

The HERALD is a Catholic Weekly of the Malaysian Church. It endeavours to communicate up-to-date news and Christian values and strives to dialogue with all sectors of society in order to build a harmonious community of believers in God. We support the formation of a participatory Church and encourage the laity and religious to make moral decisions in the marketplace.

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

1 Cor. 2:1-2



Synodality,
Relationship
and
Clericalism

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Bishops
meet in
St Anne's

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Do good,
seek
justice

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At Mass prioritise awe over aesthetics

VATICAN: Pope Francis encouraged diocesan leaders to prioritise awe, evangelisation, and silence before mere aesthetics in liturgical celebrations like the Mass.

"A celebration that does not evangelise is not authentic," the Pope said, quoting from his 2022 apostolic letter on liturgical reform, *Desiderio Desideravi*.

Without evangelisation, he added, the liturgy "is a 'ballet,' a beautiful, aesthetic, nice ballet, but it is not authentic celebration."

Pope Francis spoke about the liturgy recently in a meeting with participants in an international training course for liturgical celebrations in Catholic dioceses.

The five-day course, organised by the Liturgical Institute of the Pontifical University of St Anselm in Rome, was on the theme "Living liturgical action in fullness."

A pastoral approach to the liturgy allows religious celebrations to "lead the people to Christ, and Christ to the people," which the Pope said is the "principal objective" of liturgy and an essential principle of the Second Vatican Council.

"If we neglect this, we will have beautiful rituals, but without vigour, without flavour, without sense, because they do not touch the heart and the existence of the people of God," said Pope Francis.

Francis underlined that the Council was not talking about aesthetic joy or the aesthetic sense but wonder and amazement.

"Awe is something different from aesthetic pleasure: it is encounter with God. Only encounter with the Lord gives you awe," he said.

Sometimes, he warned, there is a danger of putting ritual first, of "putting the rite before what it expresses".

To this end, the Pope said, the liturgical formation of priests is essential, since they go on to form the faithful, who see whether they celebrate Mass properly and in a



"We must rediscover and value silence. Silence in the pews and in the sacristy helps the assembly and the concelebrants to focus on what is going to be accomplished." – Pope Francis. (photo/Sam Gopal)

prayerful way.

The Pope also stressed the importance of reverence in the Mass. He urged those who help organise liturgical celebrations to cultivate silence, especially immediately before the Mass, when people sometimes act like they are at a social gathering.

"Often sacristies are noisy before and after celebrations, but silence opens one up and prepares one for mystery," said Pope Francis. "We must rediscover and value silence. Silence in the pews and in the sacristy 'helps the assembly and the concelebrants to focus on what is going to be accomplished,'" he said.

"Fraternity is beautiful, greeting each other is beautiful, but it is the encounter with Jesus that gives meaning to our meeting with each other, to our gathering," he said.

"We must rediscover and value silence."

The Pope encouraged those who help a priest or bishop organise all of the ministers of liturgical celebrations, called masters of ceremonies, help "enhance the celebratory style experienced" in parishes.

He gave the example of when a bishop goes to celebrate Mass at a local parish.

"There is no need," he said, "to have a nice 'parade' when the bishop is there and then everything goes back to the way it was. Your task is not to arrange the rite of one day, but to propose a liturgy that is imitable, with those adaptations that the community can take on board to grow in the liturgical life."

"In fact, going to parishes and saying nothing in the face of liturgies that are a bit sloppy, neglected, poorly prepared, means

not helping the communities, not accompanying them," he added. "Instead, with gentleness, with a spirit of fraternity, it is good to help pastors to reflect on the liturgy, to prepare it with the faithful.

During his address, the Pope also reflected on the role of the master of liturgical celebrations, or "master of ceremonies". This office, he said, is a *diakonia*, or service: the master of celebrations "collaborates with the bishops in the service of the community."

Problems arise, he said, when the master of celebrations is at the centre of the liturgy. While he should co-ordinate everything behind the scenes, the Pope said, "The presider is the one that presides, not the master of ceremonies. In fact, the more hidden the master of ceremonies is, the better. The less you see of him, the better." — *Agencies*

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Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur,

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EDITOR

Patricia Pereira

editor1@herald.com.my



ASSISTANT EDITOR

Social Media Coordinator

Sandra Ann Inbaraj

sandra@herald.com.my



WRITER

Children's Section

Gwen Manickam

gwen@herald.com.my



GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Youth Section

Amanda Mah

amanda@herald.com.my



BAHASA MALAYSIA

Melania Liza Magnus

liza@herald.com.my



MANDARIN

Adelina Wong

yin4482@gmail.com



TAMIL

RK Samy

rksamy3@hotmail.com

ADMINISTRATOR

Advertisements/Memoriam

advertisement@herald.com.my

LETTERS

letterseditor@herald.com.my

SPOTLIGHT

Criticism helps us to grow

But I want them to say it to my face — Pope Francis

Pope Francis has told his critics to “say it to my face” in response to a growing chorus of attacks by his conservative adversaries.

In a recent interview with the *Associated Press*, the Pope said he was not overly perturbed by the criticism from senior Vatican figures, describing it as “like a rash that bothers you a bit”.

“The only thing I ask is that they do it to my face because that’s how we all grow, right? You prefer that they don’t criticise, for the sake of tranquillity. At the same time, it is important that cardinals and bishops feel they have the freedom to speak out and that the papacy does not become a distant “dictatorship”, he said.

Concerning criticism he has received recently, through books or documents circulated among cardinals under pseudonyms, Pope Francis said that for him, as for everybody, it is better not to be criticised, for the sake of his “peace of mind.” But although criticisms are “like a rash, they are a bit annoying,” the Pope said. “I prefer them, because it means there is freedom of speech.” What is important, he said, is that criticisms should be made “to our faces because that’s how we all grow.” Criticism is worse, the Pope said, when it is “underhanded.”

The Pope noted that he had spoken with some of his critics. “Some of them have come here and yes, I have discussed things – normally, as one speaks among mature people. I did not argue with anyone, but I expressed my opinion and they expressed theirs. Otherwise, you create a dictatorship of distance, as I call it, where the emperor is there and nobody can say anything to him. No, let them say because the companionship, the criticism, helps us to grow and make things go well.”

Following the December 31 death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Pope Francis has faced a new wave of criticism from the late pope’s long time personal assistant and cardinals that were close to Benedict.

The pontiff acknowledged that the knives were out, but seemed almost sanguine about it.

“I wouldn’t relate it to Benedict, but because of the wear-and-tear of a government of 10 years,” Pope Francis said of his papacy, which will reach the ten-year mark on March 13. At first, his elec-



tion was greeted with a sense of “surprise” about a South American pope, then came discomfort “when they started to see my flaws and didn’t like them,” he said.

The first salvo in the wave of attacks came from Benedict’s long-time secretary, Archbishop Georg Gaenswein, who revealed the bad blood that accumulated over the last 10 years in a tell-all memoir published in the days after Benedict’s funeral.

In one of the most explosive sections, Gaenswein revealed that Benedict learned by reading the Vatican daily newspaper *L’Osservatore Romano* that Francis had reversed one of the former pope’s most significant liturgical decisions and re-imposed restrictions on celebrating the Old Latin Mass.

A few days later, the Vatican was rattled anew by the death of another conservative stalwart, Cardinal George Pell, and revelations that Pell was the author of a devastating memorandum that circulated last year that called the Francis pontificate a “disaster” and a “catastrophe.”

The memo, which was initially published under the pseudonym “Demos,” listed all the problems in the Vatican under Pope Francis, from its precarious finances to the pontiff’s preaching style, and issued bullet points for what a future pope should do to fix them.

The Holy Father acknowledged Pell’s criticism but still sang his praises for having been his “right-hand man” on reforming the Vatican’s finances as his first economy minister.

“Even though they say he criticised me, fine, he has the right. Criticism is a human right,” Francis said. But he added: “He was a great guy. Great.” — *Agencies*

Purify and preserve His teachings

A certain man was invited by his friends to a local restaurant for a meal. After having tasted the food, he asked for salt. As far as he was concerned the meal needed some salt to give it flavour. Apparently, the cook had forgotten to add salt.

Jesus, in today’s Gospel, uses some images to describe what His disciples are like. The first image is that of salt. As we know, good salt is very pure so one of its functions is to purify. Another is to preserve. And as already mentioned, to give flavour. This then is what Jesus is saying. He says to His disciples, ‘you are the salt of the earth’. He doesn’t say that they should become the salt of the earth. By His very calling of them they have a certain quality about them. But of course we know, as He Himself states, that salt can become tasteless. And then it loses its value. It is also interesting to remember that salt is never actually seen in the food when it is put on the table. It remains hidden in the food and a little amount is usually all that is necessary.

Salt does not draw attention to itself though it is used to give flavour, to improve the taste of the meal. Jesus, in using a very ordinary, well-known commodity like salt, is teaching His followers that they too, wherever they find themselves, are to be people who can purify and preserve His teachings so as to hand them on to others. For the most part His disciples are very ordinary people. They are not meant to draw attention to themselves. What they are asked to do is to live as true disciples of



Jesus, so that people will be drawn to Jesus Himself and not to them. And most of the time this work will be hidden – husbands, wives, children, business people, craftsmen, teachers, farmers etc. quietly going about their daily business but doing it as true disciples of Jesus.

Another image used by Jesus in this short passage is that of light. He tells His disciples that they are to be the light of the world like Jesus Himself who once said, “I am the Light of the world”. For many of us living in the so-called First World with electricity available all the time, the image of light may not be so striking. It is probably taken for granted nearly all the time. For many years I worked in the developing world where we had no electricity and when evening came, lanterns were needed to see where one was going. A small light, even a flashlight, could really light up the way and so the importance of light was underlined. Again, like salt, light has no value

in being light for itself — its importance comes from the value it has for others. Again, Jesus is asking us, His followers, to be like that.

Some lights, especially very large ones, will light up a large area, others quite small do the same for smaller spaces. We see the same in people. People like St Mother Teresa of Calcutta, even though a small frail woman, was a very large light on the world scene. She would constantly say that any good she may have done came from her close relationship with Jesus who, for her, was the Light who inspired her. She was in many ways like the moon. The moon has no light in itself, it merely reflects on to the earth the light it receives from the sun. She tried to be a reflection of Jesus, the Light of the world. She gave meaning, importance, to so many people dying in Calcutta. And because of her incredible witness many other people joined her in her work.

Others are people like the late Nelson

Reflecting on our Sunday Readings

5th Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)

Readings: Isaiah 58:7-10;

1 Corinthians 2:1-5;

Gospel: Matthew 5:13-16

Mandela who, in spite of the way he was so harshly treated for many years in prison in South Africa, preached reconciliation instead of revenge when he was eventually released after about 27 years. And he continued to not only ‘preach’ this but live it to the end of his days.

Jesus then, in speaking to His disciples and to us in today’s Gospel, is telling all of us that though we may think we are weak and insignificant, we are very necessary for carrying on His work to bring about His kingdom on earth. The gifts given to each of us by God are not given for private use but must be communicated to others. They must shine through the weakness of its bearers. We can’t all be like St Mother Teresa or Nelson Mandela but we can be the best we can be wherever we are no matter how little we feel our contribution may be. That is all the Lord asks of each of us.

“Lord Jesus, help us to believe that we are called to be salt of the earth and light of the world. Give us the Holy Spirit to enable us to be what You ask of us. Amen”.

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IMPORTANT DATE**February 11:****31st World Day of the Sick**

Theme: "Take care of him"

Compassion as a synodal exercise of healing

To read the message in full:

bit.ly/3Rad6d7**KUALA LUMPUR
ARCHDIOCESE****Diary of Archbishop
Julian Leow****February**

- 7 AOHD Board of Management Meeting**
- 9-11 Pastoral Visit to Terengganu**
- 12 Feast Day Mass – Holy Infant Jesus Chapel**
- 14-15 Clergy Monthly Recollection**
- 16 Archdiocesan Finance Meeting**

**PENANG DIOCESE****Diary of Bishop
Sebastian Francis****February**

- 4-5 CHARIS Penang Retreat – "Holiness in Leadership" at Minor Basilica of St Anne, BM**
- 5 Meeting – Triumph Heart of Mary Ministry, Permatang Tinggi at 7.00pm**
- 7 St Anne's Curia Meeting – Minor Basilica of St Anne, BM at 10.00am**
- 11 Mass – Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, World Day of the Sick and Official Launching of Lenten Campaign, Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Silibin, Ipoh at 6.00pm**
- 13 Meeting – Members of the Diocesan Healing and Deliverance Ministry, Stella Maris at 6.00pm**

**MALACCA JOHORE
DIOCESE****Diary of Bishop
Bernard Paul****February**

- 8 South Johor Vicariate Clergy Meet – Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, JB**
- 11 Mass – Church of St Joseph, Plentong at 5.00pm**
- 14-15 Clergy Monthly Recollection**
- 14 Mass – Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, JB at 7.00pm**

Sabah Clergy Pastoral Assembly

*Archbishop John Wong with Bishop Julius Dusin, Bishop Cornelius Piong and the clergy from the three arch/dioceses in Sabah.***By Liza Magnus and Didiroy Joneh**

KENINGAU: Priests are carriers of good traditions. These "good traditions" refer to the spirit of faithful service to Jesus, serving humbly, caring, and helping those in need, Bishop Cornelius Piong said during the Sabah Clergy Pastoral Assembly (SCPA) which gathered clergy from the three arch/dioceses in the state.

Congregating at the Retreat House Diocese of Keningau, 71 priests, one deacon, and three arch/bishops gathered for four days from January 16 to 19.

The diocese Vicar General, Msgr Gilbert Lasius said the opportunity to meet all the clergy in Sabah allows them to catch up and strengthen fraternal bonds as they share experiences and challenges in priestly ministry.

"Through this gathering, we reaffirmed each other, got to know the newly ordained priests, met up with our senior priests, and

shared our ups and downs as fellow priests."

Msgr Gilbert added, "This gathering also served as a pointer: is our priestly service on the right track?"

During the various sessions at the assembly, we were reminded to serve and emulate the Good Shepherd.

This year, the SCPA focused on the Pan Malaysia Pastoral Assembly 2026 (PMPC 2026), past synodal reports, ecology, and the Sabah Pastoral Assembly 2025. Each diocese provided a report on its activities and planning.

Besides that, the clergy also played sports, engaged in group discussions, prayed and reflected together, celebrated the Eucharist, and engaged in various other bonding activities.

The diocese Development Coordination Team member, Fr Roney Mailap, said the synodal process launched Oct 2021 brought blessings to the preparation of the PMPC 2026. It strengthened and reformed

the Church's way of evangelising and serving. It also helped the diocese organise pastoral gatherings, study days, and the parish's plans towards the PMPC 2026 which emphasised four aspects namely family, Church, ecology, and social.

Fr Roney also stated that, after the SCPA, they found that churches in Sabah are not so bureaucratic but instead resolve conflicts, issues, and problems through discussions.

"This is truly the spirit of the Synod, that the Church walks together and hears what the Holy Spirit has to say," said Fr Roney.

Representing his fellow priests of the Diocese of Kota Kinabalu, Fr Terans Thaddeus commented, "It is a joy to be with the clergy and bishops of Sabah. We had the opportunity to find out what happened throughout the Synod report and the preparation of the PMPC. And I am strengthened through this assembly that I am not alone in the ministry of the presbyterium, no one understands a priest better than someone who is a priest..."



Malacca Johore Diocese News Update #118

F12
MJD NEWS
UPDATES

Hello again. A blessed and belated *Gong Xi Fa Cai* to the Chinese community of the Malacca Johore Diocese (MJD). After two weeks of absence, the F12 resumes. We needed a break, a time to refresh, reflect and return to work. It is back to work. Work never ends. Work piles up when we take five.

Refreshing Times. New year! New beginnings! New government! New inclusive national policies. Build people, no more edifices. A new Minor Basilica for the local Church. A time to become a civilised Malaysia, with a concern for the poor and B40s, to save the nation from the greedy, the racists, the bigots and the profiteers. The Christmas and CNY air was different this time. Some signs of celebrating one another's festivals have appeared. When leaders show the way, people follow. When laws against religious intolerance or sedition are practised without fear or favour, people get in line. Pray for this freshness to prevail...for this freshness to permeate every corner of our nation.

**A Thought for the Week:
Not Defeated.**

They say that Colonel Sanders founded KFC at the age of 65; and Jack Ma, who couldn't get a job in KFC, founded Ali Baba.

Colonel Sanders and Jack Ma are saying: Age is just a number.

Only those who keep trying, succeed. Seeing opportunities, creative response to people's needs and courage to try, make things happen. "Seize the moment", Robin Wil-

liams in *Dead Poets' Society* challenged. Stop seeing problems and difficulties. See new options and new missions.

Announcements for this Week

1. The ACD2022 or Annual Clergy Discernment took place from January 17-19. It was a time to Discover, Discern, Design and Deliver, undertaken by MJD Clergy.

2. A call to single women, professionals and non-professionals, adults of ages 30-50 in Malacca and Johore. Join the Auxiliaries as consecrated "women on mission", committed to the Bishop of the Diocese. The first meeting with the Auxiliaries of the KL Archdiocese is in Melaka on the February 18, 19; or in Majodi Centre Plentong on March 24, 25.

3. Caritas Malacca Johore Diocese Office of Human Development Assembly is an annual gathering of all caregivers, volunteers, frontliners, charity bodies, parish Society of St Vincent de Paul and Parish Office of Human Development ministries. A time to unite, recollect, recharge and reach out as the Good Samaritan. Come to be informed, formed and transformed for the Glory of God.

**This week's Question and Query.
The Q asks: WHAT IS MALAYSIA MADANI?**

1. According to *The Star*, the *Malaysia Madani* or Civil Malaysia slogan conceptualised by the Anwar administration is about reforming Malaysia into a country

- that believes in humanity and good values such as fair, just and effective governance,

- that prioritises the needs of the people.
- that stops its obsession with measuring success solely through economic development and numbers.
- that sees the importance to develop the country's humanity.

2. The word **Madani** is an acronym made up of six core values, namely *keMampanan* (Sustainability), *Kesejahteraan* (Prosperity), *Daya cipta* (Innovation), *hormat* (Respect), *keyakinan* (Trust) and *Ihsan* (Compassion).

3. According to PM Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the new slogan is also meant to:

- reset the country's direction when it comes to race and religion,
- emphasise that Malaysia's pillar would still be the Malay majority with an emphasis on the principles of Islam, the Malay language and Malay rights.

Pope Francis said: Certainly, the virus of war is more difficult to overcome than the viruses that compromise our bodies, because it comes, not from outside of us, but from within the human heart corrupted by sin.

We, Catholics, have a God-given call and mission, to be more inclusive, creative, bridge-building citizens. Make an effort to know the other. Befriend the unmet and unknown. Watch out for the viruses that divide, that poison the human in us. May God bless us to be a blessing to one another.

Bishop Bernard Paul

Synodality, Relationship and Clericalism

By Fr Michael Chua

PORT DICKSON: Sixty members of the clergy and two seminarians gathered at the Methodist Centre from January 16 -18 for the Clergy Annual Pastoral Assembly (CAPA).

In his keynote address, Archbishop Julian Leow reiterated that CAPA is a sort of extended Clergy Monthly Recollection, which allows the clergy to enter into a deeper reflection on current issues affecting priests and their ministry. Since we are still in the preparatory period for the upcoming Synod of Synodality, this CAPA was an opportunity for the clergy to receive updates on the diocesan, regional and continental findings which provided them with an opportunity to reflect on the implications of this data on their ministry and priesthood.

The team of moderators and speakers included Msgr Jude Miranda, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Penang, Fr Simon Labrooy, the Rector of College General Major Seminary, and Fr Surain Durairaj.

This year's CAPA was divided into three sections focusing on synodality, the relationship as it pertains to the priestly ministry and clericalism. In a pre-recorded video message, Bishop Emeritus Antony Selvanayagam provided an orientation for the three topics.

On the topic of *Synodality*, we were asked to listen and consider carefully the synod findings. Bishop Selvanayagam noted that the highlights which could be considered for our priestly ministry is: to examine the quality of our relationships, to listen with empathy, and to learn to be more inclusive.

On the topic of the *Priesthood*, Bishop Selvanayagam reminded us that the priesthood was instituted at the Last Supper, together with the Eucharist, by these words: "do this in memory of me." As priests we should always be ready to share the sacraments, be teachers and guides, and never forget to listen to the people.

Finally, he reminded the clergy of the sin and error of *Clericalism*. This is when priests begin to think that "they are the Church", and when they begin to believe that they are "the centre" of the Church, they stop listening to the people.

In a later session, Msgr Jude elaborated that "the Synodal process is an experience, not an event." He explained that the objective of this broad consultation under the Synodal process



The KL Archdiocese clergy and seminarians at the recent Clergy Annual Pastoral Assembly.

is not just to produce more documents but to enter into a transformative experience, because experiences build identity and give direction and orientation to life.

In his presentation, Fr Simon introduced us to the ecclesial symbol of a tent used at the Asian continental level of the pre-Synod process: "Enlarge the space of your tent" (Is 54:2). The Word of God did not just dwell among us but pitched His tent among us — He tabernacled Himself in our midst. And thus God, through the Incarnation, provides us with a primordial mode of synodality.

Msgr Jude, in a later session, explained that the Church is meant to be a tent — the vision of the Holy Father is to see a Church that is constantly expanding and ready to move. This requires a spirit of welcoming, recognising and celebrating diversity. The tent will be big enough when God resides in it.

Moving into the second topic, which focused on the priesthood, Msgr Jude helped the clergy to see how the Synodal attitude should also reshape our vision of relationships. There is a pressing need to move from a functional and professional mode of working to a more personal relationship with the Lord and with others. Pope Francis is fond of telling the Church to foster a dialogue of encounter. A functional relationship is not personal because it aims at success and goal achievements, where relationships are viewed as fulfilling obligations. A personal relationship involves creating emotional bonds which will have to evolve and grow with time.

On this note, Fr Simon led the clergy into the first of two break-out sessions using the spiritual conversation method that was introduced in the respective Parish Pastoral Assemblies. In the first break-out small group session, the clergy were asked to reflect on their respective personal experiences, both satisfactory and

challenging, of accompanying each other.

Some of the satisfying experiences shared by the priests included mutual support they experienced, the availability of fellow priests when help was needed, and the warm fellowship and camaraderie at gatherings, recollections and retreats. They also shared some of the challenges they faced in accompanying each other in the presbyterium, namely, the functionality and superficiality of some of these relationships, the presence of cliques, the fear of giving, and reticence in receiving, fraternal correction and the inability to reach out to those who are silently hurting.

As a prelude to the third section on *Clericalism*, the clergy watched a video by Christian Kheng, an adjunct faculty member of the East Asian Pastoral Institute, who spoke at the latest FABC General conference on New Forms of Leadership and Governance in the Church. Professor Kheng noted that synodality is not just a vision of the Church but the whole of humanity as it is rooted in the common dignity of every man and woman.

The Church gives witness to the world by how we live in a synodal way as community-living is both our identity and call. In this talk, she highlighted types of leadership which inhibit synodality, as well as elements of leadership which promote it. What is to be avoided is a solo, hands-off, centre-point, bureaucratic, maintenance, black box style of leadership.

The key principles of the synodal governance, on the other hand, facilitates mutual learning, discovers buried talents, promotes interdependence, requires dynamism and should not be achievement orientated but focused on the process of community building.

And finally, Msgr Jude provided us with a summary of Pope Francis' teachings on clericalism. Clericalism, according to the Holy Father, is an idealisation of the priesthood;

"exclusivist vision of vocation," which can lead to a "group that has all the answers and no longer needs to listen or learn anything." He then proposed the following ways of addressing clericalism: foster co-responsibility with laity, training collaborative leadership in the seminary, facilitate more lay participation, strengthen and empower parish councils and finally expanding the boundaries of your heart.

We then had four members of the clergy responding and giving their insights to this topic of clericalism. Msgr James Gnanaprasam began with a personal account of how his own understanding of his priesthood and leadership style had evolved over the decades. Fr Clarence Devadass provided a scriptural and theological response by proposing that the priesthood could be viewed through the lenses of a pilgrim leadership (following the example of Jesus in the story of the road to Emmaus). Fr Nicholas Ho OCD then added that there is a need to teach and empower the laity to discern the will of God and the movement of the Holy Spirit. Finally, Msgr Patrick Boudville reminded the clergy that they need to practise fairness and look into issues such as personal mental health, intellectual updating, and prudent financial management.

Fr Surain, who was part of the organising and moderating team, shared that "this CAPA is highlighting strengths which are already within us — collaboration in ministry and friendship within the presbyterium. We also recognise that the challenge is to form authentic relationships — friendships which are not purely functional but relational, friendships which are open to fraternal correction." On the topic of clericalism, Fr Surain noted that the clergy "sometimes forget that we are fellow pilgrims, members of the People of God... we need to walk with our communities in common discernment."

The priests share their experiences

"Throughout CAPA 2023, three key areas were identified for further discernment. These three areas are Relationship, Participation and Clericalism."

Just as it takes two to tango, it requires consistent, persistent, and loving effort on the part of both laity and clergy to make such areas work and blossom, or to guard against clericalism from rearing its ugly head. It also requires more effort in listening and not just hearing, with humility, patience, compassion, and joy. I pray and am confident that, with hope and trust in God's providence, we as a People of God, will be able to build bridges and heal wounds among us, and together give God the glory." — **Fr Andrew Kooi**



"This year's CAPA was more relaxing and rejuvenating. It gave me more time to be with myself and recollect the whole understanding of synodality."

"It was helpful, especially to hear the different experiences of the clergy, the joy and the pain of priestly life."

"However, the spiritual conversation could have been more helpful if two or three people had shared on the common experience of the given questions rather than putting us in a group."

"Perhaps we should be given the freedom to choose with whom we want to share rather than putting us in a group." — **Fr Andrew Manickam OFM Cap**



"I felt that, while the sessions were helpful and good, there was too much input to handle, having hardly any time to process the information given. I find that we were just rushing from one point to another with very little time to catch our breath. The sessions that were good for me were the Spiritual Conversations, where we were able to share our experiences on a deeper and more personal level. What I gained from those sharing sessions was what I really took away from this year's CAPA." — **Fr Philip Tay, OCD**



"Enlarge the scope of your Tent. During our deliberations, we looked at what this document was saying to us."

"We used 'tent' to cover a variety of meanings. It could mean tabernacle, church, calling, and even our world-view."

"We were asked how we would redefine our tent. For me, it stood for so much."

"I believe there are parallels with the vision of Jesus by St Francis of Assisi who summoned him to 'rebuild My church'. It meant more than just physical repairs, but it called for a spiritual renewal of God's people, His Church. Today, we read in Fr Mallon's book, *Divine Renovation* that we have to go beyond maintenance, to embrace our mission."

"I believe we are called to consider what model of Church we have in mind. True, there is no one perfect model, but we are ultimately called to discern the way, with the Holy Spirit providing us with the impetus for change." — **Fr Gregory Chan**





Regional bishops meet in St Anne's

BUKIT MERTAJAM: The 111th plenary assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei (CBCMSB) and the bi-annual general meeting of the Conference of Religious Major Superiors (CRMS) was held under the maternal embrace of St Anne, at the Minor Basilica.

The bishops, together with the Apostolic Nuncio, the major religious superiors, lay faithful, representatives of other religious traditions and state dignitaries gathered on the evening of January 9 to celebrate the solemn declaration of the Minor Basilica in a long and meaningful ceremony.

The Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious Superiors then went on to meet in separate venues within St Anne's campus for their bi-annual gathering. At the end of the first day, they gathered for Rosary in the garden, followed by dinner and conversations. The next day they met again to discuss common concerns, particularly on the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults in all the Church's institutions. The bishops and religious superiors also discussed at length the dynamics and progress towards the Pan Malaysia Religious Assembly to be held at Majodi from June 8 – 11.

Experience and learnings from the FABC General Conference

The bishops' who attended the recently held Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC) 50th Anniversary General Conference in Bangkok shared their experience and learnings. They felt it was good and opportune to build bonds among the new generation of bishops across Asia, as well as for



Members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei (CBCMSB) with the Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Archbishop Wojciech Zaluski and the executive secretary during their meet at the Minor basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam, January 2023.

them to study the issues affecting the peoples of Asia and the future path for the Church in Asia. The theme of the FABC 50 was *Journeying Together as Peoples of Asia*, based on the journey made by the three kings in Mark 2: 1-12, "...and they went a different way." The *Message to All Peoples of Asia*, issued by the FABC, was once again circulated among the bishops and later to all the religious.

Document for Continental phase of the Synod

The focus of the Conference was on the Document for the Continental phase of the Synod (DCS) that was circulated to all eleven dioceses and vicariates. The DCS compiled by the international Synod Secretariat in Rome is the privileged instrument through which the dialogue of the local Churches among themselves and with the universal Church can take place during the upcoming conti-

mental stage. The dioceses were asked to read and pray with the DCS and give their reflections to the three questions posed therein. The summary of all diocese responses and a draft consolidated document was then presented to the bishops. With the input from the bishops, the document was finalised and submitted to the FABC for their study at the upcoming continental level meet from Feb 24 – 27, at Samphran, Bangkok.

The Conference DCS document summarises the responses from the 11 arch/dioceses and vicariates around the three questions posed:

- what are the intuitions and new experiences that are affirming?
- the tensions and questions arising from the synod exercise, that need to be addressed,
- the priorities, recurring themes and call to action that can be discussed during the

First Session of the Synod Assembly in October 2023.

The consolidated document can be read at <https://cbcmsb.org/synod-of-bishops-2023/>

The President of CBCMSB, Bishop Sebastian Francis announced during the conference the three representatives to the continental level meet. They are Bishop Bernard Paul from Malacca Johore, Msgr Jude Miranda from Penang, and Anna Amandus from Sandakan. The bishops then went on to nominate His Eminence Cardinal William Goh of Singapore to represent the Conference at the Synod Assembly in Rome in October 2023.

Other Matters

Some of the other matters discussed by the bishops included the processes towards the Malaysian Pastoral Convention in 2026, the outstanding work around the National Seminary Charter and seminary concerns, the ongoing efforts of the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, the Caritas Malaysia Relief Fund Appeal 2023, the progress of the Episcopal Commission on Migrants, Itinerants and Victims of Trafficking, upgrading of Catechetical materials, the World Youth Day in Lisbon, the Malaysian Catholic Youth Ministers Committee (MCYMC) initiatives, Inter-faith and Ecumenical matters, and Liturgical concerns.

The next meeting of the CBCMSB will be held at MAJODI from July 9 to 14. The bishop president concluded by exhorting everyone to "Be true and faithful to the processes prepared by the Church and you will be faithful to the Holy Spirit." — **By Charles Bertille, Executive Secretary CBCMSB**

Renewed and eager to continue journeying in synodality



"So far, the experience was good. The fathers had a very heartfelt and sincere sharing during the 'Spiritual Conversation' sessions on the given topic of *Clericalism and Synodality*. Such moments allowed me to know our fellow priests more on a personal level and also the opportunity to listen to their wisdom and thoughts regarding various issues and solutions on the said topic.

"Ranging from retired priests to a baby priest like me, we came to the conclusion that the topic 'synodality' does not only apply to 'clergy - lay people' dynamic, but also applies to the dynamic among 'clerics'. What we discovered

so far was that the relationship between clerics as a whole is still on a rather 'functional' basis (e.g. Work and Sacrament related), what is lacking so far is the personal and fraternal relationship that is rather crucial for the clerics' sanity. So, the need for bonding among fellow brother priests, compliments, and constructive criticism should be cultivated.

"As CAPA also talked about 'enlarging one's tent' for the sake of synodality and inclusivity, the Church will become 'big' and 'messy'. So, a certain boundary has to be drawn so that the various apostolates and groups can coexist harmoniously under one tent (as perfect communities only exist in heaven or after the *parousia*).

"Without proper boundaries, good leaders, and a clear direction, the Church will lose her focus and her goal to bring her flock to God." — **Fr George Ho, OCD**

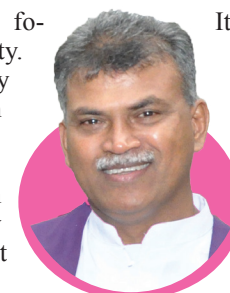
"This year's CAPA focused on Synodality. I thought it was a 'happy fault' to breakaway from the busyness of live theatre. Being close to the beach in Port Dickson brought thoughts of how life is dodging in and out like the waves.

"The sessions brought us closer to God and one another. It was a wonderful experience for me because it helped me to journey inward to discover my own identity and then to journey as companion, first with my beloved nucleus family, and then discovering this loving companionship with the bigger family — that of every creation of God. To be more enthusiastic on this journey, God gave me this beautiful vocation to the priesthood.

"Msgr Jude Miranda and Frs Simon Labrooy and Surain guided us from the macro continental findings of the Synodal process to the micro Archdiocese to parishes and even to individuals, as companions journeying together.

"The movement that has happened, and is happening within, knowing the identity as the Apostles came to meet Jesus in John 1:36-42 made me realise the importance of RELATIONSHIP, not only with humans but the whole of creation as St Francis of Assisi highlighted. We are bound to this great relationship by the Spirit.

"As stewards (priests), we are called to be SERVANT LEADERS in the 'washing of feet' spirituality.



It's not easy to hold on to this leadership because of ego and pride which push us to the other extreme of Clericalism.

"Msgr Jude brought to our attention that, unwittingly, this image dominates the mind and attitude of clergy at times, due to the wrong understanding of the theology of priesthood, *alter Christus* (another Christ). Actually, to be another Christ is to humble oneself as St Paul says in Philip 2:6-7 or, better still, after Jesus' resurrection, He walks along as 'Pilgrim Leader' with the two disciples in Lk 24: 13-35.

"When Fr Clarence Dass shared this image of Pilgrim Leader, quoting St Thomas Aquinas *homo viator* (human wayfarer), it struck home this beauty of God indwelling the Emmanuel who constantly journeys with us as pilgrim, the *paracletos*.

"As the Holy Spirit invited the Apostles in the early Church to enlarge the tent to embrace all persons, they effectively announced the Good News to the ends of the world. Church history taught us that somehow, down through the history, wittingly or unwittingly, we have restituted the rights of the people. Therefore, Pope Francis, in his call for synodality, helps us to listen to the cry of the grassroots in giving back rightfully the dignity of baptismal virtues.

"Thank you, Lord for your loving presence within and around and above, journeying as companion." — **Fr Albet Arockiasamy**

"It's my first time attending CAPA as a priest. I was so happy to be one with the clergy in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur. Praise God for that. It was a time of enlightening and empowering. As I have only been a priest for a year, listening to the sharings of priests who have been serving for decades makes me appreciate my calling. Appreciate the call and live the call to the fullest. Focusing and strengthening my vocation as a priest is one of the learning points that I appreciate the most.

"My struggle as a priest continues each time I face spiritual dryness. Where am I turning to?

"I thank God for the friendship and lovely time I had in CAPA 2023. It keeps me going to serve my people in CDM, Shah Alam." — **Fr Michel Dass**



"It's been a joy serving as a priest in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur since my ordination in 2003. This year's CAPA has deepened my knowledge and understanding of the priesthood, relationship, leadership and clericalism.

"The three days of listening to my priest friends whom I have known since my seminary days — Msgr Jude and Fr Simon — and their inputs and personal sharing have taught me to further treasure the gift of the priesthood. At times it can be challenging and discouraging especially in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia but I need to be courageous and enthusiastic in fostering my priestly ministry in the synodal Church." — **Fr George Packiasamy**



Msgr James G turns 80

By Mary Jane Buniel

KUALA LUMPUR: The Holy Father, Pope Francis, once quoted a line from the Roman poet, Ovid: *Tacitu pede lapsa vetustas* [with silent steps, old age slips up on one]. It is a blow! But also, when one thinks of it as a stage of life that gives joy, wisdom, and hope, one begins to live again. It was with the same spirit that the Church of St Joseph organised a grand birthday celebration for the gift of a person who dedicated his life to serving the community at large.

A thanksgiving celebration was held on January 23 for the life of Msgr James Gnanapiragasam as he celebrated his 80th birthday. The memorable occasion was graced by Archbishop Julian Leow and Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam, Msgr Stanislaus Soosamariam, 32 priests, 13 seminarians, and two Infant Jesus (IJ) nuns. Msgr James was the main celebrant at the 5.30pm Mass, attended by parishioners, friends, family members and relatives.

Soon after the Mass, refreshments were served, and a spectacular fireworks display took place in front of the Parochial House to kickstart the evening. Lion Dances and their percussionists then led



Msgr James Gnanapiragasam during the Eucharistic Celebration.

the guests to the dinner venue.

A variety of performances were staged by local talents of St Joseph's and the different communities such as the Pakistani, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka migrants. The band played music from the 80s and 90s, accompanied by a laser light show.

A video montage highlighting Msgr James' priesthood journey, with birthday wishes from various parish ministries, was shown.

Archbishop Julian extended his birthday wishes to Msgr James before blessing the sumptuous 10-course dinner. More than 800 people attended and enjoyed the auspicious event.

Amidst dinner, Msgr James was called on stage together with

his siblings and St Joseph's parish priest, Fr Frederick Joseph, to cut the birthday cake. There was a dazzling display of fireworks as the crowd belted out the birthday song.

Msgr James delivered his birthday message and thanked everyone for making his birthday celebration memorable.

Thanks to Fr Frederick for initiating the function and to the committee and volunteers who worked tirelessly to make the event a success.

One of the greatest gifts is the gift of gratitude. May we always embrace the clergy and pray earnestly that they continue to build the Kingdom of God with great love in their hearts.

Fr Arulnathan marks priestly silver jubilee

NIBONG TEBAL: Parishioners of the Church of St Anthony celebrated their parish priest, Fr Arulnathan Joseph's 25th sacerdotal anniversary on January 18.

Bishop Sebastian Francis, Bishop Emeritus Anthony Selvanayagam and 25 priests were present at the celebration themed *For to me to live is Christ* (Phil. 1:21). The anniversary was marked a day earlier to accommodate his fellow priests, who had gathered for their monthly recollection.

Fr Arulnathan was the main celebrant, with Bishop Sebastian concelebrating. Fr Victor Louis, Fr Edmund Woon, Fr Nelson Joseph, and Fr Vincent Paul are also celebrating their silver jubilees.

Deacon Raymond Raj delivered the homily in English while Fr Victor shared in Tamil.

A committee, headed by Sel-

vanathan Anthony Dass and assisted by Parish Pastoral Council chairman, Bernard Anthony, was formed last year to organise the event. Selvanathan said, "Fr Arul has served at St Anthony's for eight years and it was our joy and privilege to celebrate his Sacerdotal silver jubilee. This was a rare occasion for our parish."

After Mass, a dinner reception and cultural show were held at a nearby school hall with almost 1,000 people in attendance.

Fr Arulnathan said, "I am thankful to God for calling me to this life. I am happy to be a priest and very grateful to the people of my parish for hosting such a beautiful celebration."

The man of the hour acknowledged the hard work of the people of St Anthony's and the jubilee committee for the success of his anniversary celebration.



Rk Samy from Uruvadam Kudumbam garlands Fr Arulnathan Joseph.

St Jude's Church celebrates Sunday of the Word of God



Fr Vincent Thomas incensing the Bible.

RAWANG: The Church of St. Jude, Rawang, celebrated Sunday of the Word of God, on January 22, as instituted by Pope Francis, to be celebrated on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.

In his homily, parish priest Fr Vincent Thomas said the theme for the day was *Synodality and The Word of God*, focusing on three aspects; listening, participation and mission.

He added that like Mother Mary, who listened and obeyed God's Word, we too are called to open ourselves to listen to His Word.

Fr. Vincent challenged us to listen and read the Word of God as often

as possible, especially during family prayers, and reduce saying that we are unable to hear Him speak or have difficulties listening to Him.

He said it is through the Holy Scripture that we can hear Christ speaking to us. We are called by the Church to listen, participate, and live in holiness, fulfilling the mission of Christ. In short, we are called to become Missionary Disciples.

He ended his homily on a firm note that we are nothing without the Word and if we cannot understand the Word, then we do not know Christ. — *By Mercy Almeida Stellus*

Tampin parish to address unresolved issues

TAMPIN: The Church of St John Marie Vianney held its Pastoral Assembly (PPA) on January 7. The senior citizens and youth were well represented among the 50 parishioners from Tampin, Gemeneh, Gemas, Palong, Gatco, Bahau, and Kuala Pilah.

Also present was Archbishop Julian Leow. Parish priest, Fr Albet Arockiasamy, started with the Synod Prayer, followed by the Scripture text on the road to Emmaus to set the spiritual tone.

PPA coordinator, Rita Krishnan, took us through the Synodal Journey with three questions:

- What do you think requires more attention in the parish?
- Do you feel there is not enough being done?
- Do you recognise hindrances in fulfilling the above?

We were divided into groups of five, with one question each. It was interesting as we were assigned to be facilitators, notetakers, and timekeepers. The notetakers presented their findings to the



The participants during the spiritual conversation.

large group by sharing the problems shared by the laity and possible suggestions for facing these challenges. Fr Albet concluded the sharing by assuring the parishioners that an immediate Parish Pastoral Plan would be structured for 2023 by the Parish Pastoral Council to address the concerns and issues raised by the people. He also thanked the parishioners for their

valuable inputs and suggestions, including from those from the outskirts.

Archbishop Julian, in his address, invited the parish to reflect and recognise the connection within and around us, that empowered us to work with one another despite limitations. He also thanked everyone for making the PPA a memorable one.



Archbishop Julian Leow with the presenters and participants.

Do good, seek justice

By Gwen Manickam

KUALA LUMPUR: The KL District churches organised an Ecumenical Worship at Wesley Methodist Church to open the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on January 19.

Themed *Do Good, Seek Justice*, the faithful sought to explore how the work of Christian unity can contribute to promoting racial justice across all levels of society.

The Myanmar Children's Choir sang GF Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* as the prelude.

Wesley Methodist Church Associate Pastor, Rev Ashok Amarasingham, welcomed guests and prayed the Call to Gather.

Anglican Rev Vijendra Daniel and members of his congregation took turns leading the Invitation to Confession and Forgiveness.

The Epistle reading from Ephesians 2:13-22 was by Lutheran Bishop Thomas Low and Presbyterian Rev Richard Tok recited the Psalm. Parish priest of the Church of the Holy Rosary, Fr Dominic Tan, proclaimed the Gospel from Matthew 25: 31-40.

Methodist Bishop Dr T Jeyakumar preached the sermon on Isaiah 1:17 about doing good and seeking justice.

The bishop reminded the congregation that if we do not heed the commands of God, He will bring judgment upon the people.

On how this verse applies to us today, the prelate said, "Some of us try to manipulate God by participating in acts of worship without participating in acts of justice. We go to church, give our offerings and expect God to think that we have been good."

The three lessons he drew from the verse are:

Do what is good and right as individuals. It is not enough to say that I have done no evil. I must start doing good to those in real



Participants placing their pebbles in the tray of soil as a sign of their commitment to do good and seek justice.

need.

We must actively promote justice together. We have a communal responsibility and there are some things we would do well by joining hands with others.

Genuine worship must lead to right living. When we truly worship God, we will resolve to act with appropriate righteousness in our dealings with others

Bishop Jeyakumar reiterated, "If we want our worship to be acceptable to God, we need to repent of our unrighteous living and actively extend mercy, compassion, and justice to the needy, to the marginalised and oppressed. Maybe then, when we stand before God's holy throne, we may hear Him say, 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in. When you did this to the least of these, you did it to Me' (Matthew 25:31-46)."

Then, three lay people, Melissa Pereira, Shaman Gaspar, and Elder Steven Fung, shared their testimonies on how they walked the extra mile to help the less fortunate in their community.

The congregation was then asked to bring the white pebble, given at the beginning of the service, and place it in a tray of soil at the foot of the altar saying, "I commit myself to respond to the call of Isaiah to 'do good and seek

justice'."

Representatives from the different Christian denominations took turns saying the intercessory prayers before Archbishop Julian Leow said the closing prayer.

All ordained ministers were invited on stage to pray a blessing over the congregation from Numbers 6: 24-26, before the Myanmar Children's Choir sang Michael W Smith's *Angus Dei* and Presbyterian Elder Kingsley Row's solo performance of *One Voice*.

The evening ended with light fellowship.

On Jan 25, the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) closed the week with a similar service at the Chapel of the Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, Cadijn House.

Archbishop Julian Leow proclaimed the Gospel.

Cathedral of St Mary, the Theotokosin's Vicar and President, the Very Rev Philip Thomas Cor Episcopa in his sermon referred to Jeremiah 23:16 – 20, in which the prophet speaks of another version of prophesy.

He said the Council of Yahweh in yesteryears summoned selected priests, kings, and prophets so they could get a message. Here, through the body of Christ, the church, we come into the presence of God, through the communion of all believers, through the Eucharist celebration, and through worship. And, if we can be in the



Cathedral of St Mary, the Theotokosin's Vicar and President, the Very Rev. Philip Thomas Cor Episcopa giving his sermon during the Christian Unity Prayer gathering at the Chapel of the Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, Cadijn House on January 25, 2023.

council through worship and the Eucharist celebration, we will be given the prophetic message and the strength of the Holy Spirit to go into the world and rectify the injustices and correct all kinds of darkness that are encroaching in the beautiful creation of God.

After the final blessing, Archbishop Julian thanked the CFM Exco for organising the event and the *Cantus Musicus* choir for joining in the celebration.

He said, "This is not one week of effort to be united but a continuation of all our efforts to build unity among ourselves, firstly as Christians, and then to extend and build bridges across the different faiths."

Pope announces Ecumenical Prayer Vigil for Synod

VATICAN: Pope Francis announced that an Ecumenical Prayer Vigil will be held in September before the Synod of Bishops, to entrust the bishops' work to the Lord.

Pope Francis went on to note that the path to Christian unity and the Church's synodal conversion are linked. For this reason, he announced an Ecumenical Prayer Vigil, set to take place in St Peter's Square on September 30.

At the Vigil, he explained, "we will entrust to God the work of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops".

The Pope added that for the young people who will come to the Vigil, there will be a special programme throughout that weekend, organised by the Taizé Community.

"As of now", the Pope concluded, "I invite brothers and sisters of all Christian denominations to participate in this gathering of the People of God." — *Vatican News*



A file image of Pope Francis with ecumenical leaders at the Vespers for the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2022. (Vatican Media)

OLF parishioners relearn the history of their faith

KUALA LUMPUR: Some 42 parishioners from the Church of Our Lady of Fatima went on a one-day pilgrimage to Melaka on January 11. The trip was initiated and led by parish priest, Fr William Michael.

The day began with Mass at 6.30am celebrated by Fr William. Our first stop was the historical Church of St Peter, the first Catholic Church in Malaysia, built more than 300 years ago in 1710.

St Peter's parish priest, Fr Lionel Thomas, welcomed and introduced us to his staff members. He briefly related the historical events that led to the building of the church. The interior was stunning in its historical architecture as was the exterior. The unique St Peter's Chair, designed as part of the altar set-up, was a significant reminder of the Apostle who was appointed by Jesus to "take care of the sheep." The moment was reflective and poignant as the Catholic Church recently



The pilgrims at the Church of St Peter, Melaka.

witnessed the passing and funeral of St Peter's 265th successor, Pope Emeritus Benedict VI.

The next stop was the neogothic-designed Church of St Francis Xavier, built in the mid-1800s. Parish priest, Fr Moses Rayappan, gave a brief history of the church which included information about a now, unused tunnel that runs beneath the centre of the church building. One end of the tunnel showed the names of three young Portuguese Catholic priests who had died for

the faith in the tunnel.

Third on our list was the Church of St Theresa, Gajah Berang. We were met and welcomed by the assistant priest, Fr Martinian Lee, and parish staff. We were shown video clips and given a rundown of the origins of the 81-year-old church which began as a chapel to cater to the spiritual needs of the people who came from China, back in the day. The MEP fathers took great interest in ensuring that the Chinese-speaking faithful could participate

in Eucharistic celebrations and other faith-based activities to help them grow in their faith. Fr Martinian explained that on Sundays, three Masses are celebrated in Mandarin and one Mass in English to cater to the large Chinese congregation.

We arrived at our final destination, the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Krubong, on the outskirts of the state, at tea time. The present church was built on the grounds of the original church,

erected by the Portuguese in 1600. This parish continues to cater to Chinese-speaking Catholics as it has done since its inception. Parish priest, Fr Patrick Tyoh, and team treated us to tea-time Chinese delights and sent us off with a prayer and blessing.

The pilgrimage was a wonderful start to 2023 and served to help us focus on our Catholic faith. It was also a reminder of the many people who were pivotal in bringing Catholicism to Malaysia. The trip was an experience in appreciation of the history of the Catholic faith first brought to Melaka by St Francis Xavier.

Heartfelt appreciation to Fr Lionel, Fr Moses, Fr Martinian, Fr Patrick, and Fr Alexuchelvam for taking the time to educate, entertain and bless us. Our gratitude to Fr William for the idea and for helping us relearn the history of our faith. — *By Assunta Januarius*

Divisions in the Church nothing new, can be healthy

VATICAN: A top papal aide and one of the main organisers of Pope Francis' ongoing Synod of Bishops on Synodality has said current tensions within Catholicism, including those highlighted by the recent deaths of Pope Benedict XVI and Australian Cardinal George Pell, are nothing new and are potentially healthy.

Differences in opinion are actually good for the Church, said Jesuit Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, provided they are shared with respect and humility.

Speaking at the presentation of a major ecumenical event aimed at strengthening intra-Christian ties as part of Pope Francis' synodal

reform process, Hollerich said he's not worried about perceived conflicts among different Catholic camps.

"That there are different opinions in the Catholic Church is quite normal," he said, adding, "We live in a moment of change, a change of the era. We are in the year zero of digitalisation, and this means that we have to see together how we can proclaim Christ in this new world emerging."

Noting that a good deal of debate in the Church is currently centred on the synod process, Hollerich said the synod itself "is not a divisive factor," as there have always been differing opinions on key discussion topics, but rather,

the synod "is a factor that brings people together where you have to listen to each other, but not just as a position, but in order to discern what God wants for His people."

Shortly after the January 10 death of Pell in a Rome hospital, it emerged that his last essay was a piece for the *Spectator* objecting that the Synod on Synodality has developed into a "toxic nightmare" and that its preparatory document is "incomplete [and] hostile in significant ways to the apostolic tradition."

Despite what Hollerich said are "loud and shrill" voices complaining about the synod process unfolding, he said an attitude of listening and discernment alone "can

be the answer the Church gives for all of these questions."

"We have to go together, humbly walk with our Lord, and really trust in God, trust in the Holy Spirit," he said, saying, "it's not about Church politics, it's about prayer, and it's about the Holy Spirit, and it's about the people of God walking humbly together."

Christians obsessed with internal politics give the world an image of "a small group of people not interested in the world, in mission, but centred on themselves all the time," Hollerich said, adding, "If that's the image we want to give the world, we can try it, but I prefer the synodal way." — **By Elise Ann Allen, Crux**



Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg.

New convent in Iraq celebrates return of Christians



Consecration ceremony for new convent in Batnaya. (ICN photo/Aid to the Church in Need)

IRAQ: A Catholic charity has hailed the re-opening of a convent in a village devastated by extremists as a sign that Christianity can once more flourish in Iraq's Nineveh Plains.

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) helped rebuild the Dominican Sisters' new convent and kindergarten in Batnaya which replaces buildings razed by Daesh (ISIS) during the jihadists' occupation of the village from 2014 to 2016.

ACN (UK) national director Dr Caroline Hull, who has visited parts of the Nineveh Plains seized by Daesh, said the new convent was a sign of new life in a town where militants had smashed altars, decapitated statues and daubed anti-Christian messages on church walls.

She said: "Visiting Iraq, I saw the suffering of those forced out of their villages by armed extremists — which is why it is vital that we continue to help those who want to return to their villages to do so. Batnaya became a ghost town after Daesh left and some wondered if it would ever thrive again — but the sisters' new convent is a sign that Christianity can flourish and have a future in the Nineveh Plains."

Speaking at the consecration of the new convent, Chaldean Archbishop Paul Thabet of Alqosh announced it would give life and hope to the local Christian community.

He said: "The presence of the nuns in this village is a sign of encouragement for all the people of the village to return too... We Christians in Iraq have a deep wound and this wound must be healed by faith. We must have faith to rebuild the village, and you are a sign of that faith."

Appealing for Christians who had left the village to return, Archbishop Thabet said: "Your name and identity are in Batnaya and your roots are in Batnaya, not in the places of emigration." Around 5,000 — mostly Chaldean Catholics — fled the village in 2014. Some went to internally displaced people's camps, while others emigrated.

The Dominican Sisters returned in 2017 and began ministering to the families which had come back to Batnaya. Initially they lived in a house in nearby Telskuf provided to the order by a resident.

Stressing the importance of the sisters' witness at the consecration ceremony, Archbishop Thabet continued: "Consecration is a call through which God builds up the Kingdom of Heaven. Wherever monastics come, they can change the desert into a paradise, and the presence of the nuns and their coming to the stricken and demolished village is a sign of great reconstruction. We are not only rebuilding stones; we are restoring humanity." — **By John Newton, ICN**

Korean Church moves from receiving to sharing aid

SEOUL: The Catholic Church in South Korea, once largely dependent on aid from foreign churches for relief, rehabilitation and development projects, is now on a mission to provide vital assistance to countries and churches around the world, Church officials say.

The Korean Church had been a 'receiving Church' until the mid-1980s, but it has slowly become a 'sharing Church' since 1992, said Bishop John Baptist Jung Shin-chul of Incheon, president of Catholic charity, Caritas Korea.

In the 1950s, when Korea was a war-ravaged country, it needed aid for damage restoration, self-help development, and rural development projects that continued until the 1980s, the prelate said.

Bishop Jung made the comments as Caritas Korea International, the overseas aid agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCCK), carried out a fundraiser campaign on Overseas Aid Sunday recently.

"The scale of overseas aid by the Korean Church has increased. The bishops' conference aims to strengthen professionalism, publicity, and transparency in overseas aid," the prelate said.

Bishop Jung says that apart from



A South Korean nun is seen with people in Ethiopia last February. Ethiopia is among 20 countries receiving aid from Caritas Korea. (UCA News Photo/Caritas Korea)

emergency relief, rehabilitation, and development projects, the Korean Church supports dioceses, parishes, religious societies, and church-run organisations in various parts of the world.

This year, Caritas Korea plans to increase aid to emergency relief and long-term livelihood support projects in countries suffering from the climate crisis and conflict.

In his message on Overseas Aid Sunday, Bishop Jung said: "If we act together now, we can present a better tomorrow to our brothers and sisters."

"Let's act together," he appealed.

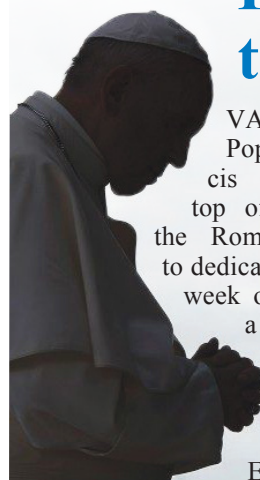
Fr Paul Choo Seong-hun, secretary general of Caritas Korea

pointed out that the Korean Church is on a mission to help those across the world "who cannot stand up on their own due to war, historical and geographical circumstances, etc."

Thus, the Church has been supporting refugees in Ukraine and development cooperation in the Palestinian region as major priority projects.

Fr Choo said he attended a Caritas Internationalis meeting in Warsaw, Poland to discuss emergency relief for war victims of Ukraine in June last year. Representatives from other countries welcomed the Korean Church's aid assistance by saying, "An Asian country that had received help in the past is now helping." — **ucanews.com**

Roman Curia to dedicate a week to Spiritual Exercises



VATICAN: Pope Francis is urging top officials in the Roman Curia to dedicate the first week of Lent to a personal experience of the Spiritual Exercises.

The Holy See Press Office announced recently that the Holy Father has invited all cardinals residing in Rome, heads of dicasteries, and superiors of the Roman Curia to take a week for prayer in Lent.

The Pope called on top officials of the Roman Curia to "experience, in a personal way, a period of Spiritual Exercises".

In order to facilitate their personal retreat, he urged them to

suspend their "work activities and engage in prayer from the afternoon of Sunday, February 26, to the afternoon of Friday, March 3."

This period of Spiritual Exercises coincides with the first Week of Lent.

The Press Office statement also noted that Pope Francis' engagements will be suspended during that week, including the Wednesday General Audience of March 1. — **Vatican News**

Parishes must merge due to decline in number of Catholics

WASHINGTON: A decline in Catholic religious practice and other changes in western Washington state means parishes will have to merge so that parish life can sustain itself, the Archdiocese of Seattle said recently.

"The mission of the Catholic Church is at the heart of strategic pastoral planning," said Archbishop Paul Etienne of Seattle. "To achieve our mission, we must reinvigorate the faith of our people and re-envision how we live our faith in our parish communities, which includes adapting to our current reality so that we can strengthen our relationship with Jesus, accompany one another in faith, and credibly proclaim the Gospel."

Despite a growing overall population in western Washington, the number of practising Catholics continues to decline, the archdiocese said in a statement. There are fewer households registered with a parish and fewer people attend Mass, receive the sacraments, and take part in parish life. From 2010 to 2019, the archdiocese said, Mass attendance fell by 11 per cent, baptismal numbers declined by 30 per cent and weddings declined by 18 per cent.

"With all of the changes that we're facing today — globally, culturally, and within the Church — it's very clear the status quo is no longer an option," Etienne said.

The archdiocese's strategic planning process, called Partners in the Gospel, is "a plan for how we embrace these realities with hope and confidence," the archbishop said.

Under the planning process, most parishes will combine into a "new family structure." Two or more parishes will become a single canonical parish under the leadership of one pastor and one or more parochial vicars. The pastor, parish leaders, and parishioners will

then determine questions such as how to share resources, staff, ministries, outreach efforts, and facilities.

The Seattle Archdiocese has fewer resources, including priests, lay leaders, and financial assets. There are 80 diocesan pastors for 174 locations, but it predicts it will have only 66 pastors in 2036.

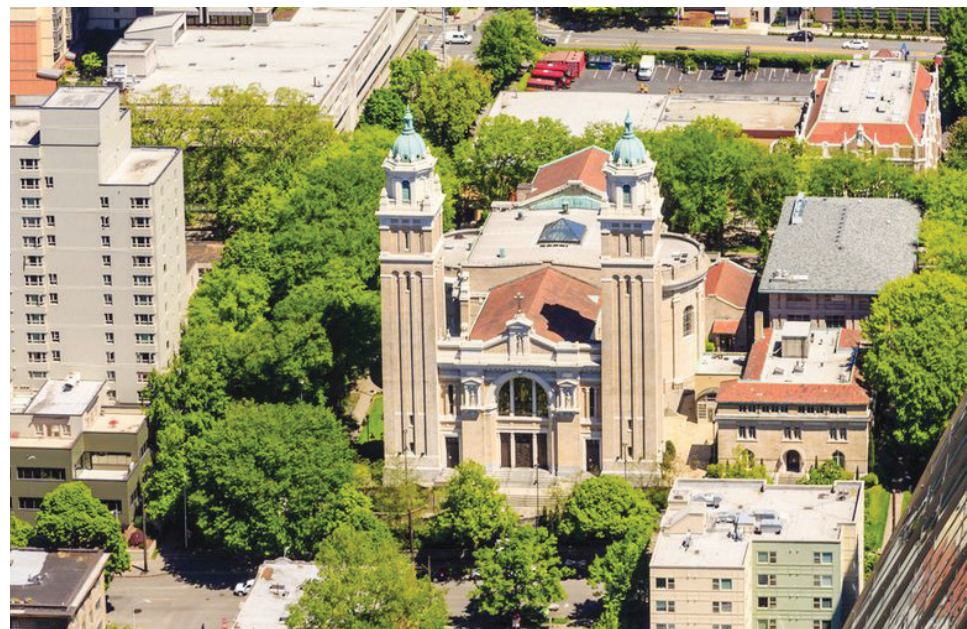
"We need to adapt to times," said Jesús Gómez Sánchez, a member of the archdiocesan pastoral council. "The worst we could do is remain not doing anything about it and just seeing the numbers in our Church decrease."

The archdiocese's 2021 annual report said it had about 600,000 Catholics in its territory. There were about 182 diocesan priests, including 81 retirees, 118 permanent deacons, 17 religious brothers, and 292 religious sisters. That year there were almost 3,200 infant baptisms, 4,700 confirmations, and 849 total marriages.

Caitlin Moulding, chief operations officer for the Archdiocese of Seattle, said the situation of Catholicism in the region has changed.

"We have churches that were built for many more people than are attending Mass, and most parishes have constrained resources with significant expenses to maintain facilities," she said. "Many smaller parishes have fewer resources, so they can't invest in the programmes and the staff needed to bring people together and re-enliven their faith."

The Minnesota-based PartnersEdge consultancy, which specialises in assessment, planning, and leadership, will aid the archdiocese in gathering data, analysis, and structural redesign.



St. James Cathedral, Seattle. (CNA photo/Darryl Brooks)

The consultation launches this month. Parish and archdiocesan consultations will take place in spring 2023, while public comment on parish groupings will take place in fall 2023. The final "parish family" structures will be announced in early 2024 and will take effect in July of that year. By 2027, parish groupings are planned to merge into canonical parishes.

The archdiocese's financial report for fiscal year 2020-2021 said parish collections drew in \$93 million (RM394 million). The archdiocese financial report found a three per cent decline in parish offertory giving on top of a four per cent decline the previous year. The previous 10 years, however, showed "moderate increases" each year.

For 27 parishes and missions, especially in rural areas, ordinary income was under \$100,000 (RM432,500) each. About two-thirds of parishes operate at a deficit when income from rental properties and special gifts is excluded, the *Seattle Times* reported. The archdiocese as a whole is fiscally solvent with about \$16.5 million (RM70 million) in cash and investments.

The Seattle Archdiocese covers the western part of Washington state, from the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade Mountains. At present, it has 72 Catholic schools and 174 parishes, missions, and pastoral centres. It celebrates more than 500 weekly Masses in eight languages. — **By Kevin J. Jones, CNA**

Catholic church in Canada's capital to become a mosque

OTTAWA, Canada: After three years of inactivity, the former St Margaret Mary Catholic Church in Ottawa, Ontario will soon be reopened. But this time as a mosque.

The Islamic Supreme Council of Canada plans to close out its purchase of the building in March, the community's founder, Imam Syed Soharwardy, told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

The organisation owns 32 mosques across the country, including two former churches. The *imam* suggested that not all of the property was destined to become a mosque. Instead, he plans to use most of the land as a multi-faith cultural centre that will welcome senior citizens, a music and arts group and a Montessori school for children, among other things.

"I [want to show] respect because this has been a church for over a century and people are emotionally, spiritually connected with this church," Syed Soharwardy explained to *CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning* programme.

He said the exterior of the old church will be preserved, while limited renovations will be made to the interior. The *imam* "hoped [the project] would serve as an example for how different faith groups can live in harmony".

"I'm 100 per cent sure that when this [sale] is closed in March, it will be a big nice model for the entire society of Canada and maybe for the world," he told the network.

St Margaret Mary in Ottawa is not the first church in Canada whose buildings have been reused to house a mosque. In November 2016, a place of worship belonging to



View of St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, Ottawa, Canada. (Wikimedia/Pipo Sullivan)

Northwestern United Church of Canada in the west end of the nation's capital was bought by the Ottawa mosque for \$1.5 million, said *CBC Radio*. Prior to the construction of this mosque, the basement of the church had already been used by Ottawa's Muslim community as a prayer room, and the two communities have continued to maintain a relationship.

Such multi-faith cooperation does not appear to be a source of tension in the country.

"In English Canada, the fact that a church becomes a mosque is even seen almost as a blessing because at least the building retains its religious vocation," said Martin Meunier, a sociologist of religion at the University of Ottawa. "Most disused churches (in Canada) are more often demolished or transformed," he pointed out. In fact, this event is indicative of a much broader phenomenon: the massive disaffection of churches in the country. In Quebec alone, a quarter of all places of worship have closed since 2003, according to the newspaper *Le Devoir's* analysis of data from the Religious Heritage Council's inventory.

Of the 663 churches affected by closure, 278 remained closed or were demolished, and 385 were transformed into community centres, libraries, theatres or housing units.

The relationship to pluralism is completely affirmed, especially in English Canada. One of the reasons for this is the secularisation movement, which has led to a decline in religious practice. And the Catholic Church, whose attendance dropped following the residential school abuse scandals, also saw its revenues drop during the COVID-19 crisis. Impoverished, the Church is being forced to sell off its property, including places of worship.

"The dioceses are identifying several loss-making or very expensive churches and selling them to keep others," said Meunier. "It is operating a prioritisation strategy," he noted.

If the transformation of a church into a mosque does not generate controversy, it is also because "pluralism is completely affirmed, especially in English Canada", he stressed. For example, in Toronto, the largest city in the English-speaking part of the country, 46 per cent of the population was not born in Canada. The "dividing line" separates believers and non-believers more than "Catholicism and Islam", Meunier suggested. But he suspects people in mostly French-speaking Quebec, where the dividing lines are not the same, probably would have reacted differently to turning a church into a mosque.

"As in France, there is a kind of greater attachment to the Catholic Church in Quebec," Meunier contended. "The fact that a church is being sold to the Muslim faith would perhaps be seen as a signal to question it," he said. — **By Marguerite de Lasa, LCI (<https://international.la-croix.com/>)**



31ST WORLD DAY OF THE SICK – FEBRUARY 11, 2023

Journey together in compassion with the sick

VATICAN: As the Church journeys along the synodal path, Pope Francis is inviting the faithful to reflect on the fact that “it is especially through the experience of vulnerability and illness that we can learn to walk together according to the style of God, which is closeness, compassion, and tenderness”. He made the call in his message for the 31st World Day of the Sick.

The Catholic Church marks the annual day on February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The theme of this year’s observance is *Take care of him: Compassion as a synodal exercise of healing*, drawn from the *Gospel of Luke* on the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

In his message, Pope Francis highlights compassion and care for the sick “as a synodal exercise of healing” to which God calls us, noting that if illness is part of our human condition, when “experienced in isolation and abandonment, unaccompanied by care and compassion, it can become inhumane”.

“Experiences of bewilderment, sickness, and weakness are part of the human journey. Far from excluding us from God’s people, they bring us to the centre of the Lord’s attention, for He is our Father and does not want to lose even one of His children along the way.”

The “condition of loneliness and abandonment” of the man beaten and robbed by bandits in the Parable of the Good Samaritan is the same experienced today by “too many of our brothers and sisters” who “are left at a time when they most need help”, the Pope writes. Indeed, he says, “There is a profound link between this parable of Jesus and the many ways in which fraternity is denied in today’s world”, in which it is no longer easy “to distinguish the assaults on human life and dignity that arise from natu-

ral causes, from those caused by injustice and violence”.

The Good Samaritan tells us a different story: that of a man, “a scorned foreigner”, who “is moved with compassion and takes care of that stranger on the road, treating him as a brother. In doing so, without even thinking about it” says the Pope, “he makes a difference, he makes the world more fraternal”.

In a world dominated by “the pervasive culture of efficiency” that pushes us to sweep our vulnerability under the carpet, “leaving no room for our human frailty”, the Church is therefore called to “measure herself against the Gospel example of the Good Samaritan, in order that she may become a true ‘field hospital’, for her mission is manifested in acts of care, particularly in the historical circumstances of our time”.

“We are all fragile and vulnerable, and need that compassion which knows how to pause, approach, heal, and raise up. Thus, the plight of the sick is a call that cuts through indifference and slows the pace of those who go on their way as if they had no sisters and brothers.”

While the World Day of the Sick calls for prayer and closeness towards those who suffer — continues the message — it “also aims to raise the awareness of God’s people, healthcare institutions and civil society, with regard to a new way of moving forward together. Indeed,” the Pope writes, “the conclusion of the Parable of the Good Samaritan suggests how the exercise of fraternity, which began as a face-to-face encounter, can be expanded into organised care.”

In this regard, Pope Francis once again draws attention to the urgent need for “strategies and resources in order to guar-



antee each person’s fundamental right to basic and decent healthcare”, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed “the structural limits of existing public welfare systems”, while “straining the great networks of expertise and solidarity”.

“The Samaritan calls the innkeeper to ‘take care of him’ (Lk 10:35). Jesus addresses the same call to each of us. He exhorts us to ‘go and do likewise’ (Lk 10:37). (...) ‘The parable shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbours, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good’ (Fratelli Tutti No. 67).”

Bringing his message to a close, Pope

Francis again reiterates that the “sick” are at the centre of God’s people, and the Church advances together with them as a sign of a humanity in which everyone is precious and no one should be discarded or left behind”.

The Pope wrapped up the message by entrusting all the sick, those who care for them in their families, researchers and volunteers, and those “who are committed to weaving personal, ecclesial, and civic bonds of fraternity” to the intercession of Mary, Health of the infirm. — **By Lisa Zengarini, Vatican News**

To read the full message go to: <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/sick/documents/20230110-giornata-malato.html>



St Francis de Sales

In a world that is inclined towards indifference, media and those in communications should use their heart to seek and speak with charity in order to make way for a better world, Pope Francis said in his message for World Communications Day.

“I would like to focus on ‘speaking with

Pope calls for more “heart”, in his message for World Communications Day

the heart’. It is the heart that spurs us to go, to see and to listen, and it is the heart that moves us towards an open and welcoming way of communicating,” the Pope wrote.

While the message is mainly for those working in communications, the Pope says everyone has the responsibility to communicate “with an open heart. Only by listening and speaking with a pure heart can we see beyond appearances and overcome the vague din which, also in the field of information, does not help us discern in the complicated world in which we live,” Francis said, pointing out that “The call to speak with the heart radically challenges the times in which we are living, which are so inclined towards indifference and indignation, at times even on the basis of disinformation which falsifies and exploits the truth.”

Speak with the heart: Veritatem facientes in caritate (Doing the truth in charity) is the theme of this year’s World Communications Day, which is traditionally observed the Sunday before Pentecost, and this year falls on May 21. The message was released January 24, the feast of St Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

To seek and tell the truth with courage and freedom

In this year’s message, the Pope invites us to reflect on the need for words capable of doing good for others and of touching even the “most hardened of hearts. In a historical period marked by polarisations and contrasts — to which unfortunately not even the ecclesial community is immune — the commitment to communicating with open heart and arms does not pertain exclusively to those in the field of communications; it is everyone’s responsibility,” the Pope said. Hence, “communicating in a cordial manner means that those who read or listen to us are led to welcome our participation in the joys, fears, hopes and suffering of the women and men of our time. Those who speak in this way love the other because they care and protect their freedom without violating it,” he said.

Pope Francis in his message praised St Francis de Sales, for offering communicators a worthwhile example. “A brilliant intellectual, fruitful writer and profound theologian... his meek attitude, humanity and willingness to dialogue patiently with everyone, especially with those who disagreed with him,

made him an extraordinary witness of God’s merciful love,” the Pope said. “May people who work in communications feel inspired by this saint of tenderness, seeking and telling the truth with courage and freedom and rejecting the temptation to use sensational and combative expressions,” he said.

“This is why all belligerent rhetoric must be rejected, as well as every form of propaganda that manipulates the truth, disfiguring it for ideological ends. Instead, what must be promoted is a form of communication that helps create the conditions to resolve controversies between peoples,” Francis said.

“As Christians, we know that the destiny of peace is decided by conversion of hearts, since the virus of war comes from within the human heart. From the heart come the right words to dispel the shadows of a closed and divided world and to build a civilisation which is better than the one we have received. Each of us is asked to engage in this effort, but it is one that especially appeals to the sense of responsibility of those working in the field of communications,” he said. — **By Ivan Fernandes, LCI ([https:// international.la-croix.com/](https://international.la-croix.com/))**

Hanging up the jersey

What happens when God calls an athlete away from sports?

St John Paul II once said that “every Christian is called to become a strong athlete of Christ — that is, a faithful and courageous witness to His Gospel.”

Though the saintly pope was clearly speaking allegorically, he himself was a lover of sports, as are billions of people around the world.

Only a small fraction of all athletes will play their sport at the collegiate level, and far fewer will make their chosen sport a career. Nevertheless, in the US in particular,

sports and the pursuit of excellence in sports can often become more than a pastime and can, instead, become a way of life — especially for young people at the top of their game.

But what happens when, so to speak, the jersey comes off? Two prominent Catholic speakers, both of whom had successful athletic careers before embracing vocations, spoke to *CNA* at the *SEEK23* conference in St Louis recently about what happened when God called them away from their sport.



Young people in sports jerseys react after winning a friendly soccer game at World Youth Day in Panama in 2019. (CNA photo/Jonah McKeown)

If Christ is not the centre of my life, something else will be

Sr Miriam James Heidland of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity described sports as her “first love,” having been interested in watching and playing them since she was young. She went on to play Division One volleyball in college.

“I was never good enough to go pro, so I knew that wasn’t going to happen, but I really wanted to pursue a career in sports journalism, work for *ESPN* or something,” Heidland said.

Then her life changed when she suffered complications following knee surgery while in college. Her doctor had to sit her down and deliver the painful news that she had to quit volleyball or risk damaging her future mobility.

“And I really did have an identity crisis. All I knew of myself was as an athlete,” Heidland said. “And those were all my friends and those were the people I hung out with and that’s what I did every day. So, to not be an athlete anymore was a time of intense darkness for me.”

At that difficult time in Heidland’s life, a

trusted priest friend helped her to better understand God’s plan, starting in motion her response to God’s call to become a religious sister.

Heidland was quick to point out, echoing St. John Paul II, that sports confers many benefits on society and on individuals. For example, being physically active is good for everyone, and developing the skills of determination and teamwork are very positive and important things, she said.

“When [sports are] lived excellently — which you see in John Paul II, a great lover of athletics and sport — when it’s lived well, it parallels the spiritual life and it brings great joy ... There are so many parallels between the spiritual life and what it takes to be excellent in a sport,” she noted.

“We admire people that are willing to get up every day and do the hard things and to keep going and to persevere and to battle through things. And that perseverance has helped me so many times. So many times in religious life I’d had memories of being on the volleyball court and pushing through.”



Sister Miriam James Heidland, SOLT. (CNA photo/FOCUS Instagram)

The danger, she said, comes when a person perceives his or her life’s identity to be an athlete, rather than a child of God. Because ultimately, she said, everyone’s athletic ability will “pass away.”

“Not to be morose about it, but there will be a day when every single one of us is not an athlete anymore,” Heidland said.

“I’ve had to wrestle through it myself: If Christ is not the centre of my life, something else will be. And my life will rise and fall based on how I do on the athletic field, what my social media count is like, whether somebody likes me or not, whether I’m doing well in my job. And I mean, yeah, those things are going to affect us, but they will

pierce our identity if our identity is not in Christ.”

Heidland cautioned against families getting so wrapped up in sports that it detrimentally affects their practice of the faith — they begin missing Sunday Mass, for example.

“If we’re missing Mass and we’re missing that because of sports, we are completely out of order,” Heidland said.

“Because sport is going to pass away. You blow out your knee, or you don’t make the top elite team, they’re done with you. It’s a system, it’s a business... so if I’m not really clear about who I am and what I’m about, it’s going to be very difficult.”

I wanted to be great at something

Fr Chase Hilgenbrinck, a priest of the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, serving his second year as vocations director, played soccer in college and at the professional level. He grew up in an athletic family and, as a child, idolised famous athletes such as basketball legend Michael Jordan.

“Growing up, I was just like any other American kid who wanted to be great at something,” he recalled. The priesthood was not at all on his radar.

After playing soccer at Clemson University, Hilgenbrinck played professionally in Chile before joining Major League Soccer in the US. He ended up playing for the New England Revolution in Massachusetts.

At first, he wanted nothing to do with the priesthood. Previous instances when people had told him he would make a good priest had gone “in one ear and out the other.”

Hilgenbrinck started to hear and respond to God’s call to become a priest when he realised the various “jerseys” that he wore throughout his life weren’t bringing him the fulfilment he truly desired. But when Hilgenbrinck first heard the call to become a priest, he said he wasn’t living as an “authentic Christian man”; he described himself as spiritually “still a boy.” He wanted to be a soccer star, not a priest of Jesus Christ.

“So often in life, we believe ... that we even have greater desires than God has for us. ‘Why isn’t He fulfilling my desires?’ I feel like I desire more than He desires, which is a false premise, and it’s a misconception,” Hilgenbrinck said.

“We start to cover our lives with things, because we’re afraid that God’s not going to show up. So, we start putting on jerseys,” he said.

“Whatever those things are: it could be music, it could be academics, it could be our job, it could be a relationship in our life. All these things are all different jerseys that we might wear, so to speak,

While playing soccer professionally in Chile, a country where he had no connections and did not yet speak the language, Hilgenbrinck had fallen back on what he knew, which was the Catholic Church. Later, his interest in practising his faith started to grow. He was struck by a quote from the late Pope Benedict XVI: “You are not made for comfort. You are made for greatness.”

He resigned from Major League Soccer in 2008 to enter Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Peoria in 2014.

Hilgenbrinck — who today dabbles in



Father Chase Hilgenbrinck

soccer coaching when he has the time — encourages every coach to be “a good translator of virtue.” For Hilgenbrinck, a quote from St John Paul II struck him as profound: “Sports are a school of moral virtues.”

“An athlete who goes to practice every day and trains — look at all the virtues that they’re learning in one single day of training. And they do that every day and then they play in games, and the discipline that it takes; realising that a team is bigger than me, sacrificing for teammates, for the team or for the win, putting myself last so that the

team can be first, losing with great class, winning with great humility. I mean, all these things that we learned,” Hilgenbrinck said.

“Then you realise these are the exact virtues that I need to foster in order to be a mature Christian,” he said.

Similar to Heidland, Hilgenbrinck was quick to point out that, despite any dangers, sports is largely beneficial for society and for people individually.

“Today it seems like there’s more talk about the evil of sports than there is the good of sport. And so, I think that we shouldn’t make them mutually exclusive. And so, I think a lot of times that’s unhelpful because the young people and even their parents see this as such good for their kids, and there’s such passion,” Hilgenbrinck said.

“[But] if sports is taking the place of God and our life and of our virtue and are distracting us ... then we’ve gone too far. So there needs to be discernment, is what I would say to families who are so entrenched in sports. Where is this leading? ... [What happens] when the jersey comes off? Who are you? And if we don’t know the answer to that question, and if we’re not training for that answer, then we’ve probably gone too far.” — **By Jonah McKeown, CNA**

Sunshine after the rain ... an MBE for Jane

By Gwen Manickam

Jane Chelliah-Manning joins an elite list of Malaysians recently honoured with the coveted Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) award. An MBE is the third highest ranking award (excluding a knighthood/damehood), behind the CBE and OBE.

The award is given in recognition of outstanding achievement or service which has had a long-term, significant impact to the community.

The London-based 59-year-old will receive her award from a member of the British Royal Family at a date yet to be determined.

Civil servant Jane is currently the Assistant Director, Senior Policy Lead at the Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategies. In her 20 years of service, she's worked in various areas including communications, construction, marine, electronics, retail and the energy sectors.

In recent years, she worked on Britain's exit from the European Union (Brexit), and during the pandemic, she led the team in establishing and implementing a statutory arbitration process in the Commercial Rent Coronavirus Act 2022. She said the

award also recognises her efforts as chair of a charity for women with learning disabilities in London.

Jane said receiving the phone call from the United Kingdom cabinet office on December 13, 2022 left her shaking.

"The caller announced, 'By approval of the King, and the advice of the Prime Minister, you have been chosen to receive an MBE. Do you accept?'"

"It was one of the biggest moments of my life. I felt validated for the person I am. It was like the universe had uplifted me. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to be recognised in such a magnanimous way."

Malaysian at heart

A SMK Assunta alumnus, Jane headed to the United Kingdom to pursue her A-levels in 1981. She went on to do a diploma in journalism before earning a law degree from the University of Westminster.

Along the way, she met and married New Zealander Roger Manning, and the couple has a 23-year-old daughter who graduates with a Masters in Law this month.

The former Old Klang Road resident said although she's lived in the UK for 41 years, she has British permanent residency and has not given up her Malaysian citizenship.

"The pull of the motherland is very strong. I believe that where you come from is very formative of your character and outlook."

"Although I don't go back to Malaysia often, I am still friends with many Assuntarians I studied with. Under the stewardship of Sr Enda Ryan (former Headmistress), the school was very progressive. In many ways, Sister was ahead of her time in recognising female leadership. Assunta brought another dimension for us to explore other aspects of ourselves. And that gave me a good standing as well."

As a fresh graduate, Jane worked as a press officer for the Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI).

Jane made a point to mention that earning an MBE doesn't mean she had an easy ride along the way in the UK. For example, in the early 1990s, before joining the civil service, when

she went for job interviews, people would not shake her hand. "It was overt racism. But along the way, attitudes have changed. I think once cultural and colour barriers are broken down, people start to see you as a person, and that's helped me."

"There is a continuum from how I was in Malaysia to how I am now – being true to myself. Appreciate and be grateful for what you have. Always strive for more, but in doing so, I constantly recognise that my path is littered with help from other people."

Trusting in God's timing

Jane's faith in Christ plays the number one role in her life. It acts as a lens to how she thinks and behaves. "I pray daily that I should do God's will for me."

"It does not mean I am a saint," she quipped, "because I am sure I fall short of God's expectations every day."

Last year, 2022, was an especially trying year for Jane. She lost three beloved family members in Malaysia – an aunt and her son, and an uncle.

"Their loss broke my spirit and caused me to spiral. For the first time in my life, I asked big questions of God – 'What is the purpose of life? What is the meaning of life? Why don't you intervene to stop suffering?'"

Soon after their passing, Jane had a bad fall and contracted COVID-19.

"I couldn't pull myself together and I couldn't, figuratively, get off the floor. I kept crying to God. 'You've left me, You are not hearing me on a prolonged basis, why?'"

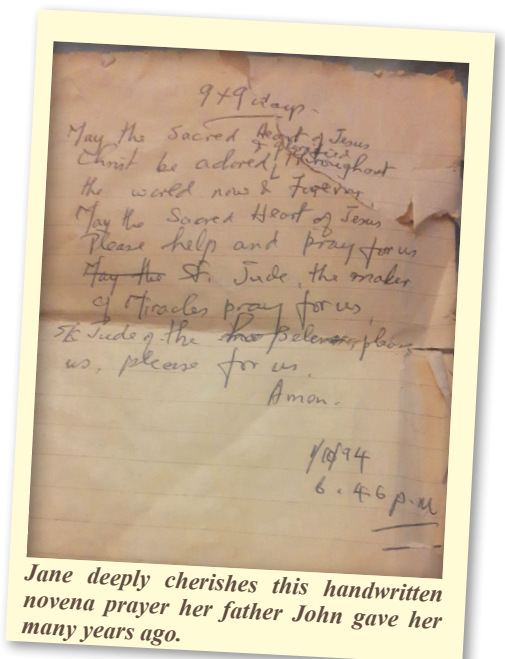
"I slowly started to turn the corner and one of the great lessons was to trust God's timing. There are reasons why these things happen. This culminated in my being awarded the MBE."

She also realised that God is present in trying times and in good times. Jane instilled a strong sense of faith in her daughter so she is mindful of God and His will in her life. This helps her see Christ in situations that go as planned.

The nomination process for the MBE is a secret. Jane was very touched when she later

learnt a former boss had nominated her and that he was supported by a number of her other former and current bosses, for being an outstanding employee and for her contributions to society.

The vivacious lady has a Masters in International Relations and Affairs from the London School of Economics and Political Science and indulges in *nasi lemak* at least once a week.



Jane deeply cherishes this handwritten novena prayer her father John gave her many years ago.

Feminist father

She dedicates her award to her late father, John Chelliah, the former director of the Malaysian Agricultural Producers Association. He championed Jane and her sister, Dr. Janet Vasanthi Chelliah, to always chase their dreams, no matter how big, and to do very well in life.

"He instilled in us a great sense of female independence and to never let our gender be a barrier."

Although Jane's father passed on over 25 years ago, she was very touched that members from his Sentosa Lodge sent her mum a congratulatory message on hearing of Jane's recent award.

BACOLOD, Philippines: Since 2020, volunteers have collected more than 100 large bags of waste cleaning up a park in Bacolod, an urban city in Negros Occidental, the Philippines' sugar bowl.

Though the park has been abandoned for more than 10 years, locals — under the leadership of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan — have taken on the work of reviving the park that is roughly the size of two basketball courts.

The park, known as Parkland, is located next to a church and the kindergarten school run by the congregation. But when young people loitering around the streets had turned the park into a hangout, local homeowners locked it down and stopped maintaining it, said Sr Helen Grace Marcelo, a member of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan.

Over time, mosquitoes and weeds took over, and when the adjacent creek overflows during a flood, waste is driven into the park.

The sad state of the abandoned park prompted the congregation to take an initiative to rehabilitate it, with trash-collecting as the first step.

Instead of burning the leaves strewn all over the abandoned park, the volunteers process them into compost by mixing them with rice husks to restore the soil's fertility, as composting is part of the waste management programme, said Desirie Tiberio, park restoration project coordinator.

Tiberio, a former student of the Good Samaritan's school, said they are also hoping to create a plant nursery as a means for fund-

Nuns, students and locals revive neglected park in Philippines

raising through the sale of plants.

To sustain the park, the nuns, students and parents began planting vegetables more than a year ago, but Typhoon Rai and severe Tropical Storm Nalgae had damaged the plants. They started replanting flowering plants along the edges, Marcelo said, and proceeds from the sale of their vegetables and flowers are put toward the maintenance of the park.

The students also turn recovered plastic wastes into decorative artworks, Tiberio said, such as cutting apart plastic bottles to turn them into pots. The funds generated from the sale of the artworks and the plants go to the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Outreach Centre, with shares going to the congregation's students and its adopted community in Bacolod.

"The outreach centre is working with two coastal communities," Marcelo said in reference to their adopted communities. "We provide them with different programmes, like scholarship, feeding and other assistance."

The volunteers are also reconstructing the small building in the park that had served as the office of the homeowners' association. In October, the Jesuits Conference of Asia Pacific offered a \$2,000 (RM8486.00) grant for its reconstruction: the building had lost its

roof, windows and doors. Only the walls remain today.

The homeowners have allowed the nuns to use the building for retreats and other activities once it is rebuilt. Marcelo said the plan is to use the building for reflection days, retreats and prayer.

With nearly 50 college students involved in the project by helping at least once a week — as well as parents of other local students — Marcelo said they are also hopeful that more homeowners will partake in the initiative. About 500 families live in the village.

Tiberio said she hopes proper waste management is practised in every home to address the larger problem of trash in the community.

Joan Lobaton, a lay and scholarship coordinator at the congregation's outreach centre, believes their rehabilitation of the park will serve as an example to others. The small efforts by each volunteer when pooled together could create a big difference and inspire initiatives and cooperation, she said.

The volunteers are eyeing to hit full rehabilitation by May 2023.

With their student enrolment increasing every year, Marcelo believes they're "bless-



Under the leadership of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, students collect trash at what remains of the small building of the homeowners' association, in the park they are rehabilitating in the city of Bacolod, in Negros Occidental, in the Philippines. (Global Sisters Report photo/Sisters of the Good Samaritan)

ed with manpower," as a condition for their scholarship grant includes helping out at the park at least once a week.

"I hope and pray that this is just the beginning of small acts in caring for Mother Earth," she said. "I also hope this will serve as inspiration for our students and the community. With small acts, we can show our gratitude to God through this simple activity." — **Global Sisters Report**

Caring for the elderly

Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

The topic of elderly care is surely one that would resonate with most of us. Having lost my father 37 years ago, my mother, who was then 53 years old, lived with one or the other of us six siblings through the years, until a few years ago.

Three years ago at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, she became seriously ill and doctors gave her between three to four months to live. We almost lost her then, but as always, she pulled through. Six years ago at the age of 83, she had a fall and broke her femur but recovered after surgery.

Through all of this, we managed to keep her at home, with care-givers looking after her during the day. Mom was not always the easiest person to manage, especially when there were many restrictions on her diet.

As much as we wanted to have her live with us, it got difficult as care-givers were not always dependable, and leaving her at home alone with a maid while we worked was not an option. Three of us siblings, including myself, live abroad.

What do you do in such circumstances?

Mom, who turns 89 this year, is now in a home where she receives round the clock care. We have received brickbats from family, friends and relatives who have admonished us for “abandoning” Mom in a home.

This piece might invoke some differing thoughts on the subject but let me tell you, Mom would be the first person to tell you that she’s happy in the home.

While most of her siblings, family and friends have passed on, except for a brother who is in his 90s now, she yearned for companionship.

Staying with either one of us at home while we all went to work made her even more resentful.

The stigma of placing a much loved elderly



FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Regina William

parent in a home is always a heavy burden on anyone, especially in our Asian society where family values are always seen as paramount and placing a parent in foster care is almost always seen as total abandonment. Such was the predicament of every one of my siblings, with much arguments and disagreements to decide how best to care for Mom.

The solution came almost like it was God-sent. It was an obscure advertisement placed in the *HERALD* which caught the attention of my eldest sibling in Penang who then alerted those of us in Kuala Lumpur to check out this place.

Mom was the one who had initially suggested that she be placed in an assisted care home and she was equally excited to have a look at the place. Her choice was made almost instantly as we arrived at the home. A clean and well managed Catholic home with only a handful of residents and an almost equal number of caregivers to ensure that every need of the residents is met.

While we did not like what we saw in most of the homes, we were thankful that this home was just like a home away from home and we knew Mom would be comfortable here.

Devoid of rows and rows of beds in the living room unlike other nursing homes, Mom took a liking to this particular one where she resides today.

At the home now, she has like-minded friends around her age and spends her days praying or playing gin rummy which she would often win if not all the time (she knows how to hoodwink everyone at a card game). Weekends are when she gets to spend time with family and more often than not, family



Three generations ... the writer (centre) with her mother and granddaughter at a recent celebration.

visit her at the home whenever possible.

At the home, she gets personalised attention and meals catered to her restrictions.

Even when she comes home for the weekends, much as she loves spending time especially with her grandchildren and great grandchildren, she asks when she would be going back to the home as she misses her friends.

I’m not saying that it is the best solution for Mom, but it is the best for her well-being and health, for now.

Unlike many other countries where the care for the elderly is well managed through the healthcare system even when they are at home on their own, Malaysia still has a long way to go.

I know of family members living abroad who have health workers coming around twice daily to manage their daily needs.

For instance, elderly care in the UK is highly regulated, and care providers whether residential, nursing homes, or care at home, are rigorously inspected to ensure the elderly are comfortable, safe, and healthy.

Under the NHS continuing healthcare, for those with ongoing significant physical and/or mental health needs and those who receive care in their own homes, the NHS covers the cost of care and support they need to meet their assessed health and associated care

needs, which includes personal care such as help with washing and getting dressed.

This way, they get to live in their own homes comfortably and their families can be rest assured they are safe in their own homes.

Perhaps there is also the need for a dedicated government department (perhaps under the Ministry of Health) to monitor and regulate assisted care homes, and to ensure that incidences of mistreatment of the elderly never happens. This was one of our main concerns initially before we found muoWhile there are homes that are well regulated and uphold the highest standards of cleanliness, some of the homes operate in appalling conditions and several homes we visited had a stench lingering in the air as soon as we entered their premises.

As I enter into my sixth decade this year, I’m not discounting the possibility that a home is where I would want to be when I’m no longer able to care for myself. I’m looking for like-minded friends who might be interested to bunk in with me too. Call me in 10 years.

● Regina William is an ex-journalist turned head of communications, now full-time grandmother to three, crisscrossing the globe to play the role.



THE MUSTARD SEED JOURNEYS

Joanne Wong

In my pursuit of being #Fabulous40, having a #blessedandamazing life, enjoying my #momlife and achieving a work life balance that any world class trapeze artist would admire, I have found myself in somewhat of a rut. I got caught up on the hamster wheel of life.

How so you ask? I tried to achieve success in my career — but succeeded in being overlooked for projects, placed my trust too willingly and inaccurately creating misunderstandings, with no one to blame but my naive self.

I tried to be the perfect mother — but my children have minds and emotions of their own. So while I listened and tried to soothe the super tantrums of a three-year-old and address the sassiness of an emotional pre-teen, I find myself having more misses than hits, leaving me feeling like a #badmum, drained and being nowhere as amazing as I had hoped to be, with a messy house to top it all.

I tried to also be as perfect a wife, daughter, sister and friend as I could be — I excelled sporadically, not making any monumental success. I tried being a mediator, a peace maker, a collaborator but ended up getting caught in the middle of squabbles and feeling frustrated instead.

When faced with all the mom guilt, frustration and feelings of inadequacy, I drowned them all out by bingeing on *Netflix* series and *HBO* movies. I read books and articles to escape, browsed social media (and felt even worse), busied myself with going out and allowed myself to be sucked into dramas that I had no need to be involved in. Worst of all, when churches opened up, I stayed away.

As I write this report card of shortcomings, I wonder how I did not see this happening... Or perhaps I did but swept it away or put it aside for further inspection for ‘another day’ or maybe I labelled it as ‘life is like that la’.

Wait. I am not having a breakdown and perhaps I am judging myself a little too harshly here. There have been many a wonderful moment since I last wrote about my journey of growth. I have travelled with my family, I have enjoyed spending time with my loved ones, I have had small wins, memorable moments, it’s not all been doom and gloom.

But when it boils down to it and if I want to be perfectly honest with myself, I seem to have misplaced my purpose. I wanted to do everything; be that perfect super hero, wonder woman with that Instagramable life, that I got caught up in stuff. In the my ‘life’.

“Not focused” was a feedback I received one day, and though bitter to acknowledge, I realised that it was indeed true. In my flurry to be ‘more’, succeed ‘more’, acquire ‘more’ and experience ‘more’ (no thanks to how the world and my own set of views are of how a ‘perfect’ life should be), I was just heading in many different directions and saying “yes”

My homecoming

or pursuing things that didn’t quite matter — and yet I wasn’t delivering anything. I was literally trying to be everything, everywhere all at once (an interesting movie, btw — well done Michelle Yeoh!) but not succeeding.

ALL of these things took precedence over God. I went about on my own way, making choices and saying “yes” without discernment and without putting God in the centre of my decisions.

Was I particularly ‘sinful’ during this period? No, I don’t think so. But I made excuses. I was too busy to go to church or get involved too much in church activities, favouring instead to have brunches / dinners with my family and friends. I needed more ‘pick me up’ songs with catchy beats instead of Praise and Worship pieces. I needed more posts from the likes of *The Holistic Psychologist* and *HBR Ascend* to make sense of myself and to be better at the workplace instead of remembering God’s promises.

Did I stop praying you ask? Did I not seek Him? I did but not as fervently as I should have. So, although I still used my Christian apps and listened to my Christian songs over the past few months to bring me closer to God, it was just on the surface. I allowed other things to take centre stage in my life.

I took my relationship with God for granted knowing that despite it all, He would be there with me through all seasons. But in every relationship, there needs to be growth, an understanding, a time for listening, a time for being still. In my case, all I was doing was taking and claiming His promises with-

out really acknowledging Him or giving thanks, moving swiftly on to the next thing and the next thing... You know, life... stuff.

One day I met an old Sunday school teacher of mine. She asked me which church I attended now and who the parish priest was. There had been a change in parish priests and I no longer knew the name of my parish priest. So, shamefully I had to acknowledge that I didn’t know and that I hadn’t returned to church for Mass. I got a gentle earful from her, but I needed that wake-up call and I am glad and thankful that she spoke to me and asked about my spiritual growth. I needed to hear it. I needed that gentle lecture.

So began my journey back. Back to Mass. Back to the rituals, the prayers, the hymns and the beautiful, sweet smell of incense. My first time at Mass, I wept. It was a homecoming.

My relationship with God is on the mend. I am looking at the various parts of me that I need to work on. Finding the discipline to embrace and let go what is no longer good for me, what does not make me flourish. It’s a journey. One that is neither smooth nor simple. But I am reminded to “let go and let God” and that through the hills and valleys He is with me, loving me unconditionally despite it all.

● Joanne Wong is on a journey towards having faith the size of a mustard seed. She welcomes thoughts and suggestions on how to have a closer walk with God. Email her at joanne.wpm@gmail.com



Fr Ron Rolheiser

Tomorrow and tomorrow

In his *Confessions*, St Augustine describes how his conversion to Christianity involved two separate moments of grace, the first that convinced him intellectually that Christianity was correct, and the second that empowered him to live out what he believed. There were nearly nine years between these two conversions and it was during those nine years that he said his famous prayer: *Lord make me a good and chaste Christian — but not yet.*

Interestingly, a contemporary of his, also a saint, Ephraim the Syrian (306-373 A.D.) wrote a similar prayer: *O my beloved, how daily I default and daily do repent. I build up for an hour and an hour overthrows what I have built. At evening I say, tomorrow I will repent, but when morning comes, joyous I waste the day. Again, at evening I say, I shall keep vigil all night and I shall entreat the Lord to have mercy on my sins. But when the night is come, I am full of sleep.*

What Augustine and Ephraim describe with such clarity (and not without a touch of humour) is one of the real difficulties we face in our struggle to grow in faith and human maturity, namely, the tendency to go through life saying: “Yes, I need to do better. I need to bear down and work at overcoming my bad habits, but now is not the time!”

It’s consoling to know that a number of saints struggled for years with mediocrity, laziness, and bad habits, and that they, like us, could for years give in to those things with the shrug: “Tomorrow, I will make a new start!” For a few years, one of Augustine’s expressions was, “tomorrow and tomorrow!”

“Yes, but not yet!” How often does this describe us? I want to be a good Christian and a good person. I want to live more by faith, be less lazy, less selfish, more gracious to others, more contemplative, less given over to anger, bitterness, paranoia, and judgment of others. I want to stop giving in to gossip and slander. I want to be more realistically involved in justice. I want a better prayer life. I want to take time for things, spend more time with my family, smell the flowers, drive slower, be more patient, and be less hurried. I have a number of bad habits that I need to change, there are still areas of bitterness in me, I am defaulting on so many things, I really need to change, but now is not the time.

First, I need to first work through a particular relationship, grow older, change jobs, get married, get rested, get healthy, finish school, have a needed vacation, let some wounds heal, get the kids out of the house,

retire, move to a new parish, and get away from this situation — then I will get serious about changing all this. *Lord, make me a more mature person and Christian, but not yet!*

In the end, that’s not a good prayer. Augustine tells us that, for years, as he said this prayer, he was able to rationalise his own mediocrity. However, a cataclysm began building inside him. God is infinitely patient with us, but our own patience with ourselves eventually wears out and, at a point, we can no longer continue as before.

In *Book 8 of the Confessions*, Augustine shares how one day, sitting in a garden, he was overwhelmed with his own immaturity and mediocrity and “a great storm broke within me, bringing with it a great deluge of tears. ... I flung myself down beneath a fig tree and gave way to the tears which now streamed from my eyes ... in my misery I kept crying, ‘How long shall I go on saying, tomorrow, tomorrow. Why not now?’” When he got up from the ground, his life had changed; he never again finished a prayer with that little nuance, “but not yet”.

We all have certain habits in our lives which we know are bad, but which for a variety of reasons (laziness, addiction, lack of moral strength, fatigue, anger, paranoia,

jealousy, or the pressure of family or friends) we are reluctant to break. We sense our mediocrity, but take consolation in our humanity, knowing that everyone (save full-blown saints) often have this spoken or unspoken caveat in their prayers, “Yes, Lord, but not yet!”

Indeed, there is in fact a valid consolation in this prayer in that it recognises something important inside the infinite understanding and mercy of God. God, I suspect, copes better with our faults than we cope with them and others cope with us. However, like Augustine, even as we say, “tomorrow and tomorrow” a storm steadily continues to build within us and, sooner or later, our own mediocrity will sicken us enough to cause us to say, “Why not now?”

When the psalmist says, “Sing to the Lord a new song”, we might ask ourselves, what is the old song? It’s the one that ends with us praying, *Yes, Lord, but not yet!*

● **Oblate Fr Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He writes a weekly column that is carried in over 90 newspapers around the world. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.**

Less ‘what’ and more ‘why’ in sharing the faith

“Where are those kids going?” my five-year-old daughter whispered. She was studying the backs of the gaggle of children scampering toward the sanctuary of the church.

“Children’s Liturgy of the Word,” I began. “Uh — they go to learn about Jesus and Mary and the saints.” A beat, and then I added: “Do you want to go? You can.”

My daughter shook her head, but her eyes didn’t stop absorbing the scene. She’s shy by nature, likes to study a situation before jumping in, understand it thoroughly, know the players. I’m much the same way — which is probably why I never went to ‘Children’s Liturgy of the Word’ as a kid.

But she surprised us after Mass. “I think I’d like to go and learn about Jesus with the other kids.”

My wife and I frantically nodded in agreement. The church we’d attended was not our own, but we’d be darn sure to be in attendance the following week if it meant our otherwise timid daughter would eagerly volunteer to go learn about God.

All that week we prepped her, told her one of us would make that long walk to the front of the church with her, hand-in-hand. When the moment came, she didn’t back down; she swallowed hard, took my wife’s hand and up she marched.

How wonderful, I thought, to see kids — and my kid, no less — excited to wander up and meet God in community!

But here’s where our story takes a turn.

The priest presiding that day gestures toward the 12 or so children gathered, a wide sweep of his arm, and says, “Now children, what do we do first? Genuflect, your right knee, please, turn this way.” He goes on for a few more seconds to this gathered group of youngsters about which knee to lower to the ground, which direction to face, and then

sends them off with their teacher with barely a blessing.

And I sigh.

On the one hand, that priest was absolutely right. I was an altar server long enough to appreciate the kind of reverence that is appropriate for moving about the sanctuary. I myself taught other altar servers. That’s Jesus there, after all, truly present. Genuflecting, kneeling, bowing, making the sign of the cross — all the activity of the Mass — is important. It forms our religious imagination, reminds us that our bodies are integral to our prayer; that God meets us there in the fleshiness of our human selves and leaves no part of our humanity out.

I want my daughter to know that, to learn how to bring her full self to the prayer of the Mass.

But here’s the thing: That priest had 15 seconds to say something meaningful to a bunch of kids about God. To make an impact. To stir in them something that would call them back again and again each week — not out of obligation but out of desire. To remind them that, yes, we recognise Jesus truly present in the Eucharist. But also that Jesus is so darn excited to see us he’s practically busting through the tabernacle to hug us — and that act of genuflecting could just as well be a way to brace our very selves from the wild, reckless love of God barreling towards us.

I’m not sure that instructions on which knee should hit the floor quite got the point across. It felt like a missed opportunity.

Few of us are in the position to give 15 seconds of inspiration to five-year-olds on a weekly basis. But we all have been given the challenge — the privilege — to share the Gospel. And too often, we lead not with the love of God, the mystery of God’s creation, the utterly mind-boggling fact that the Spirit pulses through every single thing seen and



(Unsplash/Marco Ceschi)

unseen and that we’re invited to participate in this world dripping with grace.

Too often, we lead with rules and regulations and proscriptions and the kinds of facts you might find on the *Wikipedia* page for the Catholic Church.

Simon Sinek, in his much-acclaimed TED Talk *How great leaders inspire action*, says, “People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it and what you do simply proves what you believe.” He’s talking about brands, about how to sell stuff, but his advice is relevant for those of us interested in spreading the Gospel.

It’s easier to whittle away our time telling people what they should do if they want to find God, if they want to live as God desires. It’s easy to remind people which knee to genuflect with. It’s a whole lot harder to tell people why.

But we have to rise to the challenge. The proverbial 15 seconds in front of a bunch

of five-year-olds is not long: What can we say about why this God of the universe is worth knowing? Do we even have an answer ourselves?

Because if we have that answer, if we share it in a meaningful way, then what we do next — the genuflecting, the sign of the cross, the rosary, the visits to the homeless shelter, the donation of our time and talent and treasure to works of charity and justice — will point to what we believe. To who we believe in. And people might just become curious enough to ask how a simple gesture like touching the floor with your knee can engage our full selves in the ongoing activity of God in our world.

Unfortunately, my daughter did not return to the pew wondering why she was told to genuflect — and I’m not sure she’s remembered to do so since. — **By Eric Clayton, NCR**

Little Catholics' Corner

Dear girls and boys,

The readings for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time focus on evangelisation and service.

The first reading tells us that when we care for those in need, the darkness in our lives will turn to light.

The second reading helps us remember we do not rely on our own wisdom when we speak and act, but on God's.

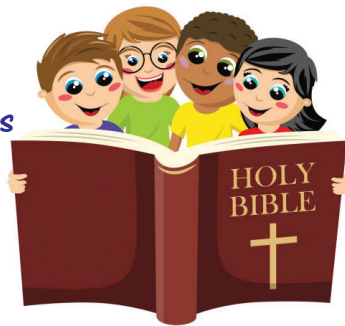
In the Gospel, Jesus tells us to be like "salt" in the world, adding good flavour to others' lives with the goodness and truth He gives us.

He also tells us we should boldly spread the Light of Christ throughout the world, to help guide people back to God.

Love
Aunty Gwen

Bible Quiz

- The Bible is the most popular book ever written, based on the number of copies sold. True or False
- What is the first book in the Bible?
a. Tobit b. Ezra c. Genesis d. Romans
- What is the last book in the Bible?
a. John c. Numbers
b. Revelation d. Kings
- What four books tell about Jesus' life on Earth?
a. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
b. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes
c. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
d. Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians
- What is the longest book in the Bible?
a. Psalms c. James
b. Deuteronomy d. Hebrews
- How many books are in the Catholic Bible?
a. 66 b. 53 c. 73 d. 76
- How many books in the Catholic Old Testament?
a. 27 b. 19 c. 32 d. 46
- How many books in the New Testament?
a. 46 b. 27 c. 15 d. 31
- In what language was most of the Old Testament given?
a. Hebrew c. English
b. Aramaic d. Spanish
- In what language was most of the New Testament given?
a. Latin b. Greek c. Mandarin d. French



Answers
1. True 2. c 3. b 4. a 5. a 6. c 7. d 8. b 9. a 10. b

You are the Salt of the Earth

IN MATTHEW 5:13, JESUS SAYS WE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH. SALT IS KNOWN FOR BEING PURE.

CIRCLE THE ACTIONS BELOW THAT SHOW HOW WE CAN BE PURE AND SHARE OUR GOD-LIKE NATURE WITH OTHERS.



SHARING



BULLYING



GETTING ANGRY



COMFORTING



HELPING



FIGHTING

Let's Colour



YOUTH

FEBRUARY 5, 2023



VATICAN: As young people from across the globe prepare to participate in World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, Pope Francis sent them a video message recently to express his joy.

The Pope noted that over 400,000 young people have registered to take part in the event August 1-6.

He said their desire to travel to the Portuguese capital later this year fills him with joy.

Pope Francis pointed out that some people may think they are travelling as tourists, but said there is likely a deeper reason for their decision.

“Any young person who goes to WYD goes because, deep down, he or she has the thirst to participate, to share, to tell their experience and receive the experience of others. They are thirsting for horizons.”

He added that WYD offers young people the chance to expand those horizons and to “look beyond”.

“Don’t put up a wall in front of your life,” he urged them. “Walls close you in;

POPE ON WYD 2023:



the horizon makes you grow. Always look at the horizon with your eyes, but look, above all, with your heart.”

The Pope said WYD brings together people from many walks of life and cultures, and encouraged participants to open their hearts to those they will meet.

He thanked them for registering so far

“Any young person who goes to WYD, goes because, deep down, he or she has the thirst to participate, to share, to tell their experience and receive the experience of others. They are thirsting for horizons.”

in advance, and expressed his hopes that others will follow their example.

“May God bless you; may the Virgin take care of you. Pray for me, for I pray for you. And don’t forget: say ‘no’ to walls, and ‘yes’ to horizons.”

The motto for WYD 2023 is *Mary arose and went with haste*, taken from Luke’s Gospel (1:39). — **By Devin Watkins, Vatican Media**

Pope to host families:

VATICAN: World Youth Day (WYD) Lisbon 2023 is approaching and in order to welcome all the pilgrims who will arrive in Portugal in August 2023, families are needed to open the doors of their homes. Pope Francis left a message of thanks to all the families who will welcome pilgrims to WYD Lisbon 2023: “Thank you for this generosity in welcoming young people.”

Addressing the host families who have already registered and all families who wish to receive pilgrims who will participate in WYD Lisbon 2023, the Holy Father explained that “the cultural universe will enter your homes, and will leave seeds of another culture in them” and recalled that “young foreigners even say that the richest experience was that of the family that

received them”.

Several families have already registered in the dioceses of Lisbon, Santarém and Setúbal, known as the Dioceses of reception that will receive young people during the week of the WYD. Lúcia and Guilherme are part of the Parish of Algueirão and are one of the registered host families.

They participated in WYD Madrid 2011,

where they began dating, and WYD Krakow 2016. They married in November 2022. “At WYD Krakow 2016, we stayed with host families and it was a very enriching experience of growth, knowledge of the local culture and rest,” the young couple stressed. After their experience in Krakow, “when applications for host families opened in our parish, we were very happy to be able to also welcome pilgrims into our home, into our family,” they said.

In his message to the host families, Pope Francis stressed that families “do this with a big heart, not only to serve, which is already a great thing, but also to open themselves up to other young people and other cultures, to another way of seeing life.” The young pilgrims will “leave [in the host families] seeds of another culture, they will leave the seed of another point of view,” Francis stressed.

Recalling the words of the Holy Father, the parishes of the host dioceses (Lisbon, Santarém and Setúbal), together with the families, are preparing to welcome the pilgrims generously and warmly, helping the young people to have the best experience possible during the week of the WYD. — **Lisboa2023**



(JMJ Lisboa 2023 flickr)

COME DISCOVER '23



The participants listening attentively.

NIBONG TEBAL: With the spirit of Ephesians 4:11-12, 49 participants, aged 15 -20 years, gathered in the Church of St Anthony to gain awareness of what it means to answer God's Call. A half-day vocation rally themed, *Come Discover '23* was held on January 14 in conjunction with parish priest, Fr Arulnathan Joseph's 25th Sacerdotal anniversary.

During the sessions, participants learnt about vocation. Sr Glorey, Sr Jessica, and Sr Mary Magdalene from the Little Sisters of the Poor, Mgrs Henry Rajoo, Fr Louis Loi, Deacon Raymond Raj, and Fr Arulnathan presented talks and shared their faith stories with the attendees. The sessions

were enhanced with presenters sharing testimonies on how they heard God's call, the events in their lives that unfolded after that, and how they answered His call.

After the awareness sessions and testimonies, there was a Question & Answer forum. The rally was lively, and participants asked many questions about vocation, the vocation journey of the presenters, and general questions on the Catholic faith.

The personal interaction and the depth of the presenters' sharing left an impact on the participants. May our Lord Jesus continue to touch their hearts and change their lives for the greater glory of God! — **By PDVT**

KENINGAU: For the first time this year, the Diocese of Keningau hosted the Vocation Seminar for young men to join the diocesan priesthood. It was held at the Holy Family Pilgrimage Centre, Nulu Sosopon, for three days January 13-15.

About 85 participants from the arch/dioceses of Sabah answered the call to participate in the seminar led by Fr Ronney Mailap, Fr Isidore Gilbert, Fr Christopher Ireneus and Fr Mattheus Augustine, who head the Vocation Commission in their respective dioceses.

Bishop Cornelius Piong said that it is "God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure", during his homily at the opening Mass.

He also compared the reading of the day (Mark 2:1-12) about a paralysed person being carried by others to come to Jesus, and in the same way, we can only come to God because of His intervention.

"Before you said YES to attend this seminar, there were people inviting you to join them. That is a sign that God is calling you" said Bishop Piong.

He also said the most important question for them is, "What do I want?", in following Jesus. "Like John the Baptist who wanted to follow Jesus, the first question Jesus asked him, what do you want? Jesus did not ask who he was. It is important for us to know what we want from Jesus," stressed the prelate.

"Hopefully throughout these three



Bishop Cornelius Piong with the presenters and participants.

days, you will listen, reflect and believe until you get the answer you want from Him," concluded the prelate.

We pray that many of you will answer His call to be the reapers in this vast field of God. — **By Juanis Marcus**



STUDENTS FOCUS ON PREPARING FOR THEIR EXAMINATIONS



Fr Stanley Goh, SJ with the students.

KUCHING: All glory and praise to God for an amazing turnout at St Joseph's Cathedral during the examination Mass for SPM, STPM and the Final Academic Sessions Examination (UASA) for primary and lower form school students. The Mass was presided over by Fr Stanley Goh, SJ with Fr Galvin Ngumbang and Fr Joseph Ng, SJ celebrating.

During his homily, Fr Stanley reminded students to focus on preparing for their examinations. He gave the example of *Tai Chi* moves where students need to learn to give and take in sharing knowledge which enables them to keep themselves equipped. Giving another example from the movie *Gladiator*, he reminded those present to always follow the flow and avoid any misunderstanding.

The Mass was organised by the Sarawak Catholic Teachers' Guild of Sarawak (SCTG). At the end of the Mass, students were given an examination prayer card with the intercessions of St Joseph Cupertino, the patron saint for final examinations. We pray all the students will grow in grace and may the blessings of the Father Almighty always be upon them. — **By Leeroy Garet, Today's Catholic**

Remembering Bro Matthew Bay, FSC

KUALA LUMPUR: Ipoh-based La Salle Brother Matthew Bay, FSC, *pic*, returned to the Lord on January 25, at the age of 76.

Born to Joseph Bay and Mary Lim on September 18, 1946, Matthew Bay Chai Leng could have settled for a cosy life in his father's business chain but like his spiritual guru, John Baptist de La Salle, he chose to abjure wealth and found his vocation with the teaching fraternity of La Salle Brothers.

Bro Matthew had his early education at SK La Salle, Klang from 1954 to 1961.

In 1962, he moved to Penang where he spent a year at St Xavier's Institution earning his Malaysian Certificate of Education. At the same time, he was a juniorate at St Joseph's Penang.

His postulancy and novitiate formation were from 1964 to 1965, and he took his first vows in April 1965. Bro Matthew also completed his A-levels that year. He also gained a Teachers' Certificate from St Joseph's Training College, Penang.

He was assigned to teach at St Anthony's School, Teluk Anson from Jan 1968 to April 1968 before moving to St. George's Institution, Taiping where he served for 24 years. Besides teaching, he was involved in scouting and photography. He was also a qualified swimming and lifesaving instructor.

Bro Matthew completed his Bachelor of Arts degree from the United Kingdom in 1983. He served as a teacher, moderator, and staff at St Michael's Institution (SMI), Ipoh, from 1993 to 2011, where he retired on Sept 16, 2011, at the age of 65.

Bro Matthew's art studio at St Michael's combined photography (both conventional and digital) and the art of painting. His mastery of these fields is superbly reflected in the young enthusiasts he has nurtured as well as in the inspirational publications that have flowered at St Michael's and at the Lasalle Centre, Ipoh.

Bro Matthew's core mission has always been the Lasallian mission of caring for the young especially "the last, the lost and the least".

He was also committed to the heritage club and literacy classes for Form One pupils with learning disabilities. He managed to recruit and train volunteer student tutors from the Sixth Form.

Bro Matthew was also part of a group of the Brothers who conceptualised La Salle Centre as early as the 1990s. They wanted to continue to reach out to the schools by providing formation and training to both students and teachers. La Salle Juniorate was as identified the venue where students and adults alike could find affordable accommodation to run their camps and retreats.

In 1993, Bro Matthew moved to La Salle Centre (from SGI Taiping) to begin the ground work of converting La Salle Juniorate to La Salle Centre Ipoh. He was the administrator of the Centre for a number of years and became the Director of the centre in 2018.

Bro Matthew was also the organising genius who established the worldwide Lasallian network which has La Salle Centre Ipoh as its hub. This is where young Lasallian leaders from schools in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Hong Kong have regularly met not only for camaraderie



MEMORIAM

For enquiries, please contact:
Email: advertisement@herald.com.my
Tel: 03-2026 8291

Forever in our hearts and
always
Loving husband, father
and grandfather
M. CYRIL D'CRUZ
FEB 27, 1931 - JAN 17, 2020



Three years have passed
and today we mark the
anniversary of our Papa's
passing and we celebrate
the love and memories he
gave us. Our love for you
is as strong as ever, Papa.
We see your attributes and
qualities in each other and
in our children and we know
you are living on those you
loved - the mark you left on
this world will never fade.

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY



Joseph Nathan
Came from the Lord on
26th February 1931
Called by the Lord on
11th February 2017

And God will raise us from the dead by his
power, just as he raised our Lord from the
dead: (1 Corinthians 6:14)

*You were called to the Lord
though we want you here
But we are rejoiced when you returned
to the Lord's House in peace and love.
You are always in our prayers
and forever in our hearts and minds
Your comforting songs
and your strength will live in us all
For we were truly blessed when the Lord
gave you as our beloved Dad and Grand dad
We love you and miss you always
our beloved father, our beloved Grand dad.*

Missed dearly by
children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren,
in laws, relatives and friends.

In Loving Memory of

Let us praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His great mercy. In raising Jesus Christ from
the dead He has given us new life and the hope of sharing life beyond death, sin and fleeting thing. This
inheritance is kept in the heavens for you. - 1 Peter 1:3-4

You have not yet seen Him and yet you love Him even without seeing Him, you believe Him and experience a
heavenly joy beyond all words for you are reaching the goal of your faith: the salvation of your souls. - 1 Peter 1:8-9



Philip Tom Matthews
16.09.1966 - 13.11.2022



C. Matthews s/o Chacko
8.11.1930 - 17.1.2015



Iphin Matthews nee Jacob
18.1.1934 - 8.1.2021

We, the family, would like to thank the priests, church parishioners, relatives and friends for their
kind presence, prayers, assistance and generosity during our bereavements.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May their souls and the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

3rd Anniversary In Loving Memory of



**Edward Fitzgerald
Emmanuel**

From the Lord:
October 17, 1970
To the Lord:
3rd February 2020

7th Anniversary In Loving Memory of



**ANN VIRGINIA
RAYMOND**

Called home to be
with the Lord on
6 February 2016

*Every day in some small way,
Memories of you come our way.
Though absent, you are always near.
Still missed, loved and always dear.*

Deeply missed and forever cherished by
mum, brothers, sisters-in-law, nieces,
relatives and friends.

1st ANNIVERSARY In Loving Memory of



(8.1.1963 - 2.1.2022)

MARGARET SEBASTIAN

*"If we have died in Christ we believe
that we shall live with Him" Roman 6:3*

*Your life was a blessing,
Your memory a treasure,
You are loved beyond words
and missed beyond measure.*

Forever loved and dearly missed by
family members, relatives and friends

3rd Anniversary In Loving Memory of



Alicia Lai Keow Moy
(07.09.1941 - 03.02.2020)

*Dearly missed and remembered by
family members.*

but for the mission of being bridge-
builders in a multi-faith world.

A De La Salle Brother for 57 years, Bro Matthew was also the man behind the scenes for the Old Michaelian Association (OMA) projects. Due to his close rapport with the Board and OMA members, and personally monitoring the works in progress, Bro Matthew successfully saw to the upgrade of the school toilets, a canteen serving better quality food, smoothly paved roads, a new roof and a fresh coat of paint for the main building, to name a few.

The official bulletin of the Lasallian East Asian District reported that "his impact on the face and the life of SMI will indeed merit a place in the history of the school."

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REST IN PEACE



Church of Our Lady of Lourdes Feast Day Celebration

4 - 12 February 2023

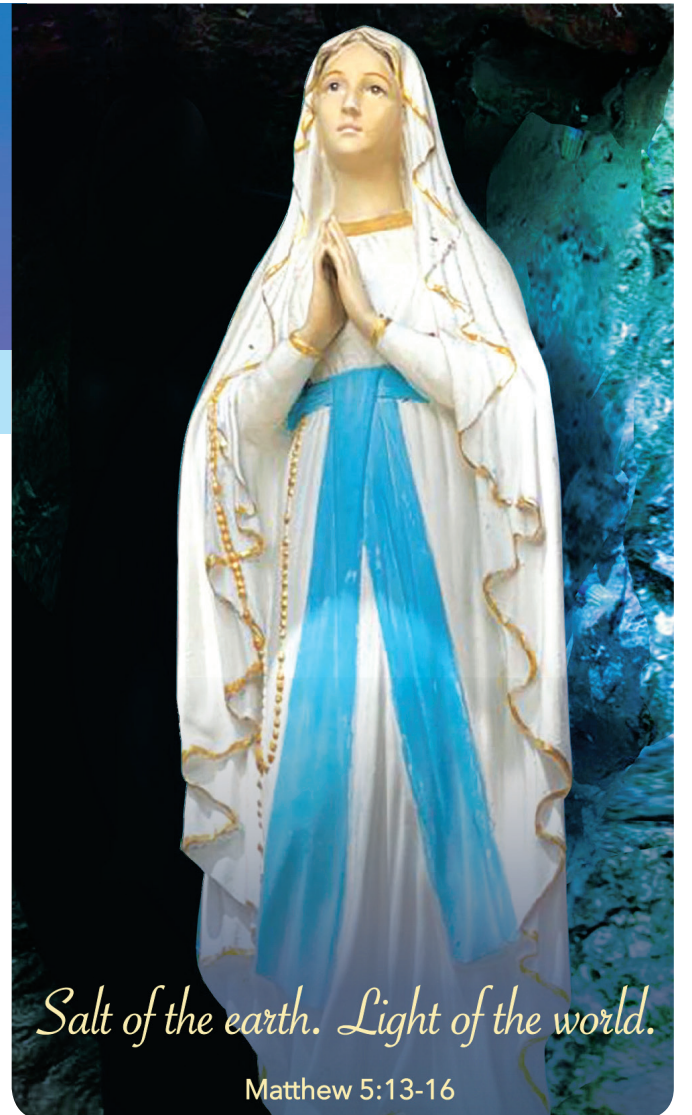
The 2023 OLL Feast Day Programmes

- **Vocation Talk: Come And See And Get to Know The Religious of the Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese**
Date : Saturday, 4 February 2023
Time : 3.00pm – 5.00pm
Venue : The Auditorium, Wisma Lourdes
- **Youth Rally: Salt Of The Earth, Light Of The World**
Date : Sunday, 5 February 2023
Time : 8.00am – 4.00pm
Venue : The Auditorium, Wisma Lourdes
Fee : FOC, inclusive of T-shirt and meals.
Liaisons: English – Shianne at +601111269623
Tamil – Josphine at +601133447029
Bahasa Malaysia – Anna at +60176091724
- **Event: Interreligious Exhibition**
Date : Saturday, 5 February 2023 till Sunday, 12 February 2023
Time : Before and after the novena Masses
Venue : The Lourdes Community Hall
- **Symposium: Legion Of Mary & Catholic Charismatic Renewal**
Date : Saturday, 11 February 2023
Time : 3.30pm – 5.30pm
Date : Sunday, 12 February 2023
Time : 8.00am – 10.00am
Venue : The Main Church
- **Lourdes Wash**
Dates & Time : Daily, before and after the novena Masses
Venue : The Grotto
Stipulation : Pilgrims are advised to bring their own towels

Come, join us...

Parish Priest : Rev Fr Gregory Chan
Assistant Priest : Rev Fr Ferdinand Magimay
114, Jalan Tengku Kelana, 41000 Klang
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: 03-3371 3053 **Fax:** 03-3373 7823
Email: lourdes@archkl.org

We are here!



[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) [v](#) ollklang www.ollklang.org

For Mass offerings, flower & food donations, please contact the parish office.

The 2023 OLL Feast Day Theme:

Salt of the Earth. Light of the World

மண்ணுலகிற்கு உப்பாகவும் உலகிற்கு ஒளியாகவும்

Garam dan Terang Dunia

地上的盐和世界的光

4th February (Sat)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Salt of the Earth. Light of the World
மண்ணுலகிற்கு உப்பாகவும் உலகிற்கு ஒளியாகவும்
Garam dan Terang Dunia
地上的盐和世界的光

5:00pm : Flag raising ceremony, Rosary, & Novena
6:00pm : Mass: E-Church; T-Auditorium;
BM-Chapel; M-Dewan Murphy

5th February (Sun)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Family
குடும்பத்தில் ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Keluarga

6:00am : Rosary & Novena; 6:30am : Mass: E-Church
7:30am : Rosary & Novena; 8:00am : Mass: E-Church
9:30am : Rosary & Novena; 10:00am : Mass: T-Church
12:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 12:30pm : Mass: BM-Church
5:30pm : Rosary & Novena; 6:00pm : Mass: E-Church

6th February (Mon)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Family
குடும்பத்தில் ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Keluarga

7:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 8:00pm : Mass: E-Church
8:00pm : Mass: T-Auditorium
8:00pm : Mass: BM-Chapel

7th February (Tue)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Leadership
தலைமைத்துவத்தில், ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Kepimpinan

7:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 8:00pm : Mass: E-Church
8:00pm : Mass: T-Auditorium
8:00pm : Mass: BM-Chapel

8th February (Wed)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Leadership
தலைமைத்துவத்தில், ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Kepimpinan

7:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 8:00pm : Mass: E-Church
8:00pm : Mass: T-Auditorium
8:00pm : Mass: BM-Chapel

9th February (Thu)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Evangelisation
மறைப்பரப்பில் ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Evangelisasi

7:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 8:00pm : Mass: E-Church
8:00pm : Mass: T-Auditorium
8:00pm : Mass: BM-Chapel

10th February (Fri)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Communion, Participation and Mission in Evangelisation
மறைப்பரப்பில் ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை
Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Evangelisasi

7:00pm : Rosary & Novena; 8:00pm : Mass: E-Church
8:00pm : Mass: T-Auditorium
8:00pm : Mass: BM-Chapel

11th February (Sat) World Day Of The Sick

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:
Communion, Participation and Mission in Celebrating World Day of the Sick 2023

உலக நோயாளிகள் தின கொண்டாட்டத்தில் ஒன்றிப்பு, பங்கெடுப்பு மற்றும் தூதுரை

Persekutuan, Penyertaan dan Misi dalam Merayakan Hari Orang Sakit Sedunia 2023

庆祝2023年世界病人日中的共融、参与及使命

9:30am : Rosary & Novena; 10:00am: Community Mass with Anointing of the Sick-Church
5:30pm : Rosary & Novena; 6:00pm: Mass: E-Church; T-Auditorium; BM-Chapel; M-Dewan Murphy followed by procession, Rosary, and benediction

12th February (Sun)

Sub-theme / துணைக்கருத்து / Sub-Tema Hari Pesta Paroki / 副主题:

Jesus: the fulfilment of the Law. Salt of the Earth. Light of the World
இயேசு: திருச்சட்டத்தை நிறைவேற்றதல். மண்ணுலகிற்கு உப்பாகவும் உலகிற்கு ஒளியாகவும்
Yesus: Penggenap Hukum. Garam Dunia. Terang Dunia.

10:00am : Rosary & Novena
10:30am : Mass: E-Church; T-Auditorium; BM-Chapel followed by the flag lowering ceremony