

Our Pilgrimage



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17th May 2020, VOLUME 117
6th Sunday of Easter

Liturgical Reflection for the 6th Sunday of Easter

In today's Gospel we are taken to the scene of the last supper, where Jesus having taught His disciples about serving and loving each other by washing their feet, calls on them to keep his commandments in response to his love.

What are these commandments? To love God "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind", and to "love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

While these two commandments to love God and neighbour are simply worded, Jesus understood that His disciples would struggle to fulfil this on their own, and would need God's presence to empower them.

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always" (John 14:16). Jesus reassures His disciples that God the Father will send the Holy Spirit to be with them always, giving them the strength to accomplish this and remain steadfast in obeying His teachings.



"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you."

[Continued on Page 2]

John 14: 16-17

First Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 65(66): 1-7, 16, 20
Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18
Gospel: John 14:15-21



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)

Indeed, the Holy Spirit is a powerful gift of God's love. At baptism we are given the Holy Spirit to guide us at the beginning of our faith and throughout our lives. Like a personal helper and friend, the Spirit aids, directs, and counsels us when we face tribulations and or find it difficult to keep the faith.

The Advocate Jesus spoke of gave clarity and reassurance to the disciples, even as they set out into a society and world that were opposed to what they were sent forth to proclaim. "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you, and will be in you." (John 14:17).

In our increasingly secularised society, we too can easily feel discouraged, especially when faced with resistance or even resentment from others when living out our faith. Yet, in the second reading, St Peter tells us that having been empowered by the Holy Spirit we should "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope" (1 Peter 3:15).

During the current COVID-19 situation, have we a newfound boldness in speaking to others about our faith, or have we found the inner strength to proclaim the Good News? Have we kept the commandments by loving our neighbour, such as catching up with a friend who recently lost his or her job, or ordered food for an elderly neighbour, or encouraged others to join our parish's online mass, Zoom formation and sharing sessions?

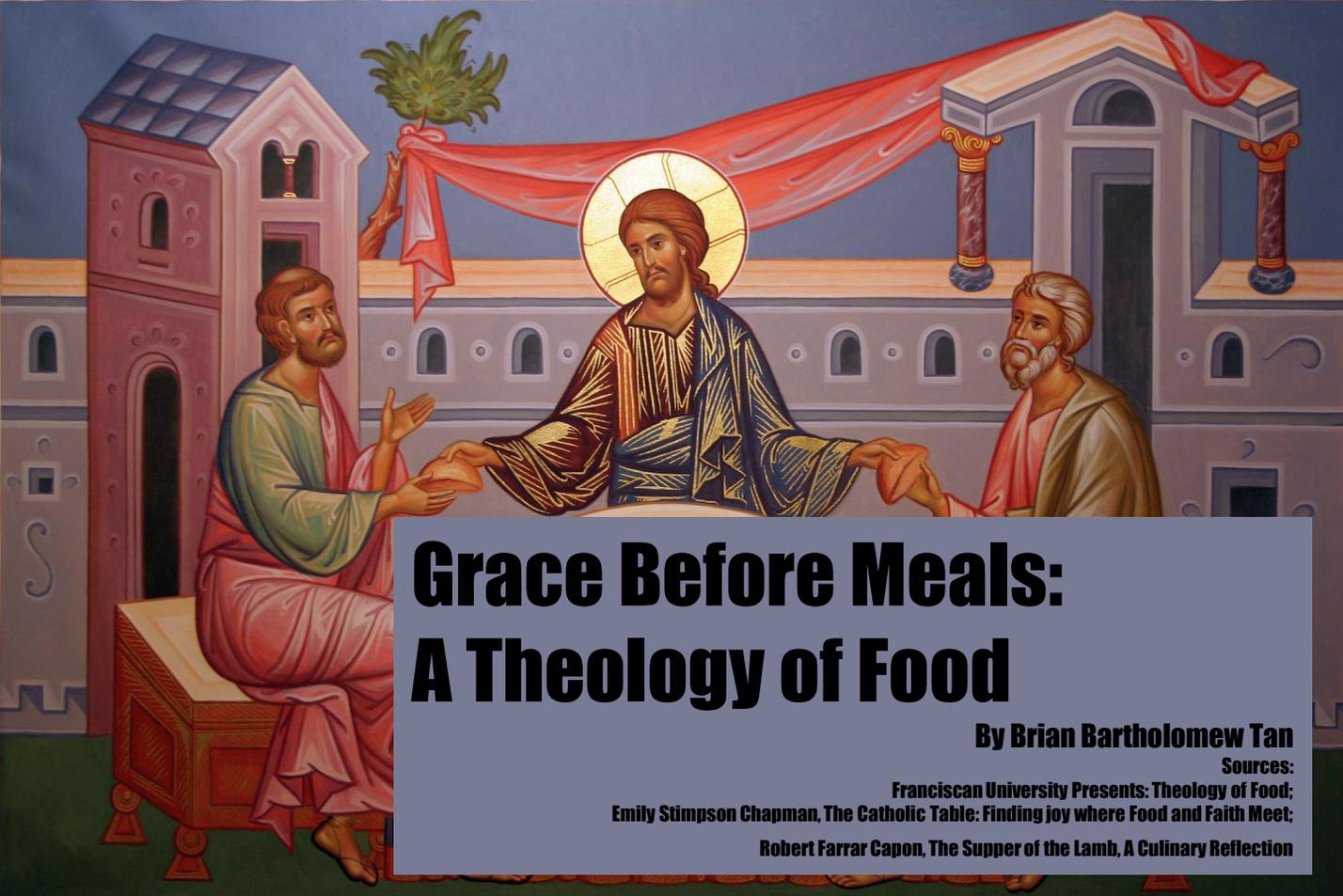
Many of us now have an abundance of time, yet still find ourselves working longer hours than before. By busying ourselves and rushing through our prayers and quiet time with the Lord, have we short-changed our relationship with God, and still love Him with the same amount as before, instead of with all our heart, soul and mind?

In the first reading, the people of Samaria experienced "great joy" as they witnessed the miracles being worked in their midst, believing and opening themselves to receive the Holy Spirit. Even amidst the challenges of keeping the faith in our present times, we should take hope that the Holy Spirit is always present within us, empowering and enlightening us with the wisdom and knowledge to do what is right, and truly love God and our neighbour.

When we learn to listen to and deepen our relationship with the Holy Spirit, we can then see God's hand in our lives and tell of His great love to those we meet. As the psalmist proclaims in the responsorial psalm, "Hear now, all you who fear God, while I declare what he has done for me. Blessed be God who refused me not my prayer or his kindness!" (Psalm 66:16,20). In doing so, our actions and words can then become fruits of goodness, giving life and hope to the world.

Leon Chng, Mervyn & Christine Wong, and Victor Chua





Grace Before Meals: A Theology of Food

By **Brian Bartholomew Tan**

Sources:

Franciscan University Presents: Theology of Food;

Emily Stimpson Chapman, The Catholic Table: Finding joy where Food and Faith Meet;

Robert Farrar Capon, The Supper of the Lamb, A Culinary Reflection

In 2019, the weight-loss market in the United States of America, weighed in at a whopping \$72 billion dollars. The industry runs the gamut from meal-replacement drinks, all the way to diet drugs and exercise programmes. The market is forecast to grow annually at a rate of 2.6%.

Human beings are hardwired for food – it is both the means of survival, and a means of nourishment. However, the danger stems from how food has become an idol in a booming industry that fuels an insecure “need” for it, and yet eschews and condemns it with the promotion of fitness endorsements who have larger-than-life endowments and thinner-than-thin waistlines. This creates a fatal scenario where followers of these influencers feel intense guilt as they are unable to keep

up with the impossible standards of Beauty that have been sucked in, airbrushed, and photoshopped. Food, rather than serving the original purpose as intended by God our Father, is now an idol upon which people project their fears, insecurities, and fetishes. It is an emotional substitute for real companionship, it is a replacement for real connection and authentic love.

It is important to go back to a sacramental and Eucharistic understanding of food. Food and sharing a meal has always been a prelude to the eventual Divine Banquet of the Bridegroom, Christ and His Bride, the Church, and the liturgical year is ordered with cycles of feasting and fasting to remind us of this heavenly banquet.

In using a sacramental and Eucharistic lens to view food, we understand that food is made by our Creator God, and every thing God made, He saw that it was good (Genesis 1). Food was created to delight our senses and to fill us, His creation, with a deep, and profound joy, as the food that we partake of today, points us and directs us to the Maker who made that food.

Robert Farrar Capon, a chef writes this: “Earth’s gorgeousness lies hidden in the glimpsed city it longs to become.” The earth in all its rooted loveliness is merely a compass to a better place in Heaven. Our appetites therefore do not end with this world, but we are in fact thirsting and hungering for a world beyond this.

As Psalm 34: 8 proclaims, “O taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!” Our hunger and our thirsts are for the Lord, and the Lord states it clearly, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.’” (John 4: 13-14)

With Jesus, food takes on a redemptive quality. Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree that they had been forbidden to eat of, and “the eyes of both were opened,” (Genesis 3: 7) After His resurrection, we see Jesus waiting for his disciples with a meal of fish freshly cooked on a wooded fire. In this invitation, the disciples “knew it was the Lord.” (John 21: 9-14) and in Luke 24, in the sharing of the meal and the breaking of bread the disciples who were on their way to Emmaus had “their eyes opened and they recognised Him.”

Furthermore, in assurance that He was truly alive, he asks his disciples, “Have you anything here to eat?” To which, they gave him “a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.” (Luke 24: 41-43) While eating predisposed Adam and Eve to shame as both became aware of their nakedness and hid from God the Father, eating in the case with Jesus opened the eyes of those who ate with Jesus to His true

identity as Resurrected Lord, removed their fear and shame, and gave them a glimpse of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus, Himself, in His humility, chose the simplest of food that was most easily available to the peasants of that time – bread and wine to be identified with. He could have taken everything else at the Passover Meal –the herbs, the lamb, but He took up the unleavened bread and the wine, what was essential to make up a meal.

In the Eucharist, as Systematic Theologian Regis Martin from the Franciscan University of Steubenville proposes in this analogy, Jesus is at once, the chef of the meal, the maitre d who welcomes the guests and runs the operations of the kitchen pass, and He is as well, the food which is served at the banquet.

The choice of the simplest of food is significant as attorney of the Banquet of the Lamb. It draws attention to the fact that God our Father took and takes delight in the simplest of things in creation, because it is He who made it. Man who is made in the image and likeness of God our Father, is thus invited to view the world as God our Father does. A grain of wheat or a tiny grape exists because God our Father created it, saw that it was good, and takes delight in it. Man was not made in the image and likeness of God for nothing.

In extrapolation, as posited by Robert Farrar Capon, if so much detail and finesse went into the making of an onion, “think how much regarding it took on the part of that old Russian who looked at onions and church spires long enough to come up with St. Basil's Cathedral.” Likewise, we are invited to think of how much loving attention God our Father put into making a simple ingredient and then expand that into an attempt of understanding the amount of time and thought that was put into making us. If a solitary ingredient is a reflection of God, what more a meal that is shared in solidarity with the Communion and the Community of the Holy Trinity?

Eating food and sharing a meal are important in reminding us of the hospitality and the love of God. Accordingly, St. Luke writes an additional 7 accounts of meals not found in the other Gospels. However, like the Pharisees, we may be fixated more on the trying-to-impress part, rather than the building of meaningful relationships with the guests who are present. In this case, food became for the Pharisees, who were great entertainers, but not at all hospitable, an idol. Like the golden calf at Horeb, in making the statue the greatest point, the Israelites substituted their glory for a man-made thing, missed the point of the matter altogether and put a slur on God.



The Church as the Family of God

By Brian Bartholomew Tan

Sources:
Catechism of the Catholic Church;
Didache Bible

“Stretching out his hand toward his disciples, Jesus said, ‘Here are my mother, and my brethren! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.’” (Matthew 12:49-50)

“God said, ‘I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.’” (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

God calls every human person to become his son or daughter, and to come into His true family in Christ. The Church is the assembly of all who respond to that call.

The image of the Church as the Family of God is found in the teachings of Christ. This motif of the family is found in Christ’s definition of his mission, his Person, his commands,

his relationship with God the Father, and with his disciples, and the Church’s relationship with God. Christ is the eternal Son, sent to regather in himself those whom the Father has called to be his beloved daughters and sons (see Ephesians 1:5). For this reason, the CCC teaches that “the Church is nothing other than the ‘family of God”” (CCC. 1655)

When we were baptised, we received the sanctifying grace that incorporates us into God’s family. This phenomenon is known as Divine Filiation – God accepts us as his son or daughter. This Divine Filiation given at Baptism is strengthened through the Sacrament of Confirmation (CCC. 1213, 1303, 2026, 2798).

In Christ, is the revelation that God is an eternal and perfect father – Abba Father (CCC. 2214, 2398), while Christ is alone the eternal and Only-Begotten Son of the Father, we are exhorted by him to approach God as “our Father” (CCC. 854, 959).

The motif of the Church as the Family of God can and should be extended into our domestic spheres. In Ephesians 3:14, we are reminded by St. Paul that God’s Fatherhood is the origin and standard of human fatherhood. While our families are not perfect, we are invited to become perfect as the Father himself is perfect. With this model then, we are invited to follow the Will of God our Father, most especially in our everyday and close interactions, our family meals at table, and to become a real Family of God within our own families.

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)

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>

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



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/001591)

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:** 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 for 4th May to 10th May

Sunday Collections	\$4,837
Donations	\$1,520
Charity Paynow	\$550

Prayer binds the community together

There will be daily prayers at **8am, 12.30pm** and **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 connected with each other. The prayers 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.

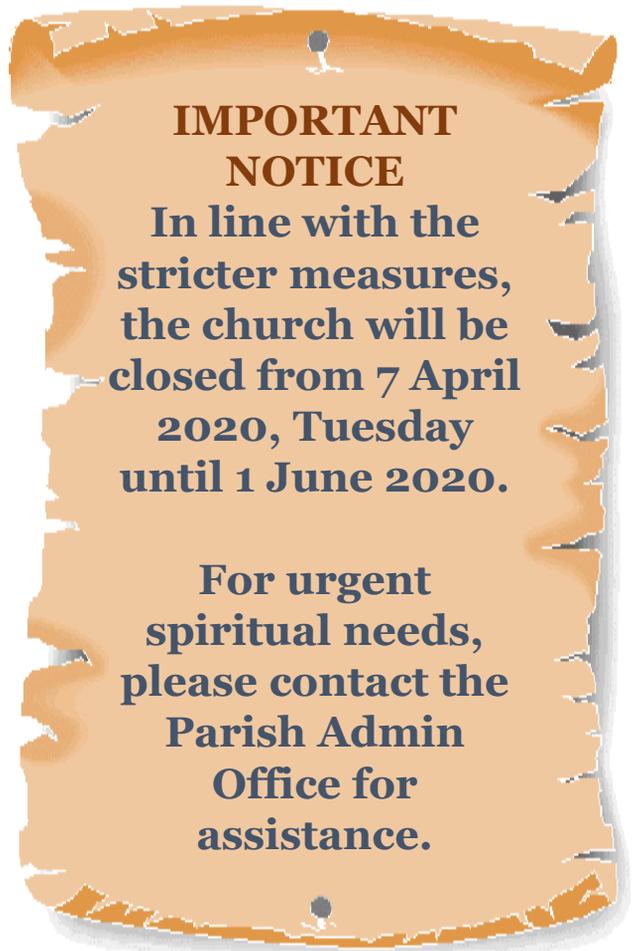


The Catholic News is going Digital!

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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