

Spiritually Speaking

What is your experience of Christ in your personal life?

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

We are all greatly influenced by what others think and say about us and like to be well thought of by others. There is a danger here. We might make popularity the goal of our lives; and we might forget that the only thing that matters is the reality of who and what we are. No matter what others may think of me, God thinks well of me because I am his child.



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

Jesus asks His disciples what people speak about him and what is their opinion about Jesus whom they follow. Do you have an answer to this question He put before His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?"

Isaiah (50: 4-9) describes partial answers to this question, that He is the suffering Christ who has come to the world to redeem all of us from the slavery and stain of sin. In chapters 40-55, there are four short passages that scholars have called the "Songs of the Suffering Servant." Jesus saw aspects of His own life and mission foreshadowed in the Servant Songs and identified Himself and His mission with the sorrowful figure of humiliation and suffering, the Lord's servant. Like the servant described in Isaiah, Jesus's life was one of radical obedience and conformity to God's will. Thus, the prophet Isaiah invites all to be like the Messiah, be obedient to the will of your parents and elders, like Jesus as the suffering Messiah.

St. James (2:14-18) reminds us that suffering is not only something to be accepted but also something to be alleviated. James also tells us that our faith in Jesus the Messiah should be expressed in works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual. In other words, professing faith in the divinity of Christ and His role as our redeemer is useless unless we practice that faith in genuine deeds of love, mercy, forgiveness and humble service as Jesus lived and demonstrated. As Christians, we are obliged to meet the material needs of poor persons and to alleviate their sufferings. We should respond concretely to the needs and sufferings of our fellow humans. Otherwise, our faith is all talk and no action. "Faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead." James is not refuting the Pauline doctrine of salvation by faith but warns us that a lifeless or an unloved faith has no power to save (v. 14) us from judgment.

St. Mark (8:27-35) describes the journey of Jesus and His disciples from northern Galilee to Jerusalem. Along the way, Jesus gave instructions about His identity and what it meant to follow him (discipleship). Today's Gospel, relating the first of the three times Jesus foretold His passion, death and resurrection, consists of two sections, the messianic confession of Peter and Jesus's prediction of His Passion and death, followed by His clear teaching on discipleship. In this particular Gospel passage, the Lord has asked his disciples, "What is the public opinion?" Their answer was, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

The second question the Lord has put before His disciple is the same question He would like to put before us all too. Jesus is personally asking each of us who are followers and believers, "Who do you say that I am?" What is your personal opinion? For the first time in their relationship, Peter, speaking for the other disciples, declared publicly: "You are the Christ (Messiah) the Son of the living God." It is evident that Jesus was well pleased with Peter's answer. Jesus pronounced a blessing upon Peter, the only disciple in the Gospels to receive a personal blessing.

Did Peter's experience of living very close with Christ for three years prompt his response? Now, if we are asked by Christ the same question, do you have a personal answer to give Him as Peter did? We can see that Jesus was quick to explain to the disciples that He was not a political messiah who would reestablish the Davidic kingdom after ousting the Romans. Instead, He was the Messiah who would redeem mankind by His suffering, death and resurrection. Like the Suffering Servant in the first reading, Jesus accepted suffering as part of His mission and out of fidelity toward the one whom He called "Father." Jesus's example provides a challenge for us all to accept the mystery of the cross when our turn comes to follow the Suffering Servant and Suffering Messiah.

AK Morter Livestock joins American Angus Association

AK Morter Livestock, Ione, OR, is a new member of the American Angus Association, reports Mark McCully, CEO of the national breed organization headquartered in Saint Joseph, Missouri.

The American Angus Association, with more than 25,000 active adult and junior members, is the largest beef breed association in the world. Its computerized records include detailed information on over 19 million registered Angus.

The Association records ancestral information

and keeps production records and genomic data on individual animals to develop industry-leading selection tools for its members. The programs and services of the Association and its entities — Angus Genetics Inc., Angus Media, Certified Angus Beef LLC and the Angus Foundation — help members advance the beef cattle business by selecting the best animals for their herds and marketing quality genetics for the beef cattle industry and quality beef for consumers.

Good News Only

By Doris Brosnan

Long weekend, last weekend before school resumes, many school sporting competitions underway, busy families, no good news shared...

But for anyone interested: I have several Oregon grape starts volunteering where I don't want them, so give me a call if you want some. Evergreen, pretty foliage. Helpful soil stabilizer. I also have some lilac starts to give away. Love the smell of lilacs in the spring.

The HHS gridiron team was successful in their challenge to Toledo last weekend. The first game of the season ended at 19-0. And six men and five women travelled to their first high

school cross-country meet last Saturday, in which Trevor Nichols placed second. Congrats to all these young competitors. So far, spectators are able to support our Cardinals and Mustangs at the sporting events, which is good news.

As fall routines settle in, maybe time allows you to remember something you want to share with the GT readers? We hope so, always looking for a reason to smile. Please, share your good-news tidbits by sending them before Monday afternoon to dbrosnan123@gmail.com, or call 541-676-5382 or 541-223-1490, or stop me on the street.

Here's hoping that some good news comes to everyone reading this.

Music in the park to hold final concert



Chasing Ebenezer will perform for the final concert of the season.

Heppner's Music in the Park will have its final concert of the season at the city park on Main Street this Sunday, September 12, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., featuring Chasing Ebenezer, a world folk-rock band based in Portland, OR. Influenced by Celtic, African and Middle Eastern music, their tunes are alive with bohemian violin licks, world percussion and an ever-increasing array of instruments. The band is fronted by husband-and-

wife team Benjamin and Heidi Beth Sadler.

This concert series has been made possible by a generous grant from the Morrow County Unified Recreation District and facilitated by Hopeful Saints Ministry. Pulled pork sandwiches, coleslaw, cookie and drink will be available for purchase by donation to Hopeful Saints' well-drilling ministry.

More information is available by calling the church at 541-676-9970.

A View from the Green

Over the Tee Cup

The Willow Creek Country Club ladies held the Eddi Skow tournament August 31 and the WCCC women's championship September 1 at the Willow Creek Country Club.

Nancy Propheeter was named the winner of the 2021 WCCC ladies' championship overall low gross. Virginia Grant received the 2021 Eddi Skow championship overall low net and Karen Haguewood won the 2021 ladies' senior championship overall low gross.

On Tuesday, at the Eddie Skow tournament, Virginia Grant got a birdie on #17 and Nancy Propheeter got birdies on #10 and #14. Jeanne Creswick and Pat Edmundson both got a chip-in on #18.

Karen Haguewood got a birdie on #4 and Nancy Propheeter got a birdie on #10 during Wednesday's WCCC championship. Karen Haguewood also got a chip-in on #4 on Wednesday.

Obituaries

Virginia Claire "Ginger" Keithley

Virginia Claire "Ginger" Keithley, 83, of Heppner, died Thursday, September 2, 2021, at Heppner. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Ginger was born November 22, 1937, at Woodburn, OR to parents Clara R. and J. Helmut Benoist Schwarzin. She was raised and attended school at Woodburn until her family moved to Heppner where she graduated from high school.

While attending Heppner High School she met the love of her life, Everett LaVern "Vern" Keithley and they were married at the First Christian Church in Heppner November 13, 1958. They spent most of their married life in Heppner, where they raised their four children.

Ginger was very talented; she enjoyed sewing, painting ceramics, gourds and wood and basket weaving. She also enjoyed playing cards and bunco. She was a Sunday school teacher and a Blue Bird leader when her kids were young. Ginger's voice will be missed at the high school athletic events as she was a supporter of all sports.

She was a member of the First Christian Church, the Red Hat Society, Soprano and a member of the welcoming committee through the Neighborhood Center. Ginger was a friend to all; didn't know a stranger and you couldn't catch her without a smile. She

worked for many years at Coast to Coast and Peterson's Jewelers in Heppner.

Survivors include her husband, Vern of Heppner; children, Ruth Ann Keithley of Longview, WA, Linda Voltz of Apache Junction, AZ, Suzanne Buentello and her husband Jerry of Milton Freewater, Everett Jay Keithley and his wife Kelly Jo of Heppner; eight grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren; sisters, Janet Kloepfel and her husband Jerry of Vernal, UT, Sharon Harrison and her husband Robert of Lexington and Trisha Sweeney and her husband Pat of Heppner and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were, a granddaughter, Amber Lynn Lynch; son-in-law, Brian Voltz; brothers, Sam Schwarzin and Pete Schwarzin.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Medical Center, 101 E. Valencia Mesa Drive, Fullerton, CA 92835, or Shriners Hospital for Children, 3101 SW Sam Jackson Park Road, Portland, OR 97201, or to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 4550 Montgomery Ave. Suite 1100 N Bethesda, MD 20814.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements. The online condolence book is available at www.sweeneymortuary.com.

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