

# JOYFUL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST



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"I love to create artwork because it is a good way of expressing myself and materializing my thoughts. Every time I create an artwork, it is a personal experience."

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"I am not a professional photographer, but I love to take photos, especially photos of myself and the people that I love. As for me, the best thing about a picture is that it never changes, even when the people in it do."

## SINARAN 2020 EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Joy is not a theory and neither just a word. It is a physical manifestation of all of our being, the immense joy that cannot be expressed in just mere words; it has to be felt and radiated. Sorrow and joy truly personifies us because as disciples, we are not higher than anyone because we are human, we are followers of this God who colour and show us what it truly is. But yet we could not fathom this because we are too caught up with the other things in life that joy becomes a distant imagery.

As I reflected on this journey, there are two verses that attracted my attention, that is, "I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distress of my soul." (Ps31:7) and "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." (Jm1:2-3). Joy, in this time of the pandemic, takes on a challenging phase because everyone is searching for meaning when everyone is caught off-guard and felt lost in the situation when we can never do the normal things we always do, when we can't receive the Communion we are used to, when we are forced to prioritize the things in life, when suddenly we value our lives to the point of being selfish to survive.

Yet, in all these things, we are called to be thankful for the "little things" that we have always overlooked. After all, being disciples, we don't lose our faith, our hope and our love because God still loves us and he knows our pain. Being disciples, having what is truly important is what kept the early Christians and us, now in this time and space, focused on what joy in the Lord can lead us and our innermost desire fulfilled. As my team and I labored with love to produce this magazine, I truly hope that you, our honored readers, come to experience the glimmer of joy as you read this magazine. Thank you and continue to keep all of us at College General in your prayers.



Timothy Galisin
Editor

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF COLLEGE GENERAL JOYFUL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

When most of the external activities and functions of the priesthood such as liturgy, Sacraments, Mass, rituals, prayer meetings, formations, and retreats were taken away during the Movement Control Order (MCO) period and this was done by Law and by Civil Authorities outside the Church, the question that I reflected upon and observed in myself and among the priests in general which lasted to almost 4-5 months is, what was left for the priests to do? And my observations led me to 3 conclusions: -

- 1. The **PRESENCE** of the priests among the people in the parish community. The priests did not return to their families, homes or to be with their friends, but they remained in their parishes. That, I believe, is the gift of priestly presence even with the absence of people in church.
- 2. Priestly **AVAILABILITY**. With all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and restrictions in place, the priests were expected and challenged to find ways to reach out and minister to the poor, the sick, the dying and the departed, where they made themselves available and present for the funeral and burial rights of the people assigned to them even without a congregation.
- 3. The priests were encouraged and expected to celebrate mass personally and privately and pray the divine office on behalf of people assigned to them without a congregation. This brings out the role of INTERCESSOR AND MEDIATOR between God and God's people. Maybe this third point brings out the essence of the priesthood, where the priest exercises his duty as a priest in the community which by essence is intermediary and intercessory. This is his primary identity and responsibility. Like Christ, the Priest, when He is with God, represents the people fully and when He is with the people he represents God fully. Likewise, a priest represents the people a 100% in an inclusive way when he is with God.

Similarly, when he is with the people, he represents God, a 100%. This is an unusual place to be in and this brings out the fundamental essence of priestly identity, life and ministry as intercessor and mediator. This pandemic has brought this out in a real, personal and dramatic way. Though alone in the parish house, he should never feel isolated if he understands this identity, vocation and mission as intercessor and mediator.

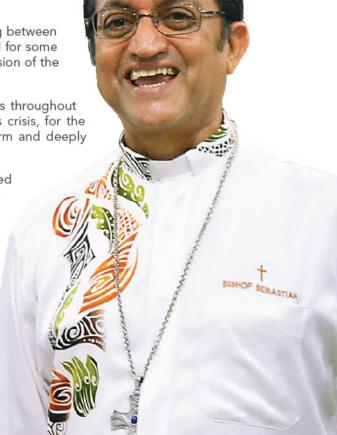
Therefore, a priest, is by vocation and mission standing between God and God's people. Specializations may be helpful for some but does not primarily constitute the vocation and mission of the priesthood.

I encourage you and challenge you to be courageous throughout your formation in the seminary, especially during this crisis, for the Malaysian Church needs priests who are first of all firm and deeply rooted in their identity and mission.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4: 18-19)

I assure you my constant prayers and blessings in your discernment journey throughout your formation.

RT. REV. SEBASTIAN FRANCIS, D.D.





# THE RECTOR OF COLLEGE GENERAL PHILOSOPHERS OF JOY

### **REV. FR. STANLEY ANTONI**

Saints are philosophers of joy. Whether they are martyrs or confessors, all of them manifest deep joy. In them we witness the concrete examples of the wisdom of joy. All of them confess openly that their knowledge, experience and sharing of joy is only a glimpse of what awaits them. Saints are convinced that joy is a divine prerogative.

### **SAINTS**

Saint are not freaks nor masochists. Saints are vulnerable heroes. It is their vulnerability that makes them heroes. Their heroism flows from their dependence on God. Such dependence on God forms them to be joyful. Even when they experience "hell" they are able to smile. Nothing can kill their joy. The secret of their joy is God. So, they are not anti-pleasure or anti contentment and satisfaction. It's just that they have a deeper, bigger and holistic understanding of pleasure and happiness. This is wisdom and this makes them joyful.

#### **WISDOM OF JOY**

Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Being aware of this fact, saints are open to the affirmative and transformative actions of the Holy Spirit - the Spirit of Truth, Love and Trust. This can be challenging as the Holy Spirit urges saints to integrate sanity and sanctity by living a life of integrity and integration.

Saints seek truth. Jesus is truth. The Spirit of Truth enables saints to experience the liberating truth of Jesus. Being open and docile to the truth enable saints not to be poisoned and enslaved by the lies of fake news, bad science, gossips, manipulative advertisements and even institutional propaganda. Saints urged by the Spirit will seek and obey truth at all costs. Obedience, for saints, is obedience to truth and not to what is popular, convenient or even "Office". Putting truth before anything else is wisdom. Such an understanding of truth makes saints joyfully obedient.

Saints love deeply. Jesus is love. The Spirit of Love enables saints to experience the healing love of Jesus. This is why saints are able to discern any form of simplification and reduction of love to sex. Sex is not just what we do. Sex is who we are. Saints are not anti sex. Saints are genuine sexual beings. In them, we witness what it means to be a human being. Knowing who they are enable saints to value sex as gift, good, beautiful and sacred. This is why they embrace chastity joyfully. This is wisdom.

Saints trust fully. Jesus is the divine providence. The Spirit of Trust convinces saints that Jesus is their ultimate treasure. Meaning, if they have Jesus, they end up having everything. A kind of strong conviction that God will provide for their needs. This is why saints live a prudential simple life. A life that is free of all kinds of unnecessary hoarding, pomp, fear and anxieties. This is poverty. Poverty for saints, is not about money nor pauperism. Poverty for saints, is the ability to put first things first. Being contented with the essentials of life. For sure, such a simple life is joyful. This is wisdom.

The Holy Spirit enables saints to know Jesus the Wisdom, deeply. Such wisdom enables saints not to be swayed by the myths and empty ideologies that perceive obedience as weakness, chastity as absurd and poverty as a curse.

#### ZOMBIISM

Zombies are the opposite of saints. Yet zombies and zombiism are very much present and alive in our churches. There are such things as "Catholic zombies". These Catholics have stopped philosophising in their search for joy. Such Catholics are boring. They easily get tired in their pursuit of truth, they confine love to mere feelings and remain indifferent towards gross injustice. These Catholics are dead to the Holy Spirit while they are still alive. They have ceased to grow in integrity and have failed to embrace the integrating dynamism of the Spirit.

### **ASPIRING FOR WISDOM OF JOY**

College General is providentially called the College of Martyrs. We must continue to seek to grow in integrity and integration in our understanding of truth, love and trust. We must aspire to be philosophers of joy. Only then will we be able to radiate the joy of obedience, chastity and poverty. Like the saints, each one of us must acknowledge our own vulnerabilities and the vulnerability of the institution. If not, we will end up being zombies. These zombies are real. Hopefully we will not end up being one.

As priests and seminarians, like it or not, we are called to demonstrate in a powerful manner the radicalism of truth, love and trust in Jesus. The kind of life that radiates joy of the Holy Spirit. So, let us aspire to be saints.



#### INTRODUCTION

In the midst of a perilous and chaotic global pandemic, Pope Francis, shell shocked Catholics to be joyful (April 17, 2020).

### **JOY: PARADOX**

Being joyful is iconic yet ironic; tantalizing all with it, and accompanying human physio-psychological affectivity yet so fleeting. Once we taste it the more we thirst, and the more it vanishes. Strange but true, though elusive yet most attainable and tangible.

It is all the more pronounced in our inexplicable fear that we are never fully good enough. Besides, our badly battered existence makes it all the more unrelenting. Thereby, affirming the popular perception that joy is only for the lucky few. This gulf in joy is also obvious in literature and sacred text.

Joy is elusive, simply because it cannot be won or bought; can't be manufactured or mass produced. It is neither in having good morals nor even, success, though distinct yet inseparable from pleasure and happiness. In that, pleasure comes essentially as sensation while happiness in moral goodness. Joy, in contrast, is always much more than happiness just as happiness is more than pleasure. The way of pleasure is in possession while happiness is in being morally up-right. Being joyful is essentially being human; fully alive, enthusiastic and wholesome. No wonder St. Thomas Aquinas says, "No man can live without joy".

#### BEING JOYFUL: STOP JOY-CHASING.

Being joyful is a live process rather than just having fun. It is encountered in human simple, child-like trust and delight in life itself. With a life of its own, as it were, joy is sheer delight in part-taking, appropriating and relishing every live moment, thereby making our implicit human affectivity obvious and more, efficacious. None the less, being joyful is as thorny as life itself but most transmittable.

This celebrated human affectivity was even well appreciated as early as in the time of Epicurus (341-270 BC), whose discourse is startling; "One cannot live in joy without living reasonably, nobly and justly, but conversely cannot lead a reasonable, noble and just life without living in joy, either. One cannot when these premises are missing".

### BEING GRATEFUL

The pre-requisite in being joyful is gratitude. Literally and figuratively, being grateful opens us up to the implanted seed of joy within own being. It is this potent portion that moves human beings into being fully human. Thus, stop chasing joy because it leads to further disappointment and emptiness. Instead, just be thankful for all that is precious surrounding us.



## BEING JOYFUL RATHER THAN HAVING JOY!

Gratitude unmasks our misconception of joy as a commodity, being less effective or just being lucky. Joy is no victory trophy. Instead, each of us needs to put in head, heart and hard work in realizing joy as part of our true worth.

The Bible expresses this strange human phenomenon with much dexterity; being a Christian is our source of joy. This seems to complicate matters but definitely puts joy not as an end product, like a fruit. Instead, it is as insignificant as a tiny seed, though off-putting yet it expresses joy best. In that its potency and life within us cannot be tarnished even in our difficult and hostile environment.

Each of us, without exception, needs to devote appropriate effort to nurture joy. The reality is, not to be experimental, but to be encountered and treasured. This is all the more efficacious in that the source of joy is Christ himself; "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).

Joy within us, the Bible poises it as the "Fruit" of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It's sufficed to say that all is God's initiative and providence. Being heir apparent and beneficiary, our most appropriate response is clear gratitude, ever thankfulness. Even, as a seed, we have no excuse not to be thankful while even being ravaged by our life circumstances. Not even the global pandemic without immunity can wipe away our God-given joy.

Being joyful, even when nothing can be done; what matters is how we make each other feel in our given circumstances. For without immunity, we are still with, are and for each other. Being joyful is just awesome.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Being joyful can swing the pendulum back to life's equilibrium. Even in the midst of our global pandemic, joy is more efficacious in making those around us feel treasured.

Thus, drop all the panic in multitasking and control. Slow down to be fully present and available; a kind gesture and word goes a long way. Get off the grid; put on the shoes of others to count and transmit blessings. Get down to live fully so that ordinary broken people affirm and heal other equally broken people. Being joyful brings wholeness into our distraught existence and atrophied humanity. Being joyful is most healing.



## JOYFUL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST



### **REV. FR. SIMON LABROOY**

Let me begin with one of my favourite verses in the Bible - LK 15:3-7.

"Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

And then Jesus carries on with the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15: 11-32. Of course, the context of this parable is in response to the observations and the complains of the scribes and the pharisees in Luke 15: 1-2.

"The tax collectors and sinners, however, were all crowding round to listen to him, and the Pharisees and scribes complained saying, 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

The only way we can experience the scriptures coming to life is when we find ourselves in the Word of God. Until we experience ourselves in the Word of God, it will just remain another literature material. When the Word of God comes to life in us in our daily experiences then we will experience its redeeming and transforming embrace. Love is what moves us. The meaning of life becomes obvious in an expression of love. There are seasons in our lives. From celebration to suffering, loss, failure and even death. That's the inevitable cycle of life that may seem absurd and futile. However, when we read the scriptures - the Word of God, it takes a totally different meaning. I have always maintained that joy is the fruit of love.

C.S. Lewis in his book entitled the "Four Loves" says "to love is to be vulnerable". "if we love" he says "we are vulnerable". As we go through the cycle of life, we will suffer. Sacrifice will be demanded if we love and if we don't, our lives will be empty and meaningless.

On the 4th of March, 1979, the then Pope John Paul II - one year as pope - released the encyclical called Redemptor Hominis (Redeemer of man). In paragraph 10 he writes:

"Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it".

Love is never love until we are willing to sacrifice; there is no love without a wound. Unless we are carrying a wound, there is no love. Unless we are willing to sacrifice, we have not experienced love. As a human person first, then Disciple of Joy and as a Catholic priest, am I meant to take more often than I am called to give? To take more often than to share? To forgive more often than to be forgiven? Where does love fit in here- into a meaningful enduring response? Only then will love really come to life.

St. Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 5 verses 7 and 8 speaks about God's love for us.

"You could hardly find anyone ready to die even for someone upright; though it is just possible that, for a really good person, someone might undertake to die. So, it is proof of God's own love for us, that Christ died for us while we were still sinners".

This is the love of God. This is Jesus Christ who is Love. We can never repay love. We don't have to repay love. Love is always a gift; it is not a trade. Love is the decision to be generous. In expressing that love, we find joy and fulfilment.

There is a fundamental spiritual concept known as Kenosis. Kenosis is a Greek word meaning emptiness. It simply means that the beginning of all spiritual journeys has to be the emptying of what is inside of me. **St. John of the Cross** says kenosis is the concept of the 'self-emptying' of one's own will and becoming entirely receptive to God and the divine will.

In the beginning of the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, he reminds us to pray for the gift of tears. To look deep into my life and own my sinfulness. Reflecting on life, and this particular gospel of the prodigal son in my life as a disciple of Jesus for 52 years and as a priest of Jesus for 22 years, the invitation here was to reflect over my life and regretfully remember my ingratitude and my failures. The sins that led me into darkness - when I failed standards of my life. The times when I disappointed not only others but myself. The times when I walked away and left a victim because of my selfishness. I was called to embrace my own humanity, my true self and not my false self. To see the real person hidden behind the mask- not the reputation nor the image.

That's the gift of tears, the Kenosis - the beginning of all spiritual journeys. When I found myself in that darkness, I was the prodigal son, praying that I can come back home where God will embrace me, heal me, encourage me to believe in myself again by the grace of God. In the place of neglect, and in the shadows of weakness praying God will welcome me back.

What a year 2020 has been thus far. The common expression of these times is "it's the New Normal".

Reflecting on this, I am wondering how future generation will remember 2020. I am wondering how history will record the Spirit and the Soul of our world, our country and the way we witness as disciples of Jesus Christ. Somehow, I believe that remembrance will be centred primarily on our wounds that have been caused by the experience of this extraordinary phenomenon of Covid 19 that changed our lives drastically.

The remembrance will be of an economy severely affected and burdened by restrictions of the virus, and the small businesses struggling to survive. These times will shout of a people who lost their jobs and the growing unemployment rate. These may be the way future generations will look back upon these times. There must be another way to understand all these.

Could it also be, when we look back at these times, and place ourselves within these experiences, we will remember the heroic, extraordinary and inspiring examples of front liners. We have seen doctors, nurses and medical personnel in the newspapers and on television worn out, fatigued and emotionally drained and how we felt for them. Until today, we are still conscious of those who are dying or have died because of this virus and we continue to pray for them and their families. This is the sign of the greatness of our society. Greatness comes from within the soul. We cannot measure greatness merely by the economy or by the stock market. We need to see that.

As disciples of Jesus Christ and as Church, how do we measure our souls? We will measure the soul of the Church - the People of God by the gospel values that are witnessed. The church has been great in prophetic courage. The many people who speak out and march for social justice, opening themselves up to judgement and criticism only to say we have a soul here, we have charity and we have faith inside of us, not something external but something deep inside of us.

The church isn't great because of her numbers or her size or her riches nor her influence. The Church is great because we take the Gospel of Jesus Christ and we put it into practice. It's a wonder, a beauty and a goodness we share as disciples of Jesus Christ - it's the power of Jesus Christ in us. We feed those who are hungry, we give hospitality to the stranger, we lift up those who are hopeless, we include those who feel left out and that's a Living Church. More and more as Church and as disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to take a second look at ourselves. The Gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us, comforts us and it might even disturb us.

Why, take a look at Luke chapter 4 verses 16 to 19 - the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus -

"He came to Nazara, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it is written: The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord".

This is the soul of the Church and the mandate of the Word of God.

Where the Gospel is absent, we find the absence of values. We will be led by greed, by selfishness and by sinfulness. Sin, therefore, is not merely breaking a commandment but more so breaking a relationship. Betrayal, lying, cheating, violence, usurping and gossip are all offences against the Word of God and the gospel values. It's an offence against relationships, against love and against joy.

The joyful disciple of Jesus should be reborn into the kindness, graciousness and understanding. From darkness to new life. The journey begins with the courage to claim our dysfunction. To acknowledge our foolishness. We cannot but deal with all this dysfunction. The Joyful disciple acknowledges the call to change. **St. John Henry Newman** says "**To live is to change, and to change often is to become more perfect**".

## THE JOY OF TEACHING



## A LECTURER'S JOY

### **EDWIN JOHNSON**

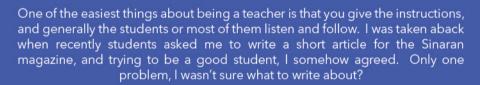
In essence what I have experienced as a Lecturer in Speech Training is the joy of giving - passing on to a group of fine young men my God-given talent in the area of articulate speaking as they discern and prepare themselves for a lifetime of giving in service to others. More specifically, my joy in journeying with the seminarians of the College General these last eleven years has been to witness to their:

- rising to the challenge of facing their fears, inhibitions and anxieties in speaking before an audience.
- applying the techniques of articulate speaking with determination and
- transformation and growth through discovering their potential to speak with confidence, clarity and conviction with constant practice.

I am blessed, privileged and grateful to participate in their lives and be their companion on the journey.

## WORKING AT IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

### **ANNE HEAH**



I didn't work as a teacher before coming to Penang from Ireland many years ago, although I did qualify as one. Since then, I have done a fair amount of teaching, from proficiency levels such as IELTS and MUET, pre-university general English exams such as First Certificate in English and Certificate in Advanced English and study skills, to writing skills for nursing and remedial English for seminarians.

I appreciate how difficult and demanding it can be to learn a second or third language when you can already function well in another language, usually your own, or other languages. However, I also appreciate how important English is for those who need to interact in that language.

We are told that society judges a person within a matter of seconds as to the level and degree of their intelligence based on how well or poorly they communicate. The person who is a good orator is judged as being smart and intelligent regardless of his mental capacity. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true, in that a person's mental acuity is often at stake because of his poor linguistic skills. Making the right impression is, therefore, always important!



## THE JOY OF TEACHING

## 我们是无法了解天主所做安排, 我们只有全心全意相信祂

MICHAEL CHAN SHEAU PING 曾小平

去年从教学生涯退休后从来没想过会再次投入另一类教学当中。从1982年自师范学院毕业后,我开始在小学执教,1994年在中学执教;2000年又开始另一个领域那就是在教育局负责 槟城州华文科的发展。第一个18年接触的都是小至一年级学生到中学高中三;接下来的18年接触的都是华文科老师,他们的华文科水平有些高中,有些是大专甚至主修华文的。接下来的18个月比较注重在行政管理。所接触的学生老师,我都能应付得绰绰有余。但是……



我得从2019年说起,那时刚刚退休不久,接到教会内的姐妹联络我太太说大修院 (General College)需要寻找华文老师。寻找华文老师是我的专长,因为我是曾经的18年华文科督学,全槟的华文老师不管还在执教的还是退休的,我都认识!绝对能够为大修院找到一个好的华文老师。当我去到大修院,负责的神父 (Rev. Fr Stanley Antoni) 在了解了我的身份后就说服我说,每个星期只2天,每天也只有1个小时。我又是教友,也是时候为主做点事的时候。我考虑了一阵子也就答应了。

第一天上课,问题出现了!人数是不多,最多也就6位! (比星期日要理班的学生还少)但是他们完全没有华文基础,连华人方言也掌握得不理想,不过他们的英语顶呱呱!以往我的学生都是有华文基础的,最少听得懂华语。现在这对我是新的挑战,主既然安排我在这儿,祂必定已经早已安排妥当。这已经不是第一次了,在我第一次远赴人生地不熟的彭亨执教时,祂安排得妥妥当当;第二次当我在教育局上任时(新的职位,无从请教他人)祂多次让我感觉"柳暗花明又一村"化解无数"窘境"。现在这些"未来的主的牧羊人",主将更加的照顾。

我现在除了教导学生认字,还教他们唱华语歌,圣歌,中华文化,中华思想,认识中国文学等等。并尝试以不同的体裁以引起他们对华文的兴趣。从这我又感觉到主所安排我之前的经历的目的是什么了。

我的这批学生其实都是非常自爱、聪明与勤劳的。他们的进度受到环境的限制,如果把他们送到台湾、中国、甚者有讲华语的环境如华文小学,我相信他们的华文会一日千里。



### குருத்துவக் கல்லூரியில் ஒரு மகிழ்ச்சிப் பயணம்

குருத்துவக் கல்லூரியில் தமிழ்மொழிக் கல்வி வழங்குவதற்கு எனக்கு வாய்ப்பினை வழங்கிய இறைவனுக்கு முதலில் என் மனமார்ந்த நன்றியினைச் சமர்ப்பிக்கின்றேன்.

பள்ளி மாணவர்களுக்கு போதிக்கும் போது மனதில் பயம் இருக்காது. ஜாலியாக அவர்களுக்கு போதிக்கலாம். ஆனால் குருத்துவ மாணவர்களுக்கு போதிக்கும் போது மனதில் ஒருவித பயமும் மரியாதையும் தோன்றும். நமக்குக் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட குறைவான நேரத்தில் அவர்களைச் சிறப்பான முறையில் வாசிக்கவும், பிழையின்றி எழுதவும் செய்யவேண்டும். இது ஒரு சவாலான காரியமாகும். ஆனால் தமிழ் மொழியில் எந்தவொரு அடிப்படையும் இல்லாத குரு மாணவர்கள் காட்டக் கூடிய ஆர்வமானது உண்மையிலேயே மிகவும் வரவேற்கத்தக்கது. இதுவே எனக்குப் பெரிய உந்து சக்தியாகவும் அமைகிறது.

குருத்துவக் கல்வியை முடித்தப் பிறகு தங்களுக்கு வழங்கப்படும் பங்குகளில் தமிழ் பேசும் மக்களுக்குத் தங்களது சேவையை வழங்கவிருக்கும் குரு மாணவர்கள் தடையின்றி பணியாற்ற தமிழ்மொழிக்கல்வி துணையாக இருக்கட்டும். குருத்துவ மாணவர்களுக்கு தமிழ்மொழிக் கல்வியினை வழங்குவதற்கு இந்த அரிய வாய்ப்பினை அளித்த இறைவனுக்கு துதியும் மாட்சியும் மகிமையும் உண்டாவதாக. நன்றி..

தமிழ்மொழி ஆசிரியர்

ஜசிந்தா லூர்து





## THE JOY OF TEACHING

## JOY OF TEACHING IN THE SEMINARY

KAREN S.M. MCINTYRE B.A., M.A. ( Music), University of Iowa, lowa City, U.S.A.

When I was approached to teach music in the Seminary, I did not hesitate, as I have been teaching music for about 20+ years to both children and adults. But the notion of teaching in a 'seminary' did make me feel a bit apprehensive as it is a religious institution and I did not know the expectations of the teacher as well as the students.

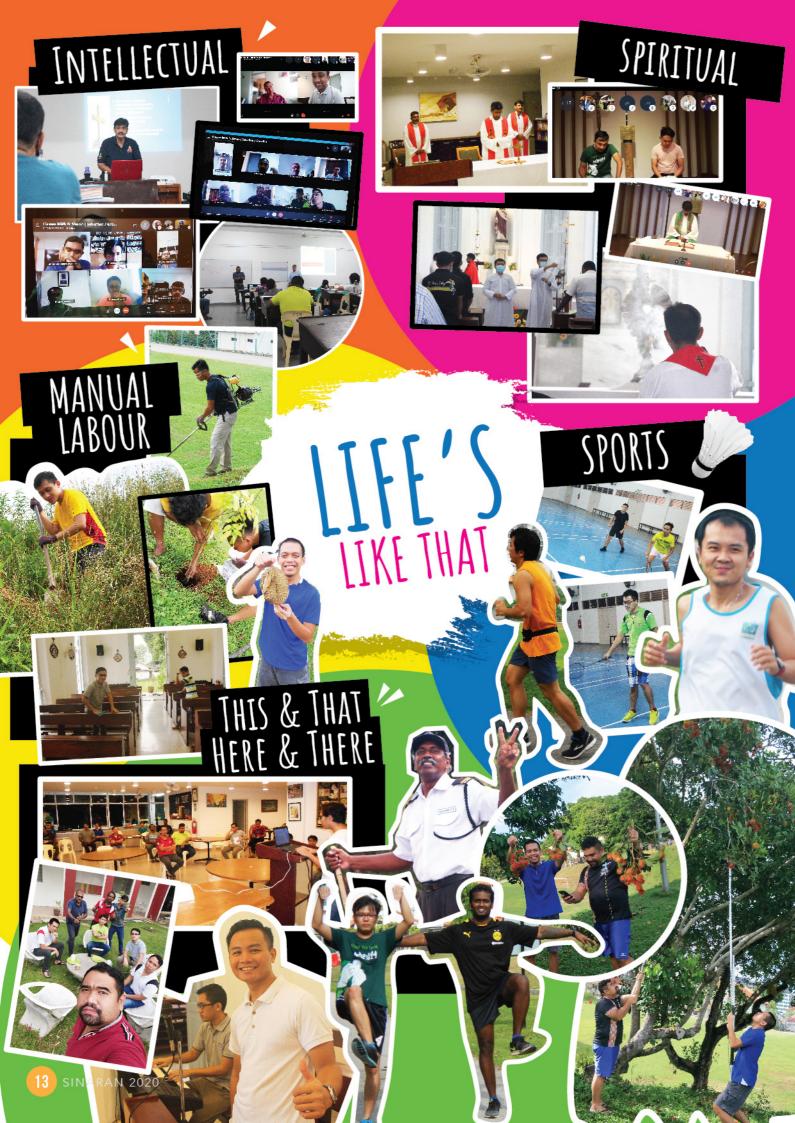
What I have found though is the experience of teaching in the seminary is something I shall always treasure. I was given creative license to manage the syllabus and since singing hymns and sacred songs was something I love to do during my free time, I shared my large collection of the songs with the brothers. Each singing session was carried out with enthusiasm from both parties. Singing with the correct techniques and skills was also emphasized.

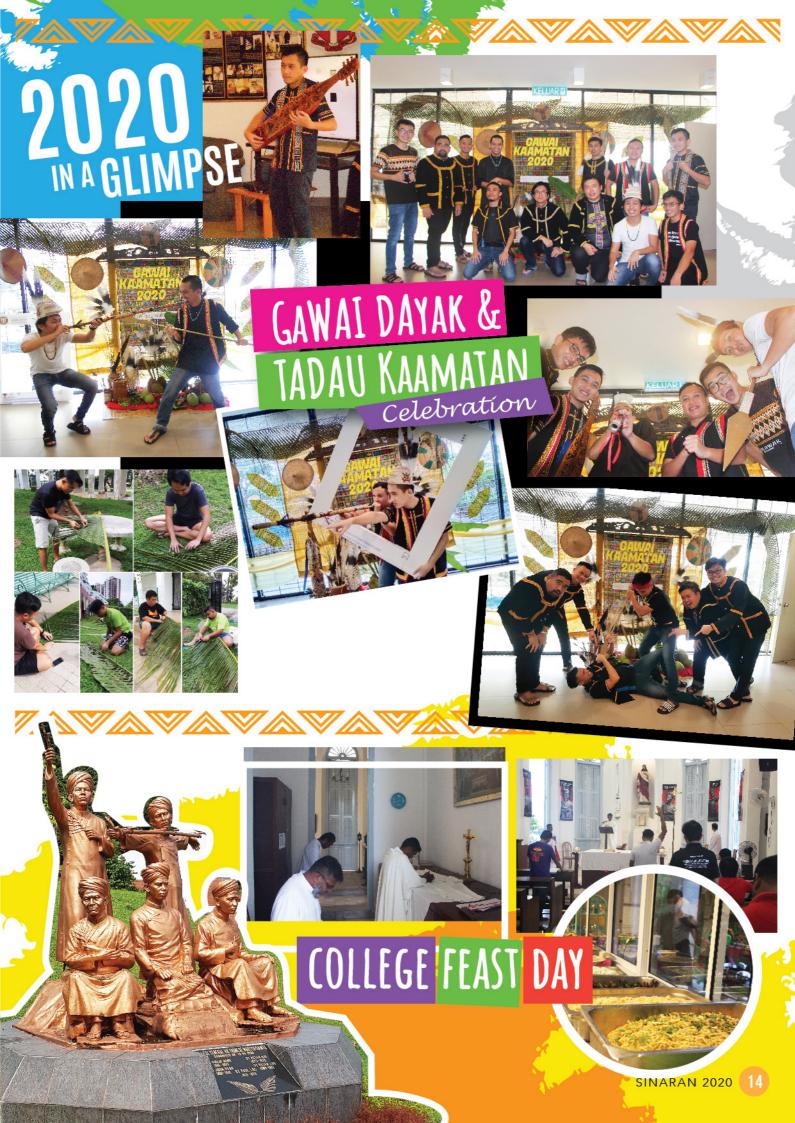
In 2020, music was being taught virtually, for a few months, and what an accomplishment it was. Rudiments of music theory (something most of them were not exposed to) was compulsory and was being learned in a virtual format. That was indeed an achievement as the brothers did well in the examinations. There was nothing that was impossible for them as they share their experiences and knowledge with each other. Their positive responses were an encouragement to me to try new teaching strategies and to encourage them to explore and to try new things based on traditional thoughts.

The brothers were very involved in whatever they have to learn/do. They were full of motivation, and enthusiasm. They have learnt to play the melody of a song on the keyboard and now they are composing the responses and even trying their hands at composing an entire psalm.

The benefits of being a teacher include the joy and pride of seeing your students learn and grow. I have seen the brothers grow in their music knowledge.













# NEWBIES ON THE BLOCK! TAK KENAL, MAKA TAK CINTA

Panggilan saya bermula semenjak dibangku sekolah ketika saya aktif dalam pelayanan sebagai pelayan altar, Legion of Mary dan sebagai pemimpin belia. Saya memulakan perjalanan panggilan pada tahun 2019 di rumah pembentukan Tahun Inisiasi di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah dan pada tahun 2020 saya meneruskan pengajian Tahun Falsafah di College General.

Setahun di rumah pembentukan memberikan saya suatu pengalaman yang tidak akan saya lupakan. Pelbagai aktiviti di rancang dengan paderi bersama seminarian dan dengan partisipasi semua, Pandemi covid19 bukanlah suatu halangan bagi kami meneruskan rutin harian sebagai seorang seminarian.

Mata pelajaran Falsafah menekankan kepada saya untuk mencari kebenaran dan membentuk diri saya agar lebih jujur dan berkomitmen dalam apa jua yang saya lakukan. Komuniti disini mengajar saya untuk menjadi diri sendiri dan pada masa yang sama memberikan saya suatu suasana berbeza bak kata pepatah, 'tak kenal maka tak cinta.' Saya belajar untuk keluar dari kepompong keselesaan saya dan memberi ruang kepada diri saya untuk menerima segala yang saya perolehi semasa pengajian saya di sini.



### **LORDKENNYLISTER P JAMES**

Falsafah Tahun Pertama Keuskupan Agung Kota Kinabalu

### THE JOURNEY BEGINS...

Dear Friends,

After completing my Aspirancy (two years) and Initiation Year in Kota Kinabalu, this year I have continued the priesthood formation here in College General to study philosophy. Actually, this is not my first time stepping into College General. I was here back in 2016 as a participant in the 'Stay in experience' for those who are aspiring to become a priest. During that time, I was working in Kuala Lumpur before applying to enter the Formation House (Aspirancy) for the diocesan priests in Kota Kinabalu in 2017, so this year, being away again from my home town and family is not a big problem for me. Moreover, I have studied and worked in Kuala Lumpur before, so the 'culture shock' syndrome has affected me less.

So far, College General is the only centre where Malaysian candidates for the Catholic priesthood can study philosophy. Therefore, here I meet people from different backgrounds, from all over Malaysia, and I feel this ambience is very unique in that each seminarian is able to share and learn from each other in various ways, including culture, shared interests and past experiences. However, it has taken me some time to adapt to the new academic setting here, and other non-academic activities. I would say that the daily schedule is quite packed and I have to discipline myself to find time for personal study and work. I believe that this rhythm is part of familiarisation for the priestly life. so that in the future, they can manage their own time for prayers, pastoral and other ministerial work. In College General, I find this idea very important because it trains the future priests to be independent in all aspects, without neglecting the community spirit.

Honestly, as I enter my fourth year, the journey that I have been on has not been that smooth. It does not mean that when I enter the seminary that all my struggles and burdens can be left outside the seminary's gates. Hence, without a Christ-centred life, it is impossible for me to be his disciple and to grow in wisdom and virtue.

Finally, I hope that College General will be part of my 'stepping-stones' to purify my intentions to be the Lord's servant. I am looking forward to next year's venture in, "The College of Martyrs".

Always with you in spirit & prayer.

### HELDY AMIN

1st Year Philosophy Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu.

## NEWBIES ON THE BLOCK!

### A CALL TO HUMILITY

17th Feb 2020 was the day I took my first step as a seminarian in the initiation year; the beginning of my journey towards discerning the call of Jesus towards priesthood. Though the journey here was full of curiosity, and I didn't know what I was getting into, I knew my first step towards formation has to begin somewhere and just as Meister Eckhart put it "So if God is to make anything in you or with you, you must first become nothing". So, here I was with nothing, starting life all over, leaving behind my old self and just falling into the arms of my creator and allowing myself to be moulded by HIM according to his purpose for which I was called. The common and most important word used in the seminary is formation, and I always reflect on this and constantly ask myself "Melvin, would you allow yourself to be formed?" and allowing myself to be formed is the only option in which Jesus can work in me.

Life in the seminary is much regimented, and getting adjusted to the daily routine which starts at 5am everyday took some time, but that's precisely what I am called to do in my formative year. Being given the role of a sacristan was something which I had already in my mind and it was not a surprise when the fathers of the college assigned me this task with two other brothers.

Besides that getting back to books was a big challenge in the beginning, but every time I shifted my attention to the crucifix just next to the white board in the class room, my attention was always drawn to Jesus and to the idea that "I am studying to be a victim" as what Bishop Fulton Sheen mentions in his book titled "The Priest Is Not His Own".

As we are facing the pandemic, things have taken a different turn; the calling was even more challenging, it seemed that this situation has questioned me on how I perceived the formation at this point of time. What is God preparing me for? Was this all God's making for me to be here at such a time as this? This and many other questions have prompted up every now and then, but rather than giving in to despair, I know with God's grace he wouldn't allow anything to happen without a purpose, and this was crucial so as to deepen and purify my intentions.

The seminary is a place for me to confront fully my weaknesses, faults and sins. Confronting these things mean dying to myself and putting my confidence in the saving power and mercy of Christ, and this is not an easy overnight task or painless undertaking. Just as the sun rises each day bringing about the endless opportunities so does life in the seminary open up every day to a new beginning, to start afresh and to improve myself and to be attentive to the inner voice that constantly reminds me of my identity in Chris. My journey here will not be fulfilled without the help of my formators who constantly guide and challenge me. I look forward with a heart full of anticipation, knowing I am in the safe hands of Jesus.

### **MELVIN DAWSON**

Initiation Year Diocese of Penang

### BENIH PEMBAHARUAN

Melangkah masuk ke suatu kehidupan baharu merupakan satu langkah yang sangat besar bagi saya. Saya secara peribadi saya bukanlah individu yang sukakan pembahruan. Penerimaan dan pershabatan di College General telah membantu dan memudahkan saya untuk menyesuaikan diri dalam norma kehidupan baharu terutamanya hidup berkomuniti

dalam pelbagai latar belakang. Komuniti yang berkongsi cinta kasih dalam perjalanan yang sama menempuhi rutin harian sebagai seorang seminari. Secara amnya kami dibentuk untuk terus bertumbuh dalam iman dan perhubungan serta penyembuhan banyak mengambil bahagian. Saling mengenali dengan lebih rapat memberi kami ruang untuk melihat keperluan setiap individu. Saya tidak nafikan pada awal pembentukkan sangat mencabar tetapi sekarang saya melihat itu satu berkat yang datang dari Tuhan. Di sini juga kami saling mengenali batas kemampuan setiap orang, kami selalu riang and sentiasa bersedia membantu satu sama lain. Terbuka kepada pembentukan memberi kami kekuatan luar biasa untuk terus melangkah bersama. Saya

percaya ini bukan hanya usaha kami tetapi campur tangan Tuhan merupakan asas kepada pembaharuan dan pembentukkan. Anugerah dan berkat Tuhan membuahkan hasil melalui setiap individu yang berkerja keras mempersiapkan kami untuk misi Tuhan. Syukur Tuhan, terima kasih kepada semua.

STEPHEN SUHAILI

Tahun Inisiasi Keuskupan Sibu





FORMATION AMIDST COVIDING

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the second academic semester of College General was postponed to September 2020. Instead of returning to CG in August, we seminarians were sent to different locations under the discretion of our respective Bishops to continue with our intellectual formation online. Here are some reflections.

## MY EXPERIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Ashley Chau**1st Year Philosphy, Diocese of Penang

The 'additional' time in my hometown that was enforced due to the worsening Covid-19 pandemic situation at the beginning of the month of August provided me with an unusual kind of experience in my seminary formation. While we were able to soften the blow of not being able to be physically present in College General by attending online classes, there were just simply no other ways to substitute the other equally important aspects of our priestly training such as our spiritual, pastoral and community formation.

I think the most important aspect of this whole experience is one of hope and it becomes an important reminder of my own vocation. The seminary provides us with valuable environment for growth but just because we are away from it does not mean that we are also 'away' from our growth as a person. For me, a seminarian is someone who strives to the best of his abilities to imitate Christ, in small and big things. This pandemic certainly managed to limit many things that we are able to accomplish, but that does not mean we should let it continue to immobilise us. I am now able to appreciate better the many small things that I 'can' achieve, such as the time I spent with my mother and family members, friends, and with the members of my community in our personal, recreational and communal work, but most importantly, in those silent moments with God. And I continue to nurture that hope that all of us, as a nation and God's people will come out stronger once this pandemic is over.

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison (2 Corinthians 4:17).

### RAINBOW IN ABNORMALITY!

JOEL & TARENCE Diocese of Miri

The pandemic and the new norms have taught us a lesson: it's not individual but a community. A community that takes care of each other, without being selfish. The spirituality of diocesean priesthood that "comes from the people and for the people", became alive at this time especially the time that we spent in our home parish, St. Joseph Cathedral, for our temporary online classes. Aside from online classes, we were encouraged to engage in pastoral work in our free time.

As we opened our hearts to the situation outside of our comfort zone and seminary, we were able to be reconciled with ourselves. The feelings of unfairness and dissatisfaction during the beginning of the lockdown slowly faded as we encountered people during our pastoral visits who were more unfortunate than us. These visits enabled us to see the real situation, an eye- opening to the yet undiscovered part of the effects of the pandemic. We learned our lesson in a hard way.

Truly God works in a way that we never understand, and He humbled both of us by His love.







**Ronfernandez** *Initiation Year, Diocese of Penang* 

"God is great, life is great" might sound cynical in the year 2020, considering so many unprecedented challenges that we are facing since the beginning of this year due to the COVID pandemic. Employees lost their source of income, travellers restrained from visiting places and devotees deprived access to their worship places to name a few despairs. As a seminarian, we too were affected by this pandemic. However, with the grace of God, our rector Fr Stanley, together with the other formators introduced various innovative ideas to beat the odds to continue with the formation and spiritual practices. We were allowed to continue our formation from respective home parishes for three weeks in

the beginning of the 2nd semester. My three weeks formation from my home parish have been a great experience. Am I being cynical here? Definitely not! I gained a lot of insights and precious experience in those three weeks.

First of all, being away from the formators and fellow seminarians, I learned to appreciate them better. I deeply missed their companionship and further reflections in the solitude revealed to me that each one of them with their "gifts and brokenness" are effective instruments to sanctify my vocation and purify my relationship skills. Besides that, I also had the opportunity to conduct RCIA classes to assist my parish priest. It was indeed a gratifying experience to be able to share my faith and love of Christ with the catechumens. On top of that, a visit to the migrant workers community in the rural palm oil plantation with the Vincent De Paul (VDP) society left a profound sense of humility and awe in my heart. I was humbled by the care and love shown by the VDP members who were willing to sacrifice their own comfort and wellbeing in order to reach out to the migrant workers community in the midst of the COVID pandemic. At the same time, I was also moved by the profound faith, hope and love demonstrated by the migrant workers who received us with smiles and genuine joy on their faces despite enduring so much struggles and uncertainty in this challenging time. God works in mysterious ways. I learnt to trust God better through their witness.

Hence, the 3 weeks formation away from the seminary was indeed a fruitful experience which deepen my relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

### God is Great, Thus Life is Great.

### Joseph Tan, Lincoln Lee, and Ashvin Xavier Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur

Three things we can say about our almost three weeks stay in the Parish of St Thomas, Kuantan; bonding, trusting and companionship. This short stay in Kuantan has given us a great opportunity to bond with each other. Most of our time in College General, Penang, we would either mix with our seminarian brothers from our own batch of studies or our own diocese. The experience of living together in Kuantan allowed us to know our personalities and learned how to live together. We enjoyed having meals, praying the Divine Office and attending daily Mass together each day without fail. A family that prays together, stays together, as the saying goes.

Besides, we have learned to put our trust in the Lord. Before the journey, we had a lot of questions, doubts and uncertainties on placing us in Kuantan and the worsening pandemic situations in the Northern states and Sarawak

CUREDA INCIDE ST. THUMAS

did not make us feel better either. To make things worse, two of our brothers fell ill upon reaching the parish but thank God they eventually recovered after taking their medications, rests and prayers. Looking back, we can only be grateful to the Lord for His providence that nothing worse has befallen us. We managed to continue with our academic formation via online classes and being enriched by this experience in many other ways.

Moreover, we enjoyed the companionship of the community in St Thomas as well as visiting priests and parishioners from other parishes too. We spent a lot of time with Fr Patrick Boudville, the parish priest of St Thomas who never failed to impart his valuable experiences and insights when he was a seminarian and presently as a priest. His words of wisdom will come in handy as we journeyed along this path of formation and discernment. We truly appreciate the generosity and the time of fellowships with the parishioners. Thank you for embracing us "with open hearts" as part of the Parish during the Recovery Phase of the Movement Control Order (RMCO)!



"The first and greatest victory is to conquer yourself; to be conquered by yourself is of all things most shameful and vile."

(Plato, Athenian Philosopher)

Shalom, readers! We, the Malacca-Johor Diocese seminarians, spent three joyful weeks in MAJODI Centre, Johor, last August.

First, we wish to express our utmost gratitude to Jesus Christ and to Bishop Bernard Paul and his staff for their remarkable hospitality, the good food, laughter and their unwavering support in accommodating us. We bonded well with the bishop, staff and with each other as well as the Mission Community School participants. We prayed, played sports, laughed and shared together.

Secondly, our stay in MAJODI was also a blessed time for us spiritually. We learned to be mindful of our inner movements as we reflected on our vocation and experiences in formation thus far. It was a time for healing, re-learning, and rediscovering our need to grow as seminarians. More time was made available for us to study, meditate and rest. The street-feeding event we helped out with was a humbling experience for us and served as a crucial wake-up call for us that Christ came for the least, the last and the lost.

Lastly, focusing our attention on positive experiences prevented us from giving in to thoughts and perceptions that are contrary to the experience of gratitude. Christ is always faithful and He loves all of us, me and you, very much.

"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, determines your destiny." (Aristotle, Greek Philosopher)











## WHO IS A JOYFUL DISCIPLE?

### INITIATION YEAR



One who knows deep down in his heart that he is loved unconditionally by 6od in spite of his brokenness.

- Ashvin Xavier

One who is a light to those who seek the truth.

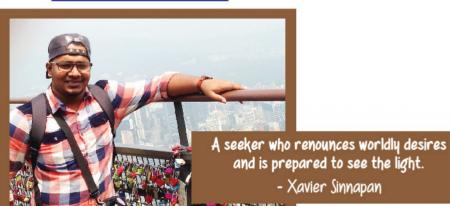
- Stephen Suhaili

One who gives himself totally to Christ with humility and love, and then experiences the fullness of joy in Him. -Lincoln Lewis



A joyful disciple is someone who is joyous about being able to be a follower of Christ.

- Melvin Dawson



He Who Trust 6od ls Faithful. -Ronfernandez



## HOW TO BE A JOYFUL DISCIPLE?

## PHILOSOPHY YEAR 1



Joy comes from within, as a result of aligning the center of our lives on Christ, who radiates His light unto others through us.

- Joseph Uvarajah



Do what pleases God, and not the world.

- Mark Calady



Living life to the fullest, enlightened by God's word.

- Heldy Amin



He fills me when I'm weak, fixes me when broken, assures me when afraid, only then I scrape the meaning of being a joyful

- Jerome Lingam



Do everything in love. (1 Corinthians 16:14)

- Lordkennylister



Keeping my eyes focused on Him who called me and be assured that He who called me will sustain me.

- Patrick Hilary



"Put all that you have and all that you are into Christ's loving hands and always care for one another."

- Cantona Cyril



To depend fully on God and learning to give without any expectations.

- Joseph Tan



By reflecting more on our own characters and gossiping less on someone else's.

- Joseph Wong



Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit (6al 5:22). A joyful disciple therefore, lives according to the Spirit, in everything that he does.

- Ashley Chau



One who is able to dialogue with his reason and faith in his time of suffering. And that consoles him deeply.

- Tarence Joe

## WHY IS JOY IMPORTANT IN DISCIPLESHIP?

PHILOSOPHY YEAR 2



Discipleship takes a goal.
The goal is not ours, but
the master's.
What's tying them two?
It's truth, and Joy keeps
the goal going.

- Adrian Linus

Joy is a deep everlasting gift of grace that we draw upon on our journey of discipleship that sustains us in the most difficult times.

- Lincoln Lee





Joy lies in the fight, in the attempt, in the suffering, not in the victory itself.

- Brywinedren





Joy boosts our energy in order to appreciate every moment in our lives, and it makes our life balanced.

- Addie Frank

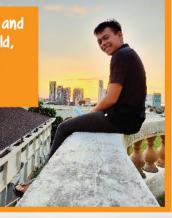


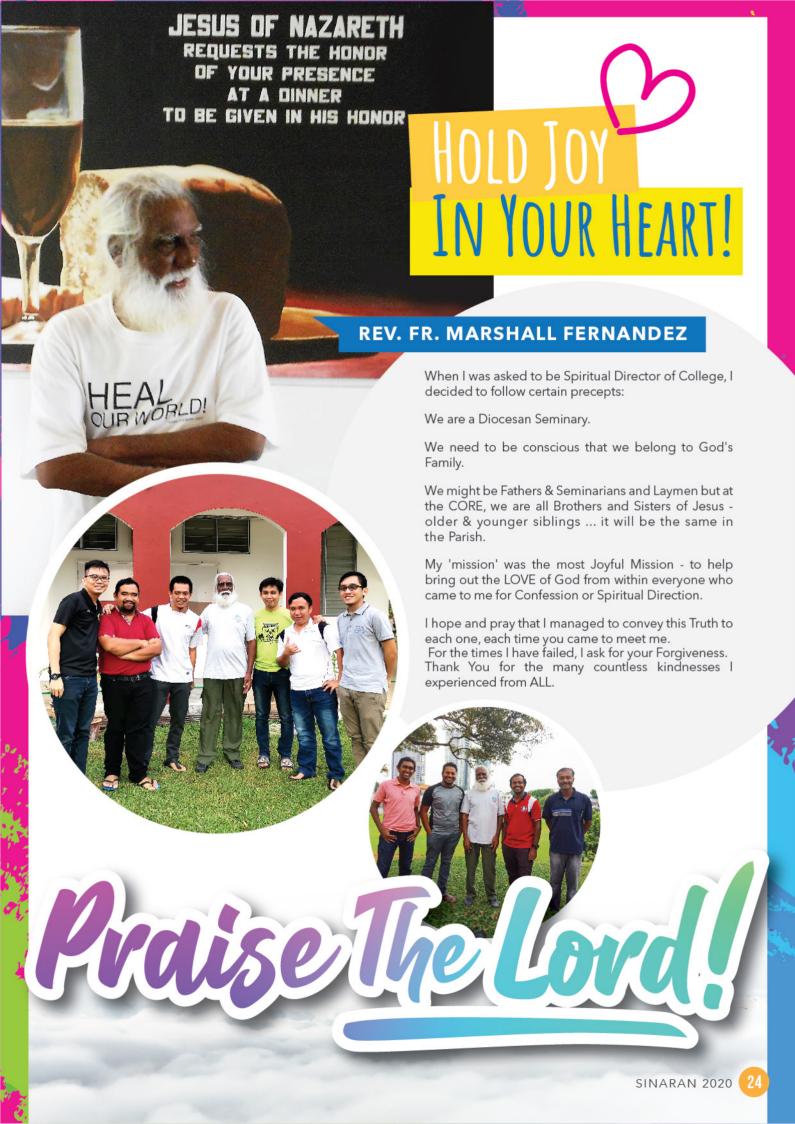
I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy" (Rabindranath Tagore)

- Joel Rut Markus

Joy is in our hearts because as disciples, we are called to share our joy in loving and serving our community.

- Timothy Galisin





## OUR COMMUNITY

## OUR FORMATORS



**REV. FR. STANLEY ANTONI** 



**REV. FR. SIMON LABROOY** 



**REV. FR. STEPHEN LIM** 



**REV. FR. RYAN INNAS MUTHU** 

## INITIATION YEAR



ASHVIN XAVIER Archdiocese of Kuala Lump



LINCOLN LEWIS
Melaka-Johor Diocese



MELVIN DAWSON
Diocese of Penang



PETER LOOKAS









## OUR COMMUNITY

## EAR PHILOSOPHY



**ASHLEY CHAU** 



CANTONA CYRIL Archdiocese of Kuching



HELDY AMIN Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu



JEROME LINGAM Melaka-Johor Diocese



JOSEPH TAN



JOSEPH UVARAJAH





PATRICK HILARY Diocese of Penang



TARENCE JOE
Diocese of Miri



**MARK CALADY** Diocese of Penang



MARVIN VOO

## OUR COMMUNITY

## 2ND YEAR PHILOSOPHY



SINARAN 2020







**BRYWINEDREN GODON** 



JOHNATHAN SEAH



LINCOLN LEE



# COLLEGE GENERAL





MS. ANNE



MS. JESINTA LOORTHU





MS. MARIA PUSHPAM



MR. MICHAEL CHAN SHEAU PING



MR. RAYMOND LIM EE ZHEN



MS. KAREN MCINTYRE



MR. EDWIN JOHNSON

### PSYCHO-SPIRITUALITY



REV. FATHER MICHAEL RAYMOND OFM CAP

### OUR STAFF















## His Eminence Anthony Soter Cardinal Fernandez who returned to the Lord on 28th October 2020.

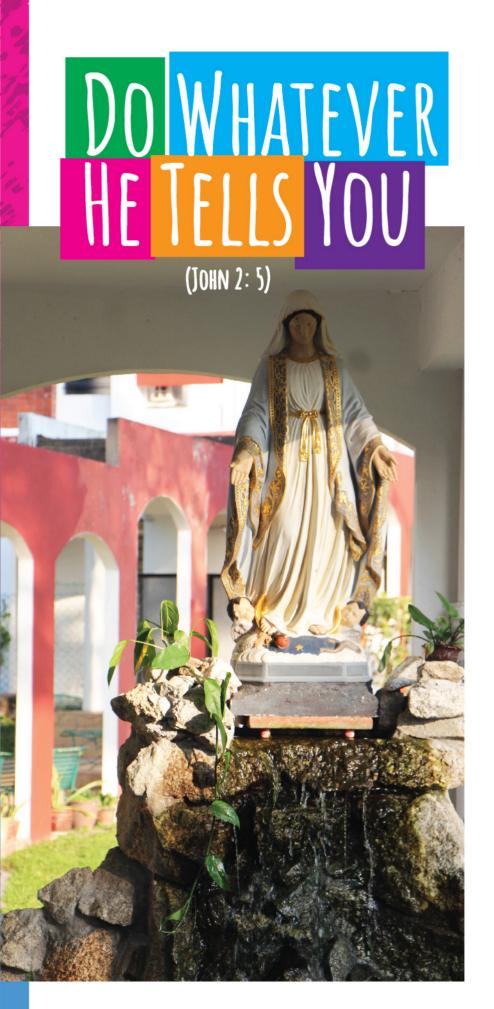
His Eminence was a seminarian at College General from 1961 to 1966. In 1973, he was appointed Director of Initiation Year. He also served as a Rector from 1975 to 1977. After his retirement as Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, His Eminence served as a Spiritual Father at College General from 2005 to 2012.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen





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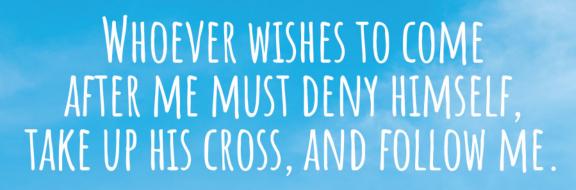
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