

A Reflection from Fr. Joseph

Every so often it is important for us to ask a BIG question. What difference does it make to have faith in Jesus Christ? How can we tell the difference between a person who has faith and a person who does not? This is an important question. Because if the believer and the non-believer look exactly the same, if we cannot find some way to distinguish one from the other, then faith is without value. Faith, if it is to have authority, must somehow make a difference, an impact upon the way we live.

The apostle Paul certainly believed in the centrality of faith. In today's second reading he says, "**Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.**" Paul believes that faith should influence every aspect of our lives. It should affect the way that we love, the way that we work, the decisions that we make, the clothes that we wear, the music that we listen to. It should influence the way we brush our teeth. Paul believes that faith influences everything we do.

So again, comes the question: What difference does this faith make in every aspect of our lives? Now our first inclination might be to say that faith makes us better people. Yet, I doubt that our experience proves this. I do not find Christian believers more loving or more just or more generous than many other segments of our society.

In fact, the difference in being a Christian is not to be found in our actions. It is to be found in God's actions. What makes us different is not what we do or fail to do but what we believe God is doing. And what do we believe that God is doing? We believe that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God is saving the world. We believe that even though Jesus suffered a violent and unjust death of a criminal, God raised him up and made him Messiah and Lord and that through Jesus Christ, God continues to destroy evil and to establish God's Kingdom in our midst. That is what we believe God is doing. Believing that, is what makes Christians different.

For that belief gives us an unshakable foundation for hope. Hope is the answer to my original question. It is this hope that sets us apart. Christians believe that through the resurrection of Jesus there is reason to hope in every circumstance. You see, Christian hope is not based on our goodness or on the wisdom of our political or religious leaders. It is not based on the achievements of science or the accomplishments of our culture. Christian hope is founded on the action of God, the same action that we believe raised Jesus up from the dead. Christian hope does not exist only when things are going well. Christian hope continues to be present even when things are falling apart. This is why Christians continue to hope even in the face of sickness and death, even as we stand on the brink of war, even when the people we trust betray us, or our leaders make faulty and disastrous decisions.

Even when there is so much evidence to the contrary, Christians continue to look for goodness and for reasons to celebrate because we believe that God is still active in the world. This unshakable foundation for hope is what makes Christians different. We are the ones who do not become discouraged or give in to despair, even in challenging times. We believe that the same God who raised up Jesus Christ and made him Messiah and Lord, is still active, even in our darkest hours. We believe that God is still destroying evil, that God is still saving our world.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. Feb. 12th - James 1:1-11; Mark 8:11-13

Tue. Feb. 13th - James 1:12-18; Mark 8:14-21

Wed. Feb. 14th - ASH WEDNESDAY

Joel 2:12-18; 2 Cor. 5:20-6:2; Mat. 6:1-6, 16-18

Thurs. Feb. 15th - Deut. 30:15-20; Luke 9:22-25

Fri. Feb. 16th - Is. 58:1-9a; Mat. 9:14-15

Sat. Feb. 17th - Is. 58:9b-14; Luke 5:27-32

Sun. Feb. 18th - FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

**ALTAR SERVERS**

Wed. Feb. 14th - 7 :30 PM - Volunteers

Sat. Feb. 17th - 5:00 PM - K.Madoginog, C & C Tang, J.Tuguinay, A.Kolobova.

Sun. Feb. 18th - 9AM - E.Garrovillas, A & A Chan,

S.Lee. **11AM** - M & T Nguyen, T.Nguyen, A & A

Babas, W.Pham, W. Del Rosario. **5PM** - C.Jaya, A.Velasquez,

J.Paja, D.Dang, J.Cayabyab, Z.Bambilla.



A 2nd collection will be taken up next weekend, at all the Masses, for St. Joseph's Society.

**PARISH ENVELOPES FOR 2024**

Have you picked up your new sets of parish envelopes? They are arranged alphabetically. If you have recently requested a set, you will also find them there. Anyone wishing envelopes for 2024, is asked to call the parish office.

Father in Heaven, protect us in our struggle against evil. As we begin the discipline of Lent, make this season holy by our self-denial. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever.

ASH WEDNESDAY

This Wednesday, Feb. 14th, is Ash Wednesday. It marks the beginning of Lent, a time of prayer, penance, fasting and almsgiving. The Penitential nature of Lent, requires the secession of the Gloria & Alleluia until Easter and the removal of flowers from the Church.



Ash Wednesday is a universal day of fasting and abstinence from meat. Fasting among Christians is a penitential discipline intended to open our hearts to God and others, a means of purification and spiritual liberation, a witness of the depth of our faith. The law of abstinence from meat binds those who are 14 years and older; the law of fasting (2 light meals per day) binds those from 18 to 59 years of age. Parents and educators are reminded of their duty to introduce children gradually to the understanding and practice of penance.

Ashes will be distributed at the 9:00 am school Mass and at our 7:30 pm Novena Mass.

EXTRA LENTEN SERVICES

STARTING THIS COMING FRIDAY, FEB. 16TH, WE WILL HAVE STATIONS OF THE CROSS ON FRIDAYS AT 7 PM FOLLOWED BY MASS. PLEASE JOIN US.

Anointing of the Sick



On Wednesday, Feb. 21st, Fr. Jun will administer the Sacrament of the Sick at our Novena Mass at 7:30 pm. All are welcome to attend!

IN MEMORIAM

Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of Mrs. Isabelita Viduya, mother of Tess Hombrebueno, who passed away last week. Prayers will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 7:30 pm and the Funeral Mass will be on Friday, Feb. 16th at 3 p, in our church.. May she rest in peace!



SCHOOL NEWS

- **School Mass:** Please join us this Wednesday at 9 am.
- **St. Jude School Accepting new Applications**
We are now accepting new applications for the 2024-25 school year. If interested, please call the school office at 604-434-1633 for application form.
- **No School:** Our school will be closed on Thursday, Feb. 15th and Friday, Feb. 16 due to the Catholic Educator's Conference.

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

Up-Coming Events

Stewardship Reflection

"Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."

- 1 Cor. 10:31

Do a quick check of your priorities. Where does God rank in that list? If He's not first, you have some work to do. Putting God first in everything helps us from putting other "gods" (like our pride, ego, money and possessions) before God. Before making a decision, ask yourself, "Am I doing this for the glory of God or for the glory of me?"

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Pastoral Letter on the Use of Social Media

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has released its Pastoral Letter on the use of social media titled: *"Let Your Speech Always Be Gracious."* The Pastoral Letter can be accessed and shared via rcav.org/announcements

Together for Good Marriage Workshop

One day could change your marriage! Thousands of couples across Canada have dedicated one day to building a marriage that stays together for good. In partnership with FamilyLife Canada, we are offering the Together for Good Marriage Workshop that will give you tools, exercises and guided conversations to help you and your partner grow a healthier, more joy-filled and resilient marriage. Each session will help you move past differences and drift to a place of greater closeness and trust. You'll strengthen your relationship in the important areas of communication, conflict, sex and spirituality. Discover how incredibly good marriage can be — for you, your family and your community. On Saturday, March 2, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Corpus Christi Parish in Vancouver. Cost is \$60 per couple. **Registration deadline: Monday, Feb. 19.** Learn more and register via beholdvancouver.org/events

Momentum Single Mothers Lunch

This is an opportunity for women to gather, share, pray, and learn more about Momentum, a faith community for Catholic single mothers that offers retreats, as well as in-person and online gatherings. We will be joined by Claire Brown, who has been a single mother to her son since his birth in 2000. Claire is a co-founder of Momentum and a Professor at McGill University. On Saturday, Feb. 24, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Corpus Christi Parish. Lunch and childcare will be provided. **Registration deadline: Friday, Feb. 16, by 6:00 p.m.** Learn more and register for free via beholdvancouver.org/events

