



LOCUSTS & HONEY



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, THANE.

PVS: Family as a bond between God & Community in Service

For Private Circulation Parish Weekly

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16 December, 2007

Are you the one?

Nathaniel Hawthorne was an American writer. When he died in 1864 he had on his desk an outline of a play he never got to finish. The play centred on one person who never appeared on stage. Every one talked about him. Everyone awaited his arrival. But he never came. All kinds of minor characters described him. They told everybody what he would be like. They told everybody what he would do. But the main character never appeared. The Old Testament is something like Nathaniel Hawthorne's play. It too ended without the main character putting in an appearance. It is against this background that we must read today's Scripture readings. Mark Link in 'Sunday Homilies'

In today's gospel we see John the Baptist in prison meeting his disciples and sending them to Jesus with the question: "Are you the one who is to come or do we wait for someone else?" Some say John asked the question because he was wondering if Jesus was the Messiah. John had preached that the Messiah would be the great avenger, who would bring down the mighty. Yet Jesus seems to be a gentle Messiah preaching words of comfort, being healing and comfort to all. Was he the one? Others say that John was asking the question to strengthen the faith of his own disciples who were disillusioned with the happenings of the time: John was in prison facing eminent death and Jesus was not living up to their Messianic expectations. Jesus does not answer the question directly. If he answered that he was the Messiah the Jewish leaders would pounce on him claiming blasphemy. If he said he was not that would be a lie. Instead he asks them to report to John what they see happening. If they observe they will see the signs of the coming of the Messiah: the blind see, the dumb speak, the lame walk....

The response of Jesus to the query of St. John the Baptist's disciples appears somewhat startling. Instead of stating yes or no, He points out to the good works of mercy and service. Many of us pride over our silly achievements; some try to impress the community by being the "FIRST" in some trivial things; some even take pride in obstructing the good work being done; if one's ego finds no place in the good work, it's no good. The "I" has to be in forefront or else hatred and revenge will be let loose to do harm, as it raised its ugly head in the anger of the pharisees and scribes against Jesus. But for Jesus, the "I" did not matter; its rather the good works mattered. "Go tell John what you hear and see; the blind receive their sight and the lame walk.." In other words the one who is to come is there in our midst wherever love and service exist. The Church of Christ through her priests, nuns and religious and through true sincere followers of Christ proclaim the Messianic Kingdom of God and His presence in our midst through the good work of love, mercy and service and not through the hatred and revengeful activities of the self-righteous conceited Christians!



Mass Schedule:

Sunday: 6,7,8,9.15 a.m. & 5.30 , 6.30p.m

At Kopri: Every Sunday at 10.30 a.m.

Weekday: 6 & 6.45 a.m., 7.00 pm.

and at 6.30 a.m. in Holy Cross Convent

Mass in Marathi: 3rd Sunday at 7. a.m

Mass in Konkani: 4th Sunday at 7. a.m.

Mass in Hindi: 5th Sunday at 7.00 a.m.

Tamil Mass: 2nd Sunday at 11.00 am

Confessions: Saturday: 6 to 7 p.m.

Baptisms: Sunday: 10.15 a.m.

Marriages: Weekday at 5.15 p.m.

Sunday: 5.30 p.m. & 6.30 pm

Funerals: Any day: 10 to 11.45 a.m. & 4 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Sacrament of the sick: on request.

House Blessing: With prior arrangement.

Novenas: St. Anthony's: Tuesday 7.30pm

Perpetual Succour Novena:

After 7 p.m. Mass on Wednesday.

Charismatic Prayer Service [English]

On Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m.

Divine Mercy Devotion: On Fridays

at 6.00 p.m. except on 1st Friday

Sunday School: after 8.00 a.m. Mass

Night Adoration: Last Saturday @ 11 pm

Office Timings: 9.00 a.m. to 12.30

5.00 p.m. to 07.00

Sunday: 9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.

Parish Tel. No. 2534 8671; 2543 5411

Website: www.stjohnthebaptistthane.com

***This week's announcements
December 16, 2007.***

1. Sunday 16th December there will be a Christmas Bazaar on the school ground from 6 to 11.30 a.m. and from 5 to 8 p.m. Home-made Christmas articles or food items will be displayed..
2. From 17th to 24th December are liturgically the privileged days in preparation for Christmas.
3. **Confessions** will be heard on Dec. 20, 21 & 22 Thursday, Friday & Saturday from 5 to 8 pm. All are asked to do their confessions.
4. The CWF meeting will be held on Sunday, 23rd December at 10.30 a.m.
5. The collection at Masses last Sunday, amounted to Rs.28,470 00
6. The collections from the Perpetual Succour image box amounted to Rs3,307.00
7. The collection from the novena box amounted to Rs. 855.00

This Week's Liturgical Readings

17/Mon Gn 49:2.8-10; Ps 71:1-2.3-4.7-8.17; Mt 1:1-17
 18/Tue Jer 23:5-8; Ps 71:1-2.12-13.18-19; Mt 1:18-24
 19/Wed Jgs 13:2-7. 24-25; Ps 70:3-4.5-6.16-17; Lk 1:5-25
 20/Thu,ls.7:10-14; Ps 23:1-2.3-4.5-6; Lk 1:26-38
 21/Fri Song 2:8-14; Ps 32:2-3,11-12,20-21; Lk 1:39-45
 22/Sat 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1.4-5.6-7.8; Lk 1:46-56
 23/Sun Is 7:10-14;Rom 1:1-7;Mt 1:18-24

Smile, Giggle, Laugh!



The snow had covered the porch, so I rang the garage to help me fix snow-tyres.

"Sorry but you'll have to wait."

"How about tomorrow?"

"I am busy tomorrow."

"When do you think you can make it?" "When it does not snow."

Counsel was cross-examining a witness-

"You say you saw the shots fired. How far were you?"

"When the first shot was fired I was ten feet away. " "Now tell the Court. how far you were when the second shot was fired."

"About half a mile, Sir."

Proprietor of a music store, training his new boy:

"Now if a customer comes in and wants to look at a piano, flute. bango or guitar. you know what to show him."

"Yes, Sir."

"And suppose a customer asks you for a tyre?" "I'll send for you, Sir."

CHRISTMAS 2007 PROGRAM

DATES	DAY	TIME	PROGRAMS
Dec. 16	Sunday	6 - 11.30am & 5 to 8 pm	Christmas Bazaar
Dec. 20 Dec. 21 Dec. 22	Thursday Friday Saturday	5 to 8 pm	Confessions
Dec. 24	Monday	07.00 p.m. 09.30 p. m. 10.00 p.m.	No Evening Mass Carol Singing & Skit MID-NIGHT MASS
Dec.25	Tuesday	06.00 a.m. 07.00 a.m. 08.00 a.m. 09.15 a.m. 09.00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass Christmas Day Mass Christmas Day Mass Christmas Day Mass Prison Mass No Evening Masses
Dec. 26	Wednesday	04.00 p.m.	Sunday School X'mas Tree & Fancy Dress
Dec. 28	Friday	05.00 p.m.	Senior Citizens' X'mas Tree
Dec. 29	Saturday	10.00 a.m. 12.00 noon.	Healing Mass & X'mas party for the sick & Homebound Lunch for the poor
Dec. 30	Sunday	7.30 p.m.	Family X'mas Day Food, games stalls & spot contest
Dec. 31	Monday	07.00 p.m. 09.45 p.m. 10.45 p.m.	No 7.00 p.m. Mass Holy Hour New Year Mass
Jan . 01	Tuesday	06.00 a.m. 07.00 a.m. 08.00 a.m. 09.15 a.m. 07.00 p.m. 08.00 p.m.	New Year Mass New Year Mass New Year Mass New Year Mass Evening Mass New Year 2008 Blast

NEW YEAR'S BLAST 2008.

The Youth Group will be organizing a New Year's Dance on 1st January, 2008.

Venue: St. John the Baptist Quadrangle

Time: 7.30 p.m. onwards

Entry Passes Rs. 50/- per child below 10 yrs
Rs. 75/- per adult.

Passes are available at the Youth Stall outside after every Mass on Saturday/Sunday, Dec. 15/16, 22/23 & 29/30

*He who honours a priest honours
Christ; he who insults a priest
insults Christ.*

--St. John Chrysostom.

The Good Shepherd Sisters are organizing X'MAS ROMANCE for all eligibles with a view to marriage. (Spinsters & Bachelors, 30 years of age and above.)

The Get-Together will be held on Sunday, 30th December, 2007 at Good Shepherd Convent, Four Bungalows, Andheri (West), Mumbai - 400053.

Contact Nos. 2637 2422 / 2637 1863

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR DECEMBER 2007

1. A hymn I. Sing an appropriate hymn 2. A brief period of silence
3. Read the Gospel text Matthew 1: 18-25 , 4. Read the following input slowly and clearly:

The New-born Babe disturbingly challenges every human being: "Can you make room for Me in your life? Today I must stay at your house!"

The numerous ambitious, engrossed in personal projects, reply: "Hold me excused! I have bought a farm, married a wife ... " As they desperately search for yet another self-directed project promising perfect fulfillment, and Jesus dejectedly retreats. Nevertheless, "He comes, he comes, he ever comes!"

The marginalized few like the Virgin Mary hurry down their sycamores with a generous 'fiat'. They too are furiously busy _ overhauling their lives: 'half my property to the poor, four times to those cheated.' They search diligently for the Elizabeths in their lives or with the contemplative Mary, silently listen to their new-found Master - supremely free from within, they have given him all that they had to live on! They joyously celebrate life with a never-ending song, making the Zechariahs around them burst into songs of God's praise. Theirs is the priceless Treasure that none can take away!

The rest aimlessly meander to and fro: "Surely, it is good to make music to the Lord - but not without first saying goodbye to friends, burying aged parents or witnessing signs and wonders." They face endless barren, wasted years - sad, harried like shepherdless sheep. Someday, however, the compassionate Christ will encounter them on their way to burial with a stirring "Young man, arise!"

5. Spend a few moments in silent reflection
6. Questions for discussion: The New-born Babe disturbingly challenges every human being: "Can you make room for Me in your 11e? Today I must stay at your house!"

Your response this Christmas?

7. Share your thoughts in groups , 8. Intercessions , 9. Concluding prayer 10. Concluding Hymn

Appeal

Snehalaya is a society of Love, Hope and Will at Thane. It is a registered trust under Bombay Public Trust, 1950.

We have started a Day care centre by name Snehalaya, where we are into Skill Training and Personality Development for the Mentally Challenged persons who are above 18 years of age. We are also registered and are associate members of Parivaar - National Federation of Parents' Association (For persons with Mental Retardation, Autism, Cerebral Palsy and Multiple Disabilities).

We have plans to grow further, hence we are now looking for a bigger and a permanent place with attached toilet and bath and also that this should be on the ground floor. Donations made to us are exempted under 80G of the Income Tax Act. For your contributions in the form of cheques/drafts, please, contact Mrs. Olivia D'Souza 22/5A, Pareira Nagar CHSL, Khopat, Thane 400601.on C. N. 09869547241 Land line: (022) 25428789 (After 8 pm). We would be very happy to answer your queries and questions, or just simply hear from you. You can send your messages, queries or suggestions at :olivia.dsouza@rediffmail.com.

--Mrs. Olivia D'Souza

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

- Come set the tone for a memorable festive season, with CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD - a musical extravaganza presented by Marcia D'Cunha, and her team, featuring Christmas songs, customs, symbols and traditions from around the world, covering countries like Hawaii, Mexico, West Indies, Australia, Spain, France, Germany, USA, Ireland, Italy, Ukraine, England & India. The programme showcasing more than 60 children and 10 adults from all over Thane will be staged on the St John the Baptist Grounds on 28th December, 2007. It will begin at 8 pm and will last approximately 2 hours. You don't need a passport a visa or a ticket to experience CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD. Just an invitation which you can collect from your zonal representative!

SENIOR CITIZENS'

CHRISTMAS PARTY

ON FRIDAY, 28TH DECEMBER
AT 5.00 PM.

IN THE AUDITORIUM

N.B. Those parishioners sixty and above are invited to the senior citizens' party.

Please, give your names to the parish office by 27th December. 2007.

Repentance

Man is weak and so he sins,
To Satan's temptation he just gives in.

Because of his sins he falls short of God's glory,
But the heavenly Father gives him a second chance
as He loves Him dearly .

ABBA would not want man to perish,
But to repent for his sins is only man's wish.

Repentance is caused by conviction of sin,
Man must realize this and change himself from
within.

Godly sorrow worketh repentance,
Man you must repent for God to show you His
acceptance.

When the prodigal son thought of the goodness of
his father,
He repented for his sin leading to reunion
thereafter.

The liar must stop lying with no more stealing and
backbiting,
Unless there is a change in one's heart and mind
repentance will not set in.

Bring forth the fruit of repentance says our Patron
Saint John The Baptist,
God the Father loves us too much, He is full of
goodness.

Malcolm Nobre

House-workers Party 6th January 2008

In the spirit of the festive season, here's your chance to show your appreciation to your house-workers by registering them for a special get-together on 6th January at 4 pm. We assure you your household help will have a great time playing games and winning prizes, not to mention the useful take-aways they receive, thanks to the generosity of our Parish Priest and the team. This is the 4th successful Annual House-Workers Get-together organized by the Women's Cell of our parish on behalf of the parish community. To register your house-worker, please contact your zonal leader or call Erica @ 9821241807 or Amber @ 9821334422 before 27th December, 2007.

Heartiest Congratulations to
Our Parish Priest
Rev Fr. John Rumao
Who will celebrate
45years
of his Priestly Ordination
on 21.12.07
We thank God for him
And pray for his good health
To go from Sapphire to Gold
--Ella

CHRISTMAS FAMILY-DAY CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, 30TH DECEMBER, 2007
FROM 7.30 P.M.onward

VENUE: ST. JOHN'S QUADRANGLE

*an evening of fun-filled excitement for
families –
games & food stalls, spot contests, multi-
talented competitions, music & dancing
and much more.*

ENTRY PASSES @ Rs. 5/- and DINNER
COUPONS @ Rs. 20/- will be available at
Legion Stall after Mass on Saturday &
Sunday Dec. 15/16 & 22/23

St. Johns Youth Group Christmas Stall

For the last two Sundays, the youth of our parish have been putting up a stall near the statue of Mother Theresa and the response to the same has been very encouraging. We have been selling various items on this stall such as candles, chocolates, wooden fret-work and Christmas decorations such as wreaths. All of the items are handmade by the youth over the past month, some of them working through the night to ensure that there are enough items to sell each week. It is indeed commendable that inspite of their hectic



schedules and college commitments, this dedicated group comes together every evening to create these works of art. The abundance of talent is evident as you see the amazing pieces of fretwork

crafted by our boys out of nothing but simple sheets of plywood. It is a tedious job requiring anywhere between two to four days to carve a single piece depending on the complexity of the design. But once the completed piece is ready and polished (which is also done by the boys themselves) it looks like nothing less than a job by a professional artist himself.

The Christmas wreaths also are handmade by youth using basic materials like satin cloth and wire.



Looking at the orders we've got, our youth could give the Crawford market salesmen a run for their money. Even the candles and chocolates are made at home and are very reasonably priced. So if you are confused about how to give your house that extra special Christmassy feel or if you just cannot make up your mind about what to gift your loved ones, do visit our stall and check out the display. We would like to thank all those who have appreciated our talent and encouraged our youth by buying the items on sale. We would also like to request all the parishioners to patronize our stall in the coming weeks before Christmas.

-- St. Johns Youth Group