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“Black Holes?”

I’ve recently felt as though I was slowly being sucked into a black hole.

A black hole, in scientific terms, is a spacetime region where gravity pulls so strongly that even light cannot escape it. Since it reflects no light, it is invisible. Its effects can only be surmised from its surroundings. And, this is just how I feel sometimes, when I put on a show for family and friends trying to assure them that I’m doing fine while all around me is darkness and destruction. I do this because I don’t want my loved ones worrying about me. I post happy pictures on Facebook and Instagram to keep up appearances. But, if they were to look closely they would notice the false laughter and fake smiles. They would know I’m slowly getting depressed again.

We can go through this for a variety of reasons: the strain of work that weighs us down; the daily grind from 9 to 5 that drains us dry and wears us out; the relentless chasing after the dollar that eventually consumes our bodies, minds and emotions.

Or maybe it’s a family issue that totally absorbs us. I myself have been through a marriage, a childbirth and a divorce. And, this happened not long after I turned 20. Just when I thought that was all, more family tragedies struck. My father committed suicide and my brother had cancer. Initially, I thought that nobody should have to live through such suffering, but God believes in me and God believes that I’m strong enough to carry all this.

My faith and my religion have come to my rescue. God has come to my aid and helped me see light in the midst of such darkness. A broken marriage? Through it God gave me my children. They are happy and growing stronger each day. Because of them I’m motivated to be the best role model I can possibly be. A troubled relationship? God gives me understanding and patience. Facing a dilemma? God guides me every step of the way. I draw strength from Jesus.

How did Jesus get by knowing that the crowd welcoming Him with waving palms would soon turn against Him? How did He endure the knowledge that one of His own would betray Him and that His friends would abandon Him? The only way He could go through His passion and death was by submitting to His Father’s will. Jesus believed that in God’s hands He will be delivered from death and in turn He will deliver us from our trials and tribulations.

Yes, it is only through my faith that I can see rays of light shining out of darkness. Faith helps me feel His presence. Even as my heart is troubled and I fight against the gravity that pulls me into a black hole, I see it as the cross I have to bear. And, I believe that with the love of my family and friends and above all, with the grace of Jesus Christ, this cross becomes bearable. Even black holes fade away and in the end light shines forth.

Reflection by Ms Lena Eng

Novena notes



Palm Sunday
 Year B
 25 March 2018

Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 25 March	Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mk 14:1-15,47 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me
Mon, 26 March	Is 42:1-7; Jn 12:1-11 The Lord is my light and my help.
Tue, 27 March	Is 49:1-6; Jn 13:21-33,36-38 My lips will tell of your help.
Wed, 28 March	Is 50:4-9; Mt 26:14-25 In your great love, O Lord, answer my prayer for your favour.
Thu, 29 March Maundy Thursday	Ex 12:1-8,11-14; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15 The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.
Fri, 30 March Good Friday	Is 52:13-53:12; Hebr 4:14-16, 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19,:42 Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.
Sat, 31 March Holy Saturday	Gen 1:1-2:2, Ex 14:15-15:1, Ezek 36:16-28, Rom 6:3-11, Mk 16:1-7

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)
 Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm
 Confession: Half an hour before Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)
 Time: 6.30pm

SUNDAY MASS
 Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon, 5.30pm

PUBLIC HOLIDAY
 Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS
 Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION
 English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm
 Mandarin: 2.30pm
 Confession: After every Novena Service except after the 11am service.

DAYS OF OBLIGATION
 Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)
 6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

Novena notes

Lenten Novena

We are in the last Week of our Lenten Novena in preparation for Easter. The Theme for this special Novena is: "Jesus gives eternal life!"

27 Jan : The 7 Signs of Jesus in St. John's Gospel

3 Feb : Changing Water into Wine

10 Feb : Healing of the Royal Official's Son

17 Feb : Healing of a Crippled Man at Bethesda Pool

24 Feb : Feeding of the 5,000

3 Mar : Walking on the Water

10 Mar : Healing of the Man Born Blind

17 Mar : Raising of Lazarus from the Dead

24 Mar : Dying on the Cross

St Alphonsus Liguori Bookroom Opening Hours during Holy Week

Please take note the bookroom will be open on Maundy Thursday 29th March from 3pm to 10.30pm.

Closed on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Revised Carpark Charges

Cars

15 minutes Grace Period

Monday to Friday (5.00am to 5.00pm)

- 1st hour or part thereof - \$1.50

Subsequent 30 minutes or part thereof - \$0.50

Per entry after 5.00pm - \$2.50

Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday (5.00am to 5.00pm)

- 1st hour or part thereof - \$1.50

Subsequent 30 minutes or part thereof - \$0.50

Per entry after 5.00pm - \$2.50

Motor Cycles

15 minutes Grace Period

Monday to Friday (6.00am to 6.00pm)

- 1st hour or part thereof - \$0.80

Per entry after 6.00pm - \$1.50

Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday (6.00am to 5.00pm)

- 1st hour or part thereof - \$0.80

Per entry after 5.00pm - \$1.50



Donations for our new pews

The pews give us the place to sit in silence, pray and worship. Your gift would be etched on a plaque affixed to the side of the pews.

Brochures can be obtained from the Reception Office.

Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday 29th March @ 8pm

Good Friday 30th March @ 10am Passion Play in the Plaza
Good Friday Service @ 3pm

Easter Vigil 31st March @8pm

Please note that there will be **NO** morning and lunch time Masses on Thursday, 29th March and there will be **NO** Novena Devotions on Saturday, 31st March.

Church Canteen

Please take note the canteen will be closed on 31st March 2018.

Maintenance of the new church

Now that our building fund target has been met, all further donations will go towards our Church Maintenance Fund.

You can donate by cheque. You can now also donate via GIRO.

Kindly issue your cheque payable to:

Redemptorist Fathers Maintenance Fund.

Those who wish to donate via GIRO, please obtain the GIRO Form from the Reception desk.

Our credit card machine can now accept donations to the Maintenance Fund via Pay Wave.

Thank you very much for your generous support.

RCIA Programme

We are starting our new RCIA Programme. It will be from 3rd July 2018 to 31st May 2019. RCIA is for adults - 18 years and above, who are interested to know more about the Catholic faith. The application form can be obtained at the Church Office. The closing date for application is on 31st May 2018.