

YOUTH: BL. PIER GIOGIO FRASSATI



Scale the Heights like Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

By Bro. Joseph Bailham, OP

The lives of saints can seem remote from our own. When I was becoming more interested in my faith from the age of 16, I found it difficult to cultivate devotion to a particular saint. That changed in my late teens when, at a Catholic youth gathering, I heard a talk about Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati who died in 1925 at just 24. After hearing only a few remarks about his life, for the first time I found a saint to whom I could relate.

Pier Giorgio was born in Turin, Italy into the well-known and wealthy Frassati family. His father, Alfredo, was the founder of La Stampa newspaper and was briefly Italy's ambassador to Germany until the rise of Mussolini. His mother, Adelaide, was a painter. His parents' marriage was turbulent and almost ended with the two separating. Pier Giorgio had one sister, Luciana, to whom he was very close, although she was very different in character.

The popular young Pier Giorgio was a keen mountaineer and regularly went climbing. He even had a note on his bedroom door declaring: 'Mountains, mountains, mountains, I love you!' He often drank and smoked with his numerous friends and was active politically, rallying against the rise of fascism. Among his friends he was known as a prankster. He created a social group called 'Tipi Loschi', 'The Shady Characters' or 'Sinister Ones'. This group of men and women organized hikes and mountain climbs but there was a comical dimension to it. He wrote a statute for the group which was full of inside jokes. He even named a non-existent saint – St. Pece of the Fools – as their patron.

Complementing his mirthful character was a profound spiritual life and love for the poor and needy in society. Pier Giorgio never broadcast the extent of his charitable works but they were extensive. He noted in his little book, which you can see if you visit his family's summer home in Pollone, the names of the people he was helping, the money he had given them or what he needed to acquire for them, whether medicine or clothing. He was often late for meals because he would give away his train ticket to someone in greater need, meaning that he would have to run home. His parents believed he was just absent-minded. Little did they know! His friends joked with him once as to why he would travel third class when he could easily afford to travel first. He would retort: 'Because there is not a fourth!'. Pier Giorgio became a lay Dominican, taking the name Girolamo, after Girolamo Savonarola. He had a great love for the Dominicans and for the Rosary. One can find his fifteen-decade Dominican rosary displayed on his bed in Pollone.

For Pier Giorgio, climbing was a spiritual experience. He would often begin his trips with Mass and would spend periods of prayer at the summit, and then return perhaps for Adoration. He had a great love for the Eucharist and received permission at a young age to receive Holy Communion daily, something quite novel at the time. He drew strength from the Eucharist in a way many of us would envy. It was not unusual for him to spend entire nights in adoration, and then, full of energy, go mountain climbing with his friends. Pier Giorgio died from polio, supposedly contracted from someone he had been visiting. His family organized what was supposed to be a small funeral with a few local dignitaries. They were not prepared for the throngs of people who came to pay their tributes, particularly the poor and sick of Turin to whom Pier Giorgio had extended his selfless charity.

Frassati is a reminder that the pursuit of holiness need not come at the expense of having a social life or being socially acceptable. He demonstrates the true joy that comes from pursuing holiness, that it is a goal worth working towards. On the back of a photograph on what would be his last climb, he wrote 'Verso l'alto', 'To the heights'. I whole-heartedly invite you to take a look at Pier Giorgio and be open to having your gaze turned towards the same heights on which his heart was fixed.

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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.

In Residence

William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

Corinna Siy

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Theresa Barao

OLPH School Principal

Lora Clarke

Jr. Kindergarten Director

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May 13, 2018

The Ascension of the Lord

Letting Go Widens Horizons, Deepens Understanding

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

How much of our life is a matter of 'letting go'? Fr. Babu returned to India this week and with his family he is letting go of his father who died Monday morning. We humans like things to be stable, trustworthy, familiar. Death becomes the ultimate wrench in our lives. We let go whether we want to or not.

Imagine for a moment the Ascension and think of those first apostles and disciples who not only became familiar with Jesus but experienced his passion, death and resurrection, thus recognizing that God was doing something utterly extraordinary, something never heard of before or even thought of. The Word became flesh and dwelt with them. "We have touched him, listened to him, believed in him!"

Then, suddenly, he is leaving! How will we survive? What will we do without him? Yet Jesus, at the last supper, told them, "It is good that I return to the Father, for then he will send the Spirit, my Spirit, to be with you." I suspect that it still took those disciples some time to realize what Jesus was doing for them and to them. Their daily life and faith revealed that God's Spirit was with them, within them, available to them, comforting them, reminding them of Jesus. They began to realize that letting go of the physical Jesus opened them to the promise that "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Letting go becomes part of stretching ourselves into a people with wider horizons and deeper understanding about this life and the next. Can you see what Fr. Babu's family is seeing? That in the midst of loss and sorrow, there is hope and promise and comfort for they are not alone. The Spirit of Jesus, who is Jesus-for-us, is in our midst!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Mark Miller, CSsR

Provincial Superior Edmonton-Toronto Province

OLPH Jr. Kindergarten Director Receives Prime Minister's Award



Congratulations, Maria Cortese, our very own Junior Kindergarten director and teacher, for being awarded the 2017-18 Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. The Prime Minister's Awards program is the highest national award for early childhood educators in Canada. Prime Minister's Awards recipients represent the "best of the best" in Canadian education and honour the tremendous contribution outstanding educators have made to the children and students they teach, as well as their communities. The awards are presented personally by the Prime Minister.

Ms. Cortese undoubtedly deserves to be recognized for her leadership in her work with the children and families that have come across her path, as well as her outstanding pedagogical practices, and her commitment to forming the necessary foundation for every child to attain joy and success in life. We want to thank you for making a difference in our children's lives and empowering them to be themselves. Congratulations on receiving this very prestigious award!

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. – Psalm 47

NEWS & NOTICES

Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering May 5 & 6: \$10,363.95. Second Collection – Pope’s Pastoral Works: \$1,234.00. Thank you for your generosity.

Project Advance Report: Dear Parishioners, we are off to a good start. At the end of April, we received pledges totaling \$13,304 with participation from 19 parishioners. Our archdiocesan goal is \$52,000 and the parish goal is \$104,000 so that the extra funds can go toward the parish seismic upgrade. Thank you for your support!

OLPH Parish Survey: If you haven’t completed the Parish Survey yet, please note, you have only one week left to hand it in. We would very much appreciate your thoughts on how to make OLPH a wonderful dynamic faith community. All completed surveys have to be handed in by next Sunday.

Door Is Open Volunteers Needed: Next month’s Door Is Open on June 5 is the last one for the 2017-2018 year. Volunteers are needed. Sign-up sheets are at the church entrance. Thank you for reaching out!

PEC Election for 2018/2019 School Year: Please note the following information for the PEC Election: Election Dates - May 26 and May 27, 2018. Polling stations will be open for one hour after each Mass on these dates. Eligible for Nomination: Practicing Catholics, 21 years and older and approved by the Pastor. Eligible to Nominate: Only persons eligible to hold office are eligible to nominate candidates. Pick-Up Forms: To get a nomination form, please contact the parish office. Nominating Committee: Fr. Babu, Renee Stafford & Doug Spaeth. Email: pec@olphbc.ca if you have any questions. Deadline for completed forms (with all required signatures): 4pm Wednesday May 16, 2018.

Victoria Day Holiday: Monday May 21 is a holiday. Mass is at 9am that day.

Parish Hall Events: On Friday May 18 and Tuesday May 22, the Parish Hall will be occupied by the After-School Care Program from 9am-6pm. As well, on Friday June 15 from 11am-6pm.

Sunday Coffee Helpers: Dear friends, volunteers are needed to make and serve coffee after the Sunday 9am Mass. Extending hospitality is a wonderful way to serve in our parish community. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer.

Kairos Blanket Exercise: St. Augustine’s Parish is hosting Deacon Rennie Nahanee who will share with us over 500 years of Canadian-Indigenous history through the blanket exercise teaching about the Indigenous rights history on Saturday June 2, 2018 2:00pm - 4:00pm. He will be bringing the past to the present through the blanket exercise and bridging our community as one through reconciliation. Deacon Rennie Nahanee is an ordained deacon at St. Paul’s Indian Catholic Church in North Vancouver and a Squamish First Nation elder and the Coordinator for First Nations for the Archdiocese of Vancouver. You can get more info and register by emailing faithformation@staugustineschurch.ca.

Carr Lecture 2018: "Preaching and Communicating in a Franciscan Era: What is the Church learning from an Argentine Jesuit Pope?" Featured Speaker: Father Thomas Rosica, CSB, Scripture Scholar, Executive Producer and Church Spokesperson. Many of the questions or statements of Pope Francis these past five years have often made us feel uneasy. That is the role of prophets. The Pope’s blunt assessment of the epidemic of fake news reveals an elderly pastor and world leader who is sophisticated, astute, wise and bold in naming evil for what it is. The Pope’s analysis also indicated how far the Church has come in her understanding of media and communications. He has argued that the most “radical antidote” to the scourge of fake news lies in “purification by the truth.” Thursday, May 24, 2018 at 7:00 pm, St. Mark’s College, 5935 Iona Drive, Vancouver (UBC) Admission is free but registration is recommended.

EnCourage Group Meeting: EnCourage is a support group dedicated to the spiritual needs of parents, siblings, children, and relatives and friends of persons who experience same-sex attraction. Join us for our next meeting on Sunday, May 27, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more info, please email encourage@rcav.org.

Ordination to the Permanent Diaconate: Our local Church celebrates in joy and prayer the Mass of Ordination to the Sacred Order of the Diaconate of Dr. Paulos Teckle on Saturday, May 19, at 10 a.m. at Holy Rosary Cathedral. All are invited to attend. Please keep Paulos and all permanent deacons in your prayers.

Stewardship Reflection

“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.” – 1 JOHN 4:15

How strong is your faith? When you have an opportunity to either defend or clarify a question about our Catholic faith, do you do it? Or, do you remain silent so that others don’t think you are weird? Pray for the courage to be strong in all circumstances and to share your witness with others.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

MAY

Single Parenting Survival Series

Natascha Lawrence, OLPH School Counsellor will be giving a series of talks on dealing with the challenges of single parenting. Over three evenings you will get tips and tricks on the most common struggles – routine, regulation and communication. Remaining talks will be on Wednesdays 7pm-8:30pm on May 30 and June 13 at OLPH Parish Hall. Please email: nataschalawrence@olphbc.ca if you are interested. Babysitting will be provided.

Rosary at the Grotto

May is the month of Mary. It is the time for spring blossoms and new growth. The tradition of honoring Mary in the month of May goes back many centuries.

Here, we too will honor Mary with a rosary at the Grotto before the Saturday evening Mass on May 19 at 4pm. We will gather at the grotto. Bring your rosary with you!

Pentecost Celebration

May 20 is Pentecost Sunday. The parish is hosting a barbeque after the 11am Mass that day. If you are attending another Mass, you are welcome to join us at noon that day. We will gather at the front of the rectory.

JUNE

OLPH Novena/Triduum & Feast

Fr. Eugene O’Reilly CSsR is our guest speaker at this year’s Triduum Novena & Talks. This will climax with a special Mass to celebrate our feast day at 4pm on Sunday June 24 to be followed by a reception and potluck dessert from parishioners. All are invited.

Friday June 15 – Wed June 20: Novena after morning Mass
-Thurs Novena & Talk June 21: 7pm
-Fri Novena & Talk June 22: 7pm
-Sat Novena & Talk June 23: 6pm
-Sun June 24: Mass at 4pm

Reception to follow.

SACRAMENTS: FIRST COMMUNION



Grade 2 and PREP Students Receive First Communion

Congratulations to the Grade 2 students of OLPH and children in PREP on the beautiful occasion of your First Communion!

A total of 49 children and parents were present to celebrate the 2pm Mass last Sunday. Music for the liturgy was led by the School Choir. A reception was held at the School Gym soon after Mass.

