

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.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things were created through him and for him.
Col. 1:15-16



'Family' at the heart of Sandakan Diocese Pastoral Assembly

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Faithful gather to pray for our priests

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Vocation stay-in at College General offers glimpse into seminary life

■ P16



(UN photo/WHO)

Hunger must never be a WEAPON OF WAR

VATICAN: In a powerful message to world leaders and delegates gathered in Rome for the 44th Session of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Conference, Pope Leo XIV issued a heartfelt plea for global solidarity and urgent action to end what he called the “scandal of global hunger.” His remarks marked the 80th anniversary of the FAO’s founding, during a weeklong summit held from June 28 to July 4.

At the heart of the Pope’s message was a sobering condemnation of the use of hunger as a method of warfare. “We are currently witnessing with despair the iniquitous use of hunger as a weapon of war,” Pope Leo said. “Starving civilian populations is a very cheap way to wage war.”

He lamented that even today, in a world of technological advancement and surplus food

production, millions suffer from malnutrition and famine. This, he argued, is not due to scarcity but to greed, violence, and indifference.

“While civilians languish in misery, political leaders grow fat on the profits of conflict,” he said, directly accusing armed groups — not regular armies — of weaponising food by burning crops, stealing livestock, and blocking aid. These brutal tactics, he said, trap farmers in zones of violence, prevent them from accessing markets, and contribute to soaring inflation and widespread food insecurity.

The pontiff linked hunger directly to broader global issues of instability, war, and climate change. “Political crises, armed conflicts, and economic disruptions play a central role in worsening the food crisis,” he warned. “They hinder humanitarian aid, undermine local agricultural production, and deprive people not only of access to food, but also of the right to live a life of dignity and opportunity.”

Pope Leo emphasised that the path forward must be grounded in peace, justice, and a willingness to share. Drawing from

the Gospel, he reminded listeners of Jesus’ feeding of the multitudes — noting that the real miracle was the community’s choice to share rather than hoard.

In recent decades, global campaigns have pushed toward the UN’s goal of “zero hunger” by 2030. But Pope Leo warned the international community is falling far short of that target, in large part due to escalating conflicts, increasing polarisation, and insufficient political will.

He called for world leaders to act decisively: “Concrete actions are needed, rooted in serious and far-sighted approaches.” In particular, he urged policymakers to put an end to war-driven food insecurity, set clear legal boundaries, and hold perpetrators accountable for using starvation as a tool of war.

The Pope also highlighted the intimate connection between climate change and food systems. Natural disasters, ecological degradation, and loss of biodiversity, he said, disproportionately affect the poor and further exacerbate hunger. “The social injustice caused by natural disasters and biodiversity loss must be reversed to achieve a just ecological transition—one that places both the

environment and people at the centre.”

He denounced the diversion of financial resources and technological innovation to weapons production and arms trade, calling it a betrayal of humanity. “Questionable ideologies are being promoted, while human relationships grow cold, corroding communion and driving away fraternity and social friendship,” he said.

In his concluding remarks, Pope Leo XIV encouraged FAO delegates and international leaders to be “artisans of peace,” setting aside rhetoric and taking bold, coordinated action. “To achieve this noble goal,” he said, “I wish to assure you that the Holy See will always serve the cause of harmony among peoples and will not grow weary of contributing to the common good of the family of nations.”

Pope Leo’s address comes just two months after his election as the spiritual leader of the world’s 1.4 billion Catholics and continues a consistent focus on the intersection of justice, peace, and care for the poor.

“I pray to Almighty God that your work may bear fruit and be of benefit to the underprivileged and to humanity as a whole,” he said.

Agencies

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UN Charter: Eighty years of a fragile miracle

Eighty years have passed — and the UN Charter is feeling every one of them.

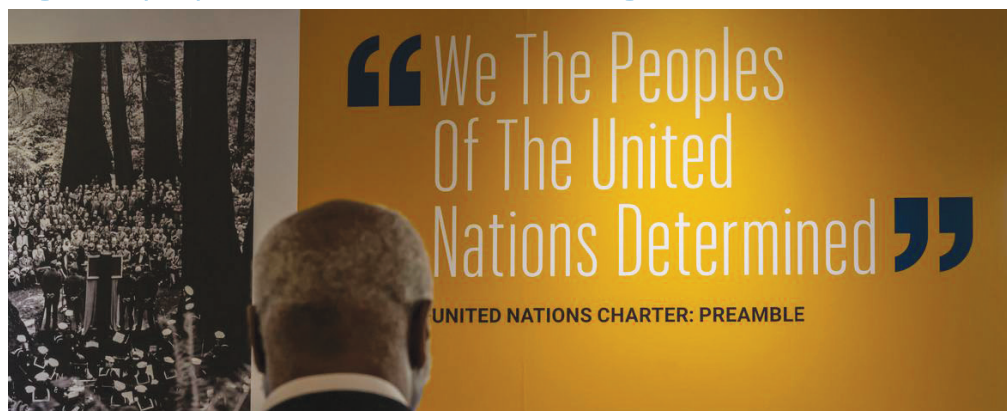
On June 26, 1945, the Charter of the United Nations was signed in San Francisco. The Preamble sets out the goal to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

The signatories were representatives of 50 countries emerging from the most catastrophic — and not yet concluded — world war in human history. That war claimed the macabre record of around 50 million deaths, most of them civilians.

Eighty years later, this institution — a ‘temple’ of multilateralism, whose very purpose lies in prioritising negotiation over the use of force, in maintaining peace, and in upholding international law — shows all its wrinkles.

Yet, the UN’s creation represented a true miracle, one that occurred in the American city named after the Saint of Assisi. This fragile miracle is in a way like the glass of the UN’s “Glass Palace,” but it is one that has produced significant achievements: the codification and development of international law, the construction of the human rights framework, the refinement of humanitarian law, the resolution of numerous conflicts, and many peacekeeping and reconciliation missions.

Today, more than ever, we are in need of this fragile miracle. We must make it less fragile, believe in it—as the Successors of Peter have believed, visiting the UN Headquarters from 1965 to 2015, recognising the United Nations as the appropriate legal and political response for the times in which we live — times marked by technological power that, in the hands of ideology, can produce horrific atrocities.



The preambular words of the UN Charter displayed at the United Nations Headquarters, in New York. (UN Photo/Mark Garten)

Speaking at a conference at the University of Padua recently, Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto spoke with clear realism. “We must guard the achievements of years that have led us to codify international law, which is totally different from an international order and very often in opposition to it. Because the international order,” the minister added, “is normally imposed by someone, by the strongest, who can decide that in some cases that law does not matter. That’s what we are living now... This is because multilateralism has died, and the UN matters in the world about as much as Europe does: nothing!”

It doesn’t take much imagination to understand what he’s referring to. Just look at what has happened over the past three years: from Russia’s aggression against Ukraine to Hamas’ inhumane October 7 attack on Israel; from the war that razed Gaza, turning it into a ghostly heap of rubble and corpses, to the alarming conflict between Israel and Iran that drew in the United States as well.

Sadly, it is true: the international order is

imposed by the strongest, who decide when to proclaim and when to ignore international and humanitarian law, depending on what suits them.

That is why, eighty years after the beginning of that fragile miracle, we repeat with the voice of Pope Leo XIV the “more urgent than ever” words of the prophet Isaiah: “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

“Let this voice from on high be heard,” said the Pope. “Let the wounds caused by the bloody actions of recent days be healed. Let all logic of domination and revenge be rejected, and let the path of dialogue, diplomacy, and peace be chosen with determination.”

Humanity must choose the path of multilateralism and negotiation, which began eighty years ago. It is the only alternative for a world teetering so dangerously on the edge of self-destruction. **Andrea Tornielli, Vatican News**

● See also page 10

Living the truth of God through compassion

For those who grew up in the 90s, I am quite sure you will remember a TV series called “The X Files”, where two FBI detectives investigate paranormal activities. Their tagline was “The truth is out there.” What do we perceive as truth? In this day and age, what is true for one person may not be true for another. There is, however, one Truth that stands above all other truths. Today, we are invited to consider this truth that is both ancient and ever-new: the Word of God is not distant, not out there, but intimately present within each of us. This central theme, woven through both the First Reading from Deuteronomy and the Gospel of Luke calls us to examine how we are cultivating this divine seed in the gardens of our hearts.

Moses, in his parting words to the Israelites in Deuteronomy paints a powerful image of the accessibility of God’s commands. He assures them, “For this command which I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach. Nor is it beyond the sea. No, the Word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart, for your observance.”

These words are a profound affirmation of God’s desire for a relationship with humanity that is not burdensome or beyond reach, but deeply personal and achievable. Moses dispels any notion of God’s law as an esoteric code reserved for a select few or a distant ideal impossible to attain. Instead, he places the Word directly “in your mouth and in your heart.” This isn’t merely about intellectual assent or verbal recitation; it speaks to an internalised understanding and a

heart transformed by divine truth. It suggests that true observance flows not from external compulsion, but from an inner conviction and a Spirit-led impulse.

The Gospel of Luke presents us with a familiar and beloved narrative: the Parable of the Good Samaritan. This parable is Jesus’ response to a scholar of the law who asks, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus, in turn, poses a question back: “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” The scholar correctly cites the Great Commandment: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” But seeking to justify himself, he then asks, “And who is my neighbour?”

The profound connection between Moses’ declaration and Jesus’ parable lies in the practical outworking of the indwelling Word. Moses tells us that God’s commands are “in your heart.” Jesus, through the parable, shows us what it looks like when God’s love truly resides within us and moves us to action. The scholar of the law could articulate the command to love God and neighbour, yet he struggled with its application, with the question of who qualified for his love. The Samaritan, however, did not need to be told; the Word of God, expressed as boundless compassion, had clearly taken root in his heart. His actions flowed from an internalised understanding of love that transcended societal boundaries and personal convenience.

The priest and the Levite, despite their

Reflecting on our Sunday Readings

with Fr Philip Tay, OCD

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Readings: Deuteronomy 30: 10-14;

Colossians 1: 15-20;

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

knowledge of the Law, did not allow the Word to penetrate deeply enough to prompt concrete action. The Samaritan, on the other hand, embodies what it means to have God’s Word not just close by, but truly within. His heart was open, compassionate, and responsive. He didn’t ask “Who is my neighbour?” He simply became a neighbour through his selfless acts of care. His love wasn’t theoretical; it was tangible, messy, and costly. This is the ultimate fruit of the Word of God dwelling within: it compels us to actively live out its truth in our daily interactions, especially with those in need.

To truly internalise the Word means more than just hearing it or memorising it; it means allowing it to shape our minds, soften our hearts, and guide our hands. It means recognising Christ in every person we encounter, especially the suffering and the marginalised, and responding with the same mercy that the Good Samaritan demonstrated. When the Word of God truly dwells within us, it becomes a lamp for our feet and a light for our path, guiding us to live lives that embody the very love of God, making us instruments of His compassion in a world desperately in need of it. Let us pray for hearts that are not just receptive to the Word, but truly transformed by it, enabling us to “go and do likewise.”



KUALA LUMPUR ARCHDIOCESE

Diary of Archbishop Julian Leow

July

- 15-16 Clergy Monthly Recollection
- 17 Meeting – Archdiocesan Finance Committee
- 19 Confirmation – Church of St Aloysius, Mantin and Church of St Theresa, Nilai
- 20 Confirmation – Church of the Immaculate Conception, PD
- 20 KL South District Eucharistic Congress – Church of St Francis of Assisi, Cheras



PENANG DIOCESE

Diary of Cardinal Sebastian Francis

July

- 14 Mass - Camino di Mutiara by Penang Island Chinese Apostolate – College General Major Seminary, Penang at 1.45pm
- 15 Council of Priests – Stella Maris, Penang at 10.00am
- 15-16 Clergy Monthly Recollection – Stella Maris, Penang
- 17 Flag Raising & Mass for Volunteers – Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam at 6.30pm
- 18-27 Novena & Feast of St Joachim and St Anne, Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam
- 20 Courtesy Visit to Menteri Besar of Kedah – Pejabat Menteri Besar, Kedah



MALACCA JOHORE DIOCESE

Diary of Bishop Bernard Paul

July

- 15-17 MJD Clergy Outing
- 19 Confirmation – Church of the Immaculate Conception, Johor Bahru
- 19 Confirmation – Church of St Joseph, Plentong

Strengthening parish service

Amanda Pumala

KUALA LUMPUR: A Chancery Training and Formation session for parish office administrators was held at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre, June 21. Organised by the Chancery Office of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, the event brought together 48 participants from 36 parishes. The session aimed to strengthen the foundations of parish communities by affirming the vital role and service of those who manage parish administration.

Fr Dr Clarence Devadass, Chancellor of the Archdiocese, led the training, offering guidance and insight into both procedural responsibilities and pastoral care. Participants explored their vocation as Parish Office Administrators — a role that demands interaction with people through phone calls, walk-ins, and emails, both locally, within the diocese, and beyond. They serve as important representatives of the Catholic Church, carrying the Church’s mission forward in everyday encounters.

The session featured discussions on challenges faced by priests and administrators alike. Attendees were invited to reflect on the practical struggles of



Fr Dr Clarence Devadass sharing the insights of procedural responsibilities and pastoral care.

managing inquiries and requests and to collaborate on solutions. Emphasis was placed on proactive empathetic service: resolving issues, guiding parishioners, and implementing positive change within the Church community.

Equally significant was the opportunity for administrators to connect in person. Many participants had long worked alongside one another by phone or email, but had never met face-to-face. This formation created space for conversation and mutual understanding, strengthening collaboration across parishes.

Feedback following the training was over-

whelmingly positive. Joan Bernadette from Christ the Light parish described the event as “an inspiring and supportive session.” Margaret Raj from the Church of the Good Shepherd remarked that “it was indeed a very fruitful session.” Daisy Raj from the Church of the Holy Rosary found “the formation was informative.”

The Chancery Training and Formation session achieved its goal: it renewed parish office administrators’ sense of calling, enhanced their practical and pastoral competencies, and fostered connections that will enrich Catholic communities throughout the archdiocese.



DIOCESE OF PENANG
PKK/BDN/2025/07/216

Notifications and Updates

1. Feast of St Joachim and St Anne, Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam

The Novena and Feast of St Joachim and St Anne this year will begin from July 18 and culminate on July 27. Let us pray for all pilgrims, volunteers, celebrants and confessors as we experience a meaningful and grace-filled celebration through the intercession of St Joachim and St Anne. (<http://bit.ly/3Tnp2dG>)

2. For the Needs of the Holy See (Peter’s Pence and Canon 1271)

I thank each one of you for your generous sup-

port and contributions to sustain the mission of the Church through the Mass collections. Sharing the attached letter received from the Apostolic Nunciature in Malaysia. (<http://bit.ly/3TU8vxX>)

3. Fifth World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly

We praise and thank God for the legacy of Pope Francis in sharing his message in conjunction with the 5th World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly to be celebrated on 27th July this year with the theme,

Blessed are those who have not lost hope (cf. Sir 14:2). (<http://bit.ly/44v7otl>)

4. Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary movement

The Diocese of Penang endorses the devotion of this Marian spiritual movement in the diocese. At present, the meetings are held at the Minor Basilica of St Anne, Bukit Mertajam on Fridays.

Sebastian Francis
Cardinal Sebastian Francis



Malacca Johore Diocese News Update #230



Dear friends of MJD,

I just returned from the opening and consecration of the new Church of St Peter, Padungan, Kuching. An event that drew countless people from all over Malaysia. I met familiar faces from Johor Bahru, Plentong, Labis, Kulai, Melaka and Ipoh. This month, another event, the Feast of St Anne will be a draw too. It reflects people’s search, but more importantly, these events unite. They bridge people. They boost the local economy. The Pilgrim Cross is currently at the Church of St Andrew, Muar (July 5 to August 2).

Local takes: Survey shows 81 per cent of 440,000 Malaysians use BNPL (buy now, pay later) just to cope with financial shocks — mainly for baby milk, medical bills, repairs, and insurance. It’s not for luxuries... 57 per cent use it to manage cash flow, 46 per cent to last till payday, 32 per cent for emergencies. The worrying part? 59 per cent say credit is needed just to survive daily life. 55 per cent can’t even get credit elsewhere. Retracting, reverting and retreating in government policies are back. The revised SST was “revised”. Surprises in appointments to top civil posts. Ministers resigning. The oldies returned. A counter-terrorism network observed that the foreign extremists are attracted by the widespread presence of radical ideologies in Malaysia, and weak policies on countering radicalism.

The Pope Speaks: Be reconciled, united and transformed. Love God and your brothers and sisters, and give yourselves to them generously. Be fervent in your celebration of the sacraments,

in prayer, especially in adoration before the Eucharist, and in your ministry. Keep close to your flock, give freely of your time and energy to everyone, without reserve and without partiality, as the pierced side of the crucified Jesus and the example of the saints teach us to do. Remember that the Church, in the two thousand years of her history, has had — and today continues to have — wonderful examples of priestly holiness. (To all priests on the Sacred Heart of Jesus Feast)

A Thought For The Week: Three Ships and the Titanic

Three ships were nearby when the Titanic sunk. One of them was known as the *Sampson*, about seven miles away from the Titanic. They saw the white flares signalling danger, but because the crew had been hunting seals illegally and didn’t want to be caught, they turned and went the opposite direction away from the Titanic. (This ship represents those busy in their own pursuits, and fail to see others in need).

The next ship was the *Californian*, which was only 14 miles away from the Titanic, but they were surrounded by ice fields. Their captain saw the white flares. Seeing the dark and unfavourable conditions, he decided to wait until morning. (This ship represents those who prefer to wait for favourable or perfect conditions).

The last ship was the *Carpathia*, which was heading south, 58 miles away from the Titanic. They heard the distress cries over the radio. The captain knelt to pray for God’s direction. He turned the ship around, steamed ahead, through

the ice fields (This ship saved 705 from the sinking Titanic).

The lesson from the Carpathia: Do not stop doing good. Justifications to avoid responsibility will always be there. Find a place in your heart to respond to cries for help near us.

Something’s Happening Near You:

1. *A Weekend Getaway with Fr Simon Yong SJ* at Good Shepherd Seminary from September 5-7. Open to all young adults aged between 19-39 years.

QnQ! Q asks? Do we really leave a mark or a dent on the world?

“Each of us was born to bring forth something new that has never existed: a way of being, a family, an idea, art, a community — something brand-new. We are here to fully introduce ourselves, to impose ourselves and ideas and thoughts and dreams onto the world, leaving it changed forever by who we are and what we bring forth from our depths. So, we cannot contort ourselves to fit into the visible order. We must unleash ourselves and watch the world reorder itself in front of our eyes.” *Glennon Doyle Melton*

The Holy Spirit @work: The mystery of God’s love is not that our pain is taken away, but that God first wants to share that pain with us. Out of this divine solidarity comes new life. *Henri Nouwen*

Something to tickle you: Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass; it’s about learning to dance in the rain.” *Vivian Greene*

Bernard Paul
Bishop Bernard Paul

SIC motor treasure hunt drives faith, fun, fellowship



Top: Fr Andrew Wong, CDD presenting the first prize winning team.

Bottom: The teams looking at the questions.



PETALING JAYA: The streets of Petaling Jaya saw more than just weekend traffic on Saturday morning as eleven enthusiastic teams took part in the SIC Motor Treasure Hunt 2025, organised by the Church of St Ignatius (SIC) in conjunction with its Family Life Month celebrations.

The hunt kicked off at 8.30am, with participants receiving their first set of clues via WhatsApp from organiser Christopher Foo. The event was structured across five zones, challenging teams with a mix of biblical references, parish trivia, wordplay, and riddle-solving, all while navigating familiar neighbourhoods in Petaling Jaya.

Clues ranged from the Scriptural (“What clung to St Paul’s hand in Malta?”) to the whimsical (“Greeks cutting locks here?”), drawing hunters into shops, churches, parks, and even supermarkets. Participants were also tested on Lenten customs and SIC-specific traditions, adding a personal and catechetical dimension to the fun.

During the treasure segment of the hunt, teams deciphered poetic riddles to locate specific items.

By 1.30pm, all teams were required to submit their treasures to Christopher’s home base. Teams arriving late incurred penalty points.

The event concluded with a cheerful return to SIC, where participants enjoyed a spread of *nasi lemak*, fried *koay teow*, IKEA curry puffs, and fellowship. At 2.30pm, the organiser revealed the much-anticipated answers, sparking laughter, gasps, and playful debates.

The top three winners were awarded shopping vouchers worth RM700, RM500, and RM300 respectively, while the fourth and fifth place winners were awarded food hampers. All other teams received mugs and chocolates.

CDD Frs Andrew Wong and Martin Then were on hand to present the prizes, and a fruit basket to Christopher in appreciation for organising the event.

With glowing feedback, perfect weather, and strong community spirit, the event was hailed as a creative way to bring families together and deepen bonds of faith through fun.

As one smiling participant put it, “Next time I pass a signboard, I won’t just read it — I’ll be deciphering it!”

Serving migrants, healing ministers



KOTA KINABALU: The 18th Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants (ECMI) took a reflective turn as the Exco team incorporated a special session on the ‘inner wounds in ministry.’ This two-hour workshop was led by Fr Charles Chiew, a certified clinical psychologist and the official exorcist of the Diocese of Keningau.

This year’s ECMI meeting, hosted by the Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu, was attended by 21 delegates representing nine arch/dioceses and one vicariate: the Diocese of Malacca Johore, Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, Diocese of Penang, Archdiocese of Kuching, Diocese of Sibul, Diocese of Miri, Vicariate of Brunei, Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu, Diocese of Keningau, and Diocese of Sandakan. The Archdiocese of Singapore was unable to attend this year’s meeting due to a change in personnel within their commission for migrants.

Held from June 9–11 at the Archdiocesan Centre, the ECMI delegates were officially welcomed by Archbishop John Wong during the opening Mass on June 10. In his homily, the archbishop reminded those present that every baptised person is called to a mis-

sion — but within that universal call, some are entrusted with a specific mission. He affirmed that the delegates have been called to this particular mission: to serve and care for migrants within their respective dioceses.

The second day of the meeting featured presentations from the four regional clusters: Sabah, Sarawak, Peninsular Malaysia, and Brunei. The reports highlighted various initiatives undertaken across the dioceses, including outreach programs for migrant communities, collaboration with groups both within and beyond the Church, sacramental ministry to migrants, and support for bereaved families through funeral services. A topic that drew particular interest among the delegates was financial stewardship, especially regarding fundraising efforts and the importance of prudent spending in migrant ministry.

The recollection session with Fr Charles Chiew proved to be one of the most impactful of the meeting, as delegates listened attentively to his insights on the inner wounds that can influence a person’s personality and effectiveness in ministry. Drawing from his expertise as a clinical psychologist, Fr Charles explored how unresolved emotional wounds — often rooted in childhood experiences —

can shape one’s spiritual journey and pastoral service.

He invited delegates to reflect on their own personal histories and how these experiences may unknowingly affect their ministry.

“Some of us in Church ministry, feeling unsettled, move from one ministry to another, seeking healing or spiritual fulfilment — even turning to exorcism, believing we are under a spell,” he explained. “But often, it is not the work of the devil. It is the result of an inner wound buried deep within us — formed during our early years — and triggered by present situations.”

Fr. Charles emphasised that unless these wounds are addressed both systematically and spiritually, they can hinder spiritual growth and maturity, ultimately becoming an obstacle in one’s service to others.

In wrapping up the meeting, the president of ECMI, Bishop Bernard Paul of Malacca Johore, expressed his gratitude to all delegates and their respective diocesan teams for their ongoing initiatives in migrant ministry. He encouraged everyone to remain steadfast, urging them to hold on to hope amid the many challenges faced in the course of their pastoral work.

Pontifical Mission Societies focus on hope and creation care

KUALA LUMPUR: The Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) of Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei convened their annual meeting at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre (APC) from June 23 to 26 to strengthen their shared missionary efforts and reflect on their role as “Missionaries of Hope.”

The meeting was attended by the Episcopal President Bishop Julius Dusin Gitom of the Diocese of Sandakan and Fr Victor Louis (Penang), the National Director of PMS. Also present were PMS diocesan directors from across the region: Fr Harry Dorisoh (Keningau); Fr Peter Hwang (Miri); Fr Raymond Pereira (Kuala Lumpur); Fr Neville Arul Sinnappah (Malacca Johore); Fr Arthur John (Sandakan); Fr Arin Sugit (Vicariate of Brunei); Fr Davie Anak Entalai (Archdiocese of Kuching); Fr Joshua Liew (Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu).

The meeting was held in line with the Jubilee Year theme, “Pilgrims of Hope,” emphasising the Church’s mission to restore faith, hope, and trust in a world facing growing challenges. The gathering also focused on preparing for World Mission Sunday 2025, to be celebrated on October 19, with the theme announced by Pope Francis: *Missionaries of Hope Among All Peoples*.

This theme underscores the missionary vocation of every Christian, calling the Church to be a beacon of hope, particularly in regions where the faith is young, fragile, or



Bishop Julius Dusin with the PMS directors.

under pressure.

Speaking during the meeting, Fr Arin Sugit, attending for the first time as the PMS director from Brunei, shared his gratitude for the spirit of unity and missionary zeal he witnessed.

“As a newcomer, I feel blessed to see how our brother priests from the MSB Conference dedicate themselves to spreading hope in a world that desperately needs it,” he said. “PMS is more than collecting funds — it is the heartbeat of the Church’s missionary call. I’ve learned so much by listening to the struggles and joys of this commission. My sincere thanks to the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, Fr Raymond, and the team for their warm hospitality. God bless our mission.”

A key outcome of the meeting was a unanimous commitment to environmental responsibility. In a move toward creation justice, the PMS directors agreed not to print posters or paper coin boxes for Mission Sunday 2025. Instead, they will promote digital materials

and the use of recycled resources, marking a shift toward more sustainable practices in Church mission efforts.

Fr Victor Louis, National Director, highlighted the significance of this decision, “What impressed me most was our shared commitment to care for creation. This year, we are choosing to reduce waste by going digital and using recycled materials. It’s a small but meaningful step in aligning our mission with stewardship of God’s creation.”

World Mission Sunday, celebrated annually in Catholic parishes worldwide, is a day of prayer and solidarity for the missionary work of the Church. All donations collected during the celebration go directly to support churches, schools, hospitals, and vocations in mission territories — particularly in places where the Church is still growing or facing economic hardship.

Next year’s PMS meeting will be held in Brunei. **Fr Raymond Pereira**

‘Family’ at the heart of Sandakan Diocese Pastoral Assembly

SANDAKAN: The Diocese of Sandakan held its Pastoral Assembly from May 31 to June 2, focusing on the theme of “Family”, one of the four key social concerns in preparation for the Malaysian Pastoral Assembly (MPA) 2026.

The assembly brought together 150 delegates, including members of the Sandakan Diocesan Focus Team, the Local Organising Committee, and invited presenters.

The three-day event began with a Bible Enthronement led by Fr Mitchelly Kiun, followed

by an orientation session and an “Expectation Check.” An opening Mass and Adoration set the spiritual tone, preparing participants for the formation sessions that followed.

The second day featured a series of formation talks by Fr Dr Clarence Devadass of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur. His sessions explored the theme of baptism and mission, aimed at: Deepening participants’ understanding of their baptismal identity and responsibilities; Encouraging a renewed commitment to live out their baptism in service to the

Church and the world; Fostering a spirit of unity and synodality among participants as they journey together in faith.

The day concluded with a para-liturgical celebration titled “Baptised and Sent.”

The final day was dedicated to parish-level reporting, presented by the Diocesan Focus Team. Using the See-Judge-Act method, Francis Tan delivered a comprehensive report summarising feedback from across the diocese. The findings affirmed the family as a source of love, joy,



The delegates sharing their hope in the form of drawings.

and blessing, while also identifying challenges such as: Weak spiritual foundations; Poor communication; Erosion of values and morals and Over-reliance on technology.

The report proposed several concrete actions, including regular spiritual activities, open communication, and balanced technology use, to help families strengthen their role as the domestic Church.

Fr David Garaman then presented the “Moving Forward” session, connecting the baptismal call to the family’s role in nurturing

faith — highlighting parents as primary catechists within the home.

The assembly concluded with a closing Mass presided over by Bishop Julius Dusin Gitom. In his homily, he reminded delegates that while no one is perfect, they should not be discouraged.

“Do not be disappointed by your imperfections,” said Bishop Julius. “God’s grace strengthens us. The Church is not built on our perfection, but on God Himself, who sanctifies us and desires to use us as instruments of His holy mission.”



Everyone participating in an action song.

Church of St Thomas More marks triduum and milestone with joy

SUBANG JAYA: Parishioners of the Church of St Thomas More came together in a spirit of joy and thanksgiving for a meaningful Triduum celebration in honour of their patron saint. The celebration coincided with the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, and was made even more special by a historic milestone: the formal Certificate of Completion and Compliance (CCC), officially recognising the building as a church.

The Triduum began on Friday evening with a Mass celebrated by parish priest, Msgr Patrick Boudville, who called the faithful to reflect on the unwavering faith and moral courage of St Thomas More, a man of integrity who remained steadfast in his beliefs even to the point of martyrdom.

Over the weekend, the Masses were celebrated by Jesuit priests, honouring the Jesuit community’s foundational role in the parish’s early days. On Saturday evening, Fr Alberto Irenaeus, SJ, celebrated the 6.00pm Mass, preaching on the

peace that flows from the Eucharist. He encouraged the congregation to draw from Christ’s real presence as a source of healing and reconciliation in a divided world. A warm fellowship dinner followed, fostering community bonds and joyful connection among parishioners.

On Sunday morning, Fr Richard Anthony Samy, SJ, presided over the 8.30am Mass, reminding the faithful that strength in trials often comes from the Eucharist. He highlighted how saints like St Thomas More drew grace and courage from the sacrament. A breakfast fellowship followed, continuing the spirit of unity.

The celebration culminated with a vibrant 11.30am Mass presided by Fr Alvin Ng, SJ, who delivered a powerful homily on how God can use our brokenness for His greater glory — just as Jesus was broken for the world. He invited the congregation to reflect on St Thomas More’s life as a willing sacrifice, lived in full trust of God’s purpose. The Mass concluded with a solemn

benediction and a procession to bless the newly completed church car park — a visible sign of the parish’s ongoing growth and development.

More than a feast day, this Triduum became a living testimony to the presence and power of Christ in the Eucharist — especially poignant during the celebration of Corpus Christi. As the Church honoured the Body and Blood of Christ, parishioners were reminded that the Eucharist is the source and strength by which the Church lives, grows, and serves.

For the community of St Thomas More, this milestone serves as a renewal of their call to be a Eucharistic people: united in love, nourished by grace, and sent forth in mission. Inspired by their patron saint, who in his final words declared, “I die the King’s good servant, but God’s first,” may the faithful continue to live with courage, joy, and unwavering integrity in service to Christ.

Angelica Bridget Bateman



ERLC discusses liturgical issues ahead of bishops’ conference

KUCHING: The 27th meeting of the Episcopal Regional Liturgy Commission (ERLC), under the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, was held on June 26. It was attended by representatives of Liturgy Commissions of the Archdioceses of Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, Dioceses of Penang, Malacca Johore, Sibul, Miri and Keningau. As the ERLC President, Cardinal William Goh was unable to attend in person, an online zoom session was arranged for a dialogue with him.

Some pertinent issues concerning the liturgy affecting the region were discussed. Among them were the All Saints Mass, that is a day of obligation and All Souls which is not obligatory and yet widely attended by the lay faithful. These two solemnities are celebrated on Saturday and Sunday respectively.

The other celebration that was debated at length was Chinese New Year 2026. The second day of this festival coincides with Ash Wednesday, that marks the first day of Lent. The ERLC will give their views to the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Malaysia, Singapore

and Brunei at its meeting in July. It will deliberate on the aforementioned matters and issue an advisory.

Some other subjects were also discussed vis-à-vis, the New Jerusalem Lectionary and English Standard Version-Catholic Version (ESV-CE) Lectionary, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and the Mass with Children.

Delegates had the opportunity of visiting the archives of the Archdiocese of Kuching, the new St Peter’s Church with gothic architecture as well as part of Kuching City and savouring the special delicacies of Kuching. Archbishop Simon Poh of Kuching made time to meet delegates and joined them for one of their dinners.

At the end of the ERLC meeting, delegates were invited to attend the consecration of the new St Peter’s Church on the Feast of Sts Peter & Paul on June 29 as well as the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the priestly ordination cum 70th birthday of Fr Vincent Chin, Rector of St Peter’s Church on June 30.

The next ERLC meeting will be hosted by the diocese of Malacca Johore from June 16-18, 2026
Dr Chan Lek Lin



Fr Alvin Ng SJ incensing the Blessed Sacrament.

Celebrating oneness with unity and hope in Jesus

GEORGE TOWN: The streets of George Town, the capital city of Penang, were filled with solemn prayers and hymns of praise in commemoration of the Feast of *Corpus Christi* on June 22.

More than 1,200 Catholics from across the Penang Island parishes attended the celebration, which began with Mass at the Church of the Assumption (City Parish).

City Parish assistant priest, Fr Desmond Jansen, was the main celebrant with City Parish priest, Fr Edmund Woon and Church of the Risen Christ parish priest, Friar Esmond Chua, as concelebrants.

Fr Desmond shared in his homily that the basis of Christian faith is the love and devotion of all the faithful towards Jesus, especially through the Eucharist.

He attributed that many of the testimo-

nies and stories which have been told, and will continue to increase, comes from a faith which trusts God and places hope in Him completely.

“This hope, which helps us in undergoing our challenges of everyday life, unites us with Christ as we continue to be part of His one body,” he said.

He prayed and expressed hope that all parishioners, having been nourished by the Sacrament of the Eucharist, will continue to embody the theme of the celebration in building the kingdom of God through a sense of oneness.

Parishioners then began their walk of faith after Mass as they held candles as a sign of public witnessing towards the real presence of Christ.

From the Church of the Assumption, the



Fr Desmond carrying the Blessed Sacrament as the congregation follows behind.

processional float bearing the Blessed Sacrament covered a two-kilometre route with solemn blessings at three stops; namely Church of St Francis Xavier, Penang police head-

quarters and Kinta Lane.

The celebrations concluded with the procession reaching the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows for solemn Benediction. **Aaron Lim**

Walking with the Lord in Kepong

Malcolm Solomon

KUALA LUMPUR: In a powerful expression of faith and unity, more than 1,000 parishioners from churches and chapels across the KL North District took to the streets of Kepong for a 3.2 kilometre Eucharistic procession in honour of the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The procession began at the Church of Jesus Caritas (JCC), the host parish, and wound its way through major roads in the area. Held during the Church's Jubilee Year of Hope, the event was a vibrant reflection of communion among the people of God.

The faithful, representing the parishes of Jesus Caritas, Good Shepherd, St Joseph, Christ the Light, Risen Christ, and the chapels of Kristus Aman, Christ the King, and Our Lady of Lourdes, journeyed together in solemn prayer and devotion.

Leading the procession were members of the Legion of Mary, carrying a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Following

closely behind was a beautifully decorated float bearing the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance — the heart of the celebration.

Along seven adoration points throughout the route, the Blessed Sacrament was raised in benediction by Archbishop Julian Leow, together with clergy including Fr Peter Anthony, Fr Simon Lau, Fr Frederick Joseph, Fr Augustine Lee and Fr William Michael. Participants knelt in adoration, while even non-Christian bystanders paused respectfully as the procession passed by.

The celebration marked the culmination of a nine-day novena hosted by Jesus Caritas Church — a time filled with prayer, community bonding, and joyful preparation. The *Corpus Christi* feast holds special significance for the parish, which this year celebrates its Golden Jubilee and its designation as a pilgrimage church in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur.

Archbishop Julian in his homily, posed

a poignant question to the congregation: “Do we really believe, and behave as if the Lord Jesus is truly in front of us?”

He invited the faithful to engage fully — body, mind, and soul — in worship,

using all their senses to encounter the living God. The archbishop also gave thanks for the parish's 50 years of mission and prayed for even greater growth and grace in the years to come.



The clergy walking in procession.

Triple celebration at Slim River chapel

SLIM RIVER, Perak: The Chapel of St Anthony came alive with prayer, praise, and profound joy on June 21 as the Catholic community marked a unique triple celebration: the chapel's feast day, the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*, and Father's Day.

The day began with a Novena to St Anthony, the Rosary, and the *Angelus* at 4.30pm, drawing pilgrims and parishioners from near and far. The evening Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr Vincent Paul, chapel administrator and parish priest of the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, Tanjung Malim.

In his homily, Fr Vincent reflected on the deep spiritual significance of *Corpus Christi*, linking it to the Gospel account of the multiplication of the loaves and fish. “Jesus did not just satisfy physical hunger — He stirred hearts,” said Fr Vincent. “He invited the people to share. That's what the Eucharist is about sacrifice, generosity, and self-giving.”

Fr Vincent highlighted how Jesus' gift of the Eucharist is a call to imitate His total self-giving. “God never keeps things for Himself,” he said. “We're often tempted to only look after ourselves and our families. But the feast of *Corpus Christi* challenges



The statue of St Anthony carried in procession after the Eucharistic celebration.

that. It's about giving without holding back, just like Jesus did.”

He also emphasised the unique belief of the Catholic Church in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. “To receive the Body and Blood of Christ requires faith and reverence. Jesus gave us this sacrament so we can remain united with Him and bring His presence to others.”

Turning to the chapel's patronal feast,

Fr Vincent spoke about the life of St Anthony of Padua, one of the most beloved saints in the Catholic world. “What made him such a powerful preacher and miracle worker was his deep closeness to Jesus,” he said. “He invites us to stay close to Christ in all things.”

Following Mass, a 35-minute solemn Eucharistic procession made its way through the streets of Slim River. Fr Vincent carried the monstrance bearing the Blessed

Sacrament, accompanied by parishioners reciting the Rosary. A statue of St Anthony, borne on a hand-held carriage by four parishioners, also joined the procession. “This public witness of our faith honours Jesus in the Eucharist and St Anthony, our patron,” Fr Vincent said. The procession concluded with Benediction back at the chapel.

In a spirit of gratitude, Fr Vincent thanked the organising committee and volunteers for their efforts. He called on the faithful to continue praying for the growth of the community and to reach out to others with love and witness.

The celebration also included a special Father's Day blessing. All fathers present gathered near the sanctuary to receive a blessing and were sprinkled with holy water. Fr Vincent reminded them of their important role in passing on the faith to their children. “Ensure your children remain in the Church and do not abandon the Eucharist,” he urged. “This is a sacred responsibility.”

The evening concluded with a fellowship dinner, uniting the community in joy, storytelling, and shared faith. Many exchanged warm wishes of “Happy Father's Day” and “Happy Feast Day,” underscoring the familial spirit of the occasion. **Bernard Anthony**

Faithful gather to pray for our priests

Bernard Anthony

KUALA LUMPUR: The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus hosted a solemn celebration for the World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests, coinciding with the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 27.

The annual observance, instituted by Pope St John Paul II in 2002, calls on the faithful to pray for the holiness of priests and the deepening of their vocation. This year's Mass drew 15 priests, two seminarians, and over 1,300 members of the laity, including attendees from neighbouring parishes.

At the 11.00am Mass, Archbishop Julian Leow expressed gratitude to the congregation for coming together to pray for priests. He thanked the faithful for their continued support and prayers, asking that priests remain holy and faithful in their ministry as the Church celebrated the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In his homily, the archbishop reflected on the priestly vocation, reminding the clergy that they are called to have the Heart of Jesus — a heart of compassion, mercy, and service. "As priests, we are expected to serve our flock, to seek out the lost," he said. "At times, we may have failed in this duty. Some of you may have

walked away from the Church due to pain or disappointment — often because of our sins of omission."

He urged priests to be healers: "We are called to bandage the wounded, to console the hurting. People come to us seeking hope and comfort, yet, sometimes we are too busy to truly see them. Many in our flock are suffering."

Turning to the laity, Archbishop Julian called for patience and understanding. "On this *World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests*, your presence here shows you have not given up on us. Pray that we may grow ever more in the likeness of Christ and His Sacred Heart."

He emphasised the mutual need between clergy and laity: "We need each other. Priests must be the voice of conscience and mediators between God and humanity, but we need your prayers to persevere."

The archbishop encouraged all to reflect on the Heart of Jesus and to seek reconciliation with one another. He also asked the faithful to forgive the shortcomings of priests and to pray for their continued sanctification.

"What is God asking of us today?" he asked. "As leaders, teachers, catechists, and people entrusted with authority, we are all called to serve — to be the Heart of Jesus to those around us."



Some of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur at the Church of the Sacred Heart.

Archbishop Julian concluded with an invitation: "May we, in receiving the Eucharist, be transformed to become more like Jesus, whose Sacred Heart cares for all. And to my brother priests — be shepherds and living signs of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Serve the people faithfully, with hearts modelled after His."

Following the homily, Archbishop Julian led the *Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests*, inviting the congregation to first observe a moment of silent prayer before reciting the formal prayer together.

In closing remarks, Msgr Stanislaus Soosaimariam expressed gratitude to the

archbishop and the visiting clergy. He thanked all present for their prayers and participation.

Archbishop Julian also noted the conclusion of the Jubilee of Priests in Rome, which ended on the same day, and requested continued prayers for all priests, especially the sick, including Archbishop Emeritus Murphy Pakiam.

The congregation concluded the celebration by reciting Pope Leo XIII's *Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*. A fellowship lunch followed on church grounds, fostering joyful interaction between clergy and laity — a moment of unity and thanksgiving within the Body of Christ.

Kampar parish celebrates 117 years of faith

KAMPAR, Perak: The Church of the Sacred Heart marked a momentous and spiritually enriching celebration as parishioners gathered for the 117th parish feast of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, held from June 27 to 29. This year's triduum was especially significant, coinciding with the 350th anniversary of the revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St Margaret Mary Alacoque, a Visitation nun from France.

The Kampar parish has been actively promoting the devotion since the start of 2025. Under the guidance of parish priest Fr Simon Anand, parishioners have been encouraged to deepen their love for Jesus through the Sacred Heart devotion. In support of this, the parish also reprinted "Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus" booklets for those seeking to grow in faith and understanding.

The triduum was led by Fr Joachim Robert from College General, Penang, who served as the main celebrant and preacher for all three days. Each Mass was preceded by special devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

On Day 1, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, Fr Joachim reflected on the Sacred Heart as the ultimate symbol of God's love, mercy, and compassion. He urged the faithful to respond to Jesus' love through prayer, acts of service, and a deepened personal relation-



Bringing Jesus into the streets of Kampar to bless the town and its people.

ship with Him. The Mass was concelebrated by Fr Simon Anand and Fr Michael Dass from Batu Gajah, with around 500 faithful in attendance. Additional tents were set up outside the church to accommodate the large crowd.

On Day 2, the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Fr Joachim spoke about Mary's heart as one fully united with the Heart of Jesus — a heart open to God's promptings and filled with contemplation and trust. He reminded the faithful of Mary's unwavering faith despite her suffering, and how she always points believers back to Jesus. "Her Immacu-

late Heart is our refuge," Fr Joachim said, referencing the message of Fatima.

The evening concluded with a candlelight procession through parts of Kampar town. The Blessed Sacrament was carried solemnly in a monstrance by the priests, accompanied by parishioners and pilgrims reciting the Rosary. Fr Joachim encouraged all present to pray for the Church, families, and the wider community during the procession, reminding them that God's love is complete, not superficial. More than 500 people participated in the sacred walk of faith and witness.

Throughout the triduum, parishioners and visitors had the opportunity to venerate relics of four saints: St Margaret Mary Alacoque; St Frances Xavier Cabrini; St Maximilian Kolbe and St Jeanne Jugan

On Day 3, which coincided with the Solemnity of Sts Peter and Paul, Fr Simon gave a homily reflecting on the lives and mission of these great apostles. He also explained the significance of the venerated relics, emphasising that relics are to be respected and venerated, not worshipped, as a sign of reverence toward the saints' holy lives.

Fr Simon explained the importance of the procession as a physical and spiritual act of reverence and evangelisation — bringing Jesus into the streets of Kampar to bless the town and its people. He noted that the procession paused at three locations, where the Blessed Sacrament was raised in adoration and blessing over the community.

Fr Simon also encouraged the faithful to take advantage of the opportunity for confession to receive the Jubilee indulgence.

"As we celebrate the Sacred Heart of Jesus, let us allow our hearts to be touched and transformed by His divine love. Let our faith be visible not only in word, but in action — through reverent prayer, devotion, and love for others." **Bernard Anthony**

Offering hope and healing for troubled marriages

PORT DICKSON: Ten couples struggling in their marriages found new hope during a three-day Retrouvaille Weekend, held recently.

The live-in programme, organised by the Archdiocesan Family Life Commission (AFLC), is part of an ongoing effort to support Catholic couples in distress.

Retrouvaille — which means "rediscovery" in French — is an internationally recognised Catholic ministry designed to help couples facing serious difficulties in their marriage.

What made this year's weekend especially significant is that it was the first time a fully Malaysian team facilitated the entire programme. The presenting team included Fr Edwin Peter, parish priest of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Port Dickson and three couples: Francis and Angeline

Chang, Canute and Lourett Magimay, and Joseph and Anita Pragasam — all of whom once faced their own marital struggles and have since journeyed toward healing.

Due to the sensitive nature of the programme, Retrouvaille weekends are held at undisclosed locations to protect participant confidentiality. "The programme isn't a magic fix," said one organiser, "but it provides a safe space for couples to open up, listen to each other, and begin the journey of healing."

Participants arrived on Friday evening, each carrying their own share of marital challenges. As the weekend progressed, many couples were visibly moved by the deep and honest testimonies shared by the presenting couples and Fr Edwin. Through these personal stories, participants realised they were not alone in their pain — and that

healing is possible.

The retreat's core focus was on self-understanding, communication techniques, and the power of forgiveness. Couples were encouraged to let go of the past and rediscover their love for one another.

One participant shared, "I never realised that behind my husband's loud and domineering exterior, he was simply trying his best for our family. This weekend helped me see his heart."

Time was also set aside for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with Fr Edwin available for Confession. The weekend concluded with Mass celebrated by Fr Edwin, offering a spiritual capstone to the couples' emotional and relational journey.

Retrouvaille does not end with the weekend. Participants are expected to attend six

follow-up sessions to reinforce what they have learned and to continue their healing journey. "Marriage healing takes time," the facilitators reminded participants. "There will be setbacks, but with God at the centre and a renewed commitment to one another, couples can overcome any obstacle."

Since its launch in Malaysia, the Retrouvaille programme has relied heavily on the support of teams from Singapore, India, and the Philippines. The growth of a local presenting team marks a major milestone in the development of Retrouvaille Malaysia.

Couples or individuals interested in attending future sessions may contact Francis (016-3330660) or Angeline (012-2072150) or email retrouvaille@familylife.archkl.org. All communications are handled with strict confidentiality.

Sybil Kathigasu, war heroine and witness of faith

Christopher Kushi

IPOH: Nearly eight decades after her death, the legacy of Sybil Kathigasu, a Malayan war heroine and devoted Catholic, continues to inspire. Her remarkable life was recently honoured with a memorial Mass at her gravesite in the Church of St Michael's cemetery, marking the 77th anniversary of her passing.

Presided over by Cardinal Sebastian Francis, Bishop of Penang, the Mass was concelebrated by Fr Aloysius Tan, Fr Michael Dass, Fr George Vaithynathan, and Fr Konstend Gnanapragasam. About 180 faithful, including parishioners, prayer groups, and members of the Catholic Nurses Guild of Taiping, recognisable in red T-shirts worn in Sybil's honour, gathered under a canopy for the evening liturgy.

Sybil Kathigasu (née Medan Daly, 1899 – 1948) is remembered for her extraordinary bravery during the Japanese occupation of Malaya. A trained nurse and midwife, she secretly aided resistance fighters in Papan, Perak by providing medical care and supplies. Her defiance led to her arrest, torture, and imprisonment by the Japanese Kempeitai, yet she never betrayed those she helped.

"She was an exemplary nurse who lived the Gospel with unwavering dedication," said

Cardinal Sebastian in his homily. "Her life was marked by a deep dependence on God's grace and the love of Jesus, which gave her hope and resilience."

The cardinal reflected on Sybil's life as a profound example of "faith through suffering." Quoting from Scripture, he spoke of a spiritual "veil" that blinds people from seeing as God sees, a veil lifted only through the Holy Spirit. Sybil, he said, lived with eyes fixed on God's mission, embracing suffering not as defeat but as testimony to her faith.

He further explained that Sybil's innocent suffering, like that of the Apostles, saints, and martyrs, reflected the call of Christian discipleship. "Innocent suffering is the price paid in pursuit of justice and truth. Such lives are

called blessed in the Beatitudes," he added.

Sybil remains the only Malayan woman to be awarded the George Medal by King George VI for her wartime heroism. On July 1, 2024, Cardinal Sebastian formally advanced the cause for her beatification and canonisation through a diocesan notification.

The Diocese of Penang has appointed Fr Eugene Benedict to assist in the initial stages of the sainthood process, following consultation with Archbishop Julian Leow of Kuala Lumpur. If the Holy See raises no objections (*nihil obstat*), Sybil will officially be titled Servant of God — the first formal step toward sainthood in the Catholic Church.

The process involves the authentication of her life and virtues. One verified miracle at-



tributed to her intercession is required for beatification, and a second for canonisation.

Since January 2025, monthly prayer sessions have been held at Sybil's gravesite on the 12th of each month. Guided by parish priest Fr Aloysius Tan and coordinated by prayer leader Alina Sng, the sessions are bilingual (English-Mandarin) and draw around 20 participants. A banner at the site reads: "With the love she had for God, she was able to reach out to many in need, a living instrument of God's hope, love and mercy."

Pilgrims and visitors also continue to frequent Sybil's former home and clinic in Papan, preserving the memory of her service and sacrifice.

If you have received any answered prayers through Sybil Kathigasu's intercession or have relevant documents to share, please contact Jennifer Duarte at road2sainthood.sybil@gmail.com, or send postal mail to: Sybil Kathigasu Prayer Group c/o Church of St Michael, 24 Church Road, 30300 Ipoh, Perak.

Sybil Kathigasu passed away on June 12, 1948, but her witness to courage, compassion, and faith continues to resonate far beyond her time.



Fr Aloysius Tan making an announcement about the monthly prayer sessions at Sybil's gravesite.

AOHD explores humanitarian models in Singapore

SINGAPORE: A delegation from the Archdiocesan Office for Human Development (AOHD), Kuala Lumpur, visited Singapore to attend the 2025 CHARIS Humanitarian Forum and Fair (HFF) and to explore regional models of inclusive ministry and humanitarian outreach.

The visit began with immersion in the Church's outreach ministries, including Caritas Agape Village, where the team engaged with key organisations such as the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Roman Catholic Prison Ministry, Catholic Welfare Services, Montfort Care and Abilities Beyond Limitations and Expectations. They also visited Crossings Café — staffed by individuals on the autism spectrum — and the Catholic Centre.

A standout moment was the visit to Enabling Village, a pioneering inclusive space integrating education, employment, and community life for persons with diverse abilities. The AOHD team saw strong potential to adapt this model locally.

The highlight of the trip was the CHARIS Humanitarian Forum and Fair, held on June 14 with the theme "Here I Am, Lord". Archbishop Julian Leow delivered the keynote, urging compassionate action in response to global crises. Cardinal William Goh of Singapore presided over the closing Mass.

The forum, structured around the themes of Heart, Head, and Hands, featured reflections, strategic insights, and real-life testimonies from humanitarian leaders across the region. Exhibits showcased outreach efforts and offered volunteer opportunities.

The visit concluded with a hands-on experience at Willing Hearts Soup Kitchen, which serves 10,000 meals daily to the underprivileged.

Invigorated by the experience, the AOHD delegation returned with renewed vision and practical insights to strengthen special needs inclusion, grassroots outreach, and inter-ministry collaboration within the Archdiocese.



The AOHD delegation and Archbishop Julian Leow with Cardinal William Goh.

Parents must lead in children's moral formation

PETALING JAYA: Parents hold the primary responsibility for the ethical and moral formation of their children and should not delegate this vital role to the Church or other institutions, said Fr Albert Tan, SJ, *pic*, director of Maranatha House of Prayer.

Speaking at the sixth session of the *Journeying as Pilgrims of Hope* series, Fr Albert presented insights from *Amoris Laetitia* (*The Joy of Love*), the late Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on love in the family. The event was organised by the Firm Foundation Ministry at the Church of St Francis Xavier, Petaling Jaya.

"A child's affective and ethical development is ultimately grounded in the experience that their parents can be trusted," Fr Albert quoted from *Amoris Laetitia*, emphasising the central role of parents in shaping their children's values and emotional wellbeing.

He highlighted that ethical formation is not limited to teaching right and wrong but also includes protecting children from harmful influences — particularly media content and excessive screen time. However, he cautioned against obsessive control, echoing Pope Francis' warning that "obsession is not education."

Instead, the Pope urged parents to help children grow in "freedom, maturity, overall discipline, and real autonomy." According to Fr Albert, this means guiding children to navigate challenges with a well-formed conscience and responsible use of freedom.

Pope Francis devoted an entire chapter of the 255-page exhortation to parenting, describing children as "the fruitfulness of marriage" and "living stones" that build up the family. The chapter covers topics such as discipline, sex education, the transmission of faith, and the importance of patient, realistic parenting.

Fr Albert praised the Pope's "remarkable practical wisdom," especially in advocating for small, gradual steps in child development



that are "understood, accepted and appreciated."

"Family life," he noted, "is an educational context in itself," with Pope Francis describing it as a place of "shepherding in mercy," where parents learn to contemplate their children with the eyes of God and recognise their dignity.

Fr Albert also drew attention to the Pope's encouragement for families to journey together in love, despite imperfections. "No family drops down from heaven perfectly formed," he quoted. "All of us are called to keep striving towards something greater than ourselves and our families."

In dealing with those who struggle to fully live out God's law, Pope Francis proposed the *via caritatis*, the way of charity, as a pastoral path. Fr Albert highlighted the Pope's call to embrace people in their reality, rather than applying rigid ideals. "A small step, in the midst of great human limitations, can be more pleasing to God than a life which appears outwardly in order," he said.

Fr Albert clarified that an apostolic exhortation, unlike an encyclical, is not legislative but pastoral, meant to encourage reflection and inspire action. He described *The Joy of Love* as "a compassionate, gentle, and caring pastoral letter" that speaks to families from the ground up, rooted in real-life experiences rather than abstract ideals.

He strongly recommended that families read *Amoris Laetitia*, calling it a source of hope and guidance for modern family life. "The greatest benefit will come if each part is read patiently and carefully," he advised. The document is available on the Vatican website: www.vatican.va.

The *Journeying as Pilgrims of Hope* series explores Pope Francis' major encyclicals and documents, providing Catholics with deeper pastoral and theological understanding. **Bob Ho**

Celebrating 85 years of faith and service

SEMARANG, Indonesia: In an atmosphere of great joy, over 20,000 faithful from 109 parishes gathered in the Jatidiri stadium to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Semarang, an important reality within the Indonesian Catholic Church.

The celebration, which took place recently, was attended by Julius Darmaatmadja SJ and Ignatius Suharyo, cardinals and both former bishops of the archdiocese, together with nine prelates from the same ecclesiastical territory. A visible sign of the extraordinary pastoral and spiritual legacy that this community has been able to build over time.

In his homily, Cardinal Ignatius Suharyo, now at the head of the Archdiocese of Jakarta, recalled the decisive contribution of Semarang to the life of the Church in Indonesia and to the country's path towards independence. It was in fact Msgr Albertus Soegijapranata, the first Indonesian bishop of the diocese and a close collaborator of President Sukarno, who promoted diplomatic relations with the Holy See. The Vatican was among the first states to officially recognise the independence of Indonesia, proclaimed on August 17, 1945.

Cardinal Suharyo also praised some ini-



Cardinal and bishops with thousands of faithful at the Jatidiri stadium.

tiatives born in Semarang and then spread to all 38 Indonesian dioceses, including: the Lenten charitable action born in 1968, the pioneering role of the women's association WKRI founded in 1924 in Yogyakarta, and the custom of bringing children to the altar to receive the blessing, started in the parish of Wedi and now spread throughout the

country. "For all these inspired and generous initiatives," said the cardinal, "I want to say a big thank you to this archdiocese."

The growth of the Church in Semarang was supported by a lively work of catechesis, started at the beginning of the twentieth century by lay people like Barnabas Sarikrama, the first baptised in 1904, and

carried forward thanks to the support of Jesuit missionaries like Fr Van Lith. That first generation of baptised people then became the beating heart of an intense evangelisation activity in the regions of Central Java.

The Archbishop of Semarang, Mgr Robertus Rubiyatmoko, stressed the importance of a Church that is "inclusive, inspiring and present" for society: "We are called to be 100 per cent Catholic and 100 per cent Indonesian," he said. "The Church must be a blessing not only for Catholics, but for the entire nation." Concepts shared by the President of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, Mgr Antonius Subianto Bunjamin, and the Mayor of Semarang, Dr Agustina Wilujeng, who described the city as "warm as a parish courtyard and open as a sanctuary for pilgrims."

The Archdiocese of Semarang is home to two of the most influential seminaries in the country: the minor St Peter Canisius of Mertoyudan and the major St Paul of Kentungan, where thousands of priests and numerous Indonesian bishops were formed. A tradition that today continues to generate vocations and service, with an eye always turned towards the mission and the common good. **Mathias Hariyadi, Asia News**

Catholic Clergy Confraternity defends seal of confession

WASHINGTON: The Confraternity of Catholic Clergy, representing over 500 Roman Catholic priests and deacons from the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom, has strongly defended the inviolability of the seal of confession in response to new civil laws threatening its sanctity. The group issued a formal statement on June 27, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, emphasizing that Church teaching allows for no exceptions to the absolute confidentiality of the sacrament.

Their statement follows the recent passage of Washington state's Senate Bill 5375, which requires clergy to report suspected child abuse learned during confession. Failure to comply could lead to up to 364 days in jail and a \$5,000 (RM21,120.00) fine. The confraternity argued that such laws violate religious liberty without enhancing child protection, citing foundational legal protections such as the US Constitution's First Amendment, the UK's Human Rights Act, and Australia's constitutional law.

The Church's position, rooted in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No. 1467) and Canon Law, holds that priests are strictly

bound to preserve the seal of confession—even under threat of imprisonment. Violating it results in automatic excommunication, which only the pope can lift. The confraternity also highlighted the impracticality of identifying anonymous penitents and noted the inconsistency of exempting professionals like doctors and therapists from similar mandatory reporting laws.

Washington's law has sparked significant legal and political backlash. The US Department of Justice (DOJ) quickly launched an investigation and filed a lawsuit on June 23, arguing that the law amounts to a direct assault on the Catholic Church's religious practices. Harmeet Dhillon, assistant attorney general for the DOJ's Civil Rights Division, described the bill as a "legislative attack" on a sacred and ancient rite. The DOJ argued that the free exercise of Catholicism cannot exist without the confidentiality of confession.

In addition, Washington's Catholic bishops, including Seattle Archbishop Paul Etienne and Spokane Bishop Thomas Daly, filed a separate federal lawsuit on May 29. They contend that the state's law violates both the First



Amendment and equal protection clauses, especially given the Church's own rigorous child protection policies, which they say exceed state standards.

Daly affirmed that clergy are prepared to face imprisonment rather than break the seal, declaring: "We must obey God rather than men." Orthodox Christian churches have joined the legal fight, filing their own lawsuit on June 16 and asserting similar religious obligations.

The confraternity's defense underscores a growing resistance among religious groups to what they view as governmental overreach into sacred practices. **CNA**

Sacred Heart month sees 40 priestly ordinations in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY: The Catholic Church in Vietnam is witnessing a strong growth in priestly vocations, with 40 new priests ordained nationwide in June 2025—a month traditionally dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and reserved for ordinations.

The ordinations were spread across key dioceses: six priests in Da Nang, thirteen in

Can Tho (Mekong Delta), and twenty-one in the Archdiocese of Ho Chi Minh City.

In Da Nang, a solemn ceremony was held on June 24 at Da Nang Cathedral, presided over by Archbishop Joseph Dang Duc Ngan of Hue, also Apostolic Administrator of Da Nang. He reminded the new priests that ordination marks the beginning of a lifelong

journey of growth in Christ: "The priesthood is a journey of daily growth... to fulfill the mission of God and the Church with joy and true love."

The Diocese of Can Tho followed on June 25 with the ordination of thirteen priests at Soc Trang Cathedral. Bishop Peter Le Tan Loi called on the faithful to accompany the newly ordained with prayer, encouraging them to remain "humble, holy, and dedicated to the flock."

On June 27, the Day of the Sanctification of the Priesthood, Ho Chi Minh City celebrated the largest group of ordinands. In his homily, Archbishop Joseph Nguyen Nang highlighted the human and spiritual role of the priest: "The priest is not a robot... he takes God's will seriously to transmit the Good News in every pastoral act." **Fides**



Caritas Bangladesh appoints first female regional director

MYMENSINGH: In a historic milestone for Caritas Bangladesh, Rozina Rongma has been appointed as the acting Regional Director of the Mymensingh Region, becoming the first woman to lead the regional office since its inception.



The formal handover ceremony took place on June 28 in the presence of senior Caritas officials and church leaders. The event was presided over by Daud Jibon Das, the newly appointed Executive Director of Caritas Bangladesh.

Holy Cross Bishop Ponon Paul Kubi of the Mymensingh Diocese, who served as chief guest, hailed the appointment as "a moment of pride and progress," noting its significance for advancing gender equity within faith-based organisations.

Rongma succeeds Apurbo Mrong, who led the region for over a decade and was recently promoted to Director of Programmes at Caritas Bangladesh. His tenure was widely praised for transformative community work in education, health, disaster preparedness, and livelihoods.

In her first remarks as director, Rongma emphasised the broader impact of her leadership: "This is more than a new chapter for me — it is a new chapter for all women in our organisation."

Caritas Bangladesh, a leading national humanitarian and development organisation, operates eight regional offices and is a member of the global Caritas Internationalis network. Rongma's appointment marks a significant step toward more inclusive leadership within the organisation. **Radio Veritas**

Is the United Nations in crisis?

Eighty years after the signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco in 1945, which promised to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and “maintain international peace and security,” questions about the effectiveness and relevance of the UN are more pressing than ever. Amid ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, Sudan, and Myanmar, and in light of Pope Leo XIV’s repeated calls for peace, *La Civiltà Cattolica* asked veteran UN diplomat and peace expert Sandro Calvani to assess the state of the UN in 2025.

A Resilient Vision with Enduring Support

Calvani opens with a hopeful assessment: the original vision of the UN is still widely embraced. In 1945, only 50 governments attended the founding conference, with little global public awareness. Today, 193 member states and more than 50 unrepresented peoples overwhelmingly support the Charter’s principles, with over 85 per cent of the world’s population reportedly endorsing its vision of peace, justice, and global cooperation.

Despite growing global complexity and persistent crises, Calvani emphasises the positive long-term balance of UN efforts. From 2.3 billion people in 1945 to 8.2 billion today, humanity has experienced major progress: reduction of extreme poverty (from over 50 per cent to 8.5 per cent), dramatic increases in life expectancy (from 47 to 73.2 years), expanded access to education and healthcare, and improved global interconnectivity.

Technological and economic globalisation, fuelled by UN-supported frameworks, has lowered the number of wars between states and fostered cross-border cooperation. Most importantly, Calvani highlights how UN initiatives have created 3,600 mandates, building sustainable paths in development, health, education, law, and the environment.

The Rise of “Piecemeal War” and Institutional Paralysis

Despite these advances, Calvani acknowledges a sharp deterioration in global peace and security in recent years. Instead of world wars, the modern era is marked by “piecemeal wars” — localised, interconnected conflicts that destabilise entire regions. Coined by the late Pope Francis, this concept captures the fractured yet persistent violence seen in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, Myanmar, and beyond.

According to the 2025 Global Risks Report, armed conflict between states now ranks as the top global risk — a significant rise from eighth place in 2024. While overall war-related deaths have decreased globally since the 1980s, the humanitarian impact of recent conflicts — especially on children — is immense. Additionally, the economic and political fallout contributes to deepening instability worldwide.

A major factor in the UN’s declining effectiveness is the paralysis of the Security Council, particularly due to vetoes by permanent members like the US and Russia. This has prevented decisive action in key conflict zones. The decline in peacekeeping missions — dropping from over 100,000 troops in 2016 to 68,000 in 2024 — also reflects a shrinking capacity to enforce peace.

However, Calvani is quick to remind us that UN interventions have successfully resolved dozens of major conflicts between 1950 and 2010 — from Korea and Cyprus to Mozambique and Kosovo. These examples show the UN can work — when member states respect and support its role.

Nationalism, Misinformation, and the Undermining of Multilateralism

Calvani identifies growing nationalism and unilateralism as key threats to the UN system. Many powerful countries today prioritise military buildup and national interest over international cooperation, bypassing both their own parliaments and international law. In 2023 alone, global military spending reached a staggering \$2.4 trillion, while contributions to health, development, and humanitarian aid declined.

Fueling this shift is misinformation — deliberately spread by aggressive leaders to stoke public fear and justify authoritarian measures. Social media further accelerates this erosion of public trust in institutions.

Calvani compares this phenomenon to disregarding rules in a soccer match: nations acting as if international law doesn’t apply to them, undermining referees (the UN), and blaming the system when chaos follows. To address this,



A Palestinian family receives food at a WFP distribution point in Nusierat camp, Gaza Strip, 25 January 2025. The distribution marks the first full rations in months due to increased aid and improved access following a ceasefire. (UN Photo/WFP)

he calls for an urgent rescue of international law, including parliamentary reinforcement and renewed disarmament — ideas once championed by figures like Gandhi but sidelined during the Cold War.

Reforming the UN: A Question of Political Will

Calvani insists that reforming the UN is both possible and necessary, but it requires political courage and popular support. Previous proposals — such as those discussed in *La Civiltà Cattolica* — already have significant consensus. However, implementation has been blocked by lack of political will.

He suggests a globally elected parliamentary assembly could enhance legitimacy, foster dialogue, and reduce national selfishness. As with any shared structure — like an apartment building — the system only works when members uphold responsibilities, not when they default or scapegoat others.

Trust, Effectiveness, and the Role of International Institutions

Responding to growing public scepticism toward global bodies such as the ICC, WHO, UNRWA, and even the European Union, Calvani defends these institutions against what he sees as largely unfounded criticisms. Contrary to popular belief, the UN’s total annual spending is lower than that of the NYPD and represents less than 2 per cent of global military expenditures.

Moreover, UN personnel undergo rigorous training, oversight, and transparency, and are not overpaid compared to national development agencies. Scandals involving UN bodies, though highly publicised, are rare relative to the scale of work undertaken by over 195,000 staff members globally.

Calvani urges a shift in perspective: instead of condemning international institutions wholesale due to isolated failures, the public should engage constructively — much like we don’t abandon a national health system because of a few malpractice cases.

Revitalising Multilateralism “From Below”

Pope Francis had called for a “multilateralism from below”, one not controlled by elite power structures but rooted in grassroots movements. Calvani wholeheartedly agrees, pointing to effective examples such as the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, Caritas, Sant’Egidio, and international youth movements.

He notes that many UN leaders began their journeys in such grassroots activism, including former conscientious objectors and youth educators. These individuals carry with them a deep commitment to common goods, which is vital for reshaping international cooperation.

New multilateral frameworks — like BRICS, ASEAN, the African Union, and the Group of 77 — should not be seen as rivals to the UN, but as complementary efforts that can enhance its mission. Their diversity, experiences, and innovations can inform and enrich global governance.

Asia’s Quiet Confidence in Multilateralism

Having spent 15 years living and working in Asia, Calvani offers a contrasting view of the region’s engagement with global governance. Unlike in the West, many Asian societies — shaped by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism — prioritise collective wellbeing over individual rights. This gives rise to a strong cultural inclination toward cooperation, negotiation, and shared responsibility.

Asian nations tend to criticise global institutions constructively and staff international roles with their best talent, with an eye toward enhancing both global standing and domestic honour. Public disinformation is more tightly regulated, and digital democracy is actively practiced through online surveys and transparent engagement with public opinion.

Calvani highlights how Asian negotiators frequently emerge as the most competent and trusted voices in global summits. In contrast to Western adversarial politics, Asia’s approach to international engagement is often marked by patience, diplomacy, and mutual respect.

The Role of the Church in Peacebuilding

In light of Pope Leo XIV’s call for peace and humanitarian law, Calvani emphasises the ongoing importance of the Catholic Church in promoting international dialogue and justice. The Holy See, with its moral authority and nonpartisan voice, continues to inspire governments and citizens alike.

Equally important is the engagement of local churches, bishops’ conferences, and Catholic lay movements like Catholic Action and the *Laudato Si’* movement. These groups play a crucial role in shaping public conscience and cultivating leadership grounded in peace, law, and multilateralism.

Ultimately, Calvani affirms Pope Leo XIV’s message: peace must be both disarmed and disarming. The first steps toward such peace must begin not with governments, but with each individual — through daily actions, informed participation, and a commitment to shared global wellbeing.

Conclusion

The UN, despite its challenges, remains a vital institution for global peace and cooperation. According to Sandro Calvani, its decline is not a result of failure, but of member states neglecting their shared responsibilities. The way forward lies in renewed multilateralism — from both above and below, grounded in respect for international law, reformed governance structures, and active public engagement.

If the UN is in crisis, it is a crisis of political will, not relevance. The tools to rebuild trust and capacity are already in our hands — if we choose to use them.

This AI-assisted summary is based on an interview with Sandro Calvani, co-author of “Protopia,” and former UN and Caritas official. To read the full interview, go to: <https://www.laciviltacattolica.com/is-the-united-nations-in-crisis/>

Bloom where you are planted

For a long time, I wrestled with God about where He had planted me. Some days it was bitter conflict and others, a quiet, painful pining. I was born in Tanzania, spent my childhood in Oman, and moved to Mumbai when I was 19. However, it was always my dream to live in America. But it never happened, and at 30, I painfully came to terms with it. Little did I know then that a new Heavenly directive would soon change my life. I got planted in Malaysia. In 2004, I married John and relocated to Kuala Lumpur.

Jeremiah 29:11: *‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’*

I knew the verse. And I believed God when He said it, but I never thought how prophetically it would apply to me. So in 2005, when I began working in KL, I mistakenly believed that a ‘hope and a future’ meant ‘a bed of roses and a pillow of jasmine’. But roses come with thorns. And while my marriage blossomed, the mundanities of life vexed me. I had to adjust to the responsibility of owning, running, and maintaining a home. You see, as one of two daughters of overprotective parents, I’d never had to manage a house financially. What I earned was solely mine. Now, I was neck-deep in it, and it was hard. “So, Lord? Half my salary has gone into paying the house instalment. Another part has gone into repairing a roof leak, and to be honest, there isn’t very much left. Is this your idea of prospering me?”, I grumbled. But I was here, and the seed was already planted.

In 2012, the house was finally paid off, and I thought it was time to rejoice. Not so fast, missy. That year, my mum fell quite ill and I almost died. To cut a long story short, I had major surgery in August and also lost my mum at the end of the year. I plunged into depression and began to get seriously miffed with God. *‘Are these Your plans?’ I have been crushed, depressed, sick and now You’ve taken Mum as well. How much more do I need to endure to feel blessed?’* I had also been feeling severely jaded in my career for a while. The stress was getting to me, and I quietly yearned to make a switch. I had never dared mention it to John because, let’s face it, responsible adults do not make drastic forays into an unknown financial future at the age of 40. But during my recovery from surgery, God’s direction became clear. End of 2012, our company, ‘Five & Two Foods’ was born, and that seed that was planted earlier was beginning to get watered.

The process of changing course in our 40s wasn’t without struggle. Those of you who have built a business from scratch know it’s challenging. Our savings vanished and frugality showed up uninvited. “Yes Lord? Prosper me, is it? I can’t even afford to go out to dinner!” I’m sure He guffawed at my myopia because what I didn’t perceive were the tiny blooms appearing. Our bottled food products were beginning to gain traction. We were a sold-out hit at every food bazaar we participated in, and unsolicited media

attention catapulted our little business.

Psalm 1:3: *That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither — whatever they do prospers.*

All was well until 2017. Then a drought hit and our orders dried up. The bush that was seeming to bloom was in serious danger of withering. Panic set in. We couldn’t see the way forward. “Come on Lord, you said we were like a tree planted at the water’s edge. We’re dying!” We used all our worldly wisdom but came up blank. Heavenly help came in the form of a friend who suggested that we switch to home catering. It was a change in course again, but we believed He had provided direction. Things were slow at first. Money was too tight to mention. And I was angry. My dreams of owning a charcuterie store, just like my dreams of America, crumbled. I trudged on, entirely unaware that rain had begun to fall softly, again.

One morning in 2022, I woke up, stumbled into the living room, coffee cup in hand, with the same question on my lips — “Lord, what am I doing here? I had dreams of stocking my products at Harrods but here I am, cooking for people. What sort of joke is this?” As I put my cup down, the words on my coaster hit me — **Bloom where you are planted.** Now I had placed innumerable cups of coffee on this coaster and

it had never gotten to me quite like this. Here I was, grumbling about where I was planted, not comprehending that God had been watering me right where I was. And through all my trials, I had been blooming!

I had left a 20-year career at the age of 39 and begun a home business at 40. Economic uncertainties, financial difficulties and a pandemic later, ‘Five & Two’ still blossomed, still provided food for families, and provided a comfortable living for us. I had been transformed into a deep-rooted shrub that was blooming where I was planted! Where I only saw mud, God saw fertile soil. The tears of disappointment I cried, God used as rain to water the seeds of prayer I was sowing. He showed me what a mighty God can do. And transformed me from a dour grumbler to a vibrant giver of praise.

Today, if you’re questioning your planting, yield to the Gardener and trust His plan. Be encouraged. Keep on sowing in prayer. He has a plan to prosper you, exactly where you are planted. Blessings!

Georgina is a Christian, Writer, Home Chef, Wife & Doggy Mama. She is of Indian origin and has lived in Tanzania, Muscat, Mumbai and is now based in Kuala Lumpur. She is an ex-advertising creative director, turned home chef and is the co-owner of Five & Two Foods, with her husband, John. In her spare time, she loves to travel, play the keyboard and craft.



When sadness engulfs me, do not delay Lord

I would like to share an experience that, while deeply personal, might resonate with others, at least in part. I hope it can provide some light for those moments when the path of discipleship grows dark and narrow, when it feels like there’s no light left to guide us.

At certain points in life, we all experience sharp halts — moments we didn’t see coming — because we didn’t realise that a tiny thread of life was slowly slipping away. Maybe a gentle calling was knocking at our door, but we didn’t hear it.

Often, we’re so busy, so distracted by a thousand things, that we forget ourselves. We convince ourselves that the right thing to do is to give ourselves to others and ignore our own needs.

And then one day, subtly, our joy fades. We lose the strength and courage to keep going. Meaning seems to vanish, and the apparent absence of God distorts everything.

Sadness consumes us. We’re caught in a loop of doubt and discouragement. We ask ourselves: Why is this happening? How did I get here?

In my case, that question surfaced as a cry from deep within I could no longer ignore: “I can’t go on living in this meaningless prison.” I kept telling myself it was just a passing crisis, but the reality ran deeper. My experience of God, built over many years, seemed to falter, and the certainty of God’s love was now hidden

behind a fear that threatened to take over.

Even in all that darkness, there was a glimpse of clarity. I trust in the God of life who says: “Do not be afraid. I am with you, no matter the circumstances.”

Our mission as women religious is to help others discover the divine presence in every moment of life.

That mission demands a constant search. When we search for God ourselves, we are also able to walk alongside others on their journey.

In times of depression, it is also necessary to allow ourselves to be accompanied — by our communities and by God’s Word. A dear friend and sister once recommended I read the passage of the prophet Elijah’s encounter with God on Mount Horeb. Elijah was fleeing what seemed like an unbearable situation (1 Kings 19).

He believed he had done God’s will, but even so, “he was filled with fear and fled for his life” from those who pursued him. He wandered into the desert, wishing only to die. “He lay down under a tree and fell

asleep.” But then an angel touched him and said: “Get up and eat, for you still have a long way to go” (1 Kings 19: 4-7).

Elijah rose, ate and drank, and set out on a journey to encounter God. When he reached Mount Horeb, he was

told the Lord would pass by. But God was not in

the strong wind, or

the earthquake, or

the fire. It

was in a gentle

whisper that

Elijah recognised

God’s presence.

He covered his

face, stepped out

of the grotto and

stood waiting.

This is where the

encounter happens

— because life is not only

about suffering and struggle. It’s

about once again encountering the God

who brings us back to life.

When we grow tired of struggling, of

trying to remain faithful, we may even

long for death — the kind of death that

shows up as spiritual sleep.

Like Elijah, I have searched for God in

clear signs and manifestations. But in this

time of darkness, I discovered that God’s

gentle breath was there — in the hidden

place — where I found myself.

Many times, we want to find God in

“
Like Elijah, I have searched for God in clear signs and manifestations. But in this time of darkness, I discovered that God’s gentle breath was there — in the hidden place — where I found myself.
”

big, undeniable moments — in the strong wind that we can feel and name. We look for experiences that shake the ground beneath us, signs that God is moving powerfully. We search for fire — for feeling, warmth, light — and even in the dramatic destruction of what we once held dear. But God does not show up in any of these violent phenomena.

And when we have had enough of struggling — when, like Elijah, we want to give into the desire to “fall asleep” — God touches us gently and says: “Get up and eat.”

At last, a whisper comes ...

You may not hear God’s voice clearly, but that soft breath refreshes and comforts you. It is there, in your darkness, waiting with you.

That’s where I find myself now.

Like Elijah, I want to cover my face in reverence and recognise Your presence with my whole being, Lord — and step out to wait for you, standing at the entrance of the grotto.

Do not delay, Lord. **Global Sisters Report**

Carmen Notario belongs to the Sisters for Christian Community and currently resides in Spain.





Evelyn Jock

Thirteen years after first sensing the call to the priesthood, Ricki Boy Hasim, a native of Kg Pisang, Jalan Sapi, Nangoh, was ordained a priest on June 8, 2025, at St Martin's Church, Telupid.

Fr Ricki, who will turn 33 on October 23, was ordained just six months after his diaconate ordination. During his time as a deacon, he was deeply committed to serving the youth in the St Mary's Cathedral Parish. He played an active role in various ministries, including Caritas — focused on charitable outreach — the Parish Youth Apostolate, Social Communications Ministry, Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), and other parish initiatives.

Fr Ricki's priestly ordination at his home parish, St Martin's Church in Telupid, was a joyful and grand celebration, witnessed by family, friends, fellow seminarians, priests, and parishioners from near and far. It was a moment of deep pride and gratitude for the local community, who have supported him throughout his journey. Following his ordination, Fr Ricki celebrated his first Mass at St Mary's Cathedral on June 28, in conjunction with the Solemnity of Sts Peter and Paul.

In his homily, Fr Ricki posed a thought-provoking question to the congregation:

Fr Ricki begins priestly journey with heart for youth and unity

"Who is Jesus to all of us?" He stressed that faith must be personal and deeply rooted — not merely inherited or shaped by culture. Drawing inspiration from Saints Peter and Paul, he urged the faithful to profess Christ boldly and live out their beliefs with conviction.

Fr Ricki challenged the community to take responsibility for safeguarding and passing on the faith to future generations. "But if we are Catholics who only come to Mass once a year," he asked, "how can we pass this faith on?"

Highlighting the theme of Unity in Diversity, he reminded parishioners that although the Church is made up of various ministries and communities, all must walk and work together in faith. He warned against division and called on the faithful to be responsible and unifying leaders — like Sts Peter and Paul — keeping the Body of Christ united in purpose and love.

Fr Ricki reminded the congregation that his ordination was not just a personal milestone, but a gift for the entire community. He urged the faithful to care for their priests, acknowledging that priests, too, face struggles and moments of weakness. "Priests make mistakes," he said. "When they lose hope, encourage them. When they're tired or burnt out, help them shine again — rekindle the candle in their hearts."

Speaking with honesty and vulnerability, he shared that priests often face challenges such

as loneliness, sadness, and even frustration. He reminded the community that priests are not called to be rulers, but humble servants of the people. Fr Ricki concluded by encouraging everyone to cherish and support priestly vocations, and to pray constantly for the bishops, priests, and seminarians entrusted with guiding the Church.

A thanksgiving potluck fellowship was held at the Parish Hall following the Mass, bringing

the community together in joy and gratitude. During the celebration, Fr Ricki once again encouraged everyone to keep the priests of the Sandakan Diocese in their prayers.

The following morning, on June 29, he celebrated Masses in Bahasa Malaysia at both St Mary's Cathedral and St Mark's Church, Mile 12. Fr Ricki will soon begin his new assignment as a newly ordained priest at Holy Trinity Church in Tawau.



Bishop Julius Dusin anointing the palms of Fr Ricki Boy with Chrism oil.

Four Capuchin brothers make perpetual profession

KENINGAU: On June 21, four Capuchin brothers from the Custody of Malaysia-Singapore made their perpetual profession to God at the Holy Family Pilgrimage Centre in Nulu Sosopon, Keningau. Brothers Tony Bingkuan, Randall Lee Ken Haw, Marthin Steven, and Peter Langgayang solemnly vowed to live lives of obedience, poverty, and chastity in a moving celebration witnessed by over 500 faithful from Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and beyond.

The sacred vows were received by their Custos, Friar Gilbert James, OFM Cap. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Bishop Cornelius Piong, while the homily was delivered by Friar Michael Raymond, OFM Cap.

In his homily, Friar Michael emphasised that the solemn vow is a profound act of

commitment, flowing from the grace of baptism and embodying fidelity to the Gospel. "The Eternal Vow is a complete surrender to God — not for worldly glory, but as a witness to a radical Christian life," he said. He encouraged the newly professed to remain humble and receptive to God's grace, especially in the face of future trials.

Addressing the brothers directly, he added, "O most beloved friars and sons forever blessed — dear brothers Tony, Randall, Marthin, and Peter. Great things you will promise, but greater yet have been promised you by Jesus Christ. You do it for Him—and all the rest of us will be His beneficiaries."

In his message to the assembly, Bishop Cornelius urged the faithful to see the profession as a powerful witness to the beauty of answering God's call.



The four Capuchin brothers professing their sacred vows.

"Let us keep these brothers in our prayers and inspire more young people to explore the Capuchin life — a path of service, humility, and love."

He also reflected on the significance of the location, "The name of this place—Holy Family—is no coincidence. It stands as a tribute to the family's role in the Church. From families arise leaders, servants, and religious."

Bishop Cornelius also extended his gratitude to the organisers and all who contributed to the success of the event.

Friar Gilbert, Custos of Malaysia-Singapore, called on the community to continue supporting religious vocations, "These brothers have chosen a path that is not easy. But the monastic life is a living testament to

God's unconditional love — made possible through total surrender to Christ."

He also expressed his deep appreciation to the Keningau diocese, Bishop Cornelius, local clergy, and lay faithful for their support and collaboration.

One of the newly professed brothers offered a heartfelt message of thanks, "We are here because of your prayers, the support of our families, and the witness of a faithful community. Please continue to pray for us — that we may remain faithful to this path of service, wherever we are sent."

He concluded by affirming that their vocation is a response to God's call, nurtured in the heart of the Church, family, and community.



Fr James Gilbert OFM Cap praying over the brothers as they lay prostrate on the floor.

The photograph Jesus never posed for

What if we had a photograph of Jesus? It's a question that has captivated some believers for decades.

Imagine scrolling through social media and finding a TikTok video of Jesus multiplying loaves of bread and fish.

For years, I thought it somewhat unfair that doubting Thomas could touch the holes in Jesus' hands and side to confirm that the Resurrection had indeed taken place.

The rest of us? We are told: "Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe."

Sometimes, it doesn't seem fair that Thomas got the proof he was seeking while we had to rely on faith alone.

If only we had at least a photograph, never mind a video, of the risen Jesus mingling with His shocked disciples. If only we had a photograph of the empty tomb.

Then again, why did God send Jesus into the world millennia before the invention of cameras?

But what if we do have something better than a photograph of Jesus as a living, breathing human being or even as the risen Jesus? What if we had an image captured at very moment of the Resurrection itself?

The Shroud of Turin has fascinated me since the 1980s. Back then, I managed to find a glossy book with photographs documenting the scientific study conducted by the Shroud of Turin Research Project (Sturp) in 1978. This team of leading scientists studied the shroud for 120 hours. They concluded that the image



Sunday Observer

ANIL NETTO

on the shroud is of a scourged, crucified man, with real bloodstains. But despite their modern equipment, they could not explain how the image was formed.

Then came the bombshell. In 1988, radiocarbon dating at three top laboratories suggested the shroud's fabric dated from 1260-1390 AD. Headlines declared the shroud an elaborate medieval forgery. Case closed.

But wait a minute. The story wasn't over. Deep down I

knew this would not be the last word on the subject. True enough, questions emerged about the carbon dating process.

Researchers later found the sampling was faulty. The tiny patches sent for dating had been taken from a polluted section that was repaired in the Middle Ages with more modern threads - not the original fabric. So the carbon dating was useless.

Recent studies using X-ray and blood analysis indicate a First Century origin. The blood flow patterns on the linen are consistent with the wounds inflicted from Roman flogging and crucifixion. Some estimate that Jesus would have received 600-700 wounds around His body.

The weave and the stitching show ancient West Asian characteristics dating back to the First Century. Even pollen on the linen point to plant species from the Jerusalem area.

The biggest puzzle remains: if the Shroud is fake, how did the image of the front and back of a grown man form on the shroud? No sceptic has answered this convincingly.

The images could not have been painted in the Middle Ages. Paint would have seeped through fabric's fibres. Yet examination reveals that the image exists only on the uppermost microscopic fibres of the linen surface - nothing deeper.

Even more compelling: the image only appears clearer in photographic negative. How could a medieval forger create a negative image centuries before cameras existed?

One theory particularly intrigues me. At the moment of the Resurrection, perhaps a powerful burst of energy was emitted from within Jesus' body as He came to life, creating the fine imprint on the cloth. This burst of energy could have imprinted three-dimensional data on the linen that would have been impossible with normal photography.

If true, what we are looking at is a snapshot of the Resurrection itself - something even the Apostles did not witness.

What seems almost as miraculous is how the shroud was preserved for centuries. It has survived long journeys, fires and wars. Even two world wars!

It is almost as if God preserved this artefact for an age of scientific cameras, 3-D modelling and artificial intelligence - to show us what Jesus looked like and more importantly, to prove to a sceptical world that His Resurrection actually occurred. Already we have AI videos of Jesus based on the image on the Shroud. Who know what else AI will be able to do to decode the image on the shroud in the future.

You do not have to believe in the shroud's authenticity to be Christian. After all, the Catholic Church itself has taken a cautious stance, given that the Shroud has become the

object of scientific study.

But if like Thomas, you have your doubts about the Resurrection, what then? If you can't feel the wounds of the risen Jesus, how do you strengthen your belief?

That's where the shroud - the most scientifically studied artefact in human history - comes in. What more compelling evidence could there be than an unexplained image showing not just a crucified man but a brutally tortured body complete with extensive wounds - at the moment of his resurrection?

So perhaps we do not have to be jealous of Thomas any longer. We have the miraculous image of a man on the shroud.

Whether we believe in the authenticity of the Shroud or not, the real test is our faith in the Resurrection. "Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believed."

Our faith should not end with the crucifixion or even the Resurrection. It is what we do armed with the knowledge that the forces of Empire and Death can never triumph over the Resurrection.

The power of the Risen Christ, through the Spirit, should move us to transform the world - one word, one action at a time.

This means helping our neighbour - whether migrant workers, widows, orphans, vulnerable people or strangers near and far who need assistance. This means building a new world from the bottom up while working for the common good.

Ultimately, that is the real test, the real evidence of the power of the Resurrection.

Anil Netto is a freelance writer and activist based in Penang. He believes we are all called to build the kingdom of God in this world.

Saints, syllables and surrender

If names had battlefields, my son's would have been the site of an epic standoff. Not a violent hair pulling one, but more like a tug-of-war (of egos) - with name definitions flying around, Google tabs multiplying, vetoes tossed like grenades, silent treatments traded over syllables and a baby shower that doubled as a search party for an identity. You see, my husband and I knew from the start that we wanted something biblical, something with meaning, something unique and something dignified yet personal. It needed to be anchored in Scripture, but still "us".

I was torn between Lucas, classic, dependable, one of the Gospel writers and Isaiah - majestic, poetic, with strong prophetic energy. My husband on the other hand, was dead set on Bartholomew Maximilian. Yes, all the names were thoroughly saint-approved. And were they beautiful? Absolutely! But were they us? Not quite. And so began the naming saga. Friends had opinions. Family threw in suggestions. At the baby shower, we literally made it a game, Name the Baby! Guests scribbled their suggestions on little cards, as if the right one would leap out glowing with approval. But it did not.

If I may, perhaps the Catholic Marriage Preparation Course curriculum could include a module titled, "How to Agree on a Baby Name Without Needing a Papal Conclave." Marriage prep talks about communication, finances, intimacy and prayer. All essential, but no one warns you about the potential tension, pressure and comedy of naming a child - trying to live up to family expectations, personal heroes, cultural traditions, and yes, maybe even a few secret Disney characters we might have tried to consider.

Anyways, as my due date approached and consensus evaded us, it was so stressful, I did the only thing left to do, I surrendered. Not to

my husband's list, but to God. "Lord, You know this child. You name him." And wouldn't you know it, God loves drama.

It was January 25th and as I was folding laundry, preparing for my baby's arrival (that was still a good month away, or so we thought), I noticed a trickle of water run down my leg. Confused, I paused. Did I have a leaky bladder or was this something more suspicious? Naturally, I messaged my family group chat. "Guys, this happened..." within seconds, my sisters, both seasoned mothers of two each, typed back "YOUR WATER BROKE!!"

Panic. Excitement. A call to my husband and we were on the way to the hospital. The most glaring problem wasn't the contractions (which hadn't started), nor the hospital logistics. It was that we STILL did not have a name!

The next morning arrived with no progress and so the doctors scheduled a C-section for 3.00pm - right at Holy Hour. How blessed, we thought, but little did we know divine intervention was also going to come knocking in the form of a phone call. At 2.30pm, just half an hour before I was wheeled into the operating theatre, a priest friend called to check in. He casually asked, "So, have you two decided on a name?" We sighed. "No, Father. Nothing yet." Then came the suggestion: "What about Josiah?" The room stilled.

Josiah. A good and righteous king. A child ruler who brought Israel back to God. A name that meant "God heals." It hit us like a holy lightning bolt. My husband and I looked at each other, and we just knew. As if affirming heaven's whisper, my husband began saying it aloud again and again: "Josiah... Josiah..." It had rhythm. It had weight. It had purpose.

Knowing this was a rare moment of perfect marital harmony, I took it upon myself to lock it in and quickly fill up the birth certificate

form as soon as I got it, before anyone, heavenly or otherwise, could or would change their mind.

Why all the fuss over just a name, you may ask? Well to me, a name is not just a name. I was named Tianne by my maternal grandfather, it was meant to be a combination of Titus (my dad) and Anne (my mum). A little bit unusual but I loved it because it was unique and to me it was meant to encapsulate just how special I am to my parents. One day however, (with technology at my fingertips) I decided to look if there was another meaning to my name beyond it being just a cute combo name, and I was stunned. It has been interpreted to mean "Lover of Christ." How beautiful is that? A name born out of the love of my parents, so personal, yet, still pointing upward toward Him. I really do love my name even more now. And yes, I know it is not just about loving the name, but living up to it too.

Even in Scripture, names are never just names. They are mission statements. Prophecies. Declarations. We see Abram become Abraham, the father of nations. We see Simon become Peter, the rock upon which the Church is built. We see Saul become Paul a fierce persecutor turned apostle.

There really is meaning to names. This is a truth I try to instill in my students as well. I often ask them, "Do you know what your name means?" Most stare at me blankly or say something like, "Uhh... I think it's a famous person?" So I give them homework to go ask their parents. Google it. Pray with it. Because our name carries more than sound, it carries identity.

As a parent, choosing a name becomes a sacred act of discernment. It calls for humility,

surrender, and a little creativity. In our case, it called for water breaking, a delayed labour and a priest with divine timing.

I write this for anyone who has ever hovered over a birth certificate or a baptismal or confirmation form with a pen that suddenly weighs a tonne, or for anyone who has argued, laughed and like me, maybe even cried over what to call the tiny miracle kicking inside. May you discover, just in time, the name that feels like a whispered blessing from God Himself and

may it forever remind you that He knows your child even better than you do. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5. This verse beautifully reminds us of God's intimate knowledge and purpose for each of us even before our birth. And for all of us who have our beautiful names already gifted to us, may we never forget that our names are not accidents or afterthoughts, but echoes of love, legacy and sometimes, divine intention. May we carry them with pride, wonder and purpose, knowing that in every syllable lies a part of our story and a glimpse of the One who named us first.

For my husband and I, it was when we stopped trying and let God speak, Josiah arrived - named, known, and loved. Turns out, the name we were searching for was also searching for us.

Tianne Ramona Pereira identifies first as a Catholic daughter, sister, wife and mother. From years in the media industry, she eventually started and continues to run her own businesses while teaching part-time. She has been actively serving in church for as far back as she can remember and is involved in various charities.



A Blessed Life

TIANNE PEREIRA



Fr Ron Rolheiser

Does God have a sense of humour

Does God have sense of humour? This may seem a frivolous or impious question, it's anything but that. It's an important question and a reverent one as well. Why? Because healthy humour and playful banter help bring joy, lightness of heart, and healthy perspective into our lives. Can we imagine all that wonderful lightness of heart having no connection to God?

Does God have a sense of humour? For sure! Without doubt! Jesus teaches that God is the author of all good things. Humour, playfulness, and healthy banter are good, healthy things. They can have their ultimate origin only in God.

Why are they good things? What positive role do they play in our lives?

Freud once suggested that sometimes we can understand things more clearly by looking at their opposites. What are the opposites of humour, playfulness, and banter? We see their opposite in three things: over-seriousness, needless irritation, and pomposity (none of which are healthy).

Consider this example: I have lived almost my entire adult life within a religious community of men, and by and large, it has been positive and life-giving. But among the (literally) hundreds of men with whom I have shared community over more than fifty years, there have sometimes been confreres who were over-serious and their presence in the community room or at table could sometimes effectively rob the room of joy.

I recall one such incident at table where someone shared a rather earthy joke (spicy, though not in bad taste). Most of us responded with a hearty laugh, but as soon as the laughter died down, one of our confreres, in a heavy and overly pious



tone, asked: *Would you tell a joke like that in front of the Blessed Sacrament?* That not only ended the laughter in the room and injected a certain heaviness into our gathering, it also effectively drained the oxygen out of the room.

Over-seriousness, while not a moral deficiency, can leave us too raw before the demands of family and community to which we can never perfectly measure up. On the other hand, playfulness, humour, and banter, when healthy, can provide some important "grease" for family and community life.

For example, when you join a religious congregation, you take a vow to live within a community (of men, in my case) for the rest of your life. Moreover, you don't get to choose with whom you get to live. You are simply assigned to a community which, invariably, will include some members whose temperament is very different from yours and with whom you would not normally choose to live.

Well, I have lived in this type of reli-

gious community for nearly sixty years and, with very few exceptions, it has been life-giving and enjoyable; mostly because I have been blessed nearly always to live in a community where part of our very ethos has been the daily exchange of humour, playfulness, and banter. Prayer and a common mission of course have been the main glue that held us together but humour, playfulness, and banter have been the grease that have kept petty tensions and the occupational hazard of pomposity at bay.

It's interesting to note that the classical Greek philosophers understood love as having six components: *Eros* – infatuation and attraction; *Mania* – obsession; *Asteismos* – playfulness and banter; *Storge* – care; *Philia* – friendship; and *Agape* – altruism. When we define love, we generally make room for most of those components, except *Asteismos*, playfulness and banter. We pay a price for that.

My Oblate novice master, a wonderful French-Canadian priest, once shared

with us (a group of young novices) a joke with a purpose. It runs this way: a family was planning the wedding of their daughter but were unable to afford a venue for the festivities after the church service. So, the priest made them an offer: "Why don't you use the entrance, the foyer, of the church? There's enough room for a reception. Bring in a cake and have your reception there." Things were fine, until the father of the bride asked the priest if they might bring liquor to the reception. The priest replied most emphatically, "Absolutely not! You may not have liquor in a church!" The father of the bride protested, "but Jesus drank wine at the wedding feast of Cana." To which the priest replied, "But not in front of the Blessed Sacrament!"

This joke can serve as a parable, cautioning us vis-à-vis stripping God of humour and playfulness.

God has a sense of humour, a sense of playfulness, and a talent for banter far beyond that of our best comedians. How could it be otherwise? Can you imagine spending eternity in heaven without laughter and playfulness? Can you imagine a God who is perfect love, but with whom you would be afraid to joke and banter? Is the last laugh before we die to be our last laugh forever? No. God has a sense of humour which will, without doubt, be for all of us a delightful surprise.

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While there are three main types or categories of prayer – vocal, meditative, and contemplative – there is a single battle for prayer. In every age, it's a challenging task for fallen humanity to humble itself, lift its head, and seek divine wisdom and assistance.

In short, prayer is not easy.

After describing the different types of prayer, the third chapter of part four of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, moves to article two and begins to explain the battle of prayer.

The use of the term "battle" might surprise some people. It can sound like an exaggeration, but it certainly is not. The task of dying to ourselves, surrendering to God, and seeking to truly pray to Him is an intense and constant battle. It is a profound – and sometimes anguishing – act of humility. And so, the "battle" language is as severe and uncomfortable as it is real and honest.

Prayer is not always a walk in the park. It oftentimes takes us to the mat of a spiritual wrestling match between ourselves and God. At times, we don't want to wrestle. We just want to do whatever we prefer. Overcoming this impulse take great effort. The *Catechism*

explains: "Prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort."

A help and motivation for prayer is the realisation that it is ultimately a response to God's love for us. Our response, therefore, must also be one of love, which involves the will. There are times when we will not want to pray. There are moments when we just want to figure things out on our own. There are situations in which we want to walk our own path.

As surprising as it can be, there are times and scenarios in which we would rather talk to ourselves than to God. We favour a self-monologue over a dialogue with God.

These inclinations show us our fallenness and the rough part of our nature that wants to reject divine assistance and do things our way. In our fallenness, however, we are called to dig deep, love selflessly, and turn to God in spite of ourselves.

In our efforts to pray, we are not alone. There are many who have gone before

us in faith who stand as models and exemplars of prayer. We see we can be inspired by them. We can also turn to them and ask their intercession. We can learn from their holy example.

As we look to these masters of the spiritual life, their holy lives emphasise the raw truth: Prayer is a struggle.

The *Catechism* teaches: "The great figures of prayer of the Old Covenant before Christ, as well as the Mother of God, the saints, and He Himself, all teach us this: prayer is a battle."

As we recognise the struggle of prayer, we can echo the question of the *Catechism*: Against whom are we battling? Yes, our fallen nature. But who else is involved? The *Catechism* explains: "Against whom? Against ourselves and against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn man away from prayer, away from union with God."

The Evil One is involved in our battle to pray. He is the master of pride and wants to nurture a similar spirit in each of us. It is pride to think that we do not need to pray. It is arrogance to presume that we

can figure out the things of life without divine grace and wisdom. And yet, such a wayward spirit can become very popular in contemporary Western culture.

We have to kick out the bad spirits, humble our sinful pride, and seek to pray. Divine wisdom tells us, "We pray as we live, because we live as we pray."

We do not live in one world and pray in another. The physical and spiritual dimensions of ourselves are always interacting, intersecting, and influencing each other.

Our call as believers compels us to follow his way of love and his way of prayer.

The *Catechism* teaches: "If we do not want to act habitually according to the Spirit of Christ, neither can we pray habitually in His name. The 'spiritual battle' of the Christian's new life is inseparable from the battle of prayer."

The Christian way of life is not easy, but it's worth it since it culminates in a union with God, joy in our hearts, and peace with those around us. **Fr Jeffrey F. Kirby, Crux**

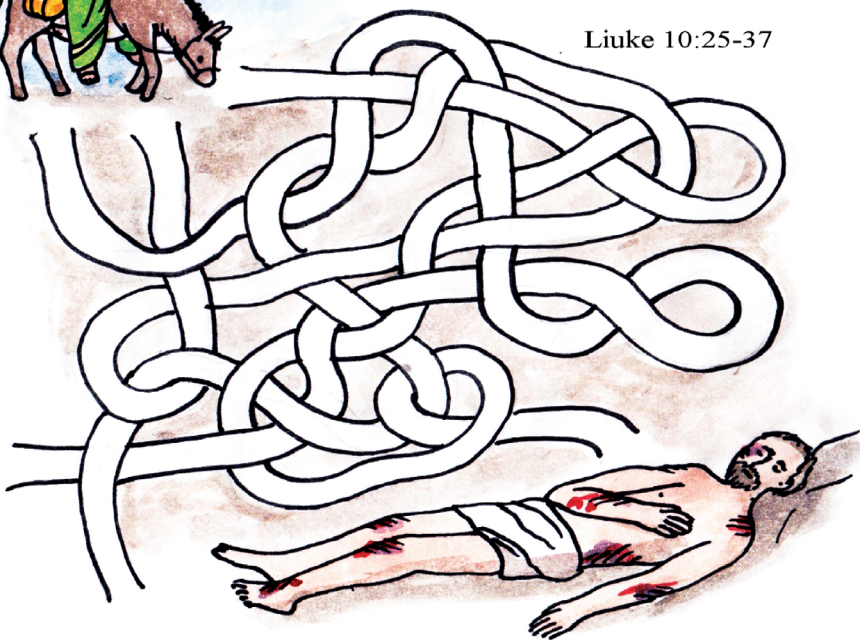
Prayer is not easy: It can be a 'battle'

Little Catholics' corner

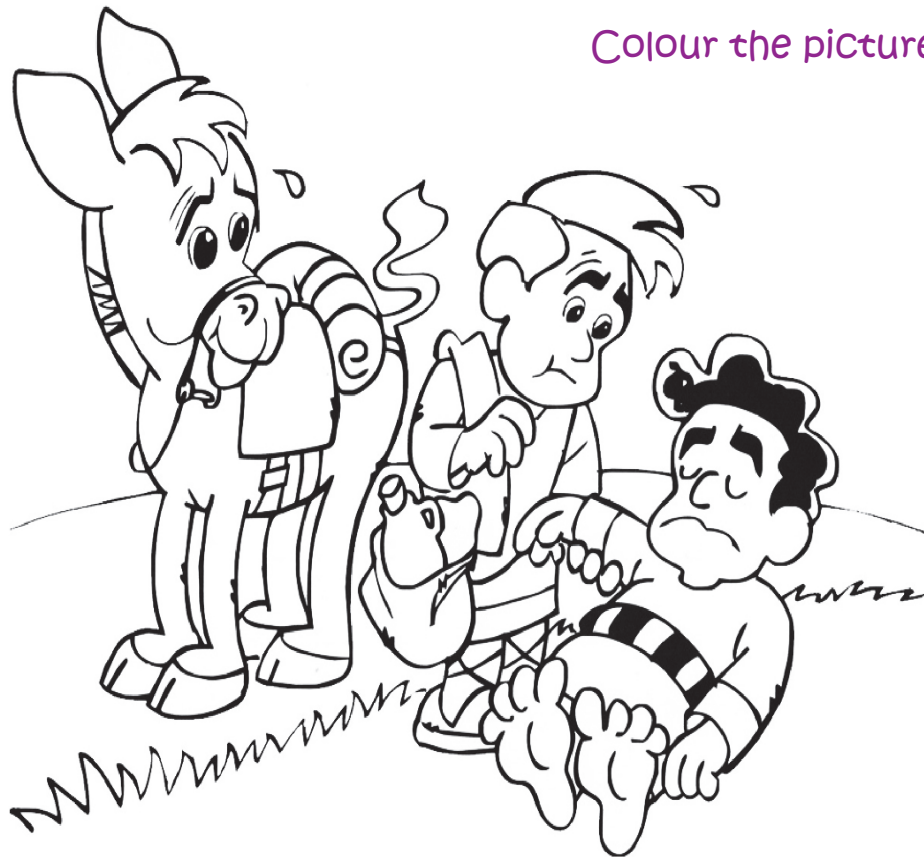


Which of the three paths would the good Samaritan take? Find out which one leads to the man who was robbed.

Liuke 10:25-37



Jesus told the Parable of the Good Samaritan to show the people what it means to love your neighbour after someone asked Him "Who is my neighbour?"



Colour the picture

Create the paragraph by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the story.

True or False? The Story of the Good Samaritan

Jesus told the people a parable to show them how to be a good neighbour. At that time the Samaritans were enemies of the Jews.

How well do you know the story?

See if you can figure out which of these are true and which are false.

1. In the parable, a man was walking from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he came across a group of people who had been robbed. True or False?
2. The robbers beat the man and took all he had. True or False?
3. A priest walked past the man and ignored him. True or False?
4. A Levite saw the man and left him some money. True or False?
5. A Samaritan saw the man, bandaged his wounds, and took him to an inn. True or False?
6. The Samaritan told the innkeeper that he had done his job and he didn't care what happened to the man. True or False?
7. In the parable, the Samaritan, who was normally the man's enemy, was his best neighbour. True or False?



Answers: 1.true 2.true 3.true 4.false 5.true 6.false 7.true

He answered, "Love the _____ your God with all your _____ and with all your _____ and with all your strength and with all your _____"; and, 'Love your neighbor as _____.' "You have answered _____," Jesus replied. "Do _____ and you will live."

this mind soul yourself heart correctly Lord

Dear children,

In today's Gospel reading, we learn that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart and soul and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

The most important thing you do in your life is loving God. If you really love God, then you will do what is right and love other people as well. The Samaritan in the story loved God, even though he didn't worship Him in the way that the Jews did.

But because he loved God, he wanted to please Him by being kind to his enemy.

If you don't love God, then you will not be able to make good decisions about other things

either.

You can't even love other people properly if you don't love God the most.

The priest and Levite in the parable probably cared more about themselves than about God.

That is why, when they saw their own countryman injured and lying by the roadside, they just walked past.

Is God the most important person in your life? Talk to Him every day and you will grow to love Him.

You can be a good neighbour to everyone by being a good friend of God.

Love
Aunty Eliz



PENANG: Twenty-nine young men from all three dioceses across Peninsular Malaysia participated in a vocation stay-in programme at College General Regional Major Seminary from June 13-15. The experience offered a valuable opportunity for those discerning a call to the priesthood to immerse themselves in seminary life and gain deeper insight into the diocesan vocation.

The programme began on Friday evening with Vespers, followed by dinner and an ice-breaking session led by the main organiser, Matthew Wee. The aspirants were then welcomed by Fr Ryan Innas Muthu, *pic*, Rector of College General, who introduced them to the seminary's formation process, centred around the four pillars: intellectual, spiritual, pastoral, and human. The day concluded with Compline at 10.30pm.



Saturday featured a full schedule of formation and fellowship. The day began at 6.00am with Lauds, guided meditation led by Fr Larry Tan, SJ., and the celebration of Mass. After breakfast, the aspirants joined seminarians in groups to carry out manual labour around the seminary grounds.

At 10.15am, the participants gathered in the auditorium for a session on vocation discernment conducted by Fr Cyril Mannayagam. He provided insight into the nature of the priesthood, methods of discerning a priestly vocation, and distinctions between diocesan and religious life. This was followed by small-group sharing sessions, where aspirants and seminarians exchanged their vocation stories.

In the afternoon, the aspirants took part in communal prayer, spiritual reading, and choir practice. At 4.30pm, a spirited foot-



Vocation stay-in at College General offers glimpse into seminary life

ball match on the seminary field offered a time for recreation and camaraderie. The evening continued with adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, Solemn Vespers, dinner, and a walking rosary around the seminary grounds. The day ended with a Q&A session, where aspirants posed questions to a panel comprising Fr Surain Durai Raj (Dean of Studies), and seminarians Lincoln Susah (2nd Year Philosophy), Daniel Anthony (1st Year Philosophy), and Marcus Leong (Initiation Year).

The final day began with Lauds at

6.30am, followed by meditation and Mass for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. After Mass, Fr Ryan and Matthew delivered concluding remarks, bringing the stay-in to a close over a final breakfast together.

The aspirants departed spiritually enriched and encouraged, carrying with them a deeper understanding of the priestly vocation and lasting memories that will continue to support them in their journey of discernment—whether in the near or distant future.

Testimonials

The College General Seminary stay-in program was such a well planned and organised experience. For me personally, it was such an eye opener because as a young man in discernment, there's just so much more that I have not thought about. But this stay-in has truly been a God-sent. I believe that I will be able to make a decision with the Lord's guidance. I've been trying to do it alone, but no, the brothers (seminarians) showed me that that way will never work. The decision must be made with God. He chooses you, not the other way around. I appreciate the hospitality that the brothers and Priests offered. Truly an amazing experience. Once again, thank you Brothers. **Joel Marcus Louis (Church of Christ the Light, Desa Jaya, Kepong – Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur)**

Although the stay-in was only for three days and two nights, the experience was profoundly meaningful and spiritually nourishing. As a 19-year-old attending my fifth vocation stay-in—and this time in an actual seminary environment—I recognise how unique and grace-filled this opportunity was. The rhythm of prayer, community life, and quiet reflection allowed me to listen more attentively to the gentle promptings of the Lord, echoing the words of young Samuel: "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening" (1 Sam 3:10). It also renewed my vision and appreciation for the diocesan priesthood, reminding me of the sacred call to be configured to Christ the High Priest in loving service to His Bride, the Church. I'm profoundly grateful to the priest formators and seminarians for their joyful witness and fraternity—and on a lighter note, I was glad to have scored a goal during the mini football game, lol! This stay-in has deepened my desire to say with faith and humility, "Here I am, Lord," and to continue discerning God's will with an open and obedient heart. **Cliff Luke Wong, (Church of St Theresa, Gajah Berang, Melaka – Diocese of Malacca-Johore)**



From Rules to Relationship My Theology of the Body Journey

I joined the Theology of the Body (TOB) course with questions about love, personal boundaries, and how to honour God through my body and relationships. It gave me a



Victoria Ling Ni Shang

new understanding and the right words to express the desires I have always carried within me — to love others rightly, and to be loved as a whole person: body, mind, and soul.

I grew up as a Methodist. From young, I was expected to be the “good girl” — polite, obedient, and chaste. While these values are important, I often suppressed my emotions in order to meet expectations. At that time, I did not fully understand the purpose behind the rules I was taught. Later, as I began to spend more time with God — through prayer, Scripture, and quiet reflection which brought me into a deeper relationship with Him.

In God’s perfect timing, I came across my teacher’s Instagram post about a TOB course focused on “Dating in Purity.” I felt drawn to it and signed up without hesitation.

One of the most important lessons I learned is that the human body has a “spousal meaning” — we are created to give ourselves sincerely to others in love. In a world that often encourages us to protect ourselves or seek love through use and control, this teaching reminded me that true love is not about taking. Instead, it is about giving — freely, totally, faithfully, and fruitfully, just as Christ gave Himself for us.

I have always desired marriage, but also carried some fears. I was unsure what marriage was meant to look like, besides staying chaste and avoiding “grey areas.” TOB taught me that love is not only about saying “no” to temptation, but about becoming the kind of person who is able to love fully and truthfully.

The course also changed how I view chastity. I used to think of it as a strict rule that I followed. Now, I see it as a joyful freedom — a way of loving with honesty and purpose. TOB helped me reflect on my past and encouraged me to grow forward — to love with patience, intention, and respect.

Through Scripture, Church teaching, and real-life stories, the course helped me connect my desire to love with God’s beautiful design for humanity. It gave me not only guidance on what to do, but a deeper understanding of why God’s plan leads to freedom and joy. I now see that the commandments are not limitations, but invitations to live more fully — to become more like Christ.

Most importantly, I have come to see that my body is not a barrier to holiness, but a sacred sign of God’s image. As a woman made in His likeness, I want to live in a way that reflects this truth — in how I see myself, how I relate to others, and how I love. I am truly grateful for this course.

To anyone who is searching for clarity in love, healing from wounds, or wondering what it means to love and be loved in truth — I wholeheartedly encourage you to attend a Theology of the Body course. It’s not just another course — it’s an invitation to deeper freedom, deeper purpose, and deeper love.

Klang District Confirmation Mass: ONE SPIRIT, ONE CHURCH, ONE CELEBRATION

Pauline Sinnapan

KLANG: On Saturday, 21 June, the churches of the Klang District came together in a joyful and prayerful celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. A total of 81 students were confirmed during a special combined Mass that brought together confirmands, families, catechists, and parishioners from across the district.

This year’s confirmands came from the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes (OLL), Church of St Anne, Church of the Holy Redeemer, and Church of Sts Peter and Paul, Banting.

The Confirmation Mass was presided over by Archbishop Julian Leow and joining him at the altar were the clergy from the four parishes — Fr Gregory Chan, Fr David Arulanantham, Fr Eugene Benedict, Fr Andrew Kooi, and Fr Gnana Selvam, each playing an integral role in both the liturgy and the months of preparation leading up to the celebration.

Archbishop Julian delivered his homily in English, offering spiritual guidance and encouragement to the newly confirmed. To ensure that the entire congregation could fully



Church of Our Lady of Lourdes confirmands

receive the message, the homily was translated into Tamil by Fr David, Bahasa Malaysia by Fr Selva and Mandarin by Fr Andrew.

This thoughtful inclusion of multiple languages reflected the vibrant cultural and linguistic diversity of the Klang Catholic community and was a powerful reminder that while our languages may differ, our faith unites us.

The combined Confirmation Mass also strengthened the bonds among the various parishes. It fostered a deep sense of unity among the confirmands, their teachers, parish teams, and communities, reminding all that we are one body in Christ.

For the confirmands, this was also a per-



sonal moment of encounter with the Holy Spirit — marking a step forward in their spiritual maturity. And yet, it was also a collective celebration, made more meaningful by the presence and prayers of a united and vibrant Church family.

As the anointing was conferred, these powerful words were spoken over each young person: “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Strengthened by the Spirit, and surrounded by the love of the community, these young Catholics now walk forward together as one Church, one people, and one in the mission of Christ.



Church of Sts Peter and Paul confirmands

Stella Maris choir clinches gold again at Sarawak choral festival

KUCHING: The Stella Maris Schools’ Children’s Choir Kuala Lumpur has struck gold once again, winning top honours in the Children’s Category at the 2025 Sarawak International Choral Festival and Symposium, held from June 13 to 15.

Under the skilful direction of choir conductor Helena Flavia Fernandez, the 28-member ensemble — comprising students from Stella Maris International School Damansara and Sekolah Rendah Stella Maris Ampang — wowed judges and audiences alike with their vibrant performances, rich harmonies, and musical precision.

Sharing the spotlight with overall category winner St Joseph’s Private Primary School, Kuching, the Stella Maris Choir delivered two crowd-pleasing numbers: *A Tribute to Two Nations* — a medley of “Tanah Pusaka” and “Arirang,” arranged by Fernandez, which showcased their vocal versatility across languages — and the dynamic gospel classic *Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho*, which received roaring applause.

This marks the choir’s second consecutive gold in the Children’s Category, a testament to their consistency, discipline, and the visionary leadership of Fernandez, who also heads the Music Department at



The Stella Maris Schools’ children’s choir with their winning number.

Stella Maris.

“Our young singers have shown incredible commitment and growth. It’s rewarding to see their joy and confidence blossom through music,” said Fernandez, praising the students’ dedication.

The choir’s Kuching trip wasn’t just about competition. They also performed in a **Friendship Concert** at The Spring Mall alongside other children’s choirs — including the internationally acclaimed *Kinderchor der Staatsoper Unter der Linden* from Berlin — fostering musical camaraderie and cultural exchange.

Adding depth to their experience, the students participated in a vocal workshop focused on enhancing singing techniques, and attended a masterclass by one of the festival’s esteemed adjudicators. These sessions left a profound impact on the budding choristers, broadening their artistic perspective.

This golden achievement not only highlights the ensemble’s musical excellence but also showcases the strength of collaboration between the two Stella Maris campuses. The choir returned home uplifted, united, and already gearing up for their next musical journey.

Pope Francis' 'Teacher of Mercy', Cardinal Dri, dies aged 98



File photo of Pope Francis with Cardinal Luis Pascual Dri. (Vatican News)

Cardinal Luis Pascual Dri, the Capuchin friar known for his tireless ministry in the confessional and his role as a spiritual model for Pope Francis, died on June 30 in Buenos Aires at the age of 98. His funeral was held on Wednesday, July 2, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii, where he had lived in retirement since 2007.

"He was a great one," Pope Francis once said of Dri, whom he elevated to the College of Cardinals in the 2023 Consistory. The Argentine Pope often cited him as an example of mercy, recalling how the friar would tell Jesus after long hours of confession: "Lord, forgive me for having forgiven too much. But it was You who gave me the bad example!"

Born in Federaci3n, Argentina, on April 17, 1927, and a Capuchin since 1945, Cardinal Dri came from a deeply religious family—eight of nine siblings entered religious life. His ministry included years as a missionary and spiritual guide, shaped by the examples of Padre Pio and Saint Leopold Mandic.

Though unable to attend the 2023 Consistory in Rome due to his health, he received the cardinal's biretta and

ring in Buenos Aires. He was assigned the title of Cardinal-Deacon of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria. Speaking to Vatican media at the time, he described the appointment not as a reward but as a "gesture of tenderness" from the Pope.

Even after receiving the red hat, Cardinal Dri continued his daily rhythm of confession and prayer. "I am as much a sinner as those who come to me," he often said, emphasising mercy rooted in personal humility and hours spent in prayer before the Tabernacle.

Pope Francis had publicly spoken of Dri on several occasions, including in his 2014 book *The Name of God is Mercy* and during meetings with priests and confessors. In 2017, he gave clergy in Rome a biography of the friar titled *Don't Be Afraid to Forgive*, highlighting Dri's example of pastoral compassion.

Reflecting on his life, Cardinal Dri once said: "I have no degrees, no titles. But life has taught me a lot. And having been born very poor, I feel called to always offer a word of mercy, help, and closeness. No one should leave thinking they were not understood or welcomed." **Vatican News**

Another tragedy at sea

A mother's life has been claimed, while her young child remains missing after the latest shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa, continuing the ongoing humanitarian crisis faced by migrants.

The tragedy struck once again as a migrant vessel capsized overnight, claiming lives and leaving others missing. The remaining eighty-seven passengers were left clinging for hope until a Tunisian fishing craft and Italian Coast Guard vessels drew them safely to the shore.

Aboard the fragile boat made out of metal, which the International Organisation for Migration spokesperson, Flavio Di Giacomo, called a "floating coffin", migrants had embarked from Tunisia. It has been reported that the boat disintegrated amid the rough seas, exposing once again the perishable dangers that are inherent in the pursuit of refuge.


This incident was followed by yet another distressing crossing, where an additional eighty migrants, among whom were children and expectant mothers, survived a separate voyage from Libya, arriving later on Lampedusa. Di Giacomo described their journey as "courageous", noting the fortitude that was shown by them amidst the turbulent conditions.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV in his address to the audience of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See said, "No one is exempted from striving to ensure respect for the dignity of every person, especially the most frail and vulnerable, from the unborn to the elderly, from the sick to the unemployed, citizens and immigrants alike". He called himself "descendant of immigrants" and called for the compassion and solidarity with displaced persons. **Janina Eddy, Vatican News**

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1st Anniversary
In Loving Memory of
Anne Seow Chai Hong
Departed on
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Our time together was so special. So were the memories that we made. And although you live in Heaven now. Those memories never fade. We miss you so much, Anne. Gone but never forgotten. We love you.

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So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

In Loving Memory of



Annie Chan Kit Yoong
From the Lord: 9.7.1962
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Dearly missed by Children Willie and Chi Ling, brothers, sister, cousins, relatives and friends.

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Bishops' conferences and councils appeal for ecological conversion

VATICAN: The regional bishops' conferences and councils from Asia, Africa, and Central and South America, in coordination with the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, have joined forces to appeal for climate justice and an ecological conversion across the world.

In light of the United Nations' climate change conference COP30, which will take place in Belém, Brazil, from November 10 to 21, 2025, these bodies have published a joint document titled "A call for climate justice and the common home: ecological conversion, transformation and resistance to false solutions", which was presented July 1, during a press conference at the Holy See Press Office. It was also shown to Pope Leo XIV earlier in the day. The document reiterates the Church's commitment to climate justice and calls nations and governments to action, inspired by the Pontiff's call to promote an integral ecology, and in line with Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary.

"Our message today is not diplomatic; it is eminently pastoral. It is a call to conscience in the face of a system that threatens to devour creation, as if the planet were just another commodity," said Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrão, Archbishop of Goa and Daman in India, and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). Alongside him at the press conference were Cardinal Jaime Spengler,



Pope Leo XIV receives the bishops and a copy of the document. (Vatican Media)

Archbishop of Porto Alegre (Brazil), President of the Brazilian Bishops' Conference (CNBB) and the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopal Council (CELAM); Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, Archbishop of Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) and President of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM); and Emlice Cuda, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

"As missionary apostles of an outgoing synodal Church, we will go to COP30 to build peace in the midst of this war in pieces against creation, where many are dying and will die even more if we do not act now," Cuda said. "We do so because, as Pope Leo XIV says, the Church 'always seeks to be close, especially to those who suffer'".

"I am raising a voice that is not mine alone, but that of the Amazonian peoples, of the martyrs of the land—we could say of the climate—and of the

riverside, indigenous, Afro-descendant, peasant and urban communities", Cardinal Spengler said in his speech, speaking from the perspective of Latin America. "There is an urgent need to become aware of the need for changes in lifestyle, production and consumption". He for example denounced the "masking" of economic interests under names such as "green capitalism" or "transition economy" or the opening of new oil wells in the Amazon and emphasized the Church rejects mechanisms such as the "financialisation of nature"

Similarly, Cardinal Ambongo spoke "in the name of the Churches of the African continent," which has been "impoverished by centuries of extractivism, slavery and exploitation". He highlighted how the race to exploit minerals is at the "origin of the proliferation of armed groups" and called for "an economy that is not based on the sacrifice of African populations to enrich others". "Africa wants to contribute to a

future of justice and peace for all mankind", he insisted. "We say enough is enough, enough of false solutions, enough of decisions taken without listening to those on the front line of climate collapse".

From the point of view of the Asian continent, Cardinal Ferrao explained that "millions of people are already living the devastating effects of climate change: typhoons, forced migration, loss of islands, pollution of rivers" while "false solutions are advancing: mega infrastructures, displacement for "clean" energy that does not respect human dignity, and soulless mining in the name of green batteries". "Rich countries ought to recognise and pay their ecological debt, without continuing to indebt the Global South," he said, adding that the Church wants to promote alternatives such as "educational programmes," "new economic pathways" or the "accompaniment of women and girls" who are often most affected.

Taking the floor spontaneously, Cardinal Michael Czerny emphasised the document's connection to Pope Francis' legacy: "Ten years ago, I wonder if there is anyone who could have imagined this press conference as a fulfillment and implementation of *Laudato Si'*". This is an extraordinary expression of what Pope Francis has called for and what Pope Leo is continuing to underline and call. I am grateful," he said. **Isabella H. de Carvalho, Vatican News**

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ROM 5:5

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