

Pope Francis Audience 23 November 2022

What is spiritual consolation? It is an experience of *interior joy*, consisting in seeing God's presence in everything. It strengthens faith and hope, and even the ability of doing good. The person who experiences consolation never gives up in the face of difficulties because he or she always experiences a peace that is stronger than any trial. It is, therefore, a tremendous gift for the spiritual life as well as life in general...and to live this interior joy. Consolation is an interior movement that touches our depths. It is not flashy but soft, delicate, like a drop of water on a sponge. The person feels enveloped in God's presence in a way that always respects his or her own freedom. It is never something out of tune, that tries to force our will; neither is it a passing euphoria. On the contrary, as we have seen, even the suffering can become a reason for consolation. Let's recall the experience Saint Augustine lived when he spoke with his mother Monica about the beauty of eternal life; or of the perfect joy of Saint Francis that was associated with very difficult situations he had to bear; and let's think of the many saints who were able to do great things not because they thought they were magnificent or capable, but because they had been conquered by the peaceful sweetness of God's love. This is the *peace* that Saint Ignatius discovered in himself with such amazement when he would read the lives of the saints. To be consoled is to be at peace with God, to feel that everything is settled in peace, everything is in harmony within us. This is the peace that Edith Stein felt after her conversion. A year after she received Baptism, she wrote: "As I abandon myself to this feeling, little by little a new life begins to fill me and – without any pressure on my will – to drive me toward new realizations. This living inpouring seems to spring from an activity and a strength that is not mine and which, without doing me any violence, becomes active in me". So, genuine peace is one that makes good feelings blossom in us. Above all, consolation affects *hope*, and reaches out toward the future, puts us on a journey, allows us to take the initiative that had always been postponed or not even imagined, such as Baptism was for Edith Stein. Consolation gives you peace and draws you toward the Lord and sets you off to do things, to do good things. In a moment of consolation, we want to do so much good, always. Instead, when there is a moment of desolation, we feel like closing in on ourselves and doing nothing.... Consolation pushes us forward in service to others, society, other people. Spiritual consolation is not "piloted" no, it cannot be, programmed at will. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It allows a *familiarity with God* that seems to cancel distances. When she visited the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome at the age of fourteen, Saint Therese of the Child Jesus tried to touch the nail venerated there, one of the nails with which Jesus was crucified. Therese understood her daring as a transport of love and confidence. Later, she wrote, "I truly was too audacious. But the Lord sees the depths of our hearts. He knows my intention was pure [...] I acted with him as a child who believes everything is permissible and who considers the Father's treasures their own". Consolation is spontaneous. Consolation leads you to do everything spontaneously, as if we were children. Children are spontaneous, and consolation leads you to be spontaneous with a tenderness, with a very deep peace. We can feel a sense of tenderness toward God that makes us audacious in our desire to participate in his own life, to do what is pleasing to him because we feel familiar with him, we feel that his house is our house, we feel welcome, loved, restored. With this consolation, we do not give up in the face of difficulty – in fact, with the same boldness, Therese would ask the Pope for permission to enter Carmel even though she was too young, and her wish was granted. What does this mean? It means that consolation makes us daring. When we find ourselves in a moment of darkness, of desolation, we think: "I am not capable of doing this, no...." Desolation brings you down. Everything is dark.... "No, I cannot do this...I will not do it". Instead, in times of consolation, the same things – "No, I am going ahead. I will do it". "But are you sure?" "I feel God's strength and I am going ahead". And so, consolation pushes you to go ahead and to do those things that you would not be capable of doing in a moment of; it pushes you to take the first step. This is what is beautiful about consolation. But let's be careful. We must distinguish well between the consolation that comes from God and *false consolations*. Something similar happens in the spiritual life that happens in human productions: there are originals and there are imitations. If an authentic consolation is like a drop on a sponge, is soft and intimate, its imitations are noisier and flashier, they are pure enthusiasm, like straw fires, lacking substance, leading us to close in on ourselves and not to take care of others. In the end, false consolation leaves us empty, far from the centre of our existence. For this reason, when we feel happy, at peace, we are capable of doing anything. But let's not confuse that peace with passing enthusiasm because there's enthusiasm today, but then it is taken away and is no more. This is why we have to *discern* even when we feel consoled. False consolation can become a danger if we seek it obsessively as an end in itself, forgetting the Lord. As Saint Bernard would say, this is seeking the consolations of God rather than the God of consolations. We need to seek the Lord, and the Lord consoles us with his presence. He consoles us, makes us move forward. And we should not seek God who brings us consolations here below: No, this is not right, we should not be interested in this. This is the dynamic of the child whom we spoke about last time who looks for his or parents only to get something, but doesn't look for them – he or she is seeking their own interests. "Daddy, Mamma" – children know how to do this, they know how to play...and when the family is divided, and they are accustomed to going to one and going to the other, this is not good, this is not consolation, but personal interest. We too run the risk of living our relationship with God in a childish way, seeking our own interests, of reducing it to an object that we use and consume, losing the most beautiful gift which is God Himself. So, let us move forward in our lives that progresses between the consolations from God and the desolations from the sin of the world, but knowing how to distinguish when it is a consolation from God that brings peace to the depths of your soul, from a passing enthusiasm, which is not bad, but which is not a consolation from God

Our Lady of Divine Providence ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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SECOND SUNDAY ADVENT



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30 pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00 am English, Church.
10:30 am Creole, Church.
12:30 pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30 pm English, B. Chapel.

Fridays: 04:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary.

05:30 pm Blue Chapel.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

1st Communions: 11 June, 2023.

Confirmations: TBC

One lady in my former parish in New Jersey used to say to me, "But Fr. Paul, I have my rocking chair in heaven ready for me!" This was after I had preached the need for repentance. In today's Gospel St. John the Baptist calls the people to conversion, and is particularly hard on the Pharisees and Sadducees. Why? Because St. John thought that they were only coming as a show. That their conversion was not deep or sincere. So that is why he says to them, "Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance". So, repentance is not just feeling sorry for your sins. It is much more. It means there must be a change in your behavior and in your attitude. This relates to my former parishioner. You may think that you are okay and not too bad but St. John is telling us something completely different. Pope St. John XXIII said, "Save me from comfortable Catholics." The people who came to John the Baptist, were baptized and "acknowledged their sins." This is the first stage of repentance. It is always helpful, though painful, to call to mind your sinful state. Your pride, how do you react to criticism? Not well, I suspect, and neither do I. Are you selfish with your money or your time? Do you really care about others? Do you speak badly or think badly of others? And this is just the surface! This season of Advent is to get us into repentance and this means for us to see the great need you have to pray. To beg the Lord for the grace of true repentance. This can even involve crying or weeping for your sins, but this will cleanse your soul. Everything is a grace so let us all ask Jesus Christ to give us His gift of sincere repentance that will lead to a new life.

Fr. Paul



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

ADVENT

Morning Prayer Monday to Friday:
06:20 am (Blue Chapel)

Penitential Celebration: Tuesday, 20 of December. 07:00 pm (Church)

Christmas Concert: Wednesday 14 of December 07:00 pm (Church).

Novena of Nativity and Posadas: Dec 16—24. 07:00 pm

Christmas

Christmas Eve Mass: Dec 24, 05:30 pm English. (Church)

Church choir: Dec 24, 11:30 pm

Christmas Midnight Mass: 12:00 am Multilingual. (Church)

Christmas Day Mass: Dec 25

09:00 am English. (Church)

11:00am Bilingual. (Church)

January 1, Mother of God

New Year's Eve Mass: Dec. 31. 05:30 pm. (Church)

Jan 1. 09:00 am. English. (Church)

11:00 am. Bilingual. (Church)

Parish Events Dec. 4-11

Sunday Holy Mass: 09:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm.

04:00 pm Coeur de Marie Children's group.
05:00 pm Fraternitey, Red Room.
05:00 pm Creole Youth Choir practice.
05:30 pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
05:00 pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday

05:30 pm D. and Mass Chapel.

Tuesday

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel.

Wednesday St. Ambrose

05:30 pm Vigil of Immaculate Conception.
07:00PM Daily Mass Chapel
All communities in CHURCH

Thursday Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

08:00am CHURCH

05:30 pm CHURCH

Friday St. Juan Diego

04:00pm Adoration
5:30pm Daily Mass, Blue Chapel .

Saturday

05:30 pm Mass, Church
07:00 pm NCW Eucharist



School Notes

Holy Family Academy

Tel: (+1649) 941, 7875



Our Holy Family Academy began the Christmas Novena this week with the children singing with immense joy at the preparation and coming of Our Saviour, Jesus. The children understand the significance and importance of this time because they are witnesses to the rebirth of Jesus in their hearts.

HFA is proud to support our high school participants that attended the Mock Science Debate Presentation. At HFA, we encourage our students to take opportunities and challenge themselves in order to evolve their growth mindset!

www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies. Any help God will reward you a hundred fold. If you would like and are able to help contact us at holyfamilytci@gmail.com

You can also donate from the US in the following link:

<https://www.rcan.org/mission-turks-and-caicos-islands>

Wish List

This is another way to help the missionary school or students who are in need, by donating any of the following:

- Automatic hand dryers
- Microwave x 3
- Walkie-Talkie Radios
- Electric pencil sharpeners
- Sound / Speaker System
- Ping Pong table.
- Tonner Canon ImageRunner ADVANCE C5255