

THE BISHOPS FOUNDATION

Newsletter



Newsletter April 2021 (2)

Greetings all. The month of May is almost upon us. Normally we refer to the Month of May as the month of Mary. There are many traditions surrounding this particular devotion. Having a little corner in the home dedicated to our Lady, called a May altar, is one of them. Its spring time in many parts of the world and the newly blooming flowers usually decorate the little altar. It would be nice for the children or whoever to do something to keep the month of Mary highlighted in the home.

However May this year, 2021, is full of other liturgical events. Here is a list.

Saturday, 1st May is the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker. This Feast Day has a long history. It was created by Pope Pius X11 in 1955 to give Catholic working men an opportunity to celebrate when the Communists established 1 May as International Workers' Day in their quest to make socialism the economic way forward as opposed to capitalism. Apart from the political background which has evaporated to a degree all Catholic working men (and women) can turn to St. Joseph, identify with him as wage earners and heads of families and draw strength from his example in their own daily struggles to support the home. Perhaps you are not aware that Pope Francis has declared this year of 2021 as the year of St. Joseph.

Thursday, May 13, is a double header. Firstly it is the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. Many know the story. She appeared to the three children, Francisco, Jacinta and Lucy on this day in 1917. Traditionally there have always been candlelight processions, especially in Portuguese communities but with Covid these are restricted. Hopefully the occasion will be marked in some way in these communities.

However, this day is also the Feast of the Ascension this year. So the feast of Our Lady falls into second place. Here in South Africa the Feast of the Ascension will be celebrated on Sunday 16th May. This marks the end of the Easter cycle. The period of 40 days between the Resurrection and the Ascension comes to an end. Jesus returns to the Father and leaves the work of evangelization to the apostles and they in turn have handed it on to us.

The following Sunday, May 23rd, is Pentecost Sunday. The moment the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles to empower them for the task that Jesus left them to spread the Good News.

As if that was not enough, the following Sunday again, May 30th, is the feast of the Holy Trinity. This is the celebration of the revealed nature of the Godhead, three persons in One God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is what we proclaim every time we recite the Creed at Mass.

Then to top it all off, May 31st is the Feast of the Visitation of Our Lady to St. Elizabeth to be with her in here last months of pregnancy.

So take your pick. You can join with all other wage earners and pray to St. Joseph that our economy will hold up; that people will still keep their jobs; that families will have enough to survive on.

If you are Portuguese, especially, you can join in any event that celebrates May 13 in your community. Sing all the songs of celebration, Maria da Nazare, or A treze de Maio, na Cova da Iria or

Fatima Adeus. Tell the story to the children. Light a candle in the home and place it before the statue of Our Lady.

At Ascension think of the promise of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit before he returned to the Father. Think of his promise to be with us always. Thank Him for all he has given, his love, forgiveness, patience and comfort.

Lastly at the Visitation, pray for all those in hospitals round the world, sick and dying and without the comfort of family and friends. Dying in isolation because of Covid. May Our Lady of the Visitation be there for them in their loneliness.

So, there is much to think about and pray about in this month of May.

Once again I am attaching the bank details for anyone who hasn't contributed for a long time.

Name of our account	SACBC Foundation
Bank	NEDBANK
Branch Code	160445
Account number	1604879564

Use your cell number as a reference.

God bless you all, keep you all healthy and Covid free.

Fr. Barney