



The Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple, Titian, 1534-1538

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

By Dan Burke

Although Holy Scripture does not tell us anything about the presentation of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple, this belief is based upon evidence authorized by a very ancient Christian tradition, and the Church has given it official recognition by making it the object of a special Marian feast.

Mary, who leaves her home and parents in her most tender years in order to live in the shadow of the Temple, speaks to us of detachment, of separation from the world, of complete dedication to the service of God, of virginal consecration to the Most High. After her, countless virginal souls will present themselves in the Temple to offer themselves to God, but no offering will be as pure, as total, as acceptable as Mary's.

Our Lady is truly the privileged one among all creatures, who, from the first moment of her existence, heard the great call: "Hearken, O daughter, and see and incline thy ear, and forget thy people and thy father's house" (Ps 44:11).

The Most High is enamored of her beauty and wills that she be wholly His. Mary responds, and her answer is eminently prompt and complete. The response of souls whom God calls to the Altar, to the religious life or to virginal consecration in the world, should resemble Mary's. These souls must also be separated from the world, leave parents and friends; they must detach themselves from their people and their homes.

There cannot always be material separation, but there must always be a spiritual one, that is, a separation in the realm of the affections. It is the heart which must be detached, be secluded, because the Lord's elect can no longer belong to the world: "they are not of the world" (Jn 17:14),

Jesus said. To live in the world without being of the world is not easy, but it is absolutely essential in order to answer the divine call. There are virginal souls who fail in their consecrated vocation, or neglect to correspond fully, because they are still attached to the world—to its maxims, its vanities,

its affairs, its comforts; they have not had the courage to effect a true separation, or at least, if they have undertaken it, they have not remained faithful. This can happen not merely to souls living in the world but even to those in the cloister, for the world penetrates everywhere, and everywhere it invades hearts that are not entirely detached

COLLOQUY: BY ST. ALPHONSUS

"O dearly Beloved of God, most amiable Child Mary, would that today I could offer you the first years of my life and consecrate myself to your service, my blessed and sweet Lady, as you presented and consecrated yourself in the Temple for the honor and glory of God...."

But time has slipped away and so many years have been spent in serving the world and my own caprice, as it were, forgetful of you and of God. Woe to the time when I did not love you! But better late than never.

Behold, O Mary, I present myself to you today, offering myself entirely to your service, for the number of days, whether few or many, that are still left to me on earth. I renounce all creatures, as you did, and vow myself entirely to the love of my Creator. I consecrate to you, O my Queen, my intellect, that it may always think upon the love you deserve, my tongue, that it may praise you, my heart that it may love you.

Accept, O Most Holy Virgin, the offering which this wretched sinner presents to you; accept it, I beg, by the consolation your heart felt when you gave yourself to God in the Temple. And if I am late in putting myself at your service, it is but fitting that I redeem the time lost by redoubling my devotion and my love.

"O Mother of Mercy, help my weakness by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your Jesus the strength to be faithful to you until death. Grant that after having served you always in this life I may go to praise you eternally in Paradise".

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

November 17, 2019

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Keeping our Faith when the Going Gets Tough

Dear Parishioners,

In these last weeks before we begin the season of Advent, we are reminded again and again of the need to stand firm in our faith in times of trials and persecution. Indeed, the Gospel seems to talk about the very age we are living in. A quick scan of the headlines will show that stories of Christian persecution are almost a daily occurrence.

A survey commissioned by the British foreign office reported in May that Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world. The report which was released just days after 250 people were killed and more than 500 wounded in attacks at hotels and churches in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday. The survey said Christianity "is at risk of disappearing" in some parts of the world, pointing to figures which cited Christians in Palestine represent less than 1.5% of the population, while in Iraq they had fallen from 1.5 million before 2003 to less than 120,000.

Why mention such a gloomy report? Because today's Gospel doesn't just give us a dire warning of such times ahead but also offers us hope and encouragement in these trials. Our perseverance and strength come through constant prayer, Mass offerings and sacrifice. We can also make sacrificial offerings by sharing our time and talent in a variety of ways. Even baking cookies for parish events, which I know is no easy task, is a good way to offer something up. Fr. Ed Broom also has some concrete suggestions on how to fortify ourselves in the article inside.

We have an important announcement from Archbishop Miller on the Clerical Sexual Abuse Review Committee with more information coming up at the end of the week. Please read his letter below. May our Blessed Mother whose feast day we will be celebrating, be our model and inspiration for prayer and steadfast faith in challenging and difficult times. Have a blessed week.



Archbishop Miller's Letter on Clerical Sexual Abuse Report

November 13, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

St. Paul tells us that we are all members of the Body of Christ, and that when one member suffers, all suffer together. The worldwide crisis of clerical sexual abuse affects every Catholic.

Although the Archdiocese of Vancouver has not seen the number of tragic cases experienced elsewhere, we have taken the problem very seriously. I mandated a Clerical Sexual Abuse Case Review Committee to examine the situation here. We have been studying the work of this Committee for more than three months, developing a detailed and comprehensive response. We will publish their 31 recommendations and the responses of the Archdiocese in a special issue of the BC Catholic, available online this Friday. As well, a pastoral letter from me will be read at all Sunday Masses next weekend.

I am writing now to ask for your prayers as we move forward with the protection of children and vulnerable adults and to encourage you to read carefully the Case Review Committee's report and our response as soon as they become available.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Michael Miller CSB

J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver

MASSES & SERVICES

- Saturday Anticipated Mass: 5pm
- Sunday Masses: 9am, 11am & 5pm
- Monday – Wednesday Masses: 8am
- Thursday Mass & Novena: 8am & 7pm
- 1st Thursdays: 8am Mass/ Novena & 12pm Mass/Novena/Healing Prayer
- Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am Mass
- 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: 4pm - 4:45pm
- Adoration Saturday 9:30-10am

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor

Babu Mathew, CSsR

Associate Pastor

Joseph Horo, CSsR

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

Corinna Siy

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Theresa Barao

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Lora Clarke

Jr. Kindergarten Director

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NEWS & NOTICES

Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering Nov 9/10 & 3: \$4,814.25. Peter's Pence: \$15. Offering for the Needy: \$1,348. OLPH Youth Pie Sale: \$20. Archdiocesan Youth Ministry: \$5. Home Missions: \$5. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities: We have several events coming up that need volunteers. School parents can also fulfill their required parish volunteer hours with these tasks. The events are the Advent Concert and Light-Up on Saturday Nov 30 after the 5pm Mass. We need help with home-made cookies and serving. On Sunday Dec 14, help is needed for Santa's Workshop and Christmas Party. Please contact Lara if you can help. Email: olphchurchvolunteers@gmail.com.

CWL Meeting: There will be a general meeting on Nov 21 at 7:30pm in the Church Hall. The main item of business will be the Fair. We may start earlier as set up for the Fair will follow. An email will be circulated.

K of C Meeting: The Knights will be meeting this Thursday at 7pm in the Madonna Room and when finished the Meeting, we will help CWL set up for the Christmas Fair in the Hall. All parishioners are welcome.

Bring Your Halloween Candy: If you have leftover candy from Halloween, please bring it to Church for the PREP Mass candy collection at all Masses on November 23/24. Candy will be packaged for the Missionary Sisters of Charity. Thank you!

RCIA Sponsors: We are looking for sponsors to support this year's catechumens in RCIA. A sponsor's role is to accompany the catechumen in their spiritual journey through prayer and faith-inspired friendship. If you can speak Mandarin or Cantonese, it would be helpful as well. You will not be expected to attend RCIA sessions except on some important dates. Just make some time for sharing the faith! Please email Bertilla if you have questions or if you'd like to help: bwatanabe@rcav.org.

Vancouver College Open House: Vancouver College, British Columbia's only K-12 Catholic, independent school for boys is holding its annual Open House for prospective students and their families on Tuesday, November 26, 2019, from 6:30 - 8:30pm. Please visit vc.bc.ca/apply for further details.

Pro-Life Mass and Prayer Vigil: One of the fundamental answers to abortion is prayer. Please join your voice with ours as we pray on the first Saturday of each month at a different parish for a new culture of life. Mass will be Saturday, Dec. 7, 9 a.m. at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Burnaby. For upcoming dates, visit rcav.org/pro-life-mass-and-prayer-vigil

Pre-Christmas Concert with Michael Russell O'Brien: Pre-Christmas concert with Marian conference singing sensation and "Catholic entertainment's Best Kept Secret," Michael Russell O'Brien. Coming from Tampa, Fla, Michael was a rock star until he became a Catholic artist with a call from the Virgin Mary. Sing with him and listen to his stories at Immaculate Conception Church in Delta on Saturday, Nov. 30, at 7 p.m. A delightful event for the whole family! Tickets available online at eventbrite.ca/e/pre-christmas-concert-with-michael-russell-obrien-tickets-79360285751 or at IC Delta Parish Office.

Surviving and Thriving with Stress for You and Your Family: This session will examine typical symptoms, sources, and practical solutions to the stresses of everyday life in both adults and children. Ideas will be shared which have helped many people not only survive with stress but THRIVE in spite of it. Our speaker is Denis Boyd, registered psychologist specializing in marriage, grief, and stress counselling. Join us on Wednesday, Nov. 20, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua Church Hall in Vancouver.

Into the Deep - The Art of Community in Mental Health: Discover the vital role of community in mental health through Lisa Rumpel's journey to wellness and Stephen Ching's experience as a counsellor. We are hardwired for connection and not meant to live alone. This free event takes place on Friday, Nov. 22 at 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the John Paul II Pastoral Centre in Vancouver. "Into the Deep" is a free bi-monthly series of talks, lectures and experiences for seeking disciples.

PROJECT ADVANCE Live gratefully, give generously.

You can make a donation to Project Advance by filling out the pledge form you received in the mail or using the detachable envelope on the leaflet. You can also go to www.rcav.org. Just indicate that your parish is OLPH.



Stewardship Reflection

"... Rather, we wanted to present ourselves as a model for you, so that you might imitate us."
(2 Thessalonians 3:9)

Most people who live a grateful and generous lifestyle don't go around bragging about it. But through their actions and words, others do take notice. They notice because of the joy and peace that results and other people desire this in their own life. Know that the way you live your life may be the only interaction others have with our Catholic faith.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

OLPH Christmas Fair



The annual OLPH Christmas Fair is scheduled for Saturday November 23, 2019 and will run from 11am until 3pm. There may be some goods on sale on the next day after Masses. As always, we are encouraging all parishioners and school families to join us. We will be selling crafts and home-made baked goodies. You can also enjoy a delicious assortment of sandwiches and sweets in our Tea Room. This year's fair will feature a larger tea area and the same beloved crafts and baked goods. Please sign up to donate sandwiches, baked goods, raffle basket items and a few hours of your time to staff the booths. There is no Treasure Trove and Book Sale this year so please do not drop off items at the church or office. Bring the family for a guest appearance by Santa and enter to win one of many raffle prizes! Questions? Contact lyse.rowledge@gmail.com.

Columbus Charities Draw

The Knights of Columbus will be selling tickets for the annual Lottery (for \$3 each) starting this week. The Grand prize is \$60,000 with cars, trucks and motorcycles also available to be won. The proceeds help support affordable seniors housing and other B.C. Knights' charitable programs.

This Lottery is different than our OLPH Christmas Fair Raffle with proceeds going to support local initiatives including the Kits Shower Program and Mary's Place. We thank you for your generous support.

Advent Concert & Light-Up

This year's Advent Concert and Light-Up of the Church and Garden happens on Sat. Nov 30 at 7pm. A beautiful selection of Advent music and poetry is being planned by the OLPH Choir, Youth Ministry and children of the parish. Hot chocolate and treats to be served at the reception after. Concert donations will go toward the Icon of Love Scholarship Fund to promote the skills of members of the Music Ministry. Volunteers are needed for this event. If you can help, please contact Lara. Email: olphchurchvolunteers@gmail.com



Courtesy of America's Test Kitchen from Cook's Illustrated

Every Talent Can Glorify God... Even Baking Cookies

By Melissa Edgington

In church we like to talk a lot about spiritual gifts. All kinds of spiritual gift inventories are available online. I remember taking one when I was in the youth group in the 90s. Pastors often encourage us to use these gifts for the good of the church and the kingdom of God, as we should. When we use our spiritual gifts we help to build up and strengthen the body of Christ, and we help fulfill our role in that body by doing the things that we are well-equipped to do.

But God also gifts us with talents. Our talents can help us to carry out our spiritual gifts, but they are different from spiritual gifts in most cases. For instance, you may have a talent for golf. Golf isn't a spiritual gift but playing golf with a friend who is feeling down or lonely can help you use your gift of encouragement. Maybe you have a real talent for cooking, baking, or decorating. While none of these are spiritual gifts, they can help you exercise a gift of hospitality.

The question is: are you wasting your talent?

God gives us talent so that we can use it to bring glory to His name. There are a million different ways that this can be accomplished, but none of those ways will work if you neglect your talent. If you become lazy or apathetic about the abilities that God has gifted you with, then your talent, meant for His glory, is going to waste. Maybe you have a gift for writing, but writing is hard, so you don't do it much anymore. Maybe you are a singer, but you don't get as many solos as you would like so you would rather not sing. Maybe you are an organizer but someone criticized the way you did something once, so you quit trying to use your ability. Maybe you feel underappreciated or underachieving, so you mostly just leave your talent on the shelf. You are wasting what God has given you.

Maybe you don't believe your talent is useful in bringing glory to Christ. Remember the story of a little seamstress in Joppa? (Acts 9) Tabitha was a widow who knew how to sew. It's not like that was a rare talent in her day. Every woman knew how to sew. But, Tabitha used her ability to provide clothing for widows and orphans all over her town. She had a well-developed ministry that brought glory to the Lord just because she had a vision for how she could use what she was good at to minister to those in need. She was so influential in her community through her sewing ministry that when she died her mourning friends sent word to Peter, and he came and raised her from the dead. After that happened, the Bible says that many came to know Christ, all because a little widow chose to use her talent.

There is no such thing as an insufficient gift from God. Whatever your talent, there are ways to use it to bring glory to Christ. Just ask the jump rope champion that travels all over the world teaching kids about Christ while he does jump rope tricks. Ask the flower-arranging employee in the craft store who told me she creates beautiful things because beauty brings glory to God. Ask the nursery volunteer who has an amazing ability to calm down the fussiest babies so that their mamas can worship the Creator of the Universe.

Maybe you are using your talent, but you are using it in ways that don't bring glory to Jesus. You may have the "gift of gab" and make friends easily, but if you are using your words to gossip or tear others down, you're wasting your talent. If you are great at making and managing money but you are stingy with what you have, then you are wasting your talent. If you have a rare ability to think deeply and operate on a high intellectual plane, yet you never dwell on God's word and who He really is, then you are wasting the brain power that God has given you.

We all have so much more to offer to the kingdom. Let's not neglect the opportunity that we have to use what God has given us. We should be working to develop our talents, to improve and be even better equipped to use our abilities for His glory and for the church's good. Erma Bombeck wrote: *When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, "I used everything you gave me."* What if we all made this our goal?

No more talent lying dormant in the Christian's life—just a joyful exercising of the good gifts and abilities that God has blessed us with. Even a meager talent can have an eternal impact when Christ is involved. We have no way of knowing what He will do through us if only we have willing hearts and open hands, giving all that He has given us back to Him.

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SHARING THE FAITH

5 Ways to Hold on to the Faith Until the End

By Fr Ed Broom, OMV

The following suggestions can help us to guard that precious gem that was given to many of us—faith in God, faith in Jesus the Lord, faith in His mystical Body that we call the Church.

1. A dynamic, vibrant and growing prayer life

The late Father John Hardon, S.J. made this observation: "Those who lost their faith often were those who abandoned the practice of prayer." This stands to reason! Why? For this simple reason: to pray is an act of faith.

When we pray, we do not see the God to whom we are addressing our words. Our God is a mysterious and a hidden God; our God is invisible to the physical eyes that perceive all the physical reality that bombards the senses. For this reason Jesus gently rebuked Thomas the doubter: "Thomas you believe because you see. Blessed are those who believe without seeing." May the doubt of Saint Thomas the Apostle strengthen our weak and faltering faith!

Every day of our life we should strive to pray a little bit more and better. This indeed will be a safeguard for us to avoid losing our faith.

2. Beggars before the Lord

Why not pray this short but powerful prayer: "Lord I believe, but strengthen my belief." Jesus told us: "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened." (Mt. 7:7) We should never be afraid to become a beggar before the Lord and implore Him to give us a robust and dynamic faith!

3. Study

If you want to grow in your faith and avoid losing it, then you must study your faith.

One suggestion: read, study and learn the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Beyond a shadow of a doubt this text is one of the most important and influential spiritual masterpieces published in the past fifty years under the guidance and pontificate of Pope Saint John Paul II. You cannot fall in love with what you do not know. Reading, studying and living the Catechism of the Catholic Church can be a wellspring of knowledge and grace for maintaining a dynamic and flourishing faith.

4. Practice your faith

There is a modern proverb, used by many people today, that's applicable to this concept: "If you do not use it than you will lose it." Musical talents, athletic prowess, literary expressions, linguistic perfection, culinary skills—all of these demands a constant effort to keep them up to the mark of approval! Likewise, with the growth of our faith; we must practice it.

5. Share your faith with others

In the material realm, when we give something to others then we become impoverished. I give you \$20 and I am \$20 poorer.

In the spiritual realm, this is not the case. Rather, if I teach catechism, preach a homily, preach a mission, explain to somebody how to pray, explain in detail the ten commandments to somebody who has a poorly formed conscience—in all of these cases, as the person that receives enrichment from this sharing, I also am being enriched by sharing my spiritual treasures. One of the greatest gifts we can give to another is to share our faith; this is one of the highest forms of charity. Indeed, there is more joy in giving than in receiving and this can be applied to the sharing of the faith.

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