



Messages	03
Editor's Foreword, Messages from the Board of Directors, Bishops. Rector, Vocation Directors and Caput	
College Memoirs	22
Events in 2024	
Sharings 1	52
Sharings from our formators	
Photo Album	62
Photos of our community	
Sharings 2	80
Sharings from our seminarians	
Office Bearers 2024	100

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

by Matthew Wee

Shalom!

We welcome you to another journey through our annual college magazine, **SINARAN 2024.** The theme for this year's edition is 'A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart'.

We have gathered articles from our beloved bishops, vocation directors and formators (our 2 out-going formators and 2 in-coming formators), and we would like to thank them for taking the time and effort to share their experiences with us. I'm sure their wisdom will be insightful for our readers. We would also like to thank our other contributors, the seminarians themselves. They have provided us with various write-ups on their vocation story, pastoral experience and outlook on prayer.

'Memoir' of the past year. As we inch towards our seminary's 360th anniversary, it is ever more pertinent that we savour and remember the blessings that God has showered on us throughout our lives. Along with the new 'Office Bearers' section, we hope to draw back the veil on our lives in College General, so those who are interested to join us as a labourer in God's vineyard, may see a little of how we spend our time.



On a personal note, two things have helped me greatly in my new life in College General. First, the main element of our magazine's theme, 'PRAYER'. Prayer has helped ground me here. Someone told me before I came into the seminary, "Matt, even if you struggle with your classes, your manual labour, and your community life; pray! It will see you through." And so it has.

Second, our wonderful community here. My formators, fellow seminarians and staff have truly been a blessing to me. They have helped shoulder my burdens, share my joys and mourn my pains. Here, i wish to thank all of you, not only for helping with Sinaran 2024, but for truly being a family here.

Lastly, I thank you, the reader, for supporting us by reading our magazine, and do continue to pray or us.

God Bless!

Cardinal Sebastian Francis Bishop of Penang

I am inclined to begin this reflection with an insight from St. Augustine of Hippo, Africa. He fought against Pelagius, who did not begin with the PRIMACY OF GOD and GRACE as pure gift but with human effort. St. Augustine fought and insisted on the PRIMACY OF GOD and GRACE to precede every movement. Using this reflection, I would like to ask, "Does God listen to your heart before God invites you to listen to His heart"? I suggest that it is impossible to listen to God's heart in Christ Jesus if God has not, in the first instance, listened to your heart. If we get this equation clear, we can proceed with the reflection. Please answer this question in prayer and contemplation before you read the rest of this reflection.

In the Sound of Music, there is a song that says, "Let us start at the very beginning, a very good place to start". We must begin this reflection on "A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart" with how the Holy Spirit convinces you that God listens first. Everything changes when this PRIMACY is experienced. Your prayer is nothing more, nothing less than a response to God who listens to you first and invites you to enter into a creative and loving relationship with Him.

If we begin with the PRIMACY OF GOD then Scripture testifies that all prayer is prompted, motivated and has the Holy Spirit as the PRIMARY MOVER. "The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness, for we do not know how to ask; but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that cannot be expressed" (Romans 8:26).



"And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father!" (Galatians 4:6). Is it possible to listen to His Heart and to repeat the algorithm "Abba Father" and remain in contemplation for some time? Is it possible to listen to His Heart and to pray the "Our Father" mostly in short contemplative pondering or silence? Is it possible to listen to His Heart and to pray the "Hail Mary" with Mother Mary and ponder like her?

An integral part of discernment involves humility and generosity to listen to the divine whispers of our Lord in prayer. In the seminary we will form you to develop your IQ (intelligence quotient) together with your EQ (emotional quotient) and especially your SQ (Spiritual quotient).

Your Spiritual Intelligence led and guided by the Holy Spirit will lead you in prayer to listen to His Heart and bring your prayer into your daily life as you strive to follow His Will at each present moment.

The first phase of the Synod in October 2023 gave the Universal Church a direction to move forward with confidence and face all the challenges and the vital need to cultivate a vibrant prayer life. This direction is called "Conversation in the Spirit". Your personal prayer life is a conversation with and in the Holy Spirit. This will be extended to conversations with fellow disciples/seminarians in the Holy Spirit.

When this happens, your life will be rooted in the Communion of the Trinity and extend to Creation and Humanity. When this happens, your life will be rooted in participating in the mission of the Holy Spirit.

If you choose to be lazy or disobedient to the gentle promptings of the Holy Spirit maybe you could at least pray for a conversion of the heart. Remember that even if you choose not to pray, someone in the Body of Christ, the Church, is praying for you. This is the faith of our Mother Church. Therefore, there is HOPE FOR ALL.





Archbishop Julian Leow Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur

In the journey of discernment and formation, prayer is the lifeline that connects us to the heart of God. For seminarians, who are being moulded to serve as shepherds of His flock, this connection is not merely a pious exercise but the foundation upon which their entire vocation is built.

The theme, "A life of prayer is to Listen to His Heart," invites us to explore the essence of prayer and its transformative power in attuning our hearts to God's will.

At the core of prayer is the art of listening. In a world that is often noisy and filled with distractions, the discipline of prayer calls us to silence, to be still and to tune in to the gentle whispers of God. This listening is not passive; it is an active engagement with our Heavenly Father, a deliberate turning of our hearts towards God, seeking not just to speak, but to understand what He desires for us.

The life of a seminarian is one of constant discernment. Every decision, from the small choices of daily life to the significant steps towards ordination, must be rooted in a deep awareness of God's voice. But how do we hear His voice amidst the clamour of our thoughts, fears, and ambitions? The answer lies in cultivating a life of prayer that is more than routine, more than mere words — it is about developing an interiority that is attuned to the movements of the Spirit.

St Ignatius of Loyola, in his Spiritual Exercises, emphasises the importance of



discernment through prayer. He teaches that God communicates with us in our thoughts, desires and feelings. These inner movements, when carefully examined in the light of prayer, reveal the inclinations of God's heart. For seminarians, discernment process is crucial as they seek to align their personal desires with God's will for their lives.

Listening to God's heart also requires humility. It means acknowledging that our understanding is limited and that we must be open to God's guidance, even when it

6

challenges our plans or disrupts our comfort. In prayer, we come face to face with our vulnerabilities, our weaknesses and our need for God's grace. It is in this humble posture that we become receptive to the transformative power of His love.

The Gospels provide us with a perfect model of this listening heart in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus often withdrew to lonely places to pray, to commune with His Father and to listen to His will. In the Garden of Gethsemane, we witness the depth of Jesus' prayer as He surrenders His will to the Father, saying, "Not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). This moment encapsulates the essence of a life of prayer — it is about surrender, about trusting that God's will is perfect, even when it leads us through suffering or uncertainty.

For seminarians, this surrender is not a one-time event but a continuous journey. The demands of formation, the challenges of academic study, pastoral work and personal struggles can all be overwhelming. Yet, it is in these very moments that prayer becomes our anchor, grounding us in the certainty that God is with us, guiding us and shaping us according to His divine purpose.

Prayer also fosters a deep sense of intimacy with God. It is in the quiet moments of prayer that we experience the tenderness of His love, the reassurance of His presence and the strength to persevere. This intimacy is what sustains us in our vocation, giving us the courage to face the unknown and the resilience to remain faithful to our calling.

"It is about surrender, about trusting that God's will is perfect, even when it leads us through suffering or uncertainty"

As seminarians, you are called to be men of prayer, to cultivate a relationship with God that is personal and profound. This relationship is not only for your own spiritual growth but is also the source from which you will draw strength in your future ministry. Your ability to guide others, to offer counsel and to be a source of comfort and hope, will depend on how deeply you have listened to His heart in prayer.

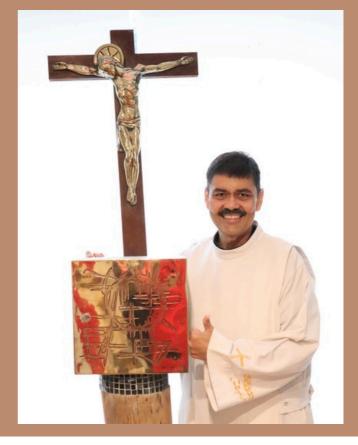
A life of prayer is an invitation to enter into the heart of God, to listen, to discern and to be transformed. It is a journey of humility, surrender and intimacy, where we learn to align our will with His, trusting that He who has called us is faithful and will lead us to where we are meant to be.

As you continue in your formation, may your life of prayer be a constant source of strength, guiding you to listen ever more closely to His heart and to respond with love and fidelity.

So dear Seminarians, please open your hearts and imitate the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As we acknowledge His divinity, let us not forget His humanity, His open, wounded, bleeding heart poured out for us. May our hearts beat as one with Jesus's heart.

Fr. James Simon Labrooy

Prayer is when one listens to his or her heart. It starts from the mind and resonates in the heart. In relation to this, St. Francis of Assisi who lived in the 12th century, was an extraordinarily inspiring figure in the life of the Church indeed. A tradition says that on one occasion, Francis was in the forest, and he was praying in ecstasy for an extended period of time. When he had finished his lengthy prayer, he was hungry and as a result his body was growing weak. He wandered through the forest praying that God would answer his prayer. Then, he came upon a house. Outside, at the entrance, hung a big sign which said "Fresh bread baked daily". So, he went up, knocked on the door and asked the lady mending the door saying, "I would like to have some of the daily fresh baked bread." She sheepishly replied, "We do not bake bread here. We just make signs!"



Now, some people are just signs, they are not bread. Consequently, they will send us to someone else. In addition, there are some people in our lives who are bread. The bread of friendship, the bread of love, the bread of forgiveness and the bread of understanding. Indeed, they are lifegiving. As a result, a life of prayer enables us to respond to the call to give bread and not just be a mere sign. Let the heart of Jesus guide us to understand, approach and respond to others earnestly in prayer.

Furthermore, I would like to expound the parable of the talents in Matthew's Gospel (25:14-30) as a reflection in this article. In this amazing parable, the Master is going on a journey. Correspondingly, he calls in three servants and gives them each talents. (Talents are money in biblical language. A talent is worth about RM1000 – Rm3000 at present).

To the first servant he gives five talents, and the second, two talents, and the third, one. He leaves and after some time comes back home. In like manner, he calls them and demands for an account of what they have done with the talents given to them. The one who had five talents said, "I have made five more." Pleased, the master says, "You are a good and faithful servant." The master gives him authority and power. Next, the one who has two talents, made two more, and

the master is pleased with his good and faithful servant, and gives him authority too. However, the one who was given just one talent, hid the talent because he was afraid. As a result of his irresponsible act the master banishes this servant, saying, "You worthless servant!"

What do we learn and glean from this parable? Relationship! Yes, it is giving us a lesson on relationship. What is the nature of the relationship between the master and his servants? It is a *Business Relationship!* Likely so, if a *Business Relationship* is what animates us in our prayer, our God experience, our interaction and daily relations with one another, naturally it compels us to imply that people are disposable. A sad nature of human condition that seems to be unavoidable. This action justifies the very nature of rewarding the servants because they make more money and if you fail to achieve of what is expected from you, thus, you are a failure and ought to be punished.

What has happened to the Master? Has he lost his humanity? This is exactly what happens when greed takes over. It is compounded when power, ambition or the desire to exert control on others becomes our dominant ethic in life. We too lose our humanity as well. The Master loses his compassion and his ability to perceive human nature. In addition, the master loses his traits of gentleness, tenderness and kindness, thus losing his humanity as well. As a consequence of losing his humanity, the master becomes selfish, vindictive and vicious. *Most of all, the master never understood the high value of failure*.

"It should be stressed that sin is not breaking a law, it is breaking a relationship."

While, the "theology of failure" may seem foreign in our culture it is worthy to be explored. We do not like failures but we learn a lot about ourselves in failures. If we do not understand failure and perceive its value, it will lead us to lose our charity as well. As for me, I learnt much from my failures in life's journey. The same can be said about you and the church as well. It is undeniable that the church in her weaknesses and sinfulness faces failures head on bravely. In doing so the church becomes human — a significant and far-reaching value which is missing in the master in the parable. Obviously, this is what is missing in our lives.

Besides, a life of prayer which allows us to listen to our heart will lead us to treasure relationships. A life of prayer enables us to be conscious of sin and sinning. It should be stressed that sin is not breaking a law, it is breaking a relationship. Let us reflect briefly on the ten Commandments. The first commandment – God is the centre of or lives, do not worship false Gods. This very commandment portrays a relationship with God. The fifth says honour your parents – it's about relationship too. If you cheat and lie, being greedy or self centered, you are breaking a relationship. It is not breaking the law that is the sin, the rupture in relationship becomes a sin – breaching trust.

So, we have to comprehend sin not in terms of law but of relationship. Failure in doing so makes us numb, resulting in the incapability of having a relationship. In addition, losing the love for prayer and the desire to listen to our hearts, leads us to be rooted in fallacy and ambitious efforts which will result in the poverty of compassion and empathy.

In its entirety, The Word of God reminds us, where there is love there is God. Love leads to expression of goodness in relationships. This concept of goodness in relationship is best explained in this story. It's a story about two brothers, one married with a family while the other a bachelor. They work hard on their field. One particular year, the harvest was plentiful. They thanked God and divided the harvest equally between themselves and each stored the grain in their own barn.

The younger brother, the bachelor thought to himself, "Now my brother has a family, and he needs more for he has many mouths to feed." So, every night while his brother was sleeping, he would secretly and silently go to his brother's barn and fill up the grain bin with a bucket of his own grain.

On the other hand, the elder brother too thought to himself, "Since my younger brother is single, his needs are greater for he has no one to look after him!" He too would secretly place a bucket of grain in his brother's barn.

One fateful night both of them met each other while carrying a bucket of grain each. They stopped, put down their buckets embraced each other and said, "This is a holy place because love thrives here." Let love thrive in ourselves and radiate towards others.

Bidding Goodbye to my tenure at College General, my memory goes back to all the formators, lecturers, staff, seminarians and all the people of god who have entered my life and made my life a colourful one. God bless you all!



Archbishop John Wong Archbishop of Kota Kinabalu

In the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Pastores Dabo Vobis, Pope John Paul II listed spiritual formation as one of the important areas of formation that is indispensable in the formation of future priests. Spiritual formation is the core which unifies and gives life to his being a priest and his acting as a priest. All other ares of formation lead and find their completion in spiritual formation. Without spiritual life, pastoral life will be left without foundation. The spiritual life is a life of prayer. Formally and structurally, the seminary has faithfully incorporated the importance of prayer life into each seminarian. It cannot be denied that this has been the best method in existence. But at the end of the day, the seminarian has to make the life of prayer his second nature.



A life of prayer should not be seen as a chore to be ticked off, otherwise, priestly life in the future will be devoid of any true internalized prayer life akin to a show or a performance. A life of prayer is not just articulating or reciting beautiful sets of prayer. Formal prayers such as the official prayers of the church should lead oneself to listen to the heart of the one who has revealed the fullness of God's love and mercy who is The Word incarnate - Jesus Christ. Otherwise, we will *listen and listen but do not understand (Matt 13:14)*. So, anyone who has ears should listen (Matt 11:15).

The act of listening is an active and humble action. Listening requires oneself to acknowledge one's own shortcomings, willingness and openness to learn from the

Master and Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Listening entails discipleship. The Scriptures has many quotes and sayings on the importance of listening and who we should listen to because the world has bombarded everyone with so much distracting noise. In the midst of this deafening clamour, Jesus calls on us, "Come to me all you who are weary and overburdened, and I will give you rest' (Matt 11:28). In our prayer, have we listened/heard and accepted this INVITATION: "COME"? Listen to His heart which is gentle and full of mercy and love. Learn from His heart, and hopefully we would be like His heart in our reaching to His people. AMEN.

Archbishop Simon Poh Archbishop of Kuching

Thank you for the invitation to share a message in SINARAN. We are now coming to the close of 2024, dedicated to as a YEAR OF PRAYER in preparation for the JUBILEE YEAR 2025. It is a good time to reflect on our relationship with our Lord Jesus. In any friendship, one gets to know the other by spending time together, talking and listening to each other. Prayer, likewise, is making time to be with our Lord.

The challenge today is that social media has conditioned us to instantaneous response and our interest wavers after half a minute or so. That is why people are constantly swiping their handphone screens with their fingers – restlessly scrolling and seeking information or reels to receive instantaneous entertainment or information.



It is my sincere desire to share that true friendship can only be formed when we give time to each other. Jesus showed us that he would often go off to a quiet place to pray. This is so that he could talk with and listen to His Father, finding the strength to carry out his Father's will. Jesus always prays before making major decisions.

As faithful, seminarians, priests and bishops, we are invited to listen to Jesus, to become shepherds after the heart of our Good Shepherd. This is so that our hearts may beat to Jesus' heartbeat of love and mercy. In order to hear Jesus' heartbeats, you and I have to be very near to Jesus, resting on Him and

remaining in His embrace. We need to seek time in silent prayer with Jesus, reading the Gospel, waiting and listening to the promptings and stirrings within our heart to the gentle voice of our Lord.

I share on this attitude of listening using a Traditional Chinese character 聽, meaning "to listen." This composite character is made up of 耳(ear); 王(king); 十目(10 eyes which means giving full attention); 一心 (one heart) Thus to listen 聽 to Jesus means: I listen to my Lord with my ear, with my undivided heart, looking at HIM with full attention for HE is my King speaking to me.

May you find peace as you encounter the Lord in prayer and experience His heartbeat of love and mercy. In turn, we listen to one another, with open heart, full attention and mutual respect. In this synodal journey as Pilgrims of Hope in 2025, let us listen that we may always recognise Jesus walking beside us as He had walked alongside His disciples on the road to Emmaus. May our hearts be burning with hope and love of our Risen Lord (Luke 24:13-35).

Pastor Cordis Christi

+ Simon Poh

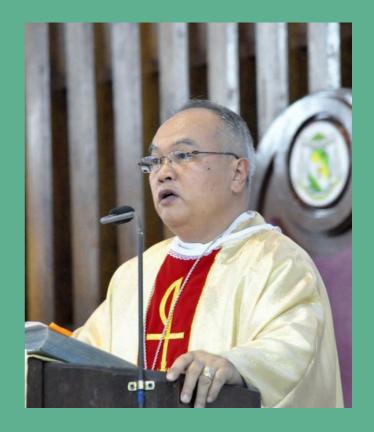
Most Rev. Simon Poh Archdiocese of Kuching, Malaysia





Bishop Julius Dusin Gitom Bishop of Sandakan

Jubilee Year 2025, this year has been declared by the Holy Father as the "Year of Prayer." It is, therefore, appropriate that the edition of SINARAN 2024 (The College General Annual Magazine) has chosen the theme "A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart." The Pope says: "From now on, I am happy to think that the dedicated to a great symphony of prayer." Symphony of Prayer"! In effect, your prayer, my prayer, indeed everyone's prayer, without exception, would contribute to the beautiful rendition of so great a symphony of prayer offered to God in preparation for the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2025. However, I would like to think that prayer is not just an elevated emotion, no matter how moving it may be while participating in that great symphony of presence.



Without denying the importance of the "Notes on Prayer" series, produced by the Dicastery for Evangelisation, tasked to oversee and coordinate the Year of Prayer, these are useful guides and aids to deepen and rediscover the centrality of prayer in the life of the Church and at the same time nurture the synodal spirit in the hearts of the faithful as envisaged by the Holy Father. Nevertheless, a question remains: what does it mean to have "a life of prayer" that "listens to His heart"? In other words, a prayer book, prayer guide, or even spiritual director can only help us to a certain extent in our prayer life. It is still incumbent on us to

cultivate a personal and intimate relationship with God.

It is also important to note that throughout the ages, libraries of books on prayer have been written by so many spiritual experts and saints in the Church. In this short reflection, I would like to quote a few of their well-known thoughts to help enhance our life of prayer. Hopefully, we will be inspired to cultivate a prayerful life that helps us to reach a higher level of spiritual life, so that even our hearts reverberate with the heart of God.

The "heart," from the scriptural point of view, indicates the interior core of human life and gives proper direction to all human faculties (cf. Psalm 51:6; Proverbs 3:5-6; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 22:37; Hebrews 4:12). Thus, prayer from the heart essentially involves the entire person, heart and mind, reaching out to God. As Augustine says, "The cry of the heart is a solemn earnestness of thought which, when given vent to in prayer, expresses the profound yearning of the one who prays." A genuine prayer, therefore, is an expression of the heart that seeks communion and the presence of God.

Another inspiring thought on prayer: echoing the experience of Elijah whom he encounters in the sound of sheer silence (cf. IKings, 19:11–13), St. John of the Cross says, "God always remains concealed from us; therefore, our heart must be willing to search for Him... God can be found from the innermost of our soul." In that sense, we must be willing to enter into the "silence" of our soul so that we can be united more closely with God in prayer. This endeavour is challenging in the midst of many voices around us. Very often those voices pull our hearts away, and since those voices are more attractive, we are tempted to embrace them. On the other hand, to sit in silence trying to discern His voice is an agonising futile effort. Strong will with determination and unwavering faith are needed in order to stay focused in prayer. An apt example is St. Mary Magdalene, who is not distracted by the social expectation of hospitality towards guests but continues with attentive listening ears sitting at feet of the Lord (cf. Lk. 10:38-42). The Lord approves such time spent listening to Him, in the midst of busyness, to be the better choice.

"The cry of the heart is a solemn earnestness of thought which, when given vent to in prayer, expresses the profound yearning of the one who prays."

St. Theresa of Avila, a doctor and one of the great spiritual masters, defines prayer as "coming into living encounter with Jesus." In her book, *Interior Castle*, she surmises prayer as a journey that leads to the union of our souls with Jesus. Thus, prayer is not just a verbal or recitation of prayer but a conscious and deliberate effort that leads the soul to experience the presence of Jesus in a deeper way. St. Theresa says that one must be disciplined and focused in order to acquire the habit of a "frequent solitary conversation with the Lord who, as we know, loves us." Consequently, even communal prayer, such as the celebration of the Eucharist, and other devotional prayers must be orientated to lead us into communion with God.

A beautiful rendition of a symphony of prayer can only be truly beautiful when it comes from the heart that has been inspired by listening to His heart, and that "prayerful life" is translated into action: concern for justice, peace, and genuine respect for others and His creation.

Fr. Robert Jissem

Kuching Archdiocese

Thank you for inviting me to write an article for "Sinaran" 2024 with the theme, "A life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart. As a Christian and as a follower of Jesus Christ we need to follow His example and put God in the center of our lives. In this article, I would like to share my own personal experience of how my faith developed.

My parents were devoted to rosary prayers. How it was start? According to my mother, I was born a sickly baby. I was admitted in the hospital for three months. The doctor who treated me, told my parents he could not find the cause of my sickness. The doctor told my parents I have no hope to live and asked my parents to bring me back home. I was brought to St. Rita Convent in Bau and staved there for three months. According to my mother, the sisters offered rosary prayers daily and somehow a miracle happened and I was cured and stand alive today. I do believe in miracles because of the faith of my parents and the faith of the sisters who offered those daily rosary prayers and surrendered everything to God. Just like Mother Mary who proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit exults in my saviour; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid (Luke 1: 39-56).



In terms of faith and how my parents brought us up, we prayed together and took meals together. After having dinner, we Rosary every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Every Tuesday and Thursday, after dinner, we read the Bible. Every Sunday we went to Church. In terms of faith, there was no compromise with my parents. That was how my parents brought us up. Initially, it was very hard for us to accept and to follow what my parents taught us and how they disciplined us. Today, I must thank my parents. Because of them, I still recite my rosary, read my Bible every day and have become a priest today. As a follower of Jesus, I try my best to follow Him especially in terms of faith and action.

Jesus, I trust in you.

Fr. Simon Lau

Sibu Diocese

2025 is the Jubilee Year "Pilgrims of Hope". In preparation for that, this year 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. So too, next year is the 360th Anniversary of College General. Therefore, in preparation for that, this year 2024 can re-emphasise "A Life of Prayer by listening to His Heart".

Before College General established itself in Penang, Malaysia, it had its origin in Ayutthaya, Siam (the Seminary of Saint Joseph) in 1665 founded by Francois Pallu



and Peter Lambert de la Motte (MEP's Fathers). Why did our MEP Fathers have the intention to establish the seminary? It was because they had the heart to spread the Gospel to the ends of the world and by doing so, they needed to form and appoint local priests and bishops in Asia if the Church was to survive and develop. That heart is a heart for Mission; it is also a heart listening to His (Jesus) Heart. That is the will of God. This can only be done through prayer in order to discern the will of God.

Now, it is our turn, my dear seminarians. Let us together cultivate a life of prayer by listening to the Heart of Jesus. With that, let us respond generously to His call and be a shepherd after the Heart of Jesus.



Fr. Mattheus Luta

Kota Kinabalu Archdiocese

I would like to thank SINARAN for inviting me to write up an article for College General SINARAN 2024. In this article, I would like to share my reflection on the theme: "A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart."



What is Prayer?

The word prayer is not a strange word to us. As Catholics, we are taught to pray by our parents, friends, catechists, religious brothers and sisters and priests. However, in order to be specific, let us find the proper definition of prayer. The word "prayer" is a derivative of the Latin "precari", which means "to beg". In our Catechism of the Catholic Church, it defines prayer as ".... a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer." (para. 2558) There are many definitions for prayer. St. Thérèse of Lisieux calls it a "surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy." Fr. Thomas Green, SJ defines prayer as an "opening of mind and heart to God" or a "personal encounter with God in Love." We could say that prayer is simply a conversation, short or long, with God.

Jesus is The Life of Prayer

Prayer was essential in Jesus' life. As we read in Luke 6:12, Jesus "spent the night praying to God." Besides that, Jesus taught His disciples to pray – the Lord's Prayer (see Luke 11: 1- 4). Jesus prayed as an example to his followers. Jesus prayed alone. Luke 5:16 reads, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Jesus prayed for others. In John 17:9 we read, "I [Jesus] pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given Me, for they are Yours." Jesus prayed with others. Luke 9:28 reads, "[Jesus] took Peter, John and James with Him and went up onto a mountain to pray." Jesus prayed regularly. In Luke 5:16 we read, "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." As prayer was essential to the Lord, we Catholics should integrate ourselves into every aspect of Christ's life because His life is prayer.

Prayer is to listen to Jesus' Heart (God's will)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, "God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer." Prayer is a time to listen to God. I Samuel 3: 9 states that "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Prayer is to listen to Jesus's Heart (God's will). How is it done? It was explained earlier that Jesus is the life of prayer. Hence, it is proper to listen to Him. Moreover, Jesus is God manifested in the flesh (John I:I4). By reading and meditating especially the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we hear what Jesus said and did and what was said about Him. As such, we are indeed listening to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Interior transformation shall be achieved when we stay faithful in Jesus' love."

The Fruits of Prayer: Interior Transformation (Intimacy with Jesus Christ)

The fruit of prayer is having an intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus. Psalm 73: 28 states, "for me it is good to be near God." Jesus provides us the access to God when He said in John 14: 6, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jesus also asserts us that "I have loved you just as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love" (John 15: 9-10). Interior transformation shall be achieved when we stay faithful in Jesus' love.

Conclusion

"A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart." It is indeed that in Jesus Christ, the life of prayer is established. It is because every aspect of Christ's life is prayer. Hence, listening to Him we shall have an access to God, the Father. This causes the interior transformation in us to happen. In fact, in John 15: 11 Jesus says, "I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete." Saint Augustine writes in his Confessions, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." "A Life of Prayer is to Listen to His Heart" because our restlessness that resonates deep in us is to be filled and fulfilled through our intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus.



Jescie Petrus Petu

THE THEME AND COMMUNAL VIRTUES OF COLLEGE GENERAL 2024



Shalom, peace be with you all.

Every vocation is like a "diamond in the rough" that needs to be polished, worked on, and shaped on every side. A good priest, sister, or nun must, above all else, be a person shaped by the Lord's grace. They must be aware of their own limitations and willing to lead a life of prayer and dedicated witness to the Gospel. Starting in the seminary, the preparation must be developed integrally, in direct contact with the lives of other people.

Our theme for the College General Major Seminary, Penang, for the year 2024 is "A LIFE OF PRAYER IS TO LISTEN TO HIS HEART." This year, College General focuses on prayer and a deep realisation with God. Some may call this meditation, but I like to call it "listening prayer". The goal of this prayer is to be still enough to hear God. The key is to wait on God to reveal a word, a picture, or a thought, to be still, and to listen to His still, small voice within us.

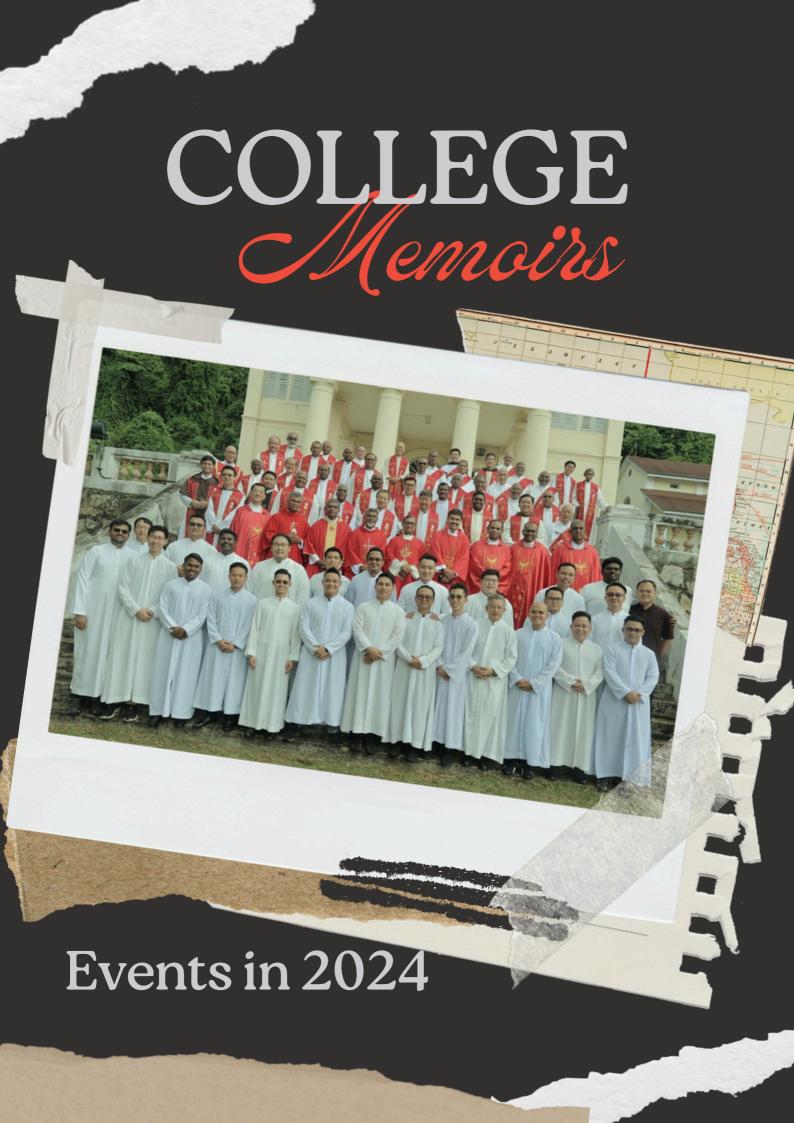
Indeed, God has given each of us the wonderful gift of prayer, allowing us to have a close relationship with Him. Matthew 6:6 states, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen." This further clarifies that for every seminarian to hear God's voice, follow His guidance and develop a close personal connection with Him, they need close contact with God during their formation and learning at the seminary. Along the way, this shapes the seminarians to become men of prayer who flourish in many spheres of life and bear fruitful outcomes.

This year, our communal virtues are Cooperation, Participation, Trust, Docility, Fraternity and Love. These virtues were chosen to reflect the seminarians' aspirations for a sense of belonging and a happy, united, positive and safe community. By prioritising these virtues, we foster a strong sense of togetherness and overall happiness among the seminarians.

We aim to create a spirit of belonging, togetherness, and love for others. These communal virtues also emphasise the need for harmony, solidarity, unity and cooperation among seminarians, supporting their growth in formation, learning and relationships.

In conclusion, my hope is that this theme and these communal virtues will inspire all seminarians to embrace the values of the gospel. May they become seminarians and priests who live lives of service and identity based on these gospel values, now and in the future.





March



MARCH 12 - INAUGURATION MASS

The College celebrated its inauguration for the academic year 2024 with a mass celebrated by its president, Cardinal Sebastian Francis. Archbishop Julian Leow and Father Gerard Theraviam joined the faculty, staff and seminarians for this joyous occasion. The day was also blessed with a seminar on the Catechism of the Catholic Church by Dr. Steven Selvaraju.







Holy Week

During Holy Week, the seminarians were assigned to parishes around Penang Island for pastoral formation.













March 31 - Baha'i Naw-Ruz

As part of their exposure program, the Initiation Year class attended an inter-faith event at the Penang Harmony Centre organised by Harmonico Penang. The event introduced the festival of Naw-Ruz celebrated by the Baha'is. It included an exhibition on the Baha'i faith and a forum with panelist from different religions (including a Catholic youth) on the practice and benefits of fasting.









April



EASTER BREAK

For their Easter Break, the seminarians practised 'Cuti-cuti Malaysia' by visiting destinations around Penang Diocese. They visited churches in Ipoh, Bagan Serai, Bukit Mertajam, Permatang Tinggi and Taiping, while enjoying the usual tourist locations and most importantly, savouring the food! It was a great time to unwind, recharge and for fellowship.



















For Vocation Sunday, the seminarians served in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Pulau Tikus and the Church of the Holy Name of Mary, Permatang Tinggi. While most of them **Immaculate** in were Conception, brothers Daniel Anthony and Leonard Ng went to Permatang Tinggi, where they shared their during vocation stories mass.

During the weekend, the seminarians animated the masses at the Immaculate Conception; serving in the choir, as lectors, psalmist and musicians. They also shared how God had called them to the vocation of priesthood during mass. A booth was also set up, for parishioners to learn more and ask questions about particularly vocation, vocation to the diocesan priesthood.

April 21 Vocation Sunday





May



ORANG ASLI EXPOSURE - MAY 5-10

The Initiation Class went to Muadzam Shah, Pahang for an immersion experience. With help from Mr. John Chin and his team, the seminarians stayed in pairs with different communities of orang asli. Many memories were made as they experienced and learned more from their foster families, about their daily life, needs, struggles, dreams and joys.





























Methodology Seminars with Dr. Roweena David May 10 & 17





Easter Lunch



May 14





June









GAWAI KAAMATAN - JUNE 1

The celebrations of the day began with Holy Mass. It was the first mass celebrated by Fr Surain as our new Dean of Studies. After mass, the proceedings were adjourned to the refectory, where the guests were greeted by our East Malaysian brothers with a traditional welcoming ceremony before all present partook in a sumptuous lunch with traditional dishes such as busou, hinava, sago, tuhau and more.







TAMIL SANGGAM-JUNE 5

The theme for our celebration was 'From the Rising of the Sun to its Setting', a reference to Psalm 113. It was chosen to highlight the main part of the event which was a presentation on the Tamil calendar. The formators and seminarians played a part in the 'pongal' making. Dinner was an all vegetarian affair of Indian dishes served on banana leaves. During dinner, there was also a lucky draw and fashion show.









June 15

Let's Talk - An Interfaith Dialogue

For the first time, our seminary was honoured to host a Penang Harmonico event on our grounds. It was an inter-religious dialogue themed 'Understanding Suffering Through Different Religious Lenses'. The forum was moderated by Wan Atikah Wan Yusoff, with learned panelist in the persons of Prof. Dr. Md Roslan Hashim, Dr. Surya Dharamdass and our very own Fr. Surain Durai Raj. It was enlightening to learn what each religion thought was the source of suffering and how they dealt with it in our world and daily life.









KAGAPE CELEBRATION IN IMMACULATE CONCEPTION













College Feast Day



FEAST OF THE VIETNAMESE MARTYRS - JUNE 19

Our college celebrated its Feast Day on 19th June. We were blessed to also celebrate the 25th Sacerdotal Anniversaries of 6 alumni; Rev. Msgr. Jude Miranda, Rev. Fr. Robert Daniel, Rev. Fr. Michael Dass, Rev. Fr. Terrance Thomas, Rev. Fr. Albet Arockiasamy and Rev. Msgr. Peter Ng. Truly a joyous day with the clergy of the Penang Diocese in attendance.

'Amor, Labor, Pietas'













August

Retreat with Fr. Patrick Boudville

August 4-11







Regional Pastoral Assembly August 25-27



The Peninsular Malaysia Regional Pastoral Assembly 2024 (RPA2024), held from August 25-27 at the MAJODI Centre, brought together 427 participants, comprising of clergy, religious and laity from the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur and the Dioceses of Malacca-Johore and Penang. The assembly also welcomed two observers from East Malaysia and seminarians from College General Seminary in Penang.

We seminarians, were delighted to serve during the masses, lead the lauds and animate the liturgy. As participants, we were also blessed to take part in the group sharings through 'conversations in the spirit'. Throughout the days, we were guided by our Episcopate to celebrate, listen and walk together as a church of Malaysia. As we return to seminary, the assembly's discussions are poised to significantly influence our mission and vision, especially in the lead-up to MPC2026.



September



5 DAY BREAK - 11-15 SEPTEMBER

The 5 Day Break started with a long bus ride down to Majodi Centre in Johor Bahru. However, it was all for a special trip to Singapore on the next day for the Papal Mass. It was truly a blessing to be part of the faithful in the Singapore National stadium for the Holy Father's visit as one universal church.







The holiday was not over after the Papal mass, for the day after, the seminarians were checking into Father's House in Cameron Highlands. Its caretaker, Uncle Wong, welcomed us to this cozy home away from home. Father Augustine Lee, the parish priest of the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, accompanied the seminarians to various locations around Cameron Highlands. Dinner for the final night was a delicious barbeque prepared by Uncle Wong's wife. The seminarians then served for Sunday Mass before making their way back to seminary.









College Feast Day



FEAST OF THE KOREAN MARTYRS - SEPTEMBER 20

On the 20th of September, College General Seminary celebrated the Feast of its Korean Martyrs.

St. Jacques Honoré Chastan and St. Laurent Joseph Marius Imbert sacrificed their lives for the faith and were martyred in Korea. Both of them had taught at College General in Penang, Chastan from 1828 to 1830 and Imbert from 1821 to 1822.

September 21

Christian Meditation Session

Once again we were blessed to host a Penang Harmonico Event, this time in the form of a Christian Meditation session with Father Larry Tan, SJ. Father Larry shared his vast experience on meditation, from both its Western and Eastern forms. Being a Jesuit, his knowledge of Ignatian Spirituality enlightened all present. He also, led us through a few sessions of meditation before answering questions from the participants.









October







WEN HUA - OCTOBER 9

On the 9th of October, College General Seminary held its Chinese Culture Celebration (Wen Hua). This year, the celebration combined the Mid Autumn and Winter Solstice celebrations.

The seminarians, worked together to make the tangyuan (湯圓) and dumplings for the 'reunion' dinner. The college was blessed to have Cardinal Sebastian Francis and his friends, Father Oliver Tham and well as members of the congregation of the Little Sisters of the Poor, Penang with us for this joyous occasion.





Dedication of the new Church of the Holy Name of Mary

OCTOBER 31



The College Fathers and Seminarians, were in Permatang Tinggi for the dedication of the new church. The Church of the Holy Name of Mary actually has a history with our college. In February 1945, during WW2, the college evacuated Mariophile to make room for the Japanese Navy and the seminarians went to stay in the Church of the Holy Name of Mary. May the parish grow 'United in Heart and Mind' (Acts 4:32) in their new home.



November



APPOINTMENT OF NEW RECTOR-NOVEMBER 6

Appointment of Rector-to-be, the Very Rev. Fr. Ryan Innas Muthu, and his profession of faith. He will assume his duties as Rector on 1st January 2025. Congratulations and may God continue to be your strength and guide. He will be taking over from our current Rector, the Very Rev. Fr. James Simon Labrooy, who will be returning to the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur. Thank you for guiding and journeying with us Fr. Simon. May the Good Lord bless and keep you. We will miss you. We will also be bidding farewell to our Spiritual Father of the House, Fr. Eugene Fernandez. Your spiritual insight and your sense of humour will be missed.







Father Robin Andrews' 60th Sacerdotal Anniversary November 13



December



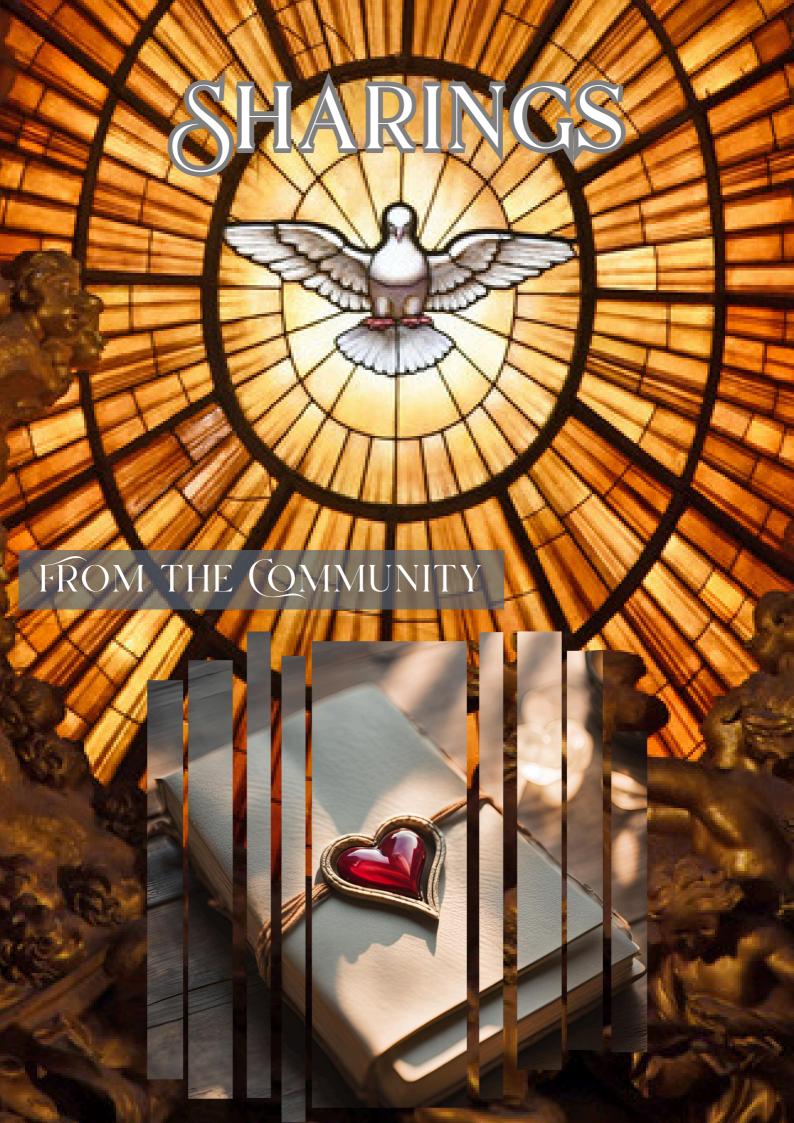


CHRISTMAS AND FAREWELL PARTY

The seminary was blessed to have in attendance its President, Cardinal Sebastian, external lecturers, staff and friends of the college for this joyous event. The event was enlivened by various performances by the seminarians, such as a skit, a song composed by seminarian Daniel Anthony, a song dedicated to our priests and Christmas caroling. There was also a gift exchange. Our rector, Fr Simon Labrooy, and our Spiritual Father of the House, Fr. Eugene Fernandez delivered their farewell speeches. The night ended with a prayer by the in-coming Rector, Fr. Ryan Innas Muthu. What a way to end our Academic Year 2024.







Words of Wisdom



Father Eugene Fernandez

Spiritual Father of The House

We are not wanting to waste our lives neither do we want time to pass by and feel that we did not do anything. That's the difference in wanting to commit ourselves to living a life worthy of the kingdom of God. Our material desires are daily increasing and it is difficult to convince the young that we have to get out of the "hedonistic groove" and be self-giving.

One important way and art of knowing what to do with our lives is to face the reality of prayer. This is not just listening to others, it is demanding much more from us. "It is to the heart of oneself". The challenge is personal work. We are connected to the universe, to other humans and to our natural world.

We are constantly not at ease when we lose our sense of connectivity – the sense of connection. We notice this when we want to be online, and we feel anxious with good reasons if we come offline. We want to belong, and have a fear of not belonging to the whole network.

A story tells of a spiritual guide who once went to his master and mentioned the fact that in the past, during the olden days, it was said that there were people who walked and talked with God. Then the question was asked: "Why doesn't this happen these days?"

The Master's reply was: "Because nowadays no one will stoop so low". The heart of prayer makes sense when it is activated through the Spirit of silence and humility.

For one to stoop, one needs the humility. What happens is that the humility of the heart is able to touch other areas of our lives.

The three and a half years at College General enabled me to see the goodness and persistence of individuals.

Bloom Where I Am Planted

BY FR. LARRY TAN, SJ.

Uprooted and transplanted

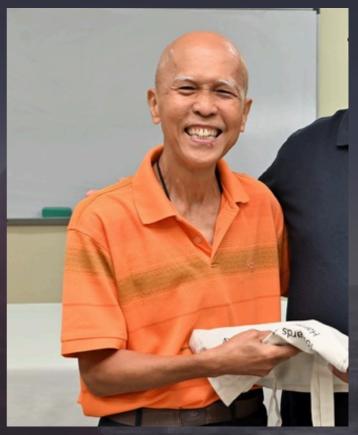
A time to be uprooted; a time to be transplanted. From Petaling Jaya to Kuching; from Kuching to Penang. Twice uprooted and twice transplanted. Life always surprises me when challenges beckon me anew.

After 10 years of service in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Kuching, I had to pack my bags and move on as my visa was not extended. I had dreamed of retiring in Kuching but God has a different plan for me.

It never dawned on me that Penang would be my next destination, not when I was nearing 75 as a priest and was due for retirement. With the approval of the three Peninsular Bishops, my Jesuit Regional Superior missioned me to College General, the Catholic Major Seminary in Penang, as a spiritual director. I have been here for almost a year. Indeed, I am so grateful to God for bringing me here. I can never thank Him enough for His great love for me; love without end.

Different environments

College General (CG) is also known as the College of Martyrs. Next year, it will celebrate its 360th anniversary. With its long illustrious history, many martyrs



who passed through the gates of CG have left an indelible imprint of their heroic lives for Christ and continue to be a source of inspiration and role models to me and the seminarians for their courage to bear witness to Jesus Christ even to the point of sacrificing their lives. I am walking on holy ground.

In CG, the community has 6 priests, and 17 seminarians undergoing various stages of formation. Thanks to the formators who made me feel welcome, I have settled into a rhythm of seminary life where structures play an important role in shaping the seminarians' lives and spirituality. Set times for early morning prayers, Mass, breakfast,

54

studies, meals, community work and games, night prayers, etc, are properly delineated. Interacting with seminarians over meals with light banters can be fun. Infrequent intellectual exchange can be stimulating.

I consider spiritual direction a form of accompaniment and there is always much more to learn. When people are at the crossroads of their lives and unsure which direction to take, speaking to someone they can confide in can greatly help them. Helping them make informed choices that align with God's will is crucial, particularly, when choosing a state of life. Discernment is key. It involves recognising the qualitative differences in our feelings between consolations and desolations, temptations and deceptions, etc.

Different challenges

Forging a deep personal relationship with God is equally important. I share sessions on meditation and Ignatian Spirituality with seminarians in the Initiation Year to deepen their prayer lives. A person's prayer ingredients provides the life discernment. Whether we know it or not, God is always quiet at work in our daily lives. Like a magnet, He draws us deeper and deeper into His presence. Being attentive to how He draws us makes a big difference in our lives. That's where directors come spiritual seminarians reveal the depths of their souls to me, I meet them on holy ground. Listening to a seminarian's daily lived encounter with God is an art. Helping them connect the interior movements of the Holy Spirit to their lives is a gift. Ultimately, God is the one who guides and directs; I am just a facilitator.

'Whether we know it or not, God is always quiet at work in our daily lives.'

CG's pristine and scenic environment is like a resort providing a perfect getaway from the hustle and bustle of city life. The chapel, perched on a hilltop, offers a panoramic view of the sea and hills, lush green trees and towering skyscrapers. I relish the simple joys of life: the awe of watching the sun arrayed in orange radiating its brilliant rays of light as it rises, the joys of soaking in the morning sun's healing rays as I take morning walks, the fascination of watching eagles flying majestically above as I walk barefoot on the sands in the evening to let the earth's negative electrons recharge me, etc. It's here that catching up with age is so carefree and easy-going.

On the other hand, it is also true that age is catching up with me. No longer like a "Speedy Gonzalez," I find climbing stairs challenging. On the one hand, walking up and down the stairs may not be ideal for me as I have to be extra careful grabbing the handrails lest I fall. On the other hand, I need to keep exercising my left leg to keep it strong, and I could think of no better and simpler way than climbing the stairs many times daily. It's a great form of exercise.

Whether I am catching up with age or age is catching up with me one thing is certain: I have changed gears. I left behind a stressful lifestyle as a priest and slowed down to relax and enjoy life – to grow old gracefully in my spiritual journey. God knows best where to have me transplanted so I can bloom where I am planted.



Philosophers and Prayer

BY FR. SURAIN DURAI RAJ

Introduction

The general perception in the philosophical world of studies is that prayer philosophy are distanced due to their different priorities. Prayer belongs to the ambit of spirituality and rituals which leans on theology and is directed towards God, while philosophy develops from cultivation of the intellectual appetite and is directed towards the search for the truth and the excellence of human life as directed by the advancement of reason. This distance became more visible from the Modern era of philosophy onward, whereby a shift took place, philosophers chose to move away from the methodology of the Medieval thinkers who merged philosophy and theology. philosophers of the modern and contemporary era, except for a few like George Berkeley, Soren Kierkegaard, and Blaise Pascal, saw the need to separate reason from faith so that philosophy could run its course, untattered by theology and

produce musings and exposes that are vouched as intelligibly justified by human reason instead a of reliance or a sundering on God. At least, that is how philosophy has traveled for many years after the Medieval era. Who knew if philosophers, like any of us, did pray for the best, but that is all a private affair. Interestingly, though, it was not a private matter back in the Medieval era. The philosophers of that period interpreted philosophy in the service of theology. They saw reason and faith as complementary to each other, which led to the higher answers and truths that they pursued in the work of philosophizing. Essentially, God was not detached from the human person and his/ her pursuit for existence, the meaning of life, and its teleological ends. This complement of faith and reason brought about a whole new prism of understanding from the joint perspective of philosophical reasoning coupled with the stirrings of prayerful contemplation. I wish to share two examples here.

St. Augustine of Hippo, remembering and prayer

Robin Lane Fox, who commentates on the Confessions of St. Augustine, held the opinion that 'Augustine dictated his Confessions in a rather short time span, rather than wrote them'. As a bishop, already had Augustine shorthand secretaries taking down the dictates of his sermons. Besides, dictated language carries more ease for readers than written work. Augustine's first nine books of his Confessions carried words and terms associated with the audience of his time and beyond in a casual manner. But for Augustine, his first audience is God. The Confessions is a conversation between the 'I' of Augustine and the 'You' of God. The Confessions was a prayer with his pen carrying the voice of his flesh and the cry of his thoughts.

Augustine was in his early forties by the end of the fourth century when he began to write his *Confessions*. What emerged from his long hours of silent reflection was first a chronicle of his 'what I once was', covering the first nine books of the *Confessions*. These sections were mainly autobiographical, recalling '... The sins and errors of his early years. He told of his thefts as a boy, his remarkable mother, his concubine, his membership of an outlawed religious group, his love of sex, his worldly aspirations.'

But upon entry into book X, Augustine switches to the 'what I now am.' The autobiography and mystical narratives disappear. It is taken over by the exercise



Augustine tries to seek the truth of the existence of God by way of memory.

memory, delving into something intellectually deep. Augustine was aware of his sins, which still tempted him, the pride of hearing praises of him or of his idle thoughts. But more than Augustine was aware that memory is an awe-inspiring gift from God, not just to discover who he was before God but also to recognize the God whom he has found. Thus, in Book X, Augustine tries to seek the truth of the existence of God by way memory. Memory comes remembering and hinges on the past. The expert rhetorician in him would have handled this process as an 'intellectual journey' quite convincingly, but Augustine takes the humble path of solitude to speak to the reason within him about the existence of God. 57



You see, everything vile in his life ambition, lust, pleasures, sex are all the mind. These captured are moments when the mind hates the truth for standing against the mind. Augustine also realized that the mind can also contain good impressions – beauty, fragrance, music, God. Here, the mind is ascending towards the truth. On the subject of God, the mind most especially, desires the Truth and delights in it. Thus, Augustine states that every time he discovered the truth, he discovered God. Reading further, we will discover the joy of his convictions that in the person of Jesus Christ, the Logos, the wisdom and power of God are made present to our human intelligence. The delight of where memory has brought him leads Augustine's reflections to one of the most famous phrases in the Confessions: 'Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!' (Confessions no. 10.27.38)

The expression 'late' within this phrase is qualified because Augustine knows it is impossible to arrive late towards One who is an eternal Being. The Confessions is the conversation between a finite being and an Infinite Being - Augustine and God. Through his Confessions, Augustine affirms that while the limits of human intelligence only allowed him to see small episodes of God's presence in his life, God, on the other, does not need small episodes to know Augustine. While Augustine required a longer time to know God, God sees all of time as a single event. Augustine could now understand that his pursuit of the truth was culminating in the God who had pursued him all along. All this is derived from prayer and philosophizing.

'Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!'

St. Anselm of Canterbury, thinking and prayer

Anselm, the Benedictine Prior from the Monastery at Bec in France, had already adopted Augustine as his mentor and guide in the journey of faith and reason towards God. Anselm, therefore, develops Augustine's fides quaerens intellectum (faith seeking understanding) into a new dictum but with the old meaning still intact - credo ut intelligam (believe in order that I may understand). Prompted by the request of his fellow monks to provide them a blueprint for reflecting on the existence of God, Anselm turns to thinking as reasoning out the existence of God. This does mean Anselm not abandoned faith. Like Augustine, Anselm accepted that there were two sources of knowledge: faith and reason. Of these two, faith, for Anselm, must be the starting point in the search for truth. In the Proslogion, Anselm writes: 'For I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand. For I also believe this, that unless I believe, I shall not understand... as referenced from Isaiah 7:9' (Proslogion, 1,S.1.100.18-19).

'I want to prove the existence of God. To that end I ask God to strengthen and help me'



In upholding the primacy of scripture, Anselm used the arguments of dialectical reasoning in his works, the Monologion and Proslogion, in discussing existence of God, but his dialectics was merely inside him within the discussions of his thinking. There was no one else to discuss or bounce the argument off with except God. Anselm says: 'I want to prove the existence of God. To that end I ask God to strengthen and help me' - but that is surely a much better proof of the existence of God, namely, the certainty that to prove it we need God's help. If we were able to prove the existence of God, without his help, that would be as if it were 59 less certain that he is there'.

'Quo nihil maius cogitari possit' - these five words summarize Anselm's thoughts and prayer with God. The five words that mean 'that which nothing greater can be conceived' have captured the faith and imagination of so many across centuries because this is Anselm's way of understanding the existence of God. One can already sense salient influences of Plato's Theory of Form and Neoplatonic influences in describing 'nothing greater' or 'simply the best' as criteria for God. Scholars have asked how five little words can capture the existence of God and what guarantee is there that these words capture what lies beyond them. Anselm himself was way clearer of his motives as to why he wrote five little words. He was seeking to understand (intelligere) the essence of God, not prove (probare) the existence of God per se. This is done in the hope of arriving at a satisfying appealing answer to understanding as to the existence of God, whereby the proof of His existence is already contained within the argument. In chapter two of the Proslogion, Anselm writes: 'Grant that, in so far as you know it is useful for me, I may understand that you exist as we believe you exist, and that you are what we believe you to be.'

chief Thus, Anselm's purpose understanding, and he is calling on God to help him understand God's existence even as he has believed it all this while. The singular mental focus on this prayer allows Anselm's dialogue with God to take the form of a dialectical formulation of various separate arguments, yet systematically placed in a logical format to affirm the existence of God. Anselm had in mind even the atheist and the 'Fool' of Psalm 13 who will need convincing. Such was the earnestness of his meditation that the character of the fool is placed very early in his ontological argument, suggesting that the argument that will follow in the existence of God should persuade any rational person, Christian or non.

He was seeking to understand (intelligere) the essence of God, not prove (probare) the existence of God per se.

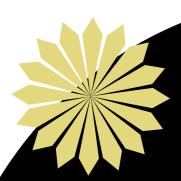


Reason and faith both lead to God.

It must be realized that reason leads to truth, and truth leads to God. Hence, faith and reason are both complimentary and rightly the 'two wings' on which the human person rises towards the Divine and enters a dialogue where the Logos, the Antropos, and the Cosmos can all meet.

Unbridled reason is something vet to be pursued totally within the corridors of the seminary and ecclesiastical faculties. but it is not to be feared as it provides a richer faith. At the time. beina same seminarians, the agenda of formation is provided for and orientated towards the service of the church and society.

I suppose formators and lecturers carry the task of being creative to marry both faith and reason in the humble task of arriving at the Truth. The objective of being seminarians at prayer and students philosophy and the other ecclesiastical sciences is not just to have a broader intellectual capacity but, more so, to use one's contemplation to engage God, who is the truth. The Medieval philosophers, as seen above, show that this is possible because....



'Faith sharpens the inner eye, opening the mind to discover in the flux of events the workings of Providence... This is to say that with the light of reason human beings can know which path to take, but they can follow that path to its end, quickly and unhindered, only if with a rightly tuned spirit they search for it within the horizon of faith. Therefore, reason and faith cannot be separated without diminishing the capacity of men and women to know themselves, the world and God in anappropriate way'

Q PHOTO ALBUM







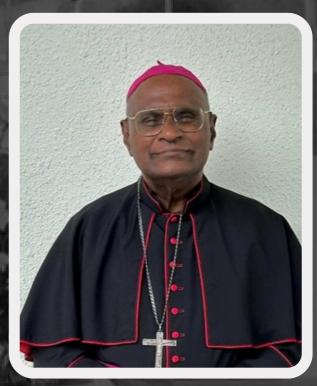
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



His Eminence, Cardinal Sebastian Francis *President*



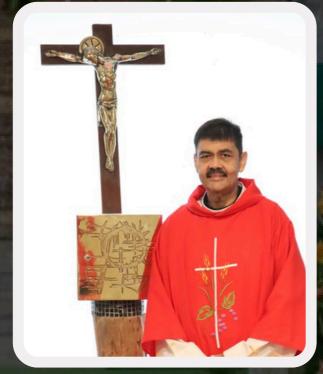
His Grace, Archbishop Julian Leow



His Lordship, Bishop Bernard Paul

FORMATORS





Very Rev. Fr. Simon Labrooy *Rector*



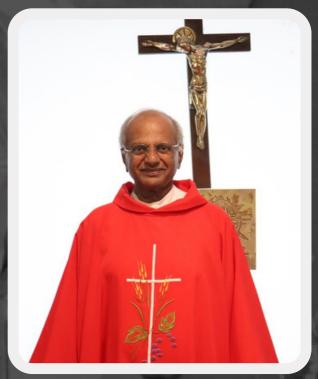
Rev. Fr. Ryan Innas Muthu Procurator

FORMATORS



Rev. Fr. Surain Durai Raj

Dean of Studies

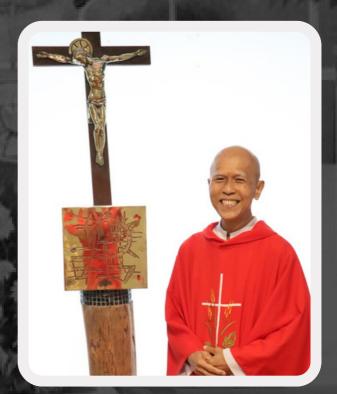


Rev. Fr. Eugene Fernandez
Spiritual Father of the House



Rev. Fr. Stephen Lim

Pastoral Coordinator



Rev. Fr. Larry Tan Spiritual Director

STAFF



Left to Right:

Maryanne a/p Anthony (Office Administrator) Neoh Lye Teng (Book Keeping) Juliana M. Michael (Part Time Librarian) Cabrinip a/p James Peter (Asst. Office Administrator)



Left to Right:

Rajkumar (General Works) Tan Paik Choo (Cook), **Caroline Victor (Cook)**



Rev. Fr. Robert Daniel
New Testament



Rev. Fr. Stanley Antoni *Metaphysics*



Rev. Fr. Jude Miranda *Liturgy*



Rev. Fr. Victor Louis

Mission History



Rev. Fr. Michael Raymond

Psycho-Spirituality



Rev. Fr. Dr. Julian Raj Theodicy



Dr. Peter Gan History of Philosophy



Mr. Jacob Moh *Intro to Philosophy*



Cardinal Sebastian Francis

Christus Dominus



Rev. Fr. Leonard Lexson Sacrosanctum Concilium



Rev. Fr. Mitchel Joseph

Lumen Gentium &

Gaudium et Spes



Rev. Fr. George Harrison
Unitatis Redintegratio &
Nostra Aetate



Rev. Fr. Frederick Joseph *Mariology*



Rev. Fr. Gerard Theraviam

Dei Verbum



Rev. Fr. Esmond Chua

Perfectae Caritatis



Dr. Steven Selvaraju

Catechism of the Catholic

Church Seminar



Dr. Roweena David

Methodology Seminar



Mr. Edwin Johnson Speech



Mdm. Anita Wee *English*



Ms. Anne Heah *English*



Ms. Maria Pushpam *Tamil*



Mr. Raymond Lim *Mandarin*



Mr. Michael Chan *Mandarin*



Rev. Fr. Gilbert James *Latin*



Ms. Karen Chin *Music*



PHILOSOPHY YEAR 2



Daniel Chan (Malacca-Johore Diocese)



Freddoline Ahsiong (Sandakan Diocese)



Jayson Wang (Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese)



Jeremia Duminggu (Kota Kinabalu Archdiocese)





Jescie Petrus (Sandakan Diocese)



Natheniel Ezrabel (Sibu Diocese)



Solomon John (Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese)

PHILOSOPHY



YEAR I



Benedict Lim
(Kota Kinabalu Archdiocese)



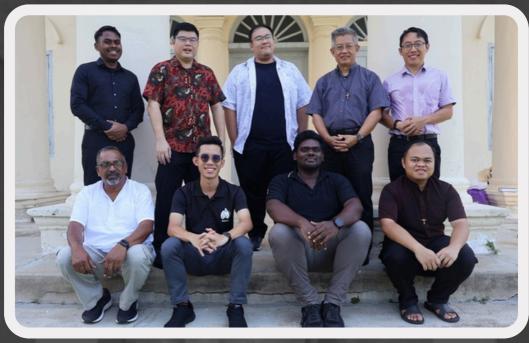
Clive Leo (Keningau Diocese)



Gerard Abraham (Kota Kinabalu Archdiocese)



Lincoln Susah
(Kuching Archdiocese)



INITIATION YEAR



Andrew Yee (Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese)



Antony Michael (Penang Diocese)



Clement Lee (Penang Diocese)



Daniel Anthony (Penang Diocese)



David Naden (Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese)



Leonard Ng (Kuala Lumpur Archdiocese)





Matthew Wee (Malacca-Johore Diocese)



Maximillian Alexson
(Order of Friars Minor)



Vincent Yip (Penang Diocese)

PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT

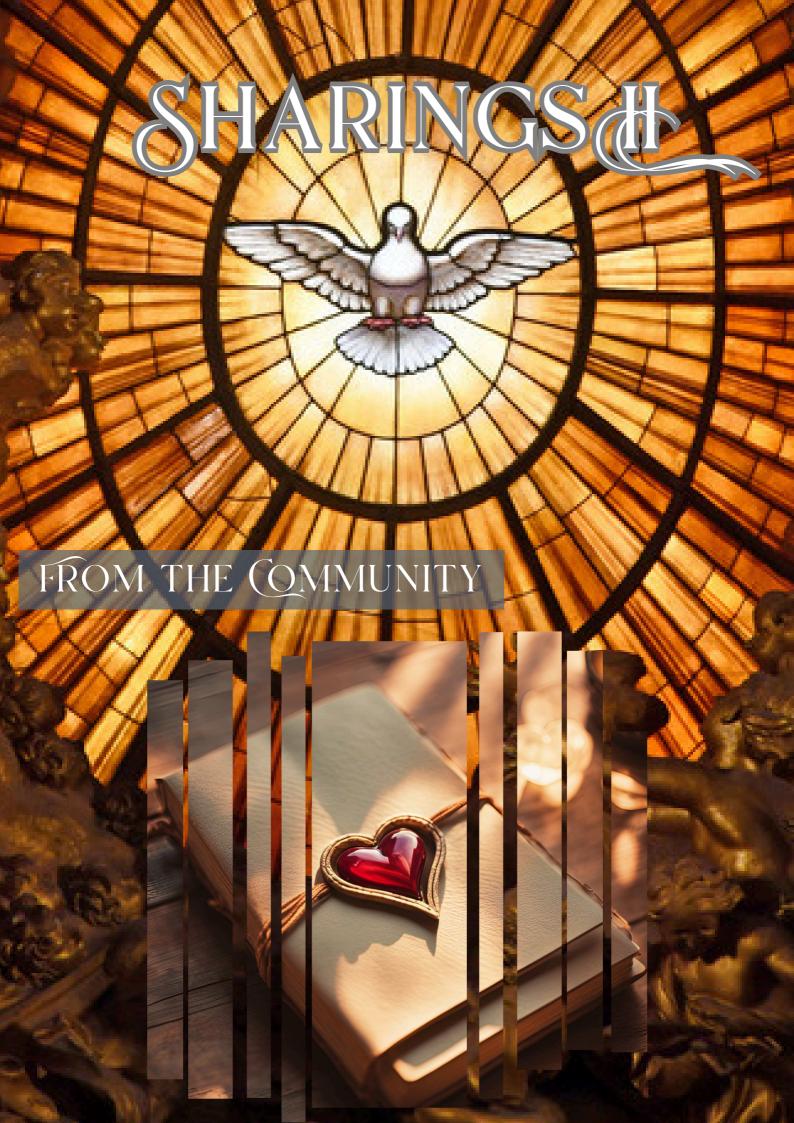


Left to Right:

Mejoery Simon (Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu)
Hilary Timothy (Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu)
Boniface Chang (Archdiocese of Kuching)
Dennis Raj a/l Rasu (Diocese of Penang)
Devson Konsung (Diocese of Keningau)
Charles Boromeo (Diocese of Sibu)
Evisdateh Paul (Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu)







"Where can you love God the most?"

by David Naden

That was the question I began to grapple with at the onset of a global pandemic. How does one begin to answer that question?

Love was first at work in the Church of St Anthony, the place where my parents fell in love and made a life-long commitment to choose love. Many people ask me how is it possible for a couple in this day and age to give up their only child to the Roman Catholic priesthood. One needed to only look at both my parents and how blessed I was to have walking examples of living the One, True, Catholic and Apostolic faith. My father would not be my father if he was not poring over the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the living room sofa. My mother would not be my mother if she was not on her knees in front of the home altar in the afternoon praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet every day. Everywhere I looked, I was surrounded by people and experiences that were conducive for a vocation to the priesthood. A supportive parish and BEC community played a huge part in teaching me how to pray the rosary, how to speak to grown-ups, not to mention, teaching me the 'Malaysian' art of fellowship.

At different moments in my life, the thought of the priesthood stirred within my heart. As an altar server, I fell in love with liturgy; down



to the minutest rubric. As a church musician, I was exposed to the beauty of liturgical worship. In my interactions with young people, I found a sense of responsibility in listening to their stories, helping them wrestle with questions of the faith. It was only a matter of time before I decided to take matters into my own hands and to start to answer questions that God was putting into my own heart.

A pivotal moment within my discernment arrived when I was visiting a Benedictine monastery in Norcia, Italy. Having already spent a few days and realising that this was not where my vocation lay, a conversation

was then had with the community prior. After a good 20 minutes or so, I asked him a question "Father Prior, how does one know where his vocation lies?" and without missing a beat, the prior replied "It's rather simple. Where can you love God the most?" And so began a three-year wrestle with this question. Where was I to love God the most? Was it as an obedient monk who found the presence of God in the cloister? Was it as a friar who loved his brothers and the people entrusted to him? Was it as a husband who gave his all to provide for his lovely wife and children? In my prayer and discernment, God did not rule out any of these instances, per se, but he invited me to see where I could use my talents to the best of my abilities. More crucially, where I could not only love Him the most, but also to be loved by Him the most in return. It is in reflecting on this invitation that the image of giving myself to Christ whole-heartedly as a parish priest to his people kept returning to me, an image that was almost always accompanied with a sense of joy and peace.



Many people wait for a sign in the skies or a booming voice from heaven to speak to them to affirm where God is calling them to. Fortunately (or unfortunately), that is not always the case. I am grateful that he chose to show me His plan for me through the every day things in life and the every day people in life. And I think that is the beauty of God in itself; His plan to meet us where we are, a plan that began with His taking on human flesh to be like us follows that he intends to be with us in our every day lives, continuing to speak and to make himself known.

'May God continue to use us as his earthen vessels, as instruments of love for divine love Himself.'

HOME BOUND MINISTRY

by Daniel Chan



In the beginning of the first semester, some of the Philosophy 2 seminarians were assigned to the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Pulau Tikus to do their pastoral there and I happened to be one of the them.

Basically, we had been assigned as Communion Ministers and to the Homebound ministry. We served and gave communion at the Sunday Mass, and visited the aged and the disabled after Mass to give Holy Communion to the persons concerned.

It was a humbling experience to bring Jesus to those who are unable to come to the Church and at the same time yearning to participate in the Holy Mass. I remember one time, an elderly person was hoping so much to receive Jesus in the church but was saddened due to the difficulty of moving around freely, however in order to bring consolation to the elderly, I said, "Don't be sad, Jesus knows your condition and He came to you instead!" It is indeed the same with our faith, He first loved us and came down from heaven to become one of us. God first created us and loved us and it is up to us to respond to His love. Although at times it is difficult to be aware of how much God loves us due to many external and internal factors, but His presence in the Eucharist is one of the ways to actually feel Him and in fact, to eat His flesh and drink His blood is a proof of how God is actually present in us and through us.

The pastoral experience in Immaculate Conception is one of my most memorable ones. To bring Jesus to people is a joy that one could experience in the journey of faith. Jesus in all circumstances is the one who is able to bring faith, hope and love in times of trial and tribulation, and it is in our faith and love towards Him that we share a life in Him even when we are helpless and at the dusk of our life. Jesus I trust in You!

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR, GEORGE TOWN

by Freddoline Ahsiong

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Sinaran 2024 team for giving me the opportunity to share my reflections on pastoral immersion or working at the Little Sisters of the Poor home to serve the elderly. As a Seminarian embarking on this type of pastoral work, it was a deeply humbling and eye-opening experience. Serving the elderly, many of whom were frail, ill or nearing the end of their lives, requires immense compassion, patience and a genuine desire to care for those in need.





Time spent with the elderly at a Little Sisters of the Poor home has deepened my understanding of the church's mission to care for the marginalised and vulnerable. Witnessing the sisters' vowed life of service was inspiring and reinforced my own calling as a seminarian to spiritual leadership and pastoral care. It has also pushed me to examine my own motivations and to recommit myself to the self-emptying love that is at the heart of priestly ministry.

In the quiet moments, I imagine, and am confounded by my own fears about aging, suffering, and mortality. Bearing witness to the resident's vulnerabilities and the sisters' tireless efforts to uphold their human dignity has inevitably stirred my own anxieties. But in that discomfort, I believe I have also encountered the profound grace that often surfaces in the midst of life's most difficult realities. Therefore, this immersive pastoral experience has shaped me in ways that no amount of classroom learning ever could. It has indelibly imprinted upon my heart the true meaning of compassion, sacrifice and the Kingdom of God breaking into the lives of the forgotten and marginalised. I have emerged from this experience both humbled and emboldened—more keenly aware of my own limitations but also more deeply convicted of the transformative power of priestly service in the future.



Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital by Clive Leo



My experience at Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital deeply resonates with Matthew 25:36: "I was sick and you visited me." During my pastoral work there, I found myself embodying this verse as I offered presence, compassion and care to those battling cancer.

The ministry of presence became profoundly clear to me. I realised that simply being there for others can manifest Christ's love. By focusing on being a good listener, I made it a priority to understand and feel the patients' emotions, rather than rushing to respond. In doing so, I honoured each person's unique journey of suffering and healing, much like how Christ journeys with us.

This calling has also prompted me to reflect on the importance of taking care of my own health. I now understand that maintaining good health is essential to serving others fully and effectively, as it enables me to be fully present for God's people, both spiritually and physically. This experience has not only deepened my pastoral skills but also fostered personal growth, helping me become more responsible in caring for myself and others. As I continue to answer my call to the priesthood, I know that the insights gained from this journey will strengthen my ministry in more profound ways.

oleh Gerard Abraham

Melalui pastoral melayani mereka yang kurang upaya di Cheshire Home, saya memperoleh nilai kerendahan hati, kehadiran diri dan ketulusan empati. Pertama-tama, keupayaan mereka untuk mencari kebahagiaan dalam detikdetik sederhana mengingatkan saya akan pentingnya rasa syukur dan keindahan hidup tanpa mengira keadaan.

Setelah mendengar perkongsian dari mereka, saya menyedari tentang makna hubungan antara sesama manusia. Mereka sangat gembira meluangkan masa bersama. Dengan ini, saya belajar bahawa kepaderian sebagai panggilan untuk hadir serta melayani mereka yang memerlukan memerlukan pendengar.

Selain itu, memerhatikan dedikasi kakitangan di sana menunjukkan nilai kasih dan kerjasama dalam pelayanan walaupun tidak semua warga menjalani kehidupan seperti manusia biasa. Maka, sebagai seorang paderi masa depan, saya bukan sahaja seorang pemimpin tetapi juga seorang pelayan membawa kasih sayang antara sesama.

Cheshire Home



Kesimpulanya, saya menyedari akan pentingnya menjadi pelayan Tuhan sebagai paderi adalah juga panggilan menjadi dorongan sumber dan penghiburan sesama. Saya sangat bersyukur membentuk kerana perjalanan rohani saya dan melengkapkan saya untuk melayani dengan kasih.

WHAT IS PRAYER TO ME?

by Jayson Wang



This is a question we should all ask ourselves. To me, prayer is how I communicate with God. It's the moment when I spiritually enter His presence and express what's in my mind and heart.

When I was younger, I believed prayer was simply a way to ask for things, like making wishes to God. I would feel angry when things didn't go the way I wanted. If my needs weren't met, or my desires unfulfilled, I would throw a temper tantrum to God. Eventually, I left the church after school, feeling resentful—much like running away from home.

Two decades later, I returned to the church because I felt His call. It was then that I learned how to reflect and contemplate. Looking back, I realise God was always there, listening to me, even when I didn't pray. I can see now, that He protected me and gave me what I truly needed, not because He didn't love me, but because He wanted the best for me—things that were good for me.

Later, I discovered that prayer must be paired with action. When I pray for something, I also need to act on it. For example, if I pray for God's protection, I must also take care of myself. I can't just pray for success on an exam without studying. Prayer requires action; otherwise, it's like hoping for a miracle without doing my part. I always remind myself: mean what you pray. Prayer is communication with God, not just a wish for good things.

At one point, I questioned why I needed to pray if God already knows what's in my heart and mind. Then, I realized that beyond being a reminder for my actions, prayer is a way to draw closer to God. It's personal time spent with Him. That's why, in addition to structured prayers like devotionals or divine office prayers, I also take time for personal prayer, sharing my thoughts and feelings as if I were speaking with someone I trust—someone who understands me and loves me. Many times, during community prayer I felt the presence of God especially whenever I'm going through challenges. Also, I felt the companionship and accompaniment whenever prayers are recited or chanted together. Through these prayers, my relationship with God and community grows deeper.

A life of prayer is essential, whether through formal prayers or personal ones. Each form of prayer has its own intention, direction, and purpose. Ultimately, prayer is about spending time with God, conversing with Him, and feeling His presence in our lives.

"Prayer is not just an act—act on your prayers."



Pengembaraan Meninggalkan Diri: Menemui Tuhan dalam Keheningan

oleh Natheniel Ezrabel



Di tengah hiruk-pikuk kehidupan seharian tatkala melangkah sendirian, membasuh pinggan mangkuk, atau menghirup seteguk kopi di pagi hari—ada kala tersingkap detikdetik hening yang seakan-akan menjemput kita menyusur ke alam yang lebih dalam, melampaui kesibukan dunia dan kekusutan akal budi kita. Dalam detik yang tampak biasa ini, tersembunyi suatu seruan halus kepada doa dalam maknanya yang paling agung, satu panggilan agar kita melepaskan keinginan akan kepastian dan kuasa, demi mencapai pertemuan dengan rahsia Ilahi. Di sinilah terletaknya hakikat doa yang sebenar: bukan sekadar medan mencari ketenangan atau pembuktian diri, tetapi ruang untuk melatih hati agar berani melepaskan.

Sebagaimana ujaran Meister Eckhart,
"Untuk memiliki Tuhan sepenuhnya,
seseorang harus melepaskan diri
sepenuhnya," begitulah doa mengajak kita
keluar dari lingkaran kesedaran diri, menuju
kepada hadirat-Nya. Kata Santo Thomas
Aquinas, "Allah dikenali melalui kasih," yang
menyiratkan bahawa doa bukanlah urusan
memahami dengan akal, tetapi gerakan hati
yang melampaui batas logik, di mana akal
tunduk kepada kekaguman yang kudus. Doa
mengundang kita untuk menempuh suatu
pengalaman yang serupa dengan malam

gelap, sebagaimana diungkapkan oleh Santo Yohanes dari Salib—satu tahap di mana Tuhan seakan-akan bersembunyi, bukan untuk menjauhkan diri tetapi untuk membuka ruang, agar iman kita melampaui batas akal dan tersandar pada percaya yang murni. Dalam detik inilah, doa menjadi perjalanan meninggalkan diri, menanggalkan sandaran ego yang terikat pada kepastian, memanggil kita ke arah keheningan yang merungkai dan menggetarkan jiwa.

Di sebalik keheningan doa ini tersembunyi suatu paradoks yang mendalam. Doa bukan semata-mata pencarian, tetapi juga kelapangan hati untuk melepaskan; ia bukanlah medan menyelesaikan teka-teki, tetapi pintu ke alam di mana segala persoalan terungkai tanpa jawapan. Doa bukan lagi satu pencapaian, tetapi pembersihan, pembebasan dari ilusi kawalan, dan satu langkah menuju tanpa diri-bukan untuk menafikan keberadaan kita, tetapi menemukan diri yang sebenar dalam hubungan yang tulus dengan Tuhan. Diri kita menjadi laksana cermin yang lutsinar, terbuka kepada pertemuan Ilahi, saat kasih yang melampaui segala hitungan memenuhi ruang batin kita.

Aquinas turut menyuarakan bahawa doa bukanlah sekadar urusan dagang jiwa; ia adalah ikatan kasih yang mengubah jiwa. "Doa itu latihan utama harapan," katanya. Harapan ini bukanlah keperluan diri untuk menggenggam atau memiliki, tetapi kepercayaan yang murni, bahawa tatkala kita menyerahkan diri dengan ikhlas, kita diterima sepenuhnya oleh Tuhan dalam satu perhubungan yang tidak sekadar mengesahkan atau menafikan diri, tetapi membawa kita melangkaui segala batas duniawi. Maka, doa itu menjadi satu tindakan kasih yang luhur, sebuah penyerahan penuh keikhlasan, yang membentuk hidup kita agar lebih sedar akan kehadiran Tuhan di setiap detik dan saat.

Tatkala kita kembali kepada rutin yang biasa, doa mengingatkan kita bahawa setiap momen mampu menjadi jeda kudus, suatu sela suci untuk melepaskan segala kepastian dan menyambut misteri Ilahi yang tak tersingkap. Akhirnya, doa membawa kita kepada renungan ini: Apakah pengetahuan yang sebenar tentang diri hanya dapat ditemukan bukan dalam kepastian, tetapi dalam kesediaan untuk dileburkan dalam misteri Tuhan? Mungkin doa itu bukan sekadar jalan mencari jawapan, tetapi sebuah laluan yang membuka jiwa, mengundang kita untuk benar-benar bersedia menerima kasih yang melampaui segala kefahaman dan perhitungan akal.



'Maka, doa itu menjadi satu tindakan kasih yang luhur, sebuah penyerahan penuh keikhlasan, yang membentuk hidup kita agar lebih sedar akan kehadiran Tuhan di setiap detik dan saat.'

祈祷就是希望,天主就是希望

by Vincent Yip



在我们生活中,每个人都会遇到困难、失落、和不确定的时刻。在这些时刻,祈祷成了心灵的寄托,也是希望的象征。通过祈祷,我们向天主寻求指引和力量,让自己在面临挑战时不再感到孤单。天主是永恒的希望,是祈祷的核心,也是人们灵魂深处那不灭的信念。

祈祷不仅仅是语言的表达,它更是一种内心的渴望,是我们向天主敞开心扉,向祂倾诉忧虑、恐惧、甚至是绝望的一种方式。通过祈祷,我们寻找到一丝希望和一份安心。无论是求助的祷告、悔改的祷告,还是感恩的祷告,所有的祈祷都包含着对未来的期许和对光明的信念。

祈祷让我们相信,天主是信仰的核心和希望的源泉,永远愿意倾听我们的祷告。我们可以将所有的恐惧和痛苦交托于祂,而祂会以爱和关怀回应。正如《圣咏》中所写的:"凡呼求上主的,即真诚呼求他的,上主必亲近他们;敬畏他的人,他必成全他们的心愿,也必俯听他们的哀祷,使他们得救。《圣咏 145:18-19》

祈祷也让我们学会感恩、包容、和耐心。信仰天主让我们深信一切事情都在祂的计划之中,即使当下无法理解,也能以更积极的心态去面对生活的起伏,因为我们知道天主始终在引领我们。祂的爱无所不在,而这种爱让我们在最黑暗的时刻也能找到光明。祈祷中的希望,是对美好生活的渴望,是对爱与和平的信念。通过祈祷,我们变得更有耐心,更加宽容,更愿意帮助他人。祈祷让我们心怀希望地走向每一个明天。

祈祷就是希望。在祈祷中我们可以从天主那里获得力量和指引。天主就是希望,因为祂的爱让我们相信生活中总有光明,总有温暖,总有和平。无论生活多么艰难,信仰天主便意味着在困境中始终拥有不灭的希望。祂是我们灵魂深处那颗光亮的灯塔,指引着我们走过风雨,迈向阳光明媚的未来。愿每一个祈祷的人都能感受到天主的慈爱,并在祂的引导下走向更充实、更幸福的生活。

REFLECTIONS ON PRAYER



by Daniel Anthony

ஜெபம் என் வாழ்வில் ஒரு திறவுகோல் ஆகும். நான் நடுத்தர குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்தவனாவேன். சிறு வயதிலிருந்தே என் பெற்றோரின் கஷ்டங்களை அறிந்து எவை மீதும் ஆசைப்பட்டதில்லை எனலாம். எவ்வளவு கஷ்டங்கள் வந்தாலும் கடவுளை விடாமல் அவருக்கு நன்றி கூறி ஜெபிக்கும் என் பெற்றோர்களே இதற்கு முன்னுதாரணம் ஆவார்கள். ஆகவே, நானும் என் பெற்றோர்களைப் போல் எப்பொழுதெல்லாம் கஷ்டங்களை மேற்கொள்கிறேனோ அப்போதெல்லாம் ஜெபம் செய்யும் பொழுது என்னுடைய கஷ்டங்கள் அனைத்தும் பனி போல் நீங்குவதை நான் பார்த்தேன். ஜெபத்தின் வல்லமையை உணர்ந்து நான் கஷ்டங்களை எதிர்கொள்ளும் போது மட்டுமல்லாமல் வாழ்வில் வெற்றிகளையும் சந்தோஷங்களையும் சந்திக்கும் பொழுதும் ஜெபத்தின் வழியாக கட்வுளுக்கு நன்றி சொல்லத் தொடங்கினேன். தொடர்ந்து, எனக்கு இசை மீது அதிகமான ஆசை உண்டு என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை. கின்னரப்பெட்டி (பியானோ) கற்றுக் கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்று விரும்பினேன். ஆனால், கற்றுக் கொள்ளும் வகுப்பிற்கு அனுப்பும் அளவிற்கு இசைக்கருவி வசதியில்லாததால் என்னால் கின்னரப்பெட்டி (பியானோ) கற்றுக் கொள்ள இயலவில்லை. ஒரு நாள், நான் இயேசுவைப் பார்த்து கின்னரப்பெட்டி (பியானோ) கற்றுக் கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்று ஜெபம் செய்த பொழுது தூய உதவிகளால் இரண்டு மாதத்தில் வலையொளியில் இணையத்தின் வழியாகவும் மற்றும் இசைக்கருவியின் மேல் இருக்கும் ஆர்வத்தில் மிக விரைவாகக் கற்றுக் கொண்டேன். திருப்பலியில் பாடல்களைச் சரளமாக வாசிக்கத் தொடங்கினேன். அதுமட்டுமல்லாமல், இசையமைப்பாளர் ஆகவும் எனக்கு வாய்ப்புகள் வந்தது. அதோடு, இசையை கொள்ளாத நான் கர்னாட்டிக் இசையையும் சரியாகக் கற்றுக் இசையமைக்கத் தொடங்கினேன். நான் அவரிடம் கேட்டதோ இசை மட்டுமே, ஆனால் அவர் எனக்குக் கொடுத்தது இசையில் பல வாய்ப்புகளாகும். இது போல் ஆசீர் கொடைகள் ஜெபம் வழி எனக்கு கிடைக்கப் பெற்றது.

REFLECTIONS ON PRAYER

ஒரு நாள் திருப்பலியில் நான் மறையுரை கேட்டுக் கொண்டிருக்கும் போது, குருவானவர் மத்தேயு 11:28-30 நற்செய்தியைப் பற்றிக் கூறினார். அப்போது என் மனதில் ஒரு தாக்கம் ஏற்பட்டதால் நான் இறைவனிடம் ஜெபம் வழியாக கேட்பத்தை விட்டு மாறாக, ஜெபம் வழியாக ஒப்படைக்கவும், மேலும் அவருடைய விருப்பம் போல் நிகழட்டும் என்று ஜெபம் செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தேன். இன்னும் கடவுளோடு அதிகமான நேரத்தை உணர்ந்தேன்.

ஒரு அழகான உறவைக் கண்டுபிடித்தேன். இதற்கு முன் அவருடைய ஆசீரையும் மற்றும் வல்லமையும் மட்டுமே உணர்ந்த நான், இப்போது அவருடைய அன்பையும் அழைப்பையும் புரிந்துக் கொள்ள முடிந்தது. என் ஜெபம் வெறும் வேண்டுதல் என இருந்தது. ஆனால் இப்போது என் ஜெபம், தந்தைக்கும் பிள்ளைக்கும் இடையிலான ஒரு அழகான உரையாடலாக மாறிவிட்டது. சில திருப்பலியில் வருடங்கள் கழித்து குருவானவர் இயேசுவின் திரு உடலையும் திரு இரத்தத்தையும் உயர்த்தி (Doxology) பாடும் போது, நான் எப்போதும் போல் இயேசுவின் திரு உடலை நோக்கிப் பார்த்து ஜெபித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தேன். அப்போது இயேசுவின் திரு முகக் காட்சியை சிறு நொடியே பார்த்தேன். அப்போது நான் ஒரு குருவானவராக ஆகவேண்டும் என்று ஆழமாக மனதில் பதிந்தது. இப்போது நான் குருமாணவனாக பினாங்கில் (குரு நான் கல்லூரி) பயில்கிறேன். தூய பாட்ரே பியோ சொல்வது போல், "ஜெபம் நமக்குள் சிறந்த ஆயுதம்." அதற்கு ஏற்றவாறு எனக்கு சேர்ந்த கவசமும் ஆயுதமும் நான் செய்யும் ஜெபமே ஆகும். இன்று நான் நினைத்து பார்க்கும் விஷயங்களை இறைவன் எனக்கு கொடுத்திருக்கிறார்.



"என் வாழ்க்கையில் ஜெபம் என்பது தந்தைக்கும் பிள்ளைக்கும் இடையிலான ஒரு அழகான உரையாடலாகும்".

PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT REFLECTIONS

MY PRAYER LIFE

by Evis Dateh



Prayer is the primary method through which I communicate with God. It is my way of praising, thanking, asking for forgiveness, assistance, and protection from God. It is more than simply an activity or obligation that I have to fulfil every day; it is a spiritual experience that takes me closer to God, even if I do not always sense God's presence while I pray. This does not mean that God is not present in my life.

In this sharing, I would like to share my prayer experience before and after joining the seminary, as well as throughout my one-year pastoral accompaniment at **St. Ignatius Church, PJ.** My experience and understanding of prayer have evolved over time as is my understanding of God. This shift is a result of my life experiences. I would also like to use this opportunity to share how I integrate prayer life into pastoral accompaniment.

Before entering the seminary, I had a totally different notion of prayer. It was one of the hardest things for me to do every day, and when I did pray, it was only because I had to, I wanted something, or I was in difficulty. Furthermore, I prayed because I desired to be saved, unaware that I was lying to God since I did not do it sincerely. However, everything changed when I joined the seminary. I discovered that prayer should be done willingly, honestly and sincerely, not just in the times of hardship or when I want something. Other than that, prayer teaches me patience since the petition I ask for is not always granted immediately; instead, God requires me to wait until the petition is answered. In 2009, I prayed to meet my father, as I had not seen him since I was five years old. And in 2012, I actually met him. Until I joined the seminary and after going through contemplation and meditation, I discovered that God answers our prayers at the correct time, sometimes when we don't expect it. God took a long time to answer my prayer to see my father, but yes, He answered it.

Currently, during my year of pastoral accompaniment, my understanding of prayer is changing. Now I try to develop trust in God by believing in him. Three days before I started my pastoral, I nearly decided not to go because I was scared; I feared I would not be able to do my best due to my weaknesses, particularly in speaking English. Yet I decided to leave everything to God, trusting that He would always provide me with the strength to keep going. I devoted myself entirely to God. While undergoing my pastoral, I tried new ways to integrate my way of praying since it was not the same as when I was at the seminary, where we are scheduled to pray together.

Before beginning my pastoral accompaniment, I expected to have time to pray, as I did at the seminary, but this was not the case. There were several impediments that hindered me from praying consistently. The sudden shift in schedule and environment required me to adjust for several weeks, particularly with regard to time management for prayer, unlike in the seminary, where we have a fixed time to pray together. Here I have to make my own time to pray, as there is no set prayer routine. We only pray together in the morning and pray individually the rest of the day due to the circumstances surrounding us - several activities including meetings, accompanying the priest to minister to the ill, home blessings, and so on. The Parish priests have their own work and pastoral responsibilities, so we won't always have time to pray together. All this required me to properly plan my prayer time.



One of the ways I remain firm in prayer is to pray the rosary with the congregation. Aside from that, I recite the Divine Office before the daily mass begins. I also attend mass every day to develop a love for the Eucharist. This allows me keep my constancy in prayer while also developing my connection with God. Following the Holy Hour every week also helps me draw closer to God. It reminds me of Jesus' presence in my life. He is truly there in my life, even if I do not feel it at all times.



This pastoral year has made me realise and be more aware that prayer is an essential aspect of a seminarian's formation and preparation for priesthood. Even though nothing seems to be changing in my life after praying many times, I need to integrate prayer into my everyday routine since that is what a future priest is called to during his formation period. I recall a priest telling me, "Pray even if you feel your prayers are not being answered because it is the prayer that will save you in your time of need," and adding, "A priest must be seen praying in front of the altar by the people." These words have motivated me to keep praying, even when I am tired of it and do not have the desire to do so.

PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT REFLECTIONS

WHEN PRAYER MEETS PASTORAL: A JOURNEY OF FAITH IN ACTION

by Mejoery Simon

There was a time during my seminary years when my prayer life felt structured and almost predictable. I would begin each day with morning prayer, follow the rhythm of the Divine Office, attend daily Mass, and spend time in adoration. I could feel God's presence deeply and my prayer life had a clear sense of order. It was, in many ways, the foundation of my daily life and service.

However, since stepping out to pastoral life, I've realised that my prayer life hasn't been the same as it was in the seminary. I've had to adapt and adjust. The once predictable structure has been replaced by unpredictable patterns of parish (meetings, events, and unexpected pastoral needs). There are days when I struggle to find time for prayer amid the busyness. Yet, I've come to see that this new way of praying, though different, has opened up a deeper understanding of prayer something that is integrated into every moment of my day.

A particular moment that underlined the change was preparing for the Sacred Heart of Jesus formation for the English BEC group here at **Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Kulim, Kedah.** I remember sitting at my desk late one evening, overwhelmed by the task of preparing content that would



both inform and inspire. In a moment of anxiety, I closed my eyes and prayed, not with words, but with a deep surrender of everything I was holding onto. It was then I realised that prayer didn't have to happen in perfect moments of silence; it could happen right there during preparation. That simple act of surrender brought peace, and I felt God's presence guiding me.

As the formation day approached, I continued to turn to prayer, especially when faced with moments of doubt. I wanted the members to encounter Christ through the Sacred Heart devotion, but I wasn't sure if I could deliver its deep meaning. During one particular prayer, I was reminded of Christ's invitation, "Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). This became the theme of my presentation and reminded me that my role was simply to invite others to experience the love of Christ, trusting that God would do the rest.

Adapting to New Rhythms of Prayer. Stepping into pastoral has required me to rediscover what prayer means in the context of everyday service. The seminary's fixed timetables are gone, but the invitation to constant prayer remains, to live a life in which prayer becomes part of everything I do each day. It's no longer about finding the perfect time or place to pray but about inviting God into every aspect of my duties. Whether I'm leading a youth program like Prayer Warriors or guiding a discussion on the ALPHA program, I've learned to pray in quiet moments between activities, asking for wisdom and strength to serve the people God has entrusted to me.



I remember talking one young person, struggling with personal challenges, who approached me to talk about feeling distant from God. At that moment, I felt a connection to my own struggles with prayer. I shared my experience of learning to pray amidst the busyness and feeling anxiety, reassuring them that even when we don't feel God's presence, He is still near. We prayed together, and I witnessed how God works even through our doubts and uncertainties.

The Connection between Prayer and Service. This new way of praying has led me to consider my pastoral duties as an extension of my prayer life. When I'm among parishioners, whether it's for a BEC formation, event planning or simply hearing someone share their experience, I've learned to be totally present, seeing every interaction as a kind of prayer. There are times when I don't have the answers or feel insufficient, but I've learned to believe that God is there and working through me, even when I'm weak or unsure.

I often find myself returning to a passage from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians: "Never worry about anything, but tell God all your desires of every kind in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude, and the peace of God which is beyond our understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7). This scripture has become a guiding light, reminding me that every task, every conversation and every challenge can be entrusted to God through prayer. It's this trust in God's guidance that sustains me in the day-to-day challenges of pastoral life.

Prayer as the Heartbeat of Service.

As my pastoral work continues, I've realized that prayer is more than simply something I do; it moulds who I am as a servant of God. Even though my prayer life doesn't look the same as it did in the seminary, it has deepened in ways I couldn't have expected. It is no longer about finding perfect moments of quietness, but rather about being always open to God's presence in what I do. Whether I'm preparing for a sharing, visiting the sick or just meeting parishioners after Mass, I try to dedicate all of these experiences to God in prayer.

The busyness of pastoral life will always be there, but I am learning that the key is not to try and separate prayer from service. Rather, it is to allow prayer to enter every aspect of my service, to let it be the heartbeat that gives life to everything I do.

As St. Augustine once said, "True, whole prayer is nothing but love." This is what I seek for to make my prayer life a deep expression of love for God and His people, so that every act of service, no matter how small, may grow into a gift of love. Through the combination of prayer and service, I find the courage to persevere, knowing that God is always with me, guiding me every step of the way.



OFFICE BEARERS 2024



STUDENT

EXCO



CAPUT : JESCIE PETRUS PETU

MATERIAL LIFE : LINCOLN SUSAH

INTELLECTUAL &: NATHENIEL EZRABEL

CULTURAL LIFE

LITURGICAL LIFE: GERARD ABRAHAM

SPORTS LIFE: MATTHEW WEE

MATERIAL

LIFE



GUEST MASTER



MAINTENANCE

(CHIEF: CLIVE)



DRIVERS



FISH POND



REFECTORIANS

(CHIEF: BENEDICT)



GARDENERS

(CHIEF: FREDDOLINE)

LITURGICAL

LIFE



SACRISTANS

(CHIEF: JAYSON WANG)



MUSICIANS

(CHOIR MASTER: JEREMIA DUMINGGU)



BELL RINGERS

INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE



SINARAN TEAM

(CHIEF: MATTHEW)



MOVIE NIGHTS



TAMIL SANGGAM

(CHIEF: DANIEL ANTHONY)



WEN HUA

(CHIEF: LEONARD)



EAST MALAYSIAN
CULTURE

(CHIEF: LINCOLN)

SPORTS

LIFE



INFIRMARIAN



SPORTS EQUIPMENT

GOD IS YOU!

Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu

Diocese of Keningau

Rev. Fr. Roney Mailap

roneypeter@gmail.com

014 - 202 8516

Rev. Fr. Mattheus Luta

matheusluta@yahoo.com

013 - 887 7835

Rev. Fr. Louis Loi 016 - 411 7214

Diocese of Penang

louisloiboonchew@gmail.com

Rev. Fr. Vincent Thomas

Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur

03 - 609 16907 vincent@archkl.org

Archdiocese of Kuching

Rev. Fr. Robert Jissem 010 - 962 4593 robertjissem@gmail.com

Diocese of Sandakan

Rev. Fr. Christopher Ireneus 010 - 952 0822 saintmartintelupid@gmail.com



Diocese of Miri

Rev. Fr. Henry Saleh 019 - 828 3285 persevero89henry@yahoo.com

Diocese of Sibu

Rev. Fr. Simon Lau 014 - 690 1608 simonlausengwuu@gmail.com



Rev. Fr. Adrian Francis 012 - 394 7986 vocations@mjdiocese.my

Diocese of Malacca Johore



LISTEN TO HIS HEART.....

COMEJOINUS IN 2025!

