

THE BISHOPS FOUNDATION

Newsletter



Newsletter March 2020

Apart from everything else this is the month of the 17th March, St. Patrick's Day, the national day for Ireland. So let me wish everyone with an Irish background or who has an Irish friend or who was taught by an Irish sister Beannachtai na Feile Padraig ort, or in English, happy St. Patrick's day. If you can get your hands on a sprig of shamrock, wear it on the 17th. If you have absolutely no Irish connections, then treat yourself to a strong drink and raise a toast to St. Patrick and say 'Ireland Abu'. (Abu is the Irish equivalent of Viva). But because of the Corona Virus, all St. Patrick Day parades and celebrations all over the world have been cancelled. So you're on your own this year.

Now to settle down. We are into the third week of Lent. As I said in the letters of acknowledgement last month, Lent is a time for quiet spiritual growth. How do we do it? Do you remember that we are all called to be holy? Pope Francis has written a wonderful booklet on holiness. Holiness is for all of us, not just special people. To make it simple. Holiness is nothing more than the fruits of the Spirit being active in our lives. The list of the fruits of the spirit are usually taken from St. Paul's letter to the Galatians (5:22). They are, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control.

Lent then is a time for us to be more conscious of how loving, patient, understanding etc we are in our daily interaction with others, at home or at work. This how we witness in our lives to the presence of Christ in our hearts. Call it faith in action. You can of course do some of the other traditional exercises, saying more prayers, getting up early and going to mass, making a sacrifice (self-control) or helping the poor in some way (as you do in the Foundation). The important thing is to be more sensitive to Jesus and his way of love and compassion.

February was a month of great growth in the donor base of the Foundation. Visits to the parishes of North Riding and Rivonia in Johannesburg and Queenswood in Pretoria evoked tremendous interest and support for the Foundation. Once Lent is over we will visit other parishes. Remember we are celebrating our 10th year and we want to capitalize on that and enroll as many more as is possible in the Foundation, to further the outreach to the more vulnerable.

Please do your bit in this expansion initiative by enlisting someone else in the family or in your network of friends. Send me their name and number and I will contact them.

Lastly, remember March 19 is the feast of St. Joseph.

God be with you all and may Lent be a time of deep strengthening of your walk with the Lord.

Fr. Barney



From the desk of Father Barney McAleer