

Our Pilgrimage



StMichael.catholic.sg



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31st May 2020, VOLUME 119
Pentecost

Liturgical Reflection for the Pentecost



The solemnity of Pentecost draws to a conclusion the Easter season, exactly fifty days after our Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday. We know from the Gospel reading that on the evening of Easter Sunday, shortly after Jesus' resurrection, He appeared to his disciples. He then commissioned them with these words, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21). With these words, He passes over the baton to His disciples and followers to continue the mission of evangelisation.

In this event, Jesus leaves us with two great gifts. First, He sends us the Holy Spirit by breathing on the disciples. The breath of God is life giving; just as Adam was brought to life by God's breath, as during the Chrism Eucharistic Celebration, the bishop breathes on the oil and invokes the Holy Spirit upon the oil, making it the symbol of the Holy Spirit's life-giving presence.

'On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

[Continued on Page 2]

John 20: 19

First Reading: Acts 2: 1-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103 (104): 1, 24, 29-31, 34

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

Gospel: John 20:19-23



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)

Second, He gave them the power to forgive sins. During the sacrament of reconciliation, the Holy Spirit is invoked and the opening line of the prayer of absolution goes “God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins.”

Then on Pentecost Sunday, the breath of God in the form of wind descends upon the apostles and disciples gathered together; “suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind and it filled the entire house, in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest upon each one of them.” (Acts 2:2-3) This powerful and visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit is still very much with us today, and is witnessed by the many miraculous healings when the Holy Spirit is invoked.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the spirit enabled them to proclaim.” (Acts 2:4) While not everyone has the gift of tongues, nor the ability of language to proclaim the Word of God to all peoples of all nations, God has gifted each of us the ability to transcend all language and cultural barriers through the language of love. What better way to proclaim the Word of God than by putting the commandment to love your neighbour into action? Loving acts, done in the name of our Lord, speaks to the heart and has the ability to overcome language and cultural barriers.

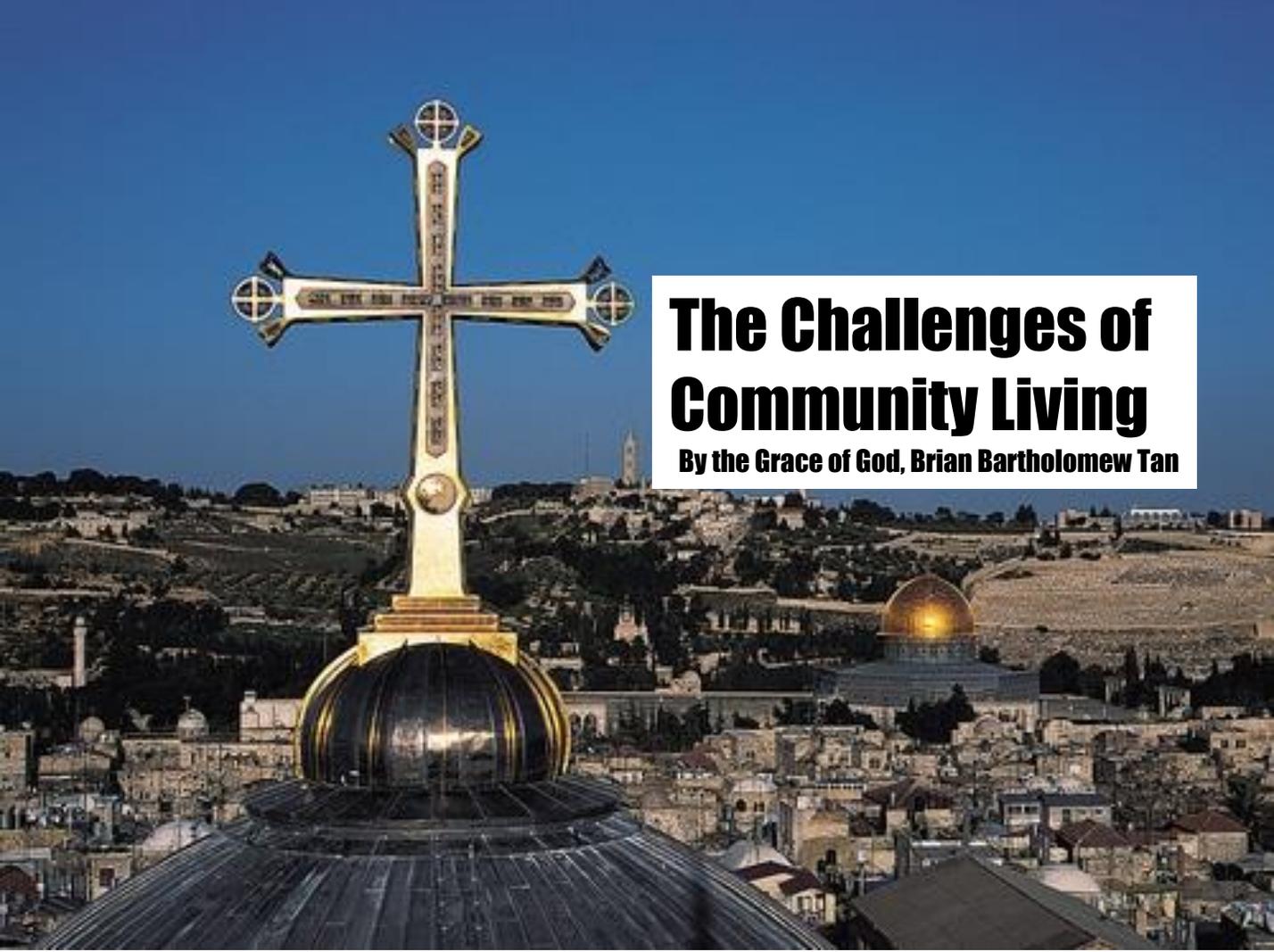
While there are many different gifts of the Holy Spirit, we know that they are all given to us for our benefit; “To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.” (1 Cor 7). Pentecost reminds us to invoke the Holy Spirit and to creatively utilise His gifts for the benefit of our neighbours.

“Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.”



Henry Seah, Oswald Song,
Helen Yzelman

“Let the minds of the faithful rejoice, that throughout the world One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is praised by the confession of all tongues, and that that sign of His Presence, which appeared in the likeness of fire, is still perpetuated in His work and gift. For the Spirit of Truth Himself makes the house of His glory shine with the brightness of His light, and will have nothing dark nor lukewarm in His temple. And it is through His aid and teaching also that the purification of fasts and alms has been established among us.” – St. Leo the Great



The Challenges of Community Living

By the Grace of God, Brian Bartholomew Tan

It is a myth and a fallacy to assume that there exists a perfect Christian community. The early Church faced as well its own set of challenges inter-community, intra-community – within and from external forces. For example we see in Acts 15: 37 – 40, that Barnabas wanted to take with them John Mark, but Paul disagreed with his decision, “and there arose a sharp contention, so that they separated from each other; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.”

Even among the apostles, there were clashes in personality as we see in Luke 9: 46, “And an argument arose among them as to which was the greatest.” The difference was that they, through the mediation of Jesus and with the unity of the Holy Spirit, managed to resolve their differences, work with their differences, and remain together as a community.

If you would recall the iconic opening scene of the film, *The Sound of Music*, Maria Rainer was a postulant who having spent some considerable time singing on the hills, returns late to the abbey. When I was living out a 5-week observership at the Cistercian Abbey of Tarrawara, Melbourne at the end of 2016 to 2017, I was *Maria* and I caused quite a bit of inconvenience to the brothers.

Living in the Novitiate House was not an easy thing to do. One had to truly put aside the self and be considerate of the brothers living together. Now, after the prayers of Compline, one was supposed to observe the Grand Silence. No one could speak, or do anything. The entire monastery had to be quiet. I often got into trouble with the brother novices, because my door would slam shut if I left it ajar to let ventilation into the room, or I would leave the communal bathroom floor wet, or I’ll take a shower after Compline. However, being the charitable brothers they were, they simply chided me gently. Yet, those days were important as they taught me about community-living. There were chores to be carried out and each had an equal hand in mowing the lawn, or chopping firewood, or washing the dishes.

1 Corinthians gives us an insight to the types of challenges faced in a community. The community of Corinth was struggling. They were divided by different power struggles and claims to partisanship and factions (1 Corinthians 1: 10 – 4:21); there were lawsuits and grievances among the members (1 Corinthians 6: 1-11); Idolatry had been allowed to infiltrate the community (1 Corinthians 8:1 – 11:1); and there was inequality at the communal table (1 Corinthians 11: 17-34).

The solution proposed by St. Paul to alleviate these divisive issues was to enable the community in Corinth to understand that “the body does not consist of one member but of many.” (1 Corinthians 12 :14)

Using the analogy of the Church as a Body, St. Paul related that each person has a certain role to play in building up the Church, Christ’s Mystical Body. Like various parts of the body, all of the faithful must work in harmony, and none should feel superior to any other or reject the gifts of another. The Holy Spirit is the source of Christian unity, and each of us plays a part in building and maintaining that unity. (cf. CCC 787-798, 805-807, 1988, 2003) As St. Paul goes on to say, “But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior part, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.” (1 Corinthians 12: 24-26)

By the Holy Spirit, the baptised become members of Christ’s Body and enter into a *katholikos*, universal, hence Catholic community that transcends all earthly distinctions (CCC. 694) As members of Christ’s Body, the faithful share in a “communion of charity”, a solidarity in which everyone shares in the joys and the sufferings of every individual member. Because the Church is one body, every action of its members can have a positive effect through virtuous deeds or a harmful influence through sinful actions. (CCC. 779, 953, 1265, 1469, 1508)

The challenges faced by the community of believers today are no different from those seen in the early Church – squabbles, politicking, a feeling of superiority or entitlement, inequality, gossip, the smearing of reputation, backstabbing, ignoring the poor and the needy, getting hung-up over the minutia of trivialities, like arguing over whether toilet paper should be placed in the Church toilet or not, or a 50cent price difference of a bowl of Mee Siam sold in the canteen, or placing the blame of one’s mistakes on another ministry. These superficial arguments can lead to deep rifts if nothing is done to repair the relationships found in the community. For example, the Youth Council in a particular Catholic Church in Singapore imploded upon itself and the Youth Ministries disbanded due to irreconcilable differences between the Charismatic Youth congregation and a more traditional Youth congregation of that parish.

In these extraordinary times of COVID-19, the spatial proxemics of what a community entails have become smaller, as families are exhorted to stay at home. The challenges of community living become magnified as people literally rub shoulders with each other in a confined space for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. With the old saying, “familiarity breeds contempt”, it is easy for tempers to go awry as jibes are taken the wrong way, for misunderstandings to occur as words and insults fly freely, and for us to take for granted our loved ones who provide for us.

When I was at the Cistercian monastery, my gaffes and blunders could have easily caused arguments and misunderstandings in the community. However, what saved the day, was charity, and a day-to-day understanding that we did not exist alone.

Likewise, St Paul, beyond stating that the Community is the Body of Christ, proposes yet a better way in 1 Corinthians 13: Love. Only Love can sustain and cause a community living to flourish. Only love of our neighbour can allow us to go beyond ourselves, to stop being self-centred, and to be mindful and considerate of others. For in love, we die to ourselves in self-sacrifice as we desire only the good of our neighbour.

“When Jesus was baptised, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him.” (Matthew 3:16)

“There appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the holy Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:3-4)

Water, fire, and a dove are among the symbols of the Holy Spirit in Scripture and Tradition. From Scripture are derived certain images representing the Holy Spirit and his role in the Christian life.

Water: Throughout Salvation History, water has been a powerful image of cleansing and new life, as at Baptism. (cf. CCC 694)

Anointing and the Seal: At Confirmation, the Sacred Chrism confers the Holy Spirit to strengthen and heal the recipient to live as an adult believer. The believer is sealed in the Spirit: “God the Father set his seal” on Christ and also seals us in Christ (John 6:27; cf 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:3; cf CCC 695, 698)

Fire: At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended as tongues of fire, bestowing gifts that enabled the Apostles to proclaim fearlessly the message of Christ (cf Acts 2). Fire is representative of courage and purification (cf CCC 696)

Cloud and Light: The Holy Spirit was in the cloud that led the Israelites in the desert (cf Exodus 40:36-38) and in the cloud of the Transfiguration (cf Luke 9:34-35). The light of the Holy Spirit reveals to us the truths of God. (cf CCC 697)

A Hand: From the early days of Christianity, the Holy Spirit has been conveyed by the laying of hands (cf Mark 6:5; 8:23; 10:16; Mark 16:18; Acts 5:12; 14:3), a gesture used in several sacraments and in the Eucharistic Prayer during Eucharistic Celebrations (cf CCC 699)

Finger of God: Christ expelled demons by the “finger of God” (cf Luke 11:20); the Law was written on stone tablets “by the finger of God”, and the Word is written “with the Spirit of the Living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts” (Exodus 31:18; cf 2 Corinthians 3:3) (cf CCC 700)

Dove: A dove is seen in the story of Noah’s Flood (a symbol of Baptism) (cf Genesis 8:8-12) and at Christ’s own Baptism (cf Matthew 3:16).

Symbols of the

Holy Spirit

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>

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."
Milton 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

Society of St Vincent de Paul An Urgent Plea for Donations

Please help SSVP 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

World Communications Sunday 2020

As with previous years, the Church collections collected during the weekend of World Communications Sunday will be channelled to the efforts of the Archdiocesan Media Apostolate.



The Catholic News is going Digital!

Bookmark the website – catholicnews.sg or visit the facebook page – <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.

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)

Income for 18 May to 24 May

Sunday Collections	\$5,157 <small>(excluding 24 May for World Communications Sunday)</small>
Donations	\$1,900

Consolidated Income/Expenses

Income for March	\$58,881.34
Expenses for March	\$56,089.64
Income for April	\$78,935.98
Expenses for April	\$51,378.94

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:

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.



Registration Link for CSM Zoom Eucharistic Celebrations via Zoom:
<https://tinyurl.com/SundayECs>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As we head for a slight easing of the measures from 1 June onwards, please note that the church premises will be closed until further notice. There will be no counselling sessions and no sacraments available.

For urgent spiritual needs, please contact the Parish Admin Office for assistance.

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