

A STITCH IN TIME SAVES A DIME

March 2nd, Tuesday

MW	Ps. 5(om.v.9-10),6	Gen.41.25-49	Rom. 6.1-14
EW	Ps. 7,8	Gen.41.50-42.17	John 5.1-18

So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. (Gen. 41: 37)

God revealed to Pharaoh through Joseph that he would see both sides of the coin during his tenure. It was evident that there would be seven fruitful years followed by seven years of famine. God is telling Pharaoh to be prepared for the worst by providing him in advance to store for the latter years of famine.

Pharaoh had a choice, he could have not believed Joseph and would have calculated in his own way, the meaning of his dreams. But, Pharaoh a man of authority succumbed to God's way for a secure future and did as was revealed to him through Joseph.

Joseph was given the responsibility to ensure everything was carried on smoothly, and that there was enough for the seven years of famine. For Joseph was honest and obedient to God, there was surplus of grain, as the sand of the sea and he lost the count.

God made it very clear that there WILL be seven years of famine, a time when there will be no produce and the human lives will have to depend on their storage. Difficult times will come our way too, times when we will have to use from our storage. Have we gathered enough in faith that when difficult times come we can sustain ourselves on our faith?

Prayer: Lord, difficult times were promised to Pharaoh and could be the same for me, grant me the wisdom to save in time for the difficult time. Amen.

PAST IMPERFECT, FUTURE TENSED

March 3rd, Wednesday

MW	Ps. 9	Gen.42.18-end	Rom. 6.15-end
EW	Ps. 10	Gen.43.1-23	John 5.19-30

Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us". (Gen. 42: 21)

Joseph's brothers came to Egypt not knowing that they will encounter Joseph who is now the Governor of the land. They want to buy grain for their home, but in this whole episode they are suddenly attacked by their past. They had sold Joseph to Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver and had lied to their father that Joseph was dead. Now all of a sudden they run into their past and realize what trouble they have landed into. They were trying to convince Joseph that they are honest but their sin of past has caught them. They are in distress as they have lied to their father about Joseph and here Joseph has prisoned Simeon. They now do not have a way out but to follow Joseph's orders. That is the only solution to their problem, to obey.

This is very much in our lives too, when we think and believe that our sins of past have been covered with dust and we think they remain no more, it is out of sudden that we are encountered with our past that has to be dealt with. God brings us to a point where we cannot go further till we have solved our past with God.

Are you stuck and have suddenly been reminded of your past, finish your past with God and then you'll be able to enter into a secure future.

Prayer: Lord, I need your forgiveness for a better future, kindly undo my past and control my future. Amen.

CHRIST HAS ETERNITY, SALVATION AND SECURITY

March 4th, Thursday

Abdul Masih (Conv.), bap. 1811

MW Ps. 11(om.v6),12 Gen.43.24-44.13 Rom.7.1-6
EW Ps. 13,15 Gen.44.14-end John 5.30-end

And they sat before him, the first born according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another. (Gen. 43: 33)

The game of chess surprises me about its inventor. From where on the earth the person had the brains to invent the game and how many sleepless nights the person would have had in placing the characters so that the game becomes complete. What a wonderful brain exercising game for people of all ages, it is now a world renowned game that compliments championships and titles to the players. Countries participate in the championships in order to win the world title which has become a prestige issue in post modern times.

Joseph too, placed his brothers according to their birthright and according to their youth.

Even after so many years he has not forgotten the family details, he is perfect in his plan and this astonishes his brothers. Maybe he wants them to have a clue of what's going on, or maybe he intends to tell them that 'I know you all very well'.

God too has created us beautifully to play a character in life and has placed us in a perfect arrangement so that we know our limits and our capabilities. With all that he has blessed us with reminds us that God has placed us in a particular family which is an integral part of a particular neighbourhood. His plan and placing arrangement is perfect and unquestionable for He knows what we are made of and what we are capable of.

We ought not to question our creator but to seek his moves for our lives, for that is exactly why we have been created, to give ourselves completely to Him, so that He be glorified through our lives.

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for creating and placing me beautifully in your creation. Help me to be effective by following your plan for my life. Amen.

FORGIVENESS- DO WE PRACTICE IT? WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

March 5th, Friday

MW Ps. 16 Gen.45.1-15 Rom.7.7-20
EW Ps. 17 Gen.45.16-46.7 John 6.1-21

“But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life”. (Gen. 45: 5)

I once paid a visit to the SDM's court to pay for a *challan*, the offence being, the corner of my vehicle's number plate broke, the full series was still readable, I explained to the sergeant the details of the cause, but he gave me a look that stated, “tell me when you are through so that I can go on with my proceedings”. I was surprised and angry, for all that I needed at that moment was a sympathetic hearing. When I pressed hard for him to listen to me, he said, “sir, humein mat samjhao, judge ko samjhana”(don't explain to me, but to the judge).

Joseph's brothers were surrounded by their crime of past, according to law, they should have been punished and Joseph being the Governor could have ensured that the intensity of their punishment were severe. He could have paid them back in full with interest, but what steps did he take? Surprisingly, Joseph cried out to his brothers stating that they were his brothers. What an astonishing step Joseph took- he forgave!

Quite often we too get an opportunity to forgive our trespassers, we might be in a mood to retaliate and seek revenge, but in order to end things on a peaceful note, it is essential that we forgive.

God forgave us so that we would have a happy ending- eternal life.

Prayer: Lord, I need to forgive just as I have been forgiven, help me to bring others to the home eternal. Amen.

IF YOU SOW, THEY WILL REAP

March 6th, Saturday

MW Ps. 18.1-24 Gen.46.26-47.12&27end Rom.7.21-8.4
EW Ps. 18.25-50(om.v.37-42) Gen.48 John 6.22-40

“So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.” (Gen. 47: 27)

The financial year 2008-09 would go down in the history for recording maximum losses to the world economy. It has suffered huge losses due to recession, the fortune 500 companies recorded losses that ran into millions rendering many jobless and pushed poor people further down the poverty line. The sense which was once soaring the sky is now slowly gaining acceleration for another take-off. Good times will return say the world economists.

God in his wonderful plan brought Joseph to Egypt through various experiences, some good, some bitter, but all of them shaped Joseph to be a good leader who would eventually settle his entire family in the country of Goshen.

It was in the country of Goshen where Israel had possessions, grew and multiplied. Imagine they had property in a foreign land, they were fruitful and they grew in huge numbers. All this was provided by God through Joseph to his Father's entire clan. Joseph's faithfulness to God was rewarded in terms of all the blessings that flowed to his entire family.

God of Joseph is our God too, In today's difficult times, our faithfulness to our Heavenly Master would reap blessings for our entire clan. We have to tread the difficult path faithfully in order to provide cushioning effect to our loved ones. Are we ready to follow the Leader of Life, for a cushioning after-effect?

Joseph walked by faith through thick and thin that resulted in thick blessings for his thin family.

Shall we begin our walk of faith?

Prayer: Lord, I am ready to start afresh with you, consider my application for long time benefits. Amen.

DIAL THE NUMBER NOW, NO CHARGES APPLICABLE

March 7th, Sunday

4 Sunday before Easter (Lent 3)
Perpetua and Felicitas (Mar.) 203

Theme: True glory of God is manifested in the humanity of Jesus.

M/EW	Psalm 99	L.S.	OT	Exodus 33.17-23
	OT	Exodus 33.12-23	Psalm	99.1,5-9
	NT	2 Corinthians 4.1-6	Epistle.	2 Corinthians 4.1-6
	and/or	Luke 9.28-36	Gosp.	Luke 9.28-36

And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. (Luke 9: 29)

Moses' prayer in Ex 33: 18 starts with a request, he is keen to see God, whom no one has ever seen with naked eyes. God tells Moses to stand on the rock and places him in a cleft. God covered Moses and then revealed His Back to Him.

God took so many precautions in order to reveal Himself to Moses, the problem was not with God but with Moses, for he was not competent to see God with naked eyes. He would have died if that would have happened. What a once in a life time opportunity Moses had, I wish, every Israelite had this opportunity! But they couldn't, for they did not find favour in God's eyes. Moses found favour in God's eyes and thus he got to view the glimpse of the lifetime.

Peter, James and John, witnessed the transfiguration of Christ, His clothes turned white, so intense was His glory that along with His physical body even His clothes reflected the glory.

Luke records the event stating that while Jesus was in communion with God, His face altered.

Jesus' true glory was witnessed by His core group.

We too become witnesses of God's glory when we believe in the happening of the event, and share the same without diluting the essence of the event. Jesus came in human form leaving the heavenly abode to autograph our visas for the final departure to heaven. Dial the number to collect your visas.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be a witness of your glory to the people, who seek Thee. Amen.

THE FUTURE IS SAFE

UNITED NATION DAY FOR WOMENS RIGHT AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE

March 8th, Monday Thomas Aquinas (Th.), 1274

MW	Ps. 22	Gen.49.1-28	Rom.8.1-11
EW	Ps. 23,24	Gen.49.28-50.13	John 6.41-59

“I have waited for your salvation, O Lord” ! (Gen 49: 18)

The Select City Mall in Saket New Delhi organises a street market in its open verandas every Wednesday evening. It's like an open bazaar, where one can buy clothes, jewellery, eatables, indoor plants, etc. I once visited this market with my wife and came across one particular stall with decks of cards scrambled on the table and the woman on the other side of the table had, few cards in her hand and was very convincingly talking to a couple. She was a tarot card reader who was helping people with their present and future.

Jacob gathered all of his twelve sons and wanted them to know, the kind of experiences each one of them will go through. He was concerned about each of them, and before he departs to another world, wanted to ensure that each of his twelve sons is prepared to take on the unexpected future.

Jesus too has warned us about the end days, the signs and events happening around us point to the second coming of Christ. Matthew recorded Jesus' statements in chapter 24. There will be wars, false prophets, lawlessness, 'but the one who endures to the end will be saved (vs.13)'.

The world is striving for peace and women's right is a major issue that needs attention. United Nations has dedicated this day for world peace and women's rights, let us remember them in our prayers and contribute to this just cause through our blessed capacities.

Prayer: Lord, you are the blessed future for humanity, prepare me for tomorrow, for I trust you alone. You are my way, my truth and my life. Amen.

HE TURNS MOURNING INTO DANCING

March 9th, Tuesday

MW	Ps. 25	Gen.50.14-end	Rom.8.12-25
EW	Ps. 26,27	Exodus 1	John 6.60-7.13

“But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.” (Gen 50: 20)

Accidents of past lead to the major incidents of the present! Samuel Brengle (1860-1936) was a dearly loved Salvation Army Commissioner. Once it happened that while he was ministering on Boston's skid row, a drunkard hit him with a concrete brick. As he was on his way to recovery, he utilized his time in writing a series of articles for the Salvation Army's publication, *The War Cry*. Much later, these articles found their way into a popular book, *Helps to Holiness*. When somebody would thank him for his masterpiece, he would reply, "well, if there had been no little brick, there would have been no little book!" Brengle's wife saved the brick and got Gen 50;20 printed on it. What man meant for evil, God used it for good.

Some of us would have gone through similar experiences, where people meant us deliberate harm, but God used the same incident for our good and for his glory. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him, and painted a picture for Jacob that Joseph lived no more, may be for the brothers Joseph existed no more, but God kept him alive and turned his worst nightmare of being sold by his own brothers to a blessing to his entire clan.

Maybe we are going through, breach of trust, betrayal, or any other incident that has shook us. This is the time to cling to God in prayer, and beseech him to change the mourning into dancing. He has done it in the past and will do for you today.

Prayer: Lord, you created light out of nothing, extend your hand and change my difficult situations to blessed times. Amen.

GOD NEVER FORGETS

March 10th, Wednesday

MW	Ps. 28,29	Exodus 2.1-22	Rom.8.26-end
EW	Ps. 31	Exodus 2.23-3.12	John 7.14-36

“But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river’s bank”. (Ex 2: 3)

I wonder what Moses’ mother was going through as she was weaving the basket; her hands would be trembling, she would be weeping and feeling helpless. She would not want to weave any further, but the circumstances are forcing her to separate the child from the family. She has no other option but to make a temporary support for her beautiful son, and let him go. She hid him for maximum time and when she could not, she thought of something unusual, which she would never do, let go off her child.

Is 49-15 states a direct question; can a woman forget her nursing child? A person with high emotional quotient would probably say ‘NO’ but God states that it is possible. In Moses’ case his mother was compelled to give him up, the situation was against her, otherwise she wouldn’t have taken such a bold step.

We are limited beings, and can only stretch to a certain extent, there are boundaries which we cannot cross. Moses’ mother stretched herself to full capacity and maybe a little bit more, but she gave up. At times, situations and circumstances force us do what is against our nature and will. But, God states in Isaiah 49; 15-I will *NOT* forget you. What a blessed assurance from God, our Creator is not bound by any chords that will compel him to forget us. Our God is without any boundaries, Hallelujah! Let us give Him all the glory and honour for He alone is the True God, who was, is, and ever will be.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the promise that leads me to have unshakeable faith in you, I give you all the glory and honour. Amen.

GOD’S WORK ONLY BY GOD’S AUTHORITY

March 11th, Thursday

MW	Ps. 30,32	Exodus 3.13-4.9	Rom.9.1-18
EW	Ps. 33	Exodus 4.10-end	John 7.37-52

And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’”. (Ex 3: 14)

A very popular international sports brand has a slogan, *I am what I am*. I once bumped into a college goer, who very smartly was proclaiming the slogan on his t-shirt. We engaged in a conversation and I told him that the slogan had been adopted from the Bible, altered and used for brand promotion. He refused to accept that such a bold and loud statement has been adopted from an ancient old historic Scripture. Providing him with the reference from the Bible led him to the discovery that God alone can make such a vibrant and bold claim.

Moses needed God’s visiting card to authenticate his visit to the suppressed community in Egypt. He was wondering, if I just go and introduce myself to the people, they would want to know by whose authority I am preaching the gospel of comfort. Moses made several attempts to escape his visit to Egypt, but God had chosen him for this task, in God’s eyes he was the perfect leader to lead an imperfect crowd. Moses was given authority to workout miracles for Pharaoh to believe. Moses did perfectly as was directed.

Jesus’ Great Commission in Matthew 28-19-20 begins with authority, the same authority that worked miracles for Moses is the same authority that equips us for proclamation of the gospel.

Moses was successful in all of his attempts because he respected God’s authority and followed the instructions carefully.

If we want to be successful in our ministries, let us begin by respecting God as the authority and following instructions found alone in the Bible.

Prayer: Lord, I know that I’ll be a success, only if I surrender to your authority, I willingly surrender to you today, transform me in order to form those who are in trance. Amen.

ATTITUDE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

March 12th, Friday

Gregory the Great (Bp. Th.), 604

MW Ps. 34 Exodus 5.1-6.1 Rom.9.19-29
EW Ps. 35(om.v.4-8, 26) Exodus 6.2-13,28-7.7 John 8.12-30

And Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.” (Ex 5: 2)

Egyptians worshipped nine gods-Osiris, Hekt, Seb, Hatkok, Apis, Typhon, Shu, Serapia and Ra.

For pharaoh there were only nine gods that they knew of and they worshipped them. When Moses and Aaron met with pharaoh and told him what the LORD God says, Pharaoh was furious, may be according to him Moses and Aaron were blaspheming or maybe they had planned a scheme to evacuate the generations of Jacob out of Egypt. There could be more interpretations to this incident, but what is clear is Pharaoh’s response to Moses and Aaron.

Taken for granted that Pharaoh did not know LORD God, he could have enquired and done some research about Moses’ God. He could have requested Moses to reveal more about his God so that he gets a better picture, before reacting in a sharp tone that disgraced the God of Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh lost it all because of his attitude.

The sharp reaction of Pharaoh against God and his remark full of pride and arrogance led him and his kingdom to downfall. Pharaoh was the king and could have dealt with Moses and Aaron in a kind manner trying to gather as much information as possible.

The same episode was repeated on the deck of the unsinkable ship-Titanic. On its maiden voyage, a passenger asked the dock hand, ‘**Is this ship really unsinkable?**’ The dock hand replied, ‘**Yes, lady, God himself couldn’t sink this ship**’. Titanic sailed for its maiden voyage on 14th April 1912 and sank in the ocean on 15th April 1912, killing 1,517 people on board. What drowned Titanic was the attitude of the dock hand towards God.

Let’s be careful of our attitude towards God and His ministers, He watches and deals accordingly.

Prayer: Lord, help me to watch my attitude and grant that pride may never nest in my mind. Amen.

“SURPRISE”- DOES NOT EXIST IN GOD’S DICTIONARY

March 13th, Saturday

MW Ps. 36,37.1-11 Exodus 7.8-24 Rom.9.30-10.4
EW Ps. 37.12-end Exodus 7.25-8.19 John 8.31-47

For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods. (Ex 7: 12)

Pharaoh was no doubt very powerful in all the spheres for he was the king of Egypt and he was armed with wise men and sorcerers. Old Testament tells us that such evil bodies existed then and were very much a part of the society. Pharaoh might be using these powers for his benefit as and when required. Surprisingly, when Moses and Aaron confronted pharaoh with God’s instructions, Pharaoh would have been surprised when Aaron’s serpent consumed the serpents created by his people. God was declaring and challenging openly that I am the Supreme Being, but Pharaoh failed to realize.

It is true that in this post-modern globalised world, people from our faith and other faith too practice black magic and witchcraft. They look for a quick permanent solution but they do not realize that though it poses to be effective but truly stating it is a temporary solution along with an entrance to the dark world, a world which has opposed and rejected Jesus.

Numerous incidents and events that are recorded in the Bible very clearly expose that there is no power greater than God. Though there are powers yet they are all inferior to the Everlasting Supreme God. It gives us immense relief when we realize, we worship YHWH-The God of Israelites.

Prayer: Lord, truly you are the greatest and I bow to you, submitting to you with the understanding that no harm will come to me. Amen.

ARE YOU POSSESSED?

March 14th, Sunday

3 Sunday before Easter (Lent 4)
Nehemiah Goreh (Conv., Th.) bap. 1848

Theme: The power of God is manifested in the works of Jesus.

M/EW	Psalm	76	L.S.	OT	Isaiah 49.22-26b
	OT	Isaiah 49.22-26		Psalm	76.1,3,5-9
	NT	Acts 19.11-20		2nd R.	Acts 19.11-20
	and/or	Luke 11.14-26		Gosp.	Luke 11.14-26

“He who is not with Me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters”. (Luke 11:23)

Whenever I visit the capital of India, Delhi, I am shocked by the huge advertisements adorning the road sides, buildings and shops, the number of cars that ply on the roads causing major traffic jams, a huge number is added daily to the city streets. The city it seems is waiting to explode. One fine day in the month of August, I picked up the local newspaper and was welcomed with numerous advertisements announcing their annual sale. There was sale on almost everything, from apparels, shoes, watches, to fitness centres and gyms. Everybody was offering huge discounts, there was this sense of competition, who would gain the most and be crowned as the wealthiest of that season. Does that ring a bell?

This is exactly how Satan is working in the lives of people, the dark forces do not want people to realize that, God has always provided his children with the essentials. Satan has made our minds mute, we find it difficult to reason, to think, to analyse and we are simply flowing in the sea of materialism. The person could not lead a normal life for he was possessed with a demon. Jesus casted out the mute demon and gave life to the person, he began to speak and was now able to lead a normal life.

The demon of materialism has bitten our community too, and only Jesus can cast out the demon, are we willing to approach Him for freedom from the bondage?

Prayer: Lord, I pray that you may free me from the demon of materialism, and allow me to dwell on you for the essentials. Amen.

LET US PRAY

March 15th, Monday

Vethappan Solomon (Ev.) landed on Car Nicobar, 1895

MW	Ps. 40	Exodus 8.20-9.12	Rom.10.5-end
EW	Ps. 41	Exodus 9.13-end	John 8.48-end

“Intercede for me.” (Ex 8: 28)

Prayer is a powerful weapon in the hands of a believer. Prayers have changed God's decisions, led to new discoveries and conquered many battles. All the above mentioned is preserved in the Scriptures for us to lead a prayerful life.

Pharaoh too felt the need, something inside him was moving him, urging him, compelling him to prayer. He tells Moses willingly to intercede for him without any external influence acting upon him. The powerful king of Egypt felt the need of prayer. Though it was between God and him personally but, he willingly told Moses to intercede for somewhere he was realizing that there is somebody else who is more powerful than him. This realization was not very strong at this point for we read on to know that after the fourth plague ended, he hardened his heart again.

The same happens with us too, we know there is power in prayer, but we utilize it only when we are surrounded by crisis, uncertainties. We lack consistency and this leads to chaos.

Jesus spent a lot of time in communion with His Father, when he needed it so much, think, how much more we require it. Someone around, needs us to intercede for him, have you identified him?

***You and I cannot walk,
Unless we draw strength from above,
Our soul needs bread and butter
which is supplied only by the Creator,
through prayer alone,
we will receive,
all that you and I need.***

Prayer: Lord, this is my prayer, that I may pray to know your will for my life that will lead me to celestial life. Amen.

GOD NEVER LOSES

March 16th, Tuesday

MW	Ps. 42,43	Exodus 10.1-20	Rom. 11.1-12
EW	Ps. 44	Exodus 10.21-11end	John 9.1-23

Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left'. (Ex 10: 12)

Some people cannot stand insects, they just hate the very site of them, and I belong to that category. My friends in school would catch a dragon-fly or a grass-hopper and would tie his legs with thread and would play with it, believing it to be a matter of amusement. They would often tease me for they knew I got irritated just by their sight.

God too knew that sending locusts on the Egyptians would irritate them, and they spoke to Pharaoh in vs.7, 'Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?' Egypt was already finished before the eighth plague could attack them. They were still surviving for the food left undamaged by the hail was available to them. When Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh about locusts, the servants of Pharaoh got alarmed. Food was essential for survival, and now God had decided to attack their food depots and the vegetation. Not a single grain would be left.

Locusts were common in that area and a swarm was believed to cover 400 square miles. It is a well known fact that each locust eats its own weight per day. Any crop left undamaged by the hail would be devoured.

God wanted Pharaoh to realize that he is finite and that he is dealing with an infinite God. Everything that is created is His masterpiece and He alone possesses and commands, He is the ultimate ruler and no one else has the authority to command. God made Pharaoh and Egyptians suffer because He wanted them to go through temporary suffering which would prepare them for eternal home rather than suffering for permanence in hell.

God will do anything to get us onto the right track, are we willing to cooperate or fight a losing battle?

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for your plans for my life, I am unable to understand them but I know they are meant for my good. Amen.

FREEDOM, AT LAST

March 17th, Wednesday

Patrick of Ireland (Bp., Ev.) 461

MW	Ps. 45	Exodus 12.1-20	Rom.11.13-24
EW	Ps. 46,47	Exodus 12.21-42	John 9.24-end

“And thus you shall eat: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s Passover”. (Ex 12: 11)

The Hebrew community was into slavery for 430 years, it is difficult to understand their culture, religion, society norms and its functions for it was all erased by the thorny slavery of the Egyptians. They had nothing that belonged personally to them, being into slavery had altered their originality. They were not themselves, probably they were just machines in human flesh made to function as per the programming.

Finally! a sigh of relief for the Hebrew community, for the institution of Passover would be a day of new beginning. God established the annual Passover Feast to commemorate His protecting the Israelites from the last plague and their final deliverance from slavery. It signified their adoption by God and gave them a new identity. The Hebrew word *pesah* means “to spare”, “to spare”. It has the connotation of “protection”.

They were free from oppression and slavery and now would freely breathe in the open. What a sense of freedom; they were beginning to feel knowing that God was on their side. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was with them.

The same God who was at work in the Old Testament is the same who saves us from the bondage and slavery of sin. John the Baptist announced, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the son of the world!”(John 1:29). The blood of the lamb saved the Israelites from physical bondage and death, the blood of Jesus saves those who believe in Him from spiritual bondage and death.

*What can wash away my sin,
nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for taking the cursed cross for me, enable me to be a true witness of you today. Amen.

GOD- A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE

March 18th, Thursday

Cyril of Jerusalem (Bp. Th.), 386

MW	Ps. 48	Exodus 13.17—14.9	Rom.11.25-end
EW	Ps. 49	Exodus 14.10-end	John 10.1-21

“And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night”. (Ex 13: 21)

I've been to Jaipur on a number of occasions. The culture, society, its historical forts and monuments intrigue me. When I wonder about their architecture and engineering, I marvel at their expertise of everything, from the location where the fort has to be built to the minutest details of the main door. Everything is so planned and dealt with neatly. The idea being, it should solve the purpose of its existence.

Who guided them to perfection and provided them the education of engineering? By looking at their architecture, I feel they never committed any mistake, I observed their monuments and palaces, and I could not locate a grey area where I believe they could have improved. Who was their guide, engineer and architect?

It is beautiful to note that God himself went *before* the Hebrew community, giving them the comfort and support that I AM with you. What a wonderful traveller's guide! God's presence was with them during day and night. They had now no one to fear, or to be frightened of, God was their keeper. He gave them specific guidance.

God does not leave His people to find their own way, He leads them to the place He has prepared for them. There is a saying in the corporate world, Boss says, 'go', leader says, 'let's go'. God is our leader and His presence is always with us, be it day or night.

*He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me,
His faithful servant I will be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

Prayer: Lord, help me to follow you faithfully as you lead me all the way to heaven for you alone are the way. Amen.

HALLELUJAH!

March 19th, Friday

MW	Ps. 50	Exodus 15.1-21	Romans 12
EW	Ps. 51	Exodus 15.22—16.12	John 10.22-39

“The LORD is my strength and song; and He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God and I will exalt Him”. (Ex 15: 2)

|: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! :|: For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! :|For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

|: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! :|The kingdom of this world

Is become the kingdom of our Lord,

And of His Christ, and of His Christ;

And He shall reign for ever and ever,

For ever and ever, forever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords,

|: King of kings, and Lord of lords, :|

And Lord of lords,

And He shall reign,

And He shall reign forever and ever,

King of kings, forever and ever,

And Lord of lords,

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! And He shall reign forever and ever,

|: King of kings! and Lord of lords! :|

And He shall reign forever and ever,

King of kings! and Lord of lords!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah!

Handel's Messiah premiered on April 13, 1742 as a charitable benefit, raising 400 pounds and freeing 142 men from debtor's prison. A year later, Handel staged it in London. Controversy emanating from the Church of England continued to plague Handel, yet the King of England attended the performance. As the first notes of the triumphant Hallelujah Chorus rang out, the king was reputedly so overcome with emotions that he rose to his feet. Following

the royal protocol, the entire audience stood too, initiating a tradition that has lasted more than two centuries.

Even the king could not contain himself and stood in awe of God, how great our God is. Let us praise God with all that we are, for just as He was good with our ancestors, so He is good to us, provides us, protects us and keeps us, glory be to Him forever and forever.

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for saving my life from the eternal fire, I praise you and give you all the glory and honour, make use of my life for thy glory. Amen.

OUR DAILY BREAD

March 20th, Saturday

MW Ps. 52 Exodus 16.13-end Romans 13
EW Ps. 53,54(om.v.5) Exodus 17.1-18.5 John 10.40-11.16

And Moses said to them, “This is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. (Ex 16: 15)

214 million hungry in India as food prices soar in the financial year 2008-09. The statistics is alarming, and WHO (World Health Organization) states the key facts about global food security crisis.

- An estimated 3.5 million people die annually from malnutrition, a number that is expected to rise due to the ongoing food crisis.
- 21 countries already have very high levels of acute and chronic under-nutrition.
- Poor people spend over half their disposable income on food, depleting household resources for health.
- The inability to afford nutritious food forces many poorer people to have a less nutritious, unbalanced diet.
- Less healthy diets will affect child growth and impair the micro nutrition status of all age groups.
- Long-term malnutrition impacts of the crisis will include impaired mental development, reduced work productivity, and higher rates of chronic disease.

God provided the children of Israel their daily meals, they had to plant and water nothing and no hard labour at all, and they enjoyed the manna. They faced nothing of what is listed above, praise God for his providence. God provides us our daily bread, let us pray for those who do not have the basic necessities and needs. Let us do our bit by sharing our blessings with people who don't have a meal for a day. Let's do unto others as God has done to us, share.

Prayer: Lord, help me to share from my portion and grant that I may proclaim your love with your children, in the name of Christ I pray. Amen.

CRUX IMMISSA
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

March 21st, Sunday **2 Sunday before Easter(Lent 5)**
Benedict (Monk), c. 550

Theme: The magnetism of the cross.

M/EW	Psalm 66	L.S.	OT	Isaiah 53.6, 10-11
	OT	Isaiah 53.1-12	Psalm	22.22-28
	NT	Hebrews 5.1-10	Epistle.	Hebrews 5.1-10
	and/or	John 12.20-36a	Gosp.	John 12.20-36a

Notice of festival of Annunciation of Mary on 25 March and Palm Sunday on 28 March

“And Jesus answered them saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified”. (John 12: 23)

The focal point in any church is the Cross. I have noticed various types and sizes of crosses, small, big, huge, some have round edges, some have flowery edges, some have Victorian designs, some are made of wood, others made of cement, some have the figure sculptured on them and some are just plain. Whatever the design or creativity that has been applied to the cross, it sends out the same meaning, that Jesus died for humanity.

Several thoughts came to my mind as I was preparing to write this particular devotion. The Cross on which our Saviour rested, was it built with care to provide less pain and more support, was it polished so that the grains would not rub against Jesus' flesh, was the cross made of light weight wood so that Jesus would be able to carry it comfortably, was any skilled carpenter employed so as to check the measurements and the dimensions of the cross to erase any discomfort. I have no positive response to any of these thoughts and I believe they don't exist either.

The cross was a cursed and a severe punishment given only to slaves, provincials and to the lowest types of criminals. Before crucifixion, it was customary for the victim to be scourged with the *flagellum*, a whip with leather thongs.

Jesus knew the customs well and was prepared to face it all, He knew what he would go through, the same we would have had to go through if we were

to pay for our sins. Jesus conquered death and washed away our sins completely, full and final.

The Cross of Calvary is meant for all, and is not exclusive for any society or class. Jesus died for all and the message of the cross is for all. Let us not create compartments in the church and limit our testimonies to chosen elite of the society. Let us always remember, if Jesus begins to discriminate, none of us will enter Heaven, ever.

Prayer: Lord, take me to people who need you, help me to share with them the beauty of the Cross. Amen.

ARE YOU ABLE-GOD'S CALLING

WORLD DAY OF WATER

March 22nd, Monday

MW	Ps. 57,61	Exodus 18.5-end	Rom.14.1-18
EW	Ps. 62	Exodus 19	John 11.17-44

Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. (Ex 18: 25)

God has a perfect timing for his people. He planned Jethro's visit in such a manner, that not only did he get to meet his son-in-law, but also counselled him in forming a second line of leadership for there was crisis in the camp, as there was only one leader and no substitute. Moses had people around him all day until evening, he had to solve their disputes. This was taking a toll on his health and would have worsened if Jethro did not visit him and gave him inputs to form a group of men to help him.

It was a cumbersome job Moses had at hand. Choosing able men was difficult, he would have probably set parameters and standards to evaluate participants. It could also be possible that people played politics for the position was that of a judge. The office of a judge was in position to ensure smooth functioning of the society. Moses was able to choose able men and delegated responsibility. Jethro's advice worked miracle for Moses and the people.

Our country is suffering from acute water problem this year, most of the Northern States have not received rains, wherein Mumbai was flooded with water yet there was acute problem of drinking water. Strange, but true, water was available in much quantity but could not be used for drinking, bathing, cooking, washing etc. Who was responsible in the water department, was the leader inefficient or the second line of leadership failed to cooperate? Coordination is essential for a system to be effective. Moses' leadership saw no inefficiencies for the leaders chosen were ABLE, a perfect illustration for better efficiency.

Prayer: Lord, you are the greatest leader of all times, lead me and prepare me to lead others to you. Amen.

ESSENTIAL GUIDELINES FOR HEAVEN

March 23rd, Tuesday

MW	Ps. 63(omv.21-23)	Exodus 20.1-21	Rom.14.19-15.13
EW	Ps. 64	Exodus 22.21-23.9	John 11.45-end

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery". (Ex 20: 3)

The Ten Commandments as they are popularly known were basically guidelines for the Hebrew community. They were a 'no people' and God had chosen them to be a ruling nation. They had no clue about the realities of the world, no education about the true God, no social ethics, because they were slaves and perhaps they had no culture of their own. They would have adopted social practices and norms from the Egyptians who were barbaric, brutal and cruel towards them. The Hebrew community had suffered for a long time working as slaves, and God had decided to give the land of Canaan to this community. They only had to follow God's ways in order to inherit the land, no labour, no hard work, just simply a free gift.

By instituting the Ten Commandments, God was working at two different levels, first, he was initiating a process, by which the Hebrew community would become dependent on God and secondly, he was introducing transformative societal norms, a healthy culture and sturdy community life. The process of transformation had begun with God's initiative. The Hebrew community had to learn the new way to life and had to become somebody from nobody and God was helping them attain that position and status. Only transformed members entered the Promised Land.

God took the initiative for us too, by sending Jesus to die for us. The act of transformation was done on the Cross and now all those who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and do His will have got their ticket for the final destination- Heaven.

Check your pockets, do you have the ticket?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to follow your ways so that I may get my personal ticket for the final departure. Amen.

**THE DO'S AND DONT'S
WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY**

March 24th, Wednesday

MW	Ps. 65	Exodus 23.10-17,20-end	Rom.15.14-29
EW	Ps. 66,67	Exodus 24	John 12.1-19

“Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared”. (Ex 23: 20)

Before planning a holiday trip, it is always advisable to check the weather conditions, accommodation, travel etc., of the destination. In order to save time, money and to enjoy the holiday this is important. There are many travel and tour operators who offer lucrative discounts, talk about exotic locations and provide many facilities along with wonderful schemes. The whole idea being, we'll take care of you. I have been on one such trip with my wife and we thoroughly enjoyed our holiday. It was absolute fun, with absolutely no hassles for we co-operated with the tour operator, who told us the do's and dont's very clearly.

God is telling Moses, your visit to the land of Amorites, the Hittites, the perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites will be hassle free on one condition, you have to be obedient. The Hebrew community was a rebellious community and to ensure smooth transition from one place to another, cooperation was very essential. God was telling Moses the do's and the dont's for the community.

In the town of Kalka and nearby areas, there are 20 different churches, some are from the main line, few are independent while others are house-churches. For the effective promotion of Gospel in this area, co-ordination and co-operation is very essential. All the leaders of the different churches ensure that, we are diverse in non essentials but common in essentials. Each time there is a problem on the Christian community of this area, we all come together to deal with it.

Today is World Tuberculosis Day, let us co-operate with the NGO's and government institutions that are fighting this deadly disease. We all can make a difference if we come together.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for showing me the importance of co-operation, help me to be cooperative with others. Amen.

IMPOSSIBLE- I AM POSSIBLE

March 25th, Thursday

The Annunciation of Mary

Theme: Thanksgiving, that the Work of God took our human nature, through Mary.

M/EW	Psalm 72	L.S.	OT	Isaiah 7.10-14
	OT	Isaiah 7.10-14	Psalm	40.6-10
	NT	Galatians 4.1-7	Epistle	Galatians 4.1-5
	and/or	Luke 1.26-38	Gosp.	Luke 1.26-38

For with God nothing will be impossible. (Lk 1: 37)

The angel Gabriel surprised Mary with his visit and gave her the good news that baby Jesus would be under her care. Mary was surprised at the angel's greeting, it was unusual, she wasn't expecting any news and she was given the good news of all times, mother of baby Jesus. Mary at once accepted the blessing knowing what the angel had told her, nothing will be impossible with God. Now, she was ready to follow the path which was directed and designed by God. Mary would have had questions but calmly gave herself to God's care.

God created Mary for a specific purpose that was revealed to her because she found favour in God's eyes and this happened at a time destined by God. Just like Mary, we too have been created for a specific purpose and God would reveal it to us if we find favour in His eyes, and this would take place at the right time of our lives.

Mary believed that with God nothing is impossible, she surrendered completely and knew God is in total control and nothing will go wrong. Eventually nothing went wrong, everything happened according to God's will and Jesus took the Cross as was God's plan. We got our salvation.

We are God's creation created for a specific purpose, God tells us today to believe in him and know that NOTHING is impossible with him. Are you struggling with some problem and don't know whom to trust, God created you, come to him for the solution.

Our God has no question Mark (?), in his dictionary.

Prayer: Lord, you have total control over the entire universe, help me to trust you with my life, I know you've never gone wrong and you never will. Amen.

ASK THE RIGHT ONE- GOD

March 26th, Friday Mathura Nath Bose (Conv., Ev.) bap. 1865

MW Ps. 70(om.v.12) Exod. 31.18-32.14 Rom.15.30-16.16
EW Ps. 71 Exod.32.15-end John 12.20-36a

“Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him”. (Ex 32: 1)

A group of people if join hands for a single aim can achieve it, whether it be right or wrong. But, there has to be a person, or a thought that should be the starting point. Somebody has to take the leadership, today's Old Testament portion suggests that the people came together for they saw Moses had not returned from the mountain. How come all of them thought of the same thing at one time? It is quite possible that somebody noticed that their leader has not returned and that they were without a leader. They did not approach Aaron to inquire of Moses rather they went to him seeking for a new leader. They were not concerned of their leader who brought them out of Egypt and led them thus far. Everything was carefully planned and for a smooth and trouble free execution of their plan, they approached Aaron sighting their desire as their need.

Aaron could have called the appointed judges and discussed with him the need and desire of the community. He felt no need and instructed people to bring their gold. They wanted a substitute for Moses, in reality they wanted a substitute of God and Aaron gave into their desire.

The church is the body of Christ that is governed by the Holy Spirit and is assisted by human hands, the priest and the pastorate committee members. The priest always takes the needs and requests of the congregation and places them before God. God answers them and the committee members execute the answer in practical application.

For we know we are limited, we approach God for an answer, he answers, in his sweet time according to his own sweet will. Things might not be right with us but with the True God on our side, things won't remain entangled always. Approach him fearlessly now.

Prayer: Lord, I praise you for seeing things that my naked eye cannot see, I seek your will for my life which would lead me to eternal destiny. Amen.

WHAT'S YOUR ATTITUDE?

March 27th, Saturday

MW Ps. 72 Exod.33.1-16 Rom.16.17-end
EW Ps. 73 Exod.33.17-34.9 John 12.36b-end

“ Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey and ; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people”. (Ex 33: 3)

Did not God know that He is dealing with a stubborn community? A community that was obedient to Egyptians had turned stubborn now. Their stubbornness was not towards each other, or towards other people of the community, it was towards God. God had decided to punish them earlier for their stubbornness, but Moses pleaded with God to spare the Israelites. God forgave them and changed his plans to punish them.

God does not want His people to be of stubborn nature. Israelites several times invited the wrath of God onto them because of their stubborn attitude. The community were free from the bondage of slavery and believed themselves to be capable of being without God.

They wanted to be independent and thus by revolting and through their stubborn attitude wanted to have their own way and were disobedient.

The same God who was leading them is the God who is leading us. They were promised the Promised land but their stubbornness prevented their entry. We have been promised the eternal home- heaven, let's insure that we do not follow the footsteps of our forefathers who by disobeying God landed into trouble.

Heaven will give entry to only those who have obeyed the Master.

Prayer: I pray to you, O Heavenly Master, to help me watch my attitude with you and with your creation, give me the grace to look up to you for any directions needed. Amen.

THY KINGDOM COME

March 28th, Sunday

Palm Sunday (Lent 6)

Theme: Christ enters Jerusalem to offer his life for the salvation of the world.

L.S. (Procession) Luke 19.29-40

M/EW	Psalm	69.1-21	OT	Isaiah 50.4-10
	OT	Isaiah 50.4-10	Psalm	69.1-3, 7-9, 13-15, 20, 21
	NT	1 Cor 1.18-25		
	and/or	Luke 22.1-23.56 or 23.1-49	Epistle.	1 Cor 1.18-25
			Gosp.	Luke 22.1-23.56 or 23.1-49

Notice of Holy Week and Easter

and when..... “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit”, having said this, He breathed His last. (Luke 23: 46)

Christ made a very humble entry into Jerusalem People often used donkeys for transportation as it was a chief mode of transport. However a king would never use an animal which is considered to be the lowest, but Jesus used what was considered to be the lowest. The prophecy had to be fulfilled that depicted and displayed His humility.

Christ willingly entered Jerusalem knowing what approached Him. He had decided and was determined to pay the price for our salvation.

No one has ever faced a more horrifying and excruciating assignment than Jesus did. Yet He willingly submitted His life into His Father’s hands. Such submission ought to be in our character.

Though we are Christians, we are often reluctant to do what Christ did for us. Jesus came as a servant, humbly ministering to everyone including the ones who would betray Him and deny Him. We are to proclaim the Gospel to the unreached and to the ones without hope. Christ had a serving and selfless attitude, the same attitude is required of us.

Many Christian NGO’s and social welfare organisations are working for the social cause, there missionary organisations fulfilling Christ’s great Commission.

Christ’s ministry is done by His people, by His will and plan and in His time. Are you anywhere in the picture?

Prayer: Lord, help me to have the servanthood attitude as I prepare to serve your people today. Amen.

HIS LOVE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

March 29th, Monday

Monday before Easter

L.S. OT Isaiah 42.1-7 **Psalm** 27.2-5, 13-14 **Gosp.** Luke 19.41-48

MW **Ps.** 13,25 **Isaiah** 63.1-9 **John** 13.36-14.14

EW **Ps.** 27,28 **Jonah** 2.1-9 **John** 14.15-end

“Jesus answered’deny me three times”! (John 13: 38)

Many today are willing to die for their leaders or religious faith, without knowing the eternal truth. In a country like India, many have died as they react to the arrest or death of a party leader. Committing suicide to make a political or religious point has become a trend in certain cultures. Hunger strikes, *dharmas*, protest rally are common in our country. Very few of these are genuine and most of them are politically motivated or arranged for some personal interest.

Peter’s false confidence is confronted by Jesus, he’s told that he would deny Christ three times before the cock crows, that is, before the dawn. Jesus uses the phrase, ‘truly, truly, I say to you that the cock will definitely not crow until Peter has denied him. Jesus here expresses his foreknowledge.

What a wonderful saviour we serve, who knows exactly what will happen next. Let us accept His Supremacy and show our loyalty which Peter failed to do. He acted beyond time and thought He would be a success. He was told his reaction beforehand. Overconfidence has a danger of taking us away from our God. But Jesus was loyal to Peter and showed him His constant love and consideration for his weaknesses.

We too may fall into the trap of overconfidence, let us be strong in our faith and commitment and allow God’s love to keep us away from all danger.

Prayer: Lord, when times are rough and the road not easy, help me to be faithful to you and declare that I worship you. Amen.

PRUNING IS NECESSARY

March 30th, Tuesday

Tuesday before Easter

L.S.	OT	Isaiah 49.1-7	Psalm 71.1-2, 9-12	Gosp. Mark 14.1-9
MW	Ps. 31	Lamentations 1.1-12	John 15.1-10	
EW	Ps. 88	Lamentations 3.1-33	John 15.11-end	

“Every branch..... more fruit”. (John 15: 2)

St. John’s Church, CNI, Kalka, Haryana has a beautiful garden with lots of plants that add beauty to the church compound. The garden starts giving trouble when it rains heavily for days and the growth of the plants advances due to plenty of water, air and sunlight. Regular trimming and pruning becomes essential during the monsoons.

The function of every branch is to ‘bear fruit’ which means doing good works after repentance. God expects good works from human beings, and failure to yield will lead them to God’s judgement, which results in being separated from His community. The ones that bear fruit and exhibit it through their good works would need pruning so that they may bear more fruit. The whole process of fruit bearing is in His hands.

God is in control of our lives and by doing good works we bring glory to His name, this responsibility is given to every Christian. We live in a pluralistic society, where everyone promotes his/her own religion. The fight to promote one’s religion is a never ending game, we are to promote the Gospel by bearing good fruits. God purifies the vine by removing the branches that do not bear fruit, it is God’s garden and He will protect us from the unfaithful people who do not bear fruit. Our job is to only bear the good fruit and not act as a controller, let God alone keep the vine pure, this is a task we cannot and are not assigned to do.

Prayer: Lord, take my life and let it bear fruits for your glory, prune me to bear more fruit for thy kingdom. Amen.

TALK YOUR FAITH

March 31st, Wednesday

Wednesday before Easter

L.S.	OT	Isaiah 50.4-1	Ps. 55.12-14, 20-22	Gosp. Matt. 26.1-5, 14-15
MW	Ps. 42, 43	Zechariah 13	John 16.1-15	
EW	Ps. 41, 54	Lev. 16.2-24	John 16.16-end	

“ They will make.....to God”. (John 16: 2)

History has spoken out rightly and fearlessly that Christians have been tortured, persecuted, and brutally murdered for their faith in Jesus Christ. There have been plenty of cases in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat which created headlines and shocked the world, but there have been cases that have not been recorded and the world did not know of them.

Why are we persecuted, and threatened each time we share our faith, Jesus warns that this will happen, it is certain that His followers will be thrown out of the synagogue, apparently by the synagogue authorities. More than this will happen, some of them will be put to death. This would be their service to God.

Jesus openly stated about the sufferings that would come upon the disciples, warning them not to drift away from the faith in Him. Many of our people have suffered, died but they never gave up on their faith. Times are coming when we will be persecuted, tried in the court of law, sentenced to life imprisonment, or given capital punishment. Come what may, we shall be witnesses

Our forefathers have gladly accepted suffering and persecution, it was a tool to promote the Gospel, now it is our turn to stand firm in our faith and advance the Gospel against the raging times. Our forefathers succeeded and so will we.

**Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;**

**Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take my self, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.**

Prayer: Lord, my life to me is a gift from you, help me to live it only for you. Amen.