



Disciples India

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Favorable Time

March 02, 2022, we begin the liturgical season of lent, a time of grace and a favorable time for us Christians. Lent is a time of greater intimacy with God, with self and with our sisters and brothers. The main ingredients of lent are Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Prayer -Improves communion with God and strengthens spiritual life.

Fasting – Increases self-control and solidarity with the poor.

Almsgiving – Expands sensitivity towards others.

May this season be a time of greater blessings and freedom.



THE CROSS OF CHRIST SPEAKS...



Dearest Friends,

It's a great pleasure for me to greet you all during the holy season of Lent. Just thought of writing about all my experience with Jesus. As you all know I was a sign of contradiction, I was ugly and unloved, I was the punishment for the evil acts, the moment people heard my name fear would creep into their hearts, I was despised by all, and nobody wanted me even in their dreams, because death was the eventual consequence after one encounter me, but all this changed because of that one Galilean whom today the world adores. Yes, Jesus changed the map of my life. When I first saw him, He was so disfigured, his face was covered with sweat and blood, and I could barely recognize Him. It was for the first time someone embraced me with so much love, he held me as if I was so dear to His heart. We journeyed together to Calvary, I knew he would be crucified and eventually die like the others, but there was a protest within me, I did not want Him to die, it was an encounter of few minutes, a short journey but His love was so magical that it changed me. When they nailed him on me, I could comprehend how precious human beings are to him. Little did I know that by dying on me he would turn me into His own sign for generations to come. A sign of a curse became a sign of blessing. I became like the hallmark of Christianity, every child born in a Christian family is taught to make the sign of the cross first. What a privilege it is for me, it was indeed a U-turn from worst to the best. If Christ could do this to a mere wooden log like me, imagine what He is capable of doing to His children whom He loves the most.

My story may seem very simple but I want you all to know and understand the Love which Christ bears for each of you at least during this season of Lent. You may be weak, sinful, ugly, even unloved, maybe all hate you, but you need to allow Jesus to embrace you, His love has the capacity to change anyone. Return to Him, go back home this lent. What you were in the past does not matter what you will become in the future; you just need to allow Christ to embrace you. As each of you will be re-living the sufferings of Jesus during lent, walk with Him and journey with Him. Once Jesus comes into the picture in one's life you too will become a blessing to all.

**With lots of love,
The Cross of Christ**



HANGOUT WITH JESUS



Me - **Hi Lord!**

Jesus- **Hi Dear**

Lord, you don't have the latest android phone, yet you answer me whenever I call you without any network issues.

Of course, my little one

You don't have a Google account, yet you have all the answers to the questions which Google is unable to answer.

Yep, that's me

Twitter account is something you don't have and yet your words are so influential.

That is the power of it.

And you are not on Instagram, still you have the highest number of followers all over the world.

Including you....

Lord, you have not created your Spotify account, still your love has inspired the greatest music and compositions, how is it possible?

Music of my love resonates in the world my dear.

Have you subscribed Netflix Lord?



Noooo

Then still you watch the movies of our lives for 70 – 80 years....

Yes, I do

Lord you don't have G-pay or Pay Tim, yet you paid the price for my salvation with your own life.

It's because you are priceless and I want you in Heaven with me

You were a star in an Era when technology had no traces, now as it is reaching the peaks of glory, you are still the star, and you will be so forever, you are just so amazing- Love you Lord

Love you too my child, today and forever!



BEST GIFTS ARE WRAPPED IN LOVE NOT PAPER



Life is God's gift. Every moment that we experience in our lives is God's gift to us whether it is good or bad. It is good because God loves us, and sometimes it is bad because God loves us even more and makes us strong through the difficult situations that we experience. As we were born, the first gift God packed and gave for us is our life, and it is very dear to him. It is through the spirit that we have life, our spirit is life. God loves this spirit that is our soul, which he created. Then our other gift is our body, this He has given into our care to keep it healthy so that we may use it for the glory of God.

Our beloved God has adorned this gift with our talents, our abilities, intelligence, and the strength. And the other is our weakness, but with our weakness we can become strong, as St. Paul says, "When I am weak, then I am strong". Our strength often makes us feel proud and takes us away from God, and when we leave God, we become weak in our own eyes and in the eyes of God. But at the same time our weakness and failures can help us to come closer to God and thus become precious in the eyes of God.

Our Parents, siblings, relatives, our congregation, and our sisters with whom we live are other gifts, in other words every moment becomes a gift, all that is around us even the creation. Adding to that God bestows his manifold blessings and graces upon us, let us be thankful because all that we have is from Him. Meister Eckhart once said "If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough". Lord thank you for all your gifts, your generosity knows no bounds, may we too be generous in thanking you.

- Sr M. Asmita Dimekar

February 2, 2022, Day of the consecrated Life

A special day in the life of all consecrated men and women. The day started for us sisters in the community Santhome, with Lauds in the Cathedral with the Parish clergy followed by solemn procession with lighted candles to the Church. The Celebrant offered special prayers for all the Priests and Religious working in the Parish.

For me it was an extra day of joy as the community in the presence of the Provincial Superior Sr. M. Celine Cunha, celebrated God's 50 years of Faithfulness in my life. Rather I would say 53 years because the day I left my home, it's from then, that the Lord was at my side leading and guiding me through joys and sorrows to reach this day and I can, with deep conviction acknowledge that whenever from the sincerity of my heart called out to the Lord, **He** was there at my side either material or spiritual.

As I expressed, the thanksgiving Holy Eucharist was in the Crypt Chapel of Santhome Cathedral Basilica. Another reason for my happiness was that the entire Parish clergy con-celebrated the Holy Mass. The sisters have taken great pain to arrange everything. A big thanks to everyone.

The song that rises within me is, "From my heart breaks forth this lovely poem, my life entire is O Lord is yours". "Bless the Lord O my soul and all that is within me bless His holy name, bless the Lord, O my soul and do not forget all His blessings (Ps. 103: 1-2). May the Lord help me to be His faithful and loving disciple as He wants me to be.



Thank You Lord & the Congregation

- Sr M. Valsa Madakacherry

PDDM celebrates 35th Death anniversary of the Co-foundress, Mother Scholastica

24th March remains a remarkable day for the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master as we celebrate the 35th Death anniversary of our first Mother and Co-Foundress Venerable Scholastica Rivata who was born on 12 July 1897 at Guarene, Italy to Lucia Alessandria and Antonio Rivata and baptized Ursula. At the early age of six her mother died of illness but Ursula was well prepared to live the consecrated life. The first 'yes' sprang from her First Holy Communion. But for various reasons, the hour of God was manifested much later. At the age of 20, she received an enticing marriage proposal; however, she felt strongly drawn to respond to her calling in the following words: ***Lord, You alone are enough!***

Ursula's encounter with Father Alberione [the Founder] was decisive in terms of her future life and mission. On 21 November 1923 Father Alberione selected two young women - Ursula Rivata and Metilda Gerlatto and set them apart for the project which was as yet unknown. He gave them the clear draft of a New Rule of life based on the adoration and the inseparable elements of hidden sacrifice of silence; he gave them this order "***Observe silence, silence, silence***"- as if to say, you must listen, listen, listen to the Lord's message. The presence speaking to us is not found in the earthquake, not in the fire but in the murmur of a light breeze, in silence (cf 1 Kings 19: 11-12).

At the beginning of the following year, i.e. on 10 February 1924 the founder gave life to a new institute, the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. On 25 March 1924, the feast day of the Annunciation of Mary, Ursula took her first vows and received the name of Sister Scholastica and was assigned as the first Mother of the institute. In her letter she writes to the Founder, ***'This time I have given all to Jesus. I offer him my body, my health, my soul, my intelligence.... Desires, affections, sentiments, food, sleep, miseries, sins... these and if ever there is something else which I do not know I give them all unconditionally. I am stripped of everything. I am made lighter for an absolute and total emptiness. I ask him to fill me up and clothe me of himself and to live only of, for, in him, my Master, shepherd, spouse and saviour and to able to act more freely in me with his design of love'***.

Mother Scholastica was deeply drawn to the Holy Eucharist sustained by the queen of heaven, to whom she raised many rosaries. Mother Scholastica directed her entire life towards the tabernacle, towards Jesus Host, whom she adored with much faith, with whom she often dialogued, to whom she offered much. Her greatest comfort was to remain in the church, the sweetest place where Jesus nurtures us with joy. She also knew how to find the master outside of the chapel in the most significant events of the day. The most beautiful flower of the theological virtues blossomed in her thirst for souls for whom she prayed and suffered. ***"I will strive each day to become a disciple evermore in accordance with the desire of my Divine Master and Mary most Holy, to live in their life in an intense Eucharistic, Priestly, Liturgical apostolate which encompasses my entire being, mind, heart, will and energy"***.

In fulfilling her delicate mission of leadership, Mother Scholastica faced and overcame periods of humiliation and trials. But with faith, much prayer, and heroic silence, she fearlessly upheld the ideals of the Sister Disciples. She was well known for her faith, courage, love for priests and radiant smile which brought joy to many. She writes to her co-Sisters, ***"Have courage, this is nothing, it is simply one of the trials that Jesus grants us because he loves us, calm comes after the storm and the stronger the hurricane the greater the serenity"***.

In 1981 she landed in the house of Sanfre as the last shore of her earthly pilgrimage. Her last years on earth were an autumn of golden sunsets, the final stage of her ascension to God. Particularly, the last 6 years of her

life were turned more towards eternal realities than those that were passing. During this period of her life Mother Scholastica's voice began to gradually fail, leading to absolute silence, as if living to the depths the initial command given by the Founder: ***"Keep silence, silence, silence"***.

On 24 March 1987 she was still able to assist with sufficient alertness in the Vigil Mass of the Annunciation and receive a small sip of the consecrated blood; then at 7.15 pm, during the First Vespers of the Solemnity, the Blessed Virgin came to bring her beautiful soul into the kingdom of light. Chosen as the first Sister Disciple she sought to transform herself increasingly more into a flower of purity, of charity, of humility, of faith to fulfil the Pauline program '*mini vivere Christus*' (Christ lives in me). While maintaining the freshness of her beautiful soul she pronounced her final *yes* on earth in characteristic silence, ready and adorned to celebrate the Eternal Wedding with the Divine Master.

Mother scholastic has left behind the beautiful legacy of life. She was a woman of without degrees or diplomas but with wisdom drawn daily at the font of the Eucharist she dedicated all her energies for the love of the congregation and glory of God.

- Sr M. Amita Mascarenhas

Woman - a Gift to the World

Women's Day is celebrated globally on 8 March every year in honor of their remarkable contribution to society. The day also commemorates the inspiring role of women around the world. Woman – the power to create, nurture, and transform! There are numerous women though from an ordinary and humble background who endeavored to become Noble, Awakened, Holy, Exemplary, and Model women. Here, I would like to highlight 3 women whose lives are an inspiration for all of us.

The church in India rejoices to celebrate on 13 March the memory of Euphrasia Eluvathingal a religious of Carmelite order born in Kerala. She was called the 'Praying Mother' and many healings are ascribed to her intercession. She was canonized by Pope Francis in November 2014. Her life of prayer, simplicity, and service is an inspiration for us the Indian Sister Disciples to strive for holiness through our vocation of Intercessory Prayer and to become 'Praying Mothers'.

The second woman, who through her continuous and 'SILENT YES' to God's will nurtured our congregation and through her love for the intercessory prayer before the Eucharistic Master received an imprint of the Holy Eucharist in her chest - Venerable Mother Scholastica Rivata and whose death anniversary falls on the 24 March, is a stimulus for every Sister Disciple to live our Vocation and Mission meaningfully and blissfully.

The third woman is none other than our Blessed Mother who through her 'PERFECT YES' in the Annunciation brought forth the salvation of humankind. This perfect Disciple continues to accompany us in our constant striving to mature as committed Disciples. May we hold on to this Loving Mother in our walk as Women, Mothers, and Disciples.

- Sr M. Regina Sebastian





For your excellent performance in Diploma in one-year Theology at Jnanodaya. We are proud of your achievement dear sisters. May you continue to use all your gifts and talents for the greater glory of God in and through the mission of the Sister Disciples All the best for your future.



**“March on. Do not tarry.
To go forward is to move toward perfection.”
~Kahlil Gibran**

Pope Francis’ Lenten Message 2022

“Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all”

(Gal 6:9-10)

Dear sisters of Chennai-Santhome thank you very much for your contribution to this issue of Disciples India. For the next issue Chennai St. Mary’s & Pondicherry communities are invited to contribute. The others are always welcome.

For further communication kindly send your news materials with photos to the following Email ID – inpddmwebsite@gmail.com