

God and His Creation

part 2



- written by T P Ng

- About His omnipresence: "And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account." (Hebrew 4:13)

- About His nature: "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone." (Deuteronomy 6:4) "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3) "...love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)

True, the study of God is very inspiring. "The study of God is the only study which can be called wisdom in the fullest sense of the Word ..." (St Thomas of Aquinas)

Creation

When we know that God is the Designer or Creator, our intellect will enable us to believe that He creates all things, seen and unseen. But, there are some people including some scientists still mention that God's Creation is mythical and the Bible often conflicts with science.

In my last article, we learn that: God desires everyone to be saved. Undoubtedly, this is the loving purpose of God for man. The Holy Bible of God is naturally written in biblical language suitable for man's simple interpretation in the ancient time. In the past and in the middle ages, people and even the church believed that the earth was the center of the universe. Protestants Martin Luther and John Calvin stipulated that the earth stood still. The concept derived from the script of the Bible. However, we should understand that the Creator regards man as the center of Creation. Here again, is it not true that God's purpose of creating the universe appears to be solely concerned with man to know and love Him. To this day without surprise, our text books and literal writings still describe: the sun comes out from the east and it sets in the west; or the bright moon hangs in the sky.

In regards to Genesis of the Old Testament on God completed His Creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, the late Holy Father, Pope Pius XII explained as follow:

The word Day in the ancient Hebrew language "Yom" means not only day but also means period. Of course, a period can be short or long, perhaps as long as millions of years. The aim to divide the whole Creation into six days of work and one day of rest is that God wants the Hebrew, His chosen people and all mankind to know two points. Firstly, God is the Creator of heaven and earth and that is why He inspired the writer of the Holy Bible to express in ancient but biblical language suitable for the ancient time. Secondly, God wants us to work for six days and rest for one day in order to have a day to honour Him. The fourth commandment of the Ten Commandments: 'Observe the Sabbath Day and keep it holy' certainly substantiates this point.

St Augustine, in one of his articles mentioned that: "For the heaven and earth, the universe and questions on creation, Christians who do not understand well the language and meaning of the Holy Bible, should not give free interpretation." In Psalm 90:4 it says, "For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night." Again in the New Testament, "With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day." (2 Peter 3:8)

Today, Catholic scholars can give a scientific view on the six days' work in Genesis. Actually, it is in connection with the planet earth and the whole solar system (perhaps with very little concern of the outer universe). The six days relate to planet earth as a home for mankind. Just how much time passed between the 'beginning' of the Creation of the universe as recounted in verse one and the start of the 'first day' described in verse three and four is not stated. So, by its very silence on when the 'beginning' took place, the Bible allows for present estimates of the universe's age or for any future revision of such estimates.

Sunset Mass

5.30pm

Rosary

4.40pm

Sunday Masses

8.30am (Mandarin)

11.00am (English)

2.00pm (Cantonese) Chapel, 3rd Floor

4.20pm (English)

Weekday Masses

7.20am

5.30pm

Intercessory Prayer

7.15pm (Eng, Thu, Adoration Chapel)

Infant Jesus Devotions

5.30pm (Thu, followed by Mass)

4.00pm (Sun, followed by Mass)

Divine Mercy Devotions

Fri, after 5.30pm Mass

Sun, 12.30pm (Mandarin)

Sion Adorers - Holy Hour

7.45pm - 8.45pm (Sat, Adoration Chapel)

Hour of Mercy (Adoration Chapel)

3.00pm (Daily)

Counselling at SPP

Family Life Society Counselling every Monday 11.00am - 2.00pm and 6.30pm - 9.00pm. Call 6382 0688 for appointment

Church of Saints Peter & Paul

225-A Queen Street, Singapore 188551

Tel: +65 6337 2585 Fax: +65 6334 5414

email: sts.peterpaul@pacific.net.sg

www.sppchurch.org.sg

We welcome literary contributions to The Apostles. Please email your submission to spptheapostles@gmail.com. You can also download The Apostles at:

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Rev Fr JOSEPH KOH OCD

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Rev Fr GREGORY HON OCD

Provincial-Delegate:

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Parish Secretary:

Ms Martha Loh, Ms Jannie Lui

Music & Liturgy Office:

Jacob Wee, sppjacob@gmail.com

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Patrick Chan, spppatrick@gmail.com

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Alex Wong, sppalex@gmail.com

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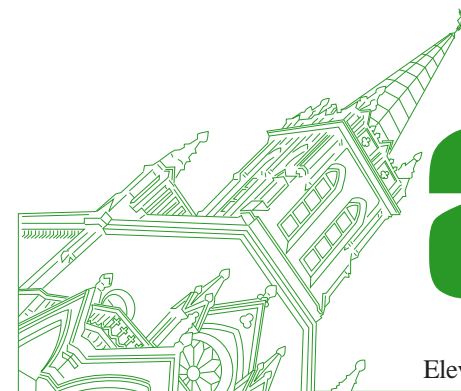
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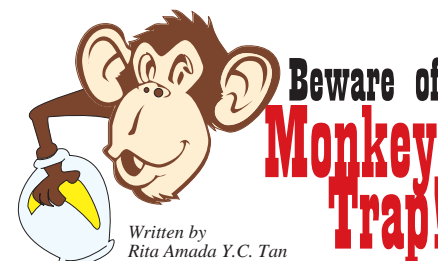


the apostles

Church of Saints Peter and Paul

Eleven Sunday in Ordinary Time

13 June 2010 Year C



Written by Rita Amada Y.C. Tan

I've once read an interesting book written by Robert M. Pirsig that was once rejected by 121 publishers (more than any other best-selling books, according to the Guinness Book of Records) but eventually sold over 4 million copies in 27 languages. One of the incredible stories that the author wrote in his book was on how the monkeys love to eat and snatch food from the people at South India. So much so that the harassed natives of South India have come with some ingenious ideas of catching the monkeys. The natives would dig a long, narrow hole in the ground and then use an equally long, slender object to widen the bottom of the hole. Next, they'd pour rice (the bait) down into the wider portion at the bottom of the hole. The greedy monkeys would soon be lured by the bait and stretch their arms deep into the bottom of the hole to grab as much rice as possible. However, a fist that was full of rice would not be able to pull out through the narrow opening and the monkey would be stuck. Can the monkeys be free from the trap? Yes, if they were to let go of the rice! Sadly, the monkeys valued the food so much that they wouldn't let go of the food. They'd hold onto the rice until it comes out of the ground or they die trying to pull it out, whereby the latter was likely to take place.

Sometimes, we can be like the monkeys in South India. The monkeys valued the food so much that they would take the risk to be captured or at the expense of their dear lives. The monkeys in the story might sound silly to some of us but we can be like them too. We may not be as greedy as the monkeys that choose rice or food above everything but we do have something equivalent to the rice. The equivalent could be something good like our values, beliefs and faith. On the contrary, the equivalent could be something bad like our sins or some sinful attachments. If we're reluctant and stubbornly hang onto our past and refuse our Lord's forgiveness and healing

to rejuvenate and heal us, then such rigid values would make us fragile.

However, I really can't imagine our loving Father would want us to be like a bunch of those silly monkeys! He wants to forgive us and does not want us to hold on to our handful of rice (past and existing sins) that would drag us down. Isn't it wonderful if we could realise the depth of our Lord's infinite love? If we were to understand His love then we'll have no fear in approaching Him to ask for His mercy on us and on the whole world.

The Gospel according to Luke has shown a beautiful meeting between a sinful woman and Jesus who illustrates His unconditional love and mercy. She washed His feet with her tears, dried them with her hair and anointed them with ointment. While Simon the Pharisee and the others at the table were questioning, Jesus said to the Pharisee "So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." (Luke 7:47) Jesus forgives even the most shameful sinners and His words to her are words that He would tell us: "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." (Luke 7:50)

David sinned and was forgiven by God. The woman in the Gospel sinned and was forgiven by Jesus. Our sins caused Jesus to suffer and be crucified but He still loves and wants to walk closely with us.

And, I'll never ever forget my first Confession (or Reconciliation) on the 4th of May 2010. It's undeniably nerve-racking, especially coming face to face to our beloved parish priest, peeling off my beautiful 'mask' from my face and coming clean with all my ridiculous sins and wrongdoings I've committed. I'm so ashamed to the point that I couldn't even bear to look at the priest but to look down at the desk where I saw a crucifix on the table top instead! Though nerve-racking it was, I still couldn't stop giving thanks to our Father on how blessed we are with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It's really a good opportunity for us to open ourselves to God, admit our filthy and sticky sins sincerely, seek repentance and through the loving Priests, we're given the amazing

Grace to begin again. Just like the woman in the Gospel! We're able to hear Jesus say to us: "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Let us invite our most merciful and loving Lord to come into our lives and turn everything good. Let us also pray for stronger faith in Jesus so we'll do His works of charity. As "I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me." (Gal 2:20)

But I've one worry now. If I were the monkey, I wonder if the keyboard I'm typing on could be the bait! Beware of monkey trap! Must let go!

Come celebrate the 140th anniversary of our parish on the Feast day of Sts Peter & Paul!

Triduum 140

24 Jun '10 (Thur): 140

Praise & worship at 6.00 pm, followed by Mass at 6.30 pm

25 Jun 10 (Fri): Love the lord, feed the lambs.

Praise & worship at 6.00 pm, followed by Mass at 6.30 pm

26 Jun 10 (Sat): Ever-growing parish?

Praise & worship at 5.30 pm, followed by Mass at 6.00 pm

Feast day: Spirit-filled leaders Peter & Paul... are you one of us?

27 Jun '10 (Sun) at 11.00 am

Fr Ignatius Huan will be celebrating all the Masses.

SPP FEAST DAY LUNCH

To commemorate our **SPP 140th Anniversary Feast Day**, our Church is organizing a buffet lunch on Sun 27 Jun '10, 12:30 pm at Hotel Royal @ Queens (across the Church). Adults: \$15/pax. Child (Below 12 yrs old): \$10/pax. All Church members and parishioners are welcome. Please contact your ministry coordinators for registration and payment in advance. For registration & further information, please contact Sandra Koh 9362 2728, email: jscfan@gmail.com or Michael Cheuk 9011 9997 email: mikecheuk@rocketmail.com.

**11TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY
TIME (13 JUN 2010)**

READINGS:
Sunday Missal (Year C): Page 275

Responsorial Psalm:
“Forgive, Lord, the guilt of my sin.”

Prayers of the Faithful: Page 278

**Readings for the Week:
Mon 14 Jun – Sat 19 Jun 2010**

Mon : 1 Kgs 21 : 1-16/Mt 5: 38-42
Tue : 1 Kgs 21 : 17-29/Mt 5: 43-48
Wed : 2 Kgs 2: 1.6-14/Mt 6:1-6,16-18
Thu : Sir 48: 1-5/Mt 6: 7-15
Fri : 2 Kg 11:1-4,9-18.20/Mt 6: 19-23
Sat : 2 Chr 24:17-25/Mt 6: 24-34

REFLECTION

The theme for this week’s Eucharistic celebration is the forgiving Christ. Indeed, Christ’s mercy is once again manifested in today’s Gospel reading. However, I am even more stricken by the courageous acts of the woman. Despite being aware of others’ condescending looks on her, she slipped into the Pharisee’s house. She wept profusely as she was deeply repentant for her bad life. When her tears dropped on Jesus’ feet, she wiped them away with a woman’s prized possession – her hair. Then, she kissed Jesus’ feet and poured perfumed ointment on them. She was an uninvited guest or might be regarded as a trespasser, but she was doing all the gestures of hospitality that a good host should show for his guest. In contrast, the Pharisee who had invited Jesus to his house did not do anything to welcome Jesus, not even the basic courteous act of washing a guest’s feet with water. But this repentant woman risked being accused of showing audacity in her process of seeking forgiveness from Christ. Look, just how determined and fearless she was!

When we commit a sin, do we have the courage to confess to God? Do we dare to seek God’s pardon and mercy? Are we just as determined to restore our relationship with God by getting our sins removed or are we still hindered by pride or fear of embarrassment?

“Don’t Say A Few Prayers... Listen to Him”

written by Michael Hii from St Peter’s Church, Kuching, Sarawak

My wife Eileen Kueh and I are here for a few weeks seeking medical treatment, we take this opportunity to treat this as a retreat.

We went to the Adoration Chapel early in the morning of Wednesday 28 April, to spend some quiet time with the Lord before we went to Mt Elizabeth Hospital for radiotherapy. Outside the Chapel we met Fr Anselm Phang, he was putting on his shoes. “Hi Father, we come here to say a few prayers before we go to the Hospital.” Fr Phang responded, “Michael, Don’t Say A Few Prayers... Listen to Him”. Oh ya correct, we should be listening to Our Lord. That morning in the Chapel, unlike other day, I did not bother Our Lord with my prayers. I tried to listen. Nothing, no voices, nothing. Then I remembered the famous line of Samuel, “Speak Lord, your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10). That was the only thought in my mind. We left for the Hospital, did the radiotherapy, rested for a while, came back for the 3 o’clock Hour of Mercy Prayers. For the last 2 weeks, our routine had been the same: Visiting the Blessed Sacrament at the Adoration Chapel early in the morning, went to the Hospital for treatment, came back, had a rest, joined the Divine Mercy Prayers at 3 pm, waited for a while (the Church Bookshop and the nearby Kopitiam helped a lot), and attended the 5.30 pm evening Mass.

While nobody wants to be sick and have to go through lengthy and painful treatments, we thank God for giving us this

opportunity to be here for a few weeks, we treat it as a retreat. We truly find peace and joy praying in the Adoration Chapel, the atmosphere is serene in the presence of Our Lord. Today after the Divine Mercy prayers, one lady approached my dear wife Eileen and talked to her. The first word she said was you have done Chemotherapy! (hmm, how did she know?). With words of encouragement and concerns, she gave her a special prayer card to pray (Healing and Keeping Prayer / Spiritual Warfare Prayer). Her name is Philo. I was thinking, maybe God is speaking through Philo? During the Evening Mass, Fr Phang in his sermon said, “Prayers mean Listening”. “Open your mind to the Holy Spirit...” Listen, Listen to Him instead of ordering God to do this and that in our prayers!

Next day, Thursday, we started the day with a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the Adoration Chapel. Again, I did not pray, I tried to listen. Nothing, no voices, nothing. Again I said, “Speak Lord, your servant is listening”. We took the newly opened Circle Line at Bras Basah Station, changed to the North South Line at Dhoby Ghaut, alighted at the Orchard Station and walked towards Mt E, as we approached the Hospital, we met Carol, the nurse from Dr Kong’s Clinic. Her kind words and concerns really warmed our hearts, she suggested we do the Blood Tests on Friday instead of Monday as Monday is normally very busy at the lab, coupled with the fact that this Saturday is a Holiday (1st May Workers Day, for us Catholics, it is Feast Day of St Joseph the

The Lighter side of The Apostles
the beagle with yellow slippers



Worker). Oh ya correct, it will be very hectic if on Monday we have to go to the lab very early and have to wait for 6 hours for the reports before we could see the Doctor, we will be spending one whole day at the Hospital. Thank you Carol, we will do the Blood Tests tomorrow. Lord, are you talking to me through Carol? We came back for the Divine Mercy Prayers at 3 pm. Later, before the Evening Mass we attended the Novena to the Holy Infant Jesus of Prague, it was the first time we attended such a Novena, wonderful to participate. (We are of course very familiar with the Novena to Mother of Perpetual Succour).

Friday as we began our routine. We met Fr Phang outside the Chapel again, “Hi Father, I came here to Listen!”... He didn’t quite hear me, so I said again “I come here to LISTEN”. Oh good, is the air-cond. too cold? He asked. It’s just right Father. Again I did not pray, trying hard to listen... And then one small thought formed in my heart. “Michael, it is not good enough to save your own soul, you must bring other souls...” Finally, I got a message! It lingered on in my heart the whole day. We went to the Hospital, after the lab and radio, suddenly I had a thought, we should change the appointment on Monday from 2 pm to the morning, otherwise we would miss the 3 o’clock Divine Mercy prayers. So, we visited the clinic, Carol was there, she kindly changed our Monday appointment to 9.30 in the morning. *(to be continued in next issue of The Apostles)*

EVENTS IN OUR PARISH

MONTHLY PRAYER FOR CMs - A monthly prayer session to pray as a community will be held for our SPP Extra-Ordinary Ministers for Holy Communion on every first Monday of the month from 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm at the SPP Adoration Room. For the month of June, it will be held on Mon 5 Jul 2010. Family members and parishioners are also cordially invited to join in the prayer with our Communion Ministers.

INFANT BAPTISM - Our next Infant Baptism service will be held on Sun 25 Jul 2010 during the 11.00 am Mass. Forms for Baptism are obtainable from the parish office or downloaded from website: www.sppchurch.org.sg/downloads.html.

ADULT CONFIRMATION - will be held in our parish on 18 July 2010 during the 11.00am Mass. Please register with the Parish Secretariat in the Parish office by 27 June 2010.

G-Connect - A parish spiritual programme to connect ourselves with the Lord our God will be held every Thursday from 8.00 pm to 9.00 pm, Chapel (level 3). All parishioners are welcome to join in and get connected!

CCD - Catechism classes ended on 31 May. The next semester will start on 4 July. Have a blessed and spiritual school vacation!

MASS FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED - For the month of June, the Mass for the Faithful Departed will be celebrated on Fri 30 Jul 2010 at 5.30 pm.

DAILY PRAYER - Our SPP Church prays the Lauds led by the Carmelite Friars every weekday morning after the 7.20 am Mass. All are welcome.

COUNSELLING SERVICES Family Life Society (FLS) - is making its counselling services available at our SPP Church every Monday from 11.00 am to 2.00 pm and from 6.30 pm to 9.00 pm. Lay Counsellors trained by FLS will be available to provide a listening ear and help to those in need. Parishioners may call 6382 0688 (weekdays from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm) to make an appointment. Website: <http://www.familylife.sg/>

NEWS AROUND THE PARISH

46TH RETROUVAILLE WEEKEND - Has your marriage become unloving and uncaring? Has your marriage grown cold and distant? If you are serious about making your marriage work, join ‘Retrouvaille’ - a Lifeline for Troubled

& Hurting Marriages. The next weekend session will be held from Fri 25 Jun to Sun 27 June 2010. For confidential enquiry, Tel: 6749 8861 / 6423 9756 / 6445 1375. Online registration: www.helpourmarriage.sg.

EVENING WORKSHOP - You are invited to join a workshop on “Christian Meditation, The Whole Person Body, Mind & Spirit in Prayer” on Tue 29 Jun 2010 from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm at Holy Family Church Function Room Level 4. Learn to acknowledge the presence of the indwelling Spirit and offer your whole being in prayer. The Presenter: of the workshop is Fr Joe Pereira, National Co-ordinator, The World Community for Christian Meditation in India. Register by 24 Jun. Call Rebecca 9835 7835 rebeccalimky@gmail.com or Daulet 6469 7671 daulet@pacific.net.sg. A love offering will be taken. Organised by the World Community for Christian Meditation Singapore.

SEMINARS FOR THE ELDERLY - The Singapore Pastoral Institute, Caritas Singapore & Family Life Society will be conducting the following two seminars for those in their senior years. To register, please call Maria at 6488-0278 or email maria@familylife.sg

- Fri 2 Jul 2010 from 9.30 am – 12.30 pm @ Christ the King Church. Focus: Successful ageing, grandparenting skills, advance care planning.

- Fri 13 Aug 2010 from 9.30am - 12.30pm. @ Christ the King Church. Focus: Prayer, spiritual reminiscence, assessing mental changes and medical conditions.

SJI OPEN HOUSE - For parents enrolling your son for Sec 1 in 2011 – Visit SJI Open House on Sat 11 July 2010 from 9.00 am - 1.00 pm. Website: <http://www.sji.edu.sg>

CHRISTIAN ZEN PRAYER - Join a retreat that leads to a prayerful path of alertness in solitude and mindful-living that heals and relaxes. 16-18 July 2010 at the Cenacle, 47 Jurong West Street 42. Contact Cenacle Sisters at 6565-2895, 9722-3148, or email: cenaclesisters@yahoo.com.sg.

SOCIAL MISSION CONFERENCE 2010 - Caritas Singapore is organising The Social Mission Conference 2010, bringing together 33 experienced overseas and local speakers to enlighten and challenge participants to go beyond charity to enable the needy to build a better life with dignity. The conference will be held at SJI, Malcolm Road on Sat 21 Aug 2010 from 8.45 am 4.00 pm. Cost: \$55 per

person. For more information or to register, please visit www.caritas-singapore.org or call 6337 3711.

QUIETING THE SOUL, MARANATHA - A 5-day silent retreat will be held from 6-12 Sep 2010 at the cool pine-forest environment of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Retreat is limited to 12 participants only. Contact Cenacle Sisters at 6565-2895, 9722-3148, or email cenaclesisters@yahoo.com.sg. Deadline for application: 15 Aug 2010.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE (MPC) - For couples intending to get married, the commencement date for the 3rd Quarter 2010 MPC is on 18 July 2010. Allocation of places is on a first-come-first-served basis. Application forms can be obtained from the church office or our website @ www.catholic.org.sg/mpc. For further enquiries, please contact: John & Joan @ 9848 2864.

ACTS NOW SEMINAR - Journey through the Acts of the Apostles with Thomas Smith from the Great Adventure Timeline Series. Register today at register@giota.stmary.sg for a 2-day seminar at the Church of St Mary of the Angels on Fri 23 July (7.30 pm - 9.30 pm) and Fri 24 July 2010 (8.30 am - 8.30 pm). Cost: \$25/ per participant (workbook & lunch included). For more information, visit: www.stmary.sg/giota.

We welcome literary contributions to our weekly newsletter (articles, observations, book reviews, etc). Please email your submissions to spptheapostles@gmail.com.

We are also looking for designers who can help with The Apostles. If you think you can contribute in this area, do drop us a line.

Thank you.



Please note that our cash-card car park barrier system is implemented with effect from Mon 11 Jan 2010. The rate are as follows: **Monday to Saturday: 7.00 am to 9.00 pm - \$1.50 per half hour or part thereafter Sunday: Free parking (10 minutes grace period)** The Church gates will be closed from 9.00 pm to 6.00 am. Parking rates for vehicles parked in the Church compound after closing hours will be levied \$10/ per hour or part thereafter from Monday to Saturday. Church worshippers attending Masses, a ‘Mass-Time’ grace period will be granted from 6.00am to 9.00 am and from 4.30 pm to 7.30 pm.