

Catholic Church of the Presentation - Montana

Parish Priest : Fr Sam Madza SMA - Cell: 063 157 5421 (*Emergencies only please*) **Office Hours:** Tuesday to Friday 09:00 -12:00 **Office Telephone :** 012 543 2771

Addresses: 214 Veronica Rd, PO Box 908862, Montana 0151, Pretoria **Email :** montana.catholic.pretoria@gmail.com **Website :** montanacatholicchurch.com

The Christian virtue of Hope

The readings of today highlight three key aspects of Jesus' redemptive mission which culminates in the descent of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Shepherd, the precursor and the intercessor/advocate.

The apostles demonstrate the hope they have in God by preaching the risen Christ to the early Christian communities, baptizing and laying on hands to impart the Holy Spirit. We can gradually see a picture of the sacraments of Christian initiation being put together by the apostolic tradition (baptism, confirmation, holy communion). The faith the apostles have in Jesus is beyond their ordinary human will and intellect. Faith is a consequence of love and when we love, we are inclined to naturally obey. Therefore, obedience to the commandments is not about the 'dos and don'ts' of the law. It is rather endearing experience of being immersed in the love of the One who speaks to God on our behalf even before we dare to say anything.

As human beings, we treasure memories, events, places and people in the depths of our hearts and often look forward to reliving the experience over and over again. Let us also "sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts" (1Peter 3:15-18). The real Christian experience of the risen Lord takes place first in the heart before we eventually end up going to church. The way we live out this new life in Christ lends credence to it.

While the global lockdown remains a daunting moment in human history, may we not be deterred to show with gentleness and reverence, reasons why our hope in God is still firm. Let us not indulge in toxic positivity by denying that we miss our freedom; but bravely acknowledge our current narrative as our sufferings bring acceptance, acceptance brings hope and our hope will not put us to shame because God's Spirit is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us (Romans 5:5). Nothing can separate us from the love of God and we cannot not be orphaned by the lockdown. This is the truth the world cannot bear at the moment because it believes there is a mysterious something we ought to always chase.

C. S. Lewis says "aim at heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in': aim at earth and you will get neither." This is why Jesus invites us to continuously keep looking forward to the eternal world with our lenses of hope. My dear friends, all earthly promises are fluff! If you doubt it, what has become of them now?

Have a blessed Sunday

Fr Sam Madza SMA

Participating in Holy Mass during Lock down

- **On Radio** 576AM and on DSTV Audio Channel 870 Live Streaming: www.radioveritas.co.za
- **Jesuit Institute** Live Video Streaming www.jesuitinstitute.org.za/masses
- **The Vatican – Pope Francis** : You Tube : Shalom World www.shalomtlive/vatican or www.vaticannews.va/en.htm
- Daily Mass Crusade is a **parish whatsapp group**. Contact Richard : 076 539 8365

Growing our faith in the time through supplementary reading and reflection

- Please read **Just what is the Spirit** that is extracted from the **Southern Cross** our weekly Catholic Newspaper.. We strongly encourage parishioners to subscribe to the weekly. Go to subscriptions@southerncross.co.za for details.
- We are encouraged to read through the Acts of the Apostles as we progress towards the end of the Easter Season.

How can we assist?

The Caring Committee has the resources to assist those in need of assistance. Please feel free to contact either Nthabiseng (083 361 8531) or Richard (076 539 8365) if help is needed.

We thank those who have responded to the letter sent out last week. If you can make a financial contribution however large or small, please make use of EFT to the Parish Bank account (details below) and designate this as "Caring donation"

Let us pray this week:

- For our Holy Father Pope Francis. That he will be kept safe and remain in good health as he continues to lead our Church through this time of great uncertainty.
- For the Bishops of Southern Africa and for our Clergy. May they receive the grace and strength to continue their work of leading the faithful entrusted to their care.
- For our own parish priest Fr Sam. That he may be guided by the Holy Spirit and remain strong in his commitment to the priesthood through this lonely time of isolation from his parish community.
- For our families. That the bonds between parents and children may continue to grow through praying together.
- For those who are deeply troubled at this time. That we may be aware of their needs and be moved to reach out to them with love and kindness.

Parish Bank Account for regular pledges and EFT : Bank: Standard Bank, Montana Kolonnade Beneficiary: THE CHURCH OF THE PRESENTATION
Account number: 013157108 Reference : Allocated Pledge number or anonymous if preferred.

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