

# *Sinaran*

2017





*College General  
Community Prayer  
2017*

O God, creator of the universe  
and fountain of hope  
and consolation,  
look with mercy  
on this world of ours,  
marred and split by conflict,  
hatred and discord.  
We are deeply troubled  
by injustice, immorality,  
violence and prejudice.

Empower us, Lord,  
to be joyful disciples  
witnessing hope  
in this broken world.  
May our testimony of hope  
penetrate our community  
and the persons we encounter  
in our ministry.

Send forth Your Spirit,  
O Lord, and renew the face  
of the earth. We ask you this  
in union with Christ and the  
Holy Spirit, and through the  
intercession of Mary,  
the Mother of Hope.  
Amen.



**DISCIPLES WITNESSING  
HOPE  
IN A BROKEN WORLD**

Theme:

**Disciples Witnessing HOPE in a Broken World**

The image used on the cover page depicts our community logo for the year 2017.

The **People** around the globe of various races are disciples striving to bring hope in a broken world.

The **Globe** represents the present world and humanity which is marred and split by conflict, hatred, discord, injustice, immorality, violence and prejudice.

The **Dove** represents the Holy Spirit hovering over the world to renew the face of the earth.

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# The Editorial Team

The tradition of College General lives on through the publishing of Sinaran which is intended to assist those who are discerning to reflect on the Vocation to the Diocesan Priesthood.

This year, we began lent with the inaugural visit of the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Joseph Salvador Marino who celebrated Ash Wednesday with the community. We were happy to sense the presence of Pope Francis through Archbishop Marino as he gave us rosaries blessed by the Pontiff Himself; and even more delighted were we as he declared a holiday for us! We had the pleasure of two new members for the staff: Fr. Stephen Lim from the Archdiocese of Kuching and Fr Simon Labrooy from the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur.

After much discussion the community adopted the theme "Disciples Witnessing Hope in a Broken World", giving expression to our unity with the Church in Peninsular Malaysia. Seminarians are disciples who aspire to imitate the heart of Jesus. Hence, to be disciples of Jesus is to be bringers of Hope in a Broken World.

Sinaran 2017 this year has three sections. Our readers are invited to comment on the stories, testimonies, sharings and reflections of these friends of Jesus.

The first section consists of Vocation Stories. The second section focuses on how our formation here is moulding us to be disciples witnessing Hope in a Broken World and the third section zooms in on our pastoral activities that help keep us grounded to the broken world

The Editorial Team wishes to express our sincere gratitude to the bishops, fathers and seminarians who contributed articles to this issue, allowing the readers to have a glimpse into our lives in College General.

We also thank those who have contributed and helped us directly or indirectly to produce Sinaran 2017. Next year, *mutatis mutandis* we hope to work towards an online production of events and activities during the year.



With Best Wishes For A Blessed Merry Christmas 😊

**Editorial Team 2017 - Ricky, Gabriel, George, Msgr. James**

## The President Speaks

At the beginning of this academic year 2017, we, Bishops Julian, Bernard and myself bring you greetings of Mercy and Hope. We, the Peninsular Malaysian Bishops are responsible for this regional seminary of College General. We also bring greetings from the other bishops who have seminarians here, especially from Sabah and Sarawak. I also take this opportunity to welcome all the staff both old and new, especially Fr. Stephen Lim from Kuching, Sarawak, and all the seminarians both old and new.

"Today's first reading is about Wisdom and another name for wisdom is 'Discernment'. Pope Francis said that we need discerning priests. Discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit and discernment is also to know what comes from the Holy Spirit and what does not come from the Holy Spirit. So you are here to be formed to be discerning seminarians. Discernment is a process which helps you to identify what is God's plan for you, for the church and for the nation. Thus we are committed to form discerning seminarians who will become discerning priests in the future.

"Moreover, we need to pray like the desperate father in today's Gospel "I do have faith but help the little faith I have" (Mk. 9:24). We will pray that you be formed in the faith while you are here. We will have to discern with you your motive for wanting

to enter the seminary and purify it. Seminarians will be given all the help in the Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, Community and Pastoral areas of formation. And I am sure that all of us will have to purify our motives during this time of formation. This is the place where you and I, formators and seminarians will continuously learn the art of discernment.

"We are not here to form 'Bosses' , 'CEOs' , 'Pharisees' , 'Scribes' or 'Taikos' , but to form disciples, shepherds, pastors and priests after the heart and mind of Jesus Christ. We have to form Visionaries and Missionaries and our specialization is to become experts in the ministry of proclaiming the Gospel, governing the Christian community and the sanctification of souls. Thus, I ask you to be very open to this kind of formation. This is the place to look at our vocation with faith, courage, simplicity and truth. So I pray that you will have the gift of trusting your formators as we work together in line with this year's theme where we are called to "Be Disciples of Hope" for a Malaysian Church. Finally, I invite all of you to enjoy this formation and grow to be mature men of God and priests of the Malaysian Church one day."



## Living in Hope

*Sebastian Francis*

**RT. REV. SEBASTIAN FRANCIS**  
Bishop of Penang  
President of the seminary  
Board of Directors



Kuala Lumpur, 25 March 2017  
Feast of the Annunciation

I am very happy to greet the staff and seminarians of College General that I had the happy occasion to visit on Ash Wednesday, 1 March 2017, during which time, I was able to meet you personally and witness first-hand the commitment of all of you in the journey towards priesthood in service to God and to the Church.

As you know, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has dedicated much attention to priests, whose ministry is indispensable in the life and growth of the Church. Just recently he lamented that the shortage of priests limits us in caring totally for the People of God who each day are searching for the Gospel, whose "message speaks to the deepest yearnings of people's hearts" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, EG, 266)

Yet, we know the dynamic of proclaiming the Gospel. St Paul teaches us that we cannot believe, if we had not heard the message; and we cannot hear the message, unless someone is sent; and someone can only be sent, if he is called (Romans 10:14ff). You, dear seminarians, are being called, in order to be sent to bring the Good News in all its richness to your people.

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**"To be sent is to be *active*  
... *means proximity*  
... **bring people *hope*"****

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To be sent is more than just an eventual assignment in a ministry in the diocese. To be sent requires an attitude into which one must be formed, especially during the time of the seminary. What does the formation in "being sent" entail?

To be sent is to be active, not passive. It means to go out to meet people where they are, where they live, where they interact, where they recreate. It is the opposite of passively sitting in our rectories waiting for people to come to us. In other words, it means "to get involved in word and deed in people's daily lives" (EG, 24). It signifies that we must be ready and willing to go to the "peripheries, geographically and spiritually.

To be sent means proximity that is, being close to others, not distant or aloof, not judgmental or condescending. It signifies that we live a life of "face-to-face encounters" (EG, 88 and following). Proximity is not only physical, it also entails a spirit of empathy, which is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, especially those who are suffering and waiting for the soothing balm of God's mercy.

To be sent means to bring people hope, which arises from our being a people of mercy and compassion giving others a new chance in life, by embracing, with the purpose of re-integrating into society and into the Church, those who live on the margins.

Be assured of my prayers as you continue on this remarkable journey of being men sent into the vineyard of the Lord.

+ *Joseph Marino*  
+ **JOSEPH MARINO**  
Apostolic Nuncio

# LOOKING BACK... MOVING ON... *With hope....*

Having spent most of the last seventeen years of my life at College General, it has been a great adventure moving out into the free-flow of a sabbatical experience, far away from the familiar, opening myself to new horizons.

Have I missed the seminary? The people, certainly!

I think of the things I might have wanted to achieve and never got down to finishing and I smile wistfully — and then I look on ahead to distant horizons that beckon, and I step out gingerly at first, but gradually stride out confidently and certainly with hope! I am indeed joyful to have moved on. One can get stale and tired in the same space, feeling that one has nothing new or exciting to offer, and yet confident that others will continue to build on what has been there before. Hence, I am grateful to the bishops who listened to my desires for my break — not just in terms of the sabbatical, but also to break away from seminary ministry to ultimately return to my first love, parish ministry.

My sabbatical at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago is proving to be an opportunity to rest, refresh, renew and re-create with God. It has been exciting to travel and study again, to see a whole different world and varying pastoral initiatives, but it is also a time for introspection — to catch my breath and to look within, to recognize my own brokenness and allow myself to find healing and wholeness. And so, hope abounds when I consider the grace of this precious time.

I look back at my years in the seminary as having been a blessed time. In my ups and downs, I hold precious the presence of persons who were a part of my life and ministry who helped form me, even as I myself sought to form seminarians. I cherish friendships and relationships with previous rectors, formators, students and staff that allowed me to grow and develop into the person I am. I am grateful to the bishops and my brother priests, family, friends and parishioners who were a constant support in my endeavours to do my very best. I loved the ministry of accompanying seminarians, delighting in seeing God's presence and action, acknowledging also my disappointment and frustration when they didn't live out their full potential. I enjoyed teaching, just as I

enjoyed learning. I recall some leaving the seminary who were then one step closer to discovering their true vocations. I recount my deep-felt joy and even tears at ordinations when I saw the birth of a new priest. I cherish the feasts and solemn liturgies as well as the simple, silent presences in the prayer-room and chapel. I rejoice in the magnificent sunrises which beckoned me away from my preoccupation with the busyness of life. I recall meetings, fun times, meals, conversations, choir practices — the list goes on. I certainly will not forget the difficult moments, the failures, the sighs and tears — for they too were part of my journey.

But I have moved on...with these memories in the recesses of my mind and heart — and onward to make many new memories....

Fare-Thee-Well,  
my dear alma  
mater and family  
— you will always  
be home to me.

In prayer, love and  
peace,

**GERARD THERAVIAM**

*20 September, 2017  
— Feast of Sts. Imbert  
and Chastan,  
Martyrs and Saints  
of College General*



# JESUS HEALS BROKENNESS

## JESUS AND BROKENNESS

Jesus heals brokenness. This is a fact. His presence, words and actions whether they are gentle and patient or strong and insistent always heal. Nobody leaves without being healed. They are either affirmed or challenged to be mature, wholesome and saintly. In short people experience a God who heals in Jesus. Every encounter with Jesus hence fortifies hope.

## BROKEN WORLD

We are living in a broken world. This is also a fact. A world marked by hatred, betrayal, addiction, depression and corruption. Various statistics confirm this reality.

Living in this broken world, we experience pain. Our pain is not just physical. It can be spiritual too, such as loneliness, emptiness and meaninglessness. These spiritual pains are more painful than the physical pains.

## PRIESTHOOD AND BROKENNESS

Another fact is priesthood. Priests act in the person of Christ the Head. Like Jesus, priests heal brokenness. By doing so, they become disciples of hope.

Priests however can never be disciples of hope, if they refuse to embrace and heal their own brokenness. Brokenness is not just about pain. Brokenness is also power. It affirms our humanity and our desperate need for God.

Such broken priests will realize it is Jesus who calls, heals, empowers and sends them to heal the broken world. Priesthood thus, is a calling and a gift from God. Growing in such conviction I suppose is what the seminary formation all about.

St Paul describes this reality as "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who has called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

This I believe is hope and being hopeful in priesthood.

Unless we embrace our brokenness, contrary to being a fact, the priesthood in reality remains a non-fact. We will continue to bask in our false sense of unworthiness, hollow excuses and parasitical selfishness. These are signs of a lack of faith in Jesus who continues to call and heal broken men. So that they become priests who heal the broken world.

It is a fact. Jesus heals brokenness. It is a fact. The world needs healing. Priesthood, however, can be a non-fact if men do not embrace their own brokenness.



**FR STANLEY ANTONI**  
*Rector of College General*

to

*Weekend With Rabboni*

Vocation camps? So boring! Unattractive! Same lah! About joining priesthood lo! Only a few attend! Only once a year promotion ... not good enough! Can we go on like this???

Then I recalled! It was the Tapah days; my first posting, a rural appointment, covered Tapah, Bidor, Slim River and Tg Malim. The youths gathered once a month at the parish house to talk, work out plans and share about the youths, church, mission and trends, etc. They were called the KFCs ... Kelab Free of Charge. (some parishioners thought that the parish provided their food). They brought the food. These gatherings were so informal and spontaneous. From this group, 2 became diocesan priests, a few tried religious life but good many became church leaders and ministry heads in many other parishes.

Fast forward. We are now in the Diocese of Melaka Johor. I meet many youths. Young adults. Chinese, Tamils, English and BM speaking men and women. Semenanjung's, Sabahans and Sarawakians! They are fired up; with a sense of doing more; a desire to share their skills and gifts. Some are seeking alternatives, instead of the usual. They hear the cries and needs. They hear that "the harvest is plentiful but labourers are few." Mission field is big but missionary 'players' are not forthcoming. One even remarked, "What about missionaries of professionals? We need something."

Flashbacks! The Tapah days! A simple gathering. Not once-off thing. So was conceived "Weekend With Rabboni (WWR)." A 'Come and See' time...a quiet getaway with Jesus, the Rabboni. A stay-in weekend of silence before the Blessed Sacrament, formal and informal 'lepak' with one another, some input and guided reflections and Q&As. They enjoyed the Q&As. Some exposure-immersion to local realities were slotted in. The WWR was planned for 3-4 times a year at Majodi Plentong and Good Shepherd Seminary (GSS) Melaka alternately.

The first WWR was held at GSS. Twenty-one young adults, ranging from the ages of 18-32 years, with 16 males and 5 females attended. Among the

feedback, the participants were enlightened and enriched by: the chit-chats and the time with the bishop; the quietening of pace and self for personal recollection; the mutual search for the something more and the something beyond; and the realisation that there is no one-off thing ... that the many dots in one's life must be connected, before one can grasp the message. So WWR Weekends were a series of stay-ins and 'come and sees' in this journey of vocational discernment.

What did I gain from the WWR? What did I experience from this encounter? First, I found the young people a fascinating group. They had questions; had desires to do more; wanted to make a difference; and deep down, they wanted to meet the "Rabboni". Secondly, it was a call to be authentic-not them-but for me, to be real and genuine. They liked my stories, my journeys, my struggles and my pains ... that I had to live with my weak and dark side ... that I had to depend on God and grace ... that I had to proceed with uncertainties and absurdities of life ... that many a times I had to step out, with the 'finish' not in sight. And finally, I had to be attuned to the Rabboni to point out the Rabboni to the young ones. That was how Andrew came to Nathaniel and said, "We have found the Messiah." My role is to point out the Lord to the seekers or help them see the many signs or interventions or interruptions of the Lord. That's the challenge that many of us, priests, religious, seminarians and facilitators of vocational discernment have to contend with. We must give hope in our witnessing.

*"Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of our life by ourselves alone — we find it with another."* Thomas Merton



**RT. REV. BISHOP BERNARD PAUL**  
*Bishop of Melaka Johor*

# A Gold Prospector

When my transfer to College General was announced, a colleague asked about my new job designation. Being apprehensive at my job description, I blurted out; "A gold prospector".

But true, the Seminary is more than just a tertiary institution or human resource development centre. It reminds me of those gold prospectors of old, whose entire life was removing endless dirt and earth. Though all is futile, if not for the rare find of minute trace of gold yet we only get to hear their thrill in prospecting for gold. Obviously, we get what we focus. When the focus is endless removal of dirt, then we get plenty of dirt. But focusing on Christ's friendship, we indeed become His authentic friends.

College General is a life-community; young adults sharing a common faith and lifestyle as 'Friends of Jesus'. However endearing, all is no walk in the park. It is no ordinary human endeavour but only with Christ's initiative we can be fully human with each other and to avail ourselves as his friends. Though hard to follow and harder still to swallow yet all is His initiative; "I call you friends, because I've made known to you everything that I've heard from my Father" (John 15:15).

Our one and only human requisite is our childlike trusting reliance in Him in whom we realise our true worth; **"The Glory of God is man fully alive, moreover, man's life is the Vision of God"**, St. Irenaeus (135-202 BC). In fact, the measure we integrate our fragmented human nature in Christ is the measure we avail ourselves as His friends. No doubt, personal and integral self-realisation is slippery, but communal living is equally elusive. Firstly, through no fault of ours but our human DNA; we cannot live well with others when we just cannot live without them. Likewise, it goes against our ego to let go off our need to win and have control or power at all costs. Finally, our obsession for instant gratification and the rest all adds up to our endless list of failures and disappointments. This horror of failure is overwhelming but with Christ's friendship, it need not devastate. All is worthwhile simply because Jesus is here.

Being a friend of Jesus is a privilege; I just avail myself to His gift of His own life, love and joy. Though still fearful yet grace is everywhere. Slowly I realised that my fear is less threatening but joy is getting more obvious. Only then it occurred to me that Jesus befriended me in College General.

**"All that is said about God presupposes something said by God".**

St. Edith Stein: Philosopher and Carmelite Nun

**FR. STEPHEN LIM**  
*Dean of Studies*

# From Banker to Seminarian

DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS



Many assume that I was raised in a staunch Catholic family or that perhaps I played an active role in the church and its ministries prior to entering the seminary. No! Absolutely not. Actually, it is quite the opposite. I was in fact very far away from church for nearly 15 years as my core focus was my career and wealth.

Though baptised Catholic, I stopped attending mass regularly throughout my university days, right into the early years of my job as a banker. Friends were a priority and so was my education and not my faith. Life went on smoothly and to put it very simply – I was happy and enjoyed what I was doing in my life then. All goals were set in place; I accomplished whatever I strove to do. Yet I recall that nagging feeling that there was a part of my life that was unfulfilled. A few untoward incidents occurred — I lost my savings in an online investment which promised to make me an instant millionaire which directly

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*being a servant  
and helping others  
in their life*

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translated as living out my dreams of having a lavish lifestyle. But this disaster was the turning point in my life. There was a void, an emptiness. I was devastated. Something was amiss. It was then that I began to search out and to find out what else was missing in my life. I wanted peace and joy not this disquieting feeling tearing my heart apart.

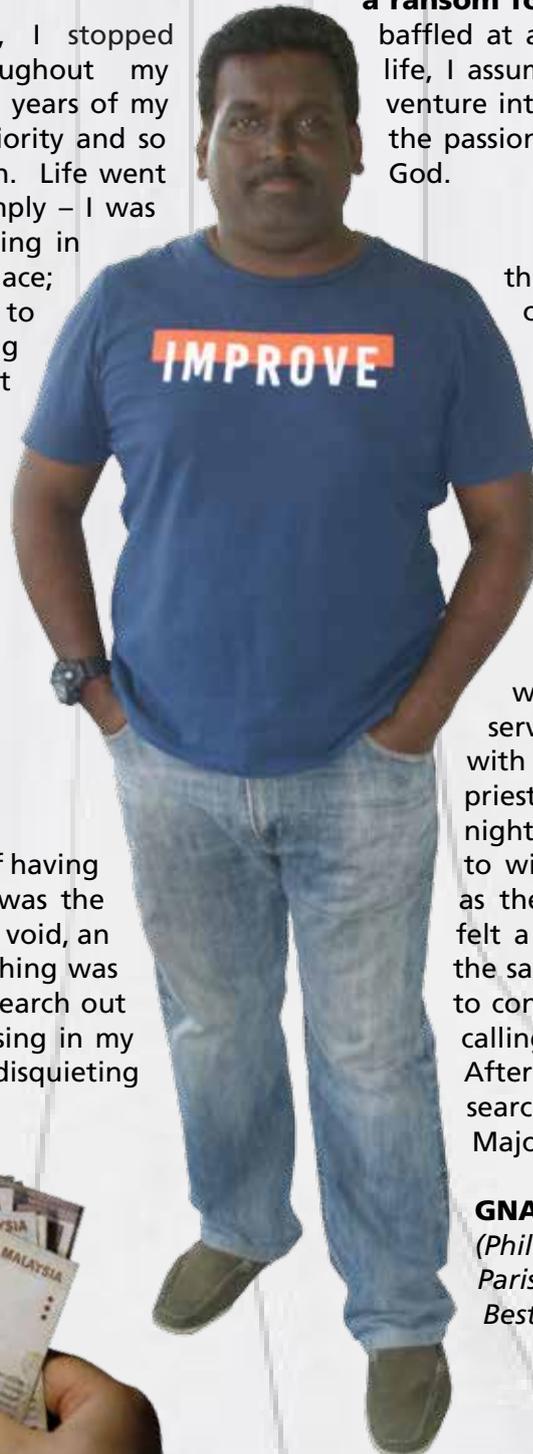
Something struck me when my CEO (a protestant) shared with me his thoughts about “servant leadership” and the importance of “God’s love”. Saying that we as Christians should bring Jesus to others, being servants and helping others in their life, he quoted - **“Jesus did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many”- Matt 20:28.** I was baffled at a CEO whose sole purpose in life, I assumed, was to make profit and venture into new businesses, had in him the passion and courage to share about God.

Soon I came to discover that scripture verses were coming alive for me and speaking to me giving me strength and a peace I had never experienced before. I began attending mass regularly and encountering Christ in the Eucharist. I started to spend a substantial time in prayer and eventually considered a vocation in the priesthood which will allow me to be a servant and share the good news with others. I got to know a few priests and spent many days and nights in their company. I was able to witness firsthand their ministry as they lived out their vocation. I felt a deep longing and desire for the same joy they radiated. I began to consider that perhaps Christ was calling me also to serve as his priest. After much discernment and soul-searching, I decided to apply to the Major Seminary in Penang.

**GNANASELVA BERENTIS**

*(Philosophy – Year 2)*

*Parish of St. Paul the Hermit,  
Bestari Jaya*



# Dig Deeper

It is a pleasure for me to share my vocation story. I started my journey as a Diocesan Seminarian five years ago in 2013.

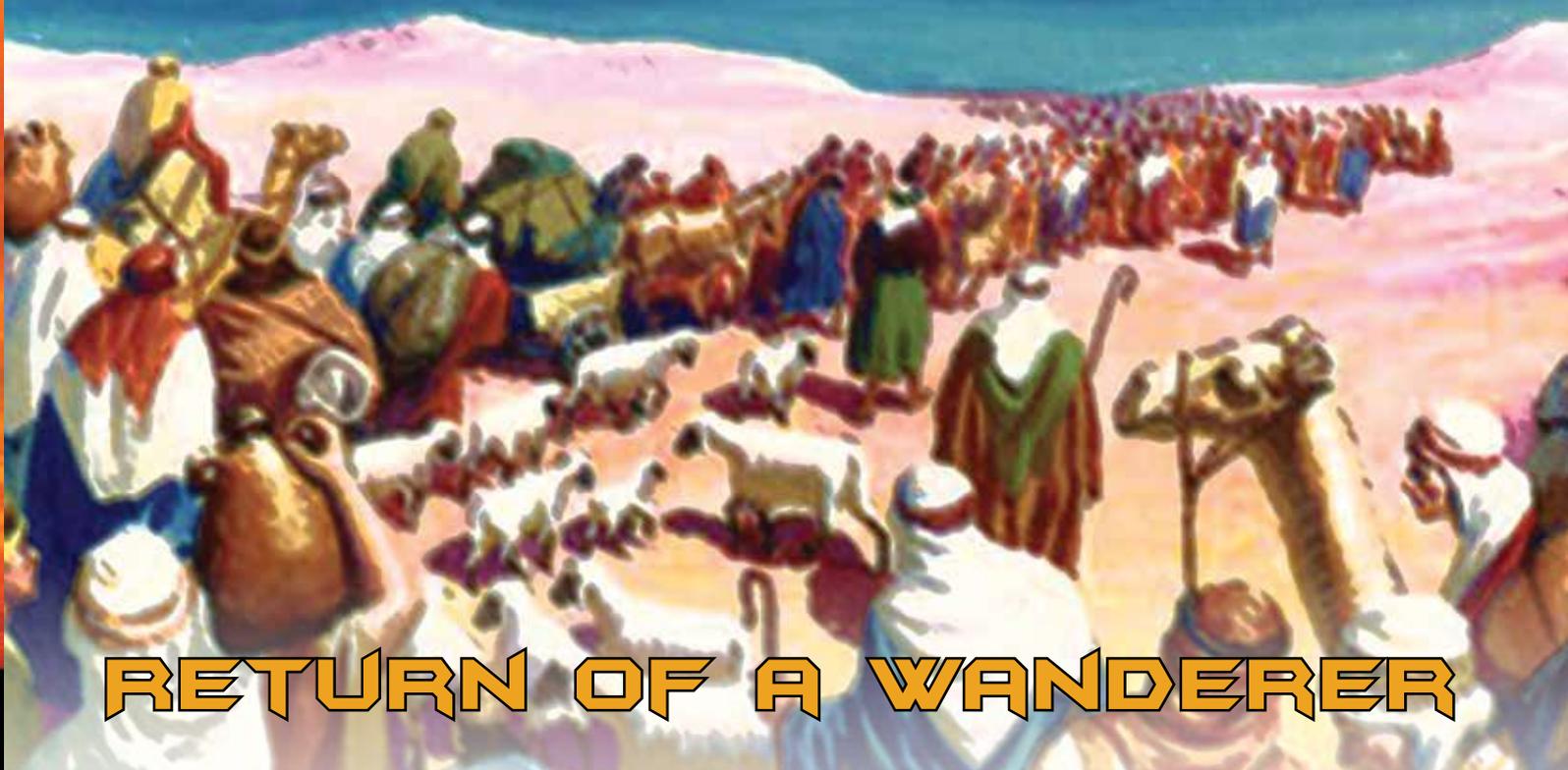
Back then, I was studying in the College Technology PETRONAS when the idea of a priestly vocation swept into my mind. It was exciting and curious all at the same time. Honestly, I couldn't make much sense of it. I was half-way with my studies and was on the way to complete my studies in a discipline in the Oil and Gas industry, yet at the same time the thought of becoming a priest began to linger in my mind. I have never had such a thought before. And what a waste of my effort! Moreover, I am a very independent person.

Surely I could never make it. To be obedient and live in a community of brothers and priests! Yes, I was giving myself all kinds of reasons why this wasn't making sense. But then, deep inside me, I had a sense of joy and meaning. I was becoming aware that God was inviting me to a deeper intimacy and to become part of Him. I can't even think of comparing my life to Jesus' sacrifice, but after all I am called to be his companion in laying my life down too and in doing it freely. In discerning my vocation I realized, I was free when I was able to put aside everything I had and choose a life of commitment in spite of what the world prefers. After all, all vocations are gifts from God.

Through these years, life as a seminarian continues to be for me the response to an invitation from God to experience his love. The invitation is very intimate and so powerful that one senses the need to respond to it by placing one's life in God's hands. It is an invitation to share in the life and the mission of Jesus, making Him present in the world by living as he lived: chaste and obedient. With my commitment I want to be an instrument of the power of God to bring healing, salvation and hope to our broken world. This conviction and a sense of gratitude for it, is what sustains me here from day to day.

**ZIFFYON MINSUN**  
*(Philosophy – Year 1)*  
*Church of the Holy Family, Telipok, Sabah*





## RETURN OF A WANDERER

My vocation story can be related to the Israelites who wandered in the desert for forty years before entering into the Promised land. At the outset, the Catholic faith that I had embraced and lived since birth was more of an obligation rather than a conviction. I could not find the significance of my life as a journey led by God. Throughout my adolescent years, I drifted away into the worldly temptations of my social environment. Yet I somehow sensed God was watching me from a distance.

At the age of 24, I experienced a conversion of heart after reading the story of St Francis of Assisi whose revelation 'repair my church' inspired and ignited my faith that God is affectionate and approachable. The emptiness of my wandering years began to be filled with Christ who now became central in my life. I sensed a calling to the priesthood but prioritized family commitments back then being, the eldest son. So I decided to find a job and regarded employment with the Government as God's blessing, since my work as a Commercial Attaché took me to different parts of the world.

During the 20 years in the 'state of wandering' out there, I encountered Christ in little things such as the Eucharistic celebrations, meeting

people from all walks of life and varied cultures, including the privilege of teaching catechism and assisted in the parish activities for a number of years. In addition, there were some other episodes and events that came my way in discerning my vocation. One such incident I could recount was during my stint in Myanmar. In June 2015, I was invited by Fr Gregory Thin, a priest whom I got acquainted with, to witness the ordination of a young priest in Leik Tho, a village situated on a hilltop that took about a three-hour drive from the Capital city of Nay Pyi Taw. The ceremony was well attended by over 100 diocesan priests with some 600 faithful. After that event, I shared with Fr Gregory that, "I too want to be a priest" and he said, "This young priest's ordination was realized because of God's choice, and you can be his choice too for nothing is impossible with God." That encouragement gave me hope and joy.

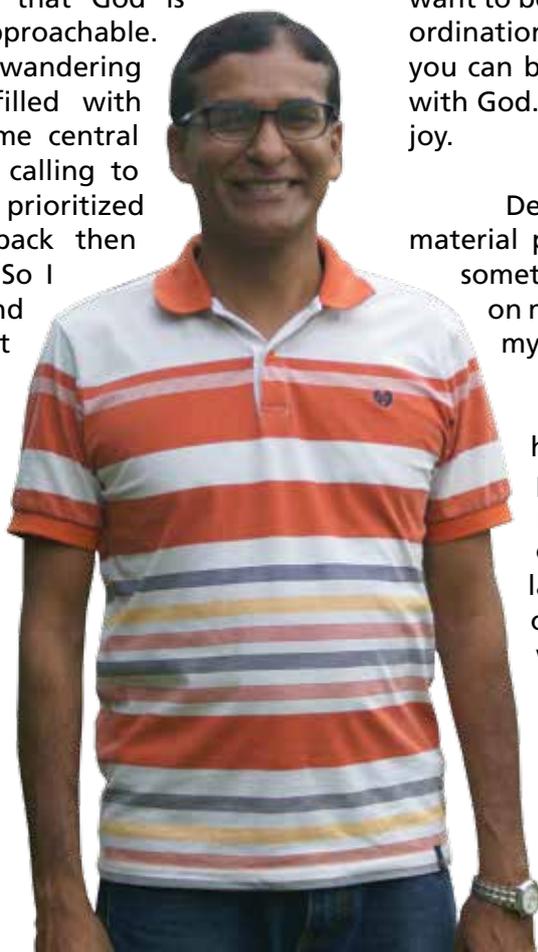
Despite the promising career prospects, material possessions and rewarding lifestyle, I felt something was still lacking in my life. It dawned on me that God had been waiting patiently for my response to his invitation to **Follow Him**.

These two bible verses greatly helped me in discerning my vocation to the priesthood: Jn 15:16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you" and Isa 43:1 "I have called you by your name. You are mine". A late vocation like mine (I am now 45 years of age) is not a hindrance to God's call to work in his vineyard.

### **JONATHAN RAO**

*(Philosophy – Year 1)*

*Church of St. Francis of Assisi, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur*



# Finding My Way in God's Vineyard



I had a simple philosophy towards life, formed over the years as I grew into young adulthood. Love to enjoy life, and as you journey through it, meditate on it and understand it. Most importantly find God in it. This might look very serious but is it really? Well, it depends on how you look at life and its journey. Let me share glimpses of my journey where I had to seek to understand events in my life, ponder over them and realize God's prompting and pointing the way I should travel.

Monsignor Anthony Thomas gave me First Holy Communion on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1999. He was someone who could not be easily influenced and humility was his greatest asset. His immutable belief in our Lord Jesus was what questioned and challenged my conviction of my faith life as a Catholic.

Following after the footsteps of my brothers, I joined the Altar Servers in the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Health, Kampung Pandan. As an altar server, I had to learn the Mass order and everything else necessary for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Serving at Mass and watching the celebrant going through all the prayers and rites left an impact on me. My dad sensed my desire for the priesthood, so he enrolled me in the Catholic school of Sekolah Menengah Stella Maris. I expected it to be a launching pad for my faith life in that school but it did not help much. Nevertheless, it helped me grow somewhat in my faith. However, I had a great time there.

In 2008, Father Christopher Wilvaraj Soosaipillai, previously unknown to me, became my parish priest. He was also the Vocation Director of the Archdiocese. I was exposed to various discernment camps both in Malaysia and Singapore through his initiative to help me discern my call. All these exposures opened my mind to the various vocations in life - marriage, single blessed, and Holy Orders.

I remember one incident during the vocation stay-in at the Good Shepherd Church in early 2016. We were to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I knelt through the half-hour and could not pray because tears were just flowing non-stop. I tried to control it, but I failed. Eventually, I ended up not 'praying' but feeling very joyful, thankful and peaceful. From this came another affirmation of my longing for a life with God, and walking in the footsteps of his Son Jesus through a life of service to his people, the Church.

This incident greatly inspired me to join the priesthood, to carry out his mission in the same way as the early disciples of Jesus.

What lies ahead on my journey? I am open to whatever God has planned for me. I draw strength and hope from what is etched in my mind forever, the words of Pope St. John Paul II taken from Matthew 14:27: **"Be Not Afraid."**

**PHILIP ASIRWALAM**

*(Initiation Year)*

*Church of the Sacred Heart,  
Peel Road, Kuala Lumpur*

# Father, I do not know



Serving in the church is what I love to do. Helping in the church every time there is a need such as serving as an altar server, reader, in the choir or as commentator has given me a lot of experiences in conducting prayers and fellowship. Through these services, I have also learned how to relate to others. I have served the church since I was 7 and my first task was to become a candle-bearer.

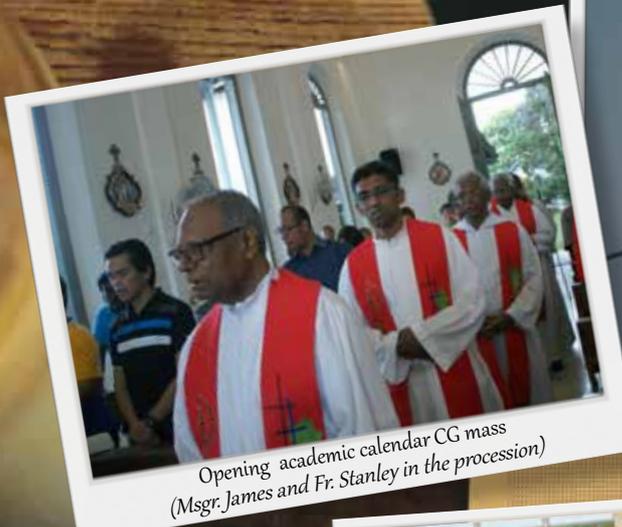
Whenever there was a Eucharistic celebration in our church, I would be asked by the prayer leaders to serve with the other altar servers. I remember once when Rev. Fr James Meehan was the celebrant, he asked me after mass, "Do you want to become a priest when you grow up?" My response was, "I don't know Father." I was very surprised when the priest asked me about it. I had been asked the same question several times by priests and my response has been, "I let God lead my step towards my vocation. If my calling is to become a priest, I will enter the seminary."

After the priests had asked me, I told my parents and asked them what they think. At first, my parents were shocked and even a bit upset. But, when they heard the priest say that the church needed more priests, they began to talk about it and their reaction subsequently was more positive and supportive. Good parishioners from my village also gave me their support to answer the calling.

In 2016, when I finished my course as a prayer leader, we had a thanksgiving mass. Our rector, Rev. Fr Paul Herry, was surprised when he saw that my name was stated in the certificate as one of the prayer leaders. Right in front of the parishioners he asked me if I wanted to go to the seminary. He said that if I refused he would keep my certificate. I answered, "Yes." Eventually I joined the St. Joseph Missionaries Society also known as the Mill Hill Missionaries. I hope that I can become a good disciple to witness in this broken world through this vocation by serving and caring for others, especially for those who are really in need.

**MAVERICK ANAK ALBERT**  
(Pre-Initiation  
Year 2017)  
Mill Hill  
Missionaries





Opening academic calendar CG mass  
(Msgr. James and Fr. Stanley in the procession)



Bishop Sebastian  
— giving the best is priority



Priests (we are ready, are you ready)



PIY (look at the smile)



Philosophy 2nd year



Parishioners (congregation experience suns)



PIY presentation (such nice performance  
keep it up brothers)



TY  
(3 stooges + big papa + Capuchin = all 4 one)



Alter (impressive work from the team)



Lauds at the Philip Minh and companion



During mass (great priority before the CG Feast)

Philip Minh shrine  
(Philip Minh and companions statue)



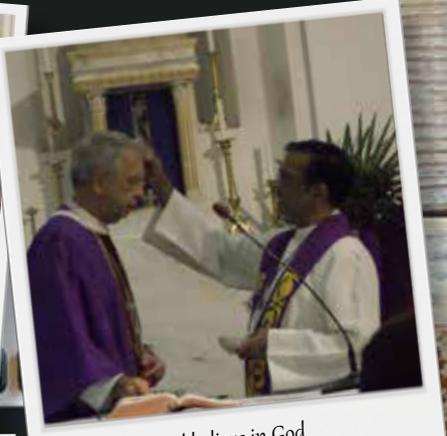
Philosophy 1st year



?)



In line to receive the Ash



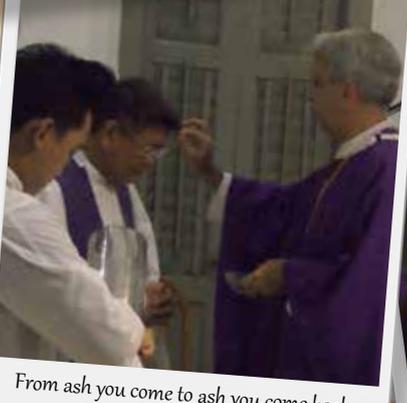
Repent and believe in God



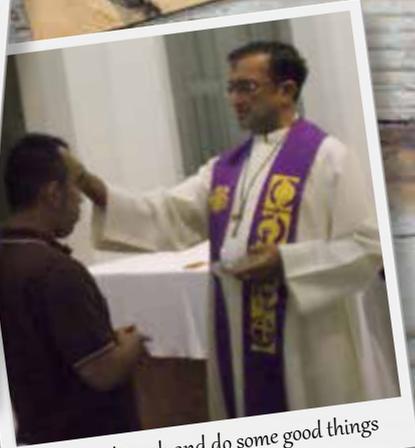
et during mass)



CG heritage (all are set down ready to roll)



From ash you come to ash you come back



Receive this ash and do some good things



Visitors (nice and decent presentation)



Visitors (more to explore upstairs)



Proclaiming the word of God



preparation for the procession



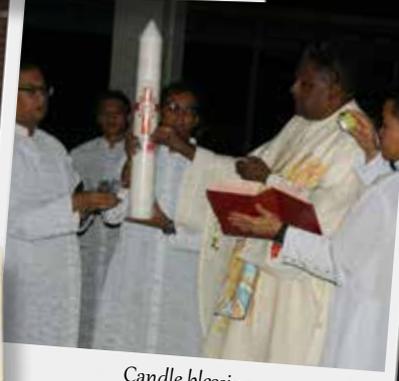
Seminarians (halloa....posing before begin)



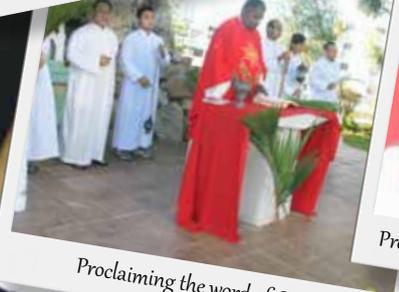
Alter (decorated nicely good job)



celebration begin)



Candle blessing



Proclaiming the word of God



Procession to chapel (Haleluyah..haleluyah...)

*Spirituality...*

*Being Fully Human*

**'He who is filled with love  
is filled with God himself.'**

*Saint Augustine*

What is spirituality? Often the discussions point towards God, The Supreme Power, The Holy Spirit and so forth. For me, spirituality is an euphoria experience or a state of higher consciousness. Spirituality essentially means to return to a natural state of self where we are just a being without any shade of artificiality, which leads to an enhanced state of perception and better understanding of reality, faith, belief and ultimately God. It helps us in 'being human' with a good and right thoughtful mind.

Many confuse spirituality with religion; however, they are two distinct schools. In my understanding, religion is designed or established by man to provide moral guidelines and to take human beings to their ultimate destination. Meanwhile, spirituality is born in a person and develops in the person. Religion is defined by its tradition and teachings; spirituality is defined by what is real in our own experience, arising from an inner search within ourselves, the finding of truth, joy and peace. Being spiritual to me is more important and better than being religious. If you are spiritual, you are spiritual in a very unique way. No one else can be spiritual the same way you are. It is unique!

Being a spiritual person is synonymous with being a person whose highest priority is to love, care and be kind to oneself, others, animals and the planet, and such a person will consciously attempt to honor this 'oneness'. Here, spirituality is manifested by our nature. It cannot be found by believing or practicing in a certain way but only through experiencing love and kindness both of which are the essence of a true spirituality.



In College General, the philosophical studies have further nourished my spirituality. "Philosophy" is a theory or attitude that guides one's behavior. It includes knowledge of values, not just facts. It gives us a "big picture," a "world-view" and a "life-view." Philosophy uses natural human reason to explore the truth for clarity. Thus, it opened my mind and thoughts in understanding who is human and who is God and most of all transformed me into

'being human'. It makes me explore the meaning and consequences of my faith and to grow in my spirituality in a realistic manner.

My spirituality is developed and sustained through experiencing the 'God of love' (1 John 4:16). I believe anything that is not of love, peace, joy, truth and kindness is not of God. By praying to God and meditating does not mean that we are in union with God, rather sharing the love, peace, joy, truth and kindness are the ones that would prompt the spirit to dwell in us. If we want to be a spiritual person, then let love and kindness become our guiding light and then we will experience the 'oneness' with God, then our spirituality will make sense to ourselves, humanity, religion and to God.

**ALBERT ARPUTHAN MANIAM**

*(Philosophy – Year 1)*

*Church of St. Anne, Port Klang.*

# Sports Help For Healthy Living

Whenever we talk or think about sports, we not only have varied preferences but even opposing stances and interests. Some are just born with talents and skills while others are totally lacking. Nevertheless, many talents can be enhanced and skills acquired through diligence and practice. After all, isn't it true that correct practice makes one perfect?

In addition to entertainment and enthusiasm, sports have many long lasting benefits, including good health, physical strength and fitness. It is a good kick-start for a lasting weight management lifestyle. The irony is though we know the benefits of exercise and sports yet we tend to neglect it. Is it that we are lazy? Or isn't it true that we create a competitive environment just because we are good in football? It all becomes part of our stress, pressure and even physical injury?

Sports and exercise is not all about muscles, it goes beyond physical goodness. In effect, much of it includes and involves our attitude and behaviour towards others. We cannot deny that in the field we learn much about communication and relationship among our team members. On top of it all, we acquire the resilience and stamina to overcome all odds and difficulties. It definitely enhances our self-esteem and personal competence. It gives us much self-control as well as being more effective in our exercise regime.

In College General, we realize that the size of a person is not everything "It is not the size of a man but the size of his heart that matters." (Evander Holyfield, professional boxer). It opens up for me the whole range of the dynamism of relationship and communication with our fellow brothers. There is little showing off superior skills and stamina but in the enhancement of self-control, discipline, and friendship but practically harnessing our sense of belonging as a community which is family based.

Among us we speak much on bringing hope into our broken world. Sports in effect helps us to walk our talk; providing us the safe venue to let go of stress to ensure better well-being. We also learn to accept and respect each other in spite of race and religious preference. Besides, we have so much to share and part-take in both the joy and health benefits of sports. Yes. Together we support and strengthen each other in our sports.

**JAYCE MUJIS**  
(Philosophy – Year 1)  
Church of St. Martin  
Telupid, Sandakan, Sabah





## DAWNING TO HUMANITY



Leaving my comfort zone and my world behind is not easy. Every so often I question myself, what am I doing here...to be formed? Am I not good enough until I need to be formed to be good? Am I not mature enough at this age? What else do I need to be more human? These questions keep spinning in my mind as I journey every single day in this house of formation. At least at this point of time I might be perceived as having achieved a fraction of what is required.

Essentially, the training continues with the call to live the particular communion with Christ. At the same time, my life and ministry must adapt to various conditions of life. So, in order to reach the point of requirement, I am obliged to reach into my deepest spiritual needs. In that way I grow in maturity.

In line with the future ministry, my personality must be really formed and moulded, so as to be a bridge and not a hurdle especially to be a disciple witnessing hope in a broken world. In future I will be able to bring others to encounter Christ.

Relating with others is very crucial; relationships are essential in priestly witnessing. It is the condition for true evangelization, bringing people together into fellowship with God and one

another. To be a witness to Christ I must not be snobbish, arrogant or selfish, but rather friendly, sociable, courteous, hospitable, genuine in words and heart, generous and always ready to serve.

Open talk especially among brothers to ensure that relationships are transparent is also important. To understand, forgive and console others helps for mutual encouragement. Personally I feel that the acceptance of other brothers with their strengths and weaknesses is essential for good relationships. "Every human being exists in his own distinct ways" is my keyword and alarm bell if I begin to make wild judgments. I strive to respect every person's dignity in this way.

These human qualities may not be new but are of paramount importance for me to cultivate ceaselessly. Consistency in cultivating these features that nurture my life is not only for the sake of personal growth and realization of self, but also in view of my future ministry.

### **CASIMIR HENRRY UMAR**

*(Philosophy – Year 2)*

*St. Stephen's Church, Bau, Sarawak*

*In your mind*

# WHAT IS HOPE?



**Maxwell Verus**



**Maverick Albert**



**Addie Frank Lingge**



**Joel Rut Markus**



**Ricky Abi**



## **Joel Rut Markus**

Hope is my strongest shield. Whenever I feel like giving up God is always there to strengthen me by giving me hope. For he said "for the things which are impossible for men are possible with God" Luke 18:27

## **Maxwell Verus**

Hope is going to give me strength and confidence for whatever I face with the broken-hearted. The good news of God is based on my experience with him. Therefore to lead people to hope is my joy.

## **Maverick Albert**

Hope is a powerful word for me and those who are looking and seeking for something in their life especially God. Through hope, we can strive for peace, joy and love.

## **Addie Frank Lingge**

For me hope is the belief that one day it will become true if I trust in God even though I may be facing difficulties and obstacles. Our God never fails to reassure me of hope when I'm in need.

## **Ricky Abi**

For me hope is the product of love and the very obvious thing to describe hope is by referring to the seven corporal works of mercy and the best part is when I can participate actively and become part of it.

# Journey of Harmony

It is a great pleasure to pen a few words on the wonderful experiences of our pastoral exposure over here. We, as the students of the Initiation year are required to engage in visits to Catholic and other Christian churches or prayer centres as well as places of worship of other beliefs.

The fundamental purpose of this pastoral programme is for us to understand better about the people and their beliefs. During our visit to the Catholic Churches in Penang Island we in fact learned a lot about the local customs and traditions and also how people over here live their faith with much love and joy. We hail from different parts of the peninsula and thus we find many new and attractive cultures and traditions.

Apart from that, we were much blessed to observe and experience the prayers and worship services of other Christian denominations. For instance, the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and others. We also had the opportunity of visiting the places of worship of other beliefs like the Hindu and Buddhist temples. This entire package of experience has given us much material for our pastoral reflection.

In line with the College General Community Theme for the current year we are grateful that we had the opportunity to be "Disciples Witnessing Hope in this Broken World" through our sharing and the time spent with people out there who were sick, abandoned, needing love and giving a listening ear.

## **ANTHONY ROBERT & GABRIEL PUVAN**

*(Initiation Year)*

*Church of St. Jude, Rawang, Kuala Lumpur*

*Church of Immaculate Conception, Johor Bahru*



**ANTHONY ROBERT**



**GABRIEL PUVAN**

## Bringing Hope and Encouragement to the Children

Apart from our English and Faith Formation classes, we have pastoral visits every weekend. The objective of the pastoral visits is to bring hope to those who are in need by sharing our love, our time, and interests with the 44 to 50 children at St Joseph's Home in Penang.

During our pastoral visit, we can see that many children lack the love from their parents and others. This is a good opportunity for us to bring hope to them by talking to them about their problems and the obstacles they face. Besides that, we also share our joy and happiness with them by singing and playing games. Although sometimes it is not easy to get close to all of them but we can see their happiness when we start to communicate with them and understand their feelings.

As a result of our visits, we have learned to be more caring, loving and understanding towards each other. Are we succeeding in being brotherly to them? We are not sure, but, we hope that by these pastoral visits, it will strengthen them to face any challenges and bring joy into their lives.

## **ADDIE FRANK ANAK LINGGE & JOEL RUT**

*Pre – Initiation Year,*

*Church of St. Theresa, Serian, Sarawak*

*Cathedral of St. Joseph, Miri, Sarawak*



# HOSPITAL MINISTRY

Being a Penangite, the General Hospital is very significant and close to our heart, as it provides shelter and healing for Penangites who are troubled with physical sickness. It is also very personal to me as I was born in this very hospital. We remember days as children at the General Hospital visiting family, relatives and friends who were hospitalized.



This year, every Sunday we were assigned to visit patients at the Penang General Hospital for pastoral formation. During this period of 2 hours, we tried to spend time with patients who were ill with all kinds of diseases. They come from all strata of society, races and religious affiliations.

In general we can say that this pastoral exposure every Sunday has made us to be more human and to empathize with those who are physically ill and need someone to talk to and share their feelings/pain. As the Church in Peninsular Malaysia celebrates the Year of Hope this year, we challenged ourselves to be Disciples of witnessing Hope to the physically afflicted.

Saint Paul's says "Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. He comforts us when we are in trouble, so that we can share that same comfort with others in trouble" (2 Cor 1:3-4). In a nutshell this pastoral exposure had enabled us to accompany the person in need and to pray for healing conversation.

We thank God for this wonderful experience that He has blessed us with, as we discern to be future diocesan priests. This exposure has helped us to taste the gift of being merciful and loving pastors to the people of God.

## RAYMOND RAJ & DESMOND JENSEN

*Philosophy Year 2*

*Church of the Divine Mercy, Penang  
Church of St. Anne, Bkt Mertajam*



RAYMOND  
RAJ



DESMOND  
JENSEN

# Pastoral at Mt Miriam

*"God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble."* This text (Psalm 46:1) is most significant as pastoral caregivers in Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital. We have first-hand encounter of God's providence, especially care and affection for the patients. It was not as what we have imagined we would do there but still we found it enjoyable and enriching despite the challenges that we met. This made us to reflect on the teaching of Jesus, *"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."* (Matthew 25: 35-36)

Initially, we had difficulties in approaching and starting conversations with the patients. Through prayers, we managed to overcome our difficulties.



We approached patients, conversed with them and especially listened to their stories and prayed with them, if they wanted to. We realized that this ministry is not about us. It is all about Christ's love and care for them, their experience of pain, anguish, hope and joy. Being with them helps us to be more alert, aware and listen attentively. A loving, serving and compassionate heart is needed to be with them. We thank God for our experiences in Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital, because there, we can see how precious life is, as well as being witnesses of hope to them.

## JERRY JOSEPH MUHAMAT & CANISIUS BENJAMIN

*Philosophy Year 1*

*Church of the Good Shephard, Manggatal, Sabah  
Church of St. Catherine Inanam, Sabah*



CANISIUS  
BENJAMIN



JERRY JOSEPH  
MUHAMAT

## Challenged

Cheshire home cares for the physically and mentally challenged.

At first it was difficult to understand what some of them were trying to say. It was challenging for us to put ourselves in their shoes and know what they were thinking, saying and why some of them behave in an unfamiliar way towards us: changing from anger to happiness in the wink of an eye. Most of them need the wheelchair and we felt pity for them. Nevertheless they are very skilled with their hands. Their attitude is positive, they do not look



down on themselves even though they are challenged. This makes us think of ourselves, even though we have good limbs; however, our attitude is not as positive as theirs.

Having done pastoral there, we experienced their routine: they do packing, recycling, making handy crafts and floor-mats. They taught us patience while working with them. We enjoy our pastoral there. This is an eye opener for us: they are very optimistic, while we allow ourselves to be otherwise. Their optimism gave hope to us, and to grow in self-esteem, to see things clearly, and not to focus on the wrong things in life.

### **PIERRE CHANG MING LUNG & KENNEDY NAKUDAH KILLIN**

*Philosophy Year 1*

*Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Johor Bahru*

*Church of St. Francis Xavier, Keningau*



**PIERRE  
CHANG**



**KENNEDY  
NAKUDAH**

## Home For the Elderly

Giving and Receiving Hope

**If we want to create Hope for the person,  
we must give Hope, always hope.**

~St Theresa of Calcutta

We were assigned to the Little Sisters of the Poor where we spent time assisting in the kitchen chores, serving the elderly during meals, cleaning, washing, as well as bathing, feeding and shaving the male residents. While it took us some time to get used to the routine, in no time we were acing it like professionals. Gradually as weeks turned to months, we managed to build our relationships with the residents and as in any relationship, trust had to be established first. They started to share their life stories both joyous and those which broke them down. Indeed, ministering to the broken world is no walk in the park. While we listen to them we too experience their joy and sadness, at times we too are down



emotionally and spiritually, but nevertheless, we are able to bring all this into our prayers. They might be frail physically but definitely not spiritually. To our amazement at times those who are in the infirmary section are able to acknowledge us or touch us in a way to express

their gratitude and say thanks to us. Though our chores were tiring, yet we learnt to be humble. Christ our Lord came to serve man, so too we who are aspiring to be priests should serve His people in humility by being humble Disciples of Hope. While we brought hope to them, they too gave us hope. Hope in him, hold firm and take Heart, Hope in the Lord! (D.O. Psalms 26:14)

### **GEORGE VAITHYNATHAN & JESSELTON JASON JAMES**

*Philosophy Year 1*

*Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Ipoh*

*Church of The Blessed Sacrament, Labuan*



**GEORGE  
VAITHYNATHAN**



**JESSELTON  
JASON JAMES**

In your mind  
**WHAT IS  
A DISCIPLE?**



**Boris Adrin**  
God broke into my life. Jesus showed me his love and called me to follow him. As I reflect on this merciful intervention, my desire to be his disciple keeps growing.

In your mind  
**WHAT IS  
A WITNESS?**



**Edward Yahan**  
Being a witness for Him I need to be daring to be different in contrast to the worldly values in order to be a witness of the mystery of salvation.

In your mind **WHAT IS A BROKEN WORLD?**



**Charles Andrew**  
We are living in a society which is broken, facing many social and political ills. As a disciple of Christ, I need to be an agent of healing towards people, permeating God's love.



**Timothy Linggang**  
A broken world for me is when I see so many bad things happening in our lives. When I go for my pastoral work, I see many children who have become victims of their family problems and many people begging and homeless.



**Editor**  
Broken people in the broken world, recognizing one's brokenness is pivotal before one can become a minister of healing towards the people of God.



Strrrrrriiitike!



Hmmmm...what size ball should I use...



Victory dance



Who is the most happy face here?



Recollection Time



Holy Hour



Prayer Room, in contemplation and prayer



Listening to the retreat master



Now hold still, master



Manual labor



Muscles in action



clean-up or 'bang'



sweep, sweep,



Fr. Stephen in his session with the aspirants



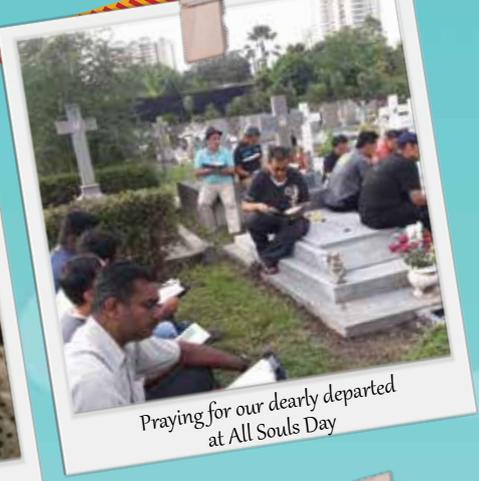
Praying with and for our aspirants at St. Francis Xavier



Korean Martyrs' & Lectures' Appreciation Day



Lectures' Appreciation Day - Dinner time



Praying for our dearly departed at All Souls Day



piece in progress!



Baaa ... baaaa ... Shaun the Sheep



Steady ... steady ... eggy does it...



We are A FAMILY



Seminarians with aspirants



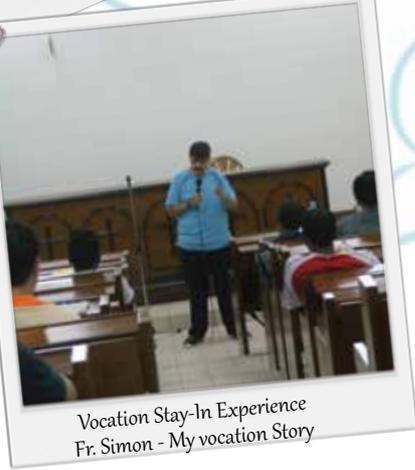
Visit to St. Joseph Home



Visit to St. Joseph Home



Fr. Stanley - What is Priesthood



Vocation Stay-In Experience  
Fr. Simon - My vocation Story

## PRE-INITIATION YEAR

**(Back row from left)**

Cornelsteve Dominic, Edward Yahan,  
Addie Frank, Boris Adrin, Maverick Albert

**(Front row from left)**

Charles Andrew, Sylver Ivan,  
Fr. Stephen Lim, Joel Rut, Timothy  
Lingkang, Maxwell Verus



## OUR COMMUNITY

**(5<sup>th</sup> Row from the Left)**

Ricky Abi, Maxwell Verus, Fr. Stephen Lim,  
Msgr. James Gnanapragasam, Fr. Stanley Antoni,  
Fr. Simon Labrooy

**(4<sup>th</sup> Row from the Left)**

Anthony Robert, Canisius Benjamin, Addie Frank,  
Gabriel Puven, Jerry Joseph, George Vaithynathan

**(3<sup>rd</sup> row from the left)**

Desmond Jansen, Kennedy Nakudah, Charles  
Andrew, Pierre Chang, Gnana Selva,

**(2<sup>nd</sup> row from the left)**

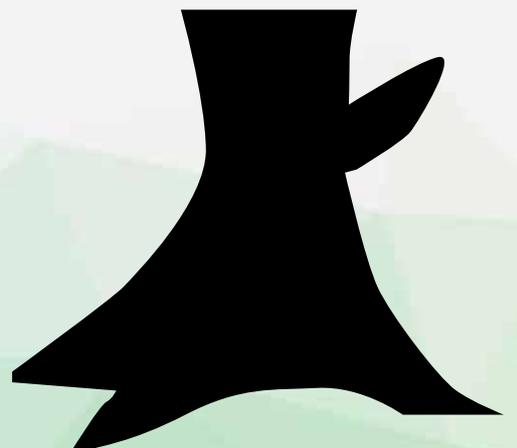
Boris Adrin, Ziffyon Minsun, Jayce Mujis, Edward  
Yahan, Joel Rut, Maverick Albert

**(Front Row from the Left)**

Timothy Lingkang, Jonathan, Philip Asir,  
Henry Umar, Raymond Raj, Albert Arputhan



**COLLEGE  
GENERAL  
FAMILY**





**A INITIATION YEAR**  
(From left)

Johnny, Gabriel Puvan, Priscilla, Fr. Simon Labrooy,  
Anthony Robert, Philip Asir, Randell



**A YEAR 1 PHILOSOPHY**

Fr. Stanley Antoni, Jerry Joseph, George Vaithynathan, Jonathan,  
Jayce Mujis, Albert Arputhan, Pierre Chang, Kennedy Nakudah,  
Canisius Benjamin, Ziffyon Minsun, Ricky Abi



**B YEAR 2 PHILOSOPHY**

Raymond, Fr. Stephen Lim, Desmond Jensen, Henry Umar,  
Fr. Stanley Antoni, GnanaSelva

**C YEAR 1 & 2 PHILOSOPHY**

**(Back row from left)**

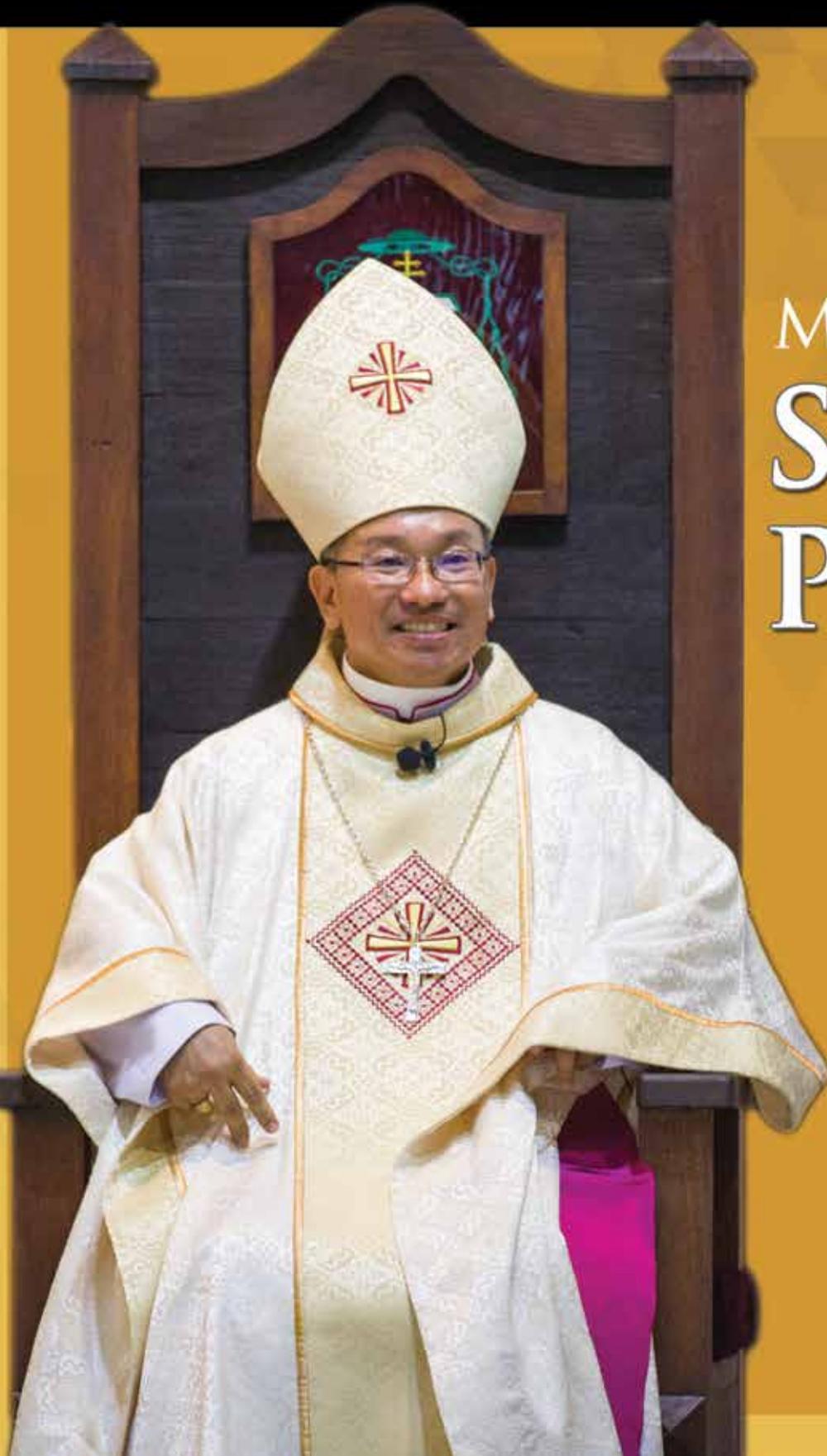
Helena White, George Vaithynathan, GnanaSelva, Fr. Stephen  
Lim, Ziffyon Minsun, Jonathan, Desmond Jansen, Kennedy  
Nakudah, Raymond, Canisius Benjamin, Jeanne Saw

**(Front Row from left)**

Fr. Stanley Antoni, Henry Umar, Jayce Mujis, Albert Arputhan,  
Jerry Joseph, Pierre Chang, Ricky Abi

*Congratulations*

ARCHBISHOP OF KUCHING



MOST REV  
**SIMON**  
**POH** DD





Wish To Know  
More About Being  
Disciples of Hope  
& Diocesan Priesthood

Please contact:

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