
THE PARACLETE

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Archdiocese of Miami*



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E-mail ccs112@bellsouth.net Web Site <http://www.miamiarchdiocese.org/ip.asp?op=B261800&1g=E>

PRAISE THE LORD ! Once again we are happy to give you the dates for our next Conference. We will meet at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel on the week-end of September 19, 20 & 21, 2008. In the next few issues of the Paraclete we will give you all the information you will need so that you can make your preparations early. Our theme this year will be:

**“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me”
Luke 4:18**

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JESUS LIGHT OF THE WORLD

By Fr. Tom Forrest, C. Ss. R

I want to tell you a story about something that happened to me a long time ago. I had to take a plane trip from Boston to New York City. I got on the plane, and everything began to progress the usual way. We got clearance from the tower, moved away from the gate, rolled out onto the tarmac, and then stopped moving. And we sat there, and we sat there, and we sat there. Finally, I looked out the window and what I saw was absolute darkness. There wasn't a single light on in the airport. All the lights had gone out. Then the pilot came on the speaker system and told us that not only were there no lights in the airport, there were no lights anywhere in the city of Boston, anywhere in the state of Massachusetts, or anywhere in the New England region of the United States.

It was the “Great Blackout of New England”. That whole corner of the United States, where sixty or seventy million people lived, was suddenly without light. So, I had to get off the airplane and with great care find my way back to the house where I had been

staying. There were no street lights. Traffic was jammed up at every corner. No electric trains were working. There was very little security protection for the people on the streets. Elevators in skyscrapers stopped wherever they were, most of them between floors. People had to walk down from the top of the highest buildings in the world, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, even one hundred floors, to get out on the street and try to get home.

Restaurants couldn't serve meals. Shopping malls and movie theaters went totally dark. People couldn't get to the hospitals. Mothers about to give birth had great difficulties. Doesn't that sound sad? But that's not the worst. Wait till you hear how sad it gets. For thirteen or fourteen hours, that whole area of the world was without television. How sad! What were they going to do with their lives? How could life be worth living without television?

Best-selling books were written about this great blackout. They even made a comical movie telling the story. And for years and years afterward, the people of that area shared with each other their personal experiences of where they were when the lights went out. That's how powerful an impression the darkness made on them.

People Trapped in Darkness

Now, dear people of God, there are many people in this world, perhaps countless millions, who live their whole lives in darkness. Why? Because they are living without the light that has come into the world. They are living without the light whose name is Jesus Christ.

I'm not just talking about places like Africa and China where there isn't a strong Christian tradition. I'm also talking about the West. In Europe and the Americas, the light of Jesus Christ is fading. In Ireland, for instance, for the first time in it's history, people are saying that young people aren't coming to church. And in the United States, statistics show how relatively few come to give God

almighty even one hour of the 168 hours he gives us every week.

We had better take notice of this fact because we – let me rephrase that – because you have the job of getting the light back on. It isn't enough to say, "Well, we have Jesus Christ in our history. We have Jesus Christ in our art, in our music, in our literature." No, we have to get the light of Jesus Christ shining brightly again in human hearts. And we have to start with our own hearts.

Living without the light

Being without spiritual light is far worse than being without physical light. Without the light of Christ, we have no protection. The devil loves the darkness. He's called "the prince of darkness." Without the light of Christ he is free to kill our hope and fill us with fear. Without the light of Christ, we are unable to move forward, unable to grow in holiness as God calls us to. Without the light of Christ, we are spiritually paralyzed, just as those planes on the tarmac, those cars on the street, those trains in the city and those elevators in the building were paralyzed without the light.

Without the light of Christ, our human actions have no traffic lights. We have no red light saying, "stop," to our selfish passions, emotions, and self-interest. Even more importantly, we have no green light telling us, "go, get moving," in accomplishing the good works that God created and destined for us. We have no red light saying, "don't do evil," and no green light saying, "go, produce fruit in abundance."

Without the light of Christ, human beings are engulfed in the utter darkness of egotism and selfishness. Do you know what the selfish person wants? He wants the right to be the only selfish person on earth. He does not want anybody around him to be selfish, but he thinks that being selfish is his right. What a sadness!

Another darkness is resentment. If you have any resentment in your heart, please be healed of it. It does you more harm than the person you are resenting. It's poison in your life. Bad memories, bad relationships – this is the darkness for so many people. Greed is another one: wanting more than you could ever use. Imelda Marcos was said to have had three thousand pairs of shoes. I calculated that if she were a centipede,

she could put on a new pair of shoes everyday for two months. There's also the darkness of addictions. What a horror in our world! People are addicted to alcohol, drugs, food. What are they hiding from? They're trying to hide from the darkness, but they only enter into it more and more deeply.

Longing for Peace

For so many people, the darkness in their hearts makes it impossible to say, "I have peace. I have enough." What a blessing peace is! This is what evangelization is all about. St. John called Jesus the light that shines in the darkness, then he went on to say that Jesus is the light that darkness cannot overcome (Jn.1:5). Jesus, and only Jesus, can fill our lives with light.

Have you ever lived through a hurricane? I have several times while I was in the Caribbean. During a hurricane, it's as if your whole world is filled with darkness and wind and rain. But when the hurricane passes, it blows away with it every cloud in the sky, and the sun comes out again. After so much fear and worry, the world is filled with light. That's the way Christ should come into our lives, bringing us beauty, bringing us color, bringing us goodness. Well, like John the Baptist each of us must be a witness to the true light that gives light to every man. Our job is to turn the light on in this world so that people can walk in light and never return to darkness.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, prophesied what would happen when the Messiah came. He said that the Messiah would shine on those who sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death (Lk. 1:79). This isn't the death that ends our time on earth. It's the death called sin, the death called fear. This is what you must be doing as an evangelizer. And it's your mistake and your sin if you don't get at it. Zechariah's next words tell us what we have to do: We must guide people's feet into the way of peace. That's what we do when we bring light into someone's life. Now, if you're in utter darkness, you won't see where to put your feet. You won't know where to walk. But the light shows you the pathway, and Scripture says the path takes you to peace.

How many people in the world are hunting for, yearning for peace? All the alcoholics, all the drug addicts, all those mad, mad, shoppers who think material things will give them peace. No, the Prince of Peace gives us peace. Jesus calls himself the Light of the World, the Light of Life (Jn. 8:12). He doesn't give light to your streets, he puts light, color, joy, happiness, and direction into your very life.

Live as Children of the Light

How good Jesus is to us! This is how he expresses his mission: “The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to proclaim recovery of sight to the blind” (Lk. 4:18). Who are the blind? They’re the poor people we’re talking about, the people who are spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically blind. They have no understanding of where they came from, where they are right now, or where they should be going. They are emotionally paralyzed. But Jesus said, “I have come to the world as its light to keep anyone who believes in me from remaining in the darkness” (Jn. 12:46).

Oh, it’s so beautiful, it’s such a wonderful, kind thing to do. We give it a fancy name – evangelization – but it really means bringing sight to the blind. What an incomparable act of love and kindness to light the pathway of someone who is lost in darkness! What an act of love it is for us to proclaim with Paul, “there was a time when you were darkness, but now you are the light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8-14).

It’s not that you have to go from darkness to light. It’s more than that. You have to go from being darkness to being light in this world. Paul goes on: “Well then, live as children of the light. Awake, O sleeper! Arise from the dead”- from the darkness of the tomb- “and the light of Christ will shine upon you” (Eph 5:8-14)

This is why we call the gospel good news. We can walk in the light. Without any doubt, evangelization is the supreme Christian service of teaching the spiritually blind to cry out like that man in the gospel, “Lord! That I might see!” (Mk. 10:51). And so many blind will see if they just cry out those words.

(Reprinted with permission from *The Word Among Us*)

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May we all be drawn to a deeper relationship in the Lord during this Lenten Season and may the risen Jesus fill you with the knowledge of his unconditional love and mercy. May you and your loved ones experience a blessed and holy Easter Season.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Every Monday - **Healing through the Word**
7:30 PM - St. Louis Church - Maria Vadia
Hospitality Room A

Fourth Monday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
7:30 PM - St. Bernard Church
Celebrant - Rev. Robert Richardson

First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church – Hollywood

First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
7:00 PM - St. Mary Star of the Sea-Key West

First Thursday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church
Indian Community

First Friday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church Shrine
Filipino Community

March 1 - **Day of Renewal**
9:00 AM 3:00 PM
Catholic Charismatic Office
Speaker- Deacon Joe Tollis

March 20 - **Mass and Prayers for Healing**
7:00 PM – Rosary 6:30 PM
St. Maurice Chapel
Celebrant: Fr. Robert Richardson

May 7- **Life in the Spirit Seminar-** St Bartholomew Church
7:30 PM every Wednesday for 7 weeks.

May 15 **Mass and Prayers for Healing**
7 PM- Rosary 6:30 PM
St Maurice Chapel
Celebrant: Fr. John Fink

June 5, 6, 7 & 8 – **Women of Worship (WOW) Conference**
Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel
1870 Griffin Rd, Dania Beach, Florida

September 19, 20 & 21 – **28th Annual Catholic Charismatic Conference** –Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel
1870 Griffin Rd, Dania Beach, Florida

ATTENTION

Because of the increased cost of printing and postage, we regret to have to tell you that this office will now have to ask for a minimum of \$5.00 per year to cover the cost of your “Paraclete” newsletter. For those of you who already send contributions specifically for the “Paraclete”, we sincerely thank you. For those of you who have not, we ask you to prayerfully consider sending in your donation. We firmly believe that this newsletter should continue to proclaim the truth of the Gospel and provide you with information concerning up-coming events. █

SCRIPTURE READINGS

March

1. Hos 6:1-6; Lk 18:9-14
2. 1 Sm 16:1b,6-7 ,10-13a; Eph 5:8-14; Jn 9:1-41
3. Is 65:17-21; Jn 4:43-54
4. Ez 47:1-9; Jn 5:1-16
5. Is 49:8-15; Jn 5:17-30
6. Ex 32:7-14; Jn 5:31-47
7. Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
8. Jer 11:18-20; Jn 7:40-53
9. Ez 37:12-14; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45
10. Dn 13:1-9, 15-17,19-30, 33-62; Jn 8:1-11
11. Nm 21:4-9; Jn 8:21-30
12. Dn 3:14-20; 91-92, 95; Jn 8:31-42
13. Gn 17:3-9; Jn 8:51-59
14. Jer 20:10-13; Jn 10:31-42
15. 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Rom 4:13,16-18, 22; Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a
16. Mt 21: 1-11; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66
17. Is 42:1-7; Jn 12:1-11
18. Is 49:1-6; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38
19. Is 50:4-9a; Mt 26:14-25
20. Is 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9; Rv 1:5-8; Lk 4:16-21
21. Is 52:13-53:12; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42
22. Gn 1:1-2:2; Gn 22:1-18; Ex 14:15-15:1; Is 54:5-14; Is 55:1-11; Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28; Rom 6:3-11; Mt 28: 1-10
23. Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn 20:1-9
24. Acts 2:14, 22-33; Mt 28:8-15
25. Acts 2:36-41; Jn 20:11-18
26. Acts 3:1-10; Lk 24:13-35
27. Acts 3:11-26; Lk 24:35-48
28. Acts 4:1-12; Jn 21:1-14
29. Acts 4:13-21; Mk 16:9-15
30. Acts 2:42-47; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31
31. Is 7:10-14; 8:10; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38

April

1. Acts 4:32-37; Jn 3:7b-15
2. Acts 5:17-26; Jn 3:16-21
3. Acts 5:27-33; Jn 3:31-36
4. Acts 5:34-42; Jn 6:1-15
5. Acts 6:1-7; Jn 6:16-21
6. Acts 2:14, 22-33; 1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35
7. Acts 6:8-15; Jn 6:22-29
8. Acts 7:51-8:1a; Jn 6:30-35
9. Acts 8:1b-8; Jn 6:35-40
10. Acts 8:26-40; Jn 6:44-51
11. Acts 9:1-20; Jn 6:52-59
12. Acts 9:31-42; Jn 6:60-69
13. Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Pt 2:20b-25; Jn 10:1-10
14. Acts 11:1-18; Jn 10:11-18
15. Acts 11:19-26; Jn 10:22-30
16. Acts 12:24-13:5a; Jn 12:44-50
17. Acts 13:13-25; Jn 13:16-20
18. Acts 13:26-33; Jn 14:1-6
19. Acts 13:44-52; Jn 14:7-14
20. Acts 6:1-7; 1 Pt 2:4-9; Jn 14:1-12
21. Acts 14:5-18; Jn 14:21-26
22. Acts 14:19-28; Jn 14:27-31a
23. Acts 15:1-6; Jn 15:1-8
24. Acts 15:7-21; Jn 15:9-11
25. 1 Pt 5:5b-14; Mk 16:15-20
26. Acts 16:1-10; Jn 15:18-21
27. Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Pt 3:15-18; Jn 14:15-21
28. Acts 16:11-15; Jn 15:26-16:4a
29. Acts 16:22-34; Jn 16:5-11
30. Acts 17:15, 22-18:1; Jn 16:12-1