



Soon we will be journeying through Holy Week. As Christ's faithful, we believe this is the most important week of the Christian faith. Beginning with Palm Sunday, we cheer on Jesus as he enters the holy city of Jerusalem. "Hosanna to the King!" we cry out, proclaiming him King as he rides on a donkey.

A few days later, Jesus gathers his disciples for the feast of Passover. He begins this observance by washing the feet of his disciples, exemplifying our first calling – to serve. Jesus continues to transform this simple yet extraordinary meal by offering the gift of himself to the world through the breaking of the bread and by the sharing of the cup, which eventually become his body and blood, the gift of his life to us. '**Do this in memory of me**' Jesus says to them and continues to say to us today.

Over the many hours following the Passover meal, Jesus will be apprehended, questioned, scourged, and judged to be crucified. From the cross, he forgives not only the thief but also the spectators witnessing the cruel event. He exclaims, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they do." Eventually, Jesus dies and is buried. However, this is not the end but only the beginning, as Christ rises from the dead and solidifies the foundation of our faith. Like St. Paul would say, "The empty tomb of Easter morning!"

Accordingly, Jesus' passing from death to new life is the story of our faith, of our lives. The Spirit that Jesus gave on the day of his resurrection was the gift the apostles needed then and all of us continue to need now to understand salvation. Salvation is God's response to our sins out of love, and that is why he sent us his Son.

Jesus' life is the story of salvation. He heals the sick, gives sight to the blind, cures the lepers, chases out demons, and raises his friend from the dead. Jesus' salvation is freeing us from the servitudes of our daily lives to live in the freedom of being a child of God. We must trust and believe in God's transforming power in our lives through Christ. It too is like death to new life. The Spirit of God gives us this faith. Forgiveness of sin is the experience of our faith in the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Not only did Christ do miracles to show us what is salvation but through his teachings and witness, he gave us the principles of salvation. Love, respect, forgiveness, and mercy bring hope to the people around us. Our actions and our deeds, our presence and our words of comfort, help to change the lives of others and of our own. It is in helping those around us that we begin to move out of the darkness of our own lives and into the light of Christ. Ultimately, this change becomes a sign of salvation for those of us who make the change and for those who our change influences, for He serves through us and we trust in Him.

Easter is New Life and our Salvation!

*Most Rev. Albert Thévenot, M. Afr.  
Bishop of Prince Albert*

## FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES

# Salvation



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**Pope Francis**   
@Pontifex



To follow the Holy Father, Pope Francis on Twitter, just go to @Pontifex and click 'follow'.

On Ash Wednesday, in his General Audience to the people gathered in St. Peter's Square, Pope Francis used the story of Israel's Exodus from Egypt to explain our path to salvation.

This Scripture, the Pope said, tells of a tormented journey that symbolically lasted forty years, the

time span of a generation. The difficulties and obstacles represented continuous temptations to regret leaving Egypt and prompted a desire to turn back. Throughout this difficult journey, the Lord stayed close to the people who finally arrived in the Promised Land guided by Moses.

Their journey, Pope Francis explained, was undertaken 'in hope', and in this sense "it is an 'exodus' out of slavery and into freedom."

"Every step, every effort, every test, every fall and every recovery has a sense within God's design for salvation, as He wants life – not death – and joy – not pain for His people," he said.

The Pope said Easter is Jesus' own exodus, his Passover from death to life, in which we participate through our rebirth in Baptism.

He said that by following Christ along the way of the Cross, we share in his victory over sin and death. He explained that in order to open this passage for us, Jesus had to cast off his glory, he had to humble himself. He had to be obedient until death on the cross.

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**"This doesn't mean that he (Jesus) did everything and we don't have to do anything," Pope Francis said.**

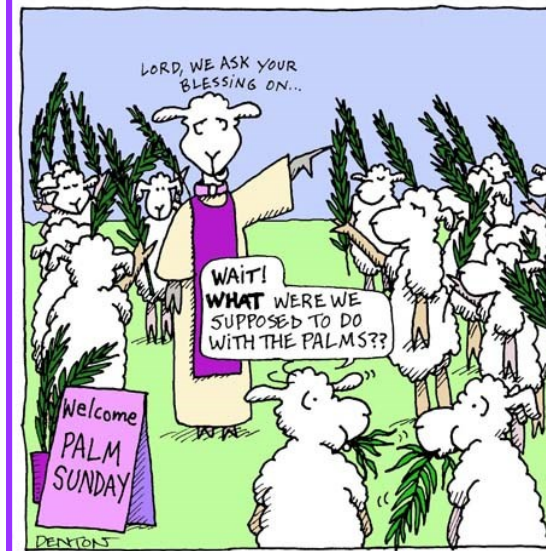
anything," Pope Francis said.

The Pope went on to highlight that it doesn't mean Jesus "went through the cross and we will go to heaven in a carriage." That is not how it works.

He explained that our salvation is Jesus' gift, but it is part of a love story and requires our 'yes' and our participation.

This excerpt is a paraphrase of the report on the General Audience from March 1, 2017, which can be found at <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-we-do-not-go-to-heaven-in-a-carriage>

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.  
Psalm 51.10**

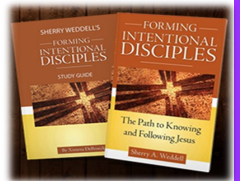


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During this Lenten Season, two parishes have begun a study of the book *Forming Intentional Disciples*. I wonder why this particular book and the approach

of accompaniment it takes seem to have lit a fire in many people and parishes in the Diocese. What is the spark and hope it is inspiring?



As I consider this question along with the theme of salvation, I am struck by the word 'hope' that encapsulates both. Salvation is our hope...the empty tomb affirmed for us that the cross was not the last word...that the promised Kingdom was real and that Jesus had become the door through which we could enter into our eternal home. We have hope! This life is not as good as it gets, there is something more.

Those of us who know the hope of salvation want to share this hope with our children, families, and friends. We feel like we fall short in our attempt to share the Good News. The reason for this is that we have desire, but do not know how, to share the message. Through the *Forming Intentional Disciples* workshop, there was a glimmer of hope and a potential that we could become better announcers of the Good News.

The focus of the *Forming Intentional Disciples* 'way' is that of accompaniment. We need to journey alongside those to whom we wish to introduce the Gospel message. We need to use fewer words, and more witnessing and listening. There is a time for speaking. We should be prepared to recognize this time and to know the words to say when it comes about.

This book is not a silver bullet that will bring about a vast number of conversions over night; however, it offers a plan that will take time to grow and mature. We begin this journey through prayer, listening and growing in knowledge of our faith, so that when the time comes, we are prepared to share the hope we have received.

Christine Taylor  
Director of Catechesis

Let us together continue to invoke the Holy Spirit to help us encounter Christ and bring about the renewal He wants for our Diocese.

**Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.**

**O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord.  
Amen.**