

'SHINING THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ONTO MY LIFE'

4th Sunday Lent – HOMILY 11 MARCH 2018

Next weekend is the weekend closest to the 'FEAST OF ST JOSEPH', one of our two parish patron saints.

We will celebrate with a sausage sizzle and cuppa after each of the three Masses.

As we prepare for our celebrations,

we have the opportunity to reflect this week on OUR MOTIVATION

for what we do, and how we live,

how we pray, and how we treat others.

The Gospel John 3:14-21, today **tells us about GOD'S MOTIVATION and why God sent Jesus into the world.**

Let us reflect on the Gospel now.

That is the easy part.

The challenge is near the end of the homily.

It is to **review our motivation** in the Light of today's Gospel passage in one aspect or dimension of our lives this week.

Welcome to this invitation.

JESUS AND NICODEMUS

Who was Nicodemus? Why did he seek Jesus?

The Gospel tells us:

"Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.'"

A **dialogue** develops between Jesus and Nicodemus.

A dialogue that helps us to understand our faith.

Jesus teaches Nicodemus:

'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.'

THE HOLY SPIRIT

To enter the kingdom or realm of God,

it is not just the physical act of pouring water over someone.

In Baptism, it is the Spirit who moves us.

And in Confirmation we celebrate the gifts and fullness of the Spirit.

We don't tell the Holy Spirit what to do.

This can be particularly difficult for people

who are into controlling everything and everyone in their lives.

Letting go can be difficult.

Trust in God, travelling with God on the journey of life.

The Spirit will lead us.

We don't know our future direction.

The Spirit will lead us.

As Jesus says in the Gospel:

***"The wind blows where it chooses,
and you hear the sound of it,
but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."***

GOD'S MOTIVATION

This passage from John gives us one of the most well-known sayings of Jesus:

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but may have eternal life.*

*'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world, but in order that
the world might be saved through him.'" JOHN 3:16-17*

- The gift of eternal life for those who believe in Jesus.
- That the world might be saved through Jesus.

And John's Gospel, there is great depth to the word "**BELIEVE**".

Why does God go to such incredible effort?

Because God so loves the world.

On a bad day we can feel down,
particularly if we think the world revolves around us, around me.
But it is not all about us. It is about God, and God's love for us.

God, in love, gives us ways of shining a light on our own lives,
to see who we really are, our giftedness, our joys, our failings, our sins, our secrets.
We need to be open to that light in our lives.
Not hiding in darkness.

The gospel passage contrasts evil and darkness with true and light.

*"For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light,
so that their deeds may not be exposed.
But those who do what is true come to the light,
so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."*

An essential part of our Christian lives is our openness to the light of the Spirit.
Exposing our goodness and exposing our sinfulness.

**The light of the Spirit shining within us
that we may truly see who we are
and to what extent we are open to where the Spirit leads us.**

Lent is one of the special times to review the light of Spirit within our deepest selves.

In Lent we take a whole 40 days to do this.

LIGHTING UP AN AREA OF MY LIFE

You are invited this week to take one area of your life and review it.

WHICH PART OF YOUR LIFE TO YOU CHOOSE?

FAMILY? RELATIONSHIPS? WORK? PARISH LIFE? RECREATION?

HOBBY? STUDY? VOLUNTEER COMMITMENTS?

Review it in terms of the Gospel today.

Take time to allow the Holy Spirit to shed light on you.

Some questions.

WHAT ARE MY INMOST MOTIVATIONS IN THIS AREA?

Share them with God in prayer.

WHY DO I DO GOOD?

WHY DO I DO WRONG?

WHAT DO I WANT IN RETURN?

DO I TRY TO CONTROL OUTCOMES?

WHO DO I IGNORE? PEOPLE IN NEED?

DO I GOSSIP ABOUT OTHERS? IF SO, WHY DO I DO THAT?

DO I RUN AWAY FROM ANYTHING? DO I HIDE?

DO I SPEND PRAYER TIME WITH GOD?

DO I TURN TO THE WORD OF GOD TO SHINE A LIGHT ON MY LIFE?

WHERE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADING ME?

Preparing for next week's Mass and Cuppa

is not just putting a reminder on our calendar for the Cuppa.

It is taking the opportunity to open our deepest selves

to today's Gospel in the presence of God during our week ahead.

Preparing spiritually for our Parish Feast of St Joseph.

For those reading this from other parishes,

WHAT DO YOU WISH TO CELEBRATE NEXT WEEKEND AFTER YOUR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION?

May God bless us this week in the light of the Spirit, and in the love of Jesus.

Let us pray.

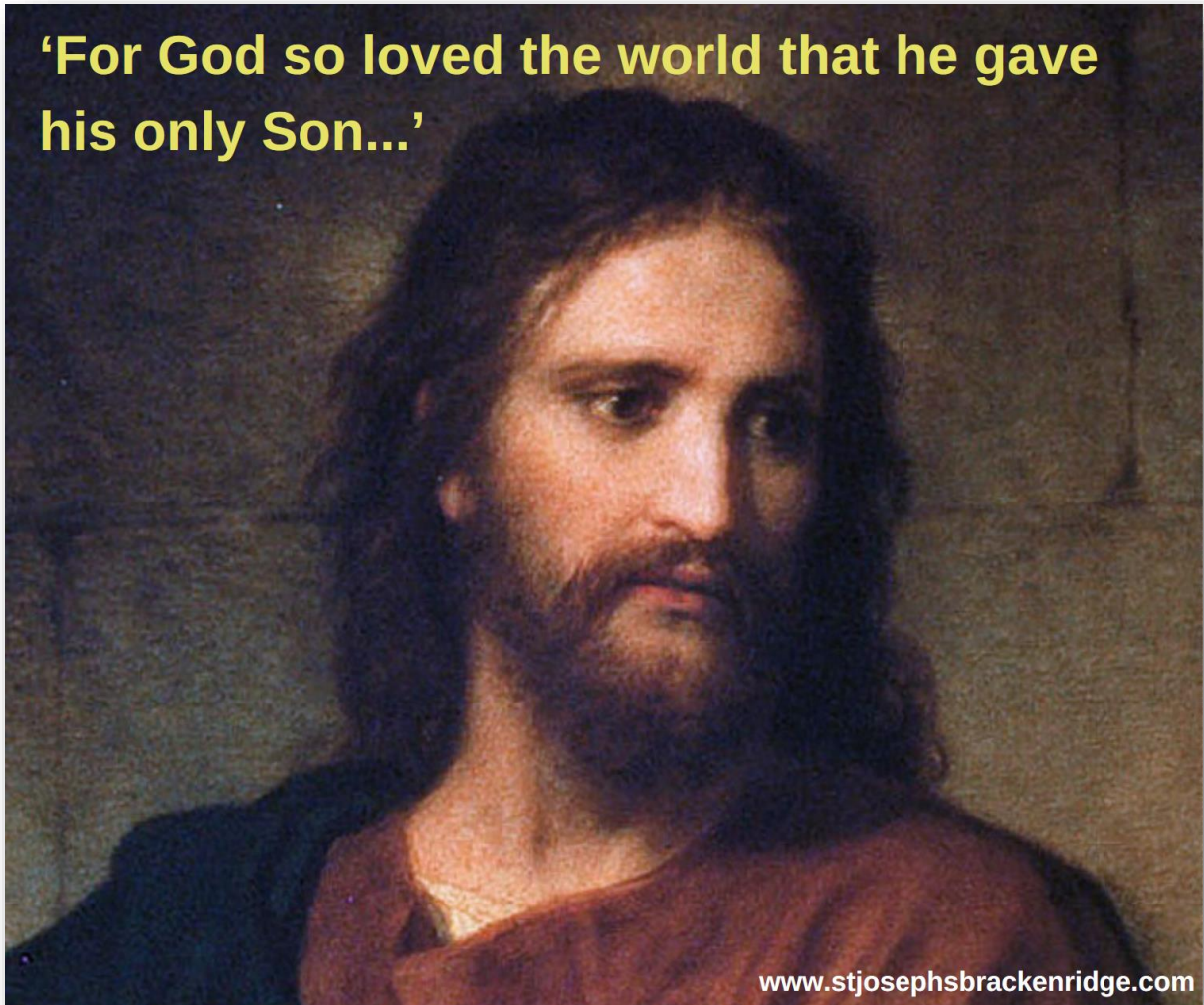
Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/031118-year-b.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook11032018>]

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**‘For God so loved the world that he gave
his only Son...’**



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