

The *HERALD* is a Catholic Weekly of the Malaysian Church. It endeavours to communicate up-to-date news and Christian values and strives to dialogue with all sectors of society in order to build a harmonious community of believers in God. We support the formation of a participatory Church and encourage the laity and religious to make moral decisions in the marketplace.

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
2 Tim 4:6-7



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Hunger still plagues millions worldwide



ROME: Pope Leo XIV issued a stark appeal to world leaders to act decisively against hunger, wars, and global misery, warning that indifference to the suffering of millions amounts to an “ethical derailment” and a “historic offence.”

The Pope was addressing the global ceremony marking World Food Day and the 80th anniversary of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) at its Rome headquarters. Speaking before diplomats, UN officials, and aid workers, he called for moral responsibility and renewed commitment to eradicating hunger — a crisis that continues to claim lives even as scientific progress extends life expectancy.

“In a time when science has lengthened life expectancy, allowing millions of human beings to live — and die — struck by hunger is a collective failure,” the pontiff declared. “The hungry faces of so many who still suffer challenge us to reexamine our lifestyles, our priorities, and our overall way of living in today’s world.”

Delivering most of his address in Spanish and concluding in English, Pope Leo spoke with palpable urgency, citing the UN’s latest figures showing that 673 million people, or 8.3 per cent of the global population, do not eat enough each day.

The Pope’s appeal echoed the findings of the recently released State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI 2025) report, produced by five specialised UN agencies, including FAO, UNICEF, WHO, IFAD, and the World Food Programme (WFP).

While the report notes a slight global decline in hunger since the pandemic, the situation remains dire in several regions, particularly Africa and Western Asia, where hunger is actually rising. Africa alone accounts for 307 million hungry people — over 20 per cent of the continent’s population.

The report also estimates that 2.8 billion people experienced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2024, underscoring the deep inequality in access to nutritious food. High food prices, driven by inflation, conflict, and disrupted supply chains, have made healthy diets increasingly unaffordable, especially for low-income families.

In his address, Pope Leo named Ukraine, Gaza, Haiti, Afghanistan, Mali, the Central African Republic, Yemen, and South Sudan among the regions most severely affected by food crises and conflict.

He condemned the use of hunger as a weapon of war, calling it a moral atrocity that must not be tolerated by the international community. “We can no longer delude ourselves by thinking that the consequences of our failures impact only those who are hidden out of sight,” he said. “We must make their suffering our own.”

The pontiff’s warning comes amid worsening funding shortages for UN food aid agencies. The World Food Programme (WFP), traditionally one of the best-funded UN agencies, recently reported that its operations are facing “unprecedented” challenges due to sharp cuts in contributions from major donors, including the United States.

The WFP estimates that 13.7 million recipients could be forced into emergency levels of hunger as a result of reduced funding — threatening food aid in countries such as Afghanistan, Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.

The SOFI 2025 report further highlights malnutrition as a persistent and deadly problem, particularly among children under five. Malnutrition contributes significantly to child mortality, while paradoxically coexisting with rising rates of obesity — a symptom of unhealthy and unaffordable diets.

Experts warn that without decisive global cooperation, the world risks falling far short of Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) by 2030.

Pope Leo’s message was not merely a critique but a call to conscience. He urged governments, institutions, and individuals to adopt sustainable lifestyles and compassionate policies that prioritise the dignity of every human being.

“Let us not look the other way when faced with world food emergencies,” he implored. “Our response to the hungry is not merely a question of aid, but a measure of our humanity.”

As the world marked both World Food Day and 80 years of the FAO, the Pope’s words served as a sobering reminder that progress in science and technology must be matched by moral resolve — for a future where no one dies for lack of bread. **Agencies**

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Reclaiming our children

When Australia announced plans to ban social media accounts for children under 16, the world took notice. Some hailed it as a bold step to protect young minds; others called it an overreach. But as Malaysia reels from a spate of tragic school incidents — a fatal stabbing, a gang rape, and a bullying case that led to death — perhaps we should pause and ask: could such a law help us too? These are not isolated incidents; they reveal a deep moral fracture spreading among our youth.

Under Australia's Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024, taking effect in December 2025, major platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and X (formerly Twitter) will be barred from allowing users under 16 to open or maintain accounts. The law, passed in November 2024, raises the minimum social media age from 13 to 16 to curb online harm and protect young minds. Its goal is simple yet powerful — to give children the chance to be children again.

Australia's eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant, put it bluntly: the online environment has become too toxic for developing minds. Constant exposure to comparison, bullying, sexualisation, and misinformation is eroding young people's wellbeing, leading to anxiety, depression, and, in extreme cases, violence.

It's easy to blame social media, and there's reason to. These platforms have become breeding grounds for cruelty, envy, and rage. Children are exposed to unfiltered violence, sexual content, and viral "challenges" that glorify danger. They learn to chase attention rather than virtue. Social media no longer merely mirrors our culture; it shapes it.

But the issue runs deeper. Social media is not the disease; it is the mirror exposing one. What we are facing is not simply a digital crisis but a moral and emotional one — a generation raised amid fractured families, distracted parenting, and silent screens.

Many parents, struggling to balance work and survival, have unknowingly outsourced their children's formation to algorithms. The dinner table, once a sacred space of conversation, has been replaced by the glow of devices. Children now turn to the internet for companionship, affirmation, and answers that once came from home, school, or faith.

Still, parents cannot shoulder the blame alone. Teenagers live much of their lives in digital spaces adults can't easily access. Even attentive parents may not monitor every post or message. Many families lack digital literacy or fear the stigma of seeking help when emotional distress appears. These tragedies are not the failure of one family; they are a collective failure of society.

Debate has arisen about dark media influences like the anime *Death Note*, but while fiction can explore moral ambiguity, it is not designed to promote violence. For emotionally vulnerable teens, however, such content can distort their sense of justice or control when there is no adult guidance. The show isn't the problem — the absence of discernment is.

Teachers, too, cannot carry this burden alone. They are mentors, not psychologists or detectives. Yet schools must prioritise emotional education and mental health awareness. The Ministry of Education must strengthen digital safety policies and counselling support, ensuring that moral and emotional formation are not optional extras,

but essentials.

Australia's move recognises that legal intervention may be needed where moral restraint has failed. It gives parents and schools the breathing space to reclaim their rightful roles as primary educators of the young.

For Malaysia, this must be a wake-up call. We may not yet be ready for a similar ban, but we cannot ignore the warning signs. What begins as fascination with screens can evolve into addiction, isolation, and imitation of violence. The chilling note reportedly left by the 14-year-old boy who fatally stabbed his 16-year-old schoolmate — "The world is fake. I have won." — lays bare the deep alienation of a generation drifting from reality and moral truth.

Laws can limit what a child sees, but only love can shape what a child believes. Parents must reclaim their place as moral anchors; teachers must be supported as guides of the heart as much as the mind. And as a community of faith, we must remind our young that they are more than their online personas; they are beloved children of God, created for purpose, not performance.

Australia's move may seem drastic, but perhaps drastic times demand drastic measures. Because if we fail to protect our children's hearts and minds, we risk losing them entirely.

In the end, the question is not whether our children are safe online, but whether we, as adults, have been truly present offline. A society that neglects its young does not just lose its future; it loses its soul.

Patricia Pereira

The posture of the heart

There are moments in prayer when words fail us, when our lips may fall silent, but our hearts speak volumes. The readings this Sunday draw us to that sacred space where humility, honesty, and surrender meet.

Sirach reminds us that "The Lord is a God of justice, who knows no favourites." He does not turn away the prayer of the poor, nor ignore the plea of the orphan. God hears not the eloquence of our petitions, but the cry of the heart. Prayer, then, is not about performance; it is about posture. It is the inward stance of one who comes before God, not with self-assurance, but with self-awareness.

In the Gospel, Jesus contrasts two men at prayer. The Pharisee stands tall, confident in his righteousness, enumerating his good deeds: fasting, tithing, and moral rectitude. His prayer, though pious in form, is hollow in spirit, for it is built not on grace but on comparison. The tax collector, meanwhile, stands afar, unable even to lift his eyes to heaven. He strikes his breast and whispers, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." That simple plea pierces the heavens.

It is striking that the tax collector does not justify himself. He offers no defence, no excuse, no negotiation. He stands bare before God, and that is enough. For humility, in its purest form, is truth.

Jesus' parable turns religious logic upside down: the sinner goes home justified; the self-righteous man does not. The point is not that sin is preferable to virtue, but that humility is indispensable to grace. When we exalt ourselves, we close our hearts to

God; when we humble ourselves, we make room for Him to dwell.

In the Second Reading, St Paul's words to Timothy echo this same surrender. Nearing the end of his life, Paul reflects not with pride, but with peace: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." His confidence is not in himself, but in the One who has stood by him through trial and abandonment. "The Lord stood by me and gave me strength," Paul says, a reminder that our victories in life are not our own.

Paul's faith is not a trophy but a torch, one handed down through struggle, trial, and perseverance. His life was poured out like a libation, not as an act of self-pity but as a gift of love. Even in hardship, he sees hope: "The Lord will rescue me from every evil and save me for his heavenly kingdom." That is the humility of faith, to recognise that everything we are and everything we will be comes from God.

These three readings together invite us to re-examine how we pray, how we live, and how we see others. Prayer that is self-congratulatory cannot reach heaven because it never leaves the self. Prayer that springs from contrition and gratitude, however, rises like incense before the Lord.

In our modern world, where appearance often overshadows authenticity, Jesus' parable speaks with uncomfortable clarity. The Pharisee's attitude still lives in us, in the subtle ways we compare ourselves to others, in the pride we take in our piety, in the quiet satisfaction of being "better than most." But true holiness begins when we

Reflecting on our Sunday Readings

with the Editor

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Readings: Sirach 35:15-17, 20-22;

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18;

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

stop measuring and start kneeling.

The Church is not a gallery of saints, but a hospital for sinners. God's justice, as Sirach tells us, is not partial to the powerful. His mercy flows toward those who know their need for Him. The poor, the broken, the humble — they are God's true interlocutors, for they pray not to impress but to be healed.

The Pharisee prayed about himself; the tax collector prayed to God. One left unchanged; the other left forgiven.

Perhaps that is what Jesus wants of us: to stop performing before God and start conversing with Him. To stop coming with lists of achievements and start coming with hearts open to mercy.

At the end of the day, the only prayer that matters is the one that springs from truth; the truth of who God is, and the truth of who we are before Him. Like Paul, we can face our journey's end with quiet assurance, not because we are flawless, but because we have kept the faith. Like the tax collector, we can whisper our inadequacy, knowing it will be met with compassion.

For in the end, it is not the words we speak, but the humility with which we speak them, that draws the ear of God.

Seventy-five years of mission in Kota Bharu

Christopher Kushi

KOTA BHARU: The Church of Our Lady of Fatima of the Holy Rosary marked a historic milestone on October 10, celebrating 75 years of Catholic mission and presence in Kelantan under the theme *As Pilgrims of Hope*.

The Mass was presided over by Cardinal Sebastian Francis, Bishop of Penang, and concelebrated by Msgr Henry Rajoo, Fr Victor Louis, Fr David Lourdes, and Fr Francis Xavier.

Among those present were Sr Elizabeth Tan, FMM, Regional Councillor, together with FMM Sisters Caroline Gan, Enid Lopez, Catherine Chong, Cecelia Soh,



Jacqueline Pan, and the Kota Bharu-based FMM community — Mary Anne Fletcher, Angela Wong, Regina Ho, Angelic de Souza — along with Sr Florence Nemesius of the

Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (FSIC). The church and surrounding grounds were filled with over 500 faithful, including pilgrims from Penang, Kedah, Perlis, Perak, Sabah,

Sarawak, Selangor, and Kuala Lumpur.

Following the Mass, a 1.5 km Eucharistic procession through Kota Bharu town drew together pilgrims and parishioners in prayer, reflection, and thanksgiving, symbolising unity in faith and witness.

In his homily on the first day, Cardinal Sebastian reflected on the mystery of the Annunciation, reminding the faithful that salvation began with Mary's "Yes" to God: "Let it be done to me according to your Word." He urged all to emulate Mary's obedience and openness to God's will, drawing a parallel to the "yes" spoken by parents in love that gives life to every child.

However, he cautioned against modern tendencies that distort or diminish the sanctity of life. "Artificial contraception prevents life even before it begins, while artificial intelligence risks replacing the human thought process," he said. "Both seek to manipulate life independent of God's will. Sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters — come back quickly to Mary's Fiat — her Yes to God's will. God is always waiting for your one word response: YES!"

During the final day of the Eucharistic celebrations, Cardinal Sebastian began his homily with the exhortation "Love, Peace, and Hope to all." Drawing from Acts 1:12-14, he highlighted how the apostles, with



Mary and the early believers, gathered in prayer — just as the community in Kota Bharu has done for 75 years. "We gather as one Church — parishioners, university students, army personnel, and families from across Malaysia — in a house of prayer for all nations," he said, citing Isaiah 56:7.

Tracing the church's history, Sr Maureen Chiew, IJS, in her book *History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Penang*, notes that the first church in Kota Bharu was built in 1950 by Fr Louis Guittat, MEP, and now serves as the presbytery. The current church building was constructed in 1965 by Fr Jean Tavenne, MEP.

Reflecting on the milestone, Sr Angela, parish administrator, said, "Today is truly a day of blessings. God is good, all the time. Our beloved church has once again felt the tender love and maternal care of Mother Mary, whose presence has guided

us through the decades. Since 1950, the FMM Sisters have journeyed in faith, mission, and service. Now, after 75 years, we look ahead with hope to the next 75 — to continue shining the Light of Christ in our families, workplaces, and throughout Kelantan."

She expressed gratitude to Cardinal Sebastian, the clergy, religious, volunteers, and civil authorities — including the State Government, Royal Malaysia Police, Kota Bharu Municipal Council, and RELA personnel — for their support and security during the celebration.

"Above all," she added, "we thank Mother Mary and entrust our future to her gentle, unwavering care. May Our Lady of Fatima continue to guide us as we remain strong in faith, united in love, and witnesses of Christ for generations to come. God bless us all."

KUALA LUMPUR
ARCHDIOCESE

Diary of Archbishop
Julian Leow

October - November

30/10- Visit to:
6/11 Caritas Hong Kong

PENANG DIOCESE

Diary of Cardinal
Sebastian Francis

October

29 Meeting with Pacific Asia
Capuchin Conference
GACC General Councillor,
Fr William Chang OFM Cap at
3.00pm

MALACCA JOHORE
DIOCESE

Diary of Bishop
Bernard Paul

October - November

28-31 Caritas Malaysia General
Assembly – MAJODI Centre
2/11 Mass – All Soul's Day, Ulu
Tiram Catholic Cemetery

Malacca Johore Diocese News Update #245

Welcome dear friends,

The Pilgrim Cross is at the Church of St Theresa, Gajah Berang until December 6. A glimmer of hope for the Gazans, the "mouse deer trapped between two elephants".

The South Johore Vicariate held its first Eucharistic Congress on October 25, with a display and exhibition of St Carlos Acutis' relics.

Local Takes. Talk or walk? An activist said: The FAM fiasco shows fake glory prioritised over human rights when there are thousands of stateless Malaysians, including Sabahans.

The PM said that no new taxes will be introduced until the administration is free of leakage, corruption and weak management. The MACC chief said that corruption, if not contained, could destabilise Malaysia in the same way that Nepal was shaken by the angry public.

The deputy IGP told cadet officers that the Haj won't absolve sins of corruption. Sabah for Sabahans has taken on new meaning — it is less about nostalgia, and more about accountability. Sabahans feel they are lagging behind their West Malaysian counterparts in terms of development, being the second-poorest state, with chronic infrastructure gaps and persistent water, power and logistics woes.

The influenza virus has infected 6000 school students across the country, prompting temporary closure of several schools.

Making a Difference: Pope Leo XIV,

in his latest, *Dilexi Te* (I have loved you, Rev. 3:9) teaches that care for the poor also means "fighting against the structural causes of poverty", "ideologies that defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation, for deepening inequality in today's world". He reminded: "No Christian can regard the poor simply as a societal problem, they are part of our 'family'. They are 'one of us.'"

A Thought for The Week: Outside the Surgery

A doctor entered the hospital in a hurry after being called in for an urgent surgery. He answered the call ASAP, changed his clothes and went directly to the surgery block. He found the boy's father impatiently waiting for the doctor. Seeing him, he yelled: "Why did you take all this time to come? Don't you know that my son's life is in danger? Don't you have a sense of responsibility?"

The doctor smiled and said: "I am sorry, I came the fastest I could after receiving the call..... And now, I wish you'd calm down so that I can do my work." The father countered angrily: "Calm down? If your own son dies now, what will you do?" The doctor smiled again and replied: "Doctors cannot prolong lives. Go and pray for your son and for God's grace to do our best. The father murmured: "Giving advice when we're not concerned is so easy."

After some hours, the doctor came out, happy, and said: "Thank God! Your son is saved! If you have any questions, ask the nurse!!" And he ran off. The father

remarked, "Why is he so arrogant? Couldn't he spare a few minutes to tell me my son's condition?"

The nurse, with tears, answered, "His son died yesterday in a road accident, he was at the burial when we called him. And now that he has saved your son's life, he is running to finish his son's burial."

Lesson from the perceptive nurse:
NEVER JUDGE ANYONE because you never know how their life is and as to what is happening or what they're going through.

QnQ: Q asks: When things are not going my way, what can I do?

"Sometimes, the magic happens when you stop worrying about how things will work out." It's when we loosen our grip and release the need to control that life begins to surprise us.

Faith grows in the spaces where certainty fades. Trust allows grace to move — quietly, gently — arranging things in ways we could never have planned. The moment we stop striving to make everything fit, we discover that life, in its own rhythm, already knows the way. In stillness, life unfolds without forcing.

The Spirit @ work: "Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see where God wants you to go — and give you the courage to get there." *Fr Jacques Philippe*

Something to tickle you: "Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." *Winston Churchill*

Bishop Bernard Paul



Parishioners venerating the Salib.

IPOH: When the *Salib* (Pilgrim Cross) arrived at the Church of Our Mother of Perpetual Help (OMPH), its journey through the city was not simply a passing of wood and symbol. It became a pilgrimage of hearts — touching schools, convents, chapels, hospitals, and parishes — reminding each community that Christ journeys with them in their struggles and joys.

Upon its arrival, the *Salib* was first assembled at the church sanctuary, where silence and solemn music set the tone. One parishioner recalled, “As I knelt before the *Salib*, I felt the weight of my own burdens but also the gentle whisper: ‘You are not alone.’”

For days, groups from across the parish gathered — elders, working adults, children, youth, and language apostolates — each bringing their prayers. The *Salib* became a mirror: it revealed not only suffering, but also hope.

Throughout the *Salib*'s stay, various parish ministries and BECs took turns leading prayer hours, devotions, and services. The Divine Mercy group prayed fervently for healing

Journey of the Salib touches hearts across Ipoh



and forgiveness. The Tamil and Chinese apostolates lifted hymns in their languages, a beautiful sign of unity in diversity. The RCIA catechists guided the faithful in reflection and reconciliation, while the lectors, altar servers, and hospitality ministers poured their energy into service.

One BEC leader shared, “When we gathered before the *Salib*, I felt strongly that our small community is part of something so much greater. We were not just praying for ourselves but for the whole Church in Malaysia.”

The catechism and CGS children were allotted a special prayer hour, accompanied by their catechists. Their innocent prayers and songs filled the church with joy and simplicity. One teacher shared, “The children approached the *Salib* without hesitation. Their trust in Jesus reminded us adults how faith is meant to be — pure, hopeful, and free.” A young child was heard saying softly, “Jesus,

I love You,” capturing the essence of what many were feeling in their hearts.

At the Convent of Our Lady and the Good Shepherd, the *Salib* found a home among religious sisters. Their prayerful songs and quiet devotion offered a powerful witness. One participant remarked, “Seeing the sisters pray so humbly before the *Salib* made me realise faith doesn't need big words — it is simply being present to God.”

The *Salib*'s presence reminded all that consecrated life, often hidden, carries the prayers of the whole Church. It was as though the Sisters, like Mary at the foot of the *Salib*, stood faithfully, interceding for all.

When the *Salib* was assembled at Hospital Fatimah, the encounter took on a different depth. Patients, families, and staff paused in their routines to gaze at Christ crucified. A patient whispered, “I offered my pain to Him. Somehow, it became lighter.”

Here, the *Salib* was more than a symbol —

it was companionship in suffering, a reminder that Jesus Himself knows human pain and stands close to those in weakness.

At St Mary's Chapel, the *Salib* was welcomed with warmth by a smaller community. Their devotion showed that even at the edges of the city, faith burns brightly. One chapel leader reflected, “The *Salib* did not pass us by. It came to remind us that we too are part of the journey of the Church.”

This stop was a sign of how Christ seeks out the peripheries, ensuring no one is forgotten.

When the *Salib* returned to OMPH, the church overflowed with thanksgiving and emotion. “The *Salib* is not staying here — it is sending us out,” said one parishioner.

As it was dismantled for its next destination, there was sorrow at parting but also a new fire in the community. The *Salib* had awakened something lasting: the call to carry Christ into our daily lives — into families, workplaces, and society.

Across the parish — from convent to hospital, chapel to parish — the *Salib* united hearts in prayer and reminded all of Christ's abiding presence. Some found healing, others rediscovered faith, and many were simply consoled by the quiet truth that God is near. One youth put it beautifully: “I came to see the *Salib*. Instead, I realised the *Salib* came to see me.”

Though the *Salib* has now journeyed on, its grace remains. It taught us that the *Salib* is not only about suffering but about hope; not only about death, but resurrection. For OMPH, this experience will be remembered not just as a visit of the *Salib* but as a true pilgrimage of the heart.

Pilgrimage rekindles hope, brotherhood among KL clergy

KUANTAN: The presbyterium of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur embarked on a “pilgrimage of hope” to the Jubilee Year shrine of the Church of St Thomas the Apostle, located along the “far east” coast, the frontier of our archdiocese. This month's recollection is unique because it was held off-site (our usual venue being the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre, KL) and outside the Klang valley.

The recollection began with an insightful sharing by the parish priest of the Church of St Thomas, Fr George Packiasamy, who shared about the significance of the Jubilee Year in both Jewish/ Hebrew and Christian tradition. He then moved to the theme for this year's ordinary Jubilee which had been set by Pope Francis of happy memory: “Pilgrims of Hope.” Fr George concluded his presentation with a pictorial history of the parish.

As many of the faithful of the archdiocese and elsewhere had been making pilgrimages to local and international shrines, the clergy of the archdiocese decided to make this pilgrimage in the spirit of synodality with their flock and to offer the graces received for their

spiritual enrichment.

Fr Michel Dass, assistant priest of the Church of St Anthony, expressed his joy with this month's change of venue, saying that the whole experience had reinvigorated him as a hopeful and joyful priest.

Fr Dominic Tan, from the Church of the Holy Rosary, noted that the gathering was a timely reminder that the Jubilee Year proclaims our hope in God's mercy.

Fr Simon Labrooy, parish priest of the Church of St Jude, said the recollection and pilgrimage were instrumental in deepening the clergy's spiritual journey and fostering growth.

Fr Peter Anthony from the Church of Christ the Light, spoke of being personally moved by the warm hospitality of the parishioners, whose thoughtful efforts made the pilgrimage a special and memorable experience for the priests.

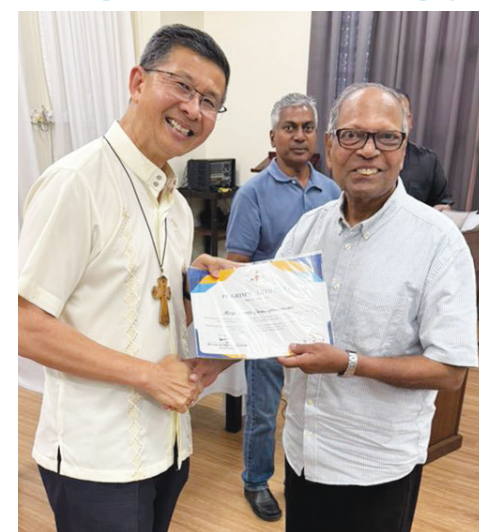
After solemn vespers with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and individual confessions, the clergy were treated to a sumptuous dinner at a local restaurant, as a fitting conclu-

sion to the first day's itinerary.

On the second day, we began our programme with Lauds and Mass with the local community. During his talk, Fr Richard Anthonysamy, SJ, highlighted salient points from the document *Lineamenta: The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World* which was presented at the 2014 Synod of Bishops. This was followed by updates from the parish priests of the various pilgrim shrine churches of the archdiocese on activities conducted in their respective churches.

In his homily at the morning Mass with the clergy and some of the faithful, Archbishop Julian Leow reminded the clergy that perfection in the context of the Lord's injunction to be “perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect,” does not entail being sinless or flawless but rather, to be seen as a call to imitate God in all aspects: to be compassionate as the Father is compassionate; to be loving as the Father is loving. Rather than seeking to judge and make comparisons with others.

The archbishop added, we should compare



Msgr James Gnanapiragasam receiving his pilgrimage certificate from Archbishop Julian Leow.

ourselves with the Lord and imitate Him in His magnanimous compassion and love. “If we spend more time focusing on our mission, we will spend less time judging others and comparing ourselves with them.” He exhorted the clergy to be “better versions” of themselves and to focus on building a synodal Church.

At the end of this recollection, many shared that they were moved by the joy and camaraderie shared among the clergy during the entire pilgrimage, including the long road trip to Kuantan and return journey to Kuala Lumpur. In the words of Fr Simon Labrooy, what stood out was experiencing “brothers praying together, in fellowship and in laughing with each other.” **Fr Michael Chua**



Faithful gather for Feast of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary

Bernard Anthony

KUALA LUMPUR: The Church of the Holy Rosary, Brickfields, was filled with the faithful from Sept 26 to Oct 4 for the nine-day novena and rosary in celebration of the parish feast day of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

The triduum Masses, held from Oct 2 to 4, featured preachers from the Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCD). On the first day, Fr Nicholas Hoh, OCD, reflected on St Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus, highlighting her “little way” of faithfulness — performing small tasks with great love. He reminded the faithful to cultivate good habits and express love through simple daily actions.

On the second and third days, Fr Christopher Loh, OCD, preached on the theme *Disciples of Hope*. He reminded parishioners that as disciples of Jesus, their lives must be rooted in hope, even amid life’s challenges — natural disasters, war, illness, or loss. Fr Christopher emphasised that death comes to all, regardless of age, but faith



The flower girls near the statue of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

enables Christians to bring hope to others.

Drawing from Luke 17:6, he said, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can command a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea — and it will obey.” He invited the faithful to deepen their faith and recognise Jesus as the Saviour whose Passion, Death, and Resur-

rection bring eternal life. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, believers are called to encounter the Risen Lord and courageously continue His mission.

Fr Christopher also urged parishioners to adopt a servant’s heart — to serve with humility, use their resources for God’s glory, and grow in compassion through prayer, Scripture reading, acts of charity,

and devotion to the Rosary.

As the feast coincided with the memorial of St Francis of Assisi, Fr Christopher reflected on the saint’s humility and spirit of poverty, urging the faithful to emulate his example, as well as that of the saints and Mother Mary, by living with faith, hope, and love until they meet the Lord face to face.

On Oct 4, some 800-faithful gathered for the Rosary, novena, hymns of praise, Mass, procession, Benediction, and fellowship. Parish priest, Fr Dominic Tan, and French priest, Fr Robert, concelebrated the Mass. A special blessing was given to those serving in various liturgical ministries, with both priests sprinkling holy water over the ministers as the congregation prayed in thanksgiving.

After the Mass, a procession in honour of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary was held around the church grounds. The statue of Our Lady was wheeled in solemnly, accompanied by the congregation praying the Rosary. The celebration concluded with Benediction and a communal dinner in the par-

ish hall, where parishioners shared a meal, strengthened bonds, and built community.

The feast culminated on Oct 7, the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, with Fr Dominic presiding over the 8.00pm English-Latin Mass attended by about 300 parishioners. In his homily, he recounted the 1917 apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, when Mary revealed herself as the Lady of the Rosary and urged the daily recitation of the Rosary for peace in the world — and in homes.

Fr Dominic also shared the origins of the feast, recalling how the Christian victory at the 1571 Battle of Lepanto was attributed to Mary’s intercession through the Rosary. Pope Pius V subsequently established the Feast of Our Lady of Victories in 1572, which Pope Gregory XIII later renamed Our Lady of the Rosary.

The Rosary as known today traces back to the 13th century and is attributed to St Dominic de Guzman, who is believed to have received it from the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1212.

Celebrating the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, herald of hope for a wounded world

CHERAS: The Church of St Francis of Assisi celebrated its patronal feast with a three-day triduum from October 3–5, themed *St Francis: Herald of Hope for a Wounded World*. The celebration coincided with the Archdiocesan-level Jubilee for Consecrated Life, which brought together various religious congregations to reflect on the enduring legacy of St Francis.

Each evening of the triduum featured a different preacher from a religious congregation, offering rich spiritual insights into the life and message of the saint who continues to inspire countless people across the centuries.

On the first day, Fr Nicholas Hoh, OCD, preached on *The Foundation of Hope – Inner Peace through Conversion*. Before the Mass, the Secular Franciscan Order, together with the friars, reenacted the Transitus — the moving commemoration of St Francis’ passing from earthly life to eternal life.

Fr Nicholas shared that it was his first time witnessing the rite and was deeply moved by the serenity of St Francis at the time of his death — a peace born of total surrender to God. “This may be difficult for many of us,” he said, “as we often feel unready due to unfinished tasks or attachments. But true conversion is a U-turn back to God. When we thirst for inner peace with Him and keep that flame alive, our selfishness and indifference are transformed into Christ-like love.”

He reminded the faithful that this is the essence of Franciscan spirituality — to find God in prayer, in creation,



Fr Christopher Wee SJ proclaiming the Gospel

and in every person, allowing each moment to be inspired by His presence.

On Oct 4, the actual feast day, the parish hosted its much-loved Blessing of Pets in the morning, where parishioners brought their furry and feathered companions to be blessed.

That evening, Fr David Reegon, OFM Cap, preached on *The Practice of Hope – Compassion for All Creation*. Drawing from the Beatitudes, he reflected that “a man of God is known by what he builds — by the compassion, joy, and peace he brings to others.” The celebration also marked the 25th anniversaries of Fr David Reegon (sacerdotal), Sr Elizabeth Jothee, FSP, and Sr Mary Teresa, FSIC, for their years of faithful religious commitment.

On the final day, Fr Christopher Wee, SJ, concluded the triduum with the theme *The Mission of Hope – Becoming Instruments of Peace*. He began his homily with a striking observation: “Who would have thought that someone from the 12th

century continues to influence so many today?”

Fr Christopher drew connections between St Francis of Assisi and the late Jesuit Pope who took his name in honour of the saint. He cautioned against viewing St Francis merely as the “saint of animals,” just as *Laudato Si’* should not be misunderstood as simply an environmental text. “It is a profound social document,” he said, “calling us to rediscover our place in creation and our faith in the Creator. Only when we see the beauty of creation can we recognise the love of the One who made it.”

He urged the congregation to emulate St Francis’ vision of the world — one where all life is interconnected and imbued with divine love. “St Francis saw the world as one family of creation. How can we do the same?” he challenged.

St Francis’ message of peace, conversion, and care for creation remains relevant today, calling each generation to live the Gospel with joy, simplicity, and hope.



**ARCHDIOCESE OF
KUALA LUMPUR**
CHAN/CD/05/2023

Chancery Notice

Banns of Ordination to the Diaconate

**Bro Philip Asirwalam and
Bro Anthony Robert s/o Peter**

Upon the recommendation of the seminary formators and after consultation with the College of Consultors, His Grace Most Reverend Julian Leow DD, Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, intends to call Bro Philip Asirwalam and Bro Anthony Robert s/o Peter to the Order of Deacon on Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 11.00am at the Church of St Anthony, Kuala Lumpur.

Bro Philip Asirwalam is from the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jalan Peel, Kuala Lumpur, and currently resides at the Church of the Divine Mercy, Shah Alam.

Bro Anthony Robert is from the Church of St Jude, Rawang, and currently resides at the Church of Christ the Light, Desa Jaya.

Both began their formation in philosophy at College General, Penang (2018–2019), and continued with theology at St Peter’s College, Kuching (2021–2025).

In accordance with Canon 1051 §2, this serves as a public notice. If anyone is aware of any canonical impediment or reason why these candidates should not be ordained, please inform your parish priest, the Chancery, or the Archbishop without delay (Canon 1043).

You may contact the Chancery by emailing us at chancery@archkl.org

Let us offer our prayerful support to Bro Philip Asirwalam and Bro Anthony Robert as they prepare for diaconal ministry and service to the people of God in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur.

Clarence Devadass

**Rev Fr Dr Clarence Devadass
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur**

October 16, 2025

Faith communities unite for 'Peace with Creation' clean-up

PENANG: In conjunction with the Season of Creation and the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2025, an inter-racial and inter-religious community came together under the theme *Peace with Creation* for a neighbourhood clean-up at Flat Taman Pulasan, Bukit Minyak, on October 4.

The initiative was jointly organised by Caritas, Diocese of Penang, the Penang Island-Northern Creation Justice Commission, the Penang Diocesan Youth Network (PDYN), and the Penang Refugee Network. It aimed to raise awareness about caring for our common home while fostering unity with the migrant and refugee communities.

Rooted in the message of *Laudato Si'*, the event echoed the call of Isaiah 32:14-18 — to restore peace and justice to the Earth. It invited participants to rediscover creation as a shared home where every person, regardless of origin or circumstance, finds dignity and belonging.

Parishioners, youth, refugees, and local residents joined hands in cleaning the surrounding areas and green spaces, collecting waste and sorting recyclables. With gloves, bags, and open hearts, they demonstrated that caring for creation is a concrete expression of faith and solidarity.

What began as a simple act of cleaning became, in the words of *Laudato Si'* (231), "love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care." Each smile and act of co-



Volunteers cleaning the plastic containers before recycling them.

operation reflected a living expression of stewardship — a reminder that ecological conversion begins with small, consistent steps taken together.

An integral part of the programme was an educational session on waste segregation and recycling, facilitated by members of the Creation Justice Commission. Participants learned how to separate recyclables from general waste and were shown practical ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Simple demonstrations illustrated how plastic, paper, metal, and electronic waste can be repurposed — giving new life to

what was once discarded. This hands-on learning experience reflected *Laudato Si'* (209), which calls for ecological education that nurtures lasting values and responsible habits.

Beyond environmental care, the clean-up became a sacred space of encounter. Friendships were formed as locals and refugees worked side by side, listening to each other's stories and discovering their shared longing for peace, home, and dignity.

For many refugees, the event offered a rare sense of belonging — a moment to be recognised not as outsiders but as neigh-

bours contributing to the well-being of the community. For parishioners and youth, it deepened their understanding of the human dimension of migration, revealing that caring for creation also means caring for those displaced by conflict, poverty, and environmental crises.

The presence of participants from diverse faiths — Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus — added a profound layer of meaning. United in reverence for life and the Creator, they worked together in harmony, embodying the belief that care for our common home transcends all boundaries.

As the morning drew to a close, participants stood together in gratitude — surrounded by cleaner streets, renewed friendships, and a shared sense of hope. The message of Isaiah resounded anew: true peace and justice flourish when humanity lives in right relationship with one another and with creation.

The *Peace with Creation* neighbourhood clean-up signified prayer in action, a tangible sign of unity in diversity and a step toward restoring harmony between humanity and the Earth.

In choosing to care for the planet and to welcome the stranger, participants bore witness to a profound truth: peace with creation begins with peace in the human heart — and through such acts of love and service, God's dream for creation continues to unfold among us.



Mission Manager

JOB SUMMARY

- To provide leadership in promoting the mission and core values of Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital (MMCH) that embodies the Catholic identity and ethics.
- Ensuring that all activities undertaken by and through MMCH give witness and strengthen the healing ministry of Christ and uphold the purpose of a Catholic Healthcare organization.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead the development and implementation of mission integration that uphold and strengthen the mission, vision and values of MMCH as Catholic healthcare service that embraces the Catholic ethos.
- Actively participate in developing programs to promote the Franciscan values. Develop education and formation programs for MMCH Board, staff and business partners.
- Work with the Board on strategic matters relating to mission and cultural building.
- Lead and manage the CPC department to ensure delivery of best practice clinical pastoral care services.
- Actively participate in key initiatives to improve patient centred care.
- Develop and lead relevant mission related committees and community outreach programs.

REQUIREMENTS

- 5 years of work experience in related field of training, customer service, counselling, coaching & management role.
- Experience and qualification in providing clinical pastoral care, is an added advantage.
- Independent, confident and yet able to work effectively in a team.
- Good interpersonal, listening and communication skills.
- Multi-lingual capability and is well-formed in the Catholic traditions, would be an asset.

WORK LOCATION

23 Jalan Bulan, Fettes Park, 11200 Tanjung Bungah, Penang, Malaysia

- Interested, please send your resume with current self-photo & stating expected salary to subloh@mountmiriam.com. Please indicate "Application for Mission Manager" as the subject.
- For more information on us, please visit our website <http://www.mountmiriam.com>

MOUNT MIRIAM CANCER HOSPITAL
Serving with Love in Cancer Care since 1976

Exploring Genesis and Mark through a living dialogue

KUALA LUMPUR: The Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate organised a dialogue session with Professor Fr Jean L'Hour, MEP, *pic*, on October 7 at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Setapak.

Fr L'Hour, one of the Paris Foreign Missions (MEP) priests who taught at College General Major Seminary from 1961 to 1973, was in Malaysia to take part in the seminary's 360th anniversary celebrations.

The dialogue session, attended by those journeying through the study of Sacred Scripture and other interested participants, offered a rich opportunity to reflect on the Word of God. Fr L'Hour provided an overview of the Book of Genesis and the Gospel of Mark, presenting a parallel reading of the first eleven chapters of Genesis and Mark's Gospel — not as a strict model, but as an approach particularly relevant to the challenges of our time. He invited participants, like Abram, to journey toward new horizons of faith and understanding.

Fr L'Hour explained that the first eleven chapters of Genesis — often referred to as The History of Origins — were not placed at the beginning of the Bible by accident. They serve as a key to reading all of Scripture and, more broadly, to understanding the human condition. These chapters offer a symbolic reflection on the fundamental dimensions of human life, both collective and personal. The Adam of Genesis, he said, represents all humanity — created good and in the image of God, yet also created free and responsible.

In parallel, the Gospel of Mark, Fr L'Hour noted, presents Jesus' response to the universal question posed by Genesis: How can we fully live our humanity — with dignity, freedom, and fulfilment? The Gospel of Mark, he said, is a true "handbook for discipleship," placing each disciple face to face with the actions and words of Jesus, and showing how faith is lived out in daily life and human relationships.

Through Jesus' encounters, the disciple learns that every relationship — even with God — is rooted in love and expressed through our relationships with one another. Ultimately, only the law of love prevails: the welcome and recognition of God cannot be separated from the welcome and recognition of one's brothers and sisters.

"This," Fr L'Hour said, "is how Jesus in Mark's Gospel answers Genesis' question: Where is your brother? To 'say God' today, as yesterday, is to welcome one's brother and sister in their differences. Loving God and loving one another — the true sacraments of God — are everything. All the rest is literature."

Participants expressed appreciation for Fr L'Hour's broad and refreshing perspective, describing the session as enlightening and inspiring. Many said it deepened their desire to read and reflect on the Bible anew, discovering Scripture as a living dialogue between God and humanity. **Philo Fernandez, KL Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate**





PETALING JAYA: The Catholic Ministry for the Deaf (CMfD), under the Archdiocesan Office for Human Development (AOHD), marked the International Day of Sign Languages (IDSL) 2025 with a vibrant celebration at the Church of the Assumption on September 28.

This year's global theme, *No Human Rights Without Sign Language Rights*, underscored the importance of recognising sign language as a fundamental human right and promoting inclusion for the Deaf community.

The morning celebration began with the recitation of the Rosary, followed by an interpreted Mass at 8.30am. The Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Julian Leow and concelebrated and interpreted by Fr Michael Chua, ecclesiastical assistant for CMfD, offered worshippers a meaningful experience that bridged the gap between the

Hearing and Deaf communities.

During the liturgy, the faithful were reminded to "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4), as both clergy and congregation embodied the spirit of unity and joy. After Mass, Aldeany, a Deaf youth, shared his personal reflection, reminding all that being Deaf is not a disability but a different way of experiencing the world. "Sign language is my voice," he said, expressing his deep love for God.

Also in attendance were Dr Gary Liew, AOHD director, and Bro Jescie Petrus Petu, whose presence was warmly appreciated by the community.

After Mass, the congregation gathered for an informative session on Deaf Culture and Community, emceed by Charles Thin, a Deaf host whose engaging dramatizations and interactive games brought laughter and participation

Sign language is my voice

from all.

A captivating traditional dance by Teresa Chong, a Deaf performer, showcased the richness of Deaf culture, followed by an exhibition highlighting CMfD's past events and initiatives promoting inclusivity and empowerment.

One of the day's highlights was the launch of the "Holy Rosary in BIM" video project — a series of Rosary prayers in Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia (Malaysian Sign Language). The initiative, a year and a half in the making, was created by Deaf individuals for the Deaf community.

Genevieve Yap, interpreter and faith team coordinator, explained that the videos aim to make the Rosary accessible to Deaf

Catholics and encourage daily devotion. Each mystery of the Rosary is illustrated through 20 original sketches by Catholic Deaf artist Lim Anuar (Max), organised into the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, and Luminous sets. The videos are now available on the CMfD website: www.catholicministryfordeaf.my

Christina Lee, a veteran hearing interpreter with over 20 years of experience, then shared her personal journey in interpreting, offering heartfelt insights into the vital role interpreters play in bridging communication between the Deaf and Hearing.

The session concluded with a Q&A segment, followed by the introduction of the IDSL 2025

Organising Committee, led by Isabella Peng, a Deaf coordinator, alongside her dedicated team of Deaf and Hearing members. Their collaboration reflected the event's theme of true inclusion and partnership.

The celebration concluded with a fellowship lunch, fostering community bonds and continued dialogue between participants.

More than just an annual observance, the International Day of Sign Languages 2025 served as a powerful call to action. By championing Sign Language rights, the event reaffirmed the dignity, inclusion, and spiritual belonging of Deaf individuals in every part of society, especially within faith communities.



The Deaf community signing during Mass.

Hope and growth blossom at Pusat Jagaan Istimewa Nathanael

PETALING JAYA: Pusat Jagaan Istimewa Nathanael, a centre for special needs children, celebrated its first anniversary since refurbishment with a vibrant and inclusive event that brought together members of the special needs community, interfaith guests, dignitaries, and well-wishers. The celebration on October 3 was made especially memorable by the presence of Archbishop Julian Leow, who officiated the event.

Archbishop Julian began the day by warmly welcoming all attendees — children and adults from various backgrounds and faiths. He led the gathering in a heartfelt blessing prayer, setting a tone of unity, compassion, and gratitude. The prelate personally greeted each guest, reflecting his

deep care for the differently-abled community.

A key highlight of the day was the unveiling and blessing of the new vegetable garden, aptly named Hope Garden. The archbishop, together with AOHD director Dr Gary Liew, representatives from Wastech Multigreen Group Company — who sponsored the garden's irrigation system — and guests from various ministries, took part in a symbolic planting ceremony. Archbishop Julian planted a brinjal seedling, followed by the harvest, symbolising not only the growth of plants but also the blossoming of hope and progress within the centre.

The celebration also featured a meaningful gift exchange. Wastech presented a bag of fer-

tiliser to support the garden's growth, while the Archdiocesan Office for Human Development (AOHD) offered a gift bag in appreciation of the centre's mission and impact.

Dr Gary expressed heartfelt gratitude to all who have supported the centre's journey, noting that it stands as "a testament to a three-decade-long legacy of ministry to those with special needs." He also welcomed guests who joined the celebration both physically and virtually via Zoom.

The children of the centre delighted the audience with a lively performance, showcasing their talents and joyful spirit. Later, Archbishop Julian joined them in creating a Gratitude Wall, where messages of thanks and hope were

displayed.

Adding to the joy, the celebration coincided with two significant milestones — Archbishop Julian's 11th episcopal anniversary and the 30th episcopal anniversary of Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam. The presence of Archbishop Emeritus Murphy was an unexpected delight, adding a sense of history and continuity to the occasion. It was during his tenure that the centre was relocated to its current premises — a legacy that continues to bless many today.

Archbishop Emeritus Murphy also blessed the Reading Corner and Therapy Room, spaces designed to nurture the children's minds and well-being. A touching moment came with the opening of

the "Murphy Door", a symbolic feature installed in his honour.

A moving parent-sharing session followed, providing a platform for heartfelt testimonies. Parents expressed deep gratitude to the teachers and staff, highlighting the remarkable progress their children have made. Their stories of resilience and transformation deeply moved everyone present.

The event concluded with a guided tour of the centre, showcasing its programmes and the impactful work being done to empower children with special needs. Among the guests was Fr Étienne Frecon, Vicar General of the Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris (MEP). Fr Étienne, who previously served on mission in Kuala Lumpur and Taiwan, highlighted the enduring collaboration between AOHD and MEP — a partnership spanning nearly three decades, strengthened by the contributions of MEP volunteers who continue to support the centre's mission.

This anniversary celebration was more than a commemoration — it was a testament to the power of community, compassion, and collaboration. As Hope Garden continues to flourish, so too does the mission of Pusat Jagaan Istimewa Nathanael: nurturing lives, fostering inclusion, and celebrating the unique abilities of every child. **Gunavathi Thurchinamurthy, Coordinator Ministry for Special Needs**



Archbishop Julian Leow greeting some of the guests.



Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam blessing the Reading Corner.

Recollection deepens BEC spirit in Melaka vicariate

Christine Ong

MELAKA: A half-day recollection for English-speaking BEC coordinators and members of parishes in the Melaka vicariate was recently held at the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Krubong. The session was led by Fr Leo Elias from the diocesan Basic Ecclesial Community Animation and Formation Team (BECAFT).

The first part of the reflection focused on the 4Ws — Worship, Word, Work, and Witness — as the living signs of the Church. As believers, we are called to move beyond being merely a Worship and Word-centred community, to one that lives out our faith through Work and bears authentic Witness to Christ.

The participants were then invited to reflect on their journey as pilgrims of hope, especially as the Church approaches the conclusion of the Year of Hope 2025.

Participants were later divided into groups for sharing and presentations. The session be-



The coordinator giving an explanation of the process.

gan with a moment of self-reflection, encouraging participants to be in touch with their inner selves by asking: What am I feeling today? What is in my heart — trust or fear, peace or anxiety, conviction or doubt? Fr Leo reminded

participants that it is easy to become preoccupied with external activities and neglect what is happening within. Each group had a facilitator and a secretary to record the discussions.

The group activities helped to deepen faith

and strengthen the sense of community among the BECs. Several practical suggestions were proposed for the way forward:

- Some participants felt that monthly BEC gatherings were insufficient.
- BECCOT meetings were seen as beneficial in motivating BECs to organise activities such as family days, picnics, or outreach programmes for the needy at least once a year, in addition to their regular gatherings.
- For BECs comprising mainly retired members, it was suggested that meetings be held during the day instead of at night, as evening sessions can be difficult for older participants in their 60s, 70s, and 80s.

The recollection provided an opportunity for BEC members to pause, reflect, and renew their commitment to building faith-filled, caring, and active communities. It served as a timely reminder that being a BEC is not merely about gatherings, but about journeying together in faith, hope, and love.

An evening of music, prayer and meditation

PENANG: On the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, about a hundred people gathered at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, for *Streams of Living Water*, an evening of sacred music, prayer and meditation led by Fr Cyprian Consiglio OSB Cam. The programme, organised by the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Meditation Group in conjunction with the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) Malaysia, invited participants to pray through song and silence.

The evening opened with the Latin chant *Benedictus es Domine* — “Blessed are You, Lord, who gaze into the abyss and are seated among the cherubim.” Its gentle rhythm and simple guitar accompaniment drew the hall into stillness. This was followed by *There Is a Light*, whose refrain proclaimed, “There is a light that can overcome the darkness, but there is no darkness that can overcome the light.” Many joined softly in the refrain, their voices becoming one quiet act of faith.

Fr Cyprian’s music moved easily between Scripture and contemplation. In *Behind and Before Me*, based on Psalm 139, he sang of the God who knows every heart: “From behind and before me, my God, You explore me — so terrible, so wonderful, so wise.” The title song *Streams of Living Water* linked Ezekiel’s vision of water flowing from the temple with Romans 5:5 — “The love of God has been poured into our hearts.” “Peter and Paul remind us,” he said, “that we are now the living temples from which this water flows.”

Each song carried a message of surrender and compassion. *Bread for the Journey* re-

called God’s daily manna; *Are You Ready?* echoed Jesus’ question about drinking His cup. Quoting St John Chrysostom, Fr Cyprian reminded the audience, “If you do not find the beggar at the door, you will not find Jesus in the chalice.” Prayer, he said, must always lead to love of neighbour.

When he sang *Unless a Grain of Wheat*, Fr Cyprian reflected that the line sums up the whole Gospel. “Yeast, salt, seed — each dissolves to bring transformation,” he said, recalling Thomas Merton’s reminder that dying to the false self gives birth to the true.

After the song, he led a five-minute meditation, guiding everyone in posture, breath and sacred word. Quoting St Augustine — “You were within me, and I was outside” — he invited all to turn their gaze inward to the light of God. The hall grew completely still; it was a moment of shared contemplation, where the evening’s music found its deepest echo within.

The final part of the evening turned outward again in prayer for peace. *A Candle in the Darkness*, inspired by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, carried the refrain, “I wish I were a candle in the darkness ... to light the way for us to find the path of peace within our hearts.” Fr Cyprian reminded listeners that there can be no peace in the world without peace in the heart.

To close, he led the congregation in the *Salve Regina*, entrusting all to the Blessed Mother’s love and protection on her feast day. As the final “Hail, Holy Queen” rose through the candle-lit hall, silence followed — the kind of silence that is itself prayer. **Basil Surin**



Fr Cyprian Consiglio OSB Cam guiding the participants in a meditation posture.

Meditators embrace the call to self-emptying

TAIPING: *Kenosis* — the emptying of self and the heart of Christian spirituality — was the theme of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) Malaysia’s annual retreat held recently.

The theme deeply resonated with the 78 seasoned meditators who attended, many of whom discovered new insights into the timeless teachings of Christ. In essence, *kenosis* is Jesus’ invitation to His followers to let go of ego and self-will in order to embrace humility and find true joy through love and union with God.

The four-day retreat was led by Fr Cyprian Consiglio, OSB Cam, a Camaldolese Benedictine monk, musician, and author, who guided participants back to the heart of meditation — understanding why we meditate and how posture, breath, and the mantra help still the mind and train the senses. The mantra used by WCCM members is the Aramaic word *Maranatha*, meaning “Come, Lord Jesus.”

Fr Cyprian, who currently serves as the Secretary General for Monastic Interreligious Dialogue in Rome, began each session with psalms, scripture readings, and reflections from spiritual masters such as Bede Griffiths and Bernard of Clairvaux, interwoven with poetry. Through these, he emphasised the essence of *kenosis* — the call to empty ourselves so that God’s grace may fill us completely.

He drew from Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish’s *Think of Others* and human rights advocate Václav Havel’s *The Voice of Being*

to illustrate how reframing our minds allows us to experience God’s grace, especially amid today’s global tensions.

Fr Cyprian also challenged prevailing notions of God as a vengeful figure and cautioned against humanity’s fixation on false idols — materialism, social status, intellectual pride, and self-indulgence. “It is easy to overlook these as minor weaknesses when, in fact, they conflict with our relationship with God,” he said, reminding participants that prayer is an act of self-emptying — of sitting in stillness and waiting on God.

Using the analogies of seed, yeast, and salt, he described pathways to personal transformation and spiritual growth: the nurtured seed that grows, the yeast that works from within, and the salt that brings out hidden flavour. “God desires to share His power with us. To receive His grace, we must first humble ourselves. When the seed, yeast, or salt dissolves within us, we are transformed by what we receive,” he explained.

He also shared the story of a Buddhist monk who dedicated hours of meditation daily for world peace, noting, “The dedication of merit through meditation is a powerful act — something each of us can do.”

Participants described the retreat as transformative — a time of renewal that deepened their faith and understanding of *kenosis* as the foundation of Christian spirituality.

During the retreat, Fr Gerard Theraviam, WCCM Malaysia’s spiritual director, led the prayers and concelebrated the Mass. **Anita Matthews**



Participants meditating in silence. (photo/Samuel Gopal)

Pope sends antibiotics for sick children in Gaza

VATICAN: As humanitarian aid was finally granted access to Gaza, Pope Leo XIV instructed the Office of Papal Charities to send medicines for the youngest victims of the war. Meanwhile, aid missions to Ukraine also continue.

Through the Office of Papal Charities, known as 'Pope Leo's first aid service', 5,000 doses of antibiotics have been sent to Gaza for children, who are among those most affected by two years of conflict and desperate shortages of food and medicines. This shipment was made possible by the reopening of the crossings through which humanitarian aid is now reaching the people of the Gaza Strip.

Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, Papal Almoner, said: "We are putting into practice the words of the Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi te*, dedicated to the poor. It is necessary to act, to pay attention to those in need."

Thanks to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the antibiotics sent have already been distributed to those in need. Cardinal Krajewski said that even at the height of the war, efforts were made to help by sending funds



(Eyad Baba/AFP)

for the purchase of food and fuel.

The Office of Papal Charities has also been sending humanitarian aid to Ukraine for years now, supporting the Basilica of St Sophia in Rome, known as 'the church of Ukrainians' from where numerous trucks have departed, carrying essential goods, including power generators and thermal clothing, to help people withstand the cold in the war-torn country.

Recently, white packages marked with Vatican and Ukrainian flags and bearing the inscription - in both Ital-

ian and Ukrainian - "Gift of Pope Leo to the people of Kharkiv" have arrived in the city. They contain canned food, oil, pasta, meat, and hygiene products.

Dilexi te clearly highlights the fact the Church's "proclamation of the Gospel is credible only when expressed through concrete gestures of closeness and welcome."

It is hoped that these gestures from the Pope's charity bring some consolation and relieve some of the suffering and pain of people exhausted by years of war. **ICN**

Synodality cannot exist without the leadership of bishops

CAMALDOLI, Italy: Pope Leo XIV reaffirmed the indispensable role of bishops in safeguarding the Church's unity and mission, insisting that true synodality cannot exist apart from episcopal leadership. His statement, sent to theologians and clergy participating in a symposium on episcopal ministry, underscored that while the Church must walk together and listen to all the baptized, this journey must always remain anchored in the authority conferred by Christ upon the college of bishops, with the successor of Peter at its head.

The message, conveyed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, to Dom Matteo Ferrari, Prior General of the Camaldolese Benedictine Congregation, was addressed to participants of the theological symposium titled *What Kind of Bishop in a Synodal Church?*, held from October 6-9, 2025 in Camaldoli. The four-day event brought together theologians, bishops, and scholars to reflect on the meaning of

episcopal ministry in an age when the Church seeks to deepen her synodal character — one marked by mutual listening, participation, and discernment.

Pope Leo XIV's message praised the symposium as "a valuable contribution to understanding the dynamic relationship between collegial leadership and the participation of all the baptized." He described the bishop as a "custodian and witness of the faith", charged not only with preserving doctrinal integrity but also with ensuring that the faithful are guided in charity and truth along the path of communion.

"True synodality demands the participation of all the baptized according to their vocation," the Pope stated, "but it cannot dispense with the authority entrusted to the college of bishops, with the successor of Peter at its head."

This affirmation comes amid ongoing global discussions about the proper balance between authority and participation within the Church. During

the recent Synod on Synodality in Rome, bishops' votes were given equal weight to those of lay and religious delegates — a move welcomed by some as a gesture of inclusivity, but viewed by others as potentially diminishing the traditional role of the episcopate. Critics, including an Orthodox bishop and the Apostolic Exarch of the Greek-Catholic Church in Greece, cautioned that such structures risk blurring ecclesial distinctions established in apostolic tradition.

The Pontiff emphasised that synodality and authority are not opposing forces, but complementary dimensions of the Church's identity. Synodality, he said, is the Church's way of living her mission: "walking together" in listening and discernment. Yet it is the bishops, in communion with the Pope, who ensure that this journey remains faithful to the Gospel and the deposit of faith. "Authority in the Church," the Pope noted, "is not domination but service — a service that guarantees unity in truth and love."

Pope Leo XIV also commended the Camaldoli gathering for its contemplative and theological atmosphere, noting that the monastery, with its Benedictine tradition of prayer and discernment, offered a fitting setting to reflect on how episcopal ministry can embody both leadership and listening. He encouraged participants to see their reflections not as a theoretical exercise, but as a spiritual contribution to the Church's renewal: "The study of the episcopal ministry must help us rediscover that walking together is not only the style but also the mission of the Church."

Agencies

NEWS IN BRIEF

In the US, younger priests remain more conservative than older priests

WASHINGTON: A 2025 National Study of Catholic Priests, conducted by Gallup for The Catholic Project at The Catholic University of America, reveals a pronounced generational divide within the US priesthood — showing that younger priests are markedly more conservative than their older counterparts, both politically and theologically.

Among priests ordained after 2010, 51 per cent identify as conservative and only 12 per cent as liberal. In contrast, 61 per cent of priests ordained before 1975 describe themselves as liberal and just 13 per cent as conservative. The same pattern appears theologically: about 70 per cent of older priests see themselves as progressive, while 70 per cent of younger priests identify as conservative or orthodox.

This divide extends to pastoral priorities. Older priests tend to emphasize social and pastoral issues such as climate change (78 per cent), LGBTQ outreach (66 per cent), and synodality (77 per cent), whereas younger priests focus more on Eucharistic devotion (88 per cent) and access to the Traditional Latin Mass (39 per cent).

Despite these differences, there remains broad agreement across generations on the importance of addressing poverty and immigration, though younger priests are slightly less emphatic.

Overall, the survey points to a significant shift towards conservatism and traditionalism among newer generations of priests, contrasting sharply with the liberal and socially oriented outlook of their older peers. **CathNews**

Korean Church seeks better worker rights under new law

SEOUL: Catholic leaders in South Korea have urged the government to ensure fair treatment and protection for all workers under the newly amended Trade Union and Labour Relations Adjustment Act, known as the Yellow Envelope bill, which marks a major shift in the country's labor policy.

Fr. Alexander Lee Young-hoon, from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea, welcomed the reform, saying the Church must stand with workers whose rights and livelihoods have long been neglected due to unfair labour practices and a corporate culture prioritising profit over people. He also noted that even within the Church, solidarity with labour is sometimes misunderstood as political.

Passed on Aug 24, the law, taking effect in March 2026, guarantees workers' constitutional rights to organise, bargain collectively, and strike without fear of retaliation. It especially aims to protect vulnerable groups such as women, contract workers, and part-timers, who often face unfair dismissals and weak legal safeguards.

Labour experts and advocates have called the legislation a landmark victory after nearly two decades of campaigning. The bill also seeks to address the legacy of lawsuits and damage claims filed against unions since the 1990s.

Attorney John Park Young-ki of the Seoul Archdiocese Labour Ministry said the reform also challenges the Church to renew its own labour policies and to embody Pope Francis' call to stand with the poor and vulnerable. **ucanews.com**

US Conference of Catholic Bishops will select new president in November

WASHINGTON: The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will elect a new president and vice president during its Fall Plenary Assembly, taking place November 10-13, in Baltimore. The current leaders — Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio (president) and Archbishop William E. Lori (vice president) — will complete their three-year terms in November.

Ten bishops have been nominated for the two leadership roles, including Bishops Robert Barron, Daniel Flores, and Kevin Rhoades, as well as Archbishops Paul Coakley, Nelson Pérez, Alexander Sample, and others.

The president will be elected first by majority vote, followed by the vice president from the remaining nine candidates.

The bishops will also vote to elect new chairmen for six committees:

- Canonical Affairs and Church Governance
- Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs
- Evangelisation and Catechesis
- International Justice and Peace
- Protection of Children and Young People
- Religious Liberty

Those elected as committee chairman will serve one year as chairman-elect, then a three-year term starting after the 2026 Fall Assembly. **CNA**



Participants read prayers during the first meeting of the full assembly of the Synod on Synodality on October 2, 2024. (CNA/Daniel Ibañez)

Nine things to know about *Dilexi Te*

Pope Leo XIV's first apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi Te* ("I have loved you"), was promulgated October 9, 2025, the feast day of St John Henry Newman. Here are nine things to know about the document.

1. *Dilexi Te* is about love and care for the poor.

The apostolic exhortation is addressed "to all Christians on love for the poor," and explores the topic through the lens of Scripture, Church teaching and the witness of the saints.

2. Both Pope Francis and Leo worked on this apostolic exhortation.

Francis' fourth and final encyclical, *Dilexit Nos* ("He loved us"), on the human and divine love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was published Oct 24, 2024, nearly six months before his death. In the prologue of the new exhortation, Leo noted the late pope was preparing this apostolic exhortation on the Church's care for the poor as a follow-up, and gave it its title.

Leo wrote, "I am happy to make this document my own — adding some reflections — and to issue it at the beginning of my own pontificate, since I share the desire of my beloved predecessor that all Christians come to appreciate the close connection between Christ's love and His summons to care for the poor."

3. Scripture and Church social teaching documents are referenced.

"I often wonder, even though the teaching of Sacred Scripture is so clear about the poor, why many people continue to think that they can safely disregard the poor," the exhortation reads.

Using Scripture, *Dilexi Te* explores mercy and justice toward the poor as shown in both the Old and New Testaments; Jesus' humbling of Himself to become man; His poverty; and His own words on the last judgement, performing works of mercy and how we are to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Several Church texts on social justice are also referenced in *Dilexi Te*, including *Rerum Novarum*, *Mater et Magistra*, *Populorum Progressio*, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, *Laborem Exercens*, *Caritas in Veritate* and documents of the Second Vatican Council.

4. It contains many saintly examples.

No less than 33 saints are referenced as examples of holiness in their treatment of the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, the uneducated or the migrant.

The example of St Francis of Assisi in his embrace of poverty is explored early in the first chapter of *Dilexi Te* and again in a section on the witness of mendicant religious orders.

St Stephen, the first martyr, and St Lawrence, who brought the poor before the Roman authorities and said, "These are the treasures of the Church," are given as examples of deacons carrying out their prescribed works of mercy in the early Church.

Early fathers of the Church Sts Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp and Justin Martyr also had much to say on the works of mercy Christians ought to perform, and are mentioned in *Dilexi Te*.

Entire sections of the apostolic exhortation are dedicated to Sts John Chrysostom and Augustine, with extensive quotes from their homilies and writings. In these, the saints exhort Christians to recognise Christ in people in need, that almsgiving is a matter of justice, that God will not be outdone in generosity and that "charity is not optional but a requirement of true worship."

Other exemplary saints mentioned include Sts Cyprian, John of God, Camillus de Lellis, Louise de Marillac, Basil the Great, Benedict, John of Matha, Felix of Valois, Peter Nolasco, Raymond of Peñafort, Clare of Assisi, Dominic de Guzmán, Joseph Calasanz, Marcellin Champagnat, John Baptist Scalabrini, Frances Cabrini, Teresa of Calcutta, Dulce of the Poor, Benedict Menni, Charles de Foucauld, Katharine Drexel, Oscar Romero, John Paul II, Gregory the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus for their words, actions or instructions for tending the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, the uneducated or the migrant.

5. Works of mercy, spiritual care and almsgiving are recommended.

"Works of mercy are recommended as a sign of the authenticity of worship, which, while giving praise to God, has the task of opening us to the transformation that the Spirit can bring about in us, so that we may all become an image of Christ and His mercy towards the weakest."

Several ways of performing works of mercy are mentioned in the apostolic exhortation, particularly through the lives of saints. Leo also notes that the spiritual dimension of caring for the poor is extremely important; that almsgiving is a matter of justice; and helping the poor with better employment reinforces their human dignity and participation in God's creation.



A woman burns wood on the street to cook a meal for her husband and their daughter outside their home in São Paulo September 16, 2022. (OSV News/Reuters/Amanda Perobelli)

6. Indifference to the plight of the poor is addressed.

"No Christian can regard the poor simply as a societal problem; they are part of our 'family.' They are 'one of us.' Nor can our relationship to the poor be reduced to merely another ecclesial activity or function."

An attitude of indifference in society and among Christians to the plight of the suffering poor is rebuked.

7. God has a preferential option for the poor.

A preferential option for the poor is repeatedly mentioned in the document.

"This 'preference' never indicates exclusivity or discrimination towards other groups, which would be impossible for God. It is meant to emphasise God's actions, which are moved by compassion toward the poverty and weakness of all humanity. Wanting to inaugurate a kingdom of justice, fraternity and solidarity, God has a special place in His heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and He asks us, His Church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favour of the weakest."

8. Some may find controversial elements.

Some factions in the Church and society may consider some references in the document controversial.

Sr Emmanuelle Cinquin, who lived and worked among poor trash gatherers in Cairo, Egypt, but also held unorthodox opinions on contraception and clerical celibacy, is mentioned as a witness of working among the poorest of the poor.

There is also a reference to a 1984 Instruction on Certain Aspects of the 'Theology of Liberation from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which critiques "liberation theology."

Leo quotes the "timely reflection: of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the CDF prefect and future Pope Benedict XVI, who wrote: 'The defenders of orthodoxy are sometimes accused of passivity, indulgence, or culpable complicity regarding the intolerable situations of injustice and the political regimes which prolong them. ... The concern for the purity of the faith demands giving the answer of effective witness in the service of one's neighbour, the poor and the oppressed in particular, in an integral theological fashion.'"

The section on "popular movements" notes that there are lay movements that have often been viewed with suspicion or even persecuted for their work addressing causes of poverty, inequality, labour injustices and other social issues affecting the poor. *Dilexi Te* says that it is necessary for institutions and governments to include them in the conversation when thinking about the needs of the poor.

The document also addresses the Church's tradition of working for and with migrants — which today is "expressed in initiatives such as refugee reception centres, border missions and the efforts of Caritas Internationalis and other institutions" — saying the Church's mission is to all living on the peripheries.

9. It begins and ends with Jesus' words.

The first and last words of *Dilexi Te* are the same words of Jesus — "I have loved you (Revelations 3:9)" — spoken to His humble, persecuted Church. OSV News

Apostolic Exhortation, Encyclical, and Apostolic Letter: What are the differences?

In the Catholic Church, the Pope issues various documents to teach, guide, and encourage the faithful. Prominent among these are the apostolic exhortation, the encyclical, and the apostolic letter. Although all are important, each has a particular purpose and form.

Apostolic Letter: Direct and specific communication

The apostolic letter (Latin: *Epistola apostolica*) is an official document from the Pope addressed to a specific person, group, or community. Although it can be addressed to the entire Church, its tone and style are usually more personal and less solemn than other papal documents. It is used to address specific topics or particular situations.

Prominent example: *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988) by Pope John Paul II, dedicated to the dignity and vocation of women.

Apostolic Exhortation: Call to Pastoral Action

An apostolic exhortation is a pastoral document that invites the faithful to deepen their faith and actively engage in Christian life. It usually arises from a synod or a reflection by the Pope on a specific topic. Although it lacks the solemnity of an encyclical, its content is of great relevance to the life of the Church.

Prominent example: Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), which encourages Christians to live the Gospel joyfully and to be missionaries in today's world.

Encyclical: Doctrinal teaching of universal scope

The encyclical (from the Latin *encyclica*, meaning "circular") is the Pope's most solemn and doctrinal document. It is addressed to all bishops and, by extension, to all the faithful of the Church. It addresses topics of great importance to doctrine, morality, and social and political life from a Christian perspective.

Prominent example: Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* (2015), which addresses the ecological crisis and the responsibility of Christians to care for creation.

Although the apostolic exhortation, the encyclical, and the apostolic letter are documents issued by the Pope, each has a particular purpose and form. Understanding their differences helps us better appreciate the richness of the Church's Magisterium and respond appropriately to its teachings. Exaudi News

More than just “naughty”

Understanding ADHD through the eyes of faith

In many of our parish communities, we see children who cannot seem to sit still during Mass, who fidget endlessly in catechism class, or whose minds seem to wander even when spoken to directly. Sometimes, we even find adults who interrupt conversations, lose track of time, or forget appointments despite their best efforts. Too often, these behaviours are met with raised eyebrows, whispered judgments, or well-meaning but hurtful comments about discipline and self-control.

For many of these individuals, the root cause is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder — or ADHD — a neurodevelopmental condition that is far more complex, and far more common, than many realise. The global prevalence of ADHD is estimated between 5.3 per cent to 7.1 per cent in children and adolescents, with a similar prevalence of roughly 4 per cent in adults. In children, symptoms of ADHD often continue into adulthood, with approximately two-thirds of cases persisting

ADHD is not a phase

One of the most common misconceptions about ADHD is that it is simply “a childhood problem” — something children will eventually outgrow. While symptoms can change and sometimes lessen with age, research tells us that ADHD is a lifelong condition. Children do not simply “snap out of it.” In fact, it is estimated that up to 60 per cent of children with ADHD continue to have significant symptoms in adulthood.

In Malaysia and around the world, more adults are being diagnosed later in life — sometimes in their 30s, 40s, or even 60s — after years of wondering why they struggled more than their peers to stay organised, meet deadlines, or manage their emotions. For many, getting the diagnosis brings not only relief but also grief, as they think about the lost years spent believing they were simply “lazy,” “scatterbrained,” or “bad at life.”

It’s not about laziness or bad parenting

Another painful misconception is that ADHD is caused by poor parenting or a lack of discipline. Parents of children with ADHD are often judged harshly — accused of being

too soft, too permissive, or “spoiling” their children. This judgment can be particularly heavy in close-knit parish communities, where everyone feels like extended family.

The truth is that ADHD has neurological and genetic roots. Brain imaging studies show differences in the areas of the brain that control attention, impulse control, and executive functioning (skills like planning, organisation, and time management). While structure, clear expectations, and good parenting are important for all children, they do not “cure” ADHD.

When a child with ADHD blurts out answers in catechism class, forgets their Bible at home, or fidgets during the homily, it is not an act of rebellion or an intentional attempt to irritate others. Their brain processes and regulates information differently.

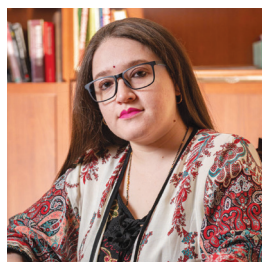
The behaviour you see is not the full story

ADHD is often described in terms of three main types:

1. Predominantly inattentive type — where focus, organisation, and sustained attention are the main struggles.
2. Predominantly hyperactive-impulsive type — where restlessness, impulsivity, and constant movement are more visible.
3. Combined type — where both inattentive and hyperactive-impulsive symptoms are present.

A child who “daydreams” during the Gospel reading may be struggling just as much as the one who keeps tapping his feet against the pew. An adult who forgets to show up for a parish meeting may be battling the same condition as the child who forgets their catechism workbook.

The visible behaviours are just the tip of the iceberg. Beneath them often lie challenges with emotional regulation, working memory, and processing speed. Many people with ADHD also experience anxiety or depression as secondary effects, often because of years of misunderstanding,



Inclusion Matters

Desiree Kaur

criticism, and internalised shame.

Faith, compassion, and the call to inclusion

As Catholics, we are called to see Christ in each person — especially in those who are vulnerable or misunderstood. Jesus Himself reached out to those whom society had labelled or pushed aside. If our parish is truly to be the Body of Christ, every member — including those with ADHD — must feel seen, valued, and welcomed.

This starts with understanding. The more we know about ADHD, the less likely we are to judge harshly. Awareness leads to empathy; empathy leads to inclusion.

Practical steps we can take as a parish might include:

- Patience in liturgy and catechesis — understanding that some children may need to move or doodle to pay attention.
- Clear, concise communication — giving instructions one step at a time, both verbally and in writing.
- Support for parents — offering a listening ear instead of unsolicited advice.
- Role models in ministry — recognising that adults with ADHD can be vibrant, creative, and deeply committed members of the Church.

ADHD in adults: The hidden struggle

When we think of ADHD, we often picture a child bouncing in their seat. But for adults, the symptoms may look different: chronic lateness, piles of unfinished projects, difficulty following through on commitments, or feeling constantly overwhelmed.

Many adults with ADHD have developed elaborate coping mechanisms — keeping endless lists, relying heavily on digital reminders, or working in short bursts of intense focus. Others struggle silently, feeling like failures because they cannot seem to manage life the way others do.

It is important for parish leaders and

fellow parishioners to understand that these struggles are not signs of weak character or a lack of faith. They are the lived reality of a brain wired differently. With the right support — which may include medical treatment, therapy, and community understanding — adults with ADHD can thrive in their personal lives, workplaces, and ministries.

Moving from misunderstanding to mission

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that every person is created in the image and likeness of God. This means that our differences — even neurological ones — are part of God’s design. ADHD may bring challenges, but it can also bring strengths: creativity, problem-solving, out-of-the-box thinking, and a contagious energy for the things one is passionate about.

When we move from labelling to listening, from judging to journeying alongside, we reflect the very heart of Christ’s ministry. A parish that understands ADHD does more than accommodate — it affirms the dignity and gifts of its members.

A final word of hope

If you are a parent of a child with ADHD, know this: you are not alone, and your child’s future is not defined by their diagnosis. If you are an adult who suspects you may have ADHD, it is never too late to seek assessment and support. And if you are part of a parish community, you have the power to make your church a place where people with ADHD feel truly at home.

In the words of St Paul, “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Let us be a Church that does exactly that — for every member, in every pew, with every difference.

Desiree’s advocacy for all abilities began in 2017 after her son Haans was diagnosed with autism. Frustrated by the lack of accessible information, she took the initiative to educate herself, earning a Master’s in Special Education. A former PR practitioner, she went on to establish Project Haans, a website supporting Malaysia’s special needs community. She also co-hosts the Kita Family podcast with four other mothers of neurodivergent children.

BOOK REVIEW

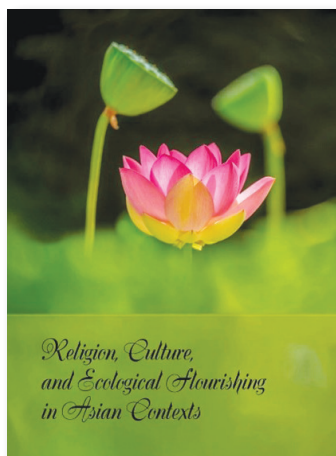
Faith and culture as pathways to ecological renewal

Thailand’s Asian Research Centre for Religion and Social Communication (ARC) at St John’s University has released a new publication offering a compelling Asian perspective on the world’s deepening ecological crisis.

Titled *Religion, Culture, and Ecological Flourishing in Asian Contexts* (2025) and edited by Fr Anthony Le Duc, SVD, the volume gathers essays from across Asia that explore how

religion and culture can help reimagine humanity’s relationship with nature and promote ecological renewal.

Drawing insights from Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Shinto, and Indigenous traditions, the book examines how Asia’s moral and spiritual heritage can reshape humanity’s understanding of its place in creation.



As Fr Le Duc observes in his introduction, environmental breakdown cannot be reduced to science or policy alone — it reflects “a web of interrelated tensions between the present and the future, local actions and global consequences, economic development and ecological limits.”

He situates Asia’s predicament in stark terms: rapid industrialisation,

deforestation, water scarcity, transboundary haze, and urban flooding threaten not just natural systems but moral balance. One striking example is China’s dam-building along the Mekong River, which disrupts ecosystems and livelihoods downstream — a reminder that ecological harm is always relational.

Yet, the book’s vision extends beyond

critique. Fr Le Duc insists that while technological and policy reforms are vital, they remain incomplete without addressing the cultural and spiritual dimensions of ecological damage. “True healing,” he writes, “demands that we engage with the cultural imaginaries and religious worldviews that shape our relationship with the Earth.”

The essays revolve around seven recurring themes: the critique of materialism and human-centred thinking; the moral power of religion in ecological renewal; traditional ecological wisdom; interconnectedness; the cultivation of virtue; gendered dimensions of stewardship; and ecological education through communication and storytelling.

Throughout, the contributors reveal how Asia’s faith traditions — Buddhist mindfulness, Confucian benevolence, Islamic stewardship, Christian ecological conversion — hold immense potential to inspire what Fr Le Duc calls “a reimagining of human flourishing.” Women’s voices

and Indigenous knowledge emerge as essential forces in nurturing this moral ecology.

In its final section, the book envisions a “moral ecology of hope,” where sustainability grows not from fear or regulation, but from compassion, justice, and sacred interconnectedness. Fr Le Duc ends with a poignant reflection from a student in Indonesia who asked why Asia — birthplace of the world’s major religions — remains so ecologically wounded. The question, he admits, remains unanswered, but the volume itself gestures toward the beginning of a response.

Profound, accessible, and timely, *Religion, Culture, and Ecological Flourishing in Asian Contexts* invites readers to see ecological care not as a technical problem, but as a spiritual calling rooted in Asia’s diverse wisdom traditions.

LiCAS News

The book is available for free download at: <https://sl1nk.com/fGhrE>

Finding strength in fraternity

JOHOR BAHRU: If anyone thinks priests only gather for formal meetings and quiet retreats, the Young Priests' Gathering (YPG) 2025 would have changed that idea. From October 6–10, fifty-one young clergy (all ordained under five years) from nine dioceses in Malaysia and one in Singapore, came together in the Malacca Johore Diocese. What unfolded over those five days was a beautiful mix of learning, laughter, heartfelt sharing, deep prayer, cultural experiences, and the warmth of parish families. It was less a conference, more a homecoming — a reminder that priesthood is, first and foremost, a brotherhood.

From the moment the priests arrived at MAJODI Centre, the air was filled with cheerful reunions and new introductions. No formal stiffness — just open smiles and easy conversations. That evening, they travelled to the Church of St Joseph, Plentong, where Bishop Richard Ng of Miri presided at the opening Mass. His homily reminded the priests that the priesthood, though sacred and demanding, should never be lived in isolation. His words set the tone beautifully: this gathering would be a space of honesty, rest, and fraternity. The night continued with a welcome dinner, where laughter and conversation came naturally — some meeting for the first time, yet already feeling like old friends.

Mental health with Dr Fabian Dass – Honest, helpful, and full of heart

On October 7, the priests welcomed Dr Fabian Dass from Regency Specialist Hospital for a session on mental health. This wasn't a dry medical talk. Dr Fabian spoke directly to the heart — on personal well-being, the rise of mental health issues in society, and how priests can walk with people in pain. He used real statistics, relatable case studies, and practical insights from his experience working with clergy.

The Q&A session became one of the highlights of the entire gathering. The priests asked real, personal questions. Dr Fabian answered with refreshing honesty, humility, and even humour, making space for open conversation. His ability to blend compassion with light-heartedness created a safe and healing atmosphere. Many priests said, "We needed this."

After the session, the clergy enjoyed lunch at Kerala Restaurant in Johor Bahru — famous for its authentic Malayali cuisine and owned by Cardinal Sebastian Francis' niece. The food was rich and flavourful, and the fellowship even richer. Laughter filled the room as cultural stories and "parish tales" were shared freely.

That evening, the priests gathered at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary,



Young Priests Gathering 2025

presided over by Bishop Bernard Paul. His homily on Mary — silent, strong, and faithful — struck a chord with many. The Mass was beautiful, calm, and deeply personal. Dinner and relaxed fellowship followed, ending the evening on a warm note.

Youth ministry with fresh eyes – Listening, not just leading

On Oct 8, the group travelled to the Church of St Louis, Kluang, where Francisco Overee and Karen Chan, from the Malacca Johore Diocese Young People Network (MJDYPN), led the second formation session. Instead of a formal lecture, it was interactive, engaging, and honest. The speakers shared insights on how young people think, what they struggle with, and how priests can accompany them in meaningful ways. Dialogue, group activities, and shared reflection helped the priests see youth ministry with fresh eyes—less about programmes, more about relationships.

After the session, Mass was celebrated in the church. It coincided with the reception of the 'Perjalanan Salib', and in a deeply moving moment, the young priests themselves carried the Cross into the church together. It was a powerful symbol of shared mission — reminding them that they carry Christ's Cross not alone, but side by side.

Hospitality in Ayer Salak – The Church at its warmest

From Kluang, the priests travelled to the Church of St Mary, Ayer Salak, Melaka, where one of the most memorable experiences awaited them. Fifteen parish families opened their homes and hearts to host the priests for two nights. It was not just accommodation — it was family life.

The priests were welcomed like sons.



They sat at family dining tables, laughed with children, listened to stories from elders, and felt the warmth of genuine love. On the first evening, each host family held a prayer session in their home. Some prayed the Rosary, some requested house blessings, and a few even brought out their pets for blessings. It was simple, touching, and deeply human — faith lived in everyday life.

A Pilgrimage through Melaka – History, faith, and deep encounter

On Oct 9, the priests journeyed through Melaka as pilgrims. Their first stop was the Church of St Francis Xavier, currently under renovation. Even without walls or pews, the spirit of St Francis Xavier seemed to linger in the air. The priests paused to pray on the very ground where the great missionary once walked.

From there, they climbed St Paul's Hill, enjoying the view over the historic city and reflecting on the roots of faith in this land. The breeze and silence at the top offered a

natural moment of contemplation.

Next, they headed to the Church of St Peter, the oldest functioning Catholic church in Malaysia. There, they had a prayer session together and entered into a profound time of Eucharistic Adoration, led by Fr Lionel Thomas. The silence during adoration was deep and healing. Many priests said it was one of the most peaceful and grace-filled moments of the entire week.

In the afternoon, they visited the Portuguese Settlement, encountering a community where faith is still lived with pride and simplicity. Later, they returned to St Mary's for the official pilgrimage Mass, followed by a joyful dinner with parishioners. Once again, the hospitality of the people touched every heart. Back at their host homes, conversations and laughter carried late into the night.

A farewell filled with joy and tears

The final morning arrived with both joy and sadness. The closing Mass was held at the Chapel of St Mary and was beautifully presided over by the youngest priest (in ordination years) — a meaningful sign of trust in the future. All the host families joined, filling the chapel with warmth and affection.

After Mass, no one rushed to leave. There were hugs, group photos, blessings, and words of thanks. Some families shed tears as they said goodbye to "their priests." One mother said softly, "Father, our house felt different with you here. It felt blessed." It was a farewell that felt more like family parting ways than guests leaving hosts.

The clergy also shared among themselves that the next Young Priests' Gathering in 2026 will be hosted by the Archdiocese of Kuching, continuing this journey of fraternity and renewal in a new corner of the country.



For many Catholics, saints are very much a part of our faith. Feast days of St Anne, St Jude and St Anthony have always drawn a large crowd, with week-long celebrations, preached missions, novenas and concelebrated Masses. Saints and being a Catholic are inseparable.

In the coming week, when the Universal Church celebrates the Feast of All Saints on November 1, the Church reminds us once again of the integral role of the communion of saints in our lives today.

Saints and sainthood have permeated our faith lives in more ways than one. All our Catholic churches are named after saints (eg: St Peter, St Paul, St Joseph, St Thomas, St John, etc). Whenever one travels abroad, we may seek out a Catholic church by recognising the name of the church. Some saints are distinctly Catholic. Eg: St Francis of Assisi, St Theresa of Avila, St Thomas More, etc.

Upon receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, we, or the parents (in the case of infants), are usually encouraged to select a saint for our baptism name. Inevitably, this could be seen as adding a western name to our Asian names.

During every Mass, when we pray the Apostles Creed, we declare our belief in



Reminiscing Church

RICHARD CHIA

Saints and us

the communion of saints when we profess “I believe in the communion of saints”. How often do we reflect on these words that we publicly profess and mean what we say?

So, how does one become a saint? To get started, one needs to die first. The Catholic Church will not officially declare anyone a saint in their lifetime, even though everyone else may think

so. Mother Theresa of Calcutta was called a living saint long before she was canonised.

This should be the ultimate goal for all Catholics, as sainthood will definitely confirm we have reached our final destination, Heaven. To be home with God and all His angels, blessed and loved ones.

Saints and stories of popular saints are repeatedly referenced in many formations, retreats and seminars. We are constantly reminded of these saints’ heroic acts, selfless sacrifices and miracles attributed to the saint’s intervention. Especially the popular ones, where many Catholics are fond of repeating. For some, we may have our favourites.

One example is that of St Augustine of Hippo, who was described as a “rascal” in his younger days, doing all the things the Church forbids, yet was later elevated to become a theologian, a scholar and a

Church Father. It is a classic story of how a person can transform, like the story of Saul, who then became the Apostle Paul.

The process of sainthood is a long process. It can only be initiated after a waiting time of five years upon the death of the candidate. The process normally undergoes four stages of investigation and verification and requires two confirmed miracles attributed to the intervention of the candidate for sainthood. Normally these four stages will take decades or even hundreds of years, with each process advancing forward cautiously. The candidate will first be called “Servant of God”, then to “Venerable”, “Blessed” and finally to “Saint”.

The process may be accelerated with a waiver of the five years waiting period by the Supreme reigning pontiff. This has been recently done on two occasions. Pope John Paul II waived three years of the waiting period in the case of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Pope Benedict XVI waived all five years in the case of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. In total, St John Paul II’s process of canonisation took nine years from the year of death, while Saint Theresa of Calcutta took 19 years.

Who can be nominated to become a saint? According to the Vatican’s New Laws for the Causes of Saints promulgated in 1983 by Cardinal Prefect of the

Congregation for the Causes of Saints and approved by His Holiness Pope St John Paul II, “Any member of the People of God or any group of the faithful recognised by ecclesiastical authority can exercise the function of advancing the cause of canonisation”. Meaning, if any Catholic faithful feels strongly that a deceased member had lived an exemplary life, they may nominate to the bishop where the Servant of God died, to initiate the cause. They will also have to provide as much information and background on this person for the Church to accept this nomination.

In Malaysia, on July 1, 2024 [HERALD, July 3, 2024], the Diocese of Penang initiated the process to advance the cause of canonisation for Ms Sybil Medan Kathigasu (1899-1948), a Malayan Eurasian nurse, who endured severe torture for providing medical care, shelter, and intelligence to anti-Japanese forces in the British-ruled Malaya during World War II. Her life is one of extraordinary courage and unwavering faith. She lived a life of service in love and compassion for the sick and suffering in the town of Papan in Perak, Malaysia. If canonised, she will be the first saint from Malaysia.

It may take a while for the Church to identify, confirm and verify the two miracles attributed to the intervention of Sybil Kathigasu. Cardinal Sebastian Francis, the Bishop of Penang, in his welcome address at the launching of two new translations of No Dram of Mercy, a memoir of Sybil’s extraordinary life [HERALD, August 10, 2025], “urged Malaysians to keep Sybil’s memory alive. Her life is a national treasure – a heritage we must cherish and pursue”.

Whether her canonisation happens in our lifetime or not, this will hopefully inspire more nominations of persons for the Church to advance to the cause of canonisation.

Richard Chia shares his experiences on the journey of the Church in Malaysia in the past forty years. Its challenges and achievements as it moves towards synodality.



BE OUR GUEST

When families become divided over caring for an ageing parent, it is often due to caregiver burnout, resentment from unequal divisions of responsibility, financial strain, and emotional stress — all of which can lead to conflict and strained sibling relationships.

To prevent this, families should encourage open communication, see themselves as a united team, and assign roles based on each member’s strengths. By sharing responsibilities fairly, they can ease stress and ensure that caregiving remains both sustainable and compassionate.

Some causes of division

Unequal burden

One or more siblings may shoulder most of the caregiving duties, even when everyone wants to help. Over time, this imbalance can lead to exhaustion and resentment from the primary caregiver.

Financial strain

Caregivers often bear a disproportionate share of expenses for medication, transportation, and other needs. This added financial pressure can heighten stress and cause tension among siblings.

Emotional stress

Caring for an ageing or ailing parent carries immense emotional weight. When the primary caregiver feels unsupported or isolated, anxiety, depression, and burnout can set in, further straining family relationships.

Varying priorities and commitments

Siblings often juggle different work

Family, the heartbeat

Deacon Louis Martin



schedules, family obligations, and personal responsibilities. These differences can make equal participation difficult, breeding feelings of unfairness or misunderstanding.

Suggestions and strategies for family harmony

Open communication

Regularly discuss caregiving needs, expectations, and challenges. Honest, ongoing communication helps prevent misunderstandings and resolves potential conflicts before they escalate.

Adopt a team approach

Frame caregiving as a shared family mission, where siblings work together for their parent’s wellbeing rather than functioning as separate or opposing parties.

Share responsibilities

Distribute caregiving tasks fairly. Even siblings who live far away can contribute through regular calls, managing finances, or taking turns with visits and appointments.

Leverage strengths

Recognise and utilise each sibling’s unique strengths and abilities to make caregiving more effective and sustainable.

Seek support

Caregivers should never hesitate to ask for help, take breaks, or reach out to professional services and organisations that assist families in elder care.

Don’t expect perfect balance

In most families, one sibling naturally assumes more caregiving duties — often due to proximity or convenience for the parent. However, this doesn’t absolve the others of responsibility. Even from afar, siblings can help by visiting periodically, checking in by phone, or offering emotional and logistical support. Caregivers, too, must be willing to ask for help. When family members visit, let them know what’s needed. Accept help when it’s offered — it lightens both the workload and the emotional weight.

Spend a few days with your parents

Primary caregivers often have a clearer picture of a parent’s day-to-day condition than siblings who only interact occasionally. Spending a few days together can provide valuable insight into how parents are truly coping and where additional support may be needed. Many families find that after holidays or extended visits, siblings gain a better understanding of both the caregiver’s role and their parents’ needs.

Don’t delay difficult conversations

The first step toward effective caregiving is a clear plan. Families should meet to discuss:

- How will we divide responsibilities?
- Who can step in when the primary

caregiver needs a break?

- How will financial matters be managed?
- When should we consider additional care or assisted living?

Having these conversations early — and including everyone’s input — prevents confusion and resentment later.

Reach out regularly

A simple weekly phone call can make a world of difference. Caregivers can share updates or request help, while siblings can check in with both parents and caregivers to offer support — practically and emotionally.

Don’t assume your siblings haven’t changed

It’s easy to fall back into old childhood roles and rivalries when families reunite. But siblings grow and evolve over time. Approach one another with openness and respect. Listen without judgment, avoid dominating conversations, and don’t assume you know best.

Be willing to forgive past mistakes and embrace differences. Seek common ground to strengthen family bonds and keep love at the heart of your shared mission.

Love and forgiveness are the foundation of every strong family. God bless every family.

Deacon Louis Martin serves at the Church of St Louis, Kluang. A retired banker/financial consultant, he is a permanent deacon of the Malacca Johore diocese.



Fr Ron Rolheiser

Celibacy and marriage need each other

“Why did early Christianity alight on the ideal of virginity, when an intelligent or even just a suspicious Roman could see that its adoption would undermine the very fabric of ancient society?” That’s a comment from historian Kate Cooper and it poses some questions worth examining.

Does the single state, celibacy, (vowed or otherwise) undermine something inside the fabric of society? Is it somehow a statement against marriage? Does it go against something within nature itself where there is an innate imperative to “increase and multiply”?

The latter question is easier to answer. The human race has now exceeded eight billion. There is much less need to ensure that there are enough people in the world to ensure our biological survival. In former times, indeed in biblical times, there was a strong, quasi-sacred imperative that people marry and have children. Remaining unmarried was looked upon negatively, as an abnormality. Nature is not being honoured or fulfilled here. Why is this person not doing his or her duty in terms of having children? That’s one of the reasons why Jesus’ choice of celibacy stands out as something abnormal in His world.

Next, does single life, celibacy, somehow speak against marriage? Does it, simply by definition, undermine the fabric of society? Doesn’t God, at the creation of the human race, pronounce that *it is not good for the human person to be alone*?

That question deserves more than a hurried answer. God did say this, and God meant it. We are meant to live inside family, in community, and not live alone. Thus, the



(Unsplash/Sandy Miller)

single life has its dangers. Thomas Merton was once asked by a journalist what it was like to live as a celibate. His answer: *It’s hell. You live in a loneliness that God Himself condemned.* But then, he quickly added, this was a loneliness that could be very fruitful.

Still the question remains, is the single life, celibacy, somehow a statement against marriage? It can be. Choosing not to be married can be a statement that marriage isn’t the best way to live, that it is a container (a prison) which unhealthily restricts human freedom and human maturity. Single life in that instance (which is then often far from celibate) is a statement against marriage.

Healthy marriage and healthy single life in fact support each other. There’s an axiom which says: *If you are here faithfully, you bring us health and support. If you are here unfaithfully, you bring us restlessness and chaos.*

Fidelity in either marriage or in celibacy

is a marathon, with temptations of every kind along the way. It demands the capacity to sweat blood at times to remain faithful to what you have promised and to what is best in you. But it needs the support and witness of others. In neither vocation are you meant to go it alone, to be the lonely, stoic, ascetic hero. You are meant instead to be buoyed up and held by the support and faithful witness of others.

Thus, when a celibate sees fidelity being lived out inside a marriage, it becomes easier for him or her to remain faithful inside celibacy. Conversely, when a celibate sees infidelity inside of a marriage, he or she feels more isolated and alone inside celibacy and lacks a certain grace (which comes through witness) to sweat blood in terms of being faithful inside of celibacy.

The same dynamic holds true for a married person. If he or she sees a celibate faithfully and fruitfully living inside the single life, he or she is graced through that witness to find both some insight and strength

to be true to his or her commitment. Conversely, if a married person sees a celibate living unfaithfully, he or she will lack a special grace that comes from witnessing fidelity which can help him or her sweat the blood that is sometimes required in order to remain faithful in a commitment.

As curious as this may sound, *Marriage and Celibacy* need each other. We need each other’s witness. We need to see, and feed off, each other’s fidelity.

And that’s true beyond just seeing each other being faithful. There’s a deeper reality undergirding this, a mystical one. As Christians, we believe that we are all part of one body, the Body of Christ, and that our unity there is not simply a corporate one (one team). Rather we are an organic unity, all part of one living organism. Hence, what one part does affects all the parts. If we are faithful, we are a healthy part of the immune system inside the Body of Christ. If we are unfaithful, in either marriage or celibacy, we are an unhealthy virus, a cancer cell, inside the body.

For Christians, there is no such a thing as a private act. We are either a healthy enzyme or an unhealthy virus inside a single body, where our fidelity or infidelity affects everyone else.

And so, we need each other’s fidelity – in marriage and in celibacy.

Oblate Fr Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He writes a weekly column that is carried in over 90 newspapers around the world. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Making a Difference
Tony Magliano

Respect life – every life, everywhere, no exceptions!

Life is not respected when we allow our nation to kill its enemies – including mostly innocent civilians – in war, ignore genocide being committed in real time, live with an attitude of indifference toward unborn babies brutalised by abortion, condone the death penalty, turn a blind eye to the uninsured sick and the poorly served elderly in many nursing homes, refuse to welcome needy migrants, fail to compassionately address the fact that more than 700 million people suffer from hunger – among them over 8,000 children who die every day because they are too poor to live – and when we deny that our earth is very dangerously heating up.

When we ignore suffering and death, we are not respecting life!

The poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the unborn, the war-torn, the sick, the dying, the old, the young, drug addicts, prostitutes, the uneducated, the unemployed, the underemployed, the uninsured, prisoners, migrants, and yes, even the enemy, are our brothers and sisters in Christ. And so, ignoring them is not an option.

Pope St John Paul, *pic*, summed this all up perfectly: “Where life is involved, the service of charity must be profoundly consistent. It cannot tolerate bias and discrimination, for human life is sacred and inviolable at every stage and in every situation; it is an indivisible good. We need then to ‘show care’ for all life and for the life of everyone.”

Reaching out to every person we can – especially those who suffer the most, what Catholic Social Teaching calls the “preferential option for the poor” – with active compassion, generosity, social justice, and peace-making is such a fundamental requirement to faithful Christian discipleship, that our very salvation is at stake (see: Matt 25:



31-46).

While God knows you and I can’t physically help everyone, it is also true that most of us can do much more. After all, look at the saints.

We can place peace-making, the poor, and vulnerable at the centre of our prayer life. We can sacrificially give money, time and skills to assist those in desperate need.

We can sign up to receive action alerts from groups that advocate for the unborn, the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the refugees, the elderly, the war-torn and the environment.

Connecting with groups like Bread for the World, Pax Christi International, Catholic Climate Covenant, *Laudato Si’* Movement, Network, Churches for Middle

East Peace, Catholic Relief Services, World Beyond War, Americans United for Life, and your state and national Catholic conferences can help you make a difference.

And try to get your parish more involved.

In the words of the late Pope Benedict XVI’s words, “Love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential [to the church] as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel” (*Deus Caritas Est*, No. 22).

During this time when so many of those who hold political and economic power are cutting anti-poverty assistance programmes, and waging war on the born and unborn, the followers of the God of Life and the Prince of Peace must prophetically proclaim: Respect life – every life, everywhere, no exceptions!

Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated Catholic social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings and can be reached at tmag6@comcast.net.

Little Catholics' Corner

Dear children,

In today's Gospel reading Jesus tells the story about two men praying in the temple.

One of them, a Pharisee, always looked like he loved God, but on the inside, he really only loved himself. The other man was a tax collector.

The people in those days hated tax collectors because they took too much money and worked for their enemies.

When the Pharisee was praying, he was really just telling God how much better he was than other people.

Do you think that God was pleased with his prayer?

The tax collector, on the other hand, was standing far off and prayed to God with his head bowed down, asking God to have mercy on him.

He knew that he was a sinner and that he needed God's help.

Do you think that God was pleased with the tax collector's prayer?

Being humble isn't a sad or bad thing.

It means knowing that all the good things we have and do come from God.

Being humble also lets us be sorry for the selfish things we have done, because it lets us admit that it was our own fault and God can help us overcome our selfishness.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner!

Love
Aunty Eliz

Let's Colour



Oct 28, Feast of SS Simon and Jude,
APOSTLES



I thank you, God,
that I am not like
those sinful men...

O God, be
merciful to
me a sinner.

What were the two
men in the Temple
saying to God in
today's Gospel
reading?

Luke 18:9-14

Look in the mirror to
find out!

Saint Paul Match-Up

What comes next?

Match up the first parts with the next parts
from today's second reading.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1. I have fought | ▪ | strength |
| 2. I have finished | ▪ | the faith |
| 3. I have kept | ▪ | the good fight |
| 4. The Lord gave me | ▪ | the message. |
| 5. so that the Gentiles
could hear | ▪ | glory forever
and ever. |
| 6. To Him be | ▪ | the race |



2 Timothy 4:6-18



YOUMAD 2.0 Immersion Camp:



Peace with Creation

PENANG: In conjunction with the Season of Creation 2025, themed *Peace with Creation*, Caritas Penang organised a three-day, two-night immersion camp that invited young adults to spend a night in the jungle with the Orang Asli community.

Titled YOUMAD 2.0, the programme was the fruit of prayer and collaboration between Caritas Penang, the Penang Diocesan Youth Network (PDYN), World Youth Day pilgrims, and Malaysian Care. It was designed to empower young people to make a difference through lived experience and reflection.

The camp aimed to deepen participants' understanding of climate change and its impact on vulnerable communities, especially the Orang Asli, by engaging them in real-life encounters with nature and the local community. Through this hands-on and faith-rooted experience, participants were invited to reflect on the realities they witnessed, discern them in the light of the Gospel, and be inspired to take concrete action for creation and community.

Rooted in Scripture

The programme incorporated Bible study materials from the Season of Creation 2025, centring on the Prophet Jeremiah. Each day, participants gathered to reflect on Scripture, share personal insights, and pray for a renewal

of heart.

This daily Bible reflection formed the spiritual core of the YOUMAD 2.0 camp, helping participants understand their purpose and calling in joining the immersion. Through it, Caritas Penang sought to cultivate in young people a habit of reflection and prayer, reminding them that without spiritual grounding, life can easily become barren and directionless.

The sessions were facilitated by Bro Solomon, a seminarian on his pastoral year at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Kampar. He guided participants toward a deeper awareness of their faith, their responsibility as children of God, and their vocation as stewards of Creation — caring for the environment, animals, and the poor.

Experiencing the Life of the Orang Asli

On the second day, participants spent the entire day at Ladang Care, an Orang Asli demonstration and research centre in Kampung Sungai Cincin, Perak, established by Malaysian Care to support indigenous community initiatives. They joined in community work — cleaning the sheepfold, fertilising fruit trees and vegetable plots, gathering firewood, clearing leaves, and tidying pathways — experiencing firsthand the simple, daily rhythms of Orang Asli life.

An awareness session led by a coordinator from Malaysian Care followed, offering insights into the organisation's long-standing ministry among the Orang Asli — a mission

deeply rooted in the Gospel's call to love one's neighbour. Their tireless service and solidarity have helped rebuild lives and strengthen communities, demonstrating the transformative power of faith in action.

Participants also met members of the Temiar and Semai tribes, listened to their stories, and formed genuine friendships. Abang Prima, a Temiar man from Slim River, shared how his village was transformed through Malaysian Care's empowerment programmes — from lacking basic infrastructure to now having proper roads, housing, clean water, and electricity. Adik Alang, a 19-year-old who was once illiterate, recounted how, after a devastating flood, a visiting pastor helped him gain access to education. Eight years later, he speaks both English and Bahasa Malaysia fluently, his story moving many to tears — a powerful reminder of how one act of love can change a life.

Female participants were also touched by the sharing of Orang Asli women, who spoke candidly about their struggles, work, and faith — and how they overcame hardship through the support and love of fellow Christians.

As evening approached, participants worked alongside the Orang Asli to prepare dinner, collecting firewood, gathering vegetables, catching fish, and building a fire. In the jungle, they became students once again, learning survival skills and appreciating the deep connection the Orang Asli have with nature.

The day concluded with praise and

worship around a campfire, where Orang Asli Christians and Catholic participants sang, prayed, and shared gifts beneath a star-filled sky. Surrounded by the sounds of the river and the forest, laughter and song intertwined in a spirit of gratitude, solidarity, and joy — a fitting close to a day that celebrated faith, friendship, and creation.

Call to Serve

On the final day, the camp concluded with a call to action. Caritas Penang reminded participants of the Church's mission entrusted to every Christian — to know God and to make Him known through love and service. Words of hope and prayer were exchanged, followed by an invitation to continue the journey by volunteering with Caritas Penang in its social mission.

Before the camp began, participants had shared their expectations — some hoped to make new friends, others to experience Orang Asli village life, to learn about care for creation, or to discover new ways to serve. Their reflections at the end revealed a deeper thirst — to grow in faith and love.

Through the YOUMAD 2.0 experience, Caritas Penang hopes that these young people found what they were seeking: a renewed sense of purpose, compassion, and connection with both God and creation. The camp, they were reminded, was not an end but a beginning — a call to live out their faith in action, serving the poor and caring for God's Creation in their everyday lives.

Participants' Testimonies

"A big thank you to everyone who helped and supported me throughout the camp. Your kindness, friendliness, and assistance meant a lot to me, and I truly appreciate every one of you." ~ **Ernest**

"I would like to thank you all for the best of these three days' stay as one family in Christ." ~ **Mavrick**

"It was a great memory for me as we could all gather at a place that connects us to nature and gives us the opportunity to experience the life of the Orang Asli." ~ **Desmond**

"Let's continue to share the love of Jesus Christ with the world and all of creation." ~ **Cerlys**



Young people don't come to church for its members,

BUT FOR GOD

PARIS: At just 29, Sr Albertine Debacker is proving that habit and hashtag can go hand in hand.

The French nun has become an unexpected but powerful voice for the Church, reaching hundreds of thousands of young people where they are — online. Since 2022, her joyful witness and authentic faith have made her a rising star in Catholic media, with over 330,000 followers on Instagram and more than 200,000 on TikTok.

Without seeking the spotlight, she's become a digital missionary, bringing Christ to the scroll-happy generation.

She felt the power of online Catholic influence in France — a country for decades proud of its secularism — on March 5, when a surprising, and record, number of young people filled churches during Ash Wednesday Masses.

Influencers and Mass attendance

Many were attending Mass for the first time, and, according to several media inquiries and surveys, many admitted they came because of social media influence. Sr Albertine played an important role.

"I was inundated with messages from young people asking me if they had 'the right' to receive the ashes without being baptised. They felt very comfortable talking about it with their friends, and shared the videos and the answers I provided," Sr Albertine told *OSV News*.

"Ramadan began at around the same time and many young people were wondering about Lent after conversations with Muslim friends," she said, adding that "I tried to explain to them in a very educational way what Lent actually is, which is not simply 'a Christian Ramadan.'"

No borders' on social media

Sr Albertine's digital adventure first began in a Catholic school in Lyon.

"I was in charge of chaplaincy for 15-to 20-year-olds," she said. "I felt frustrated that

out of 1,300 students, few came to the chaplaincy meetings. I wondered how I could reach those who did not come. So I had the idea of making videos. I did not think it would go beyond the school. But there are no borders on social media, and they spread very quickly," she said.

"When making these videos, I was thinking specifically about young people who did not practice their Catholic faith," Sr Albertine explained. "You have to start with the basics for them and explain everything in a very simple way, using their codes. From there, they, among themselves, are the best channels of communication."

Before entering religious life in the Chemin Neuf French community at 24, Sr Albertine worked in finance in Paris.

Today, cheerful and smiling, she approaches fundamental topics about God and faith with great humour, as well as practical questions concerning the organisation of daily life with God in mind, such as how to pray on a day-to-day basis.

Chemin Neuf is present in 30 countries, with 2,400 people involved, including 400 consecrated celibates, among them 120 priests. They work with students, run dormitories, and also retreats for couples and families. Since 1995, 30 parishes have been entrusted to the community in a dozen countries.

Sr Albertine has become a mainstream media phenomenon in France and abroad, but when asked about it, she said she always consults her religious superiors before agreeing to interviews. Her community was founded in Lyon, France, by Jesuit Fr Laurent Fabre in the early 1970s as part of the charismatic renewal movement.

Felt a special calling to the mission

"I joined it because I felt a special calling to the mission," explained Sr Albertine, who is now studying philosophy in Paris.

"I do not spend more than half a day a week on this missionary work on social media," she clarified. "It must not take up too much space. This is the condition, with my daily life within my community, for maintaining balance and distance from social media."

She stressed that "part of this time is spent responding personally to people who write to me via messaging, on a case-by-case basis," adding, "That is where something really important can happen for them."

Day after day, these personal contacts enable Sr Albertine to better understand the new generations of young people.

They are looking for guidance

"They have been immersed since childhood in catastrophic scenarios for the future," she noted. "In the frightening world in which they are growing up, they are looking for guidance. In this quest, the Church's long history is an asset for them. They are looking for reliable support, something solid on which to build the foundations of their lives, and they trust the Church to provide that."

"With the abuse crisis of recent years, one might have thought that the church had lost credibility," Sr Albertine told *OSV News*. "But that is not the case for young people. They are aware of the abuse, and they know that the church is not perfect, but surprisingly, that does not stop them, whereas it has deeply hurt older generations."

"With all this," she said, "the Church has gained in humility."



"One thing is certain, young people are not drawn to the Church because of its members, priests or authority figures. They come for God."

Social media can't substitute for parish life

For Sr Albertine, the mission's roots on the ground remain crucial. "Something new is happening on these social networks. But Mass and the sacraments cannot be done virtually! Our religion is that of the Incarnation, and we need to come together. The phenomenon we observed on Ash Wednesday was a beautiful combination of the dynamism of social media and traditional parish life. One nourishes the other."

"We must offer young people the ideal of evangelical life through the means of communication that are theirs," Sr Albertine concluded.

"Sometimes they are far from this ideal, and we must accompany them in their personal situation. But what I try to tell them is that their lives and the Gospel ideal are not incompatible. It is a matter of being signs of God's love and mercy for each person, by witnessing his closeness. Social media is particularly well suited to this. After that, it is the Holy Spirit who does the rest. **Caroline de Sury, OSV News**

Theology of the Body

The Theology of the Body, or TOB for short, was a truly eye-opening experience for all of us who attended it. During the camp, topics that are usually less spoken about in the Catholic Church were discussed more openly. These included subjects ranging from dating and marriage to the growing LGBTQ+ community.

Nowadays, it's hard to differentiate right from wrong, especially with the rising influence of social media content that can make us insecure about how we look or act. With that being said, the camp helped us understand that we are all made in the image of God. Each of us is unique, and no two of us are the same.

Attending the two-day camp was truly special. The group activities allowed us to share our thoughts and connect with one another — those who were once strangers are now good friends. The sessions were well planned and taught us that true love is built upon four pillars: being Free, Total, Faithful, and Fruitful.

The camp surely left a mark on us. It reminded us that God created us and that we should appreciate the life He has given us. We are reminded to stay strong in our faith and never lose sight of what it means to be a good Catholic. **Joshua Raj, Church of the Holy Redeemer, Klang**

BECOMING A ROLE MODEL

LAHAD DATU: The youth of St Gabriel Tungku, under St Dominic Parish organised the Youth Mini Camp 2 on September 19-21 with the theme *Young – Becoming a Role Model*. This programme was a continuation of the first camp held in 2018 which brought about 39 youths from St Gabriel Tungku, Felda KPUK, and St Dominic Lahad Datu Parish.

The camp began with registration followed by a short briefing. After dinner, the evening came alive with a Praise and Worship followed by ice-breaker session that helped the youths connect, build friendships, and strengthen their faith.

The first day session was led by Sr Jane Piong FSIC, entitled *Identity as a Child of God*, which invited youth aged 15-35 to reflect on how they can embody Catholic values in their daily lives. Meanwhile, participants aged 8-14 attended a session titled *Identity and Role Model for Young Catholics*, facilitated by Mary Chin. The evening concluded with an evening prayer,

entrusting the entire journey of the camp to God.

The second day was filled with spiritual formation, sharing, recreation, and teamwork building. The morning began with an insightful session by Sr Jane titled *Becoming a Role Model in Ministry*, which deepened the youths' understanding of their calling to be witnesses of Christ. Participants then attended a leadership session with Raymon, *Leadership & Ministry in Love*, which emphasised the importance of serving with compassion and humility.

Later, Tuan Ravi delivered a talk titled *Disciplined Youth & Role Model in the Community*, highlighting the value of responsibility and discipline in shaping a strong Christian community. The day continued with a *Catholic Amazing Race* — a fun, faith-based team challenge that strengthened bonds among participants — followed by sports activities that fostered friendship and teamwork. The day ended with personal



Amazing Race Game : Prayer Chain.

reflection and spiritual preparation for the next morning.

On the final day, participants began with personal prayer, breakfast, and a communal Rosary. A moving Sharing Session followed, where the youths expressed their gratitude and shared the lessons they had learned throughout the camp. The spiritual highlight was the Liturgy of the Word led by Sr Jane, bringing the camp to a close. The event concluded with group photos, token presentations, and a spirit of cooperation as everyone joined in cleaning up the venue — symbolising unity and shared responsibility.

In conclusion, Youth Mini Camp 2 provided a meaningful space for young Catholics of St Gabriel Tungku Outstation and beyond to deepen their faith, strengthen friendships, and embrace their mission to be role models in the Church and community. The experience reminded them that even at a young age, they are called to be the light of Christ — shining His love through their words and actions.



Remembering Loyola's icon – Sr Jean Dolores

CHICAGO: Sr Jean Dolores Schmidt, the spirited chaplain of Loyola University Chicago's men's basketball team whose faith, wit, and wisdom inspired millions, was called home to the Lord on October 9. She was 106.



Beloved by generations of students, faculty, and fans alike, Sr Jean was more than a university legend — she was a living witness of faith in action, embodying optimism, purpose, and love for God and others.

Loyola President Mark C. Reed described her as “an invaluable source of wisdom and grace for generations of students, faculty, and staff.”

“While we feel grief and a sense of loss, there is great joy in her legacy,” he said. “Her presence was a profound blessing for our entire community, and her spirit abides in thousands of lives.” Born Dolores Bertha Schmidt in San Francisco on August 21, 1919, she felt drawn to religious life from an early age. At just eight years old, she prayed that God would make her a Sister of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) — a prayer, she later said, that God happily answered.

She entered the BVM congregation in 1937, professed final vows in 1945, and began teaching in Catholic schools across California and Chicago, where she also coached girls' basketball. Her love of teaching and mentoring never faded.

In the 1960s, Sr Jean joined Mundelein College in Chicago, where she taught education and served in various administrative roles. When Mundelein affiliated with Loyola in 1991, she transitioned to become an associate dean and academic adviser — roles that deepened her connection with generations of students.

By 1994, at age 75, she began advising Loyola's basketball teams academically — jokingly calling herself “the booster shooter” — before becoming team chaplain two years later.

Sr Jean became a national treasure during Loyola's remarkable 2018 NCAA Final Four run. At 98, clad in her maroon-and-gold scarf and custom Nike sneakers, she cheered, prayed, and offered scouting tips from the sidelines. Her pregame prayers and postgame emails, filled with encouragement and gentle critique, made her a fixture of the team's success story.

Players, coaches, and fans adored her — not as a mascot, but as a mentor.

“She means so much to me personally and obviously to the team,” said Loyola player Donte Ingram after

a game-winning shot during the 2018 tournament. “She's just so special — her spirit is so bright, and she means so much to the city of Chicago.”

Her press conferences drew crowds larger than those at the Super Bowl, and her image appeared on bobbleheads, socks, and even a Lego statue. Yet Sr Jean saw all the attention as a

sacred opportunity: “I love life so much and enjoy being with young people,” she said in an interview in 2023. “They're the ones who keep me going — they bring such joy into my life.”

Her 2022 memoir, *Wake Up With Purpose! What I've Learned in My First Hundred Years*, became a bestseller, offering wisdom drawn from her century-long journey of service, prayer, and perseverance.

When she turned 100, Loyola and the city of Chicago celebrated with a month-long tribute, complete with a papal blessing from Pope Francis, an art exhibit, and the declaration of “Sr Jean Day.” In later years, she received an apostolic blessing from Pope Francis, a proclamation from President Joe Biden, and honours from Illinois Governor JB Pritzker — all recognising her remarkable witness to faith and humanity.

Even in her later years, she remained deeply engaged with students, often sharing meals with them in the student centre, leading prayer groups in residence halls, and inspiring countless lives through her presence and humour.

“Sports are very important because they help develop life skills,” she once said. “And during those life skills, you're also talking about faith and purpose.”

Health challenges led Sr Jean to step back from her role in August, but she continued advising and mentoring until her final days. Her life — spanning the Great Depression, World War II, and more than six decades at Loyola — remains a testament to faith, joy, and service.

Her legacy is one of radiant optimism and enduring faith — a reminder that holiness often looks like laughter, loyalty, and love for the people God places before us.

She is survived by her sister-in-law, Jeanne Tidwell, and her niece, Jan Schmidt.

As Loyola University and the city of Chicago bid farewell to their beloved “Sister Jean,” they do so with gratitude, remembering her own words: “God has been good to me. He's given me more than I ever dreamed — and I just try to give it all back.” Agencies

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Departed:
25-10-1990



Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
- Psalms 23:6

Lovingly missed by wife, daughter, sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren & loved ones.


25th Anniversary
In Loving Memory of



Mr Thomas Santiago
Born: 25th October 1926
Departed: 25th October 2000



Though sad, memories of you always bring smiles to our faces. Though painful, we are still learning to live without you. Though you are gone, we will always love and cherish you in our hearts.
Deeply missed by family and friends.

In Loving Memory of



Carkoo @ Kaku
From the Lord:
13.5.1941
To the Lord:
13.12.2020
Dearly missed by George Carkoo @ Kaku Francis Carkoo @ Kaku

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R. Anthonysamy
Departed:
13/10/2016

Michael Peter Anthonysamy
Departed: 29/6/1991

Our hearts will always love and cherish you.
Deeply missed and always remembered by Loved ones.

16th Anniversary
In Loving Memory of



Mr Arokiasamy s/o Gnanapragasam
From the Lord:
17-08-1939
To the Lord:
28-10-2009

Dad
You are the greatest gift that we ever had in our life that came from God.
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Thousands join Pope Leo XIV to pray the Rosary for peace

VATICAN: Tens of thousands of people joined Pope Leo XIV in St Peter's Square recently, to pray for peace in the world.

Before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which was brought to Rome from Portugal for the Jubilee of Marian Spirituality, the Pope entrusted believers to the Mother of God to guide the Church in its "pilgrimage of hope."

During the special prayer vigil, which included a contemplative recitation of the rosary and time for Eucharistic adoration, the Holy Father delivered a short address and encouraged those present to ask the Mother of God for the gift of a "listening heart."

"Our hope is guided by the gentle and persistent light of Mary's words as recounted in the Gospel," the pope said.

"Her last words at the wedding feast in Cana ['Do whatever he tells you'] are particularly precious," he said. "These words, which almost seem to be a testament, must be treasured by her children, as any mother's testament would be."

Sharing reflections on the life of Christ, which are included in the rosary prayer, Leo said peace in the world is not achieved through "power and money" but through prayer, listening, and living the Gospel



The original Our Lady of Fatima statue is processed in during a Marian vigil in St Peter's Square, Rome, Saturday, Oct 11, 2025. (CNA/Daniel Ibañez)

message.

"Disarm your hands and, even more importantly, your hearts. As I have said before, peace is unarmed and disarming," he said.

"It is not deterrence, but fraternity; it is not an ultimatum, but dialogue," he con-

tinued. "Peace will not come as the result of victories over the enemy, but as the fruit of sowing justice and courageous forgiveness."

Addressing the "powerful of the world," the pope said it is necessary to "lay down your sword" and have the "courage to dis-

arm" to achieve peace.

"At the same time, it is an invitation to each one of us to recognise that no idea, faith or policy justifies killing," he added.

Encouraging those who desire peace and the end of conflict and violence, the Holy Father said "take courage" and "never give up."

"Blessed are you: God gives joy to those who spread love in the world and to those who choose to make peace with their enemies rather than defeat them," he said.

"Peace is a journey, and God walks with you," he continued. "The Lord creates and spreads peace through his friends who are at peace in their hearts, and they in turn become peacemakers and instruments of his peace."

Towards the end of the prayer vigil, the Holy Father turned to Mary, the "Queen of Peace" to whom the Church can turn in time of need.

"Teach us to live and bear witness to Christian love, by welcoming everyone as brothers and sisters; to renounce the darkness of selfishness in order to follow Christ, the true light of humanity," he said.

"Virgin of Peace, Gate of Sure Hope, accept the prayers of your children!" he prayed. *Kristina Millare, CNA*

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
GENEROSITY**

Archdiocesan Disaster Relief Fund

A total of RM 183,984.21 was collected and channeled to Myanmar in aid of those affected by the devastating earthquake that took place on 28th March 2025

KUALA LUMPUR: Six months after powerful earthquakes struck central Myanmar, thousands of families — especially those headed by women, the elderly, and persons with special needs — remain in fragile and unsafe conditions.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) urges sustained humanitarian support to aid recovery and rebuilding efforts. Since the 28 March 2025 earthquakes, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), with IFRC and partners, has reached over 200,000 people in 30 affected townships, providing food, clean water, emergency shelter, health services, psychosocial care, and child-friendly spaces.

Despite significant progress, widespread damage and overlapping crises — earthquakes, floods, and ongoing vulnerabilities — mean that urgent needs persist. The

Federation-wide Myanmar Earthquake Emergency Appeal remains only 25 per cent funded. The IFRC calls for increased donor support to sustain humanitarian operations, strengthen recovery and resilience, and build safer, more dignified futures for affected communities.

In April, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia (CBCM) launched a Nationwide Humanitarian Appeal calling on all Catholics in Malaysia to respond with prayer, compassion, and generosity. Caritas Malaysia the official charitable arm of the CBCM, was tasked with the collection which will be directed towards trusted Myanmar partners focusing on both immediate relief and long-term rebuilding in the most affected and vulnerable communities.

The Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur raised RM183,984.21 to aid those affected.

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