoming oaks of righteousness, repairers of devastation, and rebuilders of ruined cities. As Christians, we were formerly "separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." We who were far off have been brought near so that we can be with Him and He can send us out. He gave us the privilege to know Him for us to desire to make Him known. But again, more than just a purpose and certainly more than just a mission statement, it is the very reality of eternal life. And that's the way it is in the kingdom of God.

The Most Reverend Angel Cornelio P. Santos
Bishop, Cathedral of the King

Patriarch's Guidelines For An Obedient Life Knowing God's Word, His will and His way.



1. Be submitted to the Scriptures. Read and know the Bible.
2. Be submitted to the authority of the Church – Bishops, Priests and Deacons.
3. Be a person who loves the Church and the local community.
4. Have a teachable spirit.
5. Have a servant's heart.
6. Be faithful in the little things.
7. Be quick to listen and slow to speak.
8. Be open to correction.
9. Be led by the Spirit. Be led by what God calls us to do.
10. Walk by faith.
11. Tithe; be givers. If we don't tithe, we don't hear God. Tithing is the easiest thing that God has ever asked us to do. Once we have done it, what is God asking us to do next?
12. Be a woman of prayer. Pray daily.
13. Know that Christ is the Head of the Church.
14. We must know what the word "confidentiality" means. No gossip. None of this, "I am just going to tell you...."

MISSIONS SO POSSIBLE

by Fr. Gary W. Thurman

The processional unit looked like a giant living checkerboard, the black of the 'Sacred' T-shirts weaving in and out amongst the red of the clergy's stoles. We were about ready to begin the 9:00 am Mass on the Feast of the Lord, the Giver of Life when an issue arose: Since members of the quartet were donned in T-shirts rather than robes, was it proper for them to process?

It was one of those moments where a decision had to be made in a split second, without a lot of deliberation. There was no time to seek a higher-up's opinion. No time to call a committee meeting. The bell was due to ring in seconds. The thought popped into my mind and I voiced it: "Today the 'Life Is Sacred' T-shirts are their vestments." The bell was signaled for, and we all proceeded down the aisle to the stirring strains of "Behold the Christ."

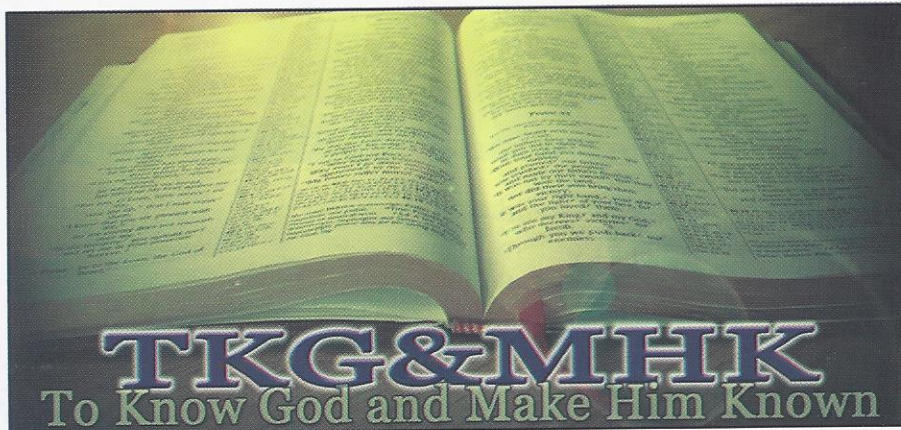
Later that afternoon, as I folded my red stole to hide away until Pentecost, I started thinking the statement over again. In hindsight, it all seemed painfully obvious. A vestment is special clothing used during ministry. The shirts were special clothing, and the quartet was ministering. So the shirts were vestments! Not rocket science, right? So why did it seem such an issue?

But this is the point to which we have gotten over the last years, even decades. We tend to overthink, overanalyze. We've come to put all our focus, not on whether something is right or

not, but if we're doing it the right way. A processional is a great thing; go do it! If some have special clothing on a special day, wonderful, let them process! As long as all appropriate body parts are covered, no big deal. But we seem to have shifted the bulk of our focus from the what, where it belongs, to the how.

That's one of the nice things about the mission statement recently given to Cathedral of the King - it's not about the how, there's only room for the what! The Lord saw us, knew where we were, and knew just what we needed to get us back on track: a point in the right direction and a good swift kick to get us going. All it took was seven words:

TO KNOW GOD AND MAKE HIM KNOWN



It's not revolutionary - most of your friends in other churches probably have similar statements. If not, they should; it's really the only mission Jesus ever gave. It's not new - it's as old as Peter and Paul. It's God-centered - there are only two nouns/pronouns in the whole thing, and they both refer to Him.

Yes, it is brief. But that's another plus. The longer a mission statement is, the more

restrictive it is. Less is more. Know God. Make Him known. 'Yun lang. Does a carpenter need a mission statement to build a bench? No, he already knows what he's doing. A baker doesn't consult her mission statement before she warms the oven. If they need to know more details of the how-to he may look at the plans, and she may consult the recipe. But the how is not the business of a mission statement. The mission statement gives a much bigger, simpler picture: What are you here to do? We've been mired in a myriad of details for so long, and now the Lord is setting us free to run unencumbered down "Know Him and Make Him Known Boulevard." Vested, if you like. Your choice, just run.

Going back to the vestment situation: with the scope of "To Know God and Make Him Known" as our guide, we

as does a business suit. A Jollibee uniform or the clothes of a concrete pourer become vestments when those wearing them are working "in the Name of the Lord." And they will, if they follow the Cathedral of the King mission statement, because there are no restrictions in those seven words that dampen any desire to do so.

Does that mean that King David ministers will tramp down the aisle of the TCU auditorium in wader boots? Not as a rule, because accompanying the advent of TKG&MHK is the return of a couple of dear old friends: discernment and common sense. The vestment must fit the purpose - which now, we see more clearly.

Imagine if the Lord had given a statement like: "We will joyfully and heartily share Jesus with all those we meet ..." Then we wake up one morning on the wrong side of the bed and say, "Hmmpf! I'm not joyful today, and I'm sure not hearty. I don't have to witness to anyone until I feel better..." Or maybe it's like, "I haven't technically met this lady next to me on the jeepney, so I don't even have to say 'boo' to her if I don't want."

See what happens? We turn qualifiers into restrictions. So God did us a favor. He got rid of all of it and said, "Here's all you need to know about what I want you to do. They're just seven words, but they're My seven words. Do you think you can remember them?"

I think I can.

"Do you think you can be guided by them?"

I know I can.

The details can follow in ministry visions and training sessions. But to keep every COTK member on track, not distracted by endless details and minutiae, all we need to follow is this:

TO KNOW GOD AND MAKE HIM KNOWN **K**

realize that singers don't minister only when they sing. TKG&MHK applies everywhere they go, because there are no qualifiers, no conditions. Colossians 3: 17 surely applies: "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus." Thus, the singer ministers in the classroom, as surely as the deacon ministers in the office. So, applying TKG&MHK, the school uniform becomes a vestment,

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Genesis 1:27

When I was given the incredible opportunity to write the lyrics for the song, "All Life Is Sacred" almost 6 years ago, I honestly didn't know how or where to begin. The topic on the sanctity of life seemed pretty clear to me: say no to abortion, take care of your body, do not murder... I thought this was all we had to remember about valuing the sacredness of life. But I was wrong.

I tried going through the scriptures again and asked the Lord to reveal to me His message about the sacredness of life. When we say, "All Life is Sacred", are we just addressing the issues of abortion and murder? When we say, "All Life is Sacred", what are we proclaiming? What are we declaring?

*"In the womb, a masterpiece lay
so wonderful, miraculous.
Full of worth in every way, God's
work beautiful and precious.
Created to declare His glory!"*

In Psalm 139, it is emphasized that God carefully weaved us in our mother's womb. We are each His masterpiece, fearfully and wonderfully made. He formed us so beautifully and intricately, making each of us precious even when no one else could yet see us. This means that life begins long before a baby is born. A single cell that is formed when the sperm and egg meet may not show any life yet, but this minute cell is already God's precious work that He is carefully forming to be a beautiful masterpiece for the world to see and witness.

*"God Almighty and Holy!
From Him all life came to be,
To Him all life belongs,
And because of Him, all life is sacred!"*

God created man in His own image; this is made clear in the book of Genesis. God, being HOLY, PERFECT, EXCELLENT, PURE, and SACRED, made man all these as well. God is a god of perfection, and all that comes from Him is perfect. Isn't this enough proof that, because He created every single life, all life is perfect, holy, and sacred as well? We can only expect excellence from our excellent God!

"Created with a true purpose, consecrated from the beginning.

*Brought forth to show God's wonders, to the world and every living thing.
This is God's work – pure, holy, and sacred!"*

Long before we are all born, our days have already been ordained by our Creator. He has prepared our days since the beginning of time. Incomprehensible as it may seem, this is the extraordinary work of our awesome God. How blessed we are to have an outstanding Father and Creator! Our lives should be a manifestation of His perfection.

*"Life is God's and God's alone,
It is our task to make this known.
Declare God's holiness; declare Life's sacredness.
All Life is Sacred!"*

Having the solid foundation of our Creator's ordained purpose for our lives, we are to live a life of holiness and sacredness. Through this we can proclaim the true meaning of the sacredness of life.

all life is

sacred

by Lala Collada- Espina

3rd Sunday of January during the Feast of Our Lord, Giver of Life.

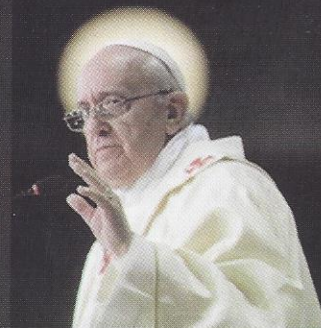
Just a little fun fact about this song: Dcn. Solomon and I got married in 2010, but unknown to many, we had our first baby in 2009. Both immersed in music, it was in the form of this song. In 2009, Fr. Nelson Tantoco encouraged me to write these lyrics, in time for the Feast of Our Lord, Giver of Life. Dcn. Solomon, who was still my fiancé then, came up with an outstanding melody for it. After that beautiful collaboration, the song "All Life is Sacred" was born. It is sung every

We celebrate this Feast every year, but may it be that all our thoughts, words, and actions would proclaim the sacredness of life every day of the year. It is our fervent prayer that through this song, we will be reminded of God's authority over all life. Each life is pure, holy, and sacred, however small or unnoticeable it may be. When we say "All Life is Sacred" it is right and proper to stand for our beliefs against abortion, murder, and all these related issues, but let's go deeper. When we proclaim that "All Life is Sacred", may it be a firm and solid proclamation of the excellence and sacredness of Life because indeed, all life comes from our Almighty and Holy God. Nothing can ever change this truth, and it is our task to make this known.

Six years and three children after coming up with this song, Dcn. Solomon and I can truly say that ALL LIFE IS SACRED! Each life is created with purpose. Each life is a masterpiece. **K**

Pope Francis gives his "Top New Year's Resolutions" for the Laity.

- "Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God, because this is the backbone of everything we do and everything we are."
- "Take care of your family life, giving your children and loved ones not just money, but most of all your time, attention and love."
- "Take care of your relationships with others, transforming your faith into life and your words into good works, especially on behalf of the needy."
- "Be careful how you speak, purify your tongue of offensive words, vulgarity and worldly decadence."
- "Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness, forgiving those who have hurt us and medicating the wounds we have caused others."
- "Look after your work, doing it with enthusiasm, humility, competence, passion and with a spirit that knows how to thank the Lord."
- "Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings that devour our interior peace and transform us into destroyed and destructive people."
- "Watch out for anger that can lead to vengeance; for laziness that leads to existential euthanasia; for pointing the finger at others, which leads to pride; and for complaining continually, which leads to desperation."
- "Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker ... the elderly, the sick, the hungry, the homeless and strangers, because we will be judged on this."



THAT CRAZY THING CALLED *Valentine's Day*

by Marilie F. Thurman



The tarps have gone up right after the New Year, already advertising the next big event more than a month away-- Valentine's Day on February 14. The price for a rose, or a dinner for two at a favorite restaurant, or a ticket to a Valentine concert, is costing an arm and a leg. The ads everywhere are practically screaming: "With love, you cannot be stingy!" It's got to be over-the-top crazy; FB-, Snap- and Instagram-worthy to be drooled over by hundreds of likers. It's got to be heady romance with that envy-inducing backdrop, whether it's a candlelit dinner, or an international love concert, or a breath-taking holiday spot. If you don't go with the flow, your reputation as a human being is on the chopping block. It's likely you'll be seen as the Ebenezer Scrooge of Valentine's Day who deserves his luckless love.

So are we, as God-loving people, obligated to play along with the public's way of celebrating what is commonly called love, on what is commonly called Valentine's Day?

Are we, as God-loving people, obligated to play along with the public's way of celebrating what is commonly called love, on what is commonly called Valentine's Day?

Let's sort this thing out and get our hearts in order so we can celebrate this day (as any other day) with greater joy and contentment.

John 8:14 is a record of Jesus' reply to the Pharisees when they accused Him of being a false witness: "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going..." We can glean a principle here, which is: if we know how a thing came to be, or understand where it came from, we will be able to adjust our thinking and behavior accordingly.

FEBRUARY 14 IS SACRED

If we proceed from the belief that all life is sacred, then as such, all days are sacred, every one of the 365 days in our calendar. There is not one day more sacred than the other, for God created both day and night, the 24 hours that make one day. Each day presents the inspiring opportunity for you and I to walk with God.

And so, the tremendously popular February 14 is a sacred or holy day because God created it so, not just because the Church designated it as the day of the martyred Saint Valentine.

ST. VALENTINE, THE MARTYRED

There are several details concerning the life of a certain third century Roman saint by the name of Valentine, or Valentinus, who was imprisoned and martyred in 269 AD under the reign of Emperor Claudius II for encouraging young people to marry within the Church, for secretly performing the marriage ceremonies, and for aiding believers to escape persecution. However, it is unclear whether they pertain to a single or several saints of that name. The confusion surrounding the origins of St. Valentine prompted Pope Paul VI to remove him from the official Roman Calendar of Saints in 1969, no longer to be celebrated worldwide as a feast day. St. Valentine's recognition by the Church as a saint still stands, however, because he did exist; his day being listed in the Roman Martyrlogy in the February 14 spot.

According to the website, Catholic Online, a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to St. Valentine has been unearthed by archaeologists proving his existence. It supported the fact that Pope Gelasius in 496 AD marked February 14 as a day to celebrate and honor his martyrdom.

Today, relics of St. Valentine can be found all over the world. One of the most notable in the listing is a small vessel believed to be "tinged" with the blood of St. Valentine that was gifted to Fr. John Spratt by Pope Gregory XVI in 1836. This gift now stands placed in Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin, Ireland. This parish is among the few in Christendom that still honors February 14 as a feast day of St. Valentine, who remains to this day the patron saint of betrothed or engaged couples, happy marriages, lovers, and young people.

CELEBRATING ST. VALENTINE'S DAY WITHOUT THE GUILT

Like St. Valentine in his day, we live in a permissive society that encourages, even forcefully pressures us toward excessive and extravagant consumption. As long as it is "pleasing to the eye, and desirable", it must be pursued. It must be had.

Paul warns us, however, in II Timothy 3:1 that we live in "perilous times" among perilous men whose sole purpose is to influence us, draw our love away from God, and turn our hearts cold. This passionate apostle of Christ exhorts us, through his epistles, to be aware of these forces around us that seek to redefine love and how we should express and celebrate it as Christians; and amidst them, to walk in

Love--human love and sexuality is wonderful, and blessed by God-- but also the shadow of the cross. That's what Valentine means to me.

- Fr. O'Gara

(Continued on page 7)

MAKING HIM KNOWN...BY REACHING OUT TO THE HELPLESS

by Emee Abalajen

It was Monday, the 14th of December 2015, when Typhoon Nona (with international name, *Melor*) made landfall and brought in her wake heavy rains and gusty winds to Sorsogon, Masbate and other nearby provinces. So strong was her fury that even Metro Manila, which was about 511 or so kilometers away, felt its peripheral effect. This unusual typhoon coming in the middle of December made us think of our brothers and sisters in the these provinces, especially those living in the coastal areas.

Immediately following *Nona*, communication was made with Bishop Paul Villavicencio of the Diocese of Southern Luzon so help for the typhoon victims could be organized. It was confirmed that many families needed assistance in sister parishes in Bulan, Sorsogon and in Mobo, Masbate. In Bulan, five families out of 30 lost their homes to *Nona*. In Mobo 50 families were affected, and some lost their means of livelihood.

Armed with this basic information, Dcn. Ben Abalajen presented to Bishop Ariel Santos the urgent need for a "mission" to be sent to Bulan and Mobo. Without any hesitation Bishop Ariel approved the mobilization for a relief operation. Discussions with Dcn. Ed Canlas, head of Pastoral

Care, got underway.

With our mission statement burning in their hearts--TO KNOW GOD AND MAKE HIM KNOWN--the team of Deacons Ben Abalajen, Armand Granada and Tony Casuco, led by Dcn. Ed Canlas, made the long trip to Sorsogon and Masbate on January 13. Although they brought with them 80 prepared packs of groceries, they also carried in their hearts the love of God for the victims of *Nona*. More than anything, the team wanted to let the people know that they were not forgotten.

With the overseers of the two parishes, Fr. Dado Embile in Bulan and Fr. Audio Lumabi in Mobo, the team witnessed and were moved to compassion by the hunger for ministry of our brothers and sisters. From their time of arrival on January 13 to the time they departed for Manila in the early hours of January 16, other than the distribution of goods, the four deacons shared the Word, prayed with families, encouraged individuals, and conducted an impromptu discussion on entrepreneurship and livelihood.

The ministry ended on a successful note, having brought to the people God's assurance of provision, and now that livelihood projects are being considered. This ministry of reaching out to the helpless will indeed continue because God is faithful, and because of the untiring labor of two committed men--Fr. Dado Embile and Fr. Audio Lumabi. It is our duty to uphold them in our prayers.

Travel of about 20 to 24 hours going and coming was worth the effort because we were able to MAKE HIM KNOWN; and that's what the Church is called to. **K**



(Continued from page 6)

sobriety, be well-balanced and self-controlled. For love is best expressed through self-sacrifice; in a quiet, consistent way that shuns the ostentatious.

In an interview, Fr. O'Gara of Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin, Ireland had this to say: "Valentine has come to be known as the patron saint of lovers. Before you enter into a Christian marriage you want some sense of God in your life--some great need of God in your life. And we know, particularly in the modern world, many people are meeting God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

"If Valentine were here today, he would say to married couples that there comes a time where you're going to have to suffer. It's not going to be easy to maintain your commitment and your vows in marriage. Don't be surprised if the 'gushing' love that you have for someone changes to something less 'gushing' but maybe much more mature. And the question is, is that young person ready for that?

"So on the day of the marriage they have to take that into context. Love--human love and sexuality is wonderful, and blessed by God--but also the shadow of the cross. That's what Valentine means to me."

Armed with this understanding, let us walk with God on February 14 and celebrate St. Valentine's Day with chin up because of the reverential joy and contentment in our hearts--freed from the pressures that society, the media, or our peers try to bear on us. **K**

Joseph. David. Daniel. Esther.

These are the names of great Bible characters many people grew up with. These are names from the Scriptures that many parents give to their children, because they desire for them to grow up as great men and women of faith. These names serve as reminders of the simple fact that many of the important works in the history of God's people were accomplished through the lives of young men and women.

Joseph

Joseph was seventeen years old when God gave him a dream. It was no ordinary dream, as it showed him a glimpse of how the future of his life would unfold. Being the favorite of his father Jacob, Joseph was experiencing a privileged life. **He was meant to be a leader, but in order to become the leader God wanted him to be, he had to learn humility.** He had to be betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and thrown into prison. He was a forgotten man. In the span of a few short years, his life seemingly took a 180 degree turn from the path that would take him to his dream. He had his own understanding of his dream, but God wanted him to take a different route.

David

When God chose David, nobody considered him as God's chosen, simply because he was the youngest. His father Jesse felt that he lacked the experience, ability, and physical attributes, because he was still young. Yet from his life we learn that God's criteria aren't experience, skills, or know-how, but heart. **David is known as the man after God's own heart, not because he was God's favorite, but because, even in his youthful experiences, whether as the conqueror of Goliath, a servant of Saul, or the king's mortal enemy, his heart longed for God.** David's story is definitely not a perfect one. He committed adultery and murder, and yet the promise of the Messiah was fulfilled through his lineage.

Daniel

Daniel is perceived as one of the more perfect youths in the Bible. He was a man of faith, prayer, and integrity. There are few stories of his inner struggles, but many know that his life turned upside down when the Babylonians seized Jerusalem. Daniel was a prince, born into a life of privilege. It was during his early years that the city of Jerusalem, the place in which he grew up, where the temple of God, the hope of his people, had stood so proudly for centuries, was conquered, and he was carried off to Babylon as a captive. What would it be like to see your home destroyed, and to be forced to live in a foreign land and adapt to a different culture? Come to think of it, although it is not specifically mentioned in the Bible, as a teenager **Daniel was being forced by circumstances to adjust to the norms and culture of another country. But he refused to adapt to Babylon.** That was why he asked for a different diet, and refused to stop praying to God. As any young person, perhaps he had doubts, perhaps there were also times he felt depressed and lonely. But through it all he courageously chose to do what was right in God's sight, despite the risk of not being popular in the sight of the Babylonian king. This actually gained him favor with man and with the king.

Esther

Esther was an orphan being taken care of by her uncle Mordecai. As a foreigner in Persia, she had to keep her true identity a secret. As a young teen, she was chosen to be the queen of Persia. One can't begin to imagine the questions that probably ran through her head. "Why do I have to hide the fact that I am a Jew? Am I worthy to be a queen? Can't I just live a simple life?" When she became queen, she didn't know that she would be saving God's people from death. **Esther had to muster an enormous amount of courage to take up such a great responsibility at a young age.**

There are two things common among these characters: First, they were young when God called them, and, second, each of them had to go through a journey before eventually fulfilling what the Lord planned for them to accomplish. Their stories aren't perfect, true, but through their young lives one sees how God can work, no matter how young he or she is.

AliveYouth, the youth ministry of the Cathedral of the King, aims to inspire the youth of the church to receive God's call and to equip them with His Word as they embark on their own journey of faith. This ministry believes that as it works towards the fulfillment of its vision: "Christ Alive in Everyone", the youth are given a special message that they are not too young to begin fulfilling God's plan for their lives. As they go along their own journeys, AliveYouth hopes that they remember what these young Bible characters also went through, so that they may be strengthened and encouraged, especially in the midst of trials, opposition, persecution, pain, and struggles.

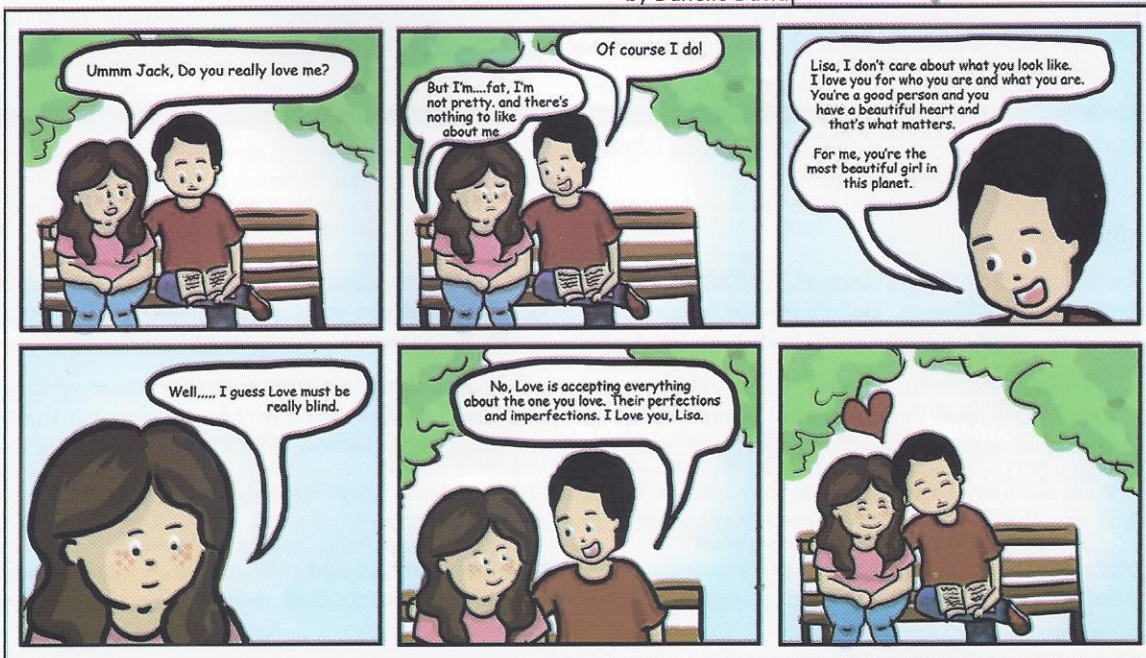
Part of what AliveYouth desires to see is young people reaching out to others, changing the world in unique ways. As they look at Joseph, who was able to save the Israelites from hunger; David, who is known to be Israel's greatest king; Daniel, through whom God's power was shown; and Esther, who saved the Israelites from genocide, this youth ministry hopes that the legacy of those young people will allow today's youth to find purpose in their journey and make a difference in the world in their own way. In so doing, they too will become a great example to the generations to come.

To the youth, may you all be empowered by what St. Paul wrote to Timothy:

"Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe." (1 Timothy 4:12) **K**

by Danelle David

#MayForever



On the HOME Front

I start my day with a quick prayer, a quick breakfast, and a quick shower as I think of all the myriad things to be done. Again. It has been like this for the last couple of days since the husband of my hired help has suddenly taken ill. I wake up, work, eat, sleep, wash, rinse and do the same things all over again the next day.

One particular day is different. I find myself at the receiving end of something hurtful a friend tactlessly blurted out. I try to deaden the pain but it hurt nonetheless. I get an urgent call from a patient asking for professional help, so I leave unwashed dishes, unmade beds and unswept floors. At the clinic, I find that no amount of cajoling would make a 5-year old patient open his mouth so I can help alleviate his pain, allowing his harassed parents to get some peace and sleep. I end up sending them home disappointed. I rush home, planning to cook the postponed lunch, only to discover that in the one hour I was gone, the house is turned upside down

by rowdy and noisy children. The command for them to undo their mess falls on deaf ears. I accidentally knock down a bowl and for some reason a shard of it ends up under my toe, and I start leaving a trail of blood on the white tiled floor. This scene mirrors what my heart feels. "That's it!" I say. I finally admit to myself that I am having a bad day. Everything's a mess. I am a mess.

I finally give in to the tears have been trying to choke down for quite a while. As I soak my pillow, I run to Him just like my own children run to me whenever they are hurt or wounded, when they have a booboo. I tell Him everything. I tattle.

He then reminds me of His promises.

I may not resolve your circumstances yet, but I will resolve you.

I may not calm your storm but I will calm you in the storm.

I give Him the reins I am tightly clutching. **I remember to let go and let God.** I remind myself that yes, I am

a strong, confident person, but I can't handle it all, nor should I.

It's okay to be not okay.

It's okay not to meet brave in the face.

It's okay to bleed inside, to be off balance.

It is by glorious design and for an incredible purpose: *to realize my need for Him.* It is these times that I am driven to God.

In Matthew 26:36-39, Jesus came with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." And He went a little beyond them and fell on His face and prayed....

I have realized that there is a need to find one's inner Gethsemane where he or she can fall on their face and pray in times of hurt, stress, and distress.

Everyone has a story to tell. Each will be dealt with twists and turns and how one's story ends depends on the actions he or she takes. What may be a mountain for one may just be a molehill for another and vice versa. But it's all basically the same. Sometimes, life is just not fair as one will discover at some point. There will be unwelcome turns.

It's okay. Sometimes the best training for the big things is just the everyday things.

One picks up the broken bowl pieces, a sleeve find its way to a wet face to dry the tears, and the heart feels a big bear hug and a warm kiss on the forehead. Hear our Lord whisper, "I love you, always...even in your mess."

Really, it's okay to be not okay. **K**



HealthNews

The Amazing Benefits of Exercise

by Dr. Marie Develos

"I have never dreamt of becoming a beauty queen nor have I have ever aspired to be a super model. So why should I exercise?" I tried to rationalize my lack of exercise with these thoughts until the day I was enlightened and I asked myself, "Why not?"

Do you know that our human bodies have been fearfully and wonderfully made?

The human body has been designed for work hence it works best when it is active. Our ancestors knew this very well. In fact they depended much on physical activity to survive. In order to obtain food for themselves and their families, they had to hunt and gather food. God directed Adam, "by the sweat of your face you will eat bread." (Gen 3:19). God made sure Adam and the rest of mankind is capable of doing this. How loving and merciful our God is!

Here are some amazing and fascinating facts about the human body.

- We have around 700 muscles and their main function is movement.
- Every physical action that a person consciously performs such as speaking, walking, and writing, requires skeletal muscle.
- Muscles are required to maintain posture and body position.
- Internal organs such as the stomach, intestines, heart, and blood vessels are also made up of muscles which cannot be controlled voluntarily. In fact, the human heart beats around 100,000 times per day even without you consciously knowing it.
- These muscles work continuously even when the body is asleep – they are responsible for transporting substances like blood and food from one part of the body to another.
- "If we don't use it, we lose it". *Muscle atrophy* is a condition when there is wasting or loss of muscle tissue. *Disuse atrophy* occurs from a lack of physical activity, when the muscles are not used enough. The good news is this type of atrophy can be reversed with exercise and better nutrition.

Realize that God has given us these earthly vessels for a purpose. We are stewards of these vessels; therefore, it is important that we take care of them. "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body (1 Cor 6:19-20)."

Many health benefits have been ascribed to exercise:

- improved immune function to resist infections;
- better regulation of blood sugar to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes;
- increased muscular strength and endurance so we can "all things through Christ who strengthens us" (Phil 4:13);
- improved cardiorespiratory functioning, lower blood pressure, better control of body fat, increased flexibility, and a whole lot more.

The Bible tells much about exercise. St. Paul uses the example of athletes when he talked about discipline in 1 Corinthians 9:25a "Every athlete exercises discipline in every way" But before deciding to commit to having an active lifestyle, remember what 1 Tim 4:7B-8 says, "Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

Every Christian should have a balanced approach to exercise and health.

Yes, we should by all means take care of our physical bodies, but in these pursuits, we must never lose sight of God. We should exercise for the right reasons. We do not desire to have perfectly chiseled bodies so we can flaunt them and be popular, but because we value God's gift to us.

Our exercise routine should not compete with our time with God. Actually, we can use it to spend time with God. We can use our workouts to give glory to God. We can pray while we jog, meditate while we swim, or put ourselves in God's presence while hiking a mountain. We can even use this time to strengthen bonds with our brethren. We can grab the opportunity to speak words of encouragement to a brother or a sister who is about to give up on the 5-kilometer run. We can have outdoor activities while training our children the essentials of life. "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:32). Ladies and gentlemen, as we gird ourselves with strength and exert our arms with vigor, let us all keep the faith.

Enjoy your spiritual and physical work-out! **K**

REALIZE THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US THESE EARTHLY VESSELS FOR A PURPOSE. WE ARE STEWARDS OF THESE VESSELS; THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE TAKE CARE OF THEM.

God in Man Made Manifest

(To Know God and Make Him Known)

by Alice V. Mandocdoc

Do we truly know God?

This question is of utmost importance to us as believers because we cannot make God known unless we have taken the time to know Him first. Jesus Himself shares to us: "And this is eternal life, that they may **KNOW YOU**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." (John 17:3, NKJV)

Eternal life then is not based on just a prayer. It is based on knowing God. Yes, it can begin with a prayer, but it is worked out as we come to know Him in an ever-growing, ever-deeper fellowship; for to truly know God must be our highest goal and desire in life. Spending time with Him then becomes a priority--the way we make it a priority to spend time with our spouse, children, or friends, to have healthy relationships. Because this is what it is supposed to be all about, right? It is having a relationship with God. To accomplish this, we must fellowship with the Living Word, who is Jesus Christ, within the written Word of God, so our prayers can become like a form of conversation with Him.

So what does it mean to *make Him known*?

As we fellowship with the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ imprints Himself upon our hearts, upon our lives. In so doing, we become Living Epistles: "*You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.*" (2 Cor. 3:2-3, NIV)

What is being "known and read by everybody"? It is our very lives, for God is known by what we say and do. One of the recurrent problems in Christianity is us trying to communicate something we are not living out. When we do this, our words have no power to make a lasting effect on others. The most powerful witness to the world is the handprint of God on our lives. Only then will our words and actions carry the weight of heaven behind them. Now that is an effective witness! That is making Him known!

Making Him known is making use of the gifts we have received from Him: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.*" (Luke 4:18)

Making Him known is being His witnesses: "*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*" (Acts 1:8)

Making Him known is being ministers of the Gospel: "*Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.*" (Mark 16:15)

Making Him known is being disciple-makers: "*...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*" (Matthew 29: 19-20)

Part of our job is to teach believers to obey the Lord Jesus Christ, until they themselves are able to make disciples of others. In other words, part of making Jesus known is to make disciples who make disciples, and to see that this process is replicated around the world.

Today, may the prayer of St. Francis de Assisi be our prayer, too.

"*Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.*

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life." **K**



Imagine a picturesque garden, the fragrant smell of trees and flowers wafting in the air, the gentle breeze, the gurgling brook. A man and a woman live in the garden, walking and talking with their Creator. The voice of joy and gladness echoes in the hills.

This scene evokes pictures of dreamy romances, fairy tales, and love stories. But it did happen, once upon a time, and because of the great love of the Creator, it may happen again in the future.

Adam was formed by God, and Eve was fashioned, in His image and likeness. They were like Him. They were Godlike in every way: looks, character, intellect, will, emotions. Moreover, they knew nothing but unselfish and unconditional love,

because they have Love Himself. With a brilliant mind, Adam was able to give a name to every creature! Eve was the epitome of beauty and love. She was confidently beautiful, because she had God's pure heart! Adam knew that Eve was made from him to complete him! How they loved one another!

They were the first ever real-life heroes, because they were bearers of God's image and likeness, and they lived to please Him!

Adam and Eve have been given the dominion, power and authority over all of God's creation. They had confidence and trust in God, who has blessed them and given them the command: "*Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing*

that moves on the earth."

Provisions for food and harmony with all creatures were graciously given. There was no lack, no sickness, no fear. Adam and Eve enjoyed their relationship with God and with each other. They loved God and knew in their hearts that the Creator loved them. They freely discovered the Father's world; they enjoyed and explored the many wonders of His creation. They basked in the attention and affection of God, who has given them everything they needed to live life abundantly. They did not have fear of anything, because they were living under the shadow of the Almighty!

Their relationship was marriage made in heaven, perfectly designed by the perfect God!

But something happened. The

Adam & Eve



honeymoon was over, so to speak. Adam and Eve were told to leave the Garden. The nature of

man has been corrupted. He was no longer able to come face to face with His Creator, lest he would die! Creation began to languish. Things were never the same again. God, in His mercy, sent Jesus to restore man and woman and all of creation to their original state. And He did, at the price of His own blood.

Today, Adam and Eve and all of mankind are no longer fallen creatures, because they have been restored to their original nature. They are real-life heroes, empowered to transform the world, because they are made in the image and likeness of God, and are like Him in every way! **K**

Love across oceans and islands



Warm greetings to Cathedral of the King, our wonderful church in the Philippines!

Through the power of social media we're still able to see the growth of the church, even if we're across the globe from you. We miss you very much – the teachings, the worship, the camaraderie and the fellowship. A few know that Cathedral of the King has been my refuge time and time again since I was a child. I've learned so many hard lessons in my Christian growth, but this church has always shown God's hand of mercy and love. Time and again, I've hit a wall in my life and the Cathedral of the King has been my saving grace. Bishop Ariel, in one of his teachings, reminded us that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. All we have to do is HOLD ON. We are here right now in America because I held-on during the lowest point in my life three years ago. God reminded me to "be still and know that He is God." For two years, I have battled between being still and being impatient but God has His ways. He opened up a door I didn't even know was there – a job opening in Washington DC and a strong reference. After a month, I got the job. Now we've been here almost a year now, and He continues to show His love.

God is really good. He really is. He does know what you're going through. Hold on to the vine of God's life. Never let go because He won't. What He did for me and my daughter, Stefani, He'll do for you as well. No matter what – DO NOT LET GO.

Love,

*Lyrah and Stefani Quintos
Virginia, USA*



Greetings to *Koinonos* from the family of

Francisco and Natividad Jorvina

Christian Life Fellowship Print Ministry, 1981



So lovingly remembered...

Frank (December 3, 1924 - July 15, 1982) and Natie (December 11, 1929 – February 14, 2014)

**He who began a good work in you is faithful to complete it.
Your legacy lives on.**



Keeping a Holy Lent

Fasting vs. Feasting

Fast from judging others; Feast on the Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from emphasis on differences; Feast on the unity of life.

Fast from apparent darkness; Feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness; Feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; Feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger; Feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism; Feast on optimism.

Fast from worry; Feast on divine order.

Fast from complaining; Feast on appreciation.

Fast from negatives; Feast on affirmatives.

Fast from unrelenting pressures; Feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from hostility; Feast on non-resistance.

Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; Feast on compassion for others.

Fast from personal anxiety; Feast on eternal truth.

Fast from discouragements; Feast on hope.

Fast from facts that depress; Feast on verities that uplift.

Fast from lethargy; Feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; Feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow; Feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from idle gossip; Feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; Feast on prayer that [strengthens].

—William Arthur Ward (American author, teacher and pastor, 1921-1994.)