



MARCH 2019 (YEAR C)

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly News Bulletin

P. O. BOX 1865, Osu - Accra

Welcome To Our Parish

MASS SCHEDULES

Morning Mass: Monday - Friday 6:30am
Sunday Mass: 8:00am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION / CONFESSION

Saturdays at 5:30pm - 6:30pm or by
appointment.

COMMUNION TO THE SICK

Please ensure the parish office is informed of
a parishioner's ill health. Arrangements will
be made for a home or hospital visit.

BAPTISM

Dates are communicated by announcements
during Sunday Mass.

HOLY MATRIMONY

Wedding arrangements should be made with
the Parish or Associate Priest. Please contact
the Parish office at least six months prior
to wedding.

Counselling takes place twice a year:
January - June
July - December

PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Mawuli Tettejji
0243 044 431

ASSOCIATE PARISH PRIEST

Rev. Fr. Prince E. Adelaayitar
0262 154 881

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

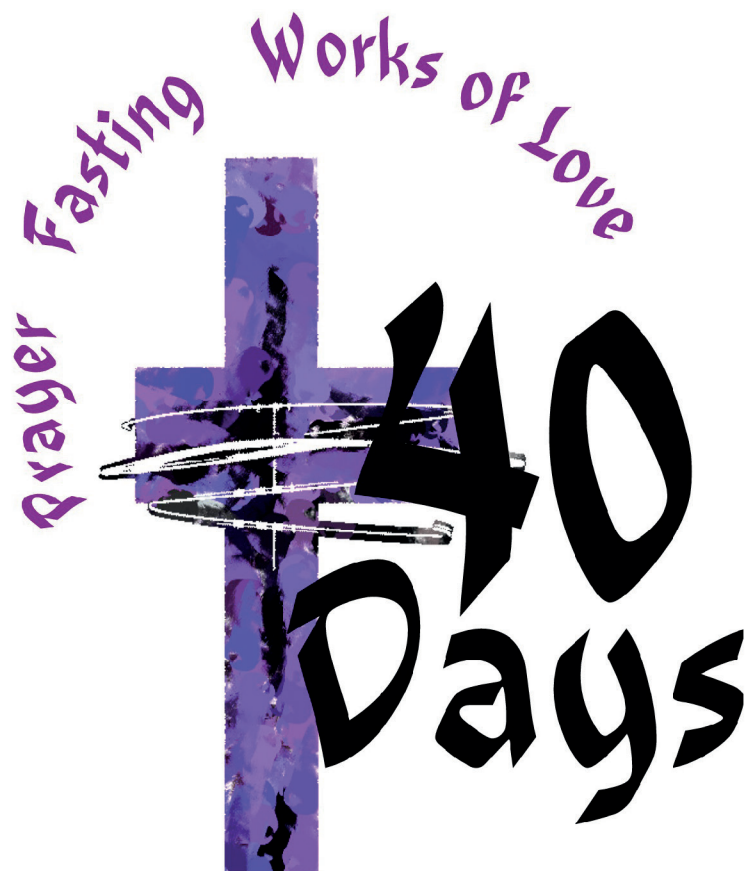
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OFFICE HOURS

Mondays 8:00am - 12:00pm
Tuesday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm

ST. JAMES MINI MART

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00am - 7:00pm
Sundays 6:30am - 2:00pm



IN THIS EDITION

- Pastor's Column
- Reflections
- Spiritual Focus
- Youth Corner

Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Tettedji

Dear cherished parishioners

I bring greetings for the month of March. As we know, March ends the first quarter of the year. We can only thank God for his goodness and mercies. Interestingly, this month also begins the season of lent, and it is proper that we examine ourselves in relation to our resolutions for 2019 to know how far we have come. The season of lent should spur us on to higher laurels in the spiritual life.

Do note the important programmes scheduled for this month:

- Ash Wednesday:

Ash Wednesday falls on 6th March. As is customary of our Parish, we shall have Morning Mass at 6:30, and Evening Mass at 6:00. All must take note, and attend one of them. Let us be reminded that Ash Wednesday is a day of penance, and for that matter, it is an obligatory day of FASTING. We are all encouraged to observe the day and derive maximum spiritual benefit from it.

- Bible Sharing:

We shall resume Bible Sharing on Monday, 11th March at 6:15pm. All must endeavour to attend and deepen their knowledge of the word of God.

- Penitential Activities in Lent:

- 1) Attend Morning Mass
- 2) Read a chapter of the Book of Revelations each day
- 3) Join the Parish fast on Fridays
- 4) Participate in the Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 6pm
- 5) Be charitable and give alms
- 6) Observe your Quiet Time
- 7) Forgive all offenses
- 8) Spend quality time with family
- 9) Share the values of Lent with non-Catholics
- 10) Donate blood on 23rd March to help the blood bank

- Lenten Retreat and Confessions:

As part of the Lenten exercise, we shall have a retreat from 26th March to 28th March with the Sacrament of Confession. All must endeavour to participate from 6pm to 7:30pm.

Conclusion:

The season of lent is a time of spiritual renewal so let us all try and make the most of it. As the Spirit led Jesus into the desert, so may He lead each and every one of us during this season.

Shalom!

"Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'" [John 8:34-36]

Kwabena met a friend who told him he was glowing and hazarded a guess that he must have forgiven someone or overcome a certain obstacle and stepped beyond it. In other words, he had put down a heavy burden he was carrying around with him and the ensuing freedom was palpable, even visible! How incredible! And how true that when we hold on to unforgiveness we are the ones who suffer the most from its effects and not the person who hurt us. The truth is, that person may not even be aware of the impact her behaviour might have had on you, and yet, you lug around the big baggage of pain for days, weeks, months or even years. In the meantime, you miss out on a lot of happiness because of the darkness within you.

Yes, freedom for yourself is the result of forgiveness whether whoever it is directed is remorseful or not. You are the one who suffers! No wonder, it is said that a lot of people with cancer are the very cause of their illness because of unforgiveness in their hearts! And the thing with unforgiveness is that it can lurk in the back of your heart, so well hidden that you are oftentimes not even aware of its presence while it eats away at your soul!

Fr Andrews Obeng in his Reflection of 24th February 2019 put it beautifully when he wrote:

When we choose to love someone, we open the windows of our lives for fresh air to enter. When we hold back love, for whatever reason, we shut the windows and slowly suffocate to death. It is not easy to love an enemy but this is where our faith counts. Onward we go, let us continue to love even if our hearts are broken.

Below is another interesting way of looking at forgiveness that was quoted in the Reflections of Laudate also for 24th February 2019:

Give and forgive - the two wings of prayer

Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) describes Jesus's double precept to give and forgive as two essential wings of prayer:

"Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given you. These are the two wings of prayer on which it flies to God. Pardon the offender what has been committed, and give to the person in need" (Sermon 205.3). "Let us graciously and fervently perform these two types of almsgiving, that is, giving and forgiving, for we in turn pray the Lord to give us things and not to repay our evil deeds" (Sermon 206.2).

When we think of almsgiving we usually think of physical giving and yet from the above we realise that forgiveness is another way of giving freedom not only to ourselves but also to the offender who has repented.

This sounds difficult and sometimes impossible, yet we can pray for grace to treat others not as they deserve but as God wishes them to be treated with loving-kindness and mercy. After all, our God is good to both the just and the unjust, embracing saint and sinner alike. Who has seen rain fall on only the good people and avoid the wicked? Just as He seeks our highest good, he teaches us to also see the greatest good in others, especially those who hate and abuse us. Love for those who are ungrateful and selfish towards us must match the kindness and mercy God has shown to us.

"If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared." [Psalm 130:3-4]

Let us pray with Don Schwager:

"Lord Jesus, your love brings freedom and pardon. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and set my heart free with your merciful love that nothing may make me lose my temper, ruffle my peace, take away my joy, nor make me bitter towards anyone."

From *In Sinu Jesu*

And we all know that Mary believed; 38 Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid

THE CHAPLET OF REPARATION

Or, Offering of the Precious Blood for Priests

This chaplet of reparation and intercession is meant to be prayed on an ordinary five decade rosary.

Incline unto my aid, O God; O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

Alleluia (After Septuagesima: Praise be to Thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory.)

On the Our Father beads:

Eternal Father, I offer Thee
the Precious Blood of Thy Beloved Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Lamb without blemish or spot,
in reparation for my sins
and for the sins of all Thy priests.

On the Hail Mary beads:

By Thy Precious Blood, O Jesus,
purify and sanctify Thy priests.

In place of the Glory be to the Father:

O Father, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named,
have mercy on Thy priests, and wash them in the Blood of the Lamb.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord,

We pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around your priests, and through her intercession, strengthen them for their ministry.

We pray that Mary will guide your priests to follow her own words: "do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:5).

May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary's most chaste spouse.

May the Blessed Mother's own pierced heart inspire them to embrace all who suffer at the foot of the Cross.

May your priests be Holy, filled with the fire of your love, seeking nothing but your greater glory, and the salvation of souls; Amen.

St. John Vianney, pray for them.

NOT MY WILL, BUT YOURS BE DONE

A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor

It was a hot sunny Friday afternoon and as usual Michelle who was hopelessly in love with her neighbor Jake fixed her gaze all afternoon at the window that leads to Jake's room. "I mean, how can another mere mortal be this gorgeous" she murmured to herself.

Anyone who knew the duo will attest that they were as thick as thieves.

And this was as a result of Michelle's tireless efforts, she did all she could to be close to him at school, events and at mass. They were both Catholics so yes, at 7am every Sunday Michelle attentively waits for her prince charming for the walk to church. And mass sermons used to be her longest ritual ever as she could only think her walk back home with him. On one of such Sundays, they were met with an unfortunate incident that totally changed their lives forever.

As they made their way out of mass that day, Michelle and Jake were hit by a motor bike. Jake fell to his feet and although he rose up with so much ease, he mentioned the fact that he heard a cracking sound from his spinal cord from that fall. Minutes later, Jake after hitting the ground 3 times was eventually unable to get up to walk. This left Michelle confused and frightened: here they were in the middle of an isolated dusty road with no sign of a moving vehicle nor good telecommunication connectivity.

"Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed are you among women she began.

A few minutes later, a royal blue range rover parked on her left side and offered to rush Jake to the Hospital, where it was revealed that Jake had a spinal fracture that would render him a cripple for life.

This was devastating. Jake felt helpless and wished for death. What is life in a wheelchair cursed to rely on others for everything: no independence, no sports, no joy, all his dreams had withered away in the blink of an eye.

For Michelle, was a guilt-ridden. "This was all my fault. I pushed Jake to use this particular route. This would not have happened if I hadn't been too stubborn and insensitive."

This was the chorus for months till Michelle resolved to help cure Jake.

"Come for our powerful anointing water which can turn water into wine with one drop. Apply the oil on your pillow and the next morning there will be uncountable 50cedi notes. This is the power from the most High".

These statements immediately captured the attention of Michelle who believed she had found all the solutions to her problems. She convinced Jake to visit this Pastor as she believed he was about to receive his much-awaited miracle. They paid a church attendance fee of GHC 2,500 each to see the Man of God. After 7 hours of non-stop prayer nothing seem to be happening. The Pastor requested that they return the next day. This continued for 3 months - that is about 90 days of intense prayer and fasting. Now Michelle was convinced God had stopped answering their prayers or wasn't interested in being their Father any longer. How sad!

Rev. Sister Mary noticed the absence of Jake and Michelle at mass and paid Michelle a visit. Michelle narrated everything that had happened in the past weeks to Sister Mary. She added that the two of them had made up their minds to not only leave the Catholic Church but to stop worshipping God altogether amidst tears. It was a heartbreaking session.

Sister Mary explained to Michelle the story of Job, Hannah and even our Savior Jesus Christ; how God put them through difficulties to test their faith and just how beautiful the Glory of God was revealed at the end of it all.

Christians have always imagined a life devoid of sorrow and storms. Oh yes, our Father in Heaven assures us of that. And because of this, he always seeks to bring out the best in us. God puts us through tests sometimes because he wants to prove to his Angels that we indeed deserve the blessings he is about to fill our beautiful lives with. Yet we are always too busy looking for means to avert these difficulties instead of meeting them upfront with prayer and trust in God.

Sometimes if we actually take a hard look at our lives, we realize that the most important lessons are learnt during difficult times. And if we go through them with God by our side, the victory is unimaginable.

For Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. James 1:12

Mitchelle and Jake after embracing the struggle and difficulty devoted their time to reading the word of God and sharing their experiences. Jake begun to feel fulfilled and happy from within. He later won a scholarship for the talented but disabled in his community to pursue further studies in Medicine and Michelle on the other hand got admission to study Law. God indeed makes everything beautiful in His time.

As Catholics we need to appreciate that the Catholic Church has all it takes to heal, strengthen us and unleash all the miracles we yearn for according to the divine will of our Father in Heaven. Instead of chasing miracles, let us pray that the will of God be done in our lives.

THE POWER OF OUR TONGUE

By Cynthia Nimo-Ampredú

It's the last month of the first quarter of the year 2019 already! How are your new year ambitions fairing? Well, let's keep persevering and continue to put our trust in God to crown all our efforts with success.

As we persevere, we must also create the necessary environment around us. One way to do this is to make positive and responsible statements to lift our spirit, not only for our self-encourage but also for the encouragement of those around us. In Revelations 12:11, the Bible tells us that the devil was not only overcome by the blood of the Lamb, but also the word of our testimony. Is it not powerful to know that one of the weapons to fight the devil is your testimony? If that is the case, then our tongue is indeed powerful and we must always use it for a good course. While we may have the liberty to freely express ourselves, we must remember the power that our tongue holds: it can either make or break us!

We have recently witnessed the murder of a journalist which has been associated with the unguarded comments by a political figure. If we also follow international news, we may have heard of the delivery of bombs to persons opposed to President Trump's government which the United States security force associated with hate speech and comments by President Trump. The persons who made unguarded comments in these instances may not have intended to cause the events which have been linked to their comments. These negative irreversible events have however happened and people have been hurt as a result. As if these were not enough, we certainly have not forgotten the famous 'all die be die' and the recent 'boot for boot' slogans which may be associated with the undesirable creation of party based security personnel (vigilante groups) who have thrown caution to the wind and caused mayhem.

As youth, we must always remember that our tongue holds a lot of power and must be well guarded. If our tongue is this powerful, we should learn to use it to command good things into our lives. A kind word to a friend can make immense difference in that person's day sometimes without us even knowing, just as faith-filled words can move mountains (Matthew 17:20).

Especially as upcoming leaders, we need to remember that many people look up to us as their role models and mentors and will often accept the things we say as final and act on them. What do you want your leadership legacy to be? Would you be pleased with yourself, knowing that you incited people to cause mayhem to the very people you are obliged to protect and serve? Or do you want to be remembered for always fostering unity and love, even where there is hatred? James 1: 19 advises us to be slow to speak and quick to listen.

I encourage us to practice speaking truths and kindness first to ourselves and to others as we nurture our weapon (the tongue) to put it to the good use for which God created it. This way, we are assured of being good leaders where ever we find ourselves.



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WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

Mondays

Bible sharing (6:15pm - 7:30pm)

Youth Choir (7:00pm - 9:00pm)

Tuesdays

St. Anthony's Guild (6:30pm - 7:30pm)

Wednesdays

Church Choir (6:30pm - 8:30pm)

Thursdays

Youth Choir (7:00pm - 9:00pm)

Charismatic Renewal (6:30pm - 7:30pm)

Fridays

Church Choir (6:30pm - 8:30pm)

Sacred heart Confraternity (6:30pm - 7:30pm)



Eucharistic Adoration

Thursday preceding the first Friday of the
month.

Day born groups

Last Sunday of the month after Mass or by
announcement.

Faith Bookshop

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Sundays 9:30am - 1:30pm

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