

Our Pilgrimage



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10th May 2020, VOLUME 116
5th Sunday of Easter

Liturgical Reflection for the 5th Sunday of Easter

This week's readings' focus is on our calling as priests. It is from today's second reading that the Church teaches - The baptised have become "living stones" to be "built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood." By Baptism we share in the priesthood of Christ, in his prophetic and royal mission. We are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that [we] may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called [us] out of darkness into his marvelous light." *Baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers.* (CCC 1268).

The question then is: How do we live out our calling to become "priests that are becoming obedient to the faith"? To do this, we first need to understand what a priest does - a priest is one who prays, intercedes, offers sacrifices, preaches, and acts as a mediator to bring God to the people and vice versa. This is what we are called to do in our common priesthood, as the baptised.

Jesus tells us in today's Gospel, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6). As priests, we are called to be the gateway to our Father, as we become the gateway for others to know Him, through the living grace that we receive by answering His call.



In answering God's call we are to offer ourselves as a spiritual sacrifice. We are to have an unwavering belief and faith that Jesus will send down His Spirit to fill and guide us to "performing greater works" than He did.

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"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me."

John 14: 1

First Reading: Acts 6:1-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 32(33): 1-2,4-5,18-19

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Gospel: John 14:1-12



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)

While we have a priestly role, we cannot forget our prophetic role, that as the laity, we have a duty to go out into the world and make the Good News known. One way of doing this is through the way we go about our daily work. Just like the seven reputable men in the first reading who were appointed to the task of ensuring fair, daily distribution to the community, we can view our work as what we have been tasked to by God for the betterment of the society at large. When our work becomes difficult, our priestly role to offer ourselves as a sacrifice comes to the forefront. In bearing the difficulties of our work with a joyful spirit, we become the cheerful giver God loves and at the same time, exuding the attractiveness of Christ to the people around us, our prophetic role is exhibited.

How else can we live out the common priesthood in our daily lives? In a world filled with secularism and humanism, we can start by taking small, progressive steps in showing our faith to others. This can involve simple steps like praying the grace before meals and making it a clear symbol of our faith to others in public. As we continue to grow and others become more inquisitive about our way of life, we must become bolder and be prepared to bring our faith beyond ritualistic actions.

Living our priestly role includes the prophetic role: The preaching of the Word of God. In John chapter 1, the Word of God is revealed to be Jesus Himself. In a world that is confused and often swayed by popular opinion, it becomes all the more important to be bold in preaching this Word, as Jesus says in today's Gospel "I am the way and the truth and the life." (John 14:6).

The world today has distorted the truth and encourages people to seek fulfillment in life through materialism and worldly pleasures. Thus, the Word of God is crucial to guide people back as Psalm 119 says "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path."

Let us then not be afraid to go out today and always cling on to Jesus' exhortation of "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me." (John 14:1).

Theodore Yzelman & Jordan Hong



Going, Going, Gone – The Statistics of Catholic Disaffiliation

According to a 2015 study conducted by Pew Research and from a more recent study conducted by St. Mary's Press in collaboration with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University:

- ❑ The number of disaffiliated young millennials (ages 18-24) is placed at 36 percent and disaffiliated older millennials (25-33) at 34 percent.
- ❑ Approximately 12.8 percent of young adults in the U.S. between 18 and 25 are former Catholics.
- ❑ Approximately 6.8 percent of U.S. teenagers between 15 and 17 are former Catholics.
- ❑ Seventy-four percent said they stopped identifying as Catholic between ages 10 and 20, with a median age of 13.
- ❑ About one-third (35 percent) are "done" with religious affiliation but still believe in something bigger, perhaps even God.
- ❑ About 14 percent say religious affiliation and faith are "nonsensical."
- ❑ Nearly half (46 percent) are looking for another faith expression or practice that better aligns with their sense of spirituality.



The Church on Mission

By Brian Bartholomew Tan

Sources: Catechism of the Catholic Church; *Evangelii Gaudium*; *Ad Gentes*; *Redemptori Missio*, National Catholic Report; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the word "Church" (Latin *ecclesia*, from the Greek *ek-ka-lein*, to "call out of") means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose. *Ekklesia* is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people. By calling itself "Church," the first community of Christian believers recognised itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is "calling together" his people from all the ends of the earth. The equivalent Greek term *Kyriake*, from which the English word *Church* and the German *Kirche* are derived, means "what belongs to the Lord." (CCC 751)

In Christian usage, the word "church" designates the liturgical assembly, but also the local community or the whole universal community of believers. These three meanings are inseparable. "The Church" is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's Body. (CCC 752)

As the Church, we have been called and gathered together by God from all parts of the world to live out and to continue the Mission that the Lord Jesus Christ gave to his disciples - "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20)

Christ's instruction to the apostles is a call that is still relevant and which still resonates today. As Christians, there is a missionary mandate that we need to fulfil. We are told to go *ad gentes*—that is, "to the nations," to those who did not know Christ, and to proclaim the Gospel. As the apostles were faithful and obedient to Christ's command, his Church has grown and flourished. Many too, are the numbers who for their faith, have given up their lives, so as to plant the seed of Christianity on foreign soil.

The responsibility for fulfilling that mandate passes on unchanged to the bishops and to all the Catholics of today. The word "catholic"—that is, "universal"—embodies God's purpose for his Church. He wants to extend it to the farthest corners of the earth. He wants to show all people his love and mercy.

However, the mission of the Church is far from complete. In these special and challenging times of COVID-19, the Church needs to reconsider our Mission and Mission Field in a new way.

At this juncture, it is necessary to define what Missions are. The word, “mission” can be traced etymologically from the 16th century use of the term, denoting the “Sending of the Holy Spirit into the World”, and comes from the Latin *missio*, from *mittere*, meaning to “send”.

Missions are those “particular undertakings by which the heralds of the Gospel, sent out by the Church and going forth into the whole world, carry out the task of preaching the Gospel and planting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ. . . . The proper purpose of this missionary activity is evangelisation” (*Ad Gentes*, no. 6).

The Church can never “withdraw from her *permanent mission of bringing the Gospel* to the multitudes who as yet do not know Christ the Redeemer of humanity” (*On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate [Redemptoris Missio]*, no. 31, original italics). Therefore, all Catholics, by reason of their incorporation into the Church at Baptism, should fully participate and cooperate in Christ’s ongoing mission “to the nations.” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)

The Church has been called the Building of God (CCC. 756) and rightfully so, the physical building of the Church has been the locus of the sacramental life. However, with the constraints and the challenges put forth by COVID-19, the time has come to consider the other definitions and names of Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church provides these definitions of The Church. It is, accordingly, a *sheepfold*, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ. It is also the flock of which God himself foretold that he would be the shepherd, and whose sheep, even though governed by human shepherds, are unfailingly nourished and led by Christ himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of Shepherds, who gave his life for his sheep. (CCC 754)

And in CCC 755, “The Church is a *cultivated field*, the tillage of God. On that land the ancient olive tree grows whose holy roots were the prophets and in which the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles has been brought about and will be brought about again. That land, like a choice vineyard, has been planted by the heavenly cultivator.

With COVID-19, the Church as Building is still relevant, but not withstanding the fact, that the emphasis is now placed on us the People of God as the living stones (CCC 756). Beyond the physical building of the Church, we are now living in a very tangible way, the Church in our bodies.

The sheepfold and the cultivated vineyard have also shifted to reflect our interior dispositions and also where we are placed in closest proximity with other sheep – within our families and homes.

The mission then takes on a different light. Pope Francis’ exhortation may be seen as prophetic, “I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*) Instead of going physically to the nations, we are exhorted to carry out the New Evangelisation, by bringing Christ and being Christ to each other in our domestic arenas and to our closest neighbours. As Pope Francis says, “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.” This is our mission today as we live out the indications of a global pandemic. To fill our homes, and our online connections with this joy.

Can we Evangelise through Social Media?

Many years ago, before the advent of the Internet and of social media platforms, I kept a snail-mail correspondence with a number of pen-pals that I had known through pen-pal forums in magazines.

There was a certain romantic idea of keeping a far-reaching correspondence and receiving letters in the post. As the years went by, and busy-ness took over and some of us moved into jobs or out of our former residences, I lost touch with these pen-pals. So I was actually pleasantly surprised when after I had set up my Facebook account in 2009, a former pen-pal touched base with me, as she had managed to find my profile.

With the proliferation of social media comes an exciting time of connectivity that was previously not feasible. While these social media platforms have resulted in a boon in communications, there is a dark side to these as well. For example, in South Korea recently in the news, a Telegram group was shut down as a chat room for unsavoury and pornographic activities, and the founders and members of the group were arrested. While on Tiktok another popular platform with the young, there have been reports of sexual predators and inappropriate content.

The key then, as a Church, and a people of God, is to be vigilant and to reclaim these social media platforms as effective means to communicate the hope and truth of Christ.

For example, Fr. Jose Emmanuel Arroyo-Acevedo, a priest who was ordained only last year from Michiana, Indiana, recognised that there was a lot of inappropriate content on social media platforms that the young had practically unrestricted access to. He has been using Tiktok to outreach to his students in isolation and as a means of wholesome entertainment. Insofar, his media strategy has proven effective. Sharing videos of his dance moves and backflips, and of silly songs teaching Catechism on his Tiktok channel, Fr Jose has amassed up to 12,000 followers.

Thanks to Social Media, we are now networked to thousands and millions of people out there on the globe. However, Social Media is underutilised by the Church. It is used generally for updates of events and announcements, but within Social Media is the powerful potential for the deep and profound spiritual conversations that the human heart is yearning for.

There are three dimensions of Social Media as a place or site for a Christ-connection as writer Bryony Taylor proposes and that which I have expanded upon:

- 1) Social Media has the potential to become another Damascus – people are looking for meaning and conversion.
- 2) Social Media can be seen as another Emmaus – people are looking to embark on a journey of self-actualisation and realisation, with God walking besides them. This is where the spiritual conversation happens.
- 3) Social Media is the place where St. Paul disembarks at Athens – People are looking for engagement, conviction, intellectual discourse, and friendship with one another.

Why Social Media as an Outreach Tool for Evangelisation?

Social Media is extremely relevant. It empowers people to share their authentic voices. Due to the demographic it services, social media also connects very strongly with a younger congregation. Social Media Evangelism occurs when the platform is utilised to open-up faith-based discussions through shareable content.



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>



CBN COVID-19 Community Service Project

Catholic Business Network (CBN) is pleased to partner with their adopted charity, Canossaville Children & Community Services (CCCS) during this Covid-19 period, to provide 120 needy families with Aid Distribution and Financial Support. This CBN Covid-19 Project aims to provide 120 needy families with NTUC Vouchers, Food and Provisions in time for Hari Raya Puasa.

Kindly send them your donations by 20th May 2020 as per payment options below, so that CCCS can distribute this Aid in time for the Hari Raya Puasa weekend.

Bank Transfer:

Bank Account name : Catholic Business Network

Bank name : OCBC Ltd

Bank Account no. : [591-205570-001](https://www.ocbc.com.sg/branch/001)

PayNow: UEN T08SS0001L

Cheque: To be issued to **Catholic**

Business Network and mail to Agape Village, 7A Lorong 8 Toa Payoh, #04-01, Singapore 319264

CBN
catholic business network singapore
www.cbn.sg

CAREER COUNSELLING for PMEs

- CAREER GUIDANCE
- WORKPLACE WELL - BEING
- CAREER TRANSITIONS

"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."
Milbon Berle

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:** csm.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)



Tell others about Jesus.

Consider setting some time aside each day to read the Word of God, to draw strength, hope and wisdom from him. And share Jesus in your conversations.

For next few weeks, some of us may have opportunities that we do not usually have, to spend quality time with people close to us, including Jesus!

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: csm.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.

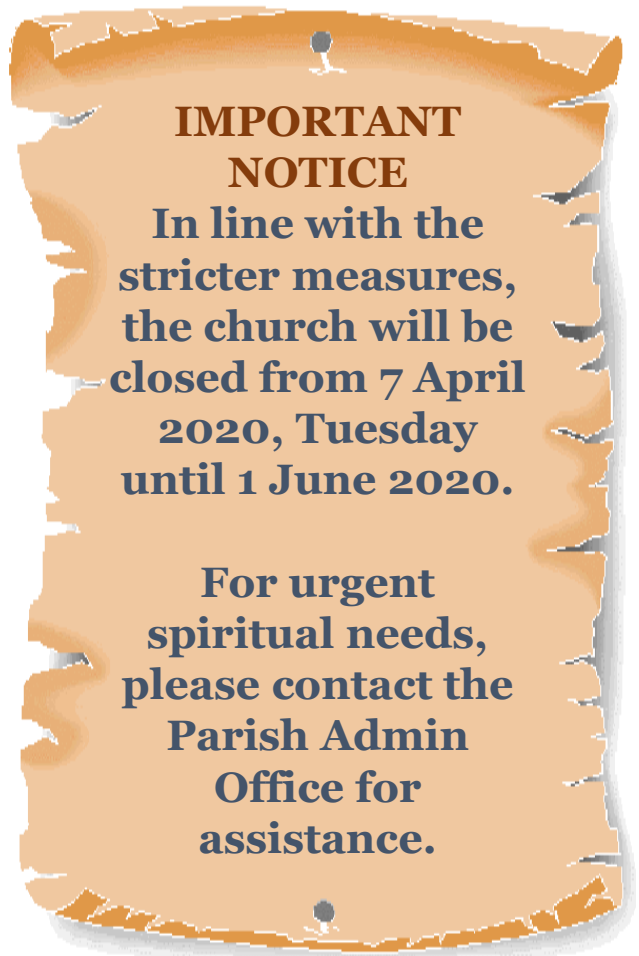


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<https://www.facebook.com/catholicnews>

Come and read the personal reflections
and articles that bring you spiritual
nourishment.

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