



St Francis of Assisi Parish



## REFLECTIONS

### THE MYSTERY OF "40"

Dear Friends,

Shalom.

By the end of April, it will be almost 40 days since we have closed our Churches, have enclosed ourselves in our homes, have stopped driving and going to places. Almost all of our human activities have been suspended. We have undergone a "lockdown" situation, wondering how long it will go on....?

However, as believers and Christians the number 40 has a prophetic and religious significance. 40 is an important Biblical number. It all started with the history of Salvation designed by God.

At the time of Noah in the Old Testament it rained for 40 days, causing the Greatest Deluge in history.

Moses the great Prophet stayed 40 days in Prayer before God as he received the Ten Commandments.

**EXODUS:** from Egypt to Canaan took 40 years travel under the leadership of Moses. Jonah, the prophet received the news of Nineveh's conversion after 40 days of preaching. Jesus, our Lord Himself, fasted for 40 days before He began his Public Ministry. We ourselves observe 40 days of Fasting during the season of Lent. In our life 40 years of life is an important milestone. And so on the whole in the Bible, whenever number 40 is mentioned Big Changes have taken place.

**CORONA-40:** Now, we are almost 40 days in Lockdown. What is happening?

Many good things seem to have happened:

The Streets in Cities and Towns are kept clean of dust and dirt. There is no more Air Pollution. Rivers and Waterways have been purified. Plants and Gardens have grown well, look green and safe. There seem to be no crime situation in city streets and no looting.

Hospitals and Doctors give better treatments to people.

The Land and Earth are resting. Family Values have improved.

Relationships have been strengthened.

Most people have turned to God in Prayer.

Online Religious services and celebrations have become popular and have more participants.

At home, men have learnt cooking and children have learnt to play together and learn.

Televisions have changed programs for better entertainments.

Likewise, we can go on counting the benefits of these 40 days of lockdown. On the whole the very year of 2020 (20+20=40) has gained a great significance.

### **What is going to be the Future?**

A better Society, better living conditions, better way of looking at life and things, better way of keeping and practising Faith, a new approach to material things in life.

More Love, more Respect, more Care, more Happiness and Joy, more Praise to God.

May all these happen in our Society.

For a New Lifestyle...Please open the New Testament and please read the Letter of Paul to the Colossians 3:1-17 (see attachment).

GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU.

Fr Joseph Rathnaraj

Parish Priest

25 April 2020

## The Letter of Paul to the Colossians

### General Norms of Christian Behaviour

**3** <sup>1</sup> So then, if you are risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your mind on the things that are above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup> For you have died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, put to death what is earthly in your life: immorality, impurity, inordinate passions, wicked desires and the greed which is idol worship. <sup>6</sup> These are the things that arouse the wrath of God.

<sup>7</sup> For a time you followed this way and lived in such disorders. <sup>8</sup> Well then, reject them all: anger, fury, slander, evil intentions, malice, and let no abusive words be heard from your lips.

<sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, since you have stripped off the old self and its way of thinking, <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self which is being renewed according to the image of its creator. <sup>11</sup> There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, between the circumcised and the uncircumcised. There are no aliens, barbarians, slaves or freemen, but Christ is all and is in all.

<sup>12</sup> Clothe yourselves then, as it fitting for God's chosen people, holy and beloved to him, with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and forgive one another wherever there is any occasion to do so. As the Lord has forgiven you, forgive one another. <sup>14</sup> And over all these put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. <sup>15</sup> May the peace of Christ overflow in your hearts, for to this end you were called to be one body. And be thankful.

<sup>16</sup> Let the word of God dwell in you in all its richness. Teach and admonish one another with words of wisdom. With thankful hearts sing to God psalms, hymns and spontaneous praise. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do or say, do it in the name of Jesus the Lord, giving thanks to God the Father through him.