

HERALD

The Catholic Weekly

Mission Statement

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

TERHAD

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So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.
2 Cor. 12:7-8



A spiritual journey with the bishop

■ P5



Do this in memory of me

■ P10



Grow in faith like a mustard seed

■ P16

Be stewards,

not predators

(photo/KL Archdiocesan Creation Justice Ministry)

VATICAN: Being obedient to God's commandment and spirit of love can radically change attitudes and actions to convert people from "predators" of natural resources to "tillers" of God's great garden of planet Earth, Pope Francis said.

"The earth is entrusted to our care, yet continues to belong to God," according to Judeo-Christian tradition, the Pope said in his message for the 2024 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

"To claim the right to possess and dominate nature, manipulating it at will, thus represents a form of idolatry, a Promethean version of humanity who, intoxicated by its technocratic power, arrogantly places the earth in a 'disgraced' condition, deprived of God's grace," he wrote in his message, which was released by the Vatican June 27.

The World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, which will be celebrated Sept 1, marks the start of the ecumenical Season of

Creation. The season concludes Oct 4, the feast day of St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology.

The theme for 2024 is *Hope and Act with Creation*, based on St Paul's Letter to the Romans (8:19-25), in which the apostle considers the destiny of the created world as it shares in the penalty of corruption brought about by sin, concluding that creation will share in the benefits of redemption and future glory that comprise the ultimate liberation of God's people.

"Why is there so much evil in the world? Why so much injustice, so many fratricidal wars that kill children, destroy cities, pollute the environment and leave mother earth violated and devastated?" the Pope said in his message.

"Creation itself, like humanity, was enslaved, albeit through no fault of its own, and finds itself unable to fulfil the lasting meaning and purpose for which it was designed," he wrote, reflecting on St Paul's letter. "It is subject to dissolution and death, aggravated by the human abuse of nature."

At the same time, St Paul saw that "the sal-

vation of humanity in Christ is a sure hope also for creation," which will be "set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God," he wrote.

"This conversion entails leaving behind the arrogance of those who want to exercise dominion over others and nature itself, reducing the latter to an object to be manipulated, and instead embracing the humility of those who care for others and for all of creation," he added.

"To hope and act with creation, then, means above all to join forces and to walk together with all men and women of goodwill," he said in his message.

It also means rethinking the meaning and limitations of human power, which has "made impressive and awesome technological advances," he wrote. However, "unchecked power creates monsters and then turns against us" and there is "an urgent need to set ethical limits on the development of artificial intelligence."

Rather than being used for domination over humanity and nature, technology must be "harnessed for the service of peace and inte-

gral development," he wrote.

The Pope's message said Christian theology and its understanding of hope play an important role in helping people of faith make the needed "ecological conversion."

With God as the loving Father, his Son as the "friend and redeemer of every person, and the Holy Spirit who guides our steps on the path of charity," he wrote, "obedience to the Spirit of love radically changes the way we think: from 'predators,' we become 'tillers' of the garden."

Presenting the Pope's message at a news conference at the Vatican June 27, Salesian nun Sr Alessandra Smerilli, secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, said "ecological conversion, like any conversion experience, is a spiritual event with visible, concrete repercussions."

That is why this year's message is "markedly theological," she said, so that it can "support this awareness that makes hope almost a miracle of God in us, but also around us" and help the faithful respond concretely to what is happening in the world. — **By Carol Glatz, CNS**

HERALD

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Schism, Excommunication and the Catholic Church

Schism has been in the news lately, with recent headlines involving Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former nuncio to the United States, being summoned to Rome to face formal charges of schism, and a community of Poor Clare nuns in Belorado, Spain, being excommunicated by their local bishop for incurring schism.

But what is schism?

Fundamentally, schism is a canonical crime. While the Catholic Church's Code of Canon Law is based on faith and morals, it is a legal system designed to ensure the good governance of the Church, creating an environment for the faithful to grow closer to God. Canon law distinguishes between sins and canonical crimes, with the latter being sins that more outwardly affect sacramental discipline or Church governance.

Canon 751 defines schism as "the withdrawal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or from communion with the members of the Church subject to him," contrasting it with heresy and apostasy. Heresy is the denial or doubt of a truth of faith after baptism, while apostasy is the total repudiation of the Christian faith.

Purity of Doctrinal Belief

An apostate abandons Christianity entirely, and a heretic denies essential truths of the faith. A schismatic, however, might uphold the Church's teachings but refuse to acknowledge the pope's authority or separate from the Church's institutional structure. Schism is not an accidental or weak act of faith but a deliberate one. Respectful disagreement or frustration with the pope's actions does not constitute schism, nor does sarcastically complaining about him, although inciting disobedience or hatred against Church authorities is a separate crime under Canon 1373.

Canonical crimes, unlike simple sins, can incur punishments from the Church. Relevant authorities, often the local bishop or the pope, may have discretion in imposing punishment, but some crimes carry automatic penalties.

'Medicinal Penalty'

Schism incurs a *latae sententiae* (automatic) excommunication under Canon 1364 §1. An excommunicated person cannot receive or celebrate sacraments, nor hold ecclesiastical office. Excommunication, misunderstood by many as being "kicked out" of the Church, is actually a "medicinal penalty" intended to

wake up the offender and encourage repentance.

'Expiatory Penalties'

In contrast, expiatory penalties restore community justice and are punitive, including fines, loss of office, dismissal from the clerical state, and other restrictions. Excommunication can result from a canonical trial or be automatic for serious crimes. *Latae sententiae* penalties may not be immediately obvious to others, necessitating declared versus undeclared excommunications. Declared excommunications are formally recognised, acknowledging the offender has excommunicated themselves.

As schism involves automatic excommunication, it can also warrant additional expiatory penalties if the scandal is severe. Even if the offender repents and is reconciled, an enduring penalty might address the scandal caused. These laws, while seemingly harsh, aim to protect the Church and ensure justice for all the faithful. Reflecting Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17:21, the Church's authority must address breaks in communion appropriately. —

By Jenna Marie Cooper, NCR

This is an abridged version. To read the full article go to: <https://bit.ly/3L9BrgV>



A prophet of the 21st century

Who is a prophet today?

In the vast expanse of human history, the role of the prophet has transcended epochs, woven into the very fabric of civilisations. Across ancient Jewish realms, those deemed worthy were entrusted with divine communication, bearing the sacred mantle to articulate God's message and enact His will. Yet, to perceive a prophet merely as a harbinger of future events would be to overlook the profound essence encapsulated by the Greek term "prophētēs" — one who speaks on behalf of another.

A prophet is a person who LISTENS and then SPEAKS.

Today, amidst the complexities of our modern era, the notion of prophecy finds resonance in the call for attentive listening and articulate expression. Pope Francis, in his profound wisdom, illuminates this path, urging Christians to embrace their prophetic calling, not as fortune-tellers, but as beacons guiding others to discern the Holy Spirit's presence in the tapestry of daily existence. For it is the prophet who, in the words of Mark Twain, grapples with the enigmatic task of prophesying, especially concerning the future, mirroring the challenges encountered by biblical prophets like Ezekiel.

Ezekiel, a towering figure in prophetic history, exemplifies unwavering fidelity to proclaiming God's message, regardless of its reception. His steadfast commitment beckons us to heed the clarion call of our



own baptismal vocation, to stand tall and listen intently, to confront our societal "rebels" with the unwavering truth of the Gospel, to embrace the arduousness of our mission with humility and fortitude.

The journey of prophecy demands not personal ambition, but a surrender to the divine Word, shaped by the sacred scriptures and the luminous examples of saints. Are we prepared to heed this call?

How do we proclaim God's word in a wounded, brittle and anxious world?

1. Stand up — Attentively listen to God. It's not about YOU, it's about GOD. The posture of standing up is an important element in being a prophet. He/she is

constantly on the move.

2. Face our rebels. Who are our rebels? Our own people ... our own selves ... as Ezekiel was sent to the Israelites, we are sent to our own people who have HEARD it but REBELLED. This is basic secularism — turning away from the Gospel.

3. Be ready. The mission is not easy. Just like St Paul's thorn in the flesh. It's a metaphor for Paul's opponents; suffering he experienced from his opponents who questioned and criticised him. The pain is constant. St John Chrysostom — the thorn is the suffering from different opponents.

4. It's not your idea. It's God's Word. So what shapes our speech, it's the Bible,

Reflecting on our Sunday Readings

with Sr Shanti Mariadass, FDCC

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

**Readings: Ezekiel 2: 2-5;
2 Corinthians 12: 7-10;**

Gospel: Mark 6: 1-6

the doctrines and saints that shapes our speeches.

5. We are not called to be successful but to be faithful. As St Mother Teresa aptly reminds us, success is not our pursuit, but rather faithfulness to the divine call.

In the same breath, we encounter Paul, a very interesting character, he boasts in his weakness and not in his power. Paul emerges as a paradoxical testament to the power found in weakness.

And yet, amidst the tapestry of prophetic legacy, it is Jesus who stands as the epitome of prophecy incarnate, the ultimate mouthpiece of divine revelation. As we journey towards the Jubilee year, the clarion call to reclaim our prophetic identity resonates deeply.

As baptised Catholics, we are called not merely to bear witness, but to embody the prophetic legacy of Christ Himself, to herald the Good News in a world yearning for healing and redemption. Indeed, who shall proclaim this message, if not us?



KUALA LUMPUR ARCHDIOCESE

Diary of Archbishop Julian Leow

July

- 13 Confirmation – Church of St Aloysius, Mantin & Church of St Theresa, Nilai
- 14 Confirmation – Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jalan Peel
- 14 Confirmation – Church of the Holy Family, Kajang
- 16-17 Clergy Monthly Recollection
- 18 Meeting – Archdiocesan Finance
- 20 Diaconate Ordination of Bro Jonathan Andrew Rao – Church of St Jude, Rawang
- 20 Confirmation – Church of Jesus Caritas, Kepong
- 21 Confirmation – Church of St Joseph, Sentul
- 21 Confirmation – Church of Visitation, Seremban
- 22 Meeting – AOHD Board

Month of July dedicated to the Bible

KUALA LUMPUR: The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei (CBCMSB) has announced the dedication of the month of July each year to the Bible. This decision was made during their January 2024 meeting, as stated by Bishop Richard Ng, President of the Regional Biblical Commission for the CBCMSB.

"The purpose of dedicating a whole month each year to the Bible is to promote reading, studying, and praying the Word of God," said Bishop Richard.

The prelate urged every parish community to organise Bible-based activities to emphasise the centrality of the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church. Suggested activities include owning a Bible, sponsoring a Bible for poor students, joining Bible seminars and courses, participating in Bible sharing groups, using a daily Bible reading guide, and organising Bible dramas, quizzes, storytelling, and colouring



activities for students and children.

"Like the sower in the Parable of the Sower (Lk 8:4-15), we need to sow the Word liberally and generously so that some seed may fall into fertile soil and yield a generous harvest," Bishop Richard emphasised. He concluded by seeking blessings for the July Bible Month initiative, hoping it would foster a deeper love for the Word of God.

Msgr James Gnanapiragasam,

Ecclesiastical Assistant for the Kuala Lumpur Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate (KLABA), echoed Bishop Richard's call for Bible-related activities. He noted that parishes have the flexibility to select one Sunday, one week, or the entire month for this purpose. Additionally, KLABA plans to host a Bible session focusing on Church, Communion, and Mission from biblical perspectives this month.



PENANG DIOCESE

Diary of Cardinal Sebastian Francis

July

- 8 Meeting – Penang Diocesan Pastoral Team (PDPT), 8.00pm Pusat Keuskupan Katolik, Penang
- 9 Meeting – Council of Priests (COP) at 10.00am
- 9-10 Clergy Monthly Recollection
- 11-17 Visitation of Relic of Padre Pio – National Shrine of St Padre Pio to various churches of Penang Diocese
- 18 Flag Raising & Mass for Volunteers at 6.30pm – Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam
- 19 Inter-denominational Christian Prayer Service at 12.00pm
- 19-20 Sybil Kathigasu Musical Opera – Segi University Hall, Kota Damansara, Kuala Lumpur



Malacca Johore Diocese News Update #179

F12
MJD NEWS
UPDATES

Greetings dear friends of MJD,

What's happening around us? Mass coral bleaching is threatening marine life here. Singapore President Tharman meets with Pope Francis. First ever Apple Store opens at TRX KL. BRICS currency, led by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, plans to challenge the USD. The athletes around the world are aspiring to compete at the Paris Olympics. Pope Francis reminded students: "Always hold true to your convictions.... and even if you are tempted to live a lukewarm faith because others torment you, hold true to your identity and stay strong like the Christian martyrs who were persecuted".

The AI is a powerful technological advancement which must be used ethically to serve humanity and its inherent risks must be made less harmful, says the Church.

"Turning Things Around" Times: Fear of others. Fear of takeover of country, religion and economy. Fear-mongering to remain in power and enslave the unthinking. Fear cripples. The *FMT* reports that the nation has lost its competitiveness, and dropped in economic performance, government efficiency and business efficiency. Can structural changes alone turn things around? Again a conversion or cultural revolution or renaissance is needed. Slogans are not enough. Where's the will, the enforcement and the vision-mission? The Church also sees the need for a spiritual conversion, an interior transformation, to achieve lasting effects. The Pope hopes that synodality may endure as a permanent mode of working within the Church, at all levels, permeating the hearts of all, pastors and faithful alike, until it becomes a shared "ecclesial style". Programmes and plans must be accompanied with a change of mind-sets. The people must come to the truth and the truth will set them free.

A Thought for the Week:

The Annoyed Turtle

Gloria Steinem, the famous feminist was on a geology field trip when she saw a large turtle heading towards the road. Fearful for the turtle, she tried to turn it around, pushing and shoving a now very angry turtle.

Her geology professor saw this and told her: She's coming from the river, exhausted from the climb, nearing the nesting spot. She is annoyed. Always ask the turtle!

A lesson from the professor: Always ask the turtle. Don't presume! Don't think that you know what is best for others. Always ask before you decide for them.

Announcements for the Week:

1. The MJD congratulates Msgr Peter Ng and Fr Thomas Chong who will be celebrating their *Silver Jubilee* (25 years as priests) and Fr Anthony Ng and Fr Lucas Ho will be *Golden Jubilarians* (50 years) this year. More info next.

2. The *Regional Pastoral Assembly 2024* or popularly known as PMPC 5 draws near. Delegates from the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, Diocese of Penang and MJD numbering 500 are expected at Majodi from August 25-27, 2024. It continues to be a time to listen, learn and be led by the Holy Spirit.

3. The *Mangrove Planting Project* initiated by Caritas-CJC MJD with the Nature Society, will see 49 participants sponsoring and planting 450 saplings at Kukup.

4. *Katholikos* on July 6 and 7 is gathering of the of the parish young people leaders and advisors of the Diocese of Malacca Johore for a time of formation and commissioning. Here the young people are gathered, formed and commissioned as we launch the "Road to the MJDYPD 2024" to begin the journey of the young people towards the Malacca Johore

Diocese Young People Day 2024 on November 22-23, the weekend of the Solemnity of Christ the King.

This week's QnQ? Q asks:

Have you heard about the 3 I's for good leaders?

Warren Buffet talks about INTELLIGENCE, INITIATIVE and INTEGRITY for leaders of people. He says that we look for intelligence, we look for initiative or energy, and we look for integrity. And if they don't have the latter ie integrity, the first two will kill us. To have a lazy and dumb leader would be better than employing one without integrity. Senior leaders have encountered managers without integrity, who turn out to be self-centred, and who manipulate others for personal gain, fail to be team players and do not serve the organisation's mission. What do we look for in our team, ministry, church or political leaders?

Pope Francis added: It is now, more than ever, *necessary that all leaders be outstanding for honesty, integrity and commitment to the common good.* Thus will they be able to marshal the moral resources needed to face the demands of the present, and to pass on to coming generations a society of authentic justice, solidarity and peace.

See the Holy Spirit @ work: Trying to do the Lord's work on your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting, and tedious of all work. But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you. — *Corrie Ten Boom*

Something to tickle you: "It is not the trials in your life that develop or destroy you, but rather, your response to those hardships." — *Charles Stanley*

Bishop Bernard Paul

Bishop Bernard Paul



MALACCA JOHORE DIOCESE

Diary of Bishop Bernard Paul

July

- 6-10 Deliverance & Healing Programme II – MAJODI Centre
- 12 MAJODI Centre Reporting Meeting
- 13-14 CARITAS MJD General Assembly – MAJODI Centre
- 15-18 MJD Clergy Outing

Beach clean-up fosters environmental awareness and action

KUALA LUMPUR: On June 3, a public holiday, the KL Archdiocesan Creation Justice Ministry (CJM) organised a beach clean-up at Bagan Lalang beach in Sepang. A diverse group of 90 volunteers, ranging in age from 4 to 76, gathered to care for the environment in alignment with the theme of this year's World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation – Hope and Act with Creation.

A total of 54.5kg of plastic; 0.5kg of cigarette butts; 1.55kg of glass fragments; 1.12kg of metal scraps; 11kg of cloth; 5.78kg of paper; 0.4kg of e-waste, and 25kg of general waste were collected and meticulously sorted, and weighed. All collected items were destined for recycling or proper disposal.

During the clean-up, volunteers discovered seashells colonies growing on bottles amidst the rocks, highlighting the resilience of nature.



Young people doing their part in caring for the environment.

The event served as an educational tool for young volunteers and beachgoers, emphasising the importance of responsible waste management. Children eagerly participated by depositing their gathered trash into garbage bags, learning first-hand about ocean pollution and its impact on marine life.

Following a zero-waste meal, Fr Andrew Manickam OFM Cap, the Ecclesiastical Assistant for CJM, expressed gratitude to all attendees for their commitment to environmental stewardship.

CJM also addresses the pollution caused by Used Cooking Oil (UCO), urging the public to bring their UCO for proper disposal at the Church of Our Lady of Fatima, Brickfields on July 7. For more information, please contact 017-328-6199.

Additionally, an inaugural 'Laudato si' Green Hunt' is scheduled for July 8 in Brickfields, featuring environmental education, clue-solving, and community-building activities. Contact Melina at +6011-2328-9008 for participation details. — *By Marilyn Menezes Simon*

Do we really know the Good Shepherd?



By Percey Chiew

PETALING JAYA: A recent talk by Martin Jalleh, at the Church of St Ignatius (SIC), left a deep impact on attendees, many of whom expressed heartfelt appreciation for the insights shared.

"I did not expect such an incredibly informative session! With each slide shared, I gained new insights on Psalm 23 and the parable of the Good Shepherd. The in-depth talk was a truly amazing, awesome, and awe-inspiring awakening for me!" exclaimed Amy Kuan, a parishioner of the Church of St Francis Xavier, Petaling Jaya.

Amy's feedback echoed the sentiments of the 60 participants, which included cancer survivors, caregivers, and those eager to deepen their understanding of the Good Shepherd through Psalm 23. Martin Jalleh, in his talk entitled "Pressing on in Faith, Fortitude & Freedom with the Good Shepherd," shared about the meaning of Psalm 23, a psalm often associated with funerals and viewed primarily as a source of comfort for the bereaved.

"Yet, Psalm 23 is more about life rather than death," Martin explained, quoting a Bible scholar who noted, "There is a comforting promise at the moment of death, but it's also a brilliant inspiration in the face of life's troubles."

Martin emphasised that the powerful image of God as a life-giving shepherd continued with Jesus, but this is often overlooked since

Martin Jalleh (front row, fifth from left) with the participants who attended his talk on 'Pressing on in Faith, Fortitude & Freedom with the Good Shepherd' at the Church of St Ignatius.

the Gospel passage is read mainly on Good Shepherd Sunday, which focuses on priestly and religious vocations. He elaborated on the characteristics of God as the Shepherd in Psalm 23 and the Good Shepherd in John 10:11-15, highlighting the strength and hope offered to those living with cancer, caregivers, and those facing various struggles.

"The Shepherd, which King David describes, and the Good Shepherd Jesus proclaims of Himself are personal, provides immeasurably, is always present, peace-giving, leads the way, protects, prepares a table for us and promises us abundant and eternal life," Martin shared.

Discussing the Divine Shepherd as a Provider, Martin explained that the Bible verse "I shall not want" can be translated as "I lack nothing" or "I shall not be incomplete, insufficient, or empty," a declaration of complete trust. Participants were particularly moved by the idea that the Shepherd not only provides but is accountable for the sheep, highlighting Jesus' words, "It is the Will of Him who sent me that I should lose nothing of what He has given Me."

Martin drew attention to Psalm 23:2, emphasising that "He restores my soul" means "He causes my life to return," "He quickens me," "He causes me to live," referring to those who are exhausted and despairing. Participants shared how they could relate to feeling wary, weary, weak, worried, wanting, worn

out, wounded, and how God restored life and vigour in them, reigniting new excitement, effort, hope, and joy.

Martin also discussed the concept of "cast sheep" — sheep that accidentally roll onto their backs and cannot regain their footing, likely to die unless the shepherd intervenes. "Many people, having gone through much pain and suffering, find it hard to get back up. They lie 'helplessly on their back.' They need the Good Shepherd to restore their footing and give them the peace the world cannot give," Martin said.

Participants were amazed to learn that the central point of Psalm 23 is "for you are with me" (verse 4). In the original Hebrew, there are 26 words before and after this phrase, a literary device by King David to emphasise God's saving presence as the focal point of Psalm 23. Another name for the Good Shepherd is "Emmanuel" — "God with us."

Throughout the talk, Martin presented many other thought-provoking Biblical reflections, offering spiritual encouragement, motivation, solace, and strength to the participants. He concluded with Jesus' words and an accompanying question: "I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me" (John 10:14). Do I really know the Good Shepherd, as He knows me?

The talk was organised by the Cancer Support Group (CSG) of SIC, in collaboration with the SIC Family-Life Ministry.

Mantin parish celebrates feast day with shrine inauguration

MANTIN, Negeri Sembilan: The Church of St Aloysius celebrated its 124th anniversary on June 21 with a feast day Mass celebrated by Fr Paulino Miranda who briefly served as an assistant priest at the parish following his ordination in August 1995.

In his multilingual homily, Fr Paulino emphasised the importance of a Christ-centred life and shared memories from his early days

as a priest. He also spoke about St Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron saint of youth, recounting his touching final letter to his mother where he expressed his readiness to meet Jesus.

A significant highlight of the celebration was the inauguration of the Shrine of St Aloysius by Archbishop Julian Leow on June 22. The shrine, designed to offer peace and tranquility, welcomes all visitors to the church grounds.

The seven-station candlelight procession of the Blessed Eucharist took place after Mass, beginning at the altar with the cross-bearer leading, followed by altar servers bearing candles and incense, hospitality ministers, flower girls with lit crowns, Archbishop Julian, priests, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the choir, and, finally, the congregation.

The procession moved across the vast church grounds, where the Blessed Sacrament was passed to senior citizens, Form 4 and Form 5 students, youth in Kadazan, Orang Asli, Chinese, and Indian attire, the Legion of Mary, and the Charismatic Group, all executing their roles brilliantly.

The final day of the celebration saw the church filled for a Tamil Mass with an 'Anjali' adoration to the bread and wine, followed by a multilingual Mass celebrated by Fr Richard Anthony S.J.



Archbishop Julian Leow incensing the shrine of St Aloysius during the inauguration ceremony, June 22, 2024

The parish's Maris Stella choir, lending their voices to the feast days, also held a fund-raising sale to support their future ministry work. Each Mass concluded with a fellowship meal that everyone enjoyed.

This year's theme, "Communion, Participation, and Mission with St Aloysius," was a guiding principle throughout the celebrations, emphasising the community's commitment to these values. — *By Selva Manogary & Marie Ashley Andrew*

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vatican Necropolis Sts. Peter's & Paul's Basilica St. John Lateran & Holy Stairs Jewish town of Trastevere Sts. Francis & Clare's Basilica Incorruptible body of Ven. John of Jesus Mary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gyeongbokgung Palace Myeongdong Cathedral Seosomun Historic Park Catholic Martyrs' Shrine Cheonjinam Holy Site Shrine of Solmoe Mirinae Shrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nam Dinh Province Bui Chu Cathedral Hue Imperial City Our Lady of La Vang Shrine Da Nang Cathedral Hoi An Old Town

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A spiritual journey with the bishop

By Aidan Laurence

CHA'AH, Johor: Amidst a world often bustling with distractions and anxieties, the Church of St Anthony transformed into a haven of spiritual renewal during the "Journey with Bishop" event held from June 13 to 15. Led by Bishop Bernard Paul, this three-day retreat prepared attendees for the Feast Day of St Anthony, observed on June 16.

Integral to the parish feast day week, the retreat centred on themes of *Review*, *Repent*, and *Renew*, offering participants an opportunity to deepen their faith and experience a spiritual awakening.

The festivities commenced on June 11 with a ceremonial raising of the flag and prayers to St Anthony, followed by Mass. The atmosphere of reverence continued on June 12 with a solemn Mass and Eucharistic Adoration led by Fr Adrian Francis, fostering a reflective ambiance in anticipation of the upcoming spiritual retreat.

On June 13, the opening day of the retreat, Bishop Bernard Paul guided participants in a comprehensive review of their faith journey, urging them to consider faith as a dynamic force that integrates head, heart, spirit, and body. He described faith as a dynamic force that animates every aspect of life, beyond mere beliefs. Participants were prompted to reflect on how their faith shapes their thoughts, emotions, actions, and spiritual well-being. The bishop emphasised the responsibility of reflecting God's image by bearing fruit in their lives, foster-

ing personal growth and benefiting their community. Additionally, he reaffirmed the role of priests, prophets, and shepherds entrusted to all baptised individuals, urging them to lead, teach, and care for others as part of their sacred duty.

The following day, the focus of the retreat shifted to *Repentance*. Bishop Bernard used the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11) as a cornerstone for exploring themes of repentance and reconciliation. Activities for the day included a symbolic penitential walk, where participants moved from the altar to the church entrance, symbolising a journey back to God's embrace. They engaged in acts of purification by washing their feet, hands, and faces, symbolically cleansing their souls. Each participant also offered incense, symbolising prayers and repentance. This immersive experience provided a tangible opportunity to confront and release sins, fostering a renewed sense of humility and openness to God's mercy.

On the third day of the retreat, the theme of *Renewal* took centre stage. Drawing inspiration from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, Bishop Bernard emphasised the transformative power of the Holy Spirit to rejuvenate and inspire. He reminded participants of their mission to love and serve, likening it to the responsibility of feeding Jesus' sheep. The day culminated in a profound meditation on the Eucharist, focusing on Jesus' actions of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving the bread, symbolising spiritual renewal through the Holy Spirit.

The retreat concluded with a renewal of



Bishop Bernard Paul conducted a three-day retreat at the Church of St Anthony, June 13 to 15.

baptismal vows, with Bishop Bernard blessing the parishioners with holy water and anointing them with Holy Chrism, symbolising the reaffirmation of their faith.

The following day, the feast day Mass was attended by over 160 people, with Bishop Bernard emphasising how God works differently in each person's life. Fr Adrian Francis blessed the St Anthony's Bread which was distributed after Mass. The day also honoured Father's Day, with Fr Paul Wong blessing the fathers with holy water. The celebrations which drew pilgrims from Kuala Lumpur, Segamat, Labis, Batu Pahat, Kluang, Kulai, Johor Bahru, and Singapore concluded with a dinner.



Participants engaging in the acts of purification.

Learning to progress from grief to joy

PETALING JAYA: The seventh gathering of the Bereavement Support Group (BSG) was held at La Salle Hall, focusing on the theme "From Grief to Joy." Attendees, as usual, offered mutual support through personal stories and strategies for moving forward.

This session introduced a structured approach with specific questions to guide discussions, aiming to enhance clarity and depth amidst diverse narratives. Questions included reflecting on joyful moments since the loss, newfound values post-loss, strategies for honouring legacies while progressing, lessons learned from grief, and personal identity transformations. Participants shared diverse experiences, highlighting celebrations like graduations and family gatherings as sources of solace and joy.

One member found comfort in caring for her late husband's cherished plants and rescued animals, while another embraced expressing love more openly after her husband's passing. Another member, inspired by her husband's hospitality, recently hosted a rosary gathering after years of hesitation, finding solace in continuing his legacy.

Reflecting on the session, participants expressed solidarity in shared experiences and emotions, finding inclusivity and understanding within the group. A new member appreciated

the diverse viewpoints shared, emphasising the group's role as a pillar of strength amidst life's challenges.

Facing grief has taught our members the importance of navigating it in their own way and allowing themselves the time needed to mourn their beloved husbands.

During the session, one member illustrated the *Yin* and *Yang* symbol, reflecting the co-existence of grief and joy throughout life. She shared how amidst sadness, moments of joy emerge from cherished memories with their husbands. Conversely, even in moments of joy, the profound loss and its accompanying triggers are never forgotten.

"For me, the symbol represents finding joy and peace alongside grief," she explained. "While life can be painful, living in faith brings a sense of comfort and peace. It's about embracing both emotions."

The gathering closed with a prayer and fellowship over meals from PJ La Salle café, underscoring the supportive community fostered by the BSG.

The BSG extends an invitation to those facing loss to join their supportive community, emphasising the importance of shared understanding and companionship in navigating grief's journey. — *Women Ministry, AOHD*



The participants and facilitators of the seventh Bereavement Support Group gathering.

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel



All are invited to join the Carmelite Sisters
At the Eucharistic celebration in honour of
Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Date: 16th July, 2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Carmelite Monastery of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
Lot PT8061, Kg Pasir, Jalan Rasah
70300 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan
West Malaysia.

Promoting mission and new evangelisation

KUALALUMPUR: Archbishop Julian Leow recently appointed Fr Edwin Peter as the Ecclesiastical Assistant for the Archdiocesan Mission of New Evangelisation for Christ (AMNEC). This organisation, operating at the archdiocesan level, is dedicated to promoting a sense of mission and new evangelisation among the Catholic faithful of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur.

AMNEC is led by Andrew and Veronica Lim from the Church of the Holy Family, Kajang, and includes a core team of 12 lay members passionate about the mission of new evangelisation. Andrew, quoting St. Theresa of Calcutta, stated, "To evangelise means you have Jesus in your heart, and then you carry Him to the heart of others."

Currently in its formative stages, AMNEC is focused on strengthening its team and defining its vision and mission as it embraces the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). At the recent clergy recollection, Andrew presented an overview of AMNEC's goals, emphasising the need to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to others in new and creative ways. This involves creating effective evangelisers by renewing their relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

AMNEC's primary roles and responsibilities include:

- Becoming a one-stop referral point for new evangelisation in the archdiocese.
- Equipping evangelisers for mission to achieve a missionary archdiocese.

- Organising activities to deepen discipleship and evangelisation.

- Collaborating with and offering practical support to various parishes.

- Producing materials to support and promote AMNEC activities.

Planned activities aim to help Catholics experience the "GO" factor of discipleship, encouraging them to enhance their faith and become missionary disciples of Christ. Future initiatives include creating Parish Mission of New Evangelisation for Christ (PMNEC) teams in various parishes to facilitate evangelisation efforts.

AMNEC is also learning from and supporting groups already engaged in evangelisation, such as ALPHA in the

Catholic Context and the Cornerstone Disciples of young adults at the Church of the Divine Mercy, Shah Alam. Working under the Commission for Dialogue and Evangelisation, AMNEC collaborates with the Archdiocesan Ministry of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs (AMEIA) and the Pontifical Mission Societies.

In summary, AMNEC is dedicated to spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through innovative approaches, fostering a culture of evangelisation, and equipping Catholics to be missionary disciples. By focusing on education, support, and collaboration, AMNEC aims to engage the entire Catholic community in the mission of evangelisation.

Enhancing community spaces and preserving historic structures

Church of the Sacred Heart, Kampar

The Church of the Sacred Heart has recently upgraded its facilities, providing a fresh space for the community. The newly renovated double-storey building, known as Mercy Hall, was officially opened last December following extensive renovations.

Originally an old building used by students and left unoccupied for several years, the hall now serves parish functions and formations, accommodating up to 150 people. The upstairs area is dedicated to classrooms for catechism classes.

Parish priest, Fr Simon Anand, announced the completion of another project, Mercy Kitchen (*pic below*), a single-storey block lo-

cated parallel to Divine Hall. Completed in June 2024 after extensive renovation and re-building, the kitchen is fully equipped, aimed at providing a space for parishioners, especially the youth, to gather and socialise after Mass.

Fr Simon added that a breakfast sale will be held at Mercy Kitchen one Sunday each month. In addition to the kitchen and fellowship room, new toilets have been constructed for the parishioners, along with two additional classrooms and storage rooms.

The two blocks are connected by pathways, collectively named Mercy Centre, offering a cohesive and convenient area for parish activities.



Above: Exterior of Divine Hall; Below: The interior of Divine Hall.



Under the guidance of parish priest Fr David Lourdes, the Church of St Anthony in Perak's fourth largest town has completed a significant renovation project aimed at restoring and repairing the interior of the historic church building. The project, initiated at the end of April this year, addressed various defects and damages accumulated over the years. Founded in 1894, the current church building dates back to 1923.

The renovation included comprehensive rewiring, new lighting installations, the addition of CCTV, interior repainting, and repairs to damaged windows and doors, along with plastering work. A lightning arrester

Church of St Anthony, Teluk Intan

was also installed on the exterior, and the building was repainted after removing parasitic or epiphyte plants from the walls.

Catherine Wong, a member of the Parish Finance Committee, detailed the project's costs to parishioners on June 15. The total cost amounted to RM131,121, excluding the exterior painting, which was generously funded by a donor. The parish received RM107,788 in donations, including RM20,188 from parishioners, with each family contributing RM100. The remaining shortfall of RM28,333 is still open for contributions, and those interested in helping

are encouraged to contact the parish office. Catherine expressed gratitude to all donors for their generosity.

During the renovation, all Masses were celebrated in the parish hall, with the work completed in early June, just in time for the parish's 130th annual feast day celebrations. The church building now boasts a brilliant transformation, preserving its original architectural integrity and enhancing its sacred space. This renovation is expected to improve worship participation, foster a sense of community, and make everyone feel more welcome. — **By Bernard Anthony**



The sanctuary



New lighting installations in the Church.

SFA leaders attend transformative “Rebuild My Church” retreat

By Priangka Elizabeth

CHERAS: The leaders and parish priest of the Church of St Francis of Assisi (SFA) gathered at the Methodist Centre in Port Dickson from June 21 to 23 for a transformative retreat.

Led by Fr Michael Raymond, OFM Cap, the retreat aimed to fortify the spiritual and communal bonds among the church’s leaders. The theme, “*I Chose You – Rebuild My Church*,” drawn from John 15:16, provided a profound foundation for reflection and growth.

Fr Michael, known for his spiritual depth and insightful teachings, guided the participants through five enriching sessions. The retreat’s

primary goal was to inspire the leaders to unite and work cohesively towards SFA’s 2024 mission, “*Rebuild My Church*.”

Each session was designed to address the specific needs and challenges these ministries face, fostering a spirit of collaboration and mutual support. The retreat provided a platform for open dialogue, allowing leaders to share their experiences and insights, thus cultivating a stronger sense of unity.

The retreat welcomed all core team members from each ministry, including two representatives per ministry, and all members of the Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Coordinating Council, and Parish Finance Committee. With 75 participants in total, this diverse group

embodied the leadership across various church functions, fostering a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the discussions and activities.

The programme touched on spiritual growth and leadership aspects, including *Holy Moments*, *Discipleship*, *Consciousness Exam*, *Passion for Christ*, *Humanity*, and *Temptation*. These sessions were designed to deepen the leaders’ understanding of their roles and responsibilities, encouraging them to reflect on their calling to serve in SFA. Fr Michael stressed the importance of viewing ministry as a vocation, warning us against distractions that could derail our spiritual journey.

The retreat concluded with a



There was an inclusive approach to the discussions and activities during the retreat.

collective commitment from the leaders to embrace these habits and work together towards the parish mission of “*Rebuild My Church*.” Fr Michael, in his closing remarks, expressed his gratitude for the leaders’ dedication and enthusiasm. He emphasised the importance of unity and collaboration, encouraging everyone to carry the spirit of the retreat back to their respective ministries.

The weekend at Port Dickson was more than just a retreat; it was a pivotal moment of spiritual renewal and communal strengthening. With

renewed perspective and a shared vision, the leaders are now better equipped to guide their ministries and contribute to the mission of rebuilding the church.

We thank the Formation ministry for organising a fruitful and joyful session. Additionally, the involvement of many youth members who provided their services was vibrant and promising for the church’s future.

As the parish moves forward, the leaders’ commitment to these values will undoubtedly shape a brighter and more promising future for the SFA community.



Penang government allocates RM1.73 million for non-Islamic houses of worship



Penang Chief Minister YAB Chow Kon Yeow presenting the mock cheque to Paul Raj of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with YB Kumaran Krishnan and YB Lim Siew Khim joining them on stage. (photo/Sam Gopal)

BUTTERWORTH: The Penang State Trust Fund for Non-Islamic Houses of Worship (Tabung Amanah Rumah Ibadat Bukan Islam - RIBI) convened a ceremony on June 18, during which Penang Chief Minister YAB Chow Kon Yeow distributed mock cheques to several recipients. A total of RM1.73 million has been allocated for RIBI funding in 2024, reaffirming the state government’s commitment to supporting Non-Islamic Houses of Worship across Penang.

The funding aims to facilitate maintenance and repair projects, ensuring these sacred spaces provide optimal comfort for worshippers. Among the beneficiaries, the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

in Butterworth received RM50,000, while the Church of Saints Chastan and Imbert in Perai was granted RM25,000. Paul Raj, representing the Nativity Church, and Joseph Lourdes, on behalf of the Church of Saints Chastan and Imbert, received the mock cheques from the Chief Minister.

These funds will be allocated towards repairing and restoring the ageing Nativity Church building in Butterworth and refurbishing the annex building of the Church of Saints Chastan and Imbert. Reflecting on the support, Paul Raj shared that when informing their parish priest, Fr Dominic Santhiyagu, about the funding, his immediate response was ‘Praise the Lord.’

SMC parishioners inspired by Oremus prayer programme

IPOH: As part of the Year of Prayer declared by Pope Francis for 2024, the Church of St Michael organised an eight-part prayer study programme titled *Oremus – A Guide to Catholic Prayer*. Held every Saturday from May 4 to June 22, the sessions gathered around 80 participants at the Parish Activities Centre, from 10am to noon.

The programme featured video sessions by Fr Mark Toups, guiding participants on cultivating a fruitful prayer life and connecting deeply with God’s presence. Small group discussions allowed participants to share their prayer experiences and support each other.

On the final day, participants reflected on their prayer journey. Ramond Chin highlighted prayer as a source of solace during desolation, emphasising the importance of surrendering to God’s

Will. Hellen Tan shared her realisation that God’s control extends to all situations, regardless of the length of the prayer.

Rita Thong expressed gratitude to the organisers and facilitators for their seamless execution of the programme. Fr Anthony Liew, in his closing remarks, stressed the importance of faith formation and encouraged participants to join future faith formation initiatives.

He urged them to become “prayer warriors” for the needs of others and the world, emphasising that a relationship with God makes His presence alive in their hearts and lives.

The Oremus programme, Fr Anthony added, aimed not just at gaining knowledge but at fostering a shared faith experience and growing in faith in the Lord. — **By Jennifer Duarte**



Some of the participants of the Oremus prayer programme.



Participants attending the eight-part prayer study programme organised by the Church of St Michael.

Pope reminds priests to make frequent visits to the chapel

VATICAN: During an audience with Pope Francis on June 27, the priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Dehonians) received devotional counsel from the Holy Father: They should make frequent visits, in humble silence, to their chapels for quiet prayer.

The audience took place on the occasion of the 25th general chapter of the congregation. Addressing the priests, Pope Francis invited them to make chapter decisions that take into account the value of sacramental life, “of being assiduous in listening to and meditating on the word of God, of the centrality of personal prayer and community, especially adoration, as a means of personal and fraternal growth and also as a service to the Church.”

“May the chapel be the most frequented

room in your religious houses, especially as a place of humble and receptive silence and quiet prayer, so that the beats of the heart of Christ may guide the rhythm of your days, modulate the tones of your conversations, and sustain the zeal of your charity,” the Holy Father told the assembled priests.

The Pope also stressed that the heart of Jesus “beats with love for us from eternity and his pulse can join ours, restoring us to calm, harmony, energy, and unity, especially in difficult moments.”

The Holy Father encouraged the priests not to be afraid in difficult times and to be close to the Lord “so that unity can be achieved in times of temptation.”

For this to happen, he stressed, “we need

to give Him space, with fidelity and constancy, silencing in us vain words and useless thoughts, and bringing everything before Him.”

Pope Francis reiterated that gossip “is a plague, it seems small, but it destroys from within. Be careful. Never gossip about another, never! There is a good remedy for chatter: Bite your tongue, so that your tongue becomes swollen and doesn’t let you speak.”

The Pope also highlighted the importance of prayer and said that without it there is no progress, “you’re not up on your feet: neither in religious life, nor in the apostolate! Without prayer nothing is done.”

Later, Pope Francis addressed the following questions to the priests: “How can we

be missionaries today, in a complex time, marked by great and multiple challenges? How can you say, in the various areas of the apostolate in which you operate, something significant to a world that seems to have lost its heart?”

“Here is the secret of a credible proclamation, of an effective proclamation: letting the word ‘love’ be written, like Jesus, in our flesh, that is, in the concreteness of our actions, with tenacity, without being stopped by judgments that afflict us, distressing problems and the evil that wounds, with inexhaustible affection for each brother and sister, in solidarity with Christ the Redeemer in his desire to make reparation for the sins of all humanity.”

— By Almudena Martínez-Bordiú, CNA

Twenty young leaders commit to become lay missionaries

TALLUR, India: As many as 20 young people from seven Indian states have committed to becoming lay missionaries through the Communio missionary training programme.

The commitment ceremony took place on June 23 at the Church of St Francis of Assisi at Tallur, Udipi diocese, Karnataka.

The second batch of the missionary training programme organised by Communio in collaboration with the Youth Commission of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India was inaugurated by Fr Stephen Alathara, Deputy Secretary General, CCBI, and the Director of Communio.

Earlier in March 2024, the Youth Commission trained 30 youth for their missionary journey.

The Communio Missionary Training Programme that began on June 22 concluded on June 27 with the trainees taking the missionary pledge before Bishop Gerald Isaac Lobo Udipi.

The selected volunteers, chosen for their diverse linguistic, cultural, and environmental backgrounds, are being immersed in the local culture by staying with twenty families from St Francis of Assisi parish. The arrangement aims to provide firsthand experience of Catholic life in Dakshina Kannada, mirroring the essence of missionary work.

The participants expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity. Smriti Kujur, an electricity board employee from Chhattisgarh’s Raigarh diocese, said the programme has given her the chance to fulfill her ambition of becoming a missionary.

Aneesh Challa, an ICYM leader from

Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, highlighted the programme’s impact on his faith journey. “It’s not just about missionary work; it’s about deepening our faith and connecting with like-minded individuals,” Challa explained.

Dr Roma Sah, a young medical practitioner from Patna, Bihar, sees the programme as an opportunity to serve the Church through her profession. “I am excited to combine my medical expertise with missionary work,” she added.

Fr Chetan Machado, the project director of Communio Missionary Training programme, expressed optimism about the programme’s future. “The enthusiasm we are seeing is inspiring. We are committed to organising more such training programmes to meet this growing interest,” he stated.

Throughout the programme, the participants studied topics, including ‘We are the Church,’ ‘Every Christian is a Missionary,’ ‘Media for Mission Volunteering,’ ‘Missionary Disciples in the Digital World,’ and ‘ICYM Leaders as Mission Volunteers.’ They were guided on ways to amplify the visibility of local churches through content creation.

The organisers said the programme not only aims to train young leaders in missionary work but seeks to foster a deeper understanding of diverse Indian cultures and the challenges faced by different communities.

The holistic approach is expected to equip the volunteers with the skills and sensitivity needed for effective missionary work in various parts of the country, they added. —

Matters India



Young people at the Communio missionary training programme. (Matters India)

Caritas Indonesia celebrates 18 years with renewed commitment to the needy

JAKARTA: Caritas Indonesia, locally known as Karina KWI, reaffirms its dedication to fostering the ‘Church of the Poor’ during its 18th anniversary celebrations.

The event featured a Holy Mass attended by Indonesian bishops, potential donors, and representatives from groups that have benefited from the agency’s aid.

Known for providing emergency response aid packages, Caritas Indonesia has been essential in directing funds from both local and international donors to those in need through a variety of programs.

Bishop Antonius B. Subianto, OSC, of Bandung, president of KWI, highlighted the agency’s role during the celebration. “Today, alongside several bishops, we give thanks to the Lord for Karina KWI, our humanitarian agency, which embodies the compassionate spirit of the Catholic Church in Indonesia and abroad,” he said.

Bishop Subianto praised the unique motivation of Catholic donors, noting that their contributions are “driven by Christian faith and values, which we believe enrich our future lives with virtues.”

He also pointed out that Karina KWI’s humanitarian efforts have reached beyond Indonesia, referencing recent aid initiatives in Turkey and Bangladesh after severe earthquakes.

Bishop AM Sutrisnaatmaka, MSF, of Palangka Raya, acknowledged the significant charity contributions. “Our donors promptly respond to disasters, reflecting the foundational spirit of Caritas Indonesia,” he remarked.

To improve transparency and accountability, many Catholic professionals have affiliated themselves with Karina KWI.

Fransiska Mok, a notable banker, has significantly contributed to the agency’s credibility. “We adhere strictly to auditing protocols, ensuring everything is managed impeccably,” she declared.

HY Susmanto, former director of the Bank of Indonesia, supported the organisation’s efforts to enhance its visibility. “This is an opportune moment for Caritas Indonesia to promote itself as a vital humanitarian arm of the church,” he said.

Rina Bambang highlighted the collaborative nature of their mission. “We rely on the active participation of our congregation to implement our mission of compassion,” she said.

Freddy Taruk, executive director of Caritas Indonesia, clarified that the agency is part of Caritas Internationalis, which operates in 162 countries. “As a body of the church, we are committed to addressing humanitarian needs globally,” he said. — By Mathias Hariyadi, LiCAS News



Bandung Bishop Antonius Subianto, the current president of KWI - Caritas Indonesia marks its 18th anniversary with Mass attended by Bishops, other clergy, and donors, reinforcing their commitment to the Church of the Poor and serving those in need. (Licas News Photo/Budi Handoyo)

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Minor Basilica of St. Anne, Bukit Mertajam, Penang

Feast of St. Anne 2024

Theme: Enlarge The Space of Your Tent

NOVENA & MASSES SCHEDULE



E - English, BM - Bahasa Malaysia, M - Mandarin, T - Tamil, K - Kadazan

Date	Time			Sub-Theme
Day 1 19 July 2024 Friday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Gift of Diversity and Harmony
	12:00pm <u>Inter- Christian Denominational Prayer Service</u>			
Day 2 20 July 2024 Saturday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Celebrating Human Fraternity
Day 3 21 July 2024 Sunday	10.00am (E)	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Celebrating The Dignity and Value of Woman
Day 4 22 July 2024 Monday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Empowering Family Life
Day 5 23 July 2024 Tuesday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Let Our Children Grow
Day 6 24 July 2024 Wednesday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Shared Mission Towards A Synodal Church
Day 7 25 July 2024 Thursday	10.00am (E)*	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Listening to the Cry of the Earth
Day 8 26 July 2024 Friday	10.00am (E)* 12.00pm (K)	3.00pm (BM) 5.00pm (T)	7.00pm (E) 9.00pm (M)	Pastoral Care of The Elderly and The Sick
Day 9 27 July 2024 Saturday	7:00am (E)* 9:00am (M) 11:00am (T) 1:00pm (BM)	7.00pm Multilingual (Open Air)	8.30pm Procession	Enlarge The Space of Your Tent
Day 10 28 July 2024 Sunday	7:00am (T)* 9:00am (E) 11:00am (M)	1:00pm (BM) 3:00pm (T) 5:00pm (E)*		Pilgrims of Hope

*This Mass will not be live-streamed



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'Do This in Memory of Me'

Eucharistic art exhibit highlights mystery of Jesus' real presence

The "Do This in Memory of Me" exhibit, part of the US Eucharistic Revival, is showcasing sacred art at the Knights of Columbus' Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Centre in New Haven, Connecticut. The exhibit features 109 pieces selected from over 660 entries and includes various styles like traditional paintings, watercolours, charcoals, reliefs, sculptures, and some modern art.

Organised by St Edmund's Sacred Art Institute, the exhibit aims to deepen visitors' connection to the Eucharist and Jesus' Real Presence. The exhibition has been well-received, highlighting a public hunger for sacred art and promoting contemporary sacred artists. The show includes prizes for the top two artists, supported by the National Eucharistic Congress and the National Eucharistic Revival team.

The art not only depicts the Eucharist but also saints and elements of Catholic theology, with many visitors finding the experience meditative and prayerful. The goal is to renew passion for the Eucharistic Lord through the power of sacred art.

Call to Meditation

Top prize went to Robert Armetta for his oil painting titled, 'The

Entombment'. Measuring more than six feet wide, the life-size painting forms a pair with a Crucifixion painting, 'Lamb of God'.

The founder and former director of the Long Island Academy of Fine Art, Armetta studied at the best art schools in the United States and Europe. "This turn or this focus on sacred art is something that is a recent development, although that's not entirely true, but it's something that I've been more focused on as of late," he told the *Register*.

In both paintings, there are wounds present, "but they're not overly emphasised, and this was done deliberately," he added.

The artist was interested in drawing people in to meditate: "I want them to see the sacrificial Lamb of God Who willingly laid down His life for us. I want the viewer to meditate on this and ask, 'Why?' Sometimes, the gore can be a distraction and maybe even a roadblock for some to see Jesus resigned to His destiny. One approach is not better than the other; each depicts a distinct facet of a very complex reality. In the painting *Entombment*, my concern was I want the viewer to focus on the soon-to-be-resurrected Jesus, unencumbered by potentially distracting details."

He would like his sacred art to do



Left to right: 'The Entombment' and 'Lamb of God,' by Robert Armetta (NCR photo/Courtesy of St Edmund's Retreat and Robert Armetta)

what the best of sacred art has always done: to move the heart of the viewer, redirect their gaze to Christ and what Jesus has done for them and what it means to them as children of God, whether or not they're religious, whether in the church or outside of sacred spaces.

"There's something really potent about the power of sacred art, because it reflects and points to the

single most potent force there is, and that is God." He hopes "that the spirit of God can move through these images and powerfully impact and change the lives of those who behold them, those who gaze upon these images. ... And what higher calling can any artist have than to essentially use the gift that God has given them? To

direct or redirect the hearts and the eyes of the people who see and experience what they do to the giver of that gift, back to God."

Armetta shared a thought about winning: "This is what God has for me. Winning this award is just confirmation that I'm truly doing what I've been called to do."

Visual Homilies

Second prize went to Kate Capato for her 36-by-24 oil painting, 'The Woman at the Well'. Capato has been painting professionally since 2010 and full time the last seven years. "I do primarily sacred art, mostly because I feel called to spread our Catholic faith through painting," she told the *Register*.

A traditional artist whose studies include time in Florence, Italy, the Cradle of the Renaissance where its major artists lived at one time or another, Capato's oil paintings include traditional subjects like the Annunciation, Christ the King and the Holy Family.

Capato explained how 'The Woman at the Well' fits the theme of the whole exhibit. "That image resonated with the theme, too, because it shows that moment where the woman at the well recognises Jesus. He's saying to her, 'I am what will quench your thirst.' And so it's her gaze of, 'You're Him. You're the Messiah.' Seeing Him physically in front of you, it's more about the recognition of who He is before you that can tie us in Eucharistically as well. It may not be as explicit as the Last Supper, but it has that effect of recognising God made flesh in Christ in that recognition moment; and also how, I believe, like many things, she has a foreshadowing of what's to come. He talks about how he will be what satisfies her."

What does she hope the viewer's reaction would be?

"I would hope that they relate to the 'Woman at the Well', which



The Woman at the Well, by Kate Capato (NCR photo/Courtesy of St Edmund's Retreat and Kate Capato)

I think many people do, even just reading the Scripture," she answered. "I would hope that this image helps them really put themselves in her place. God willing, they don't have five other spouses like she did. But we do, in a sense, when we cling to something that is not of Christ — a different idol. So again, that is another reason to have her pour out that water. I hope that people recognise it and say, 'Oh, what do I need to let go of to see Christ before me and receive ... the water that will satisfy.'"

Her aim is "creating visual homilies," referencing her studies at Florence's sacred art school. "It's our

duty to not just paint something, but to know the faith well and then pray with it. So I really feel it's a mission, every work that I create, to really express whatever it is that the Lord has called me to for that individual work."

Her process involves going to adoration, "and I'll sketch things out there often," she said, "or simply I'll bring them up at Mass or say a Rosary with [the intention] of how the Lord will work through it and whoever seizes upon it, that they come closer to Him. So really just continually giving it back to the Lord, to use how He would like for His kingdom."

It is Beautiful

Third-prize-winner Neal Hughes painted 'Agnus Dei', capturing the moment during Solemn Mass in the Tridentine Rite when the priest elevates the Host as deacons, subdeacons and altar servers watch in adoration. Although not having done much religious art previously, he chose this particular subject thinking of the Eucharist within the High Mass and Benediction, with all the incense.

"Our faith does have a lot of beauty in it, the traditions, the more ceremonial aspects to the Mass," he told the *Register*. "Hopefully, it will inspire someone to look into that a little, because it is beautiful." For this painting, he drew inspiration from beautiful churches — and an altar in particular.

Hughes was also inspired by at-

tending Benediction growing up in southern New Jersey. "And I always like the beauty of the church itself," he said. His family regularly attended a Miraculous Medal novena nearby where there was also Benediction and incense. "That's what came to mind."

Capato added, "I really feel like the Holy Spirit is inspiring the Church as a whole to bring more beauty back into our churches and to our homes. Beauty is essential."

Eucharistic art combo

The show runs at the McGivney Centre through August 25, 2024, and a small grouping of the exhibit's artwork will be displayed at the Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. — By Joseph Pronechen, *Register*



'Agnus Dei,' by Neal Hughes (NCR photo/Courtesy of St Edmund's Retreat and Neal Hughes)

For the pastoral care of the sick

Pope's prayer intention for July

We pray that the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick confer to those who receive it and their loved ones the power of the Lord and become ever more a visible sign of compassion and hope for all.



PRAYER PRISM

Fr Fabian Dicom

Josephine's father, Francis, was hospitalised for ten days before his passing. As his condition worsened, Josephine became increasingly anxious and repeatedly asked for a priest to anoint him. Friends prayed for Francis, but no priest was initially available. When a priest finally came to anoint him, Josephine was comforted and felt a sense of peace. She observed that after the anointing, her father was calm, and was sleeping peacefully. This spiritual moment comforted her, making her feel that her father had been blessed. It allowed Josephine to let go, feeling that she had done her best for her father. Francis passed away peacefully the next day, and Josephine was comforted, believing he was ready to meet Jesus.

Rediscovering the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

At the General Audience on February 26, 2014, Pope Francis encouraged the faithful to rediscover the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. He emphasised that calling a priest to administer this sacrament is not taboo and does not bring bad luck. Instead, it allows individuals to experience God's compassion and spiritual support during illness, transforming the sacrament from its old association with imminent death — previously called Extreme Unction — to a broader understanding within God's mercy.

Pope Francis clarified that anyone who is elderly or seriously ill can receive this sacrament. It is meant for anyone who is suffering a serious illness: physical, emotional, mental or spiritual. The Sacrament may be received at any time during a person's illness, especially before surgery or treatment. The priest's visit is meant to bring Jesus' presence, offering strength, hope, forgiveness, and spiritual upliftment. The Pope referenced the parable of the Good Samaritan, where care and healing are freely given, likening the Church to the innkeeper entrusted with the continued care of the suffering.

The Role of Priests and the Community

Pope Francis urged priests to actively bring God's healing grace to those in need, particularly the marginalised, embodying the role of "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep." He emphasised that the Sacrament is a visible

sign of compassion and hope, representing the entire Christian community gathered around those who suffer, fostering faith and providing support through prayer and fraternal warmth.

Complementing Modern Medicine

While modern medicine has made incredible strides in alleviating suffering and curing diseases, it cannot address the entirety of human pain, which includes emotional, psychological, and spiritual suffering. The Anointing of the Sick complements medical treatment by addressing these often-overlooked dimensions of illness.

Dr Mark Tan, a Healthcare Ethics Consultant and Medical Lecturer, draws a parallel between Advanced Care Planning (ACP) and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, highlighting the importance of preparation and planning from a spiritual perspective as a preparation for the journey. He notes that this Sacrament can alleviate spiritual pain, and through the incorporation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation into the rite, it helps bring peace and reconciliation, essential for mitigating the burdens of illness, whether serious or critical. Another significant positive effect, he adds, is the instillation of hope.

Psychological Aspects: Emotional Support and Peace

Illness often brings fear, anxiety, and a sense of helplessness. The Anointing of the Sick offers profound psychological support. Through the prayers, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with oil, the sick person feels the tangible presence of the Church and the community. This ritual can alleviate feelings of isolation and despair, replacing them with peace and comfort.

Joyce, who was recently admitted to the hospital due to a sudden illness, shared her experience: "After the anointing, I could feel a sense of peace and relief within me. The fear and worry about my illness have become less burdensome. Additionally, I was able to sleep better compared to the night before. Thank and praise God!"

The prayer and presence of a priest can reassure the patient that they are not alone in their

suffering. It can bring a sense of peace that medical interventions alone cannot provide, fostering a positive mindset that is crucial for healing.

Spiritual Aspects: A Sacrament of Faith and Hope

Theologically, the Anointing of the Sick is deeply rooted in the compassion of Christ. As outlined in the Epistle of James (James 5:14-15), the early Church practised this sacrament, emphasising prayer and anointing as means of healing.

The sacrament is a reminder that Christ's healing ministry continues through the Church. It emphasises the belief that God's power transcends human limitations and can bring about holistic transformation and healing. It assures the sick that their suffering is not meaningless but united with Christ's own suffering, which brings redemption and hope.

The Rituals and their Significance

The rites of the Anointing of the Sick include several key elements: prayer, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with the Oil of the Sick. Each ritual carries deep spiritual significance:

Prayer: Connects the sick person to the broader faith community, reminding them that the entire Church is praying for their healing.

Laying on of Hands: Recalls Jesus' manner of healing: "They brought the sick with various diseases to Him; and He laid hands on every one of them and healed them" (Luke 4:40). The gesture indicates that this particular person is the object of the Church's prayer of faith. It is a sign of blessing and an invocation for the coming of the Spirit.

Anointing with Oil: A sacramental sign of healing, strengthening and the Holy Spirit's presence, fortifying the person's spirit and soul.

Dr John Wong, an Occupational Health physician, believes that "oil is meant for healing of bodily sickness but in a mystical way and in a sacramental sense it reconciles and restores the wellness of the body and soul. Therefore, the Sacrament of Anointing brings forth tremendous consolation, joy and peace to the anointed and those related to the anointed through faith and blood."



Pastoral Approach: Compassionate Outreach

Understanding and appreciating the Anointing of the Sick is crucial for the laity. It is a call to be active participants in the ministry of compassion. Visiting the sick, praying for them, and encouraging them to receive the Sacrament can significantly enhance their experience of God's love.

Pastoral care groups must ensure that the Sacrament is readily available, especially for those in hospitals, nursing homes, and those confined to their homes. Education about the Sacrament can dispel misconceptions that it is only for the dying, promoting its true purpose as a Sacrament of healing and hope.

Conclusion: A Visible Sign of Compassion and Hope

The Pope's prayer intention for July calls us to deepen our understanding and practice of the Anointing of the Sick. By embracing and promoting this Sacrament, we can ensure that those who are suffering receive not only medical and psychological support but also the spiritual and pastoral care that acknowledges their full dignity as persons beloved by God. In this way, the Anointing of the Sick becomes a visible sign of compassion and hope, transforming the experience of illness into an encounter with the living Christ.

● Fr Fabian Dicom is the National Office Director for Caritas Malaysia.

Can science explain every aspect of prayer?



Prayer is an activity that humans around the world engage in on a daily basis. It would make sense that the scientific community would be interested in prayer and try to analyse it.

The problem is that prayer goes beyond the realm of science and cannot be completely explained by natural reasoning.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* points out this error in its section on prayer:

We must also face the fact that certain attitudes deriving from the mentality of "this present world" can penetrate our lives if we are not vigilant. For example, some would have it that only that is true which can be verified by reason and science; yet prayer is a mystery that overflows both our conscious and unconscious lives. # CCC 2727

Prayer does not fit the mould of modern scientific inquiry. It cannot be grasped at or examined under a microscope.

It also cannot be subjected to medical tests or x-rays.

When prayer is seen as only a human activity, it does not allow for the presence of God.

Faith and science

St John Paul II warned against such a view of this world in an address he gave to scientists in the year 2000: "In past centuries, science, whose discoveries are fascinating, has held a dominant place, and at times, was considered the only criterion of truth or way to happiness. A reflection based exclusively on scientific elements tried to accustom us to a culture of suspicion and doubt. It refused to consider the existence of God or to view man in the mystery of his origin and his end, as if this perspective might call science itself into question. It sometimes saw God merely as a mental construct which would not stand up to scientific knowledge. These attitudes have

estranged science from man and from the service it is called to offer Him."

The pontiff instead begged scientists to be open to God's mysterious work in the universe: "Devote all your energies to developing a culture and a scientific approach which will always let God's providential presence and intervention be disclosed."

If we were hoping that science could explain to us everything about prayer, we will be sorely disappointed.

Prayer certainly involves the body, but it also involves the spirit, a part of the human person that science alone is not able to pin down to an examination table.

Prayer will always involve a mysterious aspect to it, and that is where faith comes into the picture. If we want to pray, we need to have faith in God that He is with us and calling us back to Himself. — By Philip Kosloski, *Aleteia*

Touched by a priest

Within the vibrant parish community of the Church of St Anthony, Pudu, a remarkable transformation is unfolding. Here, a young couple, once consumed by worldly desires, has found a new path, guided by the narratives and spiritual leadership of their parish priest, Fr Dr Clarence Devadass. His teachings seamlessly weave the wisdom of the Bible into the fabric of everyday life, offering hope in a world often overshadowed by materialism.



Kumaran and Elvina with their parish priest Fr Dr Clarence Devadass.

Among the many souls touched by his ministry are Elvina and Kumaran, a mixed-marriage couple. United in marriage at the Church of St Anthony in 2012, they were once mere Sunday church attendees. However, through Fr Clarence's teachings, they found answers to their questions and guidance for their journey, both individually and as a couple, within the church community.

"Our New Year resolutions, once filled with worldly ambitions, have undergone a significant shift. Inspired by Fr Clarence's teachings, our vision board now reflects a spiritual journey," shared Kumaran.

Transitioning from sporadic church attendance to faithfully attending novenas together every week after work, the couple has embraced a lifestyle centred on prayer and reflection. They have traded materialistic pursuits for the deeper nourishment found in reciting the daily Rosary and meditating on God's Word.

"Little did we know that these changes, integrating God into our daily lives, have transformed us into better individuals and strengthened our relationships with each other, our families, friends, colleagues, and the broader community," Kumaran reflected.

Embracing the call to serve, the couple has become actively involved in parish ministries and outreach programmes, extending their hands to the marginalised, both within and beyond the church walls.

For Kumaran, perhaps the most profound change has been his own spiritual journey. Accompanying his wife to Sunday Mass for 12 years without fully embracing the faith, Fr Clarence's gentle guidance has opened his heart to the beauty of Catholicism. This July marks the beginning of his journey through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), a significant step towards fully embracing the Catholic faith.

"Through his unwavering commitment and deep understanding of the faith, Fr Clarence has been a guiding light in our marital journey, impacting lives far beyond the confines of our parish community," Kumaran acknowledged.

The transformation experienced by this couple stands as a testament to the transformative power of faith. It serves as a poignant reminder that, by centering our lives on God and the Holy Spirit, we can undergo profound changes that lead to a more purposeful and fulfilling existence.

United in the Eucharist, Guided by Grace

For Catholic singer-songwriter Matt Maher, the 17th chapter of John's Gospel, in which the Lord prays that all will be one, has fueled his 20 years of itinerant ministry and traveling.

"That prayer, which is the longest prayer that Jesus prays, is right after He institutes the Eucharist," he said. "So, the unity of all Christians is presupposed in the Eucharist, but maybe the reason that Jesus prays for the unity of all Christians after He institutes the Eucharist is because He knows that's what will keep the church together."

Perhaps painfully, too, Jesus foresaw that the Eucharist could be the point of separation for Christians, he said.

"The Eucharist is Jesus's high priestly prayer of thanksgiving to the Father. It's the perfect sacrifice of Him offering Himself on the cross. But it's also the fulfillment of one covenant, the institution of another; it's the centre of all history. The passion, death and resurrection of Jesus is the epicenter of all of human history, and all salvific activity within the Church flows from that," Maher said in an interview recorded for *Catholic Review Radio*, a weekly news interview programme produced by the Baltimore Archdiocese's *Catholic Review Media*.

While in Frederick on his "Live and in the Room Tour" this spring, the Canadian-born musician reflected on the Eucharist as he prepares to provide the music for one of the revival nights during the National Eucharistic Congress July 17-21 in Indianapolis. Maher will be featured July 20 during the revival session at Lucas Oil Stadium, with keynote speakers Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, and Gloria Purvis, speaker and host of "The Gloria Purvis Podcast" from America Media.

Within the Eucharist, in Mass, "there's no place in life where you could be closer to those you love who are in heaven as during Communion, because we're one with God and we're one with each other and the Eucharist isn't just the symbol of that. It represents Christ drawing all men to Himself in the offering of Himself. Because if He's in all of us, then because of Him, we can be together," he said.

This is what helped him understand why the US bishops have called for a Eucharistic revival as a three-year project to revitalise the faith. "In the age of so much scandal and disappointment and disillusionment, the poverty of Jesus humbly offered, in what looks like simple bread and simple wine — so simple that it's not even leavened," Jesus brings peace, he said.

"My encouragement to everyone is to hold on to the Eucharist. Don't let go of that,"

Maher said. "My hope is through something like the Eucharistic congress, the Eucharist could actually be the place where everyone — young and old, all sides of the political spectrum — it could be the gravitational centre that actually pulled the Church back toward itself because that is the place where, eschatologically speaking, the Church is one. The Church will never not be one in the Eucharist."

He said when the organisers of the congress asked him if he wanted to do a concert in a separate ballroom, he said, "No, I want to adore Jesus in the Eucharist. That's why I'm there." The music is a secondary role "to edify the soul, to lift the soul toward God, to reflect the things that are transcendental."

Though he is still thinking and praying about what music he will use for the revival, he may use the arrangement of five Eucharistic hymns by St Thomas Aquinas, which he recently composed for the Hallow prayer app.

Maher said that when the organisers of World Youth Day 2013 in Rio de Janeiro asked him to sing during adoration, he suggested "Lord, I Need You," which the organisers thought was perfect. The artistic director told him it was the tip of the spear. "That's a beautiful image, you know, in terms of piercing the human heart," he said.

He sang that song, on his knees, for Pope Francis and more than 3 million pilgrims along the beach in Rio. The experience was "sort of beyond human sensory understanding. There's a limit to what your eyes can process and what you can emotionally process in a moment, and then it just is like white noise."

He realised also that in the countless youth conferences, retreats and other events, whether it was a full stadium, or a group of 25 or 50 people, or just five people in an adoration chapel, in that moment in Brazil, "I felt the Lord say, 'I was just as present then as I am now' and so, to me, that moment really represented a full circle moment in my life in terms of all the years."

Such a revelation reminded him that God does not judge things by human experience. "My eyes were open to the global scale of when we come before the Blessed Sacrament, we're joining with over a billion believers around the world," Maher said.

Asked how he has tried to show through his music the graces present in the Eucharist, he said he feels barely qualified to answer. "I think I'm trying to figure out how I show the graces of it in my life, first and foremost."

As a husband and father — his family lives in Nashville, Tennessee — he is more cognisant these days about the time he spends away on tour, and trying to stay engaged in



Catholic musician Matt Maher performs April 6, 2024, in concert during the "Live and in the Room Tour" at the International Community Church in Frederick, Md. (OSV News photo/Christopher Gunty, Catholic Review)

their lives. "So many people say, 'I pray for you,' and I'm like, don't pray for me, pray for my family. It's hard for a family."

When he is home, he tries not to talk about life on the road so much, "not because I'm hiding it, but because I don't want my kids to think that their life revolves around what I do. That's not how it's supposed to work. As a dad, my life is supposed to revolve around what they're doing."

During the height of the pandemic, Maher and his wife became a Catholic home-schooling family because the children were not thriving with distance learning. They loved doing it, but once things went back to normal, the kids went back to their parish school. "They missed the community; the social aspect is so important."

Once the kids were back in school, it freed him up to get back to writing music. "A lot of the songs on this new album, 'The Stories I Tell Myself,' were written in that period." He was able to get back into a studio in September 2021 and the album was released in October 2022.

The musicians and singers he brought together for six weeks of recording sessions became a community of sorts. "I think it naturally happens on its own. I think that's the great thing about making music is you try collaborating with different people. And with some people it works and some people it doesn't."

"I think the trick is learning to listen to that and observe that and not try to force it."

Maher said one of the translations of Scripture talks about Jesus calling all who are weary and laboured, and that Jesus says, "My yoke is easy. My burden is light." It says in this, "Come learn the unforced rhythms of grace" (cf. Mt 11:28-30).

"I look at the creativity as trying to follow an unforced rhythm," he said. — **By Christopher Gunty, OSV**



(Matt Maher facebook)



REMINISCING CHURCH

Richard Chia

One of my must-do places during my family travels overseas, is to visit one or more Catholic churches there. Just to spend time to pray, appreciate the beauty and infrastructure of these old historical church buildings and perhaps attend Mass if our timing is right. Most times the Mass will be in other languages, which we may not understand, but have no problem following, as the sequence and rites are exactly the same.

One noticeable observation is the incredible design and architecture of these old church buildings we saw in Greece, France, Germany, United Kingdom and even in Turkey. We were fortunate to have entered Notre Dame Cathedral in France before the fire broke out in April 2019.

Many of these old church buildings were built during the period of Renaissance and after, with its high ceilings, gothic architecture, stained glass murals, tall columns, magnificent statues and crucifixes, and acoustics that can amplify sound without the need of modern day microphones and speakers. Visitors will feel the awesomeness and sacredness of being present in God's house.

We also saw many tourists and visitors moving in and out of the church, snapping photographs and walking around the periphery of the church. Sadly, very few were actually going in to pray, to attend Mass or to spend quiet moments in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. In fact, it was a challenge to find a pew to have our quiet time when there are streams of visitors thronging the place.

Is this what churches have become in many parts of the European world? A tourist attraction? A place where ceremonial rituals are

Of churches and church designs



Left: Interior of the Church of St Anthony, KL | Right: Exterior of the Church of St Francis Xavier, Melaka.

performed with an audience?

In Malaysia, we are truly blessed to now have our first Minor Basilica in Bukit Mertajam. We too have our oldest church in Melaka (Church of St Peter), and an equally old church in Penang (Church of the Assumption). No doubt while these two churches lack the grandeur of those in Europe, they are still magnificent in their own ways.

In Malaysia, we have many churches built incorporating gothic architecture. High ceilings, roman columns, thick wooden arched doorways, bell towers, stained glass murals, statues of saints, crucifixes, spires, mostly built during the late 19th century and early 20th century. Some examples include Church of the Holy Rosary and Church of St Anthony, Kuala Lumpur; Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Klang; Church of the Visitation, Seremban and Church of St Aloysius, Mantin; Church of St Michael, Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, both in Ipoh and Church of St Joseph, Batu Gajah; Church of the Assumption and Church of the Immaculate Conception, Penang; Church of St Francis Xavier, Church of St Peter and Church of St Mary, Melaka; Church of the Immaculate Conception, Johor and perhaps more.

The second category of churches found

in Malaysia are those with contemporary modern design, but with some aspect of gothic architecture. They have stained glass windows, high ceiling, modern façades, arched windows, open auditorium-style seating capacity, no pillars to block the view, great sound system and screen projection-friendly. Some have a bell tower or spire, to distinguish it from a normal commercial building. Many of these are built after the second half of the 20th century.

A third category of churches in Malaysia, especially those built in the past 20-30 years, are found in industrial locations, sometimes in commercial areas (shoplots or standalone buildings). They are mostly small, with limited car parks and limited seating capacity at the main worship area. Usually worshippers will be celebrating Mass via closed circuit television in adjacent rooms or adjacent building.

Due to the increasing population of Catholics in Malaysia, partly due to the influx of Catholics of other nationalities living in Malaysia, many churches embark on renovation, extension or new build projects. Renovations may include adding seating galleries upstairs, side extensions and adding adjacent buildings to accommodate the increasing number of church worshippers.

Installing LCD screens, television monitors

and projection screens seems to be the in-thing in most, if not all the churches in Malaysia today. This is something I do not see a lot of in any of the churches in Europe. Many still expect its congregation to memorise their responses and hymns during Mass.

Moving forward, I foresee our future new churches in Malaysia mostly falling under the second or third category, modern, contemporary, and yet, unassuming from the outside, but practical, spacious and still retaining a prayerful and sacred atmosphere inside. It may no longer have the magnificent gothic design, or the fine sculptural door archways or the intricacies in the stained glass murals, as found in the European churches, but it will certainly have its crucifixes, crosses, statues of saints, shrines, grottoes and stained glasses inside.

In addition, most new churches require sufficient spaces to accommodate their catechism classes, parish community events and meetings, something I observe conspicuously absent in many of the European churches. Some churches have a "cry room", a space in church where parents may attend Mass with their infants without disturbing the liturgy.

For now, our churches in Malaysia are still having a good crowd attending weekend Masses, and hopefully will return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic days of overflowing pews. We still see many young people in Church, but many are aging fast. It will indeed be a sad day if ever our churches turn into tourist attractions, or become a building devoid of worshippers and devotees seeking solace, comfort and God. Hopefully, it will not happen in our life time.

● **Richard Chia** shares his experiences on the journey of the Church in Malaysia in the past forty years. Its challenges and achievements as it moves toward synodality.



FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Regina William

Romans 12:18: If possible, on your part, live at peace with all

The above is easier said than done in real life. Try as hard as you may, it is not easy to live in peace with everyone, whether they are your own family members, extended family, friends or colleagues.

How do you deal with people who are "toxic" especially when they are your immediate family members? Many take the easier route. Cutting them out of their lives seems to work fine with them, but is that the only way out?

I have personally experienced some of them who, due to their "toxic" nature have fallen out with their own parents, siblings, children and grandchildren. They weave in and out of relationships, when it suits them but they don't make it easy for those around them.

The word 'toxic' is used to describe a person who causes distress in others and their lives through negative words and actions. It isn't always easy to identify a toxic person, as the behaviours can be subtle and sometimes intentionally so.

A person who acts in this way may be suffering from low self-esteem themselves or other mental health conditions. They may have experienced childhood trauma in some way, or have deep-rooted personal issues.

These "toxic" people may have dark personality traits exhibited by their determination to put their goals and interests ahead of others.

Despite their motivations or personal history,

Dealing with "toxic" relationships

their behaviour does not become any less hurtful or painful. You may even be made to feel like it is your fault for feeling the way you do and not as a result of the "toxic" individual's behaviour.

Dealing with toxic family members can be incredibly challenging, but there are several ways to navigate these difficult relationships. Deciding whether to maintain or sever ties with "toxic" people especially your own family members, is a deeply personal and often challenging decision.

While Catholic teachings emphasise on forgiveness, reconciliation, and the importance of family bonds, it also recognises the complexities of human relationships and the need to prioritise personal well-being.

The Catholic perspective encourages practising love and forgiveness, even towards those who have hurt us. This means striving to see others with compassion and extending forgiveness where possible.

However, it is also important to protect one's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. If a family member's behaviour is consistently toxic and harmful, it may be necessary to establish boundaries or even distance oneself from that person to prevent further harm.

While it may be necessary to maintain the distance for safety or emotional health reasons, reconciliation should remain a goal and it can be through prayers for healing and conversion for the family member, being open to dialogue if circumstances improve, and seeking support from spiritual advisors or counselors.

In severe cases of abuse or serious harm, protective measures may be necessary, including legal intervention or seeking safety away from the abuser. While reconciliation is ideal, it cannot compromise the safety and well-

being of individuals.

We are encouraged to discern decisions about relationships through prayer and seeking guidance from trusted spiritual mentors or counselors and making decisions that are rooted in faith and wisdom.

Begin by praying for guidance, wisdom, and patience in dealing with the toxic family member. Reflect on how you can respond with love and compassion while also protecting your own well-being.

If it is truly necessary, you must also establish clear boundaries to protect yourself from the negative impact of toxic behaviour. This might include limiting the time spent with them, avoiding certain topics of conversation, or even taking breaks from contact, if necessary.

Sometimes a decision to cut ties with a "toxic" person has to be made to preserve the wellbeing of others but while it is being done with good intent, one must remember that as Catholics, we are asked to strive to forgive that person in our hearts and in our prayers. This act of forgiveness even if it does not lead to mending the ties, will bring gradual healing to one's self, albeit a slow and painful one.

This does not mean condoning harmful behaviour but rather releasing anger and resentment for your own spiritual well-being. Pray for the grace to forgive and ask for God's help in healing any wounds caused by the toxic relationship.

Surround yourself with a supportive community, including friends and other family members, share your struggles and seek guidance on how to handle the situation in a healthy and constructive manner.

Always try to respond to the toxic behaviour with love and kindness whenever possible. This

may help diffuse tense situations and potentially lead to positive changes over time. Remember that love does not mean enabling harmful behaviour but rather, responding in a way that reflects God's love and mercy. This may help diffuse tense situations and potentially lead to positive changes over time.

Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Engage in activities that bring you joy and peace, and prioritise your own well-being amidst the challenges of dealing with a toxic family member. In some cases, seeking professional counseling or therapy can provide additional support and guidance in coping with toxic family dynamics. A therapist can help you develop healthy coping strategies and boundaries.

Ultimately, the decision to maintain or sever ties with toxic family members is complex and may require seeking both spiritual guidance and practical counsel. It is important to balance the principles of love and forgiveness with the need for personal safety and emotional health. Each situation is unique, and everyone should approach such decisions with prayerful discernment and the support of the faith community.

It is important to remember that every situation is unique, and there may not be a one-size-fits-all solution. Trust in God's guidance and seek to respond with grace and humility, even in difficult circumstances.

● **Regina William** is an ex-journalist turned head of communications, now full-time grandmother to three children aged between 4.5 and one, crisscrossing the globe to play the role. She can be reached at regina.william1223@gmail.com



Fr Ron Rolheiser

What has been given you to carry?

What has been given you to carry? Where do the needs and pains of others conscript your freedom? When is freedom mitigated by circumstance? What are the situations that you are born into or meet in life to which you must respond, perhaps even at the cost of your life? *What may you not walk away from?*

These are important questions, not easy to answer. But they are key questions vis-a-vis discerning one's vocation: what is that special task to which each of us is asked to give over our lives?

Each of us comes into this world with a God-given vocation. In essence, that's easy enough to pinpoint. Simply put, we are all asked to love God and love each other. That's the same for everyone. However, beyond that bald essence, it's no longer the same for everyone because we are all born into and meet different circumstances in life. We are born into different families, different countries, different times in history, different cultures, different situations of poverty or affluence, different faiths, different kinds of intelligence, different natural aptitudes, and different physical bodies that vary greatly in terms of health, strength, and physical attractiveness. Philosophers call this your "existential" situation. In that, in that particularity, like snowflakes, no two persons are ever the same. And that

uniqueness will color and perhaps fundamentally define your vocation and help dictate *what will be given you to carry*.

Here's what's at stake. We are all born free, yes, but many things both *conscript* and *constrict* our freedom.

Let me illustrate with a personal example. I was born the twelfth child in a large family. My parents, first-generation immigrant farmers who, during many years of marriage and child-rearing, were unable to fully support our family from the farm alone. We needed some added income. As well, our outback rural community had only an elementary school and any education beyond the eighth grade required leaving home to attend a boarding school, something my parents could not afford.

Because of that, five of my older siblings had to end their education after elementary school, not because they wanted to or because they lacked the desire or intelligence for higher education, but rather because our financial need and the absence of a local high school necessitated that they leave school and take jobs to help support the family. For all of them, particularly for a couple of them, this was a hard sacrifice. Everything in them hungered for more freedom and choice; but, given their circumstances, *this was what they were given to carry*. And that sacrifice, that giving over of themselves for something beyond themselves,

very much defined their vocation and their very persons. A large part of their vocation was to sacrifice many of their own dreams and ambitions for the sake of the family. Among other factors, my own opportunity for an education was largely predicated on their sacrifice.

However, in this, they are not exceptional. Their sacrifice is mirrored in the lives of millions of men and women all over the world: immigrants who need to sacrifice their own ambitions in order to work in the fields or take menial jobs to support their families; young women and men from developing countries who have to leave their families and go abroad to earn money to send back to their families; millions of young people who cannot attend university because of cost; countless women and men who need to sacrifice whole seasons of their lives to take care of an ill or aging parent; and billions of women who have to sacrifice career to raise children. *This is what has been given them to carry* – and their sacrifice helps constitute the heart of their vocation.

Beyond these things which can conscript our freedom and radically dictate our vocation, there are still other things which either *constrict* or *open* our freedom and so help dictate our vocation: having robust physical and mental health as opposed to being physically or mentally fragile; having an athlete's body as

opposed to having a physical disability; being an alpha male or a homecoming queen as opposed to being the one who is bullied and shunned; being temperamentally aggressive as opposed to being temperamentally gentle and accommodating; or being the one who comes from privilege as opposed to being the one who comes from a background without privilege.

Each of these not only helps dictate your vocation, but each also helps to specially equip you for your vocation. If you are on the fragile and wounded side of the equation, your seeming human shortcomings can give you special powers to be a healer for others. Being wounded, you have special powers to become a wounded healer. Conversely, if you are on the privileged side of the equation, that privilege also dictates your vocation and your special gift, namely, you are now the one to whom much is given and consequently from whom much is expected.

What has been given you to carry?

● **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

The challenge to pray is oftentimes found in the fallen definition we give to it. We think that prayer only works when we get what we want. If we ask for something in prayer, then God is supposed to give it to us. If we don't receive what we ask for, then – we think – prayer doesn't work. What's the point?

If we allow ourselves to grow beyond our fallen definition of prayer and seek divine wisdom, we receive a very different understanding of prayer. Prayer is about communion with God, about speaking and

The Lord comes to us in prayer as priest, head and God

listening to him. Prayer is about being with God. It's about being taught by him and learning his ways.

While the heart of prayer is union with God, petition and supplication are a part of prayer. It's good for us to ask God for what we need. There are times in

which what we ask for is in accord with God's will. Just as there are times when God's will points us in a different direction from what we ask of him. Our task is to accept the answer he gives, whether it matches our request or not.

With this understanding, we can rejoice in prayer knowing that the outcome is not our responsibility. All will end well by God's providence. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* records times in which the Lord Jesus answered prayers during his public ministry: "Prayer to Jesus is answered by him already during his ministry, through signs that anticipate the power of his death and Resurrection: Jesus hears the prayer of faith, expressed in words (the leper, Jairus, the Canaanite woman, the good thief) or in silence (the bearers of the paralytic, the woman with a haemorrhage

who touches his clothes, the tears and ointment of the sinful woman)."

The *Catechism* is keen to stress that the answered prayers of the Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry were all in service to the Resurrection. The prayers were answered according to the requests of the petitioner so that these answered prayers could "anticipate the power of His death and Resurrection."

Miracles, signs, wonders, and healings are all in service to the Resurrection, as the promise and hope for eternal life. God's perspective is eternal. When things are given to us in this life, they are meant to point us to eternal things.

The *Catechism* continues by pointing out: "The urgent request of the blind men, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David' or 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' has been renewed in the traditional prayer to Jesus known as the Jesus Prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!'"

Here again the blind men are healed and given their sight as a sign of the validity and credibility of God's mercy. The earthly blessing is meant to direct us to the heavenly blessing.

Understandably, we focus on the things of this world, but God and his actions among us are constantly trying to guide us to see heavenly things and to approach the things of this world from the light of eternity.

The *Catechism* isn't done with this point

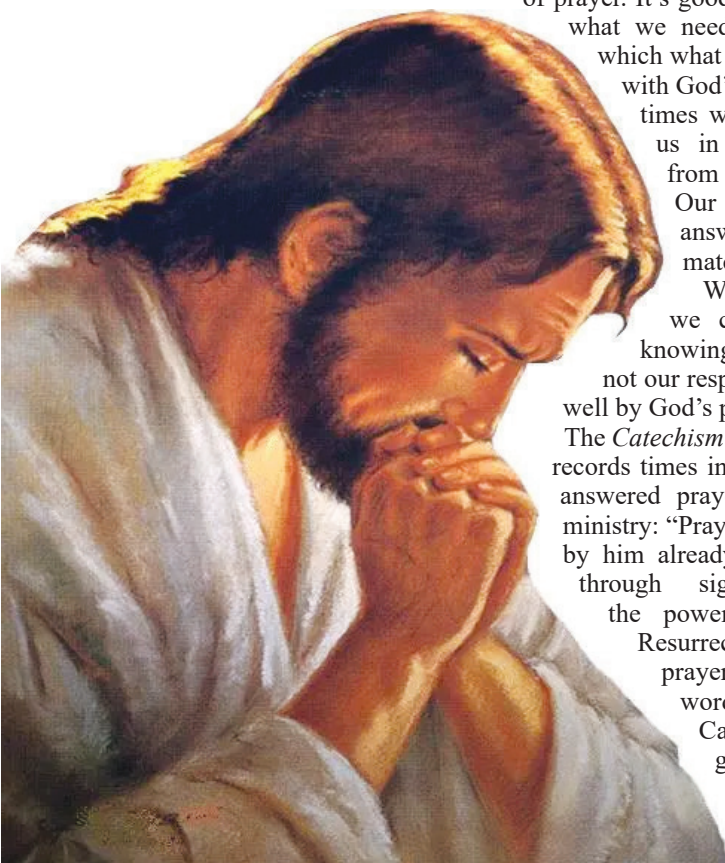
and explains further: "Healing infirmities or forgiving sins, Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: 'Your faith has made you well; go in peace.'"

It is faith that must be nourished since it is faith that allows us to see everlasting realities. Faith allows us to see things from the perspective of God. And so, healings are given so that faith might be strengthened and encouraged. The healing isn't given as a good in itself. It is in service to faith and its work in opening up an eternal horizon to us.

On this point, the *Catechism* quotes the Doctor of Grace: "St Augustine wonderfully summarises the three dimensions of Jesus' prayer: 'He prays for us as our priest, prays in us as our Head, and is prayed to by us as our God. Therefore, let us acknowledge our voice in him and his in us.'"

St Augustine shows us the different aspects of prayer and the ways in which the Lord Jesus desires to work in us and through us. The focus is the transformation of our minds and hearts to the heavenly realities of life. Eternity is the goal. The Lord, therefore, comes to us as priest. He is our head. And he is our God.

As priest, head, and God, he invites us to pray in him. Our voice is spoken in him and – to our great amazement – His voice is spoken in us. In this exchange, we enter into a union with him. Such a union begins here and reaches fulfilment in heaven. — **By Fr Jeffrey F. Kirby, *Cruz***



Little Catholics' corner

WORD SEARCH



Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home." (Mark 6:4)



THORN	GRACE	CHRIST	DIFFICULTIES	MESSENGER
FLESH	PERFECT	REST	WEAK	BOAST
GLAD	POWER	HARDSHIP	STRONG	




Elijah and the Great Rain Word Scramble

Unscramble each of the clue words. Take the letters that appear in the circle boxes and unscramble them to find the answer to the last phrase.

RIFE

--	--	--	--

BAHA

			
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THOPPER

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RASIEL

○	○				
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NTAMOUIN

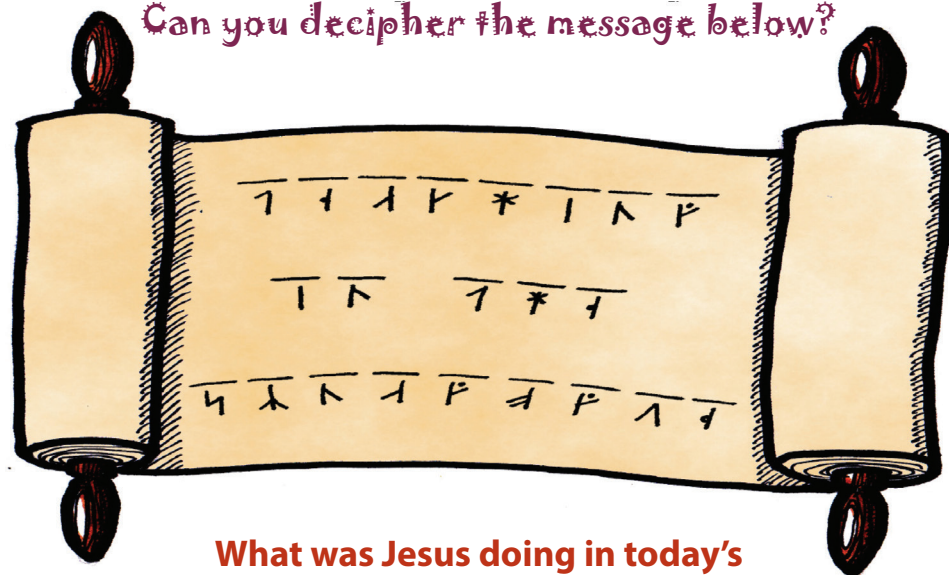
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Elijah prayed and God

--	--	--	--

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Can you decipher the message below?



**What was Jesus doing in today's Gospel reading?
Use the secret code to find out!**

A C E G H I N O S T U Y
 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Aunty Eliz

YOUTH

July 7, 2024

Stella Maris' very own compositions vocalising hope and loyalty



The Stella Maris International School choir clinched first place as the Category Winner in the Children's Choir Division.



Helena Fernandez receiving the appreciation award from YB Datuk Sri Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister for Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak.

KUALA LUMPUR: Stella Maris International School (SMIS) participated at the Sarawak Choral Festival to acknowledge God's gift of our harmony of cultures through choral music... and emerged as the WINNER.

SMIS showcased two of its very own choral compositions in the recent Sarawak Choral Festival held in Kuching. These two compositions resonate well with the tenacious spirit of the school to uphold the *Rukun Negara* principles as reflected in many of its initiatives.

Within the grand ensemble featuring combined voices from participating choirs, the 16-member SMIS choir, led by Head of Music, Helena Fernandez, presented the school's home-grown compositions titled *Voices of Hope* and *My Jalur Gemilang* at the choral competition at Swinburne University in Kuching. *Voices of Hope* is a lyrical call to press on with dreams to achieve unity, standing shoulder to shoulder together; while the *My Jalur Gemilang* expresses honour and pride in the yellow, red, white and blue symbols and stripes of our Jalur Gemilang.

The festival, organised by the Kuching Choral Society and supported by the

Ministry of Education, featured, among others, choir competitions, workshops, masterclasses and public choral performances at various venues in Kuching, aimed at promoting cultural exchange while providing a platform for choirs to showcase their talents. It was a first for Stella Maris, and an exhilarating experience for these talented students to fly the distance to perform in East Malaysia.

They were privileged to attend a Masterclass for first-hand feedback from esteemed international judges and choral experts prior to the competition, as well as a choir workshop where they got valuable insights into various aspects of choral singing. Their itinerary also included a Friendship Concert for a public presentation at one of Kuching's leading malls.

Ms Fernandez commented that *Voices of Hope* was inspired by children singing at a Holy Mass, which led her to compose

the song for Stella Maris's Blessing Day of 2018. The *Jalur Gemilang Ku* (or My Jalur Gemilang) was a recent composition of 2022 in her pursuit of music as a labour of love with an aim to instilling a sense of patriotism in the children in conjunction with National Day.

"I tell my students that if they want to excel in the performing arts and music, sacrifice is required. Nurturing skill is a journey in developing patience and discipline. Musical skills are formed layer by layer but the fruit of it is excellence and the reward is a chance to tell your story to a world that cares to listen," she said.

The SMIS Choir clinched first place as the Category Winner in the Children's Choir Division, and received an acknowledgement of appreciation from Sarawak's Minister for Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak, YB Datuk Sri Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah.

Grow in faith like a mustard seed

By Bernard Anthony

IPOH: Forty-four young candidates received the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes on June 16. Cardinal Sebastian Francis, the Bishop of Penang, delivered a profound message to the confirmands, emphasising the essential role of the Holy Spirit in their faith journey.

Cardinal Sebastian addressed the candidates, referring to them as "young mustard seeds" and stressed the importance of growth in faith. "We need the Holy Spirit to grow for the Church and move forward where the Spirit is leading us," he said. He highlighted that without the Holy Spirit, spiritual growth is impossible. "From now onwards, confirmands need the Holy Spirit to grow, like a mustard seed."

The cardinal underscored the responsibility the confirmands were taking on, stating, "Today, you are to take responsibility for your faith in life. The Holy Spirit is given to you sacramentally as you receive Confirmation." His message resonated deeply as the young candidates



Confirmands with Cardinal Sebastian Francis, Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam, Fr Robert Daniel, Fr George Vaithynathan and Deacon Sandnasamy Peter.

prepared to affirm their faith, initially received at baptism, within the wider Church community.

Cardinal Sebastian was the main celebrant of the Mass, concelebrating was Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam, parish priest Fr Robert Daniel, assistant parish priest Fr George Vaithynathan, and

Deacon Sandnasamy Peter.

During the Rite of Confirmation, each of the 44 candidates was anointed with the oil of Chrism by Cardinal Sebastian, who pronounced, "Receive the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Father. Peace be with you." Each confirmand then received a special blessing from Archbishop Emeritus

Murphy, who was seated nearby.

The ceremony concluded with a thanksgiving testimony by Ashley, one of the confirmands representing all 44 candidates. Fr Robert expressed gratitude to the catechists and congratulated the confirmands. Fr George later distributed certificates to the new confirmand.

SOCIAL MEDIA WARNING LABELS NOT ENOUGH TO PROTECT TEENS

Parents still need to do their part



On school days, I check in on my eldest son while he does his homework to offer help and ensure he's not distracted. Like his peers, he has a smartphone and recently joined social media.

The US Surgeon General's recent call to add a warning label to social media caught our attention. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy suggested in *The New York Times* that social media warning labels could alert parents and adolescents to potential mental health risks, requiring congressional action. He compared it to tobacco warning labels that have helped people quit.

A survey of Latino parents indicated such warnings might encourage monitoring or limiting children's social media use. When I asked my son about it, he thought the warning label was pointless, believing people would ignore it. I shared his initial scepticism.

I explained some reasons that came to mind: people get bullied on social media, people spend too much time on it (he was surprised that US teens spend an average of 4.8 hours a day on it, according to a Gallup poll), and platforms like Instagram can negatively affect self-image. We've discussed social media extensively as a family. I pointed out that online posts don't always reflect real life and that people can be more aggressive online due to the lack

of in-person consequences.

"OK, but if it's so bad, then why do they allow it at all?" my son wondered.

I explained that it's not all bad. Social media can

connect people to supportive communities they might not otherwise be able to access and provide fast news updates, though not always accurate. My son remained unconvinced about the warning label's effectiveness,

and I shared his doubts. Dr Murthy did not claim the warning label alone would make social media safe. He has suggested other measures for government leaders, social media platforms, and consumers, such as increasing transparency from social media companies and making schools phone-free zones. Dr Murthy also advised parents to restrict children's phone use during social gatherings and before bed.

However, Dr Murthy sometimes seems

to portray parents and children as social media's unwitting victims needing government intervention. That's not how I see it. As a parent, I am responsible for my children's overall well-being.

My wife and I are accountable for their mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

With that in mind, I have a few ideas. Be self-aware. Both parents and children should understand how social media affects them. Recognise how social media influences emotions and behaviours. Sharing my own experiences — good and bad — on social media helps facilitate these conversations.

Make time to talk. And listen. It's important to talk to our kids about more than just social media. I always want to hear about my son's school day and his friends. Even though I haven't played video games in years, I listen to him talk about his fa-

vourites. The more I know about him, the more I can love him. Our home should be a safe space for our children to share their thoughts and feelings. While our younger children don't have phones yet, we aim to build strong face-to-face communication before they do.

Discuss social media regularly. Since social media is a constant in our lives, it should be a regular conversation topic. This involves more than just monitoring usage time. We discuss both negative and positive experiences on social media. Understanding how social media operates is also crucial.

Resources like the Netflix documentary "The Social Dilemma" and insights from Jaron Lanier, a computer scientist and philosopher, can be valuable.

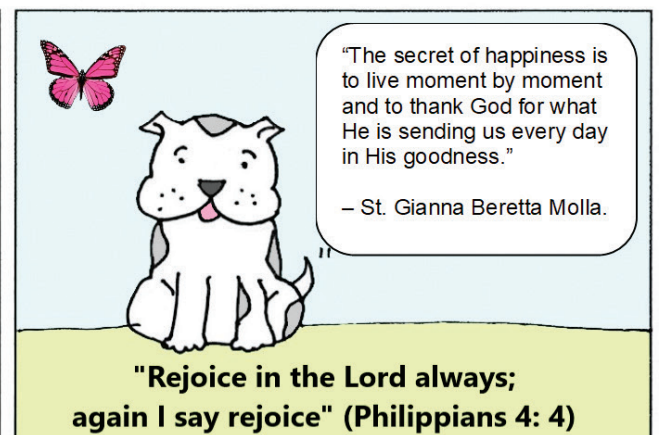
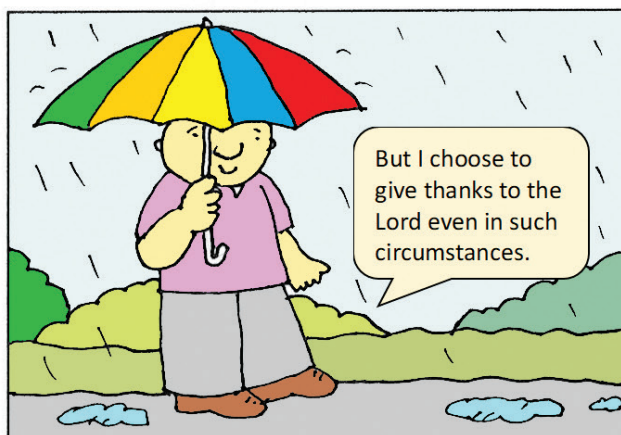
I love being a parent. It brings immense joy to my life. Despite generational gaps in communication, I strive to understand my children. I may not fully grasp what it's like to be a teenager today, but I can reassure my children of my unconditional love and support every day. They are cherished by their parents and by God.

Maybe warning labels on social media could spark meaningful conversations between parents and children. However, building loving family relationships should not wait for that. — **By J.D. Long Garcia (Senior Editor at America)**



THE SIMPLE LIFE...

Created by Dr Steven Selvaraju, this is a comic strip that wishes to tell simple stories of life and faith.



Pope pays respects to his Franciscan confessor

ROME: On the morning of June 23, Pope Francis left the Vatican to take a brief crosstown trip to Rome's Trastevere neighbourhood, where he visited the church of Santi Quaranta Martiri e San Pasquale Baylon in order to pay his respects to a Franciscan priest who died June 20, and who had been the pontiff's confessor.

Fr Manuel Blanco Rodríguez (*pic*), who had lived in the Roman church for 44 years, was 85.

In his traditional noontime *Angelus* address Sunday, Francis paid tribute to Blanco.

"He was a superior, a confessor, a man of counsel," Francis said. "Remembering him, I'd like to recall so many Franciscan brothers, confessors and preachers,

who have honoured and continue to honour, the Church of Rome. Thank you to all of them!"

According to Fr José Manuel Sanchis Cantó, who teaches at the Franciscan-run Pontifical University Antonianum and who lives at the church of Santi Quaranta Martiri e San Pasquale Baylon, the pontiff's visit was a surprise.

"This morning before 7.00am, the doorbell rang and the father superior told us someone had arrived from the papal household, but we didn't think it was the Pope," Sanchis Cantó said.

"When I opened the door, a Vatican gendarme told us the Pope would arrive soon," he said. "All the brothers came down to the sacristy where Fr Manuel's casket was located, and then the Pope arrived and greeted us."

Sanchis Cantó said Francis inquired where the Franciscans were from, and made some brief impromptu remarks.

"He gave us some advice, and spoke about Fr Blanco as a good person, merciful and mild, all in a climate of serenity and closeness," he said.

Afterwards, he said, the group

said morning prayers and then Francis spent several moments in quite reverence before the coffin.

According to a note from the Franciscans, Blanco held various roles within the order over the years, including General Definitor, Provincial Minister, a visitor in various entities of the order, Vice-Rector, Dean and Professor of Philosophy at the Antonianum, all in addition to serving as the Pope's confessor.

Fr Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the Franciscan order, also paid tribute to Blanco.

"I was able to know him personally over the years and thus appreciate his human, spiritual and intellectual

qualities," Fusarelli wrote. "I also always found in him a good, fraternal, strong and faithful presence in his way of life."

"We thank the Giver of all good for everything He has given us during the life of Brother Manuel, including the inevitable weaknesses that remain entrusted to the inexhaustible mercy of God," he wrote.

Blanco was ordained to the priesthood in 1963 after theological studies in Rome. He taught at the San Ildefonso Theological Institute in Toledo, Spain, for a decade before arriving in Rome for the first time in 1985. He was also the superior of a Franciscan community in Toledo, where he became a close friend of the late Cardinal Marcelo González Martín.

In a September 2015 interview with Portuguese Catholic journalist Aura Miguel, Francis revealed that he went to confession with Blanco every fifteen to twenty days.

"I confess to a Franciscan Father, Fr Blanco, who is kind enough to come here to hear my confession," the Pope said. "And yes, I never had to call an ambulance to take him back, scared of my sins!" —

Crux



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*He never looked for praises
He was never one to boast
He just went on quietly working
For the ones he loved the most.*

*His dreams were seldom spoken
His wants were very few
And most of the time his worries
Went unspoken too.*

*He was there....A firm foundation
Through all our storms of life
A sturdy hand to hold on to
In times of stress and strife.*

*A true friend we could turn to
When times were good or bad
One of our greatest blessings
The man that we called Papa.*

Deeply missed but forever cherished by:
Wife, Daughters, Sons in law,
Granddaughters, Grandson and loved ones.

5th Year Anniversary In Loving Memory of



LOUIS AROKIASAMY

2 September 1933 – 8 July 2019

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Loving wife: Josephine Louis

Children & Spouses:

Gerrina & Andrew, Drs. Rosita & Kumar,
Jancie & Robert, Stephanie & Bernard, Indra Marie,
Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren

*John 15:5 – I am the vine, you are the branches.
He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit:
for apart from Me you can do nothing.*

In Loving Memory

16th Anniversary

25th Anniversary



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*You have gone no further
from us than to God, and
God is very near.*

ALOYSIOUS CARMEL PEREIRA

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*Remember me
as forever loving you.*

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race. I have kept the faith."
– 2 Tim 4:7*

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daughters-in-law,
grandchildren, relatives
and friends.

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Pope Francis pays respects to the remains of his late confessor on June 23, 2024. (Vatican Media)

FEAST OF ST. ANNE

FRIDAY, 19 JULY – SUNDAY, 28 JULY, 2024

CHURCH OF ST. ANNE | JALAN TENGKU BADAR, 42000 PORT KLANG

A CALL TO WALK... IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE SAINTS

呼吁... 跟随圣人的脚步

புனிதர்களின் அடிச்சுவடுகளில் நடக்க ஒரு அழைப்பு

PANGGILAN UNTUK BERJALAN... PERJALANAN PARA KUDUS



DAY / DATE / THEME	TIME
FRIDAY, 19 JULY, 2024 SAINT JOSEPH/ SANTO YUSUF/ புனித யோசேப்பு / 圣若瑟	6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
SATURDAY, 20 JULY, 2024 SAINTS PETER & PAUL/ SANTO PETRUS & PAULUS/ புனிதர்கள் பேதுரு & பவுல் / 圣伯多禄及圣保禄	6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
SUNDAY, 21 JULY, 2024 SAINTS MICHAEL, GABRIEL & RAPHAEL/ SANTO MIKAIL, JIBRIL & RAFAEL/ அதிதூதர்களான புனித மிகேல், கபிரியேல் & ரபேல் / 圣迈克尔、加布里埃尔和拉斐尔	8.00 am Rosary & Novena 8.30 am Mass (Tamil) 10.30 am Rosary 11.00 am Mass (Children) – SAINT TARCISIUS/ SANTO TARSISIUS/ புனித தார்சியஸ் / 圣泰西修 6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
MONDAY, 22 JULY, 2024 SAINT MARY MAGDALENE/ SANTA MARIA MAGDALENA/ புனித மரிய மதலேன் / 圣玛利亚玛达肋纳	6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
TUESDAY, 23 JULY, 2024 SAINT PADRE PIO/ SANTO PADRE PIO/ புனித பாத்திரி பியோ / 圣毕奥神父	6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
WEDNESDAY, 24 JULY, 2024 SAINTS AUGUSTINE & MONICA/ SANTO AGUSTINUS & MONIKA/ புனித அருஸ்தினார் & மோனிக்கா / 圣奥思定及圣莫尼加	6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
THURSDAY, 25 JULY, 2024 SAINT JAMES, APOSTLE/ RASUL, SANTO YAKOB/ அப்போஸ்தலரான புனித யாகப்பர் / 圣雅各, 宗徒	9.30 am Rosary & Novena 10.00 am Mass followed by Anointing of the Sick 6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
FEAST OF SAINTS ANNE & JOACHIM	
FRIDAY, 26 JULY, 2024 SAINTS ANNE & JOACHIM/ SANTA ANNA & SANTO JOAKIM/ புனிதர்கள் கவாக்கிம் & அன்னா / 圣亚纳及圣若亚敬	9.30 am Rosary & Novena 10.00 am Mass (English) 6.30 pm Rosary 7.00 pm Adoration/Novena 7.30 pm Mass (E/T/BM)
SATURDAY, 27 JULY, 2024 ALL SAINTS/ PARA KUDUS/ அனைத்துப் புனிதர்கள் / 诸圣	9.30 am Rosary & Novena 10.00 am Mass (English) 5.30 pm Rosary 6.00 pm Adoration/Novena 6.30 pm Mass (Multilingual) followed by Procession
SUNDAY, 28 JULY, 2024 ALL SAINTS/ PARA KUDUS/ அனைத்துப் புனிதர்கள் / 诸圣	6.30 am Rosary 7.00 am Mass (English) 8.30 am Rosary 9.00 am Mass (Tamil) 10.30 am Rosary 11.00 am Mass (Mandarin) 5.30 pm Rosary 6.00 pm Thanksgiving Mass (E/T/BM)

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