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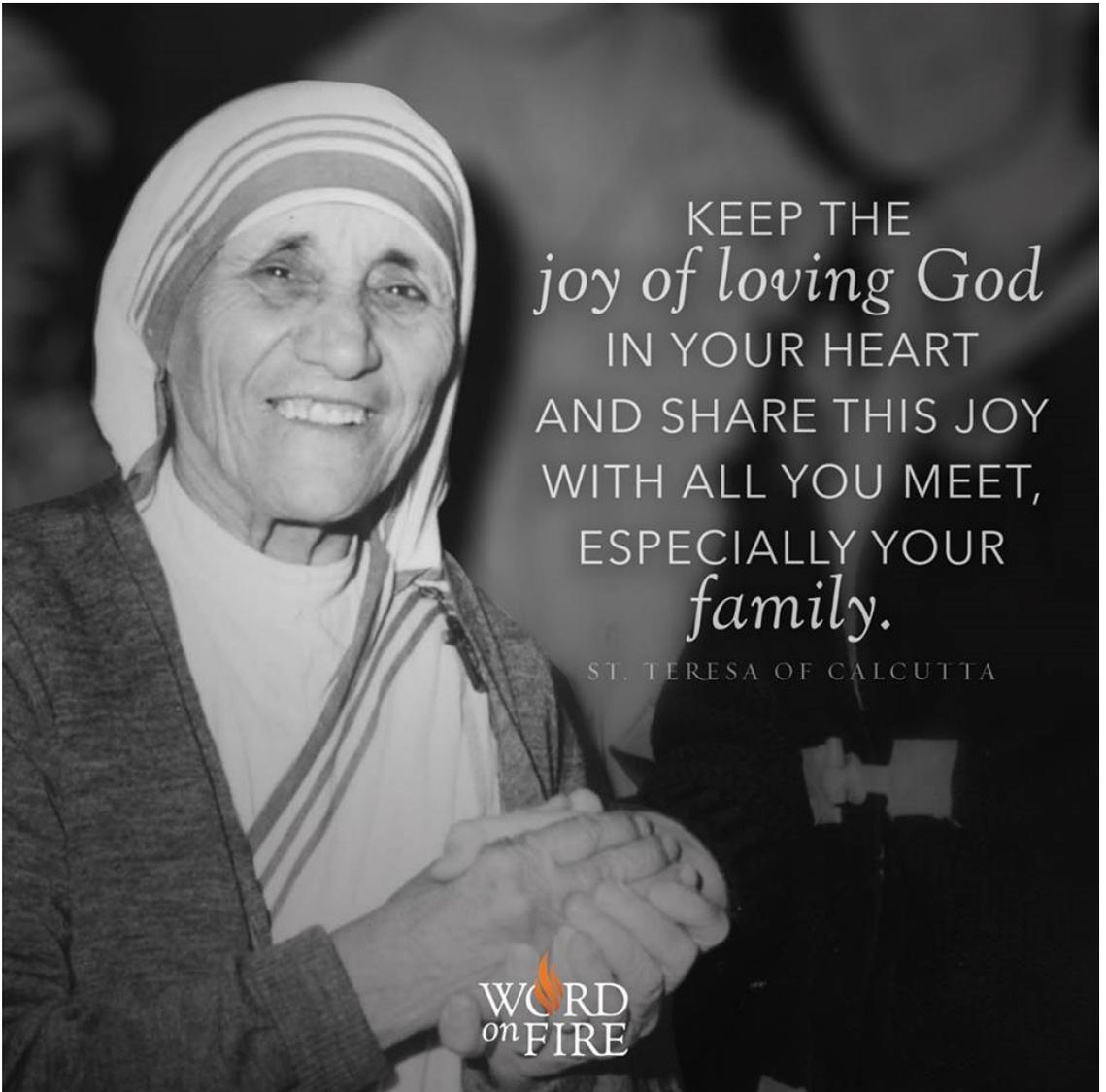


The Vine



OPEN IN SPIRIT TO GOD (BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS) Community

St. Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us!



KEEP THE
joy of loving God
IN YOUR HEART
AND SHARE THIS JOY
WITH ALL YOU MEET,
ESPECIALLY YOUR
family.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

WORD
on FIRE

WORD SHARING CIRCLE (WSC) REFLECTION GUIDE OCTOBER 2016

COMMUNITY WORD:

Faithfulness, gratitude, perseverance, humility and repentance are marks of a true servant of Christ.

THEME:

We bear the mark of a true servant of Christ when we give our utmost for Him.

PROMISE:

“...God give (s) ... us power and love and self-control.” (2 Tim 1:7)

REFLECTION:

“How important is faith? It takes faith to believe in Christ; it takes faith to believe that what God says is always right and true, and it takes faith to trust and walk in that truth each day. And, if your faith doesn’t continue to grow in your relationship with Christ, you won’t have the faith to see God’s Kingdom come not only in your life, but in the lives of those around you.” (Christy Wimber)

In the Gospel reading, Jesus teaches us the importance of faith and service to God. Using a tiny mustard seed and a large mulberry tree as comparison, He demonstrates that even a little, but sincere faith, will enable His followers to do wondrous things. **“If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you,”** (Lk 17, 6). Faith then, should include knowledge and understanding of our place in God’s plans. Through faith, we receive God’s grace as faithful servants to do the work He calls us to do, and to participate and cooperate in His plan for His Kingdom. Our faith enables us to believe that what little we have to offer in our service to God can grow and multiply a hundredfold.

The first and second reading tells us to hold on to our relationship with God who brings salvation, reminding us to keep alive our covenant with Him. Our aim as believers is to give our utmost to the Lord. This involves complete surrender to Him and to His will. Giving our utmost to God means surrendering the good and the bad, the best of who we are and what we have. Our all in all. If we are to truly live for God there is a cost

involved. Growing in the Lord and taking up our cross and following Him is a long and challenging process that we must nurture daily in our relationship with Him. We are to grow slowly no matter how painful it may be.

Scripture tells us to love the Lord with all our heart. God must be paramount. If other priorities are more important to us, then we are not giving Him our all. In everything that we do, obedience to God's will is what we should pursue and strive for. And God's grace will carry us through with this promise for the week **"...God give(s) ... us power and love and self-control."** (2 Tim 1:7).

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, like your disciples, I ask You to increase my faith day after day. Continue to draw me to closer to You, for You are my fondest hope, my deepest desire. I surrender everything to You, and as You take control of my life, grant me the grace to follow after You, and be obedient to Your divine will at all times. Amen.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Has your relationship with God grown deeper and stronger in your faith journey?
2. What obstacle(s) have you encountered which challenged your faith in the Lord's will for your life?

This Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:

October 2, 2016 (Sun)	Hb1:2-3; 2:2-4/ Ps 95:1-2,6-9/ 2 Tm 1:6-8,13-14/ Lk 17:5-10
October 3, 2016 (Mon)	Gal 1:6-12/Ps 111:1,2,7-10/Lk 10:38-42
October 4, 2016 (Tue)	Gal 1:13-24/Ps 139:1-3,13-15/Lk 10:38-42
October 5, 2016 (Wed)	Gal 2:1,2,7-14/Ps 117:1,2/Lk 11:1-4
October 6, 2016 (Thu)	Gal 3:1-5/Lk 1:69-75/Lk 11:5-13
October 7, 2016 (Fri)	Gal 3:7-14/Ps 111:2-6/Lk 11:15-16
October 8, 2016 (Sat)	Gal 3:22-29/Ps 105:2-7/Lk 11:27-28

***"Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ." St. Jerome
Read your Bible daily!***

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #4

The Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) is a wonderful opportunity for Catholic Christians to better understand their faith and consciously develop a sense of discipleship by following the dictates of Jesus Christ. The OSG/BLD SFX LSS comprises 7 weekly sessions of shepherding, but is not the end of spiritual transformation: It is the beginning of a more Holy relationship with the Lord. In order to sustain this new life, the OSG/BLD SFX Prayer Community is there to support its commissioned members, mainly through weekly meetings of Praise and Worship, training and education, and fellowship.

The 4th LSS, sponsored by the OSG/BLD SFX Community, is now underway at the St. Xavier Church. It began on September 15th and is scheduled to be completed on October 27th. Despite the low-key campaign this year in comparison to previous years, the number of registrants is quite huge – a total of 65, which includes 15 couples. This is a sure sign that God must be pleased with this undertaking. Attendance has been consistent and there is an enthusiasm among Shepherds to ensure that they meet the expectations of the lambs under their charge, in delivering the message of God's promise of a fulfilled life as they strive to obey his holy words.

Day one, September 22nd, set the stage for this evangelical seminar. It started off with an Invocation Mass presided by Msgr Pan, the SFX Pastor, then the welcoming of the registrants and an overview given of what they could expect during their 7-week journey learning about God's love and the expectations of a new and promising life.

The next 2 weeks gave the registrants a taste of what it is like to belong to the present community: vibrancy in worship, singing and praising the Lord in all they do and sharing of knowledge and experiences: Ed & Lori Bautista were the prayer leaders for the 2nd week and Rey & Mabel Perlas for the 3rd. As expected, both couples were gracefully in charge as they led the praise and worship in enthusiastic prayer and song; In their presentations on week 2 and 3 respectively, Lorenzo Rato and Larry Nieva embraced the themes of the day and shared their thoughts with confidence and conviction;

Four weeks to go, and from all appearances, lambs are awaiting the day when they will be empowered in the spirit and commissioned as members of the OSG/BLD SFX Prayer Community.

Praise the Lord!



Cita Treyes, Praise Ministry, stood boldly during the LSS Week 2 to testify on the power of **God's Love** in her life.

Quoting from Jeremiah 31:3 ***"I have always loved you, so I continue to show you my constant love."***, Cita shared how she hung on to Jesus, the daily Holy Mass and the Eucharist to survive the consequences of Parkinson's Disease that affected her loving husband, Joe (now deceased).

At the end of Joe's life, the good Lord fulfilled His promise to Cita and her only daughter: ***"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart."*** Jeremiah 29:11-13.



Like the week before when Cita shared on God's Love, wet eyes and sniffles filled the room as **Rosemary Williams**, Intercessory Ministry, shared her life journey to Christ, being left with an unanswered question from her Dad who died too soon. Her story in Week 2 about her **New Life in the Spirit** was a fulfillment of the Lord's promise in Ezekiel 36:26-28 ***"I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts. I will put my spirit within you and make you live by my statutes, careful to observe my decrees"***.

A deep sense of bitterness, anger and resentment changed to understanding, calmness and peace brought by the grace of forgiveness. In her new found love of Jesus Christ, Rosemary embrace this new life facing all obstacles and life's surprises with the Lord's promise in Luke 12:22 ***"He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear'"***.

Both Cita and Rosemary gave praises and glory to God! Blessing to you both!

MOTHER (SAINT) TERESA: A SYMBOL OF LOVE

What is Love? In the spiritual sense, Agape is the love that God has for us, and this is the love that God asks us to share with our fellow human beings.

According to Wikipedia, Agape **love is: the highest form of love, charity; the love of God for man and of man for God." Not to be confused with "philō" – brotherly love – agápē embraces a universal, unconditional love that transcends, that serves regardless of circumstances.."**

In his homily during the canonization of Mother Teresa, the Pope emphasized her worthiness for this honour because of her love for God and for humankind. He cited her mercy for human life; for those unborn and those unwanted and discarded. Below is an excerpt from his homily on Mother Teresa:

"Mother Teresa, in all aspects of her life, was a generous dispenser of divine mercy, making herself available for everyone through her welcome and defence of human life, those unborn and those abandoned and discarded. She was committed to defending life, ceaselessly proclaiming that "the unborn are the weakest, the smallest, the most vulnerable". She bowed down before those who were spent, left to die on the side of the road, seeing in them their God-given dignity; she made her voice heard before the powers of this world, so that they might recognize their guilt for the crime – the crimes! – of poverty they created. For Mother Teresa, mercy was the "salt" which gave flavour to her work, it was the "light" which shone in the darkness of the many who no longer had tears to shed for their poverty and suffering.

Her mission to the urban and existential peripheries remains for us today an eloquent witness to God's closeness to the poorest of the poor. Today, I pass on this emblematic figure of womanhood and of consecrated life to the whole world of volunteers: may she be your model of holiness! I think, perhaps, we may have some difficulty in calling her "Saint Teresa": her holiness is so near to us, so tender and so fruitful that we continually spontaneously call her "Mother Teresa". May this tireless worker of mercy help us increasingly to understand that our only criterion for action is gratuitous love, free from every ideology and all obligations, offered freely to everyone without distinction of language, culture, race or religion. Mother Teresa loved to say, "Perhaps I don't speak their language, but I can smile". Let us carry her smile in our hearts and give it to those whom we meet along our journey, especially those who suffer. In this way, we will open up opportunities of joy and hope for our many brothers and sisters who are discouraged and who stand in need of understanding and tenderness." <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/francesco/omelie/2016-09-04Vaticanva.html>

One in a million! Can we dare try to exemplify her?

GOOD NEWS

Let us share the good news and give thanks for the glory of Our Lord

1. From Ed & Lu Dumlao, SFX Prayer Group Shepherds - September 22, 2016:

It is with joy in our hearts to share with you that at last night's meeting of Coordinators - Mission Steward Willie and Viv Saguil presented an update on the SFX Prayer Group and announced that the DCS with one heart and mind endorsed by District Servant Leaders Jimmy and Nora Valera - recommended the elevation of SFX Prayer Group to a DIP Status.

Attached is a copy of the Letter to the ECSL dated September 19, 2016. We are just awaiting for confirmation of the recommendation in connection with our status as a community. We are hopeful that this will be communicated to us soon.

We praise the Lord for this uplifting news and we remain thankful to the District Council of Stewards for their support and guidance through this phase of our Prayer Group.

We also want to take this opportunity for all your support, leadership and patience as we all journey in building a BLD/OSG Community.

Excerpt from ECSL Letter: " ...We are pleased to advise that OSG – SFX has completed the following in relation to the Covenanting of "Recalled" and "home-grown" Disciples : ("Recalled" disciples are those inactive previous members of BLD-Toronto who joined the OSG-SFX Prayer Group)

- Three committed & "recalled" disciples joined the Toronto District 2016 Discipling Program and completed the Aspirants Retreat last weekend (Sept 17-18, 2016)
- Twenty two committed ("recalled" and "home grown") disciples completed the CDFP teachings and will be attending the 1st Discipling Program using the updated Discipling Method and Manual of BLD Toronto. The discipling sessions are scheduled in September 2016 to January 2017, with the Aspirants Retreat in February 2017

As well, OSG SFX continues to seek approval of BLD-Toronto DCS through the Mission Steward of its plans and activities, as well the approval of sharers, ME/LSS coordinators, teachers..."

2. BLD Toronto District—New Steward for Evangelization:

Gie and Beth Santulan were installed as the new Toronto District Steward for Evangelization, taking over the post left open by the resignation of Rene and Ditas Dimen. Blessings to Gie and Beth as they provide the inspiration and leadership to spread the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ thru the evangelization programs of BLD in Toronto District.

SFX PARISH EVENTS

1. Auditions for The Christmas Story Concert are currently taking place. If you have the voice and would like to be a part of this celebration, call **Rick Torres: 416-524-8188** or **Joanita Miranda: 905-890-5290 ext. 223**. The Christmas Story Concert is happening on December 20, 2016 .
2. The Knights of Columbus and the Parish are organizing an electronic waste week-end with Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES). If you have electronics you need to get rid of, come to the Church parking lot on **October 15-16, 2016**. A recycling bin will be there for collection of your items. OES will donate \$200 per tonne of devices towards the parish's debt reduction.

BLD SFX ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMINDERS

1. LSS Prayer Partners, it is time to book your one-on-one with your LSS Participant when you can chat privately and talk about concerns.
2. Confession is a very critical aspect of the LSS for both Prayer Partners and Participants in preparation for Baptism. Confession has been arranged with the Parish for October 12, 6.00 - 7.00 p.m.

OSG-SFX PRAYER GROUP CALENDAR October 2016			
DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE
Oct 6	7-9 pm	LSS - Receiving God's Gift	SFX Hall
Oct 12	7-9 pm	LSS - General Confession	SFX Hall
Oct 13	7-9 pm	LSS - Baptism in the Holy Spirit	SFX Hall
Oct 20	7-9 pm	LSS - Growth & Transformation	SFX Hall
Oct 27	7-9 pm	LSS - Commissioning	SFX Hall

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