



confirmands' reflections

Ignorant was a typical image of me. I was an ordinary teenager, rebellious, stressed out for the crucial O level year and didn't have much time for God. Though I attended weekly Sunday classes while constantly being reminded that I would be 'graduating' from catechism soon, I felt guilty because I was supposed to have a strong faith foundation, yet I knew my relationship with God was strained. My confirmation camp came timely, serving as a 'starting point' where my journey with God began.

During the camp, all the ten confirmands were paired with a mentor. I had the honour of being my cousin's mentee. Throughout this experience, we were in the same sharing group. The sharing sessions included topics on getting to know ourselves, what does it mean to be in a relationship, knowing the difference between talking and communicating, being sensitive and responsible of our response to others, seeking forgiveness, building better relationships with others especially within our families. Apart from having to discuss about the topics as well as reflect on the reading material, I gained a new experience of having to facilitate my group in sessions. The confirmands and I also had a one to one session with our mentors. It was the most inspirational yet a little awkward at the same time for me where I poured out the struggles I faced in life to my understanding cousin

who lent me a listening ear. She was sympathetic to some difficulties I had and never fails to compliment me when I did the right things. In addition, she gave me diligent advises and alternatives to handle certain situations or how to improve a relationship. We had an enjoyable session together. I recalled her sharing her inner most feelings with me and even identified similar life stories that I am going through.

We laughed, we talked, however I would always be reminded of her telling me that among all the solutions she suggested, the ultimate way to lead a happy and better life was to build a close relationship with God. Through him all things are possible. Her words really struck me then and I was further motivated to strengthen my ties with God. The moment confirmation camp ended was the beginning of working towards my goal which is to be closer to God, not forgetting wanting to make amendments in various relationships.

"No Action, Talk Only" is commonly heard of today. Unless knowledge gained from this camp is put into action, the purpose of this camp would be aimless. Till today, there are still trying periods which I have to face daily, but with the constant reminder of my cousin's words, I would try to persevere in doing good, working on the relationships with my love ones including God. I am very thankful for all those who had sacrificed their weekends to make this camp possible, because without any of them, my fellow confirmands and I would not have experienced this life-changing event and feeling God's presence through the people around them. GOD IS AWESOME! ■

Sunset Mass
5.30pm
Rosary
4.40pm (Saturday)
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

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We welcome literary contributions to The Apostles. Please email your submission to spptheapostles@gmail.com. You can also download The Apostles at: <http://sppchurch.org.sg/downloads.html>

Parish Priest:
Rev Fr ANSELM PHANG OCD
Asst Parish Priest:
Rev Fr JOSEPH KOH OCD
Priest in Residence:
Rev Fr GREGORY HON OCD
Provincial-Delegate:
Rev Fr THOMAS LIM OCD
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Alex Wong, sppalexwong@gmail.com

Church Donations
Please make you cheque payable to :
(i) Church Of Sts Peter & Paul - for contributions /donations for on-going maintenance of our Church or parish projects and Mass offerings;
(ii) Church Of SPP Building Fund -for contributions /donations to our Church building fund;
(iii) Carmelite Fathers for contributions/donations to the Carmelite Friars (SPP), OCD Missions, Frairs Formation.
(iv) Soc of St Vincent de Paul (Conf St Peter) - for donations to the Society of St Vincent de Paul for the poor and needy.

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 Monday to Saturday. 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.

Information is correct at time of publication.



READINGS: Liturgy for Holy Week booklet: pg 1

READINGS FOR THE WEEK - Mon 18 Mar - Sat 23 Apr 2011
Mon: Is 42:1-7, Jn 12:1-11 Tue: Is 49:1-6, Jn 13:21-33, 36-38 Wed: Is 50:4-9a, Mt 26:14-25, MaundyThursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday please refer to Holy Week Missal

Keep it Empty

written by Fr Anselm Phang

The people at the disco pub will want to keep their glasses full and drink themselves silly; gratify their carnal pleasures; as they seek to fill their empty voids. But keep it empty - keep our souls empty for God. This is the message given by St Paul as he writes to the Philippians:

"Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil 2:6-11)

By constantly emptying ourselves, we would be imitating our Lord Jesus and be at home with the will of God. If we are seeking true happiness, we would desire truth in our lives.

St John of the Cross, the founder of the Discalced Carmelites, prompts us to empty our appetites as we journey into God:

"People, indeed, are ignorant who think it is possible to reach this high state of union with God without first emptying their appetite of all the natural and supernatural things that can be a hindrance to them, as we will explain further on. For there is an extreme distance between such appetites and that which is given in this state, which is nothing less than transformation in God. Instructing us in this way, our Lord stated according to St. Luke: 'Whoever does not renounce all

that the will possesses cannot be my disciple' (Luke 14:33). This statement is clear, for the doctrine the Son of Man came to teach is contempt for all things so we may receive the gift of God's Spirit. As long as people fail to rid themselves of these possessions, they are incapable of receiving God's Spirit in pure transformation." (Ascent of Mount Carmel Book One Chapter 5 Stanza 2, St John of the Cross)

Are you seeking transformation in God? God certainly wants that for you.

Because as the passion of Jesus Christ the Lord drew near, he looked on Jerusalem and wept (Dominus Flevit - Luke 19:41) because it did not recognize that God's salvation had come. Being moderns in a high technology world, we have to be aware of the mistakes of those who had bombed by living squandered existence.

Let us also pray in faith and repentance the spirit of the Servant of the Lord: "The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame." (Isaiah 50:4-7)

On Good Friday, the world will try to trick you with "Earth Day" but keep your entire focus on The Lord of the Earth and Life.

This Holy Week, let us decide for ourselves, "The soul that desires God to surrender Himself to it entirely must surrender itself entirely to Him without keeping anything for itself." (Prayer of a Soul Taken with Love, No. 128, St John of the Cross)

Yes, keep it empty. ■

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Arise Passion Play 2011 - Have a secret passion for acting but too shy to express your talents? Well, now you can! Arise is re-enacting The Passion of Christ once again around the church compound of SPP. If you're too shy to act, there are still various ways that you can contribute to this exciting drama act! Narrating the story of our Lord, make-up crew, costumes for the actors and actresses... Seems exciting? Come on down to our rehearsals at 2.00pm on Sundays! :)

Kids corner - Hosanna in the highest heavens. Today we welcome Jesus back into Jerusalem. Find the 10 words in the word search.



PALM • JERUSALEM • OLIVES • PROPHECY • COLT • HOSANNA • DONKEY
• HEAVENS • BRANCHES • TURMOIL

We welcome literary contributions to our weekly newsletter (articles, observations, book reviews, etc). Please email your submissions to spptheapostles@gmail.com. Include a short introduction of yourself to our readers. Thank you.



Please support and donate generously towards Charities Week 2011, an Archdiocesan annual fundraising project. Proceeds will enable Caritas Singapore and many Catholic organizations under its umbrella to continue their work in reaching out to those in need. These include the poor, families and children, prisoners, migrant workers, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with physical challenges, persons with mental health conditions, and overseas humanitarian aid.

Pick up a Charities Week appeal envelope this weekend and contribute generously. You can mail your donation directly to Caritas Singapore (for cheques only) or drop them at your parish.

Your contribution will make a difference in the lives of those in need. Visit www.caritas-singapore.org or call 6337 3711 for more information.

Part of the Crowd

written by Rita Amada Y.C. Tan

It's closing to one year since I received my Sacraments of Initiation. How do I feel? Well, I feel that it's easy to be part of the crowd that puts on an impressive procession for a baptism. It's also easy to be part of the crowd to receive First Holy Communion.

Likewise, it's easy to be part of the crowd that receives Confirmation. Yes, it's always easy to be part of the crowd! But, as the excitement gradually wearing out, everything seems to be not so easy! How many of the crowd would bother and faithful to meet up Jesus anymore? It's not easy!

Similarly, the superficial cheers and enthusiasm that the crowd has given to Jesus during His entry into Jerusalem were easily worn out too. The crowd has welcomed Jesus but was also quick to turn against him. Their support for Jesus was merely skin-deep. It's so easy to be part of the crowd to welcome Jesus and it's also so easy to be part of the crowd that demand Jesus' crucifixion. The crowd was quick to abandon Jesus, leaving just a handful that went to the Cross.

Even Peter who made beautiful promises to Jesus during the Last Supper was quick to succumb to the pressure, denying Jesus and hearing the cock crowing after it. How many could really stand by Jesus like the handful that went to the Cross?

In this complicating and rapid changing world, we've even gotten used to sin that we can't even hear our conscience 'crowing' any more! So much so that it makes me wonder if it's our sins that has inflicted suffering on Jesus and not the soldiers during the Passion of Jesus. I fear – fearing that each time I sin; I'm crucifying and nailing Jesus again and again. It's only when we realized and recognized our sins, then we'll turn to Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and ask Him for His mercy and forgiveness.

On the other hand, it's inevitable that in turn, we're constantly hurt by so many things in our lives and hurt by what we're witnessing around us. Thus, we'll learn to look at the Passion of Jesus to find the answers, healing and hope.

Are we part of the crowd that welcomed Jesus and quick to abandon Jesus? Are we like Peter who denied Jesus to save his skin? When we sin, can we still hear our conscience 'crows'? What have we done to Jesus? And, what have we done for Jesus? ■

The Spirit of Lent

By Augustine Low

For some, Lent is a season for sacrifice and moderation. I know of those who are disciplined in cutting down on their indulgences like favourite foods and alcohol. For others, it is a time of reflection and taking stock of their lives.

This week, I am reminded of a country song which has the line, "Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers." How often have we felt disappointed that our prayers are not answered, that a certain wish could not be fulfilled? I suspect quite often.

But I think back and marvel at how unanswered prayers can often turn out to be blessings in disguise. I realise that God's love can touch us at any moment, that by not fulfilling our wishes, he could be helping us and not hindering us. I am amazed that so many things that did not seem to be going my way eventually turned out all right in the end, and that obstacles happened for a reason.

I just need to keep reminding myself of this.

So Lent is certainly a great time to do some soul-searching, and to be grateful for the many blessings received. I would never fully comprehend the mysterious ways of the Lord. But how wonderful it would be if I could have full and complete trust in His ways and in His love. ■

HOLY TRIDUUM 2011

HOLY THURSDAY

Thu 21 April 09

6.15pm Mandarin

8.00pm English

8.00 pm Cantonese (Chapel)

GOOD FRIDAY

Fri 22 April 09

10.00am Mandarin

1.00pm Passion Play

3.00pm English

3.00pm Cantonese (Chapel)

EASTER VIGIL

Sat 23 April 09

6.00pm Mandarin

9.00pm English

SAVE THE EARTH

Calling all brothers and sisters using the rooms which have been blessed with air-conditioning systems. For your comfort, you may wish to adjust the coolest temperature to 24 degrees Celsius. Then, our children and our children's children may still get to see the sky. Thank you.

"Travelling TIPS"

Written by Michael Hii. Inspired by Fr Anselm Phang's article "Travelling LIGHT" (The Apostles 3 April 2011) and his homily on 31st March and 1st April.

For the past one and a half years we have been travelling much, especially to Singapore. And with God's guiding light, we chose a small hotel next to St Peter and Paul Church as our "home" in Singapore. While the new Apostolic Nuncio to Singapore Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli stays at the Catholic Welfare Services Building and thus making him a "true blue parishioner" of SPP, we consider ourselves parishioners of SPP too, albeit "visiting parishioners."

True to its small size, the rooms of the hotel are really small. Little space to put the luggage bags, little room still to move around. Out of necessity, we are forced to travel light, we were well known for bringing the whole house while travelling, but now... we have to travel light, but not too light.

Life is a journey, a pilgrimage. As a pilgrim we need a few basic baggage for our journey. Too many will burden us, too light will make life difficult as we journey towards our ultimate destination - Heaven.

Jesus told us very clearly the basic baggage we need to carry with us.

Baggage Number One: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' (Matthew 22:37). For most people, it is quite easy to love God, especially when we are in need of this and that, or face with great challenges in life, we quickly remember our God and love Him very much by praying very hard to Him. But when the Church needs us to offer our services such as Choir, Warden, Sunday School, most of us will offer many excuses: no voice, no time, not qualified and so forth. Are we carrying the very basic Baggage Number One? Are we loving God with all our heart and soul and mind? If not, our luggage for our pilgrimage may be too light!

Baggage Number Two: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22:39) We all know the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), often we are blind to our "neighbour" in need, we only worry about ourselves, our own well being, neglecting those around us who are in need, some desperately needed help for food and shelter, or clothing, but for some, perhaps just a listening ear, a pat on the back. Often we are too busy going our own way, no time to notice them, let along "love" them.

One year ago, we spent 40 days at SPP, attending the daily 3pm Divine Mercy Devotion and the 5.30pm evening Mass. It was a retreat by Divine Providence. We were so Touched and Comforted by the Merciful Lord that we brought back to Kuching the Divine Mercy Devotion. With the blessing of our Parish Priest Fr Vincent Chin, St Peter's Church started the Daily 3pm Divine Mercy Devotion on Friday 18 June 2010 and our Divine Mercy Apostolate was launched with a Mass and Benediction on the Feast Day of St Faustina 5 October 2010. Ever since we started in June last year, we have been praying fervently and unceasingly, 7 days a week, even during Public Holidays, Christmas and Chinese New Year. Truly our DMA people have shown their love for God with all their heart, mind and soul. On the other hands, there were people telling us not to start the Divine Mercy Devotion, it would not last and it would surely fail. These people also love God, but not with all their heart, mind and soul. We can only pray for them.

Jesus tells us to do work of mercy. To love our neighbours, we identify people in needs and organize visits to their homes, bringing clothing, food stuff and other necessities to help them. Last year Advent we visited one poor family, this year on the Second Sunday of Lent (20 March 2011) we visited one desperate mother of seven children, aged 7 months to 19 years old, her husband is nowhere to be found, leaving her to fend for herself and the children. When 30 odd people visited her with toys, gifts, food stuff, milk, clothing and cash, she was moved with awe. We brought her our good wishes and sang hymns for her. We nearly collapsed her little hut which was overloaded with visitors. Truly we will never forget this Lent.

Travel light, but not too light.

We need to bring at least 2 baggage: **'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'** And **'Love your neighbour as yourself.'** ■

NEW BAPTISM FONT



Working on a new dance move? No, just trying to fix up the new baptism font. It is specially designed. One of its kind in the world. Come take a look at our Easter Baptisms this year and keep praying for our Elect. Thank you.

PARISH NEWS

COLLECTION FOR THE HOLY LAND - Collection to be made at all masses on Holy Thursday 21 Apr '11 is for the Holy Land. We thank you for your generosity and support.

SPP FEAST DAY DINNER - Our church will celebrate 141th anniversary with a Feast Day Dinner to be held on Sat 2 Jul '11 at Yan Palace Restaurant (Hong Lim Complex) at 7.30 pm. Tickets @ \$40 (adult) and \$30 (children under 12 years) will be sold after all masses on Sat 30 Apr '11, Sun 1 May '11 and Thu 5 May '11 only.

ADORATION ROOM CLOSED - The Adoration Room of the Incarnation would be closed from 6.00pm on Holy Thursday 21 Apr. It will reopen on Easter Sun 8.00am 24 Apr. Thank you for participating in the Paschal Triduum.

LEGION OF MARY DEVOTION MEET (ENG) - Join us in the Walk with Mary leading to Jesus, every Sun, 1.30pm - 3.00pm at the Church Sts Peter & Paul, Rm1, level 2. Call @ 96780397 - Jzen Ana. All are Welcome!

LENT IS SPRING CLEANING - In the Season of Lent, let us embark on a period of spring cleaning: mind, body and soul. For all ministries of SPP who have been blessed with the use of a church locker, I hereby call you to spring clean your locker. If there are any perishables, especially food, kindly remove them. Thank you.

TAIJI CLASS 2011 held twice weekly would be starting 1st May 2011 (Sunday) from 7.30pm to 9.00pm and continues on 2nd May 2011 (Monday) from 7.30pm to 9pm in the car park. Henceforth, classes would be held every Sunday and Monday evenings. Interested parties should contact the Secretariat. Free and open to all.

LAY FORMATION FOR SPP - Cycle (C) - Apr 16, May 7 '11. Venue: Chapel (3rd Storey, Parish Building) Saturday Time: 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm Please register with the Secretariat by Mar 11 '11 for Cycle (C). Parishioners of SPP are encouraged to register as this is the last cycle for this series

SPP COLUMBARIUM - We have niches available for bookings. There are 3 types of niches: Standard (1- 2 urns), Premium (1-4 urns) and Benefactor (1- 4 urns). Donation amount for the use of the niche depends on the location and level. For Benefactor Niche, the donation amount can be given by instalment. For further information, please call Parish Office Tel: 6337 2585.

COUNSELLING SERVICES - Family Life Society (FLS) is making its counselling services available at our SPP Church every Monday from 11 am to 2 pm and from 6.30 pm to 9 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.family life.sg/>

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.

NEWS AROUND THE PARISH

"CARING FOR YOUR BONES & JOINTS" - an interactive seminar organised by Mount Alvernia Hospital will be held on Sat 16 Apr '11 from 2 pm to 4 pm at Suntec Convention Centre, Meeting Room 303 - 305. Their specialists and professional staff will be speaking on common sports injuries, causes of foot and back pain as well as options for treatment. They will also be sharing some simple exercises to help ease back pain.

God's dream for every married couple: LOVE EACH OTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. Make this dream come true at a Marriage Encounter Weekend. Coming Weekends: 3-5 Jun, 1-3 Jul, 5-7 Aug. To register, click www.MESingapore.org or call 9670 5390.

AMPLIFY MINISTRY invites All Youths between the ages of 16 - 25 to come for AWAKEN A Youth Conversion Experience from 9 - 12 June '11. AWAKEN seeks to give youths a deep and personal God experience by awakening youths to the reality and depth of God's love and forgiveness. Come! Taste and see that the Lord is good! For more information, please contact Eunice (9667 2382) or Rachel (9105 5718) or email: amplifyawaken@gmail.com.

PERSONAL COMPASS: NAVIGATING ETHICAL AMBIGUITY By Fr David Garcia, OP The Ethics of Love & Sexuality: Building the Family 6 Tues evenings, 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm commencing 26 Apr 11, at 5 Waterloo St, #08-00 CWS Bldg. For more information or to register, please login to www.catholic spi.org or contact Janice @ 68587012, Email: janice@catholicspi.org

LENTEN PENITENTIAL SERVICES (CITY DISTRICT):

14 Apr 11 (Thu) : Church of Sts Peter & Paul (8.00pm)

16 Apr 11 (Sat) : Church of Sts Peter & Paul (Chinese, 1.30 pm)