

31st January 2010 (Night Prayer)

My dear little one,

Rejoice My children in the love of your Lord and God given freely to you. Do not become so weighed down by your burdens that you no longer recognize and rejoice in God's love. You are children of God. You have been given an abundance of gifts and graces to use to further the Kingdom of God. Put God's love first and you will be given all you need. Love your Lord and God with all your heart and love your neighbour as yourself. Reach out and give My love to all you meet. Open your hearts and receive My love and then let it flow out freely to all. Do not put any conditions on this holy love you are given. Be happy to accept the last and most lowly place. Be generous and giving; do not have hidden agendas. Be holy and pure and you will inherit life eternal. Pray, fast and give selflessly in reparation for the sins committed throughout the world. Look to Me. Cling to the corner of My garment. Come and follow My ways. Go to your quiet place and pray to your Lord and God. When you fast do not bring attention to your acts of self sacrifice. You must be pure in thought, word and deed. When you give alms your right hand must not know what your left hand does. Look to John the Baptist. Decrease so that I your Lord and God can increase. Listen and learn the many mysteries of the Kingdom of God. Time is limited. Do not delay. Read Matthew 6: 1-18 to understand My ways. Be holy as I your Lord and God am holy.

2nd February 2010 (Night Prayer)

My dear little ones,

Do not be afraid – I will be your shelter from the storm. Cling to Me. Do not be tempted to venture out alone. Stay close to Me and I will show you the way to life eternal. Make the most of the opportunities you have been given to learn the lessons of holy love. These lessons will be an important tool for you to use in the time to come. Do not waste a moment of your time. It is important that you take time to prepare a holy dwelling place for your Lord and God. The winds of change blow and many are caught napping. Stay alert my little ones. Do not fall into satan's trap of complacency. Open your eyes to the wonders of the Lord. Look to your Lord and God. I am your Good Shepherd and I will guide you to pastures green. Remain in Me as I remain in you. Do not fear the disciplines of prayer, alms giving and fasting. You will be given rewards by your Father in Heaven when you choose to take the narrow and more difficult path. You will be given strength to persevere when you choose to follow the ways of the Lord. Renounce all selfishness and accept the path of humility. This is the path My Mother took. Pray and ask for her guidance and you will be given it. Let My Mother draw you under the protection of her holy mantle. Choose the little way of holy love. Will you be My hands, My feet, My heart of holy love? Will you be My servant of the little way?



Door has been cut through from St. Benedict's to new room



Gas stove



Coolroom



Through Mary
to Jesus

THE HOLY FAMILY HOUSE OF PRAYER

23 Keppell Mews

Rockingham West Australia 6168

08 9527 9165

www.weepingmadonna.org

June 2009

Dear Friends

We at The Holy Family House of Prayer wish you a very Happy New Year. As some of you would be aware the first task we perform in the New Year is to pick a patron saint. If you would like us to pick a patron saint for you then give us a ring on 0895279165 or email us on weepingmadonna@inet.net.au or send us a letter. This year Patty was given St. Valentine so we thought you might be interested in the origin of Valentine's Day.

There are varying opinions as to the origin of **Valentine's Day**. Some experts state that it originated from **St. Valentine**, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on **February 14, 269 A.D.**, the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "*From Your Valentine*".

Other aspects of the story say that Saint Valentine served as a **priest at the temple** during the reign of **Emperor Claudius**. Claudius then had Valentine jailed for defying him. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honour St. Valentine.

Gradually, **February 14** became the date for exchanging love messages and St. Valentine became **the patron saint of lovers**. The date was marked by sending poems and simple gifts such as flowers. There was often a social gathering or a ball.

The History of Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honour Juno. Juno was the Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage. The following day, **February 15th**, began **the Feast of Lupercalia**.

The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate. However, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing. On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often, they would fall in love and would later marry.

Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. **Claudius the Cruel** was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good **Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome** in the days of Claudius II. He and **Saint Marius** aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, about the year 270.



At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom, indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honour of a heathen god. On these occasions, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.

The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavoured to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen **Saint Valentine's Day** for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.

PROJECTS FOR 2010

This year we are planning to convert the double garage into a community area where we can prepare food and share communal meals together. The words "make hospitality your special care" Romans 12:13 have been given many times and over the past year we have shared lunch with many different people that have come to visit the Holy Family House of Prayer. We have been given a cool room which will be used for our outreach programme "S.O.U.L. Soup Patrol" and also for storing our vegetables etc from the garden.

A friender who is a builder is going to come and help us put a door through from the entrance area "St Benedicts" through to the new room. All new projects seem daunting when they first begin. There seems always so much to do and not many hands to help. If you would like to help us in any way we have listed below several ways in which you could help:

- Prayer support. None of this work can be achieved without on going prayer support for God's Will to be always done.
- Donation of your time.

(If you live a long distance away and would like to help we would love you to come and visit and stay for a few days or a week at Bethany and help us with our projects.)

ALMS GIVING

In the beginning of Chapter 6 in Matthew's gospel we are told to be careful we do not parade our good deeds before men to attract notice. We must give alms in secret (our left hand must not know what our right is doing). In the Catholic Encyclopedia it says that alms giving is: Any material favour done to assist the needy, and prompted by charity, is almsgiving. There are many ways we can help others By alms giving. Over the 6 weeks of Lent we help the poor through Project Compassion. Another way we could help is by cleaning out our cupboards and donating our goods to St Vincent de Paul's. Since opening St. Pio's House of Hope which is the house for pregnant girls people have generously given to us prams, cots, babies clothes etc to help. We received a call from the hospital the other day to say that a young mother needed a cot and pram for her new baby. She came to collect them and was so grateful that she was given these things to help her as she didn't have the money to go and buy new items. Sometimes we do not see the results of our labours. Pray and ask God to reveal to you the ways you can help others by your alms giving. Nothing is too small in the eyes of God. In Luke 6: 36 we are told to be compassionate as your Father is compassionate....Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.

On Page 4 of the newsletter are the messages given regarding prayer, fasting and alms giving.

FASTING

Fasting is a powerful discipline which helps us to tame our appetites for worldly wants. There are many examples in the Old and New Testaments regarding fasting. In Exodus 34:28 we read that Moses stayed for forty days and forty nights with God on the mountain, eating and drinking nothing, in reparation for the sins of the people. In Matthew 4: 1-11 we read that Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights. Jesus says after he is tempted by Satan three times “Be off Satan, For scripture says “ You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone”. Moses fasted on the mountain because the people had disobeyed and made a golden calf while he had gone up the mountain to speak to God and receive the Ten Commandments. Many today have made golden calves through worshipping material possessions. In Matthew 6: 19-21 which is the verses after fasting we are told “do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moths and woodworms destroy them and thieves can break in and steal. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor woodworms destroy them and thieves cannot break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Fasting helps free us from the chains which bind us whether it be food, drink, money, television, computer magazines or other addictions. We need to cleanse ourselves in readiness for our Eternal Bridegroom. In Scripture we are told to put new wine into new wineskins. When we go for certain medical tests we fast so that the doctors can see more clearly if there are any problems. In the same way we will be able to see more clearly God’s plan for us when we embrace the discipline of renouncing self through fasting. There are many forms of fasting. Some people fast on Wednesdays and Fridays having water and bread for the two smaller meals and then a normal meal at night. Each person should pray and seek God’s help as to the form of fasting they are called to. You may be called to renounce self by not watching favourite television programmes for Lent or from stopping buying a magazine you like to read. If you can’t survive without a cup of coffee or cup of tea you may be called to give up that pleasure for the 40 days of Lent. Just as Moses fasted in reparation for the sins of the people we too can fast in so many different ways for the breaking of the chains of sin and the restoration of God’s love in our families and loved ones.

- Donations of goods. We are needing plaster board for the walls and ceiling. We need wood to build the stud wall frames to hold the plaster board. We need some sort of flooring. We need to get a window with window frame and sliding door. We need batts for insulation.
- Monetary donation. There is an oven for sale \$400. It is worth about \$5000 new and is in very good condition and will be a help to us to cook muffins for the Soup Run and prepare meals in the Community room. See picture over page
- Service of our current photo copier or a trade in which will cost \$2000. The drum needs to be replaced.

Our building project may have to be accomplished in stages. The electrical work in the shed needs to be rewired and the plumbing done for the sink and gas bought for the stove..

We will keep you updated as to the progress of the new area.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which is the 17th February this year. Below are the gospel reading for Ash Wednesday.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18)

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men’s admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

‘And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

‘When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.’

As you can see from both the messages and the gospel reading we are called prayer, fasting and alms giving. We have been asked to prepare a worthy dwelling place for our Lord and God. Many of the messages given have been telling us “to be holy as I your Lord and God am holy”. We are called to be pure in body, mind and soul.

PRAYER

It is very easy to get caught up in the ways of the world and to put off taking time each day to be still in prayer so that we can speak to God and listen to what He has to say to us. It takes discipline to set aside this time of quietness as the fast pace of life and the many distractions (eg. television, magazines, computer, work, etc) makes it a constant battle to find that quiet place to be still. In Matthew 7: 7-8 we read the words “ Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him.”