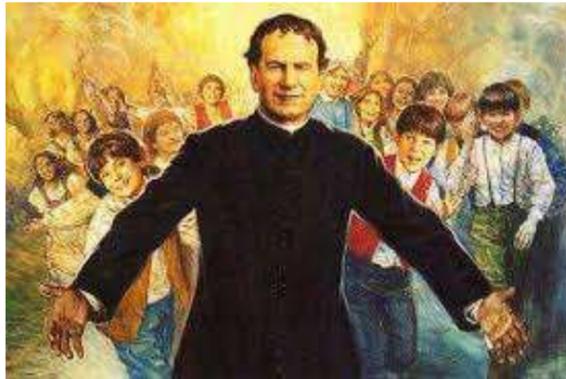


SACRAMENTS



The Snake and the Rosary: The Dreams of St. John Bosco

By Brian Kranick

Dreams are a product of our unconscious mind and imagination. To pay too much attention to them is foolhardy. The inspired writer Sirach wrote “dreams give wings to fools.” (Sir. 34:1) But, not all dreams are created equal. Some dreams are more than just unconscious renderings of our conscious lives. In some rare cases, dreams are inspired visions from heaven. Mary and Joseph were “warned in a dream” not to return to Herod. The wife of Pilate warned him to release Jesus “for I have suffered much over him today in a dream.” It is of this latter version, that of prophetic dreams, that filled the life of St. John Bosco. *The Forty Dreams of St. John Bosco* details some of these dream-visions that he experienced. St. John Bosco was an Italian priest who lived in the 19th century helping and educating youth, particularly disadvantaged young boys. Many of the vision-like dreams revolved around the state of the boys’ souls in his Oratory. The dreams often involved the boys with weapons in fierce battles against gruesome animals and beasts. The weapons were metaphors for the sacraments and devotions, while the animals and beasts were various sins and vices.

The dreams were a sublime rendering of our internal struggles between virtue and vice, innocence and sin, heaven and hell. The prophetic nature of the dreams revealed the actual state of the boys’ souls. They also revealed the hidden spiritual realities of the Catholic faith. These remain completely relevant to us too. One of the prototypical dream-visions St. John Bosco had concerned “The Snake and the Rosary.” In it, he and the boys were in a meadow where a stranger took him to see “a huge, ugly snake, over twenty feet long.” The stranger impelled him to dangle a rope over the snake, which he was quite hesitant to do out of fear. He finally agreed to hold the rope over the menacing snake, and the snake leaped up and “ensnared itself as in a noose.” The snake then furiously writhed to free itself but ended up tearing itself to pieces. The stranger then took the rope and put it in a box saying “watch carefully.” Then, opening the box he saw the rope had taken the shape of the words “Ave Maria” or “Hail Mary.” The man then explained to him that the snake is a symbol of the devil and the *Ave Maria* rope stands for the Rosary — with which “we can strike, conquer, and destroy all of hell’s demons.”

The dream, however, was not done. In the second part of the dream, the boys of the Oratory were now congregated around the remnants of flesh from the snake. Then, against St. John Bosco’s protests that it was poisonous, some of the boys began to pick up the snake flesh and eat it saying, “It’s delicious!” They promptly crumpled to the ground, with their bodies swelled and hardened like stone. The saint tried vigorously to keep them from eating the meat but they just kept eating it. He questioned the stranger why do they keep eating the meat even though it will kill them? The stranger replied, “Because the sensual man does not perceive the things that are of God!”

He pleaded to the stranger that there must be some way to save them. To which, the stranger said there is, by “anvil and hammer.” St. John Bosco then put the boys on an anvil and hit them with a hammer. With that, most of the boys were “restored to life and recovered.” The stranger then explained to him that the anvil and hammer are symbols respectively for Holy Communion and Confession. By Confession we strike away at sin, and by Holy Communion we are sustained. St. John Bosco constantly stressed this theme, “Frequent and sincere Confession, frequent and devout Communion.” This was reflected in many dreams. For example, in another dream, the boys fought with two-pronged pitchforks against ferocious animals. He was shown that the two-prongs symbolized a “good Confession and a good Communion.” In yet another terrifying dream, St. John Bosco saw boys running down a road and being caught in traps and pulled into hell. God, however, left implements next to the traps so the boys could cut themselves free. There were two swords symbolizing a “devotion to the Blessed Sacrament – especially through frequent Holy Communion – and to the Blessed Virgin.” There was also a hammer “symbolizing Confession,” and knives symbolizing devotions to St. Joseph and various saints.

In perhaps his most famous dream, he saw a large ship, representing the Church, in a violent storm and under attack. The Pope guided the ship to two large columns, at which, the ship docked and was saved. On the one column was a statue of the Virgin Mary with the title “the Help of Christians;” and, at the top of the other larger column was a Eucharist Host entitled “the Salvation of the Faithful.” St. John Bosco explained: “Only two means are left to save her amidst the confusion: Devotion to Mary Most Holy and frequent Communion.”

The Church is here to aid us in the battle. It is our field hospital, present on the battlefield to heal our wounds and save our souls. She helps us grow in virtue and slay the beasts. The saint’s solution for us was simple: innocence preserved in penance. He said one good Confession could restore us to our title of Son of God. As the dreams of St. John Bosco reveal, our salvation is found in prayer, frequent Confession and Communion, Adoration, and recourse to Mary and the Rosary.

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MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)
Children’s Mass: 9am 1st
Sunday of the month Oct-June
Children’s Liturgy: 11am All
Sundays except the 1st Sunday
from Sept- June
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor
Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.
Associate Pastor
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.
Office Manager
Virginia Fong
Pastoral Coordinator
Bertilla Watanabe
Bookkeeper
Corinna Siy
Youth Ministry Coordinator
Theresa Barao
OLPH School Principal
Lora Clarke

IN RESIDENCE

William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

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February 11, 2018

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Repentance is Laying Down Stuff that Doesn’t Work

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

As we prepare for lent with Mass and ashes on our forehead, let us take this time to reflect on how we can feel truly sorry. The following is a reflection from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops:

Let God make your life bigger by getting small - pride, defensiveness, excuses, avoidance, blame. There are so many tactics we use to avoid facing our mistakes, sins, and hurts. Each of these tactics makes us feel big while actually making us small, ineffective, and prone to more pain. Repentance is not a word we use often and, when we do, it often makes us feel shame and guilt. But what if repentance is actually just about getting real, laying down the stuff that doesn’t work, and being small enough to recognize that God can do more with our weakness than with our denial.

“At an acceptable time, I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” We have all sinned alongside the Psalmist. The ashes are a reminder that our sin gives us access to Jesus who dies and rises for us. So, “return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.” Repentance sets us free. Who among us doesn’t want more freedom, more life?

Let us pray for joy in turning back to God during this Lenten season.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R

Mission Prayer

Glory to you, O God for all seasons!
Your love calls us to be your people.
By sharing our many and diverse gifts
we share in your mission.

We ask you, Lord, to shape us into a
community of mercy. Nourish us by your
Word and Sacraments, that we may grow
in the image of Jesus.

Through the power of your Holy Spirit,
and the blessings of our Parish Mission,
heal us that we, in turn, may heal the
wounded. Form us to be instruments of
mercy, justice and peace in our world.
Give us the courage to take up our crosses
and follow your son, Jesus,
and then send us out to proclaim your
merciful love.
Amen.



You are my refuge Lord; with deliverance you surround me. – Psalm 32

NEWS & NOTICES

Ash Wednesday Masses: There will be Mass and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday February 14 at 8am as well as 9am with OLPH School students.

Catholic Women's League Notices: 1. Opportunity to renew your membership or join the CWL this next weekend - February 17-18. For those considering joining, there is some information at the back of the Church - blue coloured sheets. See us next weekend before or after mass at the back of the Church.
2. NEXT MEETING - Thursday February 22 in the Madonna Room 7:30pm. We will be having a fabulous speaker - Tia MacDougall from The Signal Hill.

Sunday Offering Envelopes: 2018 Sunday Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up from the parish office. Please drop in during office hours if you have not got a box of envelopes for this year. Please do not use envelopes from previous years. Thank you!

Funeral Receptions: Please consider signing up to donate food or your time to participate in our Parish's Funeral Reception Ministry that helps to provide comfort and support for the bereaved. This is not only for CWL members. There are sign-up sheets at the back of the Church. Information available on request mknowling@outlook.com or leave message @ 604-222-0791.

Easter Vigil: Every year to welcome the new people entering the church at Easter, we put on a reception after the Easter Vigil Mass. We are looking for volunteers to help with this celebration. Please use the sign-up sheet in the church foyer or contact Bertilla. Email: bwatanabe@rcav.org.

Food Bank Appeal: There will be a Food Bank Appeal this weekend. Proceeds will go to the Hong Family. PREP students will be at the door to help with this service project. Please give generously.

Madonna House Recollection: "Trust in the Lord" a recollection led by Fr. Paul Burchat, a Madonna House priest. Join us for a talk, silent reflection followed by fellowship and sharing on Saturday, February 17 at St. John the Apostle Parish Hall (5457 Trafalgar St, Vancouver) 9:30 am to noon. For more information contact Madonna House: madonna02@shaw.ca Or call 604-267-1757

Family Day: School is closed on Monday Feb 12 for BC Family Day.

Join the Choir: Scripture often tells us to sing to the Lord in gladness. There is also that oft-quoted line of St. Augustine "He who sings, prays twice." So, if you like to sing and can carry a tune, come and be part of a fulfilling experience with the OLPH choir. Rehearsals are on Mondays 7-8pm in the church. Please contact Catherine Walsh: catherine.organist@gmail.com for more information.

Men's Discernment Night: Do you have questions about discerning God's call for your life? Vocations in Progress for single men, aged 17 and up, is an opportunity to meet priests, ask questions, and learn about their life and spirituality. The informal event will include prayer, dinner, and discussion at St. Patrick's, Vancouver, on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 7 - 10 p.m.

Cardinal Tagle in Vancouver: Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, the Archbishop of Manila, will be giving a public address at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver, on Monday March 19 at 6 p.m. Highlighting one of our Archdiocesan Priorities and Goals: Strengthening Marriages and Families, Cardinal Tagle will address the challenges of living the faith within family life. Family time, among today's many distractions, continues to be an almost lost reality for many. Join us for his talk on *Keeping Families in Faith: The Domestic Church in a Global Village*. Tickets are not on sale yet. More details to come at: <http://rcav.org/event/cardinal-tagle>

St Mark's College Lenten Liturgy and Lunch Series: Back by popular demand, St. Mark's College at UBC will again be offering our weekly Lenten lecture series "Fill Your Bowl with Joy" every Wednesday of Lent starting Ash Wednesday Feb 14, 2018. We start with Mass at 12:10pm in St Mark's Chapel followed by a talk and discussion at 12:45 in Plato's Cave (St. Mark's College).

Stewardship Reflection

"Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."
- 1 Corinthians 10:31

Do a quick check of your priorities. Where does God rank in that list? If He's not first, you have some work to do. Putting God first in everything helps us from putting other "gods" (like our pride and ego, money and possessions to name a few) before God. Before making a decision, ask yourself if I'm doing this for the glory of God or for the glory of me?

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

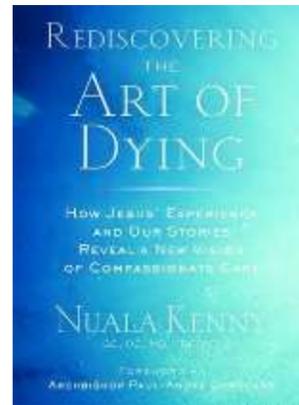
Healing Mass & Anointing

The annual Healing Mass & Anointing organized by the CWL is on Tuesday February 13 at 4pm. Mass will be followed by a potluck supper. If you are attending, please put your name down on the sign-up sheet in the church foyer. Please indicate what item you will be bringing for the potluck supper.

Youth Safety Awareness

Learn martial arts and physical safety that combines combative arts and psychology developed by instructor Robert Lynds of Dojang. It is a discipline which enhances your body, mind and soul. All teenagers welcome. This is a Youth Ministry sponsored event for OLPH church and school youth. No charge for attendees. Dates for this two-session workshop are Sat Feb 17 and Sat Feb 24. Time: 3:30pm - 4:30pm. Workshop is at Dojang at West 4th and Blenheim. For more details email Theresa: olphyouthmin@gmail.com

Lenten Talks



Our annual Lenten Talks will begin on the second Friday of Lent after the 7pm Stations of the Cross. Books are available for \$15.16 from Novalis <https://en.novalis.ca>. You can buy a book or simply attend the talk prepared by our speakers for each session.

Friday Feb 23: Should Suffering Be Avoided?

Friday Mar 2: The Loss of Dignity & Identity

Friday Mar 9: The Dimensions of Suffering & Care

Friday Mar 16: The Art of Dying: Learning from the Master

Friday Mar 23: Consolation & Resurrection

Offering My Gifts at Sunday Mass

By Christina Donati

I believe it is natural for people to go through a period where they don't feel the desire or the need to go to Church. There have certainly been days when I felt the loss of desire to attend Mass.

When I was young, there were Sunday mornings when I didn't even want to make the effort to get ready. I would show up incredibly late almost every week and I would debate the thought of even attending.

I felt unmotivated because I felt there was no purpose for me at Mass. I sat in the pew, not contributing in any way. I felt like just a number, and not one of God's special children.

This all changed at 13 years old when my dad invited me to join the choir. He was the choir director at the time and he was very passionate about keeping music lively in the church.

Singing is one of my passions, so being able to do it at church every Sunday gave me a reason to attend Mass. I became part of a group of people who all had a passion for music as well.

It was fun to get to spend my time in Mass doing one of my favourite things, and it felt really good to know that I was somehow participating in everyone else's Mass experience instead of just sitting in the pew and listening.

As the years went on, I noticed that other people in the choir started to become dependent on me and this was a nice feeling. As someone who has studied music my entire life, catching onto the choir's ways was not too difficult.

The choir is a voluntary group that anyone can join, so there are singers who did not have the same musical training as I did. Some people started to depend on me to be there to help guide them through certain songs and this was another way I started to feel like I belonged at Mass.

I have learned that music is a big part of Mass because it is an expression of God's Word, a strong force which can unite people together.

By sharing my musical expertise, I found a place where I belonged. I may not be going across seas to help spread the Word of God, but in my own small way, I am giving back to my Church. This is a great feeling.

Of course, the choir isn't the only way to be part of Mass. For example, there is altar service where the servers help the priest with the celebration. Being a lector is another wonderful opportunity because they are able to spread God's teachings to everyone.

Or becoming a Sunday school teacher and being one of the first influences a child has about their faith. Whatever the role, they all serve to make for a richer Mass experience.

Donati, 22, is a fourth-year English and sociology student at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont.

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PREPARATION FOR LENT

What Should I Do For Lent? Pope Francis' 10 Tips

Ash Wednesday is on Feb 14 and is the beginning of Lent. Every year Catholics try to answer the age old question: What should I do for Lent? Well, who better to pick as your Lenten spiritual director than Pope Francis? These tips are from the Pope's past homilies and messages.

1. Get rid of the lazy addiction to evil

"[Lent] is a 'powerful' season, a turning point that can foster change and conversion in each of us. We all need to improve, to change for the better. Lent helps us and thus we leave behind old habits and the lazy addiction to the evil that deceives and ensnares us." – *General Audience, March 5, 2014*

2. Do something that hurts

"Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt." – *Lenten Message, 2014*

3. Don't remain indifferent

"Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience. God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation." – *Lenten Message, 2015*

4. Pray: Make our hearts like yours!

"During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord: '*Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum*': **Make our hearts like yours** (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference." – *Lenten Message, 2015*

5. Take part in the sacraments

"Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ." – *Lenten Message, 2015*

6. Prayer

"In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could harden our hearts, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of God's boundless love, to taste his tenderness. Lent is a time of prayer, of more intense prayer, more prolonged, more assiduous, more able to take on the needs of the brethren; intercessory prayer, to intercede

before God for the many situations of poverty and suffering." – *Homily, March 5, 2014*

7. Fasting

"We must be careful not to practice a formal fast, or one which in truth 'satisfies' us because it makes us feel good about ourselves. Fasting makes sense if it questions our security, and if it also leads to some benefit for others, if it helps us to cultivate the style of the Good Samaritan, who bends down to his brother in need and takes care of him." – *Homily, March 5, 2014*

8. Almsgiving

"Today gratuitousness is often not part of daily life where everything is bought and sold. Everything is calculated and measured. Almsgiving helps us to experience giving freely, which leads to freedom from the obsession of possessing, from the fear of losing what we have, from the sadness of one who does not wish to share his wealth with others." – *Homily, March 5, 2014*

9. Help the Poor

"In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are so often the cause of destitution. When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth. Our consciences thus need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing." – *Lenten Message, 2014*

10. Evangelize

"The Lord asks us to be joyous heralds of his message of mercy and hope! It is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news, sharing the treasure entrusted to us, consoling broken hearts and offering hope to our brothers and sisters experiencing darkness." – *Lenten Message, 2014*

You probably won't be able to take huge steps forward in all of these areas. Instead, pick a couple that stand out for you and try to find practical ways to grow in your love of God and your love of your neighbor.

www.focusoncampus.org