Come fly with me

My dear youth and friends in Christ,
I cannot believe how the last two months have flown by, and we now are in the month of March. With this comes warmer weather, longer and brighter days and we know that spring is in the air! So much to be thankful for. This year, we will have the full month of March in the season of Lent. Read more about Lent from the message of Dr Vic Joseph.

I pray for each and every one of you and I look forward to seeing all of you at our ERCM Youth Nights and at our very first full day retreat later this year. For this, I ask you to pray. Pray for your family, friends and for this Ministry and for all its programs with the sole intention to give glory to God and for you. Yes you, our precious Youth.

~Fr Samy, Spiritual Director~

Founder's Message

In this issue, we highlight the season of Lent, where we are called to do good deeds, promote charity and refrain from wickedness while sacrificing through abstinence. For most, especially those aged 18-65 years, as encouraged by The Vatican, fasting from meals satisfies this sacrifice. Some fast from all foods and water (dry fast) and some fast from just chicken and red meat (pescatarian fast) or from all meat (vegan fast) while others eat smaller, portioned meals or with those who are children, who cannot fast, who are ill, who have health restrictions, may perhaps give up some of their favorite foods or snacks during Lent.

Fasting suppresses the carnality of flesh while inversely enhancing the godliness of spirit within us (Gen 6:3). Indeed, John 4:24 teaches that because God is spirit, the ideal connection that leads to a perfect union between divinity and humanity during worship is honed and acquired at our spiritual height. Then when we ask, we shall receive, when we seek, we shall find and when we knock, the door will be opened (Luke 11: 9).

Continued page 2.

INFOCUS

A Season of Renewal

Lent is a time of repentance, reflection, and renewal, preparing our hearts for Easter. It's not just about giving something up, but making space for God's grace through prayer, fasting, and charity.

This month, let's focus on:

- *Sacrifice* – Letting go to grow closer to God.
- *Spiritual Growth* – Deepening faith through prayer.
- *Charity* – Serving others with kindness.

May this season renew our hearts in faith, hope, and love.

Please join us for the next Youth night on **March 27, 2025.**

Check out eaglerisingnyc.org to learn more!

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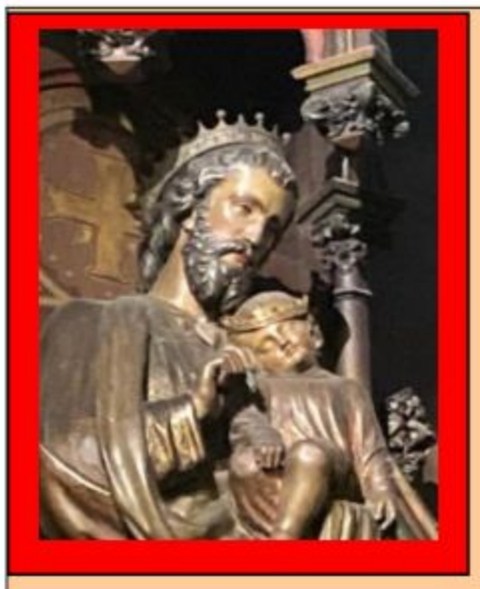
Eagle Rising Catholic Youth Ministry



This month we celebrate the feast of Saint Joseph. This Saint is very close to the hearts of our founder Dr Vic Joseph, having taken his name when he converted to the Catholic faith, and to me, his wife, Andrea.

Joseph is a man of integrity and devotion. When he learned that Mary his betrothed was with child he could have chosen to abandon her but instead he chose the path of mercy and compassion. His obedience to God was shown when in a dream he accepted Mary as his wife and took her into his home despite the social stigma that would have followed.

Saint Joseph's story is also a model of quiet strength. While not a word is recorded from his mouth in the Bible his actions speak volumes. He is a provider and protector, working as a carpenter to support his family and ensuring Jesus and Mary were safe. His silent presence in the Holy Family reminds us that sometimes the most profound acts of service come without fanfare or recognition.

Saint Joseph's life encourages us to act with humility and trust in God especially when faced with challenges. In a world that often seeks grandeur and recognition he remains a powerful example of how serving quietly and faithfully can make an eternal impact.

He is a powerful Saint and countless Saints; men and women pray through his intercession.

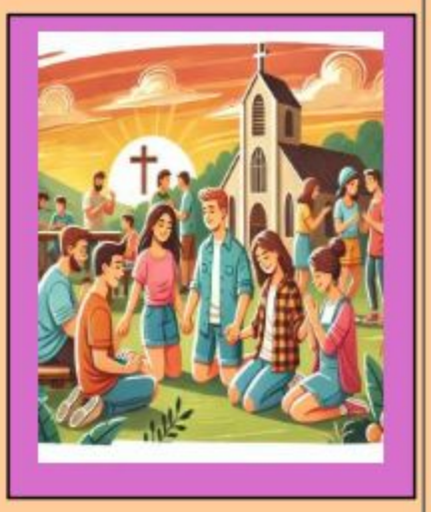
There is a beautiful church in Montreal Canada dedicated Saint Joseph. Spend some time reading about this special place. https://www.saint-joseph.org/fr/

Saint Joseph, you are the terror of demons. Pray for us!
~ Andrea, Chairperson~

The founder's message continued.

While we can observe a Lenten abstinence via general fasting, we can also dedicate our fasting for various specific personal intentions. In Esther 4:16, Esther organized a fast among her people to obtain legal favor when approaching King Ahasu-erus. Her fasting was targeted at breaking down bureaucratic, legal barriers that defied common reasoning and human rights. Undoubtedly, her sacrifice was successful, and it culminated in the ultimate freedom of the Jewish captives in Persia, which today, is celebrated as the Jewish feast of Purim. Elsewhere, in the Book of Esther (Esther 4:3), fasting was also previously commenced by her uncle, Mordecai, during mourning for the captured Jews. In 1 Samuel 31:13 and 2

Samuel 1:12, fasting accompanied the mourning of King Saul's passing. Others have Biblically fasted for repentance for their misdeeds and misgivings (Jonah 3:5 Joel 2:12). Not all fasting, however, is related to sorrowful events. Indeed, Jesus upon his baptism, prayed, meditated and fasted for forty days in the desert in preparation for his Messianic mission. It is a great example of how when the flesh was weakest, Jesus was perhaps most equipped spiritually for his battle with the Devil (Luke 4:1). One can also fast merely to abstain or deny oneself (Daniel 1:8), to seek protection (Ezra 8:25), prepare for confession (Nehemiah 9:1), seek healing (Acts 9:9 Psalm 35:13), to maintain grace (Deuteronomy 9:9 Luke 2:37), to discern on difficult choices (Acts 13:3 Acts 14:23) or for spiritual deliverance (Matthew 9:29 Psalm 69:9). Regardless, we have to invest care into the reasons for fasting in order not to diverge from our spiritual focus (Isaiah 58:3-13 Matthew 6:16-18) or use fasting for ungodly intentions (Acts 23:12 1 Kings 21:4, Luke 18:12). Lenten fasting, merely so that we can lose weight, display poor etiquette, portray hypocrisy, gain pity or seek attention and indulge in wickedness, is not the types of sacrifice that will shine forth as righteousness in the eyes of God.



When breaking your fast, it is preferable to have a spiritual routine e.g. breaking fast after attending mass or receiving Holy Communion, saying a novena, praying the rosary, reading Scripture, meditating or quite simply by saying a prayer and reflecting on your fasting intentions for the day.

More often than not, you will find it to be an extremely joyful and rewarding event where winding down to breakfast instead elevates you spiritually while you commune and share with family and/or friends to end the day with irreplaceable, lingering memories.
May your Lenten offering, therefore, bring you fruitful and spiritual communion with the Lord. Stay well and happy fasting!
~Founder, Dr Vic Joseph~

OUR PRAYER

Lord, guide us to be of service to you and others. Inspire us to care for all your creation, especially the youth. Fill us with truth, hope and love in all that we do. Unite us to faithfully journey together with you, as we work to build Your Kingdom within our community.

~Serviam~

Youth Corner

February Recap: Identity, Faith & Stillness
Our last Youth Night was a powerful evening of reflection, growth, and connection. We explored identity in Christ and how faith shapes our lives. A highlight was learning about Saint Josephine Bakhita, who found strength in God's love despite hardship. We also practiced meditation, taking three minutes of silence to embrace God's presence. Through conversation, laughter, and unity, we reflected on carrying these lessons forward—embracing identity, drawing strength from the Saints, and making space for God.

Eagle Rising Catholic Youth Ministry