



E-BULLETIN #113

"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 213

already half way through Lent? and yet...

a personal reflection based on Jn.9

Oh boy! It's already half way through Lent!

Lord, looking back on these past days, I feel smugly happy.

I feel happy and even proud about all those little extra pious rituals like praying the Stations of the Cross, giving up hard candies/chocolates, abstaining from alcohol/meat/fish etc.

Unlike many others, I feel I have done rather well and I am complacent!



But Lord, on further introspection, I feel it's all eyewash.

I am content with just cosmetic changes.

Deep inside I feel arrogant. I keep parading my little rituals and pious actions whenever possible.

I keep proclaiming them many times.

Thus I keep on living a sort of delusion!

Lord, this is me.. a good part of me..

I keep failing to rend my heart and repent my evil ways.

I am often unwilling to check my waywardness.

Above all Lord, it very difficult for me to give up my unmerciful actions and uncompromising attitudes.

I often look at people and see them in a twisted manner.

Lord, I am often like your disciples as John observes them.

When they looked at the man born blind, they saw him as a problem.. a theological problem.

They asked you: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

Their eyes could only see him as a theoretical/theological problem, devoid of any compassion!

While Your eyes looked at him with compassion and as a result you healed him of his blindness. You made his life brighter!

Lord, as the eyes of the disciples did, I often see people around me and I keep highlighting their faults.

The eyes of his neighbours were very unsettled as they saw him healed of his blindness. Their eyes too had no compassion!

Lord, so are my eyes – many times!

The scrutinizing eyes of the Pharisees, saw only the breaking of the Sabbath law.

Their eyes failed to see a happy man, able to see for the first time in his life.

Lord, you know full well that many times I have had the eyes of the Pharisees very active in me.

When his parents felt that they may get into trouble with the Pharisees, their eyes saw their own son as a possible problem to be distanced.

Neither your disciples, nor his parents, nor his neighbours, nor the Pharisees shared his joy of being able to see for the first time.

It didn't occur to them to congratulate either him or you!

Their eyes were anything but compassionate, unlike Yours!

Lord, my eyes alternate as the eyes of the disciples, of the neighbours, of the Pharisees and of the parents.

It is this negative and biased attitude that I want to give up during this season of Lent.

It is my prejudiced views, it is my lack of compassion that I want to get rid of.

Lord Jesus, I do want to keep my pet rituals of piety for the rest of the season of Lent.

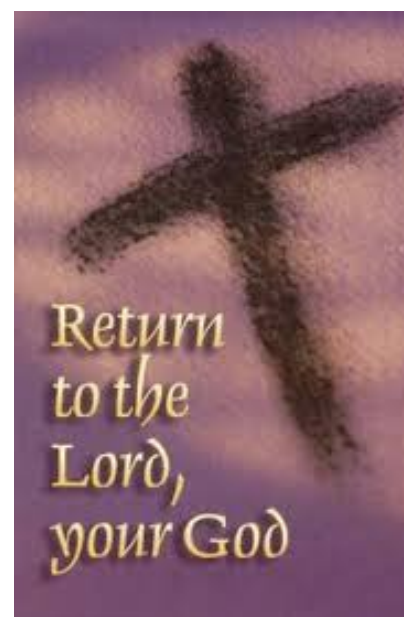
But much more than that, I also want to give up the eyes of the disciples, the eyes of the neighbours and the eyes of the Pharisees.

I want to give up my eyes of arrogance.

I want to begin to see people and look at those around me with Your eyes of compassion.

I want to make the season of Lent meaningful.

Amen



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item 214

a memorable day for the Khristsevikas at Pune

10th January 2014 was a memorable day for us Khristsevikas at Vardan, Pune situated in Maharashtra State in India. We had the privilege of having the Holy Bible, used by St Vincent Pallotti himself, with us for the whole day.

One of our members, Ms Crescy John who lives in Mumbai, came to Pune for this occasion, joining Ms Joyce Almeida and myself. Fr Anthony Vayagappan SAC graciously agreed to make the Relic available and to celebrate the Eucharist. Together with a young seminarian he brought the Bible from Pallotti Home, Goa.

In the morning our small group of UAC members along with their families joined in one hour of adoration. The Eucharist was celebrated at 6.00 p.m. attended by families in the area and Sisters from three different convents, altogether around 55 people. Fr Anthony beautifully explained the



Relic, telling us that St Vincent Pallotti was rooted in the Word of God. I felt proud to listen to our young Pallottine priest, ordained a year ago, delivering a homily filled with zeal and conviction. It was really good. Soon after Mass, all had an opportunity to venerate the Holy Bible. This was followed with an informal get together and snacks. All were happy to have come for this celebration and to have shared this unique experience.

In fact so much so that some immediately shared their experience with other Catholic families and, during the night, two families came to pray and venerate the Bible. Among them was a little girl of about 9 years old who came along with her parents, her younger sister and grand-parents. Her faith inspired her to do something different. She took with her the house key and her pen and touched them on the Bible. Whispering, she later told her mother what she had done. The mother of the girl then shared with us that, during the last two months, there had been several deaths and, one after another, people in that family were falling sick. With this in mind the little girl brought the house key with which she touched the Bible. She believed that God's blessings would come to the house and that all would keep good health. As for the pen



she believed that by touching the Bible God would bless her with a good memory and that she would do well in her studies. She did all this quietly without anyone noticing.

Then the sisters and novices from the neighbouring convent came in large numbers.

It was amazing to see that all who came did so with reverence and faith, and prayed. In total a little more than 100 people came at different times of the day and night.

10th January 2014 was a grace-filled day for us. I profusely thank our Rector General, Jacob Nampudakam SAC for bringing this Relic to India and giving us this wonderful opportunity. This Bible touched and used by a saint did inspire us, and many others, to give great importance to the Word of God in our life. I am sure this would have been the experience of people everywhere the Relic was taken.

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25.02.14
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you commented...

on #112 I remember, watching with interest, a news report showing Christopher Patten sailing out of Hong Kong. I specially noted how graciously and kindly he dealt with everyone!! And I think he played a role in Northern Ireland also—bringing those gifts of nature and grace.

MG 23.03.14