Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I pray that you are all doing well by His grace. Today begins the very first day of the Great Lent (Valiya Nombu).  It is a great opportunity to grow closer in faith and commitment to our Lord and God.  It is also a time when we remember the awesome love that brought Christ to the cross for our sins.  It is important that you all as a family sincerely take part in Lent through fasting, prayer and meditation.  Remember, God is reaching out to us...let us hold on to Him!

**This Lenten season, as a church, we will mediating on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans**.  Edavaka Mission will be reaching out to all our parish families to offer a brief devotion on a passage from Romans.  *Please sit together as a family, discuss the portion  given and creatively with prayer prepare a devotion.  May the Lord God bless us this Lent!*

**Introduction to Romans**

The letter to the church in Rome was written by St. Paul in AD 57.  It has deep theological undertones but, essentially focuses on the theme of righteousness both individually and within the redeemed faith community.  This epistle is powerful and can help to transform and strengthen our faith.  May the Lord God strengthen us all to grow in faith during this journey through the letter to the Romans.

**Devotion**

   Sunday, February 7, 2016

Scripture:  Read Romans 1: 1-7

**Title:  You were created for an extraordinary life!**

Life is truly extraordinary with Jesus, but without God it is less than ordinary.  Paul, upon his conversion, realized this awesome truth and it completely changed his perspective on everything!  In this first passage of his letter to the Romans, St. Paul provides great clarity as to his identity and purpose through life.  He describes himself first as a *slave* (or bondservant) of Christ, then as an *apostle* and finally as *separated* or set apart for the gospel.

* As a slave, he suggests that Christ is the master of his life and actions. In other words, every aspect of his life is*subject* to God.  In fact, he claims it as a position of honor for he belongs to the greatest master.  Thus, for St. Paul ‘who I am’ was not as important as ‘whose I am’.
* As an apostle (one who is sent), he understood that he was lovingly selected and specifically *chosen*for a great purpose and mission.
* As separated, he affirmed that he was called to be *holy* and different for the sake of the God.

Further, he shares that the divine commission (grace and apostleship) is not limited to him alone but, extends to all believers (v.6,7).

Our life is only complete in our faith and surrender to Jesus Christ.  Life has much to offer when you offer yourself to God, the Creator of life.  Don't get complacent and limit what God wants to do through you! If we seek to define and satisfy ourselves through worldly measures of power, fame and position then, we become slaves to our passions, apostles of despair and lost in the crowd of ‘anything goes’.  So, let us begin a new journey this Lenten season to fully turn to Christ and through Him fulfill the extraordinary life that He has promised and commissioned us!

Love and prayers,

Jaisen Achen