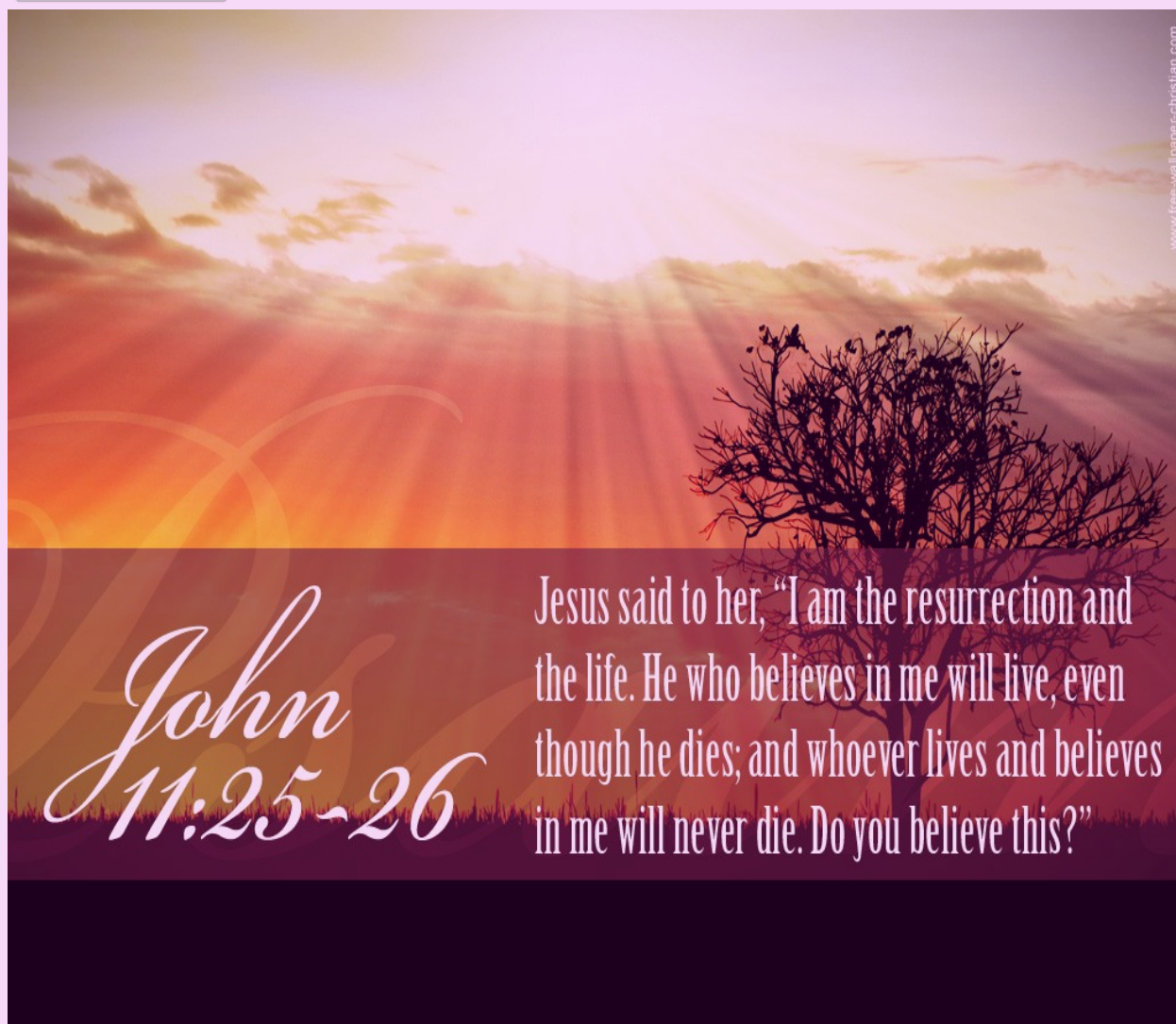




A BLESSED EASTER



CATHOLIC ENGAGED ENCOUNTER OF
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
EASTER EDITION 2013



A WEDDING IS A DAY..... A MARRIAGE IS A LIFETIME
EASTER GREETINGS



Easter blessings to each of you in this year 2013,

In the past two weeks we have been perusing precious past manuscripts, letters, and minutes of the beginnings of ICEE to become familiar with its roots. We read of the musings, the calling of the heart of the USA National board in response to other countries asking for help and directives. The NET decided to name one couple: Ann and Ron Trudel to look into creating an International Board so that all could be served with the same vision excellence and opportunity. We read of the hopes of this couple, their struggles to make this need a reality, the road-blocks they encountered, and their worries about how financially it would all come together. This was in 1986. In 1989, 12 countries came together and our ICEE foundation was laid.

As we read these letters, so many of the struggles and worries were the same as the apostles talked about when they followed their leader the Messiah. Their hopes vanished and they suffered complete disillusionment as their leader... their Jesus ...died on the cross and to them, at that time; this was the end of their journey. Jesus had not left them, but they all felt abandoned. That is why



Easter is so vital to our faith. It is because Jesus **RESURRECTED** and came back to give them (us) strength and grace that the second calling to serve was born. The apostles felt the presence of Jesus inside them... His strength inside them, His graces and wisdom inside them. They no longer depended on their own strength or weaknesses but on Him. They no longer followed as sheep but came shepherds. Fear and worry were no longer their obstacle but rather faith, that

God would clear the way for them and trust, that they were doing God's work, was their shield. We found the same kind of positive and negative feelings in our past leaders but more often we saw their spirituality and we see this same kind of devotion in all of you who give of your time to write or rewrite talks, sacrifice your weekends to be leaders on CEE weekends or to help out in your families, your Church your community. None of it easy but all of it needed. We are so proud of all that you do but even more proud of whom you are ... Easter people... Alleluia people...

Have a wonderful time rejoicing in the glory of the RESURRECTION.... HAPPY EASTER!

Bernard & Ginette Charbonneau and Fr. Kevin Maloney

Hi Everyone,

May the peace of the risen Christ be with each and every one of you. We wish to quote one Franciscan nun, a woman of faith, who stated, "the unreflective life is not worth living." Lent is a time which affords us, baptized Christians, the opportunity to retreat and go within ourselves as mother, father, husband, wife or educator and rediscover our true selves.



Excitement mounts as we enter Holy Week and the countdown to the Easter Triduum. If however we have allowed the five weeks of



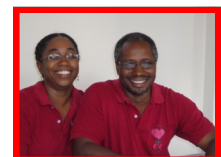
Lent to flit by and we who profess to have been fasting and praying and have not entered into the forgiveness mode, where we forgave others and have also forgiven ourselves, then we would most definitely be unable to enter deeply into the high point of our faith- The Resurrection. Dear friends, during this Holy Week, we are called as baptized Christians, to give our whole heart, our mind and soul, our entire being into the Paschal Mystery, so that we can truly experience the saving power in our lives. Our prayer for you and for us is that we all experience New Life in Christ this Easter.

Lester and Aura Victor and Fr. Wilfred John , Caribbean Coordinating Team

Hello All,

We trust that during this Lenten season, we have been able to appreciate our God as loving, forgiving and enabling. As we approach Easter, let us ask for renewed zeal for our ministry, our marriages, and our walk in faith. May the Risen Christ continue to be present in us , and visible to others, making us more and more in His image and likeness.

Tony and Angela Mitchell,,CEE Trinidad and Tobago



Strengthening our Marriage During Lent...and beyond



Lent seems to be the ideal time to look at renewal of our marriage. How does our Lenten journey shape what we are called to do in marriage?

A few decades ago, the word "obey" was removed from wedding vows. Instead we promised to love, honor and cherish each other. Many years later, Jesuit philosopher John Kavanaugh, S.J., lamented how much we had lost by dropping the word "obey" from wedding vows. He said that the root of the word "obey" simply means to put the needs of another ahead of our own.

Obedience in this context has nothing about one dominating another - only two people pledging to put the needs of the other ahead of their own. What a wonderful idea! It seems that this is exactly what we are called to in a gospel-based marriage.

Called by Jesus to be Unselfish

Now during these weeks of Lent we can take some time to examine our marriage. Do we love as deeply as we had originally intended when we first made our vows? As unselfishly?

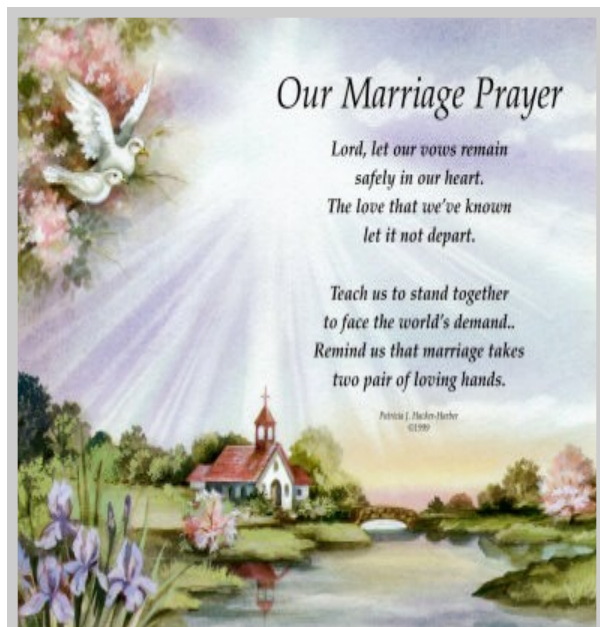


Whether we've been married 3 years or 30, this sacred season could be the start of a renewed relationship with our spouse, shaped by our experience of Lent.

We are invited by Jesus to put the needs of another ahead of our own. We can deepen our commitments in marriage and even change the dynamics within our relationships through unconditional love. In loving this way, we transform not only our spouses but more importantly, ourselves.

For those of us who are parents, we have probably always put the needs of our children first - but our spouse? Yes, we care for each other, but do we put the other's needs ahead of our own? And yet how profoundly would our marriages change if we simply lived that vow for a while?

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"Live in the awareness that Christ lives and that He lives in His people."

Julien B. Weil

Strengthening our Marriage During Lent....and beyond cont'd

During Lent, we can make "obey-ing" the special focus of our lives. Instead of giving up chocolate, what if each day during Lent, we asked for the grace to be more unselfish in our marriage?

As a first step, what if tomorrow, before we got out of bed, we asked God to help us love our spouse more? To put the needs of this life partner of ours ahead of our own?

Silencing our Disappointments

This Lenten journey begins with prayer and moves into silence. We hold off on the sarcastic comment aimed at our spouse. We silence a cutting remark. We drop the correction before it comes out of our mouths. Neglect the pouting. Stop the stony silence when we are displeased. These behaviors can be long standing and not easy to change. Also, it might take a while before our



spouse really trusts these efforts. We will be the ones doing the "giving" for a while.

We are born selfish creatures crying out for someone to take care of our needs.

But from this earth, this grave, this dust, My God shall raise me up, I trust.

~Walter Raleigh

The process of growing in this life seems to be learning how to become less selfish, less self-absorbed. On our good days we can do that, by loving, giving and caring for others before thinking of ourselves. But on our bad days, we look at our spouses and others and grumble about the unfairness: "Why is it always ME who has to do the giving? Why doesn't my spouse have to care about ME first? Am I always the one who has to apologize first? Ask about the other's day first? When is it MY turn to be taken care of?"

We are called to love in marriage the way we are loved by Jesus – without figuring out what we will get out of it.

"Love one another as I have loved you." *As I have loved you.* In the same way Jesus loves us – without limits. And so we love our spouse who is crabby and barking. Instead of snapping a response we can ask ourselves, "What does my spouse need right now?" It's not about giving up my dignity or rolling over to a bully. It's about loving someone who might not be very loveable right now.

We can wallow in our own self-pity and self-absorption, but it is in that moment that we are being called more deeply into Jesus' love. We must die to our own needs and our own longing in order to find a new life in Jesus.

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"Christ has not only spoken to us by his life but has also spoken for us by his death."

Soren Kierkegaard

Strengthening our Marriage cont'd

In a profound way, we are being called to the simplest task: to care about other people before we take care of ourselves. What kind of people would we be if we got everything we wanted? If we never had to move outside of our own needs and desires? Jesus asks us: What good is it for us to get everything we wanted, if in the process we lose our very selves?

Cherishing Each Other

We've stopped snapping back, held our complaints. What if we add a small goal for ourselves every day? What if we added one positive, loving thing each day of Lent? We might hang up his clothes without complaining about it. Put the cap back on her toothpaste – with a smile. Lay out the crossword puzzle with a fresh pencil for him. Have a pot of coffee ready for her in the morning. Do some of the tiny, thoughtful things we might have done years ago, before we slipped out of the habit.



It's not spending money, it's a change of attention. Send him an e-mail of gratitude during the day. Tuck a note into her suitcase as she departs on a trip. A call just to say how grateful I am for you in my life. Each day we ask God for the grace to love as God loves us – without limits.



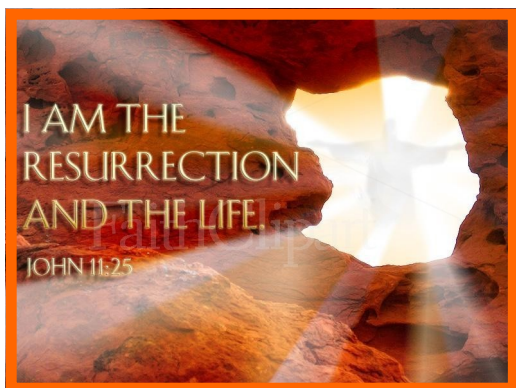
One final thing is patience. We have to learn to trust that eventually, with our constant loving and God's grace, our spouse will notice the difference. Under the barrage of love, our spouse will begin to soften, bark less, say "Thank You" more. It takes time to change the patterns and it takes time for our spouse to trust in the changes. It may take months beyond Lent, but if we believe in this, pray about it and trust in God, the changes that happen in our marriages and ourselves can be dramatic.

We live and die; Christ died and lived! ~John Stott

This isn't something for women to do for their husbands. Or husbands to do for their wives. It is what each of us as married people are called to do for each other. This is the way of life Jesus calls us to: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

Re-focusing our marriage invites us to be more giving, to fight our human nature that has us focused on our own needs. We are asked to stop keeping score with the ones we love and to put their needs ahead of our own. It is then, Jesus promises, that by losing our lives for his sake, we will find real life.

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/marriage-lent.html>



**THE PROMISE OF EASTER SUNDAY-
" THAT ALL MAY HAVE LIFE AND
HAVE IT IN ABUNDANCE." (John
10:10)**

At Easter time we celebrate the Paschal Mystery and give thanks for the superabundance of God's life. It is a time to live with deep gratitude for the salvation and new life offered to us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Following the path of Resurrection is not a guarantee that we will never have life challenges. What it does mean is that we will never have to face the challenges alone. The Promise of Life that is offered to each of us, calls us to examine our approach to life. In many ways our society has made great advances in science, medicine, technology and other fields. At this Easter season, we are invited to tap into a far greater power, the power of God's Spirit always available to us. If we fail to do this, we deny ourselves access to life's deeper meaning and purpose, in our own lives and in our relationship with the human family, those close to us and those far away from us.

During this Easter season, we are invited to take a deeper look at our life journey and reflect on the promise of God's life in abundance. How does it affect us indi-

vidually and communally, and also the world beyond us? We pray the prayer of Jesus calling us to live in harmony and peace, forgiveness, justice and love. We face many daunting challenges today in the world around us - often marred by wars, conflict, economic woes and neglect of every kind. Many of the movements we hear about are not working in the best interests of the human family.

We need a new vision, a new way of being and doing that is life-giving and guided by justice, peace and love. We all need to be reminded that our own personal agenda is not of greatest importance. We are challenged to live and act in the power of the Risen Lord and to choose hope, life and wellness for ourselves and for generations still to come. Then we can help bring God's truth and healing love to many people.

Each one of us is asked to be a credible witness to the power of the risen Lord, believing in the promise that "God's power working in us can do infinitely more than we dare ask or imagine" This is a good time to think about what is the abundant life that the

Easter Sunday cont'd pg 11



Easter Sunday cont'd

Risen Lord is offering us. It certainly does not mean an abundance of worldly goods. It is an abundance of deep faith and courage. Each day is a gift given us by God. It is a time freely given to "praise, to bless and to preach, by the witness of our lives."

In addition we have the promise of eternal life to be with our God for all eternity. Using these gifts given us, it will deepen our relationship with God and we will be assured that we are living abundantly, no matter what the circumstances of our lives happen to be

Like the early apostles, we pray for the peace of Jesus' presence Eastering into radiant life. This will enable us to light our world with hope. We can sing an Exultet (praise song) to every dark tomb that appears around us and announce the resurrection of Jesus. We think of the people all over the world who lack hope and life and a means to survive. We pray and work to remove the stones that prevent or destroy life for so many. We can

help make tyranny tremble, the tyranny of war and violence, hunger and disease, and make fearful hearts feel the redeeming presence of the living God.

This year as we celebrate The Year of Faith, we pray to awaken our own and the faith

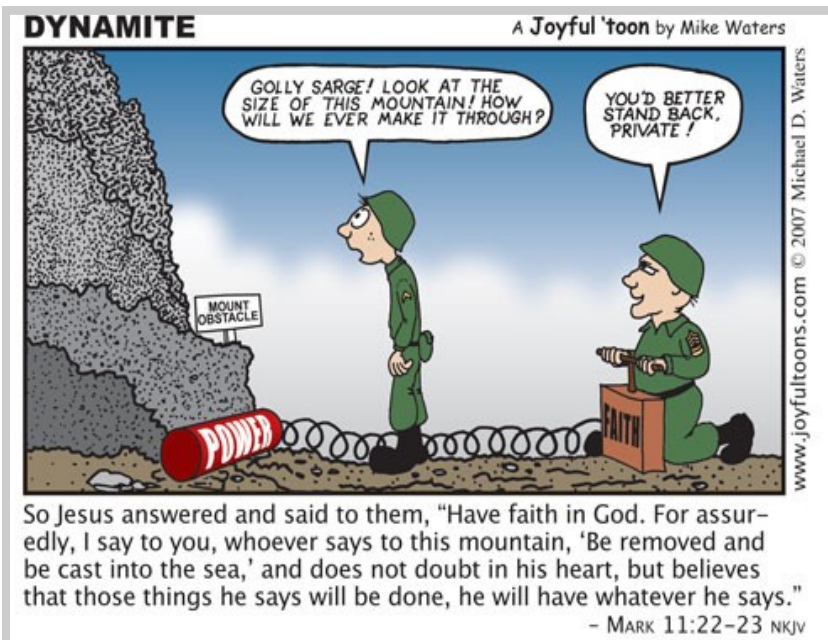


of believing people everywhere, and allow it to cast an Easter glow on all the earth. May we stand strong in our faith and reach out with courage and hope to bring God's redeeming love to our broken world. Like Mary, may we stand firm and steadfast in our ministry of bringing God's healing touch to those most in need. God of life and hope, fill us and all people with the abundance of your love.

Share a time you have had a Resurrection moment/experience and give thanks for the abundance of God's love.

Sister Brenda Walsh, Racine Dominican

From *Preachers' Exchange*: <http://www.preacherexchange.com/essay.htm>



"The biggest fact about Joseph's tomb was that it wasn't a tomb at all - it was a room for a transient. Jesus just stopped there...on His way back to glory."
~Herbert Booth Smith~

Jesus Christ, the Incomparable

More than nineteen hundred years ago there was a man born contrary to the laws of life.

This man lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity.

He did not travel extensively.

Only once did He cross the boundary of the country in which He lived; that was during His exile in childhood.

He possessed neither wealth nor influence.

His relatives were inconspicuous and had neither training nor formal education.

In infancy He startled a king;

in childhood He puzzled doctors;

in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as if pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep.

He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charges for His service.



He never wrote a book,
yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books
that have been written about Him.

He never wrote a song,
and yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all
the songwriters combined.

He never founded a college,
but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as
many students.

He never marshaled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a

gun;

and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under His orders, made more rebels stack arms
and surrender without a shot being fired.

He never practiced medicine and yet He healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near.

Every seventh day the wheels of commerce cease their turning and multitudes wend their
way to worshiping assemblies to pay homage and respect to Him.

The names of past, proud statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone.
The names of past scientists, philosophers, and theologians have come and gone,
but the name of this man abounds more and more.

Although nineteen hundred years between the people of this generation and the
scene of His crucifixion have passed,
yet He still lives.

Herod could not destroy Him and the
grave could not hold Him.

He stands forth upon the highest
pinnacle of heavenly glory,
proclaimed of GOD,
acknowledged by angels,

adored by saints, and feared by devils,

as the living personal

Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

(Author Unknown)

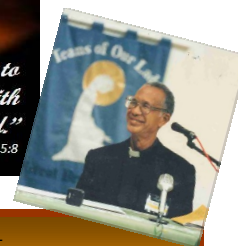
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In Memoriam

Fr. Neil Rodriguez, C.S.Sp.
21st April, 1932 – 1st February, 2013



"And we are not afraid, but are content to die for then we will be at home with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

In loving memory of Father Neil Rodriguez, the founding priest of CEE Trinidad and Tobago. A devoted servant, personal friend, spiritual advisor, teacher and firm advocate of family life. His contributions to our ministry are immeasurable, and will not be forgotten. We pray that God will grant him eternal rest and a place in his kingdom for his labours of love here on earth.

The resurrection gives my life meaning and direction, and the opportunity to start over, no matter what my circumstances. ~Robert Flatt



CEETT FAMILY NEWS NEW ARRIVALS



Zaikai Victor and Abdul Mu-
haymin to grandparents Aura
and Lester Victor

Jada Marie to parents Carla
and Kenroy Ambris (grandparents Pat and
Carl Mendez)

Maria Kioni to Arleene and Bevon Martinez

Newly arrived Baby Boy to Carl and Char-
lene Quamina (just as we were going to
"print"!)

For you created my inmost being; you knit
me together in my mother's womb. I praise
you because I am fearfully and wonderfully
made; your works are wonderful, I know
that full well. My frame was not hidden
from you when I was made in the secret
place. When I was woven together in the
depths of the earth, your eyes saw my un-
formed body. All the days ordained for me
were written in your book before one of
them came to be.

~Psalm 139:13-16~



Verily, verily, I say unto you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains but a grain of wheat; but if it falls and dies, then it bears much fruit.

John 12:24



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"The LORD [is] nigh unto all them that call upon Him..."

(KJV) Psalm 145:18

May the Lord's blessings be with you on Easter & always.

Happy Easter!

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