



Beyond The Signs Of The Times

The daily readings leading up to this Sunday have pointed to God's justice, generosity, and mercy. Evildoers are dealt with justly, in readings from Monday to Wednesday, as well as Saturday. Prevailing mercy and solidarity closes the distance between heaven and earth most explicitly in Thursday's readings. In all the readings, God's judgment is not an end in itself, but aims to nurture and give life, where judgment is an expression of God's power and agency. To what end?

In the current pandemic that the US is weathering badly, there doesn't seem to be a clear outcome that could entail God. At least there's an awakening about racism, structural and personal, stories that you'd think belong to the 19th century – until you realize that you too might have been racist or oppressive in some manner in your life, especially when stereotyping people.

In an irretrievable past, I might have recounted previously of finding myself seated alone in a section of empty pews, only to be surprised as migrants filled them. It was an accidental public social action, one that inspired at least another churchgoer to switch seats in solidarity not only with me, but with these fellow faithful who happen to look different, though still Catholic, still human.

Certainly, God can make straight lines with crooked ones, but even the pandemic tests the faithful, and more so those without faith, with incredibly challenging dangers and debilitating change. Nothing can nor should stay the same. If this is not a message writ large that humanity is not God, let me know otherwise. This epochal period is

a liminal space, between what has been, and what is to come. Not surprisingly, revolutionaries and mystics emerge from such spaces.

Revolutionaries have strategically agitated and created inconvenience to those in power until the voiceless and social hunger for justice are heeded, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, or even the biography of Buddha (without reference to Buddhism itself). Mystics who turned to God amidst crises and challenges in their times, creatively birthed new spirituality in response to serious problems in society or in their own personal lives, as St Francis of Assisi and St Ignatius of Loyola had witnessed.

Clearly, anxiety overshadows such liminal spaces, where unknown and hence untrustworthy elements are in play. The resulting reactive differences and disunity when resolving this liminal space exemplify a mistrust in the other. The science fiction movie *Arrival* (2016) builds from that theme. In order to achieve solidarity with the other, a belief in something or someone other than our abilities and knowledge, is necessary. This belief is often not a guarantee, but a hope in the good of the other.

We don't simply trust in strangers, and also God, if we don't know them. However, today's readings emphatically declares how we can definitely trust in God. Today we hear and read who God is – universally caring, able to make things happen, fair but also capable of tough love, yet unrelentingly kind and merciful, especially given how often Moses successfully bargained with God for his people.

The Holy Spirit is always accompanying and inspiring us –

helping us see straighter lines among the crooked ones in our lives, or see the straight in all lines. To do so is to be transcendent, to know beyond just ourselves. Prayer is a good exercise of transcendence, a dialogue with God who is utterly beyond us, yet incarnate through and around us in the world, uniting all things, time and space.

Recognizing each other as human alike, with very human needs and desires, is only the first step of understanding, leading to knowing, trusting, and accepting the other like ourselves. Beyond what Jesus asks of us, I hope we will live out God's will for us, united as one, like at a great wedding feast. There, joyful for and with each other for the united Bride and Bridegroom not only at the eschaton, but also as so desperately needed in this liminal space, might we fulfill our baptismal promises as daughters and sons of God.

MICHAEL PHUNG, S

The ICPE Woman to Woman (W2W) ministry held a 10-week module on “Finding Your Personal Vocation”. Valerie Tan shares her reflections

*Who am I?
Why am I here?
How shall I lead my life?
What shall I do?
Why?*

You may have, at some point, asked these questions of yourself. Do you believe that there is an answer? How important is that answer to you? Why?

In my early twenties, I became interested in the concept of vocation, God’s call for me. I was very keen to do the right thing, so I sought to learn more about discernment in order not to make irredeemable life choices that would conflict with God’s will. I was surprised to learn that the primary purpose of discernment is not so much about understanding **what** God wants me to do, as it is about developing my understanding of who God is, and my relationship with Him. When we get to know a person, we start to understand how he or she thinks. When I know that this person has my interests at heart, I start to trust him and his words. When I fall deeply in love with him, I want him to be able to fulfill the longings of his heart, and I do what it takes for that to happen. Hence, understanding what God wishes for us to do is simply a byproduct of knowing Him, experiencing His love for us, and falling deeply in love with Him; Him who loves us absolutely.

Thinking myself very wise and enlightened, I didn’t expect to learn much more from this module of personal vocation with the ICPE W2W ministry. But our infinite God had a surprise in store for the finite me. I should’ve known. Really!

The most important thing that God revealed to me was my lack of trust in Him. As part of the module, a one-on-

What Is Your True Vocation?



one sharing session with an ICPE team member helped me to realise that, even though I often ponder the questions of vocation, I didn’t really want to hear an answer anymore, because I didn’t trust God. I didn’t trust that He had my interests at heart, and I was deeply afraid of the trials and sufferings that God’s disciples endure when carrying out His mission. Uncovering this was the first step in enabling me to address the false image of God which I unconsciously had, and to acknowledge my fears so as to enter into a deeper level of trust that my loving Father was inviting me to.

Having asked the question of “Who is God”, I was in a better place to seek an answer to the second part of the question that is also embedded in the search for our personal vocation: Who am I?. The search for our personal vocation can be also understood as the question: Who does God call me to be, and hence what does He call me to do?. Answering this requires us to also answer the questions: Who is this God, and who is this me? Over the course of 8 weeks, we went through many exercises to reflect on who God created each of us to be. One that struck me was a simple reflection on the qualities I liked about Jesus. I was surprised to learn that the qualities I liked about Jesus could reflect the qualities I had in me.

The 8 weeks of reflection culminated in a Day of Recollection, where we looked back on all our reflections to identify the common thread that has been weaving tirelessly in each of our life stories. You see, our call had already been given to us even before we began searching for it. It had been given to us even before we were born – nay, conceived! The words God spoke to the prophet Jeremiah are also meant for us: “Before I formed you in



the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you; I appointed you as prophet to the nations.” (Jer 1:5).

Thus the understanding of our personal vocation is not so much about sending messages to a faraway God, and deciphering the encrypted message that He may or may not send to us in a green glass bottle that we have to trawl the oceans for. No, it is much more about going as deeply and as authentically as you can into the depths of your heart, and listening to it. Listening to it to hear the call that God has already gently whispered to you, and continues to reveal to you, day after day, that soon you may not just live unconsciously with it, but more and more fully from it.

“It’s like a symphony/
Just keep listening/
And pretty soon you’ll start/
To figure out your part”

Glorious,
by David Archutella
[https://www.youtube.com
watch?v=nomxXk6Q1rk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nomxXk6Q1rk)

The ICPE W2W’s personal vocation module created for us that time and space to listen and hear the call that God has already placed in our hearts. I pray that wherever you are, you may also seek and find that time and space to listen, so that you may live the fullness of life that Jesus came to give:

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.

John 10:10

Our next module, Landmarks - An Ignatian Journey, is from 17 July to 2 October (via Zoom). To find out more, send an email to icepw2w@gmail.com

PARISH NEWS

LATEST UPDATES ON MASS RESUMPTION

Please go to <https://stignatius.org.sg/> and our church Telegram channel for updates, guidelines to the resumption of weekend Masses.

PARISH OFFICE OPERATING HOURS

The church office is open from Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm, strictly by appointment only. Closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Communications via telephone, email and Telegram will be as usual.

The King’s Road church gate will remain closed until further notice.

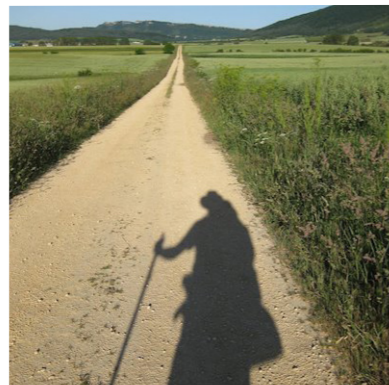
IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR COLUMBARIUM NICHE APPLICANTS

Parishioners who have booked niches with receipt no: 0561, 0320, 0306 or 0289, please contact Angela at church office 6466 0625. Or email csi.admin@catholic.org.sg as soon as possible for further details.

SUNDAYS WITH JESUS is a Liturgy of the Word for Children session, with homily by Fr Leslie Raj, SJ. It is available at <https://stignatius.org.sg/home/>

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

All are invited to Fr Charlie Oasan's sharing on "Healing



IGNATIAN PILGRIMAGE

FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. IGNATIUS IN DAILY LIFE

Join Fr Pham for an 8-day online retreat via Zoom about what we can learn from the journey of St. Ignatius to Rome. He will guide you through a series of daily exercises, reflection questions and more, all leading up to St. Ignatius’ Feast Day!

Date/Time: July 23 – 30, 2020, 8pm – 10pm

To sign up, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/ignatianpilgrimage>

Contact: Gerard at csi.youth1@catholic.org.sg

by Hearing" (Lk 6:17-19). People came to Jesus to hear Him and they were healed of their diseases. We are healed by hearing the words that comes from the mouth of God. This Wednesday 22 July, 8pm. Email cpg.cosi@gmail.com for details.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR YOUTH (RCIY) 2020/2021

Do you know youths who are seeking God? Or do you feel called to journey and help non-Catholics find God? New cycle begins 25 July. Sessions are every Saturday, 4-6pm. Find out more at www.rciy.sg

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS (RCIA) 2020/2021

Begins 4 August (every Tuesday, 8.00pm to 10.00pm). Introduce friends or family to our Catholic faith. Baptised Catholics are also invited to journey as sponsors. Registration is now OPEN for inquirers of the Catholic Faith, sponsors and facilitators. Enrol at tinyurl.com/stignatius-rcia at stignatius.org.sg. Contact Teddy (9745 8313) or Angela (6466 0625). Spiritual Director: Fr Colin Tan, SJ

RIP NEWS- RISEN IN THE LORD

Michael Choo Lip Kung – 79 years old
Departed: 15 July 2020



ONLINE FEAST DAY MASS

Join us in person or online for our Feast Day Mass at 12.15pm on Sunday 26 July 2020. This Mass will mark the opening of our Jubilee year (St Ignatius Church will be 60 years old in Singapore). A short celebratory video and address after Mass will be available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiRyLonrn1ZL2ARrfxOEO6Q>

SPONSOR



INQUIRER



St Ignatius Church is looking for

YOUTH COORDINATOR

We are looking for a Christ-centred and dynamic individual to provide comprehensive and holistic ministry and formation to youth and young adults within our parish. You will be primarily responsible for journeying with and sustaining the development of our vibrant and growing youth community. As a leader of leaders you will have the opportunity to engage, communicate with and inspire individuals in their respective faith journeys. You will also collaborate across the community in the conduct of parish events and initiatives.

DESIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

- Personal spirituality and ability to accompany and support individual youths through their faith journey
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to inspire others and lead by example
- High level of accountability and organisational skills
- Emotional competence and a good sense of healthy boundaries
- Ability to teach, lead worship, run cell groups
- Experience in social media communications, conflict resolution and facilitation

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

We are looking for a creative and experienced individual who has a desire to serve with the spirit of Christ and work in a faith based organisation, to lead in conceptualising, overseeing and coordinating all internal and external communications across our parish platforms, ensuring its message is consistent with the wider parish vision and goals. You will be primarily responsible for formulating and implementing effective communications strategies and guidelines. You will also collaborate closely with stakeholders to plan and manage the design, content and production of communication materials in meeting the parish communication needs.

DESIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Experience in communications via social media and digital media platforms
- Experience in designing EDMs, posters and other digital marketing content
- Experience in planning and executing communications strategy and campaigns
- Ability to work independently while managing inter-personal relationships and networking with parish ministries and external stakeholders
- Ability to multitask and work well under pressure.
- Excellent organizational and time management skills.

Interested applicant to submit resume to:

csi.hr@catholic.org.sg

Application for post of Communications Manager closes on 24 July 2020.

Fr Colin Tan, SJ Parish Priest • Fr Jerome Leon, SJ Assistant Parish Priest • Fr Ravi Michael Louis, SJ Assistant Parish Priest
Angela Kurnadi Parish Administrator • Suzie Wee Parish Accountant • Gerard Robert Youth Coordinator • Susan Thian Catechetical Coordinator • Robert Ong Sacristan • David Saw Operations Manager
Steven Leong Facilities Manager • Therese Gian Communications Manager