



[Jesus said,] “For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

MATTHEW 11:30



Take Up the Yoke

ANN M. GARRIDO

The invention of the yoke 6,000 years ago marked one of the great advances in human history. The yoke—a wooden beam fitted across the neck—harnessed the energy of two cattle pulling in the same direction, hastening the tilling of soil and transport of goods.

It is easy to see why, among many ancient peoples, the yoke became a symbol of subjugation. When the Roman army won a battle, they forced defeated soldiers to walk beneath a “yoke” of spears to indicate they were now in a state of servitude. The prophet Jeremiah once walked through Jerusalem wearing a yoke to warn the people they were about to be conquered by Babylon.

In Judaism, however, the Torah was also sometimes referred to as a yoke. It was a law to be submitted to, but it also was a way of life that offered an alternative to the cruel “yokes” imposed by kings. The Book of Sirach encourages youth to “Take [Torah’s] yoke upon your neck; that your mind may receive her teaching.... See for yourselves! I have labored only a little but have found much” (Sirach 51:26–27).

It is unclear exactly what Jesus meant when he invited us to accept *his* yoke, but it is likely that he was echoing the invitation of Sirach. He wanted us to know that following God’s law makes it possible for us to work together, accomplishing much that we could not do on our own. And that God’s law is a gentle law—one that enables rather than oppresses. Are you willing to receive Christ’s gentle teaching and make it your own?

Reflect

Is there a teaching of Jesus you find challenging?



ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

53 South Road, Paget PG 03 | P.O. Box HM 727, Hamilton HM CX

Pastor: Reverend Joseph F. H. Morley, Vicar General • Cell: 705 0236

Email: stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com

Weekend Masses: Vigil: 5:00pm, Sunday: 10:15am

Saturday 7:00pm (Neo-Catechumenal Mass).

Baptisms: by appointment 3 weeks in advance

Weddings: by appointment 6 months in advance

www.facebook.com/stmichaelpaget & “LIKE” us | Diocesan Webpage: www.romancatholicbermuda.bm

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Mass Schedule & Intentions

We welcome our parishioners and visitors who have come to St. Michael's to worship this weekend. May you be blessed by your presence here today.

MINISTRIES...

JULY 4/5th - THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Karen Marsh EM: Peter Marsh
10:15AM Lector: Lucy Attride-Stirling EM: Joyce Lee
 Collection: Jesse Almeida

JULY 11/12th - THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Laura DeFrias EM: Karen Marsh
10:15AM Lector: Willie Forbes EM: Lucy Attride-Stirling
 Collection: Karen Marsh

MASS INTENTIONS...

JULY 4/5th - THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM The Deceased Members of St. Michael's Parishioners
10:15PM For The Health & Future Of St. Michael's Parish

JULY 11/12th - THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Adelina & Jose DeFrias ++
 Mary & Benjamin Botelho ++
10:15AM For St. Michael's Parishioners

Thank you for your generosity.



Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

JUNE 27/28th Collection: \$1,794.00

The Collection included a donation from an Overseas Visitor of \$1,000.00

Peter's Pence Collection" \$349.00

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE
 to St. Michael's Church's: BNTB Account # 2000 6060 081824 100.

WHEN MAKING YOUR ONLINE TRANSACTION, BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND "COLLECTION" AS YOUR MEMO ON YOUR BANKING TRANSACTION.

Pastor's Point...

Dear Parishioners,

I want to thank you for your prayers, presence, persistence, hope and awakening that as a parish we seem to be exhibiting. The lively discussions on Saturday and the more quiet discussions on Sunday that we had last weekend is an indication of such diversity, but in both cases this energy must be sustained. I believe that it is good, from now on, to have this type of meeting with the parishioners annually. I have not done this annual meeting of the parishioners before, with the Pastoral Council present, but it was very revealing of how you, the people of God, think and feel about your parish of St. Michael the Archangel.

Physically, our church can hold about 313 people with the breakdown as follows: **CENTRAL WING** (facing South Shore) with 24 pews [12 on the left and 12 on the right] seating comfortably about 7 per pew = 168 souls. **WEST WING** (facing the farm) with 20 pews [10 on the left and 10 on the right] seating comfortably about 6 per pew = 120 souls. **EAST WING** (facing our next door neighbour) with some pews and chairs in varied configurations, seating comfortably about 25 souls.

I reported to those at the Diocesan Staff meeting on Tuesday, 30 June 2026, in part, the following which are statistics based upon the last 6 months of this year from 3 January to June 28 that I have observed: **MASS ATTENDANCE** at the 5:00 pm on average has been about 27, at the 10:15 am on average has been about 34, plus those who attend the NCW on Saturday at 7:00 pm is 15 - with about 76 souls attending, this church, each weekend on average, again 76 souls. Remember we can hold about 313 comfortably - so right now we do not even come or meet half our capacity. This can change with each of your personal charisms, talents, gifts and abilities to go out and get more people to come in as the Lord has commanded us to do (as we are reminded at the end of each MASS) and "GO therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19) - "go" means movement, means action, means invitation, so do something whatever the Lord has gifted you as we all have (as I have said before) talents, gifts, and abilities. Let's bring all of this together and to walk together in faith.

Historically, we are the only parish in the Diocese of Hamilton, Bermuda that is **named after an angelic being and not a person who walked on the face of the earth**. This makes us very unique and I am determined to keep us alive, but, as I have said before, I cannot do this alone. I cannot lead this parish alone as I am only temporary. I can be here today and gone tomorrow, but you all who stay are truly the members of this awesome and unique parish. Know that I love you and always want the best for you. I am not perfect, as none of us are, we can agree to disagree, we will face challenges of all sorts, but we can face these challenges and look upon them as opportunities for our faith to shine forth with the power of the Holy Spirit, the presence of Christ as our Lord and Saviour and ultimately God who is the source of our existence. Let us remember what happened to the early church in the Acts of the Apostles, what happened to the apostles and even the first 15 popes and in many parts of the world what is happening today with the attack on our church across the planet. Let us be the light that shines, the courage (the gift we received at Confirmation) that is exhibited by virtue of all the other blessings we have received with the sacraments. We were once called the "Isles of Devils" and we know how St. Michael the Archangel who drove out those in heaven who were self centred instead of focusing upon God who hopefully is our collective final destination when we close our eyes on planet earth for good.

I am proud of you, we can get through this together, overcome these challenges. So remember **COURAGE, COURAGE, COURAGE** brothers and sisters with love, determination and conviction. Don't let the devil win, because the devil lost his influence in heaven and let us remind him (the devil) that he will not win here on planet earth with this church named after the one who is more powerful than him - St. Michael the Archangel. St. Michael, pray for us and guide us always. Amen.

Fr. Joe

God bless, Fr. Joe, Pastor and Vicar General DOHB



Bishops Corner . . .

Dear Fellow-Catholics,

"We need you. We need your imagination, your narrative creativity, and your lively thinking. We need these to create spaces of freedom and authenticity, within which divine grace can make the promise of consolation and peace resound." This is the encouragement Pope Leo XIV expressed on Wednesday to writers from many parts of the world, who have gathered in Rome to mark the centennial of the founding of the Vatican Publishing House. He noted that Writing is a form of human expression in which a variety of styles and languages serve as teachers and as role models.



Firstly, the Pope said that writing is an act of truth, of revelation, for it reveals who we are, what we believe and hope for, the world we strive toward, and the future of which we dream. The Pontiff said that he hopes writers will inspire others to be drawn to the truth, because they themselves are drawn to it.

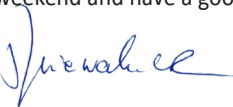
Secondly, he stated that writing is an act of humanity, observing that literature encompasses the full spectrum of human experience, gaining a breadth of perspective that broadens our humanity. The Pope said, "The great training ground of humanity that you allow your readers to experience, because, in a sense, readers 'live' many lives in addition to their own. It also helps us to discover different perspectives, to avoid treating our own views as absolute, and to piece together, as in a mosaic, the outline of that truth, which always transcends us."

Finally, Pope Leo stressed, writing concerns God. He quoted Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe who wrote, "For Christians, nothing human is alien to Christ. Every attempt to grapple with the fundamental questions of our lives; how to love, how to be just, how to be free, how to face suffering and death, helps us to understand Christ, the one who is most human of all."

"God," the Pontiff reminded the writers, "works in our lives through what we do and who we are and through the many people we meet." He concluded by thanking writers for their efforts to sow seeds of reconciliation, encounter, and friendship.

Perhaps the summertime and holidays may inspire us to read good books we had no time to read during the busy year.

Enjoy your weekend and have a good week!

+ Wes 
Bishop Wes



Dear Padre,

Is it appropriate to display the American flag in our church?

A diocesan bishop—who often delegates this matter to the discretion of the pastor—determines regulations on whether and how to display the American flag in a Catholic church. Displaying the flag, and a book of remembrance for those serving in the armed forces, seems to have originated in many US parishes during World War II. The practice has continued through subsequent wars and national tragedies. While the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy advised that national symbols should no be *permanent* fixtures of a worship space, they may be appropriate at worship services on a civil holiday, etc. This same committee discouraged pastors from displaying the American flag within the sanctuary itself—a space reserved for the altar, ambo, presidential chair, and tabernacle—but instead to place the flag in the vestibule of the church together with a book of petitions for the living and deceased.

Fundamentally, a church building is where the liturgical assembly gathers as one body in Christ—the same Christ of the Eucharist who is beyond time and place, who came to unite our divisions. "The church building is a sign and reminder of the immanence and transcendence of God—who chose to dwell among us and whose presence cannot be contained or limited to any single place" (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Built of Living Stones*, 2000). *



JOAQUIN OSSORIO CASTILLO / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

What is Happening in Our Diocese?

St. MICHAEL'S

- We need a volunteer to assist with St. Michael's Communications initiative, to help with getting the word out about St. Michael's via all social media. Please Email stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com if you can help.
- **The EMMAUS Bible Study** will be taking the summer off. It will re-start on Tuesday, September 15th. Have a great summer everyone.
- Neocatechumenal Way Eucharist celebration - Saturdays at 7:00pm

St. THERESA'S

- St. Theresa's Cathedral summer opening hours are:

Monday-Friday	7am-4:30pm
Saturday	8:30am-7:30pm
Sunday	8am-7pm
- Daily Mass is celebrated at 7:30am.
- Noon Day Mass in St. Theresa's Cathedral: The 12:10pm Mass is celebrated each Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

St. ANTHONY'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated Tuesday - Friday at 8:30am

St. PATRICK'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated at 8:00am
- Praying the Rosary is on each Wednesday at 10:00am
- A weekly Portuguese Mass is celebrated each Wednesday at 7:00pm.
- Adoration each Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm
- A mass in Tagalog takes place on, THE SECOND FRIDAY of the month at 7:00pm.

St. JOSEPH'S

- A Filipino mass is celebrated every, THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH at 11:00am

STELLA MARIS

- A Filipino mass is celebrated on the LAST Wednesday OF THE MONTH at 7:00pm

St. THERESA'S GIFT SHOP

- *Opening hours* - 10:00am-2:00pm. Tuesdays and Saturdays.
- **VOLUNTEER NEEDED** that can assist for 2 hours/week on Saturdays from 12-2PM, or as a fill-in for any absences. If you can assist, please call 292-0416 or drop by in person. Thank you



LET'S TALK MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Brochures . . .

Please find included in the Bulletin rack (*in Portuguese and English*) and as individual links to the weekly email blast three flyers discussing your Mental Health and Wellness. They are brilliant, informative and very helpful flyers.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health illness or suicidal thoughts, please call: 236-3770 weekdays from 8:00am to 5:00pm (MWI) 911 or 239-1111 (24/7 Crisis hotline)

Upcoming Events

SUMMER LUNCH & MOVIE

This Thursday, July 9th, the 2008 film **"FIREPROOF"** directed by Alex Kendrick will be shown at the Lunch & Movie event.

Kirk Cameron stars as Caleb Holt, a heroic fire captain who values dedication and service to others above all else. However, the most important partnership in his life, his marriage, is about to go down in smoke. This gripping story follows one man's desire to transform his life and marriage through the healing power of faith and fully embrace the fireman's code.

Film's length: 118 minutes.

Parental Guidance is suggested.

WORDS OF LIFE

"O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus...We celebrate the abundant gifts you have given this nation, founded on the self-evident truths that our Creator has endowed all people with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We make reparation for the offenses against you and against human dignity that have taken place in this nation. May our hearts be united to yours, so that our families and communities enjoy peace and happiness."

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

"Local Celebrations of the Consecration of the United States of America to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus"

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

There is a burning question in our hearts, a need for truth that we cannot ignore, which leads us to ask ourselves: what is true happiness? What is the true meaning of life? What can free us from being trapped in meaninglessness, boredom, and mediocrity?... We need to lift our eyes...to the "things that are above" (Colossians 3:2).

HOMILY, TOR VERGATA, AUGUST 3, 2025

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BRICOLAGE / SHUTTERSTOCK

STUDIO APARTMENT REQUIRED

There is a parishioner who is in need of a studio apartment and this single man is hoping to rent for a maximum of \$1400 a studio or one bedroom, with washer and dryer, plus electricity included. The rent is paid directly into the landowners account by financial assistance. He does not have any pets, is quiet and not a smoker or drinker. Would prefer any area, hopefully not on a hill and that this place is safe. Hoping to move at the end of August. If you have such a place, please phone Fr. Joe at 705-0236.

Our Sunday Readings



ZECHARIAH 9:9-10
PSALM 145:1-2,8-11,13-14
ROMANS 8:9,11-13
MATTHEW 11:25-30

Yoked to Christ

ZECHARIAH 9:9-10

Reading closely

1. To whom is this passage addressed?
2. How is the king described?
3. What all is promised? To whom?
4. How might people have responded?
5. How exactly might people have expected the future king to fulfill this prophecy?

Living the word

6. Where do you see the greatest need for peace right now?
7. Why do people resist peace?
8. How peaceable are you?

THE FIRST READING

Wearied by war

For most of its history Israel endured war and domination by foreign nations. Here God promises to send a leader who will ensure peace not only in Israel but across the known world.

The terms *Zion* and *Jerusalem* personify the inhabitants of southern Israel, many of whom were descendants of those who had stayed in the region after the Babylonians invaded in the sixth century BC. As new nations competed for dominance, these people were eager for peace.

Horses

Military leaders rode horses and chariots, but the new king of Israel would ride a donkey, a comparatively unimpressive animal. Horses evoked the memory of conquerors like the Assyrians and Babylonians.

Horses also reminded God's people of the reign of Solomon, who oversaw a golden age for Israel but at the cost of expensive building campaigns and a heavy tax burden. Soon after King Solomon died the northern part of Israel broke away to form its own kingdom.

Peace at last

The reference to *Ephraim* suggests that the new king will reunify Israel. Ephraim, the name of Joseph's second son, came to be used in reference exclusively to the northern kingdom after northern and southern Israel separated.

On Palm Sunday we hear how Jesus entered Jerusalem in a way that evokes this passage. Jesus is the gentle king who brings all people into God's lasting kingdom of justice and peace.

MATTHEW 11:25-30

Reading closely

1. Who all is hearing Jesus' prayer?
2. What all might Jesus mean by *these things* that have been revealed to the *childlike* (v.25)?
3. Why is God's revelation *gracious* (v.26)?
4. How does Jesus perceive his relationship with God?
5. How might people have reacted to this prayer?
6. In what ways might people have felt *burdened*?
7. How do you think people responded to Jesus' assurance that his way was *easy* and *light*?

Living the word

8. a) How are people burdened today?
b) What does Jesus offer them?
9. a) Does Jesus seem to keep you busy?
b) In what ways do you want to rest?
c) How does Jesus help you rest?
10. Can you think of a contemporary metaphor for the yoke of oxen?

THE GOSPEL READING

The wise vs. the little ones

This passage is part of the third book or section of Matthew's Gospel in which people question and oppose Jesus. In response, Jesus praises God for those who accept his words and actions (v.25).

The *wise and learned* include Jewish religious authorities. Those Jews who couldn't or wouldn't obey Jewish law as these authorities presented it were disdained. Jesus offers these lowly ones a new way of upholding God's law: turn entirely to him.

Revelation from the Father

Jesus declares that he and God perfectly understand one another (v.27). God has entrusted to Jesus the task of bringing about his kingdom. Jesus, in turn, speaks and acts exactly as God wants.

Jesus offers himself to all who listen. People who think they already understand God close their ears to him. Rather than waste time trying to persuade them that he speaks for God, Jesus concentrates his ministry among those who will listen (v.27c).

Jesus embodies God's wisdom

The Old Testament includes the biblical wisdom tradition. Here are some themes from this material.

- God created through wisdom
- God's wisdom is personified as a woman who calls out to people and feeds them
- God's wisdom is in his laws
- wisdom is inseparable from God

Jesus spoke and acted as God's wisdom. The wise reveal that they aren't so learned after all when they reject Jesus, the incarnation of God's wisdom.

Yoked to Jesus

In Matthew 23 Jesus says the Pharisees burden people with their rules. By contrast, Jesus insists that his "rules" are manageable (v.28). The way of Jesus leads to joy now and in the life to come. Jesus also treats people with patience and mercy.

Jesus further distinguishes himself from the Pharisees by saying that people should not only obey his words but also model their life after his: how he spends his time, how he treats people, what he hopes for, etc. Because he is God's wisdom in the flesh, his followers are right to emulate him.

Jesus will also work right alongside us, just as two oxen joined (*yoked*) together pull the plow.

PRAYER

by St. Clement of Alexandria

Be kind to your children, Lord. Be a gentle teacher, patient with our weakness and stupidity.

Give us the strength and discernment to do what you tell us, and so grow in your likeness.

May we all live in the peace that comes from you.

May we journey toward your city, sailing through the waters of sin untouched by the waves, borne serenely along by the Holy Spirit.

Night and day may we give you praise and thanks, because you have shown us that all things belong to you, and all blessings are gifts from you.

To you, the essence of wisdom, the foundation of truth, be glory for evermore. Amen.