

1 Pet 3:15



■ P5



■ P2, 8, 9, 16



■ P16

A right increasingly endangered

As every year, the observance offers an

The Index shows enormous volatility in situations, with major rises and falls and unprecedented changes resulting from in-

Malaysia jumped 40 places with 62.83

Agencies



**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

COMMENTARY

Where are creative efforts for peace?

Pope Francis' dramatic question is uttered from the heart of Europe, from Hungary, whose borders touch Ukraine, the victim of Russia's war of aggression. It is a question that, first and foremost, challenges the leaders of the nations that are involved, as well as the heads of European governments and those of the entire world. It is also a question directed to the conscience of each of us.

Quoting from the 1950 Declaration by Robert Schuman, one of Europe's founding fathers, the Pope said: "The contribution that a structured and vital Europe can make to civilisation is indispensable for the preservation of peaceful relations" because "world peace cannot be ensured except by creative efforts, proportionate to the dangers threatening it". Defining them as "memorable" words, the Pope went on to ask: "At the present time, those dangers are many indeed; but I ask myself, thinking not least of war-torn Ukraine, where are creative efforts for peace?"

It is significant to note that the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, a year ago, speaking at the Council of Europe, had already quoted this phrase from Schuman. Yes, where are these creative efforts? Where is diplomacy with its ability to take new and courageous paths for a negotiation to end the conflict? Where are the "patterns of peace" to be brought into play in order to overcome the looming "patterns of war"?

Pope Francis' question is both dramatic and realistic. It is dramatic because it confronts us with the lack of initiative on the part of a Europe that seems to be surrendering to the logic of rearmament and war while appearing rather apathetic about peace. It is realistic because it warns us against becoming accustomed to "adolescent"



Ukrainian refugees arrive in Hungary after the Russian invasion.

belligerence, to a tragic conflict that can degenerate at any moment with catastrophic outcomes for all humanity.

Yet the Pontiff's words, his reference to European unity, the "great hope" together with the United Nations to prevent further wars after the devastating one that ended in 1945, already contain an answer. It lies in the invitation to rediscover "the soul of Europe", the enthusiasm and the dream of the founding fathers, statesmen who knew how to look beyond their borders, who did not succumb to the sirens of nationalism and were capable of mending instead of tearing. Millions of people, who today see the great hopes raised by the end of the Cold War dashed, and the nightmares of the atomic threat return, are waiting for an answer: where are creative peace efforts? — By Andrea Tornielli, *Vatican News*

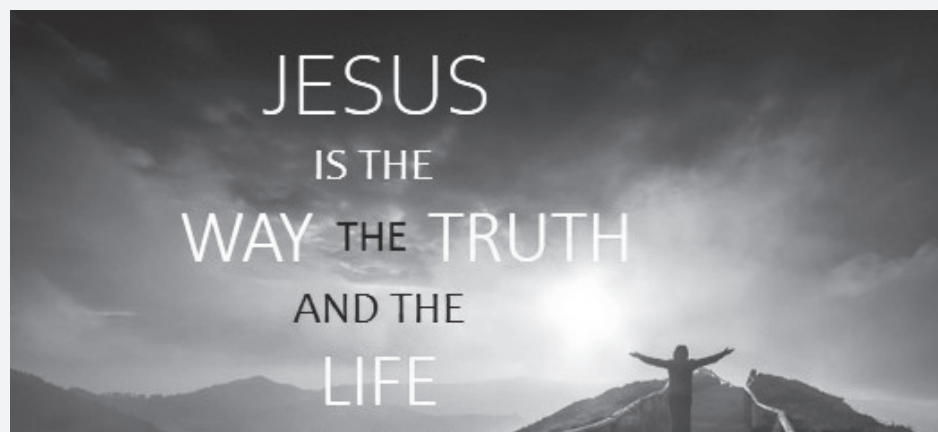
• Turn to these pages for more 8, 9 & 16

If you love Me, obey Me

"How can we know the way?" is a commonly asked question by all of us as Thomas, in our faith journey. To Jesus, Christian hope is not in a method or in a procedure, but in the person of Jesus Himself. Jesus is "the Way, the Truth and the Life (Jn. 14:6)". In His instruction to His disciples, Jesus challenges them and personally invites them to have an intimate relationship with Him and to believe in the One who sent Him through the works that He has been doing in His three years of public ministry. Before His departure to His Father, He promised His disciples that He would not abandon them. Jesus desired that His disciples would continue God's mission by doing greater works than Himself, if they believed in Him.

Philip's question "What will happen to the disciples when Jesus departs from them?" is real and applicable, even for us today. Sometimes we hear our loved ones asking 'how can I live without you?' Jesus knew that He is the Son of God and the Messiah who promised them that He would be with them to the end of time. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" says Eleanor Roosevelt. When someone we love is away from us for some time, we will miss them. We long to communicate and have a stronger relationship with them as we move on in life. We wish for that relationship to last longer.

Similarly, Jesus' departure and His absence in person is necessary for the completion of His mission. This is also an important moment in the lives of the disciples — to mature with the promise of the Holy Spirit



acting in each one's heart until Jesus' second coming. The same goes for each one of us to encounter Jesus, even when He seems to be absent from us. We cannot deny our own experiences where we have gained values imparted to us by our loved ones. Though they are physically absent from us, we still treasure the valuable moments and make them our own for a fruitful life in Christ.

Philip asked Jesus, "Master, show us the Father...(v.8). Like him, we too struggle to experience Jesus personally in the everyday events of our life. We sigh often of weariness, almost of failure, for not being able to hear Jesus' voice. His question is valid in asking Philip 'have you not known Me that for so long a time I stayed with you?'"

"Seeing Me is seeing the Father", says Jesus. Jesus' works show clearly the way of truth and life. His words and actions qualify the expression "The Way". Therefore, Jesus

is not just a guide to salvation. Instead, He is the source of life and truth.

Jesus the promised Messiah walked His talk as the Father commanded Him. In the same way, Jesus commands His disciples to love one another by works of mercy, so that God will be manifested in the Son. Hearing and reflecting over and over the message of truth, together with the disciples, we, as believers, are challenged to experience the Spirit of truth working within us, in and through Jesus. To love Him is to love the Father. Jesus promised the disciples the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, who would remain with them till the end of time. In this sense, Jesus assures us of His Spirit who leads us all into the truth.

The world cannot receive Him, neither can it look for Him because they cannot recognise Him. However, Jesus' statement "Seeing the Son is seeing the Father" is meant for

Reflecting on our
Sunday Readingswith Sr Retta
Savariannan Fdccc

6th Sunday of Easter (A)

Readings: Acts of the Apostle 8:5-8, 14-17

1 Peter 3:15-18;

Gospel: John 14:15-21

those who believe in Him. As believers, we see the Father, who is invisible, through the Son who is visible, by His incarnation. Being touched by the grace of God, a true believer of Jesus is able to continue the revelatory ministry in truth because he or she has been baptised into Christ and he or she would be able to understand Christ's union with the Father.

We always meet challenges in the form of argument, to prove someone wrong because we want to stand for our own truth. Instead, as baptised members in Christ, we are invited to journey with the community of faith to proclaim Christ as our true God, who showed us the way to the Father. Let us also bring to our awareness what St Paul says, "Beloved: In your hearts honour Christ the Lord as the one who brings hope into our lives and forms our conscience. No need to be afraid to suffer for doing good, if it is God's Will. Let us learn to cultivate the joy of the Lord in our hearts and genuinely proclaim Christ by our life witness."



KUALA LUMPUR ARCHDIOCESE

Diary of Archbishop Julian Leow

May

- 16-17 **Clergy Recollection**
- 18 **Meeting – Archdiocesan Finance**
- 19 **Mass – CHARIS, Commissioning**
- 20 **Confirmation – Church of Our Lady of Lourdes**
- 29/5 - **Clergy Retreat – Cambodia**
3/6



PENANG DIOCESE

Diary of Bishop Sebastian Francis

May

- 17 **Meeting – Dr Luis Chen KCHS, President of Penang Section - West Australia, Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem at 3.30pm**
- 19 **Meeting – 2nd FABC Meeting regarding Radio Veritas Asia (RVA), via ZOOM at 4.00pm**
- 20 **Mass – Celebration of 57th World Day of Social Communications, Minor Basilica of St Anne, BM at 6.00pm**
- 22-25 **Meeting – Episcopal Regional Liturgy Commission (ERLC), Kuching, Sarawak**
- 28 **Mass – Solemnity of Pentecost – Feast Day, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Penang at 10.00am**
- 31 **Mass – Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Church of the Nativity of the Blessed, Virgin Mary, Butterworth at 8.00pm**



MALACCA JOHORE DIOCESE

Diary of Bishop Bernard Paul

May

- 17 **Meeting – South Johor Vicariate, Holy Family Church**
- 17 **Meeting – Caritas MJDOHD Exco at 6.30pm, Caritas MJDOHD Office, CIC, JB**
- 19-21 **Pentecost Retreat – Cathedral of Holy Spirit, Penang**
- 23-24 **Clergy Monthly Recollection – MAJODI Centre**
- 24 **Meeting – Diocesan Finance Council, MAJODI Centre**
- 27 **Confirmation – Sacred Heart Cathedral, JB**

Ground-breaking for community centre

KUALA LUMPUR: The Cathedral of St John will soon have a new community centre.

Archbishop Julian Leow led the ground-breaking and blessing ceremony for the *Magnificat* Community Centre on May 2.

He was joined by parish priest, Fr Gerard Steve Theraviam and head of the Building Committee, Selvanathan.

The ground-breaking ceremony was held on the grounds of the existing two-storey hall, adjacent to the cathedral, that will partly make way for the new RM16 million four-storey pastoral and community centre.

The centre will house a chapel, conference hall (600 people), meeting rooms, parish offices, funeral parlour, children's catechism classrooms, grotto, cafeteria, PIHD programmes and dormitories.

Archbishop Julian prayed that there would be no untoward incident and that the construction would be completed on time and within the budget.

After the Scripture reading, prayer of intercessions and blessings, Archbishop Julian

and Fr Gerard blessed the grounds with holy water.

Then, with the flick of a shovel, Archbishop Julian, followed by Fr Gerard and then Selvanathan, celebrated the start of the construction.

The event ended with a group photo and tea fellowship.

The estimated construction cost is RM14.5 million with an additional RM1.5 million being development cost. As of April 26, the parish has raised RM11.2 million.

The project will take approximately 15 months to complete. The handover of the site to the contractor was on March 7.

The *Magnificat* is expected to be completed by 2024 fulfilling the pastoral requirements for the parish for the next 40 years.

To raise the outstanding amount, the parish has ongoing fund-raising projects such as donations, T-shirt sales, Fam Day Fiesta on June 18, buy a brick at RM10/- each and a musical event in August. — **By Bernard Anthony**



From left: Archbishop Julian Leow, Fr Gerard Theraviam and Selvanathan during the ground-breaking ceremony.



Malacca Johore Diocese News Update #130

F12
NEWS
MJD
UPDATES

Greetings again dear people of God. Great week. Holidays! Holidays! Holidays! Many were travelling, marriages celebrated here and there, camps and seminars in progress. Some remembered the Feast of St Joseph, the Worker. Groups gathered to protest, or make statements. A "To pardon or not to pardon" rift appeared. Our Buddhist friends celebrated Wesak, when they commemorate the birth, the attainment of enlightenment and the passing on of the Buddha.

Admission Times: A sense of disease prevails over many things. COVID-19 is again on the rise. Some talk of another Sheraton move, resignation of MPs and different reactions to the pardon issue, is unsettling. There is no admission of wrongs, sufferings of the poor, the emergence of the new poor, the jobless, the homeless and the rising cost of living. There is no admission of corruption and abuse of power as sin by religious leaders and politicians. The masses do not admit their prejudices, there is an attitude of indifference and "tidak apa" to citizen politics. The Church admits her many sins, weaknesses and abuses. Admission of deeds shocks many, but it leads to awareness, acknowledgment and appropriate action. Change, renewal and transformation then follows. Admission of sin is the beginning of enlightenment and new life.

A THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: The Spider's Web

During World War II, a US Marine was separated from his unit and was lost on a Pacific island. Alone in the jungle, he could hear enemy soldiers coming in his direction. He found his way up a high ridge and crawled into one of the caves. The enemy was looking for him. He waited and prayed, "Lord, if it is Your will, please protect me. Whatever your will though, I love You and trust You. Amen."

Just then he saw a spider begin to build a web over the front of his cave. As he watched, listening to the enemy searching

for him all the while, the spider layered strand after strand of web across the opening of the cave.

"Hah" he thought, "what I need is a brick wall and what the Lord has sent me is a spider web. God does have a sense of humour."

The enemy drew closer. To his amazement, however, after glancing in the direction of his cave, they moved on. Then he realised that with the spider web over the entrance, his cave looked as if no one had entered it for quite a while. "Lord, forgive me," prayed the young man, "I had forgotten that with You, a spider's web is stronger than a brick wall."

Lesson from the Spider: We all face times of great trouble. When we do, it is so easy to forget the victories that God can work in our lives, sometimes in the most surprising ways. *Nehemiah told the Israelites when they faced the task of rebuilding Jerusalem, "In God we will have success!" [Neh.2:20]*

Announcements for this Week

1. April 29 - 30: a vocation camp for single ladies conducted by the auxiliaries from the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur had eight participants, who are discerning and will inform their bishop of their next plan.

2. April 29 - May 1: a diocesan priesthood vocation Discernment Weekend at St Louis Kluang, was attended by 13 young men.

3. The new Vocation Director for MJD is Fr Adrian Francis.

4. On May 1, the Deliverance and Healing Programme was conducted in English and Mandarin, and was attended by 17 English-speaking and 23 Mandarin-speaking participants. This first session focused on *Understanding Spiritual Freedom* and *Understanding Deliverance Prayer*.

5. The Montfort Youth Centre, Melaka offers courses in automotive engineering, information technology, general maintenance and agriculture. The Centre is open for admission, which begins on July 23. Contact MYC Office for more info.

This Week's Question and Query?

The Q asks: Why is there an air of uselessness pervading everywhere?

1. Younger people realise that the world is full of huge problems that they dream of solving but no one is interested in their views. They are told: "You don't know what the world is really like. Listen to your elders and then you will have a better idea of what to do."

2. The older people have gained experience and maturity; they have learned about life's difficulties the hard way, but when the moment comes for them to teach these things, no one is interested. They are told: "The world has changed. You have to keep up to date and listen to the young."

3. *The feeling of uselessness is no respecter of age and never asks permission but, instead, corrodes people's souls, repeating over and over: No one is interested in you, you're nothing, the world doesn't need your presence.*

4. In a desperate attempt to give meaning to life, many turn to religion, because a struggle in the name of faith is always a justification for some grand action that could transform the world. "We are doing God's work," they tell themselves. And they become devout followers, then evangelists and finally fanatics.

5. *They don't understand that religion was created in order to share the mystery and to worship, not to oppress or convert others. The greatest manifestation of the miracle of God is life.*

(Extract from *Manuscript Found In Accra*) by Paulo Coelho.

Have a great week. May you meet the Risen Lord on your journey and in your work. Keep safe.

Bishop Bernard Paul

BEC's Easter outreach

MELAKA: Members of BEC Kampung Lapan visited Fatima Home recently as part of their outreach programme. Fatima Home is under the Malacca Johore Diocese and at present there are 17 primary and secondary school students staying there.

The BEC members were impressed with the cleanliness of the Home and how happy the children seemed living there.

With the generous contributions from their community, family and friends, they bought Milo, powdered milk and cooking oil for the Home. Lunch was McDonalds and the balance money was given as a cash donation. It was a fruitful and interactive outing for the BEC members as well as the children and their caregivers. Though it was a short visit, the children, as well as the BEC members, had a joyful time together. — *By Christine Ong*



The BEC Kampung Lapan members with the children of Fatima Home.

Catholics are called to constant renewal

By Alvin Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR: At certain points of His life, Jesus retreated from the crowds for various reasons; to pray, to prepare for a mission, to recharge, to discern about an important decision and, in the case of the beheading of his cousin, John the Baptist, to grieve. In other words, Jesus thought it necessary to make retreats.

With that in mind, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) prayer group and covenant community leaders and their core team members from CHARIS Kuala Lumpur Service of Communion (CKLSC) retreated to the hills and spent three days at Villa Dominic with their spiritual director, Fr Clement Lim.

The CCR in Malaysia has seen the ups and downs and twists and turns of ministry life in service of the Church. In this life of servant-hood, we do get caught up in being too 'Martha' and leave little time to be 'Mary'. We confuse ministry with doing many, many things and we forget to seek clarity of mission through prayer, Scripture and going deeper into communion with our Master. That was a constant reminder for us at the retreat from Fr Clement, who reminded us to stay with the vine, to remain at the source, to seek the Master's heart and to remind ourselves why we are doing what we are doing. For without the source, without a constant renewed relationship with Jesus through the power of the Spirit, it is hard to discern the will of the Father. And without that discernment, our crosses will be hard to bear.

The sessions conducted aimed at drawing us all deeper into reflecting on our own road to Emmaus. To help us confront the



The Charismatic leaders in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur at Villa Dominic.

simple yet critically important question on the reason and purpose of our journey. To re-encounter Jesus in our lives. To allow the Spirit to reveal our own heart in the light of this encounter. And with this, to allow healing and transformation to take place.

For as leaders, we often forget that we too experience pain and brokenness. And while we struggle to lead people to 'metanoia', to a spiritual awakening and conversion of heart, we too need the spirit of humility and child-like faith to seek our own 'metanoia' constantly. After all, renewal is never a one-off event. It is a constant journey of grace. It's important that we know this because we can't give what we don't possess. To play a role in the renewal of faith in the Body of Christ, the Church, we need to be renewed again and again. And judging from the silent tears shed during Adoration and times of worship, this beautiful lesson, this beautiful invitation to 'come to Me, all you who are burdened and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest' was deeply realised.

In the blink of an eye, the retreat came to a close. But the mission of the Church continues and continues more urgently. We are called to draw all people into Christ and introduce a life in service of the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a huge battle happening in the possession of hearts and minds and the call to renewal is an invitation to be transformed by the renewing of the mind. (Rom 12:2). But far from seeing this as a task or a burden, it is the call to the greatest of adventures, for on our road to Emmaus, Jesus walks with us and we can hardly wait to introduce Him to people we meet along the way.

On behalf of CKLSC, we would like to thank Fr Clement Lim, our Ecclesiastical Assistant (EA), for helping us seek the Master's heart. And if you're reading this and feel like journeying deeper into faith with a committed bunch, seek out the prayer group in your parish and allow the Spirit to transform you to be His witness and servant. For the glory of God. Amen



DIOCESE OF PENANG

PKK/BDN/2023/05/161

1. Fr Peter Wang assures his unity with the Diocese of Penang

Fr Peter Wang, a priest from the Diocese of Penang residing in Canada, was recently gifted by the Diocese of Penang with the statue of Our Lady of the Jubilee on his 100th birthday celebration. He assures us of his prayers and unity as he commits to pray for the diocese every day through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother.

2. Appointment of Fr Joseph Stephen CSsR as parish priest

Fr Joseph Stephen CSsR has been appointed parish priest of the Church of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Ipoh with effect from May 1, 2023. My heartfelt thanks to Fr Patrick Massang, CSsR for his contributions in his priestly ministry as parish priest as I welcome Fr Joseph Stephen, CSsR with gratitude for his generous availability in accepting this role and mission once again.

3. Fr Fabian Dicom accepts role as National Director of Caritas Malaysia

The Diocese of Penang is pleased to offer the services, talents, experiences and resources of Fr Fabian Dicom to take up the role as National Director of Caritas Malaysia under the leadership of Bishop Bernard Paul, Bishop President of Caritas Malaysia. I thank Fr Fabian for his kind acceptance

and generosity in availing himself for this role.

4. Head of Penang Diocesan Healing and Deliverance Ministry

Deacon Charles Lazaroo will take over from Deacon Clement Samuel as Head of the Penang Diocesan Healing and Deliverance Ministry with effect from May 1, 2023. We thank both Deacon Charles and Deacon Clement for their commitment in this ministry. Let us pray and entrust this ministry to the powerful intercession of Our Blessed Mother.

5. Secretary of Penang Diocesan Finance Committee (PDFC)

Mary Yeo has been appointed as Secretary of the Penang Diocesan Finance Committee (PDFC) effective May 1, 2023. I thank Patrick Morton for his faithful service in this role and his continued commitment to the Penang Diocesan Finance Committee (PDFC) as ex-officio while welcoming Mary Yeo on board.

6. Penang Diocese Clergy Retirement Home

A retirement home for the Clergy of the Diocese of Penang is being set up at the St Joachim's Spirituality Centre situated at the Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam.

Notifications & Updates

The team of three headed by Fr Dominic Santhiyagu, will consist of members of the clergy from each deanery for a period of three years with effect from April 18, 2023.

- Fr Dominic Santhiyagu (Northern Deanery)
- Msgr Stephen Liew (Perak Deanery)
- Msgr Jude Miranda (Penang Island Deanery)

7. Movement of Religious Sisters in the Diocese of Penang

Following the recent movement of the Congregation of the Daughters of Carmel (Kongregasi Putri Karmel) from Bukit Mertajam to Balik Pulau, the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (FSIC) will move from Penang to Bukit Mertajam, taking over the previous residence of Karmel Putri at No. 16 & 18, Jalan Kolam Air Off Jalan Kulim, 14000 Bukit Mertajam

8. Seminarians of the Diocese of Penang
We have seven seminarians from the Diocese of Penang currently under formation. The full list of the seminarians can be found at the QR code provided. Continue to keep them in your prayers as we pray for more vocations and all who are discerning. May the Good Shepherd lead them and guide them in their discernment journey.



9. Diamond Jubilee, Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) in Malaysia

The Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood will be celebrating their 60 years of presence in Malaysia, 1963 to 2023 on May 23, 2023. There will be a Eucharistic Celebration at Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Ipoh to commemorate this event. Let us continue to pray for their mission and for the sisters of the congregation.

10. 57th World Day of Social Communications 2023

In conjunction with the 57th World Day of Social Communications 2023, the Diocesan Social Communications Ministry will be organising a day of formation with several workshops on Saturday, May 20, 2023 from 9.00am to 6.00pm at the Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam.

Parish representatives and all who are interested in social communications are most welcome to join in this celebration which will conclude with Holy Mass (Sunset Mass) presided over by me.

Sebastian Francis

Rt Rev Sebastian Francis

Catechists must be bearers of Good News

By Dr Ivan Filmer

PENANG: A retreat for catechists themed *Proclaiming Jesus as the Hope of the World* was held April 22-23 at the Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam. It was organised by the Penang Diocesan Catechetical Commission (PDCC).

Before the retreat began, Bishop Sebastian Francis, in a motivational video, thanked all catechists for their loyal and faithful service. He hoped that they would continue to grow in the journey of synodality with the Church and avoid the temptation cited by Pope Francis of working on their own. He urged the catechists to focus on the directions of the latest *Directory for Catechesis* (2020 edition) which was to shift from being just teachers to also being bearers of the Good News. He asked them to take responsibility for their formation and gave a stern warning that they should leave if they were not prepared to do so. He also asked them to become like the disciples who were the first evangelists, who were touched and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Archbishop Julian Leow, the President of the Malaysian Catechetical Commission, in another video said that catechists are the bearers of hope to help connect the children with Jesus in their daily lives. Quoting Pope John Paul II in *Catechesi Tradendae*, his Grace said the ultimate aim of catechists is to de-



The Putri Karmel Sisters during the session in Bahasa Malaysia.

velop an intimate relationship with Jesus. This is because only Jesus can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit. Our purpose must be to bring forth the teachings of Jesus. Each catechist must always endeavour to bring the teachings and the life of Christ through their own behaviour. How can we do this if we do not know Jesus personally? Only through a pure relationship with Jesus can we know Him and proclaim Him as the hope of the world. That is why this retreat would be the best opportunity to know Jesus again and renew our relationship with Him.

Two hundred and twenty-five participants from 26 parishes registered for the retreat. The English-speaking group was facilitated by Michael Xavier, the President of the Peninsular Institute for New Evangelisation, the Mandarin group by Mark Ng, Tamil by Benedict Savarimuthu and Bahasa Malaysia by Sr Irene

and the Putri Karmel Sisters.

In the opening session, Deacon Clement Samuel, Head of PDCC, welcomed the participants. He asked the participants to open their hearts to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. He said the focus of the retreat would be on the eight fundamental truths of the *Kerygma* or Good News of our Catholic Faith:

Truth 1: God is Love (With God's love comes mission. Go back to the Nation)

Truth 2: All Men have Sinned (God uses all of you including your limitations)

Truth 3: Jesus is the Only Saviour (3C -> 3E (Catechist -> Catechumens -> Christ: Experience -> Express -> Experience))

Truth 4: Faith & Repentance is the Door to Salvation (Faith + Repentance = Salvation)

Truth 5: New Life comes from the Holy Spirit (Old Life -> Encounter Holy Spirit -> New Life; Information vs Impartation)

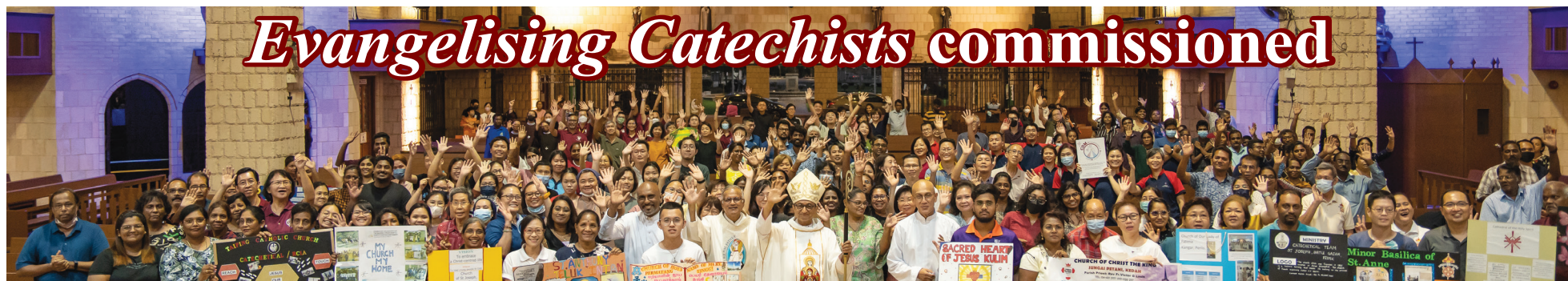
Truth 6: The Church is 'The Instrument & Sign of Salvation' (The Church serves as a place where people find Salvation in Jesus through the Holy Spirit)

Truth 7: We Need to do our part for Spiritual Growth (Focus on Prayer, the Word, the Name, the Blood of Jesus. Begin with Being that leads to Doing)

Truth 8: Our Goal in Life is to reach Heaven (Before we experience Heaven after life, we need to first be part of creating Heaven on Earth).

Towards the end of the retreat, participants were asked to write a pledge of their intentions to carry out their mission as *Evangelising Catechists* and present it before the altar in church. Some also shared their experiences of the retreat; many said that the sessions were relevant and heart-warming, boosting and energising their passion to carry on their work as catechists.

The end of the retreat was marked with the commissioning of the catechists with their new identity as *Evangelising Catechists* by Bishop Sebastian at the closing Mass. At the beginning of the Mass, each parish in attendance processed into the church carrying a poster displaying their parish and ministry logos and mission statements. They were all presented with a free booklet entitled *More Treasures of the Catholic Faith* by Jennifer Duarte from Ipoh.



PENANG: Over 200 catechists and RCIA facilitators from the five states of the Diocese of Penang were commissioned as *Evangelising Catechists* by Bishop Sebastian Francis at the Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam.

He also extended this commissioning to all faith sharers who were unable to be present. (bit.ly/3Lqm1oj)

"The role of sharing the faith is the most important and challenging ministry in the Church. It is not just something that is 'touch & go' but is systematic and needs preparation," said Bishop Sebastian in his opening address on April 23. He added that it provides no glamour and involved prayer and spirituality, with formation that extended the whole year round. The most vulnerable gift

of God entrusted to parents is children who were given into the care of catechists within the Church.

At a recent conference in Rome of 200 over bishops from around the world, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, had asked to keep the child at the centre of the narrative of the Church and the kingdom of God. When dealing with the most vulnerable in our midst, Bishop Sebastian said the primary requirement is the love for children. To engage with them in faith using the universal language of love from the heart.

After the homily, his Lordship explained that the faith sharers have been given a new identity of being *Evangelising Catechists*. According to the *Directory for Catechesis* (2020), Pope Francis described catechists as

people who keep the memory of God alive in themselves and are able to revive it in others.

In the Pope's Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, evangelisation is the task of the Church and the Church as an agent of evangelisation... she is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrimage way towards God. So, everything the Church does is to advance us on the way to God. As no one is saved by himself or herself, or by our own efforts, God attracts us to Himself within the complex relationships of the human community called the Church.

His Lordship then explained the new identity of *Evangelising Catechists* within the context of the *Mission Statement of Evangelising Catechists*. The five principles of the mission are as follows:

Firstly, to seek to deepen a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, to proclaim the core message of the Gospel, the *kerygma*. Thirdly, to accompany people to a response of faith and conversion to Christ. Fourthly, to provide a systematic exposition of God's revelation within the communion of the Catholic Church. And lastly, to have as its goal to send out missionary disciples as witnesses to the good news of salvation. His Lordship then received the pledge of all present to accept and be *Evangelising Catechists*.

The ceremony ended with a blessing to all the children and adult *Evangelising Catechists* with the sending forth on mission. —
By Dr Ivan Filmer

Seniors go on pilgrimage

PARIT BUNTAR, Perak: The senior citizens of the Church of Our Lady of Good Health went on a pilgrimage to the Chapel of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Sungai Batu, Bedong, Kedah. It was a meaningful pilgrimage for about 41 senior citizens as they sought to experience spiritual growth.

Before starting their journey, they were given a briefing and breakfast. Parish priest Fr Martin Arlando also recited a short prayer for their safe journey.

On the way, they stopped at the Church of Christ the King, Sg Petani. Parish priest, Fr Victor Louis, welcomed them and served them some light refreshment before they continued their journey.

Upon reaching their destination, they were greeted by the caretaker of the chapel, Francis, who briefed them on the chapel and

the miracles that took place there. Many testimonials were given by devotees of Our Lady who flock there every now and then.

One testimony was given by a woman who was diagnosed with bleeding in the brain and suffered a stroke. When she heard about the miracles here, she immediately came and prayed to Our Lady and asked her to intercede to Our Lord on her behalf. To the amazement of the doctors and herself, she recovered from her illness. And as of today, she is still continuing to visit the chapel as often as possible.

This pilgrimage changed the hearts of the faithful. It has brought them to understand that as children of God, our destiny lies with Jesus Christ to accomplish all according to His Will so that we may exist for the praise of His glory. — Rueben Raj

• PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY & CONSULTATION ON BEREAVEMENT MATTERS •

诺曼殯儀服務

NORMAN FUNERAL SERVICES

Honouring Lives Since 1966 24 HOURS

012 212 0677 / 012 333 5753 / 019 333 5753

Norman Christian Funeral Services (002882028-X)
No. 112, Jalan Gasing, 46000 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
603 7931 6639
✉ normanfuneralservice@gmail.com
f Norman Funeral Services
www.normanfuneralservices.com

• BUILDING OF MONUMENTS • SUPPLY OF CONDOLENCE WREATHS •

REPAIROMENT OF REMAINS • EXHUMATION SERVICES

COMPLETE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENT FOR ALL FAITHS

Focus on being a Christ centred community

By Cassandra Grace H. Jayasuria

KUALA LUMPUR: The Church of the Good Shepherd celebrated her feast with a Triduum of daily Masses, Holy Hour and Adoration from April 28 – 30.

The theme for the celebration was a *Christ Centred Community*, with sub-themes of *Communion, Participation and Mission*.

On the first day, guest preacher Fr Andrew Manickam OFM Cap, reflected on the theme of *Communion*. In our society today, many have lost the understanding of what truly being together can be. We have lost the understanding of being a community of authentic friendship and communion. Society is longing for connection and communion. Sometimes we are engrossed with our digital gadgets that we fail to see the person sitting next to us. In a digital world, we have lost the essence of table fellowship. We need to cultivate table fellowship and build communion within our families. If there is no communion in our families, then



From left: Parish priest, Fr Mitchel Joseph, guest preacher, Fr Andrew Manickam OFM Cap and Fr Francis Go OFM Cap.

it is difficult to build a Christ Centred community. Jesus Himself sits with the disciples and it always takes place in the context of a meal.

On the second day, Fr Andrew spoke on *Participation* in the life and mission of the Church. When we participate, we are building the body of Christ. What are the barriers we have when it comes to participation? The three images that we see operating in our lives are; those who see the church as a restaurant i.e. I come for an hour in a week to get nour-

ishment and then I go on with my life without any other spiritual connection; secondly, those who see the church as a social service agency – we gather together to work, to help those in need and build a better world but there is more than this; thirdly, the church as a social club where a group of likeminded people gather with their friends, feel comfortable and share recent news. These three images prevent us from building the body of Christ. We must invest our time using our talents and gifts to

build the church for God's glory. We all have resources that God has blessed us with; we are not here as silent spectators or strangers. We are here as the body of Christ, in the parish, our bigger family.

On the third day, he said that *Mission* invites us to move out from our bigger family, the church, to the world. "There are two great days in a person's life — the day we are born and the day we discover why." The first day explains our presence on earth. The second day explains our purpose. "We weren't put on Earth to live for ourselves. We were made for a greater purpose than simply to make money, retire, and die. We were made for a mission, and that mission gives our life meaning. We are unique. God has made us so unique that there are certain things only we can contribute to the world. Those things make up our life mission. We need to ask ourselves, "Based on how God wired me, what is the greatest contribution I can make? How can I make a difference?" Mission begins with me.

St Joseph fulfilled his mission on earth



The procession after Mass around the chapel grounds.

MELAKA: The feast of St Joseph the Worker was celebrated at the Chapel of St Joseph, Tanjung Kling. Chapel Administrator, Fr John Yoew, presided over the feast. More than 400 faithful from far and near were present.

In his homily preached in both English and Mandarin, Fr John described how Jesus behaved to fulfil His mission. In the early morning, He would go into the wilderness to pray. Before His Passion, He prayed earnestly to His Father for strength to fulfil His mission. Jesus has the heart of a father — to forgive, to understand those who need compassion. Faithfully He obeyed the Will of the Father, fulfilling His mission, not boastfully, like St Joseph, a simple man, like you and me. He knew his mission and every day faithfully fulfilled it, according to the Will of God.

Fr John, who is also the parish priest of the Church of St Mary in Ayer Salak, said St Joseph, who is the foster father of Jesus, is a favourite saint of all workers. Usually we think of workers as those who work for a salary, but even housewives/husbands are workers.

St Joseph is a patron saint for everyone — fulfilling the Will of God, building up families and nations. Fr John invited the assembly to ask St Joseph to intercede for us as we celebrate his feast day. To be faithful ourselves and always to do God's Will. One day when we enter the Heavenly Kingdom, like St Joseph, God will tell us — well done, good and faithful servant.

There was a procession after Mass around the huge grounds of the chapel followed by fellowship. — **By Bernard Anthony**

Vincentians raise RM190k for ORV

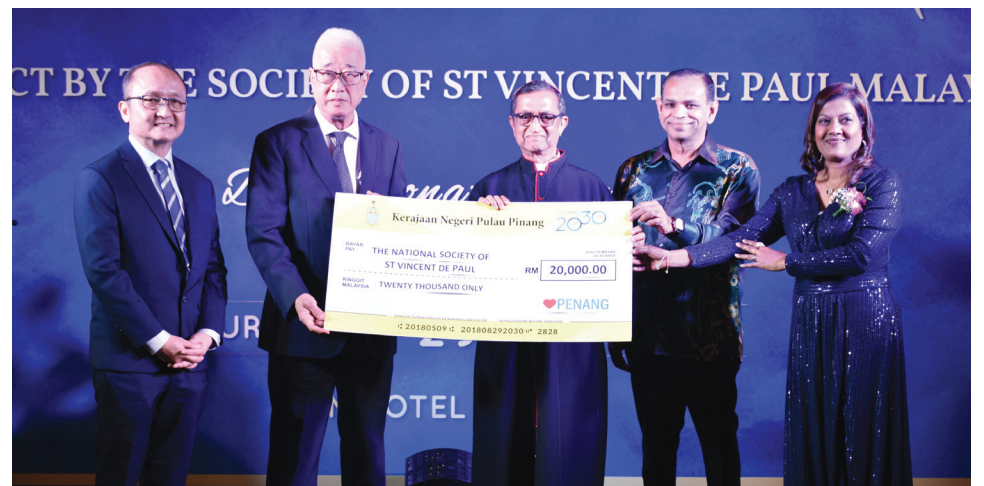
PENANG: A whopping RM190,000 was raised at the Society of St Vincent De Paul's (SSVP) Charity Gala dinner held recently at the Jen Hotel. It was to fund the society's first retirement home — Ozanam Retirement Village (ORV), situated in Taiping, Perak.

"It was the huge commitment, passion and hard work of the SSVP members to undertake and realise this project which would give the not-so privileged members of society a decent life in community living, thirty per cent of the accommodation had been allocated for the poor, for which the charity drive was aimed at," said Ameleena Maikal Yasu, co-chairman of ORV Charity Gala dinner organising committee.

From the moment go, the charity dinner, themed *Dine, Donate and Dance* lived up to its theme with lively and entertaining performances, songs and auctions to raise funds, and donations poured in, boosted by a RM20,000 donation from the Penang State Government.

Penang State Exco member for Environment and Welfare, Phee Boon Poh, who presented the donation during the event, said that it supported the society's efforts to undertake charitable projects in helping the less fortunate and that the ORV signified their extended mission in caring for the elderly.

ORV, situated in Klian Pauh, Taiping on the grounds of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church was launched in 2017 and is due for completion by the end of this year. However, it is still short of funds so the



Cheque presentation by YB Phee Boon Poh to Bishop Sebastian Francis flanked by SSVP National president Aloysius Lai, Msgr Jude Miranda and Ameleena Maikal Yasu. (photo/Sam Gopal)

charity dinner was one of the many initiatives to raise awareness of the project and seek generous support.

Bishop of Penang, Rt Rev Sebastian Francis, in his speech said that ORV was timely as both society and the Church will have to face the social, economic and spiritual implications of a rapidly growing elderly population.

"We are all growing old, not just as individuals but as members of the faith community. ORV will provide senior and retired individuals a community-based living, seeing to the residents' physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs. Community living will ensure lesser loneliness and despair and is important for the wellbeing of persons as

we grow old."

"As with the Catholic ethos of welcoming everybody, the ORV will also offer free residence to the less endowed so they are not forgotten."

ORV will offer a wide range of amenities and services such as full board and lodging in a furnished room within a senior friendly premise, a sick bay with some care-assistance rendered, regular health checks and visiting doctors, daily activities, recreation and social activities, a common cafeteria with four meals, a library and reading room, a gym, indoor games, gardening, hiking, 24-hour security, laundry and housekeeping, and free shuttle services within Taiping town. — **By Anne Haslam**

Working together to help others

JASIN, Melaka: An Outreach Programme was held at the Church of the Holy Spirit on April 30 for 15 poor families from Jasin and Merlimau.

The mission was organised by the SSVP Conferences of Holy Spirit Jasin and St James, Merlimau in collaboration with a Catholic group from Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese.

Parish priest, Fr Devadasan Madala Muthu, with his SSVP leaders and members and a few parishioners were present to welcome the guests who received essential food items and pillows.

Everyone adjourned into the church for a

prayer and reflection session. Fr Devadasan gave ten reasons why Christians should help the poor. He said to follow Jesus our Good Shepherd as a Christian, it is our duty to help the less fortunate, to make the world a better place for them.

Fr Devadasan said God created us in His image to become like Christ to others. Be a good shepherd like Jesus to others and care for them. The parish priest also invited the 90 present to pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life. "May the Good Shepherd guide and lead us in our lives for the greater glory of God." Fr Devadasan added. — **By Bernard Anthony**



SSVP members and parishioners handing out provisions to the poor families.

Franciscan Friars celebrate autonomy, launch fund for poor and missions

By Friar Sylvester Singh OFM

SINGAPORE: The OFM Custody of St Anthony (Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei) officially became an autonomous custody on April 25. This was declared by Friar Massimo Fusarelli OFM, the 121st successor of St Francis of Assisi and Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor (OFM).

Prior to this, the Custody of St Anthony was under the Province of the Holy Spirit (Australia-New Zealand). The Minister General also named the new administration with Friar Derrick Yap as Custos, Friar Michael D'Cruz as Vicar, Friars Vernon Chua, David Au, Esmond Chua and Aiden Peter as Councillors.

The OFM Custody of St Anthony (Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei) has 36 solemnly professed friars, including 18 Malaysians, 16 Singaporeans, one Sri Lankan, and one Filipino. There are eight friars-in-formation, including five Malaysians and three Singaporeans.

The friars have also been given charge of four parishes: the Church of St Ann in Kuching, Church of St Joseph in Johor, Church of the Risen Christ in Penang and Church of St Mary of the Angels in Singapore.

In his speech during the pronouncement, Friar Massimo Fusarelli exhorted



The friars with the Minister General of the Order, Friar Massimo Fusarelli OFM.

ed the friars to "be the face of an Order and Church that speaks to the people of God in a way that is deeply Singapore, authentically Malaysia, and, as we say, truly Asia."

The friars in Singapore-Malaysia expressed their gratitude to the Australian Friars of the Province of the Holy Spirit who were represented by the current and past Provincial Ministers and the Provincial Secretary. There was also a moment of silence to remember the friars who had gone before them.

That evening, the Minister General celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass at the Church of St Mary of the Angels. Fellow religious, parishioners, benefactors, and friends participated in the joyous occasion. During the Mass, Friar Nelson Evarinus from Sabah was admitted to the Ministry of Acolyte, and all the solemnly professed friars recommitted themselves to the Fran-

ciscan Gospel way of life, dedicating themselves to becoming contemplative fraternities in mission.

The Custody launched a fund called *St Anthony's Touch*, as a commitment to helping the poor and marginalised, and supporting mission and evangelisation efforts. During the launch, a cheque of RM50,000 was presented to Friar Don Don Ramirez, rector of St Ann's Church (Kuching), to support the parish's mission efforts in building houses for poor families in the villages under their pastoral care.

At the end of the Mass, Friar Massimo presented a gift to Friar Derrick – a first-class relic of Blessed Gabriele Allegra. Blessed Allegra is considered to be the initiator of the Franciscan presence in Singapore; it was he who requested the Vatican to set up a sociological institute in Singapore to offer an alternative to Communist ideas which

were gaining ground in the 1950s. Blessed Allegra, better known among Chinese-speaking Catholics as Lei Yong Ming, is lauded for his work of translation of the entire Bible into Chinese with a team of fellow Franciscan friars.

The next day, the Minister General departed for Kota Kinabalu, Sabah where the friars had just established their latest presence in Malaysia. Here, Friar Massimo enjoyed a lively dialogue with the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and 80 representatives of the Secular Franciscan Order, a fraction of a thriving community numbering 589 members currently in Sabah. The Minister General also paid a courtesy call to Archbishop John Wong of Kota Kinabalu, discussing current ministries of the friars and future possibilities of closer collaboration with the Archdiocese.

History of the Order of Friars Minor in the region

On March 28, 1957, Friar Vergil Mannion OFM arrived in Singapore by disembarking from the *Peleus* ship onto its soil. A group of Franciscan friars from Italy, America, and Hong Kong was brought to Singapore in 1957 to establish a sociological institute for outreach, research, and publications to counter communism after a dialogue between Rome, local Church leaders, and Franciscans.

On August 26, 1958, Archbishop Michael Olcomendy of Malacca-Singapore officially declared the presence and ministry of the Order of Friars Minor. Subsequently, the Vatican decreed the canonical establishment of this new community.

In May 1991, the Franciscan Custody of St Anthony in Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, dependent on the Australian Province of the Holy Spirit, was officially constituted.

Vietnamese Catholic Community celebrates 20th anniversary in Seoul

SEOUL: The Vietnamese Catholic Community in Seoul Archdiocese celebrated its 20th anniversary with Mass on April 23.

"I am very happy to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Vietnamese Catholic Community with all of you," said the celebrant, Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-Taick, OCD. He extended his gratitude for the services of many Catholic priests and lay believers for the development of the community in the past two decades.

The prelate said in his homily, "It is nice to feel more closely connected with you as the president of the pastoral committee for Migrants and Foreign Residents." Archbishop Chung was elected as the President of the Committee for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Foreign Residents Living in Korea of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCCK) at the Spring General Assembly the earlier this year.

He continued, "It may be the same for everyone, that living in an unfamiliar foreign country away from his or her beloved family and home is a difficult task that requires great sacrifice. All of you here are enduring various hardships for the sake of work or study. The resurrection of Jesus is an event that gives strength, grace, and blessings to all of us who are enduring difficult times."

"As the disciples of Jesus were dispatched to various parts of the world after the resurrection of Je-



Members of the Vietnamese Catholic community in Seoul with Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-Taick at the Archdiocese's Employment Pastoral Centre. (Photo courtesy of the Archdiocese of Seoul)

sus Christ, you also are sacrificing yourselves and enduring hardships for your beloved families and for your own future, offering the love of Jesus. Let's dedicate your resolve to live as apostles who practise the Gospel," the archbishop said.

The Vietnamese Catholic Community in Seoul Archdiocese was formally established in April 2003, when Fr Pham Thanh Binh, SDB, started Sunday Mass at the Labour Pastoral Centre. Currently, it consists of six local communities based on the parish of origin in Vietnam and most of the members are international students, migrant workers, and marriage immigrants.

Fr Yoo Sang Hyeok, Director of the Migrant Pastoral Committee of the Archdiocese of Seoul, said, "There are foreign migrants in Korea who are living away from their homes for various reasons."

Fr Yoo added that, "The Vietnamese community, which started as a small community with factory workers and marriage migrant women in Seoul, now boasts the largest number of believers among the ethnic communities of the Seoul Archdiocese. With the change of the times, Seoul now has more international students than migrant workers," he explained, adding that "there are many more non-believers."

He continued, "I want all of us to remember that, before being migrants, they are also people loved by God," and added, "Because the lifestyles are different in different cultures, various conflicts are occurring and will arise. I think if we first respect the new culture and share our culture with them, our society will naturally be integrated." — *Archdiocese of Seoul*

Church leaders in India discuss ways to combat human trafficking

JAIPUR: The Commission for Migrants of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India on May 1 drew up plans to combat the issues of forced labour and human trafficking in Agra region, which comprises 10 dioceses.

About 30 delegates from these dioceses attended a workshop at Gyandeep Bhawan, Jaipur to celebrate International Worker's Day and address human trafficking and bonded labour that are rampant in the agricultural field, brick kilns, and factories of the region.

The participants decided to form a resource team equipped with legal knowledge and adequate skills to effectively address human trafficking which has become a serious issue after the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

They stressed the need for educating Christians on the Church's social teaching to end injustice against workers.

Fr Jaison Vadassery, the executive secretary of the Commission for Migrants, stressed the need to address the pastoral care of migrants in all dioceses in the region.

Wide awareness among workers regarding their rights and entitlement has to be generated by activating the commission's work in every diocese and religious congregations.

The participants agreed that they need to network with each other to end discrimination against women and weaker sections, the disparity between the rich and the poor and the inequality between high and low castes. — *Matters India*



The participants of the force labour and human trafficking workshop.



Pope Francis' visit

Day 1, April 28

Meeting with Hungarian President and Prime Minister

On his arrival in Budapest, Hungary, the Pope signed the country's Book of Honour, writing in Italian:

"I come as a pilgrim and friend to Hungary, a country rich in history and culture; in Budapest, city of bridges and of saints, I think of all Europe, and pray that, in unity and solidarity, it might be, in our times, too a house of peace and a prophecy of welcome."

Pope Francis signs the Book of Honour as Hungarian President Katalin Novák looks on. (Vatican Media)



Pope Francis greets Prime Minister Viktor Orbán at the official welcome ceremony at Sándor Palace in Budapest. (Vatican Media)

European unity 'crucial' to peace

The Pope challenged the nations of Europe to recapture a spirit of fraternal unity and pursue "creative efforts for peace".

Speaking to Hungarian civil authorities in Budapest he said: "In the post-war period, Europe, together with the United Nations, embodied the noble hope that, by working together for a closer bond between nations, further conflicts could be avoided.

"We seem to be witnessing the sorry sunset of that choral dream of peace as the soloists of war now take over. More and more, enthusiasm for building a peaceful and stable community of nations seems to be cooling, as zones of influence are marked out, differences accentuated, nationalism is on the rise, and ever harsher judgments and language are used in confronting others."

He offered a different vision for Europe's future.

"How much better it would be to build a

Europe centred on the human person and on its peoples, with effective policies for natality and the family – policies that are pursued attentively in this country – a Europe whose different nations would form a single family that protects the growth and uniqueness of each of its members," he said.

In a sense, the Pope said, the city of Budapest symbolises that vision.

"The most famous bridge in Budapest, the chain bridge, helps us to envision that kind of Europe, since it is composed of many great and diverse links that derive their solidity and strength from being joined together.

"The Christian faith can be a resource, and Hungary can act as a 'bridge builder' by drawing upon its specific ecumenical character. Here, different confessions live together without friction, cooperating respectfully and constructively." — *CNA*

Solutions to loss of faith 'come from the tabernacle, not the computer'



The crowd listens to a speech by Pope Francis to bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated persons, seminarians, and pastoral workers in St. Stephen's Co-Cathedral in Budapest, Hungary. (CNA photo/Daniel Ibañez)

Clergy and others discouraged by a shortage of priests and ebbing faith in the West were encouraged to pray for God's help, saying the solutions will "come from the tabernacle and not the computer."

"I want to assure you that good pastoral ministry is possible if we are able to live as the Lord has commanded us, in the love that is the gift of His Spirit," the Pope said, speaking to an audience of approximately 1,000 Hungarian priests, seminarians and pastoral workers gathered in St Stephen's Co-Cathedral in Budapest.

"If we grow distant from one another, or divided, if we become hardened in our ways of thinking and our different groups, then we will not bear fruit," he warned. "It is sad when we become divided, because, instead of playing as a team, we start playing the game of the enemy: bishops not communicating with each other, the old versus the young, diocesan priests versus religious, priests versus laity, Latins versus Greeks."

Such divisions lead to polarisation along entrenched ideological lines, the Holy Father said. "No! Always remember that our first pastoral priority is to bear witness to communion, for God is communion and He is present wherever there is fraternal charity," he said.

To combat "bleak defeatism and a worldly conformism," Pope Francis said, "the Gospel gives us new eyes to see" as well as discernment that enables us to "approach our own time with openness, but also with a prophetic spirit." He added that we are called to "prophetic receptivity."

"Prophetic receptivity is about learning how to recognise the signs of God in the world around us, including places and situations that, while not explicitly Christian, challenge us and call for a response," the Holy Father said. "At the same time, it is about seeing all things in the light of the Gospel without yielding to worldliness, as heralds and witnesses of the Christian faith." — *CNA*



Civil servants listen to the Pope at the former Carmelite Monastery. (Vatican Media)

Day 3, April 30 Christ calls us by name and sends us forth



Pope Francis waves to the crowd during an outdoor Mass in Kossuth Lajos Square in Budapest, Hungary. (Vatican Media)

Hungarians have been called to be "open and inclusive," reflecting on how Jesus wants His flock to share the abundant life they've received from Him.

Pope Francis said this during Holy Mass with tens of thousands of faithful gathered in Kossuth Lajos Square in central Budapest.

The Holy Father based his homily on the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Easter, which focuses on the figure of the Good Shepherd. A good shepherd, he said, "gives his life for his sheep."

"Jesus, like a shepherd who goes in search of his flock, came to find us when we were lost," he said. "Like a shepherd, He came to snatch us from death."

Christ, the Good Shepherd, does two things in particular for His sheep, the Pope continued: He calls His sheep by name, and He leads them out.

Pope Francis reminded the faithful that God calls each of us by our name, desiring

"to save us from sin and death, to give us life in abundance and joy without end."

The Pope went on to explain that, as Christians, we are all "called by name by the Good Shepherd, summoned to receive and spread His love, to make His fold inclusive and never to exclude others."

From this, he said, it follows that we are called to build fraternity and avoid divisions, "opening our hearts to mutual love."

Be open doors!

Addressing bishops and priests, and all those who are "shepherds" within the Church, the Pope called them to be "increasingly open doors, 'facilitators' of God's grace.

He likewise called on the lay faithful, including catechists and pastoral workers, political and social leaders: "Be open doors! ... Be open and inclusive, then, and in this way, help Hungary to grow in fraternity, which is the path of peace." — *Vatican News/CNA*

to Budapest, Hungary

Day 2, April 29 Visiting children with visual impairments

The second day included a visit with children and adults with visual impairments and other disabilities.

Arriving in his wheelchair at the Blessed László Batthyány-Strattmann Institute, he received a tour and was greeted by songs and a reception.

The Holy Father was not expected to give remarks but spoke briefly

from the heart, encouraging those present to walk “alongside the reality of the poor,” the sick, and the needy, because, he said, “this is pure Gospel.”

“Jesus came to take on reality as it is, and to bring it forward. It would have been easier to take ideas or ideologies and bring them forward, without taking into account reality. [But] this is the way of the Gospel,

this is the way of Jesus,” he said.

At the end of the visit, the children and residents joined the Pope in praying the Our Father, which they had learned in Latin. They also presented him with a handmade gift: a woven bag in the colours of the Argentinian flag and the Argentinian soccer team.

For his part, the Pope left them with a statue of Our Lady, Undoer of Knots. — *CNA*



“Jesus came to assume reality as it was and carry it forward.” Pope Francis greets and blesses the children assisted by the Blessed László Institute in Budapest

Speak the language of charity

Jesus came to bring “glad tidings to the poor,” Pope Francis recalled during a meeting with poor people and refugees in Budapest.

“Those in need — let us never forget — are at the heart of the Gospel,” he insisted.

The Pope addressed some 600 people, most of them refugees from Ukraine aided by the Caritas charity, gathered inside St Elizabeth of Hungary Church. Local authorities estimated another 1,000 people gathered outside the church.

He evoked the example of Hungary’s beloved 13th-century princess-saint, known for her piety and

heroic service to the poor, saying Elizabeth spoke “the language of charity.”

Referring to the statue of Elizabeth he had passed in Rózsák Square before he entered the church, the Pope recalled how the saint “not only sold her possessions but also spent her life serving the poor, lepers, and the sick, personally caring for them, even carrying them on her own shoulders. That is the language of charity.”

The Pope thanked the Church in Hungary for its “generous and wide-ranging service to charity.”

“Thank you, too, for having wel-

comed — not only with generosity but also with enthusiasm — so many refugees from Ukraine,” he said. More than 1.5 million Ukrainians have crossed into Hungary since the beginning of the war more than a year ago.

“Sadly, many people, even here, are literally homeless. Many of our more vulnerable sisters and brothers — living alone, struggling with various physical and mental disabilities, devastated by the poison of drugs, released from prison or abandoned because they are elderly — are experiencing severe material, cultural, and spiritual poverty; they have no roof over their heads and no home in which to live,” he lamented.

Charity, he said, is “much more than material and social assistance. It has to do with the whole person; it strives to put people back on their feet with the love of Jesus: a love that helps them to recover their beauty and their dignity.”

The Pope concluded by reiterating his call to speak, like St Elizabeth of Hungary, the “language of charity.” — *CNA*



Pope Francis meets with the poor and refugees in Budapest. (Vatican Media)

Blessing a Greek Catholic Church



Pope Francis wears the ‘Chotki’ or Byzantine ‘rosary’ on his wrist.

Pope Francis paid a brief visit to the Greek Catholic community in Budapest (Protection of the Mother of God Church), which serves the Catholic faithful of the Byzantine rite.

He was welcomed at the entrance by Archbishop Péter Fülöp Kocsis, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Hajdúdorog, and togeth-

er they walked to the Iconostasis, while the choir sang in the background.

After a brief greeting with the archbishop there was a moment of prayer, led by Pope Francis, with the community. The Pope was handed a cross and blessed the Greek Catholic community of Hungary. — *Vatican News*

Meeting with Moscow Patriarchate’s former No. 2 official

The Pope held private talks in Hungary with Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev) of Budapest, the Moscow Patriarchate’s former “foreign minister”, a meeting that was not part of the published programme of his April 28-30 visit.

“Hilarion is someone I respect very much, and we have always had a good relationship,” the Pope told journalists on Sunday evening as they accompanied him on his flight back to Rome.

Francis did not share what he and the Russian Orthodox bishop spoke about. And the Vatican would only say that the meeting, which took place on Saturday morning at the papal nunciature in the Hungarian capital, lasted about 20 minutes and was “cordial”.

The Pope has met several times over the years with Hilarion, who was removed from his post as Moscow Patriarch’s head of External Church Relations in June 2022 and made Metropolitan of Budapest. The 56-year-old bishop is now spir-



Pope Francis met with Metropolitan Hilarion of Budapest and Hungary, of the Russian Orthodox Church. (Vatican Media)

itual leader of the tiny Russian Orthodox community in Hungary.

Although his discussions with the Pope were not about his country’s war in Ukraine, which is less than three hours’ drive east of Budapest. But most observers believe the two men likely discussed their respective positions on the conflict. Since the beginning of the war in February 2022, contacts between the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Moscow have dwindled considerably. — *LCI* (<https://international.la-croix.com/>)

Day 3, April 30 Pope warns against technological domination

Pope Francis warned of the risk of technological domination and the threat it poses to culture and to our human ecology.

He also spoke about the false freedoms offered by both communism and consumerism, and encouraged people to seek out Christ’s truth.

On April 30, the Pope addressed approximately 250 people, including 30 students, from the Faculty of Information Technology and Bionics at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest.

The visit was the final meeting in Francis’ three-day trip to Hungary’s capital.

In his speech, Pope Francis made extensive reference to the 20th-century intellectual, Romano Guardini, a Catholic priest, theologian, and philosopher, and the author of the book

Letters from Lake Como: Explorations in Technology and the Human Race.

“Guardini did not demonise technology, which improves life and communication and brings many advantages, but he warned of the risk that it might end up controlling, if not dominating, our lives,” Pope Francis said.

The priest, he added, “foresaw a great threat: [in that case] we lose all the inner contact that we might have derived from a sense of proportion and the following of natural forms. We become inwardly devoid of form, proportion, and direction. We arbitrarily fix our goals and force the mastered powers of nature to bring them to fulfilment.”

Guardini, said Francis, “left posterity with a troubling question — ‘What

will become of life if it is delivered up to the power of this dominion?’”

“A system of machines is engulfing life ... Can life retain its living character in this system?” Guardini asked in one of the letters in his book.

“Can life retain its ‘living’ character?” the Pope repeated. “This is a question that is proper to ask, particularly in this place, which is a centre of research into information technology and the bionic sciences.”

At the university, Pope Francis also warned of the “false notion of freedom” offered by the ideologies of communism and consumerism.

He quoted Jesus’ words that “the truth will make you free” and said “communism offered a ‘freedom’ that was restricted, limited from without, determined by someone else”.

“Consumerism,” instead, he add-



He urges them to always promote a form of knowledge which is relational, humble, and constructive. (Vatican Media)

ed, “promises a hedonistic, conformist, libertine ‘freedom’ that enslaves people to consumption and to material objects.”

The way forward, Pope Francis said, is truth: “The key to accessing this truth is a form of knowledge

that is never detached from love, a knowledge that is relational, humble and open, concrete and communal, courageous and constructive. That is what universities are called to cultivate and faith is called to nurture.” — *CNA*



Discovering unity in serving God and people

Andrea Tornielli: The Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023 will include a significant number of voting members who are not bishops: priests, religious men and women, laymen and laywomen, with 50 per cent women and a special focus on the participation of young people. What is the significance of this decision?

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich: It is not really new, because, in the past there have already been members with voting rights who were not bishops. There were no women voters, but there were non-bishop members. It can therefore be said that that small group now becomes larger.

The Synod remains [a Synod] of the bishops, because the bishop is always the pastor of his Church; one cannot see the function separated from his people. I am the Archbishop of Luxembourg, when I am in Rome, I miss my Church: I think of the people I see in the first row, the second row, the third row in the cathedral, I think of those I meet every day... and I miss them. A small part of these people will be present at the Synod to be with their pastors. They will have a special mission, they have already had a great experience of synodality in the dioceses, then at the level of the bishops' conferences and finally at the continental level. Not all

The relator general of the Synod on synodality, Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, explains in an interview with Vatican Media, the changes in the upcoming General Assembly, emphasising how the Church is called to be missionary with all its diversity, while always keeping Christ in the centre.



the bishops who will participate have had this experience. Therefore, the task of these new members is to be witnesses of what they have experienced in order to communicate it.

Despite this, the Synod remains 'of the bishops'?

Yes, it remains so because the bishops are the majority! It is up to the bishops to undertake a discernment, which has been done at different levels and, ultimately, arrives at the Holy Father. Now there is the bishops' stage, but there is a matter of discernment and this matter has been offered by the people of God. The new members of the Synod represent, so to speak, the 'non-episcopal' portion of the people of God.

Can it be said that it is a synod of bishops accompanied by a representation of the people of God?

But bishops also belong to the people of

God! At least I want to belong to them... otherwise I would feel bad! We need to understand these new members more as witnesses and memories of the synod process so far.

'Synod on synodality' is a rather technical title, which sounds far removed from people's lives. For those who have lived this experience, however, it is exactly the opposite. Can you tell us what the subject of this synod is?

It is this: how we, together, can be a missionary Church, today and tomorrow. How we can be a synodal and missionary Church.

I think it is important to emphasise this: this is not an analysis or meditation, no! We are there to live the Church as God desires for our times, to proclaim the Gospel to the world, to our contemporaries. And this is beautiful.

The Church has always been synodal. St John Chrysostom says that Synod and

Church are synonymous... The path we are on, the involvement of the whole people of God, shows that the Holy Spirit is leading us in such a way as to put into practice what the Second Vatican Council, and in particular the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* affirmed.

So, at the centre of the next General Assembly is this way of being Church, and not individual topics?

CH: Yes, and I believe this is also a response to the sickness of our time. Because what characterises our post-modern or digital time, as we could call it, is an individualism that is becoming more pronounced every day. And we see that with this individualism humanity cannot subsist: we need community elements to survive.

Then there is the phenomenon of growing polarisation, in society and in the media, even in those Catholic-inspired outlets.

The people of God walking together is a response to these tendencies. Be careful here: it is not that we have 'invented' synodality to respond to these tendencies but, rather, it is the Holy Spirit who, in this period, has rekindled the desire for synodality already experienced by the first Christian communities. And it is a way to respond to the challenges we face, because otherwise humanity is in danger.

The importance of listening

The Pope often emphasises the importance of listening in a time when everyone talks and everyone is engaged in polemics, but few listen...

As a bishop, I see that when I listen, I sometimes change my mind, and that is good for me. My diocese is not large: my country has 660,000 inhabitants, but the bishop has an entourage of people who have more or less studied the same things, sometimes in the same places, with the same professors. They think in the same way. There is evidence that is not obvious to every member of the people of God. In that sense it is good to have this openness, to know how to listen.

And it is also good for people to go and listen to the bishops, because bishops have not only the role of listening but also the role of offering answers and being shepherds of the people.

We do not have a synodal parliamentarianism, where the majority decides and everyone follows. The synod is not a parliament. We want to discern the will of God, to let the Holy Spirit lead us.

How does this process take place?

It is a spiritual process; and that is why we have this spiritual conversation, or rather, this conversation in the Spirit: it is a way of listening and entering into dialogue, not with an attitude of opposition, in order to reach a common conclusion. It is clear that there is always a need for conversion in this process: sometimes it is the bishop who must convert, sometimes it is the laity who must also convert.

What does 'walking together' mean concretely?

When we walk, Christ is the centre. There are people on the right, on the left, there are those who walk further ahead, there are those who take longer and stay behind: it is normal when we walk together. We must learn that certain tensions in the Church are normal: it means the Church is close to the people, because not everyone thinks in the same way on all continents, on all issues. So it is important to listen with a lot of respect, also for different cultures, seeking God's will, to decide together the way forward.

Since there are several people who 'place' me on the left, let us say that I am walking on the left. If I take Christ as the centre and look at Him from the left, I do not see Him alone, I see Christ with the people walking on the right. I cannot see Christ without also seeing them: that means that those walking on the right are also part of my community. It means we have to walk together. I hope the same experience happens to those who are walking on the right side, those who go forward, those who go behind...

If Christ is truly the centre — and the Holy Spirit is the instrument and the guarantee that the Lord who died and rose again is at the centre — we are all missionary disciples.

Sometimes it seems, however, that we are busy or preoccupied with something else, with structures and strategies...

The Church cannot always be busy talking about its structures, its organisation. Wouldn't you find it strange to have a football club where you only talk about the rules without ever playing a game? There won't be many people to join that club and support the team! It is the same for the Church: our faith is lived by serving, in the Church and outside the Church. It is lived in service to God and in service to people.

What emerges from the eight final documents, those of the continents but also that of the digital synod? Individual topics or the synodal way of being Church?

The 'digital synod' was a beautiful experience... From all the documents, what emerges is the experience that was had, the joy of the people. In Europe, in Asia, they asked to be able to repeat the assemblies. I was worried about Europe, because we know there are big differences. But here, too, the people want to go forward, and we must go forward with our differences and walk together. We must look

at what is important for communion, for participation, for mission, and present it to the Synod of Bishops in October.

What should we expect from the Instrumentum laboris?

It will be a short text. It will help us in sharing, in participation, so that the members of the Synod can express themselves. Indeed, I hope that the members will also be free to say: let's throw it away, let's do something else, also because we have a two-year Synod ahead of us and there is no hurry. We must not arrive at an artificial compromise. We have time to truly understand the call that God makes to His Church in today's world.

How can the Synod address a person who will not be directly involved and has not had the opportunity to be so in the preparatory phase in the dioceses?

First of all, I would ask them to pray, because in order to do God's will we must pray a lot. We must have the support of the prayer of the whole Church.

And then I would ask them to try to live the Synod in their own hearts, in their communities — work or ecclesial — because then their prayer will not remain abstract.

I dream of great participation in prayer for the Synod. Cardinal Mario Grech said something I found beautiful: let us try to have the style of Jesus. When you see the Church, you must recognise Jesus. This is very important. Otherwise, how could we evangelise if people do not recognise Jesus in us?

And for that we need conversion. Synodality is not possible without conversion, and this conversion is required of everyone, right, left, and even centre. — *Vatican News*

To read the full interview, scan the QR code or go to: <https://bit.ly/42je7Eh>



Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, SJ, Archbishop of Luxembourg speaks at the exclusive press briefing on the composition of the XVI General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops as Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops looks on. (Synod.va)

Should children share their parents' faith?

This question is really a no-brainer. This was one of the many questions put forward to parents living in the United States of America, in a survey conducted by *Pew Research Centre* from September 20 to October 2, 2022. (*HERALD*, Feb 19, 2023). In the *Pew Research* report, it states that only 35 per cent of Catholic parents think it is very important that their children have similar religious beliefs as them, and 34 per cent say it is not at all important.

In Malaysia, many parents raise their children in the same faith as themselves, and perhaps their parents. They may not explicitly teach them the faith as how teachers teach in school, but the parents' actions, culture and beliefs will be seen, mimicked and perhaps practised by their children. The act of taking the child to church (or temple or place of worship) from a young age, despite them not understanding what is going on, is one such action the child will remember. The culture of celebrating religious festivities is another. The recitation of specific prayers or phrases during prayers could be another. All these actions by the parents, seen and heard by the child, will eventually rub onto the child, and will form the basis of their initial faith.

Of course when the child reaches teenage or young adulthood, he or she has the choice to embark on their own spiritual and religious journey. Factors that influence their decisions in life are plentiful, and will probably not be attributed to their parents' faith.

A more apt question to ask, in my opinion, is, "Should parents share their faith with their children?" In Malaysia, and perhaps much of Asia, this question is also a no-brainer. It should be an overwhelming YES. But, not so in the western world, where freedom of choice, individual rights and independence, is valued more than parental duties, culture and tradition. Of course this is a generalisation only, as the *Pew Research* report states



REMINISCING CHURCH

Richard Chia

that 35 per cent still hold on to this tradition and culture of passing on the faith and religion. It is the other 65 per cent that seem to think that pro-choice and individual rights of freedom is more important.

Our Catholic Church has in place many "mechanisms" or opportunities for parents to utilise to share their faith and religious beliefs with their children. At birth, a Catholic parent can avail themselves of the Sacrament of Baptism for their infant child, and at an early age, register the child for catechism. Of course this implies the parent has to faithfully send the child for classes, usually once a week for 1.5 to two hours, approximately 40 times or so a year, for a period of 10-11 years. This is no different from having to send their child to regular school. Can a parent say no, let the child decide later if he/she wants to study?

Even if the Catholic parent(s) seldom or never attend regular Sunday Mass, they have another opportunity. The Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) is an initiative of the Church, separate from catechism, for children aged eight and below. In several churches in Malaysia, CLOW is facilitated by a team of lay volunteers, typically parents of young children themselves, where at the start of the Mass, after the Opening Rites, the children are invited to gather at an adjacent hall or building. There, the young children will be introduced to the Liturgy of the Word for that weekend, presented in a manner they can understand easily. They are then brought back to the main Mass celebration at the end of the Liturgy of the Word, typically after the homily, to re-join their



(iStock/Fat Camera)

family for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

What this means is that the facilitators of CLOW have only 20-30 minutes (including time to settle the children down, move from church to the adjacent hall or room, and back) to impart the Gospel reading message for the week in bite-size, child-like manner. To do so calls for a clear understanding of the Gospel message and to impart the message in simple words and actions. Parents involved in CLOW have the opportunity to learn to summarise, simplify and share their faith with their children in a short burst of time. This skill will certainly enrich the parents, as well as bring their faith closer to their child.

Someone I know once said this, "Faith is something that cannot be taught. It has to be caught". Who else better for a child to catch their faith from than from their parents? Sadly, these days, many children obtain their knowledge from the Internet, social media and online apps. The role of parents in their faith life is minimal, except perhaps once a week when and if the family attends Sunday Mass together.

The Church also has another opportunity for parents to learn how to share their faith with their children. While catechism is going on, some parishes organise parents' group gatherings. It need not be formal classes with structures, topics or speakers for the day. Rather, this could be a support group where parents of similar aged chil-

dren come together during catechism days, to share and fellowship with each other. If there is a facilitator or coordinator, they may invite occasional speakers to speak on specific topics of interest. Or, it could just be a simple Bible sharing session, using the Gospel reading for the weekend. These informal sessions among parents could provide a channel where parents could learn from each other, develop their own spiritual faith, and perhaps learn a thing or two from each other about their faith. After all, this form of learning is less imposing on our time than having to register for a full course Bible study or Bible sharing session, a weekend formation or a spiritual retreat. Parents of school-going children are stretched for time, and seldom can commit to time away from the family.

Returning to the *Pew Research* report, it would certainly be very interesting to know the outcome if the study asks the question, "Should parents share their faith with their children?" Sharing our faith with our children is not merely saying "Do what I say, not what I do". Spirituality, faith and beliefs need to be seen alive and active in the family before it can effectively be passed down to the next generation.

Richard Chia has been actively involved in Church since young. He held full-time corporate jobs while serving in ministries and groups at various church levels for the past four decades.

Why I pray the Rosary with my kids even though they don't want to

"Okay, kids, let's pray the Rosary!" I call to the back seat, as we settle in for a long drive. Anytime we are in the car for more than 20 minutes, I figure it's the perfect time to pray a Rosary together.

My kids moan and groan. They would rather listen to music or an audiobook or just stare out the window. I understand how they feel, because I felt the same way as a child.

"I know you guys don't want to pray with me," I say with a smile. "I know because I felt the same way when I was little. My mom and dad would always pray the Rosary with us on long car rides, too. I never wanted to pray with them. I used to pretend I was asleep just so I wouldn't have to join in!"

My kids laugh at that. Then one of them pipes up, "Then why are you making us pray? We don't want to either!"

I have an answer for that too. "It's because I know some things now that I'm an adult that I didn't understand when I was your age," I explain. "I know what the Rosary will mean to you, someday."

The Rosary is a gift

There will come a day in your life, I tell them, when it feels like your entire world is crashing down around you. I wish I could prevent it from happening, but I can't. And I don't know what it is that will happen to



(NBVM/Sam)

make you feel that way. All I know is that suffering and sorrow are totally unavoidable realities in this mortal world, and one day, you will face them for yourself.

When that day comes, I may not be there to help you and support you. But somebody else will be there, somebody who loves you

even more than I do.

Our Mother in Heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, will be there with you. It has never been known that anyone who fled to her protection was left unaided. Her Rosary is a sign of that protection.

When that day comes, you may be left so

shaken that you cannot even find the words to voice a prayer to God. Your heart may cry out in agony, but your mind cannot give form to the words. The pain is too great to be voiced.

Then what a gift it will be to have the words of the Rosary, memorised, written forever on your heart. When your own words fail, the words of Scripture that make up the Our Fathers and Hail Marys will still be there and accessible to you.

"That's why I teach you these prayers," I say, "so you will always have them with you when you need them."

I know that the Rosary is a lifeline between heaven and earth, and that connection is one I hope they will hold tightly all their lives.

My kids stop grumbling and agree to pray with me, and I promise we can play their music when we're done.

"Besides, there's one other reason I'm making you pray the Rosary," I say. "I know you're going to thank me for it someday."

"How do you know that?" one of them asks, suspiciously.

"Because I'm glad my mom and dad made me pray the Rosary, even when I didn't want to," I say. "I'm thankful for it every day. And I know someday you will be, too." — **By Theresa Civantos Barber, Aleteia**

Mosques and churches take on plastic challenge

A solutions-oriented story about how mosques and churches in Indonesia are stepping up to address the country's plastic waste problem.

In Indonesia, a mosque has achieved two important targets — it has succeeded in nudging communities to manage waste and use the profit gained to support the mosque and congregation's activities.

Baitul Makmur Mosque in Bekasi, West Java, has accomplished these through the Gerakan Sedekah Sampah Indonesia (GRADASI), which translates to Indonesian Waste Charity Movement. This aims to reduce plastic pollution in communities by “donating” household waste in mosques.

“GRADASI aims to increase the environmental awareness of the congregation and visitors that waste is our shared responsibility, not only of the government or other organisation that manages waste,” said Suhapli, the coordinator for GRADASI in Baitul Makmur Mosque.

Data from Indonesia's National Waste Management Information System showed the country produced 19 million tons of waste in 2022, of which 18.2 per cent was plastic.

Plastic waste has caused many

problems in the archipelago such as unsightly landscapes, polluted marine ecosystems, and potentially, health issues due to the leaching of microplastic.

A religious approach like GRADASI can be successful in Indonesia, where an overwhelming majority of citizens — 87 per cent — identify themselves as Muslims. If implemented widely, this movement has a strong potential to change the mindset of 280 million Indonesians, and lead to wiser plastic use and better plastic waste management.



Children join in the GRADASI Akbar event in Baitul Makmur Mosque, Bekasi, Indonesia. (LiCas News Photo courtesy of the Secretariat of the National Coordination Team for Marine Debris Handling of Indonesia)

Gaining momentum

The movement was initiated in 2021 through the efforts of the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Secretariat for the National Coordination Team for Marine Debris Handling, United Nations Development Programme Indonesia, and the Indonesian Ulema Council.

Among the key messages of the initiative is how the concept of “Sadaqah” — or the voluntary giving of alms or charity — can be done not only by financial means but also by waste donation.

Under GRADASI, the congregation of mosques can donate waste such as glass, metal cans, paperboard, and of course, plastic, in drop boxes provided by mosques.

The collected waste is taken to recyclers where it is shredded into

smaller pieces that are then sold as a material to manufacture new plastic. This increases the circularity of plastic production — the more plastic waste is recovered, the less virgin plastic material is needed.

As of March 2023, 123 tons of waste have been collected from 34 mosques that reported their waste collection data through a monitoring system. Of this, 38 tons is plastic waste.

Two years since its initiation, GRADASI is gaining momentum as more houses of worship have joined the movement. Initially, there were only six mosques that implemented this programme. Currently, about 100 mosques all over Indonesia are carrying this out.

Suhapli admitted the response to the initiative was mixed in the beginning, with some of the con-

gregation worried this would make mosques dirty.

“We conveyed that the aim of GRADASI is to educate, keep our surroundings clean, and fund the activities of the mosque, and then people started to understand this movement's purpose,” Suhapli added.

In 2021 and 2022, Baitul Makmur conducted “GRADASI Akbar,” a major event where the mosque was open all day to collect waste. Unlike GRADASI, waste collected in GRADASI Akbar was sold to recyclers directly.

GRADASI started gaining widespread media coverage after those events, leading to more people visiting Baitul Makmur to learn about the initiative's model. This convinced the local community to support and join the movement.



Volunteers sort waste during the Kolekte Sampah event in Bogor Cathedral, Bogor, Indonesia. (LiCas News photo)

Helping Indonesia to meet targets

GRADASI supports the goals of the Indonesian government to reduce plastic waste. Indonesia aims to manage 70 per cent and reduce 30 per cent of its waste by 2025. The country also targets to slash 70 per cent of its marine plastic debris by 2025.

GRADASI also supports efforts to achieve the “Zero Waste 2050” target. The government aims to reduce plan-

et-warming greenhouse gas emissions in the domestic solid waste sub-sector by no longer sending solid waste to landfills by mid-century. This will contribute to Indonesia's commitment of reaching net zero emissions by 2060 or sooner.

Due to GRADASI's contributions, the government backs the programme. Sinta Saptarina Soemiarno,

director for waste reduction at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, said the government is helping spread the initiative to relevant institutions, religious organisations, and communities.

This is done to inspire thousands of mosques and houses of worship of other religions to participate in the replication of this movement.

Education, solar, and more: What the plastic sale revenue supports

In Baitul Makmur, the sale of plastic collected from the two GRADASI Akbar events reached around IDR 7 million (around US\$450). When combined with the sale of other waste such as metal and paper, the profit amounted to around IDR 45 million (RM13,317).

The money is used to pay the tuition of underprivileged “santris” (Islamic school students) and even to install solar street lights near the mosque.

In Al Muharram Mosque, Yogyakarta, the profit from GRADASI is used to help the less fortunate

and orphans.

Meanwhile, in Malang in East Java, GRADASI works with 98 schools, while in Jombang, another city in the province, GRADASI works with 92 “pesantren” (Islamic boarding schools). There, the programme supports students who cannot afford uniforms and school supplies.

Other houses of worship have also started implementing this programme. The Diocese of Bogor in West Java, along with governmental and private partners, launched in 2022 Kolekte Sampah. Its model is similar to GRADASI, but it is imple-

mented in churches.

Fr Yosef Segu, chairman of the Ecology Commission of Bogor Diocese, said that Kolekte Sampah is a form of ecological conversion stemming from *Laudato Si'*, the encyclical on the environment of Pope Francis.

“Through Kolekte Sampah, there has been real action from the Church towards the waste problem that is in the form of appeal, education, or study, and the congregation appreciates that.”

Fifteen out of the 28 churches under the Bogor Diocese are currently doing the initiative.

Roadblocks along the way

Despite the benefits, GRADASI has an inclusivity issue. Implementers will have to consider the movement's potential impacts on waste pickers, whose main source of income is household waste—a resource that GRADASI might begin monopolising on. To address this, waste pickers might be involved in the programme.

Other challenges include funding as mosques need money for dropboxes, meetings, and information and education campaigns, said Hayu Prabowo, chairman of the Environment & Natural Resources Body of the Indonesian Ulema Council.

Prabowo said the private sector should contribute to funding GRADASI as part of their Extended Producer Responsibility.

There is also a need to develop local champions who can lead communities in different regions in carrying out the programme, which is limited to Jakarta.

Meanwhile, the challenges for Kolekte Sampah are differ-

ent. According to Segu, there is a lack of recyclers in some areas and a lack of human resources in churches that can support the implementation of the movement.

To extensively replicate this movement all over Indonesia, it is crucial to utilise the network of the religious communities.

Prabowo said that apart from replicating this movement through provincial level offices, the Indonesian Ulema Council is also collaborating with Plastic Bank, an organisation that recycles plastic waste, to enhance the capacity of mosques in managing plastic waste.

The government, according to Sinta, can also provide support in the form of providing facilities and equipment such as segregated trash bins at places of worship. In addition, appreciation and official awards can also be given to houses of worship that actively participate in such environmental movements. —

By Ariel Adimahavira, LiCAS News

The motive behind the intent



WORD IN PROGRESS

Karen Michaela Tan

As we are well into the season of Easter, I'd like to know if the fasting, going vegetarian, or being pescetarian during Lent has changed your life in anyway? Not really? I guessed as much.

That's why I don't put much stead into that part of Lent. As an adult journalist and psychology student coming into the Catholic Church 21 years ago, I understood, and yet was fascinated by the yearly ritual of fasting (primarily), almsgiving and penance that preceded Easter. As an adult catechumen, I was taught that the reason we fasted was to put ourselves in solidarity with the poor, and those who did not enjoy food security.

However, having been a volunteer in the recovery stages of the Asian tsunami, living with the people of Aceh in Indonesia and documenting the struggle to emerge from one of the most major catastrophes to hit Asia, I learnt that physical hunger is nothing compared to the need to belong, to call somewhere home.

In Aceh, survivors of the tsunami were in a place that was both familiar and alien. The ground they trod was still Aceh in name, but landmarks, buildings, villages, homes had all been lost in the massive killer waves. Now, even 19 years on, thousands no longer live on what used to be their land. They have food, they do not go hungry, but they



remain displaced. The term 'displaced', in humanitarian terminology is to be removed from a usual or proper place due to circumstances beyond the control of the displaced.

The biggest objective of Lent is to take people out of their comfort zones, so that change can be allowed to happen (I will not say 'forced' because a Lenten change has an almost supernatural element to it, and many times, can only be brought about by divine help). Catholics who do not want to stay at the lowest common denominator of their faith need to use Lent as a means to get to another level of communion with God, the world, and themselves.

And that level does not have a 40-day time frame. Things given up, or undertaken in Lent, need to shine from Easter to

eternity. Any changes made at Lent needs to change the ways we eat, live, work, fellowship, worship and contemplate. Congratulating oneself for living on cabbage, chutney and white rice for 40 days is vain-glorious if that denial bears no fruit from Easter onwards.

The beauty of our God, however, is timelessness. There's no 'limited time' offer to God's call to live a life beyond what we already know. While many deathbed confessions and professions are heartfelt and true, I, for one, would rather live better while I have life ahead of me, than seek a nth hour pardon.

While I did not fast during Lent, I did gather a dozen friends who were, and I presented them with an idea. In a way to

going beyond just fasting, what if each person who was fasting donated the equivalent of the meal they would have eaten? On a loose honour system, each person put away the cost of their Subway meal, or *chap fun*, or banana leaf rice into a kitty, and at the end of Lent, we had around RM6,000 from the collection. Working with an accredited aid foundation, the money was channelled towards the safe hospital delivery of an undocumented person's first child, as well as diapers, and provision of food for the post-partum period for the mother.

The money finishing did not end the project. One of the twelve happened to tell her different Lenten story to a friend who was a gynaecologist. The good doctor, though not Catholic, who had hitherto not given thought to how migrant and refugee women brought children into the world without any medical help, has now offered to give gynaecological treatment and assistance, free of charge, for migrant women her friend brings to her.

This is what Lent is about: the birthing of changed behaviour that benefits more than just the penitent. This is why I love Hosea 6:6 so much. Not only at Lent, but each day I live, I hold the verse before me: For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

If we live like this, we live in perpetual communion with the needs of God's people, and we become the light and salt of the earth, as Christ intended us to be.

● **Karen-Michaela Tan** is a poet, writer and editor who seeks out God's presence in the human condition and looks for ways to put the Word of God into real action.

Identity: Identified, Navigating the challenges of life

When I was asked whether I wanted a copy of *Identity: Identified, Navigating the Challenges of Life*, I thought that the book would only add to the other four Bibles that I already have in my collection. The four Bibles, all different versions, were either given to me as a gift or purchased throughout my journey as a believer. However, since I was told that *Identity: Identified* presents the Word of God in an unconventional way, I decided to get a copy. I wanted to explore what it contains. The book turned out to be a good investment, and I am inspired to write a review of it.

First Impressions

At first glance, *Identity Identified* does not look like a Bible simply because the word 'Bible' is not stated anywhere on the cover like other regular Bibles, e.g. Good News Bible, Revised New Jerusalem Bible, The Catholic Youth Bible, etc. Instead, its full title, *Identity: Identified, Navigating the Challenges of Life* is printed in blue and black coloured fonts on its front cover.

On the back cover is written the following text:

"Do you ever wonder "Is all this God-stuff real? "Does God care when I am troubled?"

Living a life of faith in our modern world is challenging, especially when things don't go right for us. We often struggle and have doubts. Even St Mother Teresa of Calcutta had spiritual doubts, despair and loneliness, and it lasted most of her life.

If you have long or short periods of doubt, you are not alone!"

The text gives a glimpse on the contents of the Bible and its focus on using the Word



FAITHFULLY SPEAKING

Julie Lim Seet Yin

of God to help young people navigate through the challenges of life.

Background

The idea for the book was conceived during the Synod on Young People held in 2018. During the synod, Pope Francis spent a week with Catholic bishops from around the world discussing some of the painful and confusing issues that young people are commonly faced with.

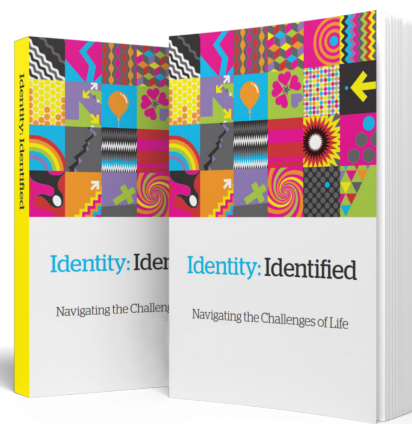
The book is a collaborative effort of three parties, i.e. Cardinal John Dew of the Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand, John Bergin, who is the liaison and consultant of the United Bible Societies in the Asia-Pacific region; and the Office of Evangelisation of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC).

It is published by Bible Society New Zealand on behalf of the Bible Society of Malaysia.

The book was launched on October 21, 2022 during the general conference of the FABC that was held in Bangkok, Thailand. In Malaysia, the book was officially launched on Jan 9, 2023 at the solemn declaration of the Minor Basilica of St Anne in Bukit Mertajam, Penang.

Content

Identity: Identified uses text of the second



edition of the Good News Translation. It only contains books from the New Testament, i.e. the four Gospels, the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Letters of Paul*. It would have been good to have all 73 books of the Catholic Bible in a single book, however that would make the book bulky and heavy to carry around.

There are three things that makes *Identity: Identified* unique. Firstly, the book contains 24 inserts that were designed to help the reader work through issues such as anxiety, loneliness, peer pressure and rejection. Even though these issues are usually experienced by young people, anyone for that matter could also be facing similar challenges. Therefore, the book appeals to everyone.

Secondly, the book contains hundreds of key passages of Scripture that are highlighted in yellow, similar to how you use a highlighter to highlight Bible passages or important notes in textbooks.

Thirdly, there are QR codes throughout the book which lead to video clips on

young people sharing their stories and how they cope with life. The clips are from the Bible Society of New Zealand's YouTube page, and were uploaded nine years ago. This shows that the challenges faced by young people have vaguely changed even after almost a decade has gone by.

Size and weight

The book's compact size of 12cm x 18cm makes it easy to slot into bags, good for reading whilst commuting, or whilst on long journeys.

Its 0.5kg weight may be heavy for some of us, especially if you have to lug it around for long periods of time. This is because the book is printed on thicker, high-quality paper — the type that does not bleed ink through when you highlight or write on it.

Where to purchase a copy

Identity: Identified would make a great gift for a young person; to help them understand the Word of God better, and more importantly, to let them know that God is always walking with us through challenges that we may be going through.

In Malaysia, the book can be purchased online through the Bible Society of Malaysia's website: <https://biblemalaysia.org/bookroom/identity-identified/>

● **Julie Lim Seet Yin** believes that a satisfied life measured by one's heart, mind and soul is better than a successful life measured by worldly yardsticks. She works for a Japanese bank and is responsible for its Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. She can be reached at: limseetyin@gmail.com



Fr Ron Rolheiser

Of innocence, purity and chastity

Inside the rite for Christian baptism there's a little ritual that is at once both touching and unrealistic. At one point in the baptismal rite, the child is clothed in a white garment symbolising innocence and purity. The priest or minister officiating says these words: "Receive this baptismal garment and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ."

As touching as it is to say those words to an innocent baby, one cannot help but think that unless this child dies in childhood, this is an impossible task. Our baptismal robes inevitably take some stains. Adult life sees to that. No one goes through life without losing the innocence of a baby.

But that being admitted, innocence still remains an ideal to be fostered and continually recovered. And that needs some defence today because innocence and its attendants, purity, and chastity, have fallen on hard times in a world that tends to value sophistication above all else and which generally sees innocence as naivete and prudery.

There's a long history to this. For centuries, the churches held up innocence, purity, and chastity as salient virtues within Christian discipleship and within life in general. However, from the 17th century, right down to our own time, major thinkers have tried to turn this on its head, suggesting that these (so-called) virtues are in fact the antithesis of virtue. For them, innocence and its counterparts, purity, and chastity, are fraudulent ideals, fantasies of the timid, symptoms of an unconscious hostility towards life. Nietzsche, for example, once wrote: "The Church combats the passions with excision, in every sense of the word: its practice, its cure, is castration." Freud suggested that in the ideals of innocence, purity, and chastity there is more than a trace of narcissism, frigid arrogance, and a fantasy of invulnerability. Ac-

cording to these (*Enlightenment*) thinkers, in idealising innocence, purity, and chastity, humankind has agreed to make itself unhappy in that the medicine we take to purify our souls lets in the moral toxins of self-righteousness, arrogance, and insensitivity, a mischief that makes lust look benign.

Our culture, minus some of the harsh rhetoric, essentially buys in to this. There are of course a few salient exceptions within some of our churches, but our cultural ethos pretty much identifies innocence, purity, and chastity with timidity, naivete, and fundamentalism.

Where to go with all of this? Well, one isn't quite sure where to look.

Conservatives, in their very makeup, tend to fear the breaking of taboos, not least those surrounding innocence, purity, and chastity. This has a healthy intent. This is J.D. Salinger (*The Catcher in the Rye*) looking at innocent young children playing and wishing they would never grow up but could always remain this innocent and joyful. Conservatives fear any kind of sophistication that destroys innocence. That's well intended but unrealistic. We need to grow up and with that comes complexity, sophistication, mess, and stains on the purity of our baptismal robes. God did not intend for us to be children forever playing in innocence in a rye field.

Liberals have a different genetic make-up, but struggle equally (just differently) with innocence, purity, and chastity. They are less fearful about breaking taboos. For them, boundaries are meant to be stretched and most times broken, and innocence is a phase you pass through and outgrow (like belief in Santa and the Easter Bunny). Indeed, for liberals, real self-actualisation begins with owning your complexity, recognising its goodness, and accepting that complexity and lost innocence are, in fact, what opens us up for deeper meaning. Experience brings

knowledge. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened, not closed. To the liberal eye, naivete is not a virtue, sophistication is. Innocence is judged as unrealistic, purity as sexual timidity, and chastity as religious fundamentalism.

Both these views, conservative and liberal, wave some healthy warning flags. The conservative flag of caution can help save us from many self-destructive behaviours, while the liberal flag inviting us to more fearlessness can help save us from much unhealthy timidity and naivete. However, each needs to learn from the other. Conservatives need to learn that God did not intend for us to make an idol out of the innocence and the naivete of a child. We are meant to learn, to grow, and to become sophisticated beyond first naivete. But liberals need to learn that sophistication, like innocence itself, is not an end in itself, but a phase through which one grows.

The renowned contemporary philosopher Paul Ricoeur hints at something beyond both. He asserts that growth to final maturity goes through stages. We are meant to move from the naivete of a child, through the lost innocence, messy and often cynical sophistication of adulthood, towards a "second naivete", a post-sophistication, a second innocence, a childlikeness which is not childish, a simplicity that is not simplistic.

In this second naivete, our baptismal robes will emerge again unstained —washed clean in the blood of a new innocence.

● **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.**

Use this saint's advice if you question the power of your prayers

When Sunday morning comes around, it's not always easy to jump out of bed to go to Mass. Equally, when you're about to go to sleep and you remember you haven't said your prayers, it's sometimes hard to feel motivated to commune with God.

In fact, this reluctance may leave you questioning whether it's actually worth praying, since you feel your heart isn't in it. Thankfully, St Josemaria Escriva has the answer.

The founder of Opus Dei answered a question that he was asked by a student while on a pastoral trip to Brazil in 1974. And her question is one that no doubt many Catholics would love to hear the answer to:

"Father, I'm a student, and people in my class often say that you should only go to Mass and pray when you feel like it, because doing things when you don't really want to is just hypocritical. What can I tell them? How can I make them see that they're mistaken?"

The Spanish priest, who was known for teaching that we are called to holiness by God, and this can be found in the sanctity of our everyday lives, had the perfect response that should reassure us all that all our prayers are welcomed by God:

"Listen, my daughter, I very seldom really feel like it.

We have to do things we don't feel like doing, and then, as they're based on sacrifice, and are difficult, they are much more fruitful and are worth much more, before God, they shine like stars in the night.

When you go to do some prayer and you don't feel like praying and you can't think of anything to say, put yourself in God's presence and tell Him:

"Lord," — as you've just told me — "I really don't feel like talking to You, I don't want to spend a minute on You, I feel as if I'm doing You a favour."

And you'll hear in the depths of your heart like a sudden shout, loving, but strong, a cry from God:

"I'm the one doing you a favour when I call you to

serve Me, when I call you to have a conversation with Me, when I tell you that I want to make friends with you, with your very soul."

And then, whether you feel like it or not, you'll go and spend time praying every day, at home, or in the street, or at the office, or in the university, or your studio, or on the highway, travelling, or in church, in front of the Tabernacle, because Christ Jesus is there, our Lady's Son, the Son of the Blessed ever-virgin Mary;

Jesus, Who was born in a stable, Who worked with St Joseph, and learned from him how to work, and then preached and suffered His Passion and was crucified for love, letting Himself be nailed to the wood of the Cross.

He is waiting for us there; because you and I know through faith that hidden in the sacramental species is Christ.

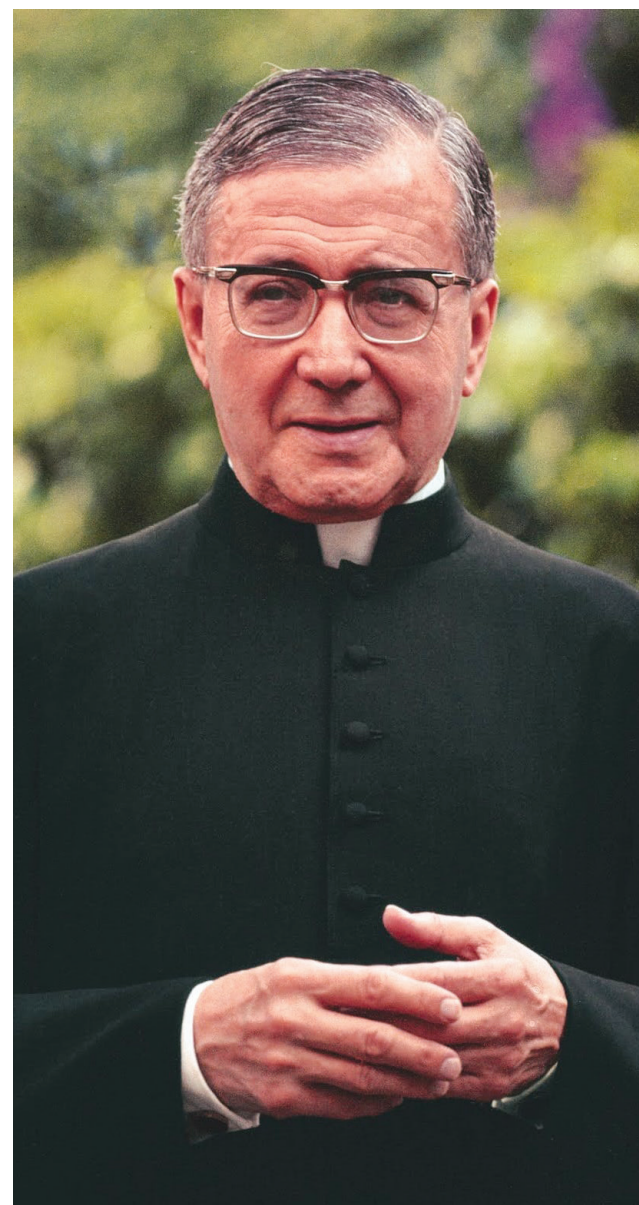
Christ is there: His Body, His Blood, His Soul and His Divinity, a prisoner of love.

We'll go there, not feeling like it, but knowing that He's listening to us, to tell Him that we don't feel like it — and we are already praying.

And you'll see how He speaks to you, how He moves you, how you end up learning how to converse, to chat with our Lord, and how the day you don't talk to God, whether you feel like it or not, that day you'll be hungry to pray, you'll feel the need to pray."

With the saint's wise words in mind, when you hear God's invitation to pray to Him, remember the comfort to be had by checking in with our Heavenly Father, seeking His advice, and offering up our gratitude.

In some respects, God can remind us of our earthly parents. He reminds us to do things we don't always want to do, but when we've done them, we always feel better for having listened — and even when we don't listen, He still loves us and is waiting for us to get there in the end! — **By Cerith Gardiner, Aleteia**



St. Josemaria Escriva

Little Catholics' Corner

Hello children,

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus tells the disciples that He is going away, but that the Father will send the Holy Spirit to help them.

We can't see Jesus on earth any more, because His body went into Heaven at the Ascension. We can't see the Holy Spirit either, because He doesn't have a body.

The Holy Spirit really is in the world, though. He is working in the Church and in people who obey and love God.

The Holy Spirit comes to us mainly through the sacraments.

We get grace, which is God's life in us, when we receive the sacraments. Jesus gave us the sacraments to help us on our way to Heaven.

Remember to wish your mumHappy Mother's Day!!

Love
Aunty Gwen



Colour this picture of Mother Mary and baby Jesus



An Acts of the Apostles Word Find

Today's first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles.

See if you can find all the words from the reading that are in CAPITALS in the puzzle.

Use the leftover letters to fill in the blanks at the end!

P	H	I	L	I	P	E	T	E	R
R	H	S	A	M	A	R	I	A	E
E	N	A	M	E	O	C	W	H	J
A	L	Y	M	S	S	O	O	A	O
C	H	R	I	S	T	M	R	N	I
H	O	P	R	A	Y	E	D	D	C
E	L	T	A	G	O	D	P	S	I
D	Y	H	C	E	I	J	O	H	N
O	W	E	L	C	O	M	I	N	G
W	R	R	E	C	E	I	V	E	D
N	I	E	S	P	I	R	I	T	T

PHILIP went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the CHRIST to them. The people united in WELCOMING the MESSAGE Philip PREACHED, either because they had heard of the MIRACLES he worked or because they saw them for themselves. THERE was great REJOICING in that town.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem heard that SAMARIA had accepted the WORD of GOD, they sent PETER and JOHN to them, and they went DOWN there, and PRAYED for the Samaritans to receive the HOLY SPIRIT, for as yet He had not COME down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the NAME of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid HANDS on them, and they RECEIVED the

Match the sacrament with the image

Baptism

Confession

Holy Communion

Confirmation

Marriage

Holy Orders

Anointing of the Sick



YOUTH

MAY 14, 2023

EXPOSURE IN THE COMMUNITY



TATAL, Keningau: The second Malaysian Catholic Youth Ministers' Committee (MCYMC) Initiative programme was held in the Diocese of Keningau's Retreat House (RRKK), April 20-26.

The first MCYMC Initiative programme took place at the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur at the end of February.

Thirty-six young people from the nine arch/dioceses attended the programme. They comprised members of the MCYMC, 'Friends of MCYMC' and parish representatives from the Diocese of Keningau.

The (MCYMC) Initiative programme was implemented at diocesan level through-

out Malaysia in preparation for the Malaysian Catholic Young People Assembly (MCYPA) in 2025 and then the Malaysian Pastoral Convention (MPC) in 2026.

For this second MCYMC Initiative, the theme chosen was *Journey to Emmaus*. The Catholic Youth Apostolate Commission of Keningau Diocese focused on 'Youth encounter and exposure with the community' which has three objectives namely:

1. To help youth grow in their faith and empower their personality
2. To integrate a spiritual life
3. To cultivate missionary, pastoral and community work in the youth

On the first day, Bishop Cornelius Piong celebrated the opening Mass and welcomed the delegates.

The delegates were sent to carry out mis-

sionary work in six selected villages. In the village, the youth worked on three initiatives with the villagers. The first initiative was to do charity work, the second to do good to others (Act of Kindness) and the third initiative was to reflect and share their experiences based on the activities they did.

After three days, they returned to RRKK Tatal for evaluation and reflection which was divided into three parts.

In the first part, they shared their *Joy, Junk* and *Jesus' Moments* during their time in the village.

In the second part, they presented their experience through arts such as acting, dancing, singing, painting, song and poetry.

In the third part, each group chose a Bible verse to describe their exposure and write a prayer as an expression of gratitude for

all their experiences. This prayer was then prayed together.

On the final day, they headed over to Holy Family Pilgrimage Centre, Nulu Sosopon, and in the evening a 'hybrid' MCYMC meeting was held.

The next MCYMC Initiative will be held in Miri Diocese in May.

Indeed, the MCYMC Initiatives programme brought great joy to them because they had the opportunity to live with their adoptive family in the village and carry out missionary and spiritual activities among the community.

Most of them shared that they would never forget this experience and are ready to share what they have been through here and become witnesses of Christ. — **By Roney Eming**

AIM HIGH IN LIFE POPE TELLS YOUNG HUNGARIANS

BUDAPEST, Hungary: "Invest in the great goals of life! Then, train through dialogue with Jesus, who is the best of coaches". In the last public event of the second day of his Apostolic Journey to Hungary, Pope Francis encouraged youth to "aim high" in their lives, overcoming their fears and stepping forward, always dialoguing with Jesus, their best friend and brother.

The event, attended by some 12,000 people, was introduced by the greeting speech of the Hungarian lead bishop for Youth Ministry, Bishop Ferenc Palánki, and the testimonies of four youth: Bertalan, Dóra, two high-school students, Tódor, a young Greek-Catholic, and Krisztina, a university student.

WHO DARES WINS

Taking his cue from the first testimony, Pope Francis reminded those gathered that "Jesus wants us to accomplish great things" in life and "never disparages our expectations".

"Jesus doesn't want us to be lazy 'couch potatoes'; He doesn't want us to be quiet and timid; instead, He wants us to be alive, active, ready to take charge. Jesus would agree with a proverb of yours, which I hope I pronounce well: Aki mer az nyer [Those who dare, win the prize]."

"But how do we win in life?", the Pope asked. "Just as in sports, there are two basic steps". The first step, he said, is "to aim high", putting our talents "to good use", investing them "in the great goals of life".

"We don't achieve greatness by treading upon others, but by serving others!"

DIALOGUING WITH JESUS

The second step is to train through dialogue with Jesus, "who is the best of coaches". Indeed, said the Pope, "Jesus encourages you, believes in you" and "constantly invites you to be a team player, never alone but with others: in the Church, in the community, sharing your experiences with others".

Another important element of this training, the Pope further remarked, is silence which was recalled in the testimony of Krisztina. In a world "bombarded with the message that we have to be fast, efficient and practically perfect, like machines", said the Pope, "we have to learn how to stop and fill our tanks, to recharge our batteries", without however, indulging "in moodiness or brood" over our troubles.

Silence, he remarked, "is not sitting glued to your cell phone, or on social media", but rather "the soil on which we cultivate good relationships". It "allows us to entrust to Jesus whatever we are feeling, (...), to share our difficulties, to remember our friends and to say a prayer for them".

Silence is therefore, "the door to prayer", which is a "dialogue with Jesus", with whom we freely share our vulnerability "without hiding or disguising anything".

"Prayer is not boring, it is an encounter with Christ"



THE LORD WANTS AUTHENTIC PEOPLE

Indeed, "the Gospel tells us that the Lord does not do great things with exceptional people, but with ordinary people. Those who count on their own abilities and are anxious always to look good before others", the Pope noted, "keep God away from their hearts".

"Jesus loves you the way you are"

HELPING THE WORLD TO LIVE IN PEACE BY SERVING OTHERS

Pope Francis then reflected on the words of Tódor, a young Greek-Catholic, who in his testimony noted that the zeal for the mission "can be blunted by living in security and comfort", while not far from us "war and suffering are daily realities".

"This," the Pope commented, "is the real challenge: to take control of our lives in order to help our world to live in peace", by gener-

ously and selflessly serving others, "as Jesus taught us".

FAITH STARTS WITH GIVING

Faith "starts with giving freely, with enthusiasm and generosity, overcoming our fears and stepping forward!", insisted Pope Francis at the end of his discourse, recalling the miracle of the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish recounted in John's Gospel in which a young man shares the little bread and fish he has with Jesus, to feed the multitude.

"We have to learn to leave things in the hands of Jesus."

"Each of you is precious to Jesus, and also to me!" the Pope concluded. "Remember that no one can take your place in the history of the Church and the world: no one can do what only you can do". — **By Lisa Zengari, Vatican News**

NEGERI SEMBILAN DISTRICT YOUTH CAMP

NILAI: The Negeri Sembilan District Youth Team organised a District Youth Camp with the theme *Lego- Let God!* April 28 to May 1 at the Church of St Theresa. It was aimed at bringing together youth from the district to get to know each other and grow together in spirit.

Fifty-two youth came from the four parishes — Church of St John Vianney, Tampin, Church of the Visitation, Seremban, St Aloysius Church, Mantin, and Church of St Theresa, Nilai. The priests from the district supported and contributed to the success of the camp.

Fr Christopher Soosaipillai, parish priest of St Theresa Nilai gave an introduction of the camp. After a briefing on the ground rules, the youth were divided into groups and a short ice-breaking game was played. Before calling it a day, they were asked to prepare a short presentation for the Talent Time that would be held the next day.

The second day started with Praise and Worship by the youth from Church of the Visitation, followed by a session by Klara Arokiasamy on *Social Graces and Etiquette*. In groups, they were asked to discuss some of the etiquette that they adopted in a mind map. One of the most common etiquettes they found the most relatable and touching is the element of welcoming everyone with open arms. As we live in an era where everyone feels the need to belong, our youth are selective of the people they mingle with, neglecting the ones who do not fit into certain criteria. The youth felt that it was something that they needed to work on to be able to do God's work effectively for everyone. The session ended with each group doing a short pledge on things they would work on within their community.

After lunch and Praise and Worship, Stephen Francis spoke on *Careers*. He shared his experiences in the workforce and the struggles he faced before finding his true passion. They then filled out a Multiple Intelligence test to see



which category their strengths lay. Based on each category, they were given examples of the different fields they could venture into. One other point highlighted was the types of struggles they could anticipate once they join the workforce. Though the struggles may get harder, they were reminded to always put their faith at the fore front and not give up.

After the sessions, the youth from St John Vianney organised a fun-filled Telematch which ended in a friendly water balloon fight.

The day continued with a Taize Recollection by ASAYO and Benediction by Fr Phillip Tay.

The day ended with a Talent Time. This session brought the crowd together as they cheered one another on.

The morning of the third day, they joined the parishioners for Mass. The camp continued after lunch with Praise and Worship by the youth from St Theresa, followed by a session by ASAYO on *Youth Today and Tomorrow*. Among many things shared was "Recognise, Interpret and Choose". This formula is to be used when they come across an issue or a problem that they think is not solvable at that time. They first need to recognise the problem and then interpret what is happening or what they feel at that time. Finally, they need to lay out their options and

choose the most appropriate one they can take. The session was especially fruitful as the input helped the youth make decisions without feeling overwhelmed by the choices they face. It allows them to think clearly when they do not know what to do or whom to seek out. Putting God at the centre, they can decide the best and healthiest option for them.

Then Fr Phillip and Soosai organised a Telematch. The groups were asked to find clues that would bring them to the place of the challenge where, once they completed the task, they would be given a few items that would be needed in the last station. At the last station, the groups had to start their own fire and cook eggs which needed to be plated as creatively as possible for judging.

After dinner, they were asked to gather in the church for a Taize session which was conducted by the youth from Church of the Visitation. Fr Michael Dass led the Benediction. Then, they gathered to listen to singer-songwriter Francesca Peter who spoke about her journey as a musician and what it was like to gain popularity whilst being strong in faith. She pointed out that the youth of today need to keep their faith alive and strong as currently there are many temptations they may fall into. She reminded them that they need to hold on to their faith and turn to God the Father in times of need as many are called but few are chosen.

On the final day, the session began with Praise and Worship by the youth from the Church of the Visitation and St Theresa, followed by a short reflection by the youth who said that they especially had fun and were glad that they could gather again after the pandemic.

The camp ended with everyone saying their goodbyes and some photo taking. All in all, the camp was a success as it brought the youth together not only in faith but also as a community. They left the camp no longer segregated according to their parish but as one. One in spirit and one in faith. — *By Susann Kavitha*

SHARINGS

"The agenda was relaxed and well-planned. The sessions were interesting and contained good information regarding etiquette and career shared by nice people. The games definitely brought out teamwork among everyone. Now the most important part is staying connected after the camp. Keeping this group of people together to continue being united. May this friendship be a support system for each other and we can be a group of people who help one another to keep on going in this race of life." — *David Selvam, Church of the Visitation, Seremban*

"I feel so happy, and a bunch of love to you guys and everyone for making this camp happen. Memories can't be bought but can be created. I wish next year or sooner, you guys will have a camp like this again and invite more parishioners from other churches to join us. I am definitely joining again if you guys are having a camp. We are family!" — *Jerry Jensen, Church of St Aloysius, Mantin*

"Through this camp, I have learned how to build trust and friendships with youth from all over Negeri Sembilan. I didn't just make friends, I made a family. I have learned the value of vulnerability, that sharing insecurities and fears with others is not weakness, but strength. I believe that it is these interactions and communication that help me see the world from a larger perspective and, at the same time, remind me of the old saying that every cloud has a silver lining. This camp opened my eyes to see and appreciate God's entire creation as something lovely and exquisite. And for me, thinking of these small and simple things, allows me not only to be happy but to remember that God's love is indeed present in the lives of everyone." — *Jennifer Junita Franklin, Church of St John Vianney, Tampin*

"My experience during the *LEGO - LET GOD* Camp was amazing. Firstly, I was shy of getting to know the youth from other parishes. However, in the end, we all got along well and became like brothers and sisters in Christ. Thanks to all the games and fellowship we had, we really bonded. I really loved it when we had the Taize Prayer. It was a new experience for me, and I really felt the comfort of Jesus during that session." — *Benedict Edmund Lucas, Church of St Theresa, Nilai*



First large-scale camp after the pandemic

KLANG: A confirmation camp themed *Sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit* was held for 53 students from the Church of Our Lady Of Lourdes at the IJ Sisters Convent, Port Dickson.

After the three years of pandemic, we were the first batch to have a Confirmation camp on this scale and we were blessed with great memories to carry into the future. As always, the Holy Spirit guided our journey and made it so meaningful.

Our first session by our parish priest, Fr Gregory Chan, was on the beach and. He gave us a brief reflection of the Sacraments we receive that play an important role and is a symbol of acceptance towards Christ. This was followed by a little physical activity based on *Laudato Si'*. We were supposed to bring Fr Gregory something that caught our eye and something that gave a meaning about life.

The following day's focus was on the Sacrament of Holy Orders and Holy Matrimony. Fr Gregory shared on Holy Orders, which included a self-reflection activity for all students.

Later on, the students had a session on Holy Matrimony by a couple from the parish. They



explained the meaning of Holy Matrimony and its sacredness.

After an afternoon filled with sessions of prayer and understanding, the students had their evening activities by the beach which included fun beach games, dancing and a one-minute group performance.

That evening, the students entered a spiritual path of reflection when Fr Gregory himself conducted the washing of the feet for all. Fr Greg kissed the feet of the students and welcomed them into the Church, just like the Prodigal Son was welcomed back home when he chose to re-

turn to his father.

A few minutes after the washing of the feet, the students went for Confession, which was a very spiritual experience.

Apart from the chatting and yapping, there were various situations where the students showed their responsibility and diligence. Dishes cleaned, so too was the hall.

The final day began with Mass animated by the students. Around 9.00am, they had an inter-religious session.

The next focus was about the PIHD Ministry which was a new topic for many. They explained

how the Church had this ministry to help all those who were less fortunate during the flood, the homeless and the sick.

The students left the convent around 1.30pm to OLL. Parents were waiting as earlier they had had a session with Fr Gregory.

It was a great experience before we could receive Christ all over again in Confirmation. God had blessed us all with the beautiful gift of free will and we had definitely taken the wisest decision to stay and journey with Him more. — *By Abigail Bernadette Alfred, Elvinc Lourdes and Timothy John*

MEMORIAM

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



1st Anniversary In Loving Memory of

Francis Xavier Masilamany

**From God: June 18, 1953
To God: May 9, 2022**

Dearest Francis,
we hold you close within our hearts and
there you shall remain.
To walk with us throughout our lives until
we meet again.

Sweet, the sound of the rolling waves, on the
lovely shore beyond, there we'll meet from
beyond our graves, in everlasting bond.

Fondly remembered by wife: Maria

Children: Kathleen, Matthew, Clara, Sandra, Son-in-law Preamaanand, siblings,
and a host of relatives and friends.

*Thank you for having been that joyful "Light-n-Sound" to family and friends.
The sound of your silence is truly deafening. Rest in peace Francis.*

10th Anniversary



Vincent Thomas s/o Jacob Sigamoney

(Toppan Moore @ IDT & Roy Trading Co)

15.04.1957 – 15.05.2013

*It has been 10 years that you've left us with your
Precious Memories, Enchanting Smile & Your Voice
uniquely expresses our Hearts and Minds.*

We Miss You Appa

Fondly Remembered by
Wife - Selvarani, Children & Grandchildren.

1st Memorial Anniversary



Doris J. Anthony Pillai (nee Vendargon)

25th October 1926 – 15th May 2022

*Our lives may change from day to day, but the love,
lessons and memories you left us, stay.*

From all your children,
(Youtube – Doris Anthony Pillai)

'Apostle to the dying' and hospice trailblazer, dies at age 90

NEW YORK: Dr Michael Brescia, *pic*, who prescribed love as an antidote to calls for assisted suicide, died at his home in Yorktown Heights, surrounded by immediate family the evening of April 19. He was 90.

Brescia "was a real apostle to the dying," said New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan in a video message April 24, the day of Brescia's funeral at St Patrick's Church in Yorktown Heights.

For more than 50 years, Brescia faithfully served thousands of patients at Calvary Hospital, an acute care specialty hospital in the New York borough of the Bronx devoted exclusively to providing palliative care to adult patients with advanced cancer and other life-limiting illnesses. He first joined the staff in 1962 as an attending physician and was appointed executive medical director in 1994, a position he held until December 2019.

Calvary in a statement said Brescia "is widely considered a co-founder of modern hospice and palliative care in America." The late doctor "always spoke of administering God's comfort." He embraced the staff and advised them all to "serve joyously and faithfully" and "always relieve physical and spiritual pain," the hospital said. "His favourite place was with a patient," it added.

He was predeceased by his wife, Monica. Among their six children there are three physicians, and one of their nine grandchildren is a doctor.

In the early days of his medical career, he was a pioneer in kidney dialysis. As a young physician with a degree from Georgetown University's School of Medicine in Washington, Brescia helped discover a way to help patients with kidney failure. The procedure allowed a network of veins to act like arteries, increasing the time a patient could receive dialysis until a match for a donor kidney could be found.

Named for him and his co-inventor, Dr James Cimino, the Cimino-Brescia Arterial Fistula is still used today and is said to have saved the lives of tens of millions of people.

Brescia saw medicine as an act of



giving away the gifts God had given him. Rather than taking a prestigious job at another hospital, Brescia went to work at the House of Calvary in the New York City borough of the Bronx, a then-obscure place run by the Dominican Sisters of the Sick Poor. It would soon become Calvary Hospital, where, as medical director, Brescia would oversee the implementation of a methodology to sustain the lives of terminal patients in peace and happiness until their natural death. Brescia's approach has been upheld as an answer to calls for physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia.

He transformed the New York institution, which was founded in 1899, into a "world leader in end-of-life medical care." Cimino also ended up at Calvary, as director of the Palliative Care Institute.

In his practice and in public advocacy against physician-assisted suicide on the state level and nationally, Brescia insisted that pain — even the worst kinds of pain from cancer — can always be taken care of with drugs. What can be more challenging — and which Calvary strove to address — was the suffering that comes from depression, fear, loneliness and a sense of abandonment. The spiritual and emotional response — and just human love — is just as important a part of medicine as the clinical response, Brescia always said.

Key to his approach were touching patients and holding the dying, and the faithful presence of caregivers — both to the patient and the family.

"I'm never going in a room with a syringe filled with death," he once told a gathering of doctors. "I'm going in and putting these people in my arms, immersing them in a pool of love." —

OSV News

† 2nd Anniversary † FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS †

*Beloved Husband of the late Rosamma Mathew,
much loved Dad, Dearly loved Father-in-Law,
Brother, Uncle and Friend to Many*



M. J. Mathew

**Born: 30th Sept 1933
Departed: 5th May 2021**

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

*"Truly, truly, I say to you,
an hour is coming, and is
now here, when the dead
will hear the voice of the
Son of God, and those who
hear will live."
(John 5:25)*

You have been
sorely missed!

*And he will swallow up
on this mountain
the covering that is cast
over all peoples,
the veil that is spread
over all nations.
He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away
tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people
he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.*

Isaiah 25:7-8

In Loving Memory of our Ironlady Our Beloved Amam



Happy

Mother's Day in Heaven



Rosalind Michael

We are sending our warm Mother's Day
wishes and love to you in heaven.....
our wishes that wherever you are, you are
always happy and smiling... We cannot thank you
enough for all the love you had always pampered
all of us with....

thank you for everything.
Queen of our heart, our Ironlady ♥!!!
♥ always,

Adelina Anne, Celestina Anne, Valentina
Anne, Eneng Heni, Sathi Kumar, Morgan Felix
Lukeisha Faustina, Zachary Eli, Killian Matthias,
Niel Sebastian, Preeshanthini, Shareeny,
Theresa, William and Vernon.

Casket Paradise & Funeral Care Sdn. Bhd. (311899-W)

PERSONAL ATTENTION AT ALL TIMES

- * Specialised In Christian Funerals
- * Exclusive Handmade And Polished Wooden Casket
- * Restoration And Cosmetology
- * British Trained & Qualified MBIE Embalming Service (Only One In Malaysia)
- * Member Of The European Association Of Embalmers
- * Private Chapel Of Rest And Coldroom Facilities
- * Economical, Budget Planned & 24 hrs Service

TEL: 03-2148 5776 / 2148 4855
FAX: 03-2143 1442

19B, Jalan Jalan Dewan Bahasa, Bukit Seputeh,
50460 Kuala Lumpur.

H/P: 012-333 4899 / 012-333 4646 / 019-777 5537

MJD prepares for MPC2026

KUALA LUMPUR: As the Malaysian Church prepares for the 2026 Malaysian Pastoral Convention, the Diocese of Malacca Johore (MJD) will be having a two-stage diocesan assembly this year.

Bishop Bernard Paul (*pic*) informed the faithful regarding the four areas of focus: Family, Church, Ecology, and Society as well as the mechanics of the assembly in a pastoral letter dated April 27.

The assembly will be structured around 'synodality,' which emphasises collaboration and listening to each other while discerning what the Holy Spirit is saying.

The MJD's Diocesan Pastoral Assembly (DPA) will be in two stages, first at the vicariate level on June 5 at three different locations. The diocesan level assembly will take place on October 14 at the Majodi Centre.

Four hundred delegates will be invited. They will include parish priests, assistant priests, religious pastoral workers, leaders from language groups, and youths, and they must participate in the vicariate and diocesan levels of the assembly. Bilingual or trilingual delegates are preferred, with English and Bahasa Malaysia being the main languages used.

"Let us celebrate our sense of togetherness while exercising our priesthood (com-



mon or ministerial) that we share in the one baptism of Christ.

He ends the letter by urging everyone to prepare themselves through prayer and works of mercy.

"Let our spiritual preparation remove the distractions that prevent us from listening to each other and being sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Please scan to read the letter in full (bit.ly/3p2iKUI).



A Journey of Faith

Catholic Pilgrimages

2023 Departures

All Inclusive	Hassle Free	No Hidden Cost
 <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">13D Holy Land</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Jordan - Holy Land - Egypt</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold;">10 Dec</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Fr V. A Michael</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">RM 11,900</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">/person</p>	 <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">15D Medjugorje + Eastern Europe</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Croatia - Bosnia - Hungary - Poland - Czech</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold;">7 Oct</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Fr Kevin Chundi</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">A journey of peace, prayer, conversion, and reconciliation</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">RM 13,900</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">/person</p>	 <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">16D Journey of St Paul</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Turkey - Greece</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold;">5 Oct</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Fr Bernard Hyacinth S.J</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Discover the footsteps and preachings of St Paul</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">RM 15,500</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">/person</p>
 <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">15D Our Lady of Knock</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Ireland - Scotland - UK</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold;">11 Sep</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Fr V. A Michael</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Visit the National Shrines of Ireland and United Kingdom</p> <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;">RM 15,900</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">/person</p>		

TRAVEL & TOURS SDN BHD
(237364 - TIKKKP8377)
No. 10 (1st Floor) Jalan 17/54,
46400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Email: tours@topaztravels.com

For more info:

+6 019-2113166

+6 019-6688471

www.topaztravels.com

Singapore cardinal takes possession of titular church in Rome

OSTIA, Italy: On April 23, Cardinal William Goh formally took possession of the Church of St Mary Queen of Peace in Ostia Lido (in Italian, Santa Maria Regina Pacis a Ostia Lido). It is the titular church assigned to him when he was created a cardinal by Pope Francis at the consistory on Aug 27, 2022.

Before the Mass, Cardinal Goh was welcomed at the entrance of the church by parish priest, Fr Giovanni Vincenzo Patanè, SAC, who presented him with a crucifix on behalf of the Pope. After venerating the crucifix with a kiss, Cardinal Goh sprinkled holy water on the faithful, and was then accompanied to the sanctuary to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The Papal Bull – the official Vatican document announcing



Cardinal Goh kisses the crucifix presented to him on behalf of the Pope by Fr Giovanni Vincenzo Patanè, SAC, the parish priest of Santa Maria Regina Pacis. (Catholic News SG Photo/Patrizi Fotografi)

the assignment of Santa Maria Regina Pacis to Cardinal Goh – was then read aloud in both Latin and Italian.

The Eucharistic celebration then proceeded as usual. In his homily, which he preached in Italian, Cardinal Goh reflected on Jesus' encounter with His disciples at Emmaus (Luke 24:13-25) and reminded all present that "faith in the Risen Lord comes about through fellowship and journeying with each other." He said we need to share our pains and our sorrows with each other since Jesus is Risen in our brothers and sisters who care for us.

He continued, "Christ appears to us when we journey together as a community, and speaks to us and through us. Pope Francis has emphasised that the Church must make the synodal process the way by which we help each other to grow in faith, discover the will of God, listen and support each other in our struggles, pains, and celebrate hope and joy together."

The parish of Santa Maria Regina Pacis is no stranger to the presence of non-Italian cardinals; before Cardinal Goh, they were under the patronage of an Australian, a Vietnamese and a Congolese respectively, but because the last rite of taking possession occurred in 2010, it was a new experience for many present.

Young parishioners were seen contributing to the event in various ways – from the altar servers (both male and female) to the Scouts who assisted with the offertory collection, as well as those who helped behind the scenes and were present with their



Pope Master of Ceremonies Msgr Marco Agostini (L), holds aloft the papal bull before reading it aloud. (Catholic News SG Photo/Dominic Nalpon)

families at Mass. The participation of these youth was not lost on Cardinal Goh, who said, "I was delighted to see the children so prayerful and receptive to the Lord. I feel hopeful that the faith is still present in the lives of the Italians, as the Mass was not just attended by elderly but by young parents, youth and children. I am also grateful for their warm hospitality and love for their priests and for me as their cardinal."

Alessandro Bottero, the vice-president of the parish council of Santa Maria Regina Pacis, put it beautifully: "This solemn and heartfelt moment of communion shows that no matter the distance or difference in languages, our Church is one, with every particular community living its way in the ser-

vice of the Lord. Liturgy and prayer keep us as one, knowing we have brothers and sisters in faith, and shepherds who guide us."

Cardinal Goh said that being assigned this titular church is of personal significance to him since his ministry and vocation arose from his devotion and love for Our Blessed Virgin. He prayed at the end of his homily, "Today, I commend all of you, and my ministry, to Our Lady Queen by the Sea in Ostia. May Our Blessed Mother be with you and your loved ones and your leaders so that you all will find strength in the storms of life, peace and courage for Our Lady Star of the Sea will guide us safely into the arms of our blessed Lord. Amen!" — **Catholic News SG (Catholic News SG Photo)**