

Our Pilgrimage



StMichael.catholic.sg



@ChurchofStMichaelSG

3rd May 2020, VOLUME 115
4th Sunday of Easter

Liturgical Reflection for the 4th Sunday of Easter

On the 4th Sunday of Easter, we celebrate Good Shepherd Sunday. Most of us have heard about the parable of The Good Shepherd many times. Perhaps we have become so used to the parable that we forget to marvel at it. Today, the Gospel reading invites us to rediscover the Good Shepherd in our lives and ponder on how we can be an instrument so as to be a shepherd for someone too. Who is the Good Shepherd and how does this parable speak to us in this present time?

The lamb learns from a very young age about the true shepherd of the flock. It learns this from the older sheep. The sheep keep together as a flock to protect themselves from threats. The sheep are able to recognise different animals and to keep a safe distance from them. The flock is the only protection that it has. The young learn who can be trusted because the shepherd feeds his flock.

As we celebrate Good Shepherd Sunday, we also celebrate Vocations Sunday. Vocations to the religious and priestly order are dropping drastically in Singapore. Does this have to do with what our young are fed? If their constant diet is one of social media, gaming, studies, and assessment workbooks, how will they learn to hear the Shepherd's voice?



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“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.”

John 10: 1-2

First Reading: Acts 2:14, 36-41
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22(23)
Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:20-25
Gospel: John 10:1-10



OUR LOGO

The two 'C' stand for the Christ (outer circle) encompassing the community (inner circle).

Christ Jesus is always present in his Church. The golden stylised sword represents the community rooted in the word of God ready to move as represented by the wings spread out to bring the Kerygma as represented by the cross to everyone.

- The colours are that of the Archangel
- The sword and wing represent the Archangel who is always there as our guardian.

VISION

A vibrant loving community of **disciples making disciples** for the Kingdom of God

MISSION

To Create moments of God encounters

To Form Disciples in Christ

To Nurture community spirit through the Word of God

Liturgical Reflection (cont'd)

Jesus our Good Shepherd knows our every thought, our past, present and future. In Psalm 139: 1-4, "Lord, you have probed me, you know me, you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar. You sift through my travels and my rest; with all my ways you are familiar. Even before a word is on my tongue, Lord, you know it all."

However, he is not able to call out to his lambs and sheep because they are feeding on a diet that is not good for them. They do not recognise his voice.



St John Damascene (675-749) a monk, a Theologian and a Doctor of the Church shared this Good Shepherd prayer:

O Christ, my God, You stooped down to me, poor straying sheep, to take me on Your shoulders and have set me down in green pastures. Enable me to proclaim Your word boldly, may Your Spirit's tongue of flame give perfect freedom to my tongue and make me constantly attentive to Your presence. Be a shepherd to me, O Lord and together with me, be the shepherd of Your sheep, that my heart may not cause me to swerve, either to right or to left.

Sometimes, we use the world's wisdom to make choices and decisions, instead of basing our discernment process on God's perspective. We fail to consider the needs of others, but we rather focus on our own wants and desires. We allow our self-centeredness to be a priority above all. When things go wrong, we tend to blame others for causing it. We have followed the thieves and robbers who have distracted us. We fail to listen to our Good shepherd. Do you recall being a thief or robber who led others astray?

Pope Francis reminds us "Let's not forget that Jesus is the only Shepherd who speaks to us, who knows us, who gives us eternal life and guards us. We are His flock and we must only make an effort to hear His voice, while He scrutinises with love the sincerity of our hearts. And from this constant intimacy with our Shepherd, from this conversation with Him, springs the joy of following Him, allowing ourselves to be led to the fullness of eternal life."

Dickson and Cindy Rose

LR Layout by: Melliana

The Crucial Role of the Parish in Community Building

According to research conducted by The Catholic Leadership Institute through the Disciple Maker Index, the data indicates that fostering the communal dimension of the Church is one of the best practices the parish can follow to nurture and to inspire Discipleship. Parish Life can only thrive when the entire community is involved and engaged. There is a need for parishes to fulfil their mission of being a Community of Disciples by connecting people not only to God, but to one another.

According to the data presented in the study, only 26% of the respondents strongly agree that a parish follows up with them when they express interest in becoming involved with an event or programme. Most significant to fostering the local Catholic community is the person-centeredness of a parish. The faithful point decidedly to the importance of any parish making its members feel welcomed and accepted. Those who responded with strong agreement (43 percent) are more likely to credit their parish with helping them to grow spiritually. They are also more likely to recommend their parish to others. This welcoming approach - an embodiment of the belief that "we are (all) members one of another" - remains a key to differentiating those reporting that they practice the Faith from those who do not.

Source: <https://www.catholicleaders.org/documents/The-Disciple-Maker-Index-Parish-Brochure.pdf>



THE LORD'S SUPPER (1953)



The Church as Community

By Brian Bartholomew Tan

Sources: Mark Link, S.J., "We believe in the Models of the Church", *The Catholic Vision* 1-6; Thomas Dailey, OSFS, "These 6 Models of the Church Embody Christ", Ascension Press

For a long time, the Church and its members have existed in silo – each person going about doing their own thing. While there was regular attendance at the weekly Eucharist, the congregation was made up of Ministry members who performed merely a functional role – beyond doing what was needed to be done, there was little outreach beyond the functions of the Ministry, and there were many Ministry members who knew little about what was happening in the lives of the other members of the Ministry; Pew-warmers whose faith comprised of fulfilling an obligation, usually passed down to them along family lines; and a remnant of those truly fired up for the Faith and by the Holy Spirit.

The congregation would gather, nod cursorily at the Sign of Peace, and go.

The extraordinary gifting of COVID-19, has caused some disarray. The Church as we have become familiar with is no longer. Eucharistic Celebrations and Paraliturgies have shifted to the online arena, ministering has taken on new nuances with the advent of new technologies.

However, much of this scrambling and dissonance, comes from how we have encountered the Church and have come to understand the Church to be.

Across the centuries, as liturgy solidified, the Church has been focussing on the Church as Institution with a structured order, roles, and practices and the Church as Sacrament – as a sign and instrument to the world. We are currently struggling with the unprecedented implications of COVID-19, for we have been channelling

all our energies to maintaining the Church practices as we have inherited and have come to know them. We have been working (too) hard to maintain the regular pool of faithful congregation. Now, that the Sacraments have been taken away from us for a time, and with the presence of the embargo from entering the physical compounds of the Church, we are faltering, because we are at a lost at what to do. Pope Francis himself warns that if we the Church are not ministering to those who most need the Church at this time, then when COVID-19 passes by, we would have lost these sheep for good.

"Through Him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord; in Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."
Ephesians 2: 21-22

It may be salient at this point in time, to consider the Models of the Church proposed by Cardinal Avery Dulles in 1974 and 1983. Models render often abstract concepts in visual forms. These visual forms then show how something functions. When that something touches upon the supernatural, models make the mysteries more meaningful by comparison to things more naturally known.

Cardinal Dulles initially proposed 5 models of the Church. The Church is:

1. an **institution** (with structured order, roles, and practices),
2. a **mystical communion** (uniting members in a shared faith),
3. a **sacrament** (as sign and instrument in the world),
4. a **herald** (with the mission of announcing the Good News of the Kingdom of God),
5. a **servant** (committed to social justice).

In his later writings, he added a 6th model:

6. The Church is a **Community** of Disciples

Pope Francis has recently introduced a 7th Model that is relevant to our age of Social Media:

7. The Church is a **Social Network**

For Pope Francis, the Church as Social Network, highlights the need to transform online networks, built on superficial “connections” into real human communities that mirror the image of the Holy Trinity. The connectedness of our shared faith emphasizes the words of Ephesians 4: 25 “we are members one of another.”

According to Pope Francis, **“The Church herself is a network woven together by Eucharistic communion, where unity is based not on ‘likes’, but on the truth, on the ‘Amen’, by which each one clings to the Body of Christ, and welcomes others.”** (World Communications Day Address, 2019)

Revisiting the idea as the Church as a Community of Disciples, we recall the persecution of 1980 as a result of the Guatemalan Civil War, which left a large area of Guatemala without priests. Many congregations however, in spite of the danger, continued to meet and gather in the churches left without priests.

During these gatherings, a lay leader would lead a reconciliation paraliturgy, and the community would break together the Word of God. Once a month, the community would send a representative to travel for 18 hours on foot, to a place where it was still permitted for Priests to function.

The representatives would then celebrate the Eucharist, in proxy of their communities. In time, the authorities clamped down on the Church and closed all the churches in Guatemala, but the people continued to gather. According to a live witness account, "Native Christians have a strong sense of community. They know full well that Christ is present wherever two or more are gathered together in his name... . So they said, 'If they forbid us to meet in the chapels, we shall gather under the trees of the wood or in the caves of the mountains.'" (Fernando Bermudez, *Death and Resurrection in Guatemala*)

The Church as a Community of Disciples is thus modelled upon the very first Christian Communities that we read about in Acts. They too were persecuted. They too were filled with the spirit of Jesus in a way seldom realised in contemporary Christian communities. They too were adjusting to a new style of worship and leadership that had to be developed to replace the style to which they had been accustomed as Jews.

With COVID-19, the physical buildings of the Church have been closed off momentarily, but with this is an exhortation to be the Church in Community. We have been tasked in this extraordinary time to be the Church in our domestic spheres, within the walls of our homes, in Jesus' name to witness to our faith that "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again."

Will we have the faith and the courage to witness from our homes and rooftops?

Activities to Build Community at Home

Random Acts of Kindness

Use your creative minds and available resources to come up with a way to bless others this season of COVID-19. For example to spread Easter Joy, someone filled paper bags with sweets and treats with a card saying “Something extra to show you God loves you.” and hung them in the lifts of her block with a sign to help themselves and explaining, “We planned for an Easter party for our children, but now that it can’t happen, we hope it brings cheer to children and families staying at home. We will clear these bags by 7pm tonight. Won’t leave a mess.” The response was tremendous. Out of the 40 bags put out in the lifts, only 4 remained at the end of the day, with someone also writing back to thank the family for their kindness.

A Listening Ear

Know someone who is grieving? Use social media as a platform to help these people share their stories and connect with people who have had similar experiences. The Social Media platform would serve to help those grieving to share their story through words, prayers, songs, or art and to feel connected to others who understand loss.

If you are a trained counsellor, you could also consider setting up a platform where people could make appointments with you on a pro bono basis during this time.

Meeting Knits (Needs)

During this time, foster homes and residential care settings are working overtime to meet the needs of the residents in care. You could check in with the organisations to see what is needed. Someone began to quilt and knit at home, and sent quilted blankets and knit toys to the foster homes. This provided a great source of comfort to the children who had experienced trauma.

Connecting Online

With the congregation confined at home, perhaps you have an extraordinary gift – you lead group exercises, you know how to knit, you are an amazing baker or cook. Why not connect with your neighbourhood communities, by making a video of yourself doing these amazing things, upload them to Youtube and send out the link to your neighbours and chat groups. It’s a great way to start a conversation with the members of your parish.

A Hand-up Not a Hand-out

People have been affected by the recent pandemic. Some have been retrenched, some have been put on mandatory no-pay leave. Some do not have food. There are mothers who do not have enough for the basic needs of their infants and toddlers.

Find out the needs of your Community:

Consider giving these people a hand-up – for example helping someone who needs to commute to work by donating a bicycle or sponsoring someone’s EZlink card for the month.

**“God is not Solitude, but Communion.”
– Pope Francis**

GIFT Appeal



Please support the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) campaign to build a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church. Please give generously for the vision of the archdiocese.

You may contribute online at <http://www.catholicfoundation.sg/give>, or through PayNow at UEN 201231391K (please leave your contact details under remarks to receive an acknowledgement)

Society of St Vincent de Paul An Urgent Plea for Donations

Please help SSSVP to continue helping the poor. They spend \$330,000 every month to support its 3,300 Friends in Need (FINs), and in this time of uncertainty, they have not been able to collect donations. You may give

- (1) By cheque made payable to **SSVP NC Singapore** and mail to:
Society of St Vincent de Paul
7A, Lorong 8, Toa Payoh,
#04-01 Agape Village
Singapore 319264
- (2) By PayNow - UEN number S61SS0149BNCS or visit the website www.ssvpsingapore.org to scan the QR code

Supporting the Catholic Businesses During this time

To support Catholic businesses during this time of COVID19, click on the CBN Market Place link provided:

<https://www.cbn.sg/web19/index.php/cbn-market-place>



CAREER COUNSELLING for PMEs

“If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.”
Milkon Berle

- CAREER GUIDANCE
- WORKPLACE WELL - BEING
- CAREER TRANSITIONS

HOW TO REGISTER?
To make an appointment +65 6801 7491 or email : admin@cbn.sg or Scan QR Code or http://bit.ly/CareerCounselling_REGIS

All sessions are by appointment, no walk-ins. Non-Catholics are welcome.
There will be a nominal charge of \$10 to cover administrative cost. All PMEs are welcome.

SCAN ME TO REGISTER
www.cbn.sg



Contact Us

Main: 6291 9272 **Parish Admin Office** (ext. 1)
Columbarium (ext. 3) **Email:** esm.secretariat@catholic.org.sg
Address: 17 St Michael's Road, Singapore 327976

Priests of the Parish

Parish Priest: Fr. Terence Pereira (ext.6)
Asst. Parish Priest: Fr. John Van Dich MEP (ext.5)
Asst. Parish Priest: Fr. Augustine Joseph (ext.7)

Income and Expenditure

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Sunday collections | \$6,952 |
| Donations | \$1,430 |
| SVDP Income | \$800 |
| SVDP Expenditure | \$6,690 |



Prayer bind the community together

There will be daily prayers at **8.00am**, **12.30pm** and at **6pm**.

We invite you to join us. We will be praying the prayers of the Church, namely, Lauds, Midday and Vespers.

This is one way we can stay connect with each other. The prayer are invariably 15 to 20 minutes long. Please sign up at:

esm.secretariat@catholic.org.sg

Transport and Drivers Needed for Less-Abled and Elderly

If you can provide transport using your own vehicles. Please contact the Parish Admin Office.

Seniors Club

As seniors club has discontinued indefinitely because of our current situation please be advised that our seniors team will keep in touch and stay connected via phone calls or online with seniors until we can meet again in the church premises. If you do not wish to be called, please let the team know.

In the Community

Staying Connected

In view of current situation please be advised that NCC reps will keep in touch and stay connected via phone calls or online with our neighbourhood parishioners until we can meet again on church premises, during neighbourhood gatherings or events. If you do not wish to be called, please let your NCC reps know.

Anointing of the Sick

Please be reminded that the anointing of the sick can be requested before you go to the hospital for surgery or for some procedure that would require you to stay in the hospital. You do not need to be in the hospital to call a priest for anointing. **Please note that for this time, the Anointing for the Sick will only be done for extreme cases.**

Wedding Bells

Those who desire to enter into the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony will have to book their wedding dates one year in advance. The booking will be confirmed only when the necessary documents are signed.

Recruitment Drive Sing for the Lord - Sunday, 5.30pm Eucharistic Celebration

Chorus Angelus Paxorium is looking for Choir members to Praise and Glorify the Lord.

Choir Seeking Organist

Coro di Velli Angeli Choir for the 5.30pm Sat Sunset EC is looking for an Organist.

Comms Ministry

We are looking for a few passionate parishioners who love to communicate and have skills or an interest in writing, design, photography, etc.

Please contact the Parish Admin Office to express your interest in the above ministries.

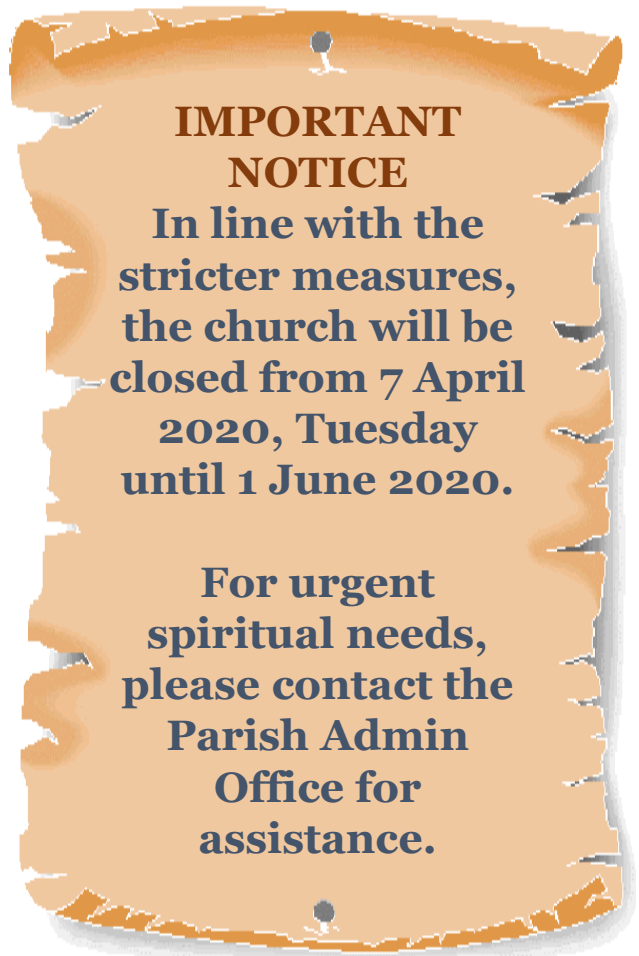


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It will continue to offer the latest
updates concerning the Church locally
and universally.



Your Weekly Donation

Dear Parishioners of St Michael

We look forward to your generosity to sustain the general operations and maintenance of the church. A weekly donation to the Church by electronic bank transfer using PayNow is available.

Alternatively, you can issue a cheque (payable to Church of St Michael) and mail it to the Parish Admin Office. Thank you once again for your generosity.

Here is what you need to do:

- Step 1: Select bank transfer
- Step 2: Key in Parish UEN # T08CC4028F
- Step 3: Check Name – Church of St Michael
- Step 4: Key in amount
- Step 5: Key in Ref - Mass Collection

God Bless.

Parish Priest
Fr Terence Pereira