



# MUTUAL *Divine* Motherhood

I was moved by a recent class assignment on the concept of divine motherhood in the writings of Julian of Norwich, as explored by theologian Patricia Donohue-White. Julian is an interesting person in the church's history of mystics. She was a lay person, supported by her community in her dedication to prayer and contemplation to serve the community as a spiritual guide or director, as well as to pray for their intentions.

Julian, via Donohue-White's explanations, showed how applying the idea of divine motherhood to God could help us better appreciate God, the world and each other. For example, mothers are very particular with their affection and care. They know the likes and dislikes, needs and wants, of each of their children. God's love for us is like that — specific, transformative and effective — unlike objective, scientific, statistically aggregating formulas for dispensing “social welfare” that serve no one adequately, as nobody has 1.3 children.

Julian suggests that all creation is the result of ongoing “womb-work”. Rather than seeing creation and humanity, as separate and distinct from God, all creation is contained within God, and knit together into existence, or “one-ing”, as Julian puts it. Humanity and all creation are closely interconnected, and we do not have a privileged position to recklessly exploit others, without trespassing God.

In that same sense, we have a responsibility and kinship with all peoples, all manner of people, poor and rich, young and old, already familiar or yet to become friends. I am reminded of my mother who is not shy to talk to people, those whom she engages with at the market or food stalls for other transactions. Reflecting and praying further, I became very aware of how very little I valued my own mother for all her love for me and our family.

No matter our particular socio-economic status, or individual life-directions, my mother seemed to bear a lot of “trouble” for our sake, and

continues to do so. Her love for us is so bountiful, reflective of God's bountiful love, it makes me wonder if God is more “mother” than “father” when God deals with us. In pouring out so much love, my mother might not be impoverished, but the lack of attention and affection she receives marks her out as a “poor one”.

Poverty of the heart is more damaging than any material lack. The lack of giving affection might be indicative of our lack of affection to give. Is this what the cautionary tale of the Gospel is warning us about, that those with less are liable to lose what little they have? My mother gives abundantly despite the little she has received; it must be God's grace that she continues to give so generously. However, if she did not give, I feel that whatever consolation she had would vanish, leaving her deep in despair and desolation.

This does not detract in any way from the fact that material poverty has to be addressed in terms of meeting the material lack. Neither am I advocating giving away all one's material

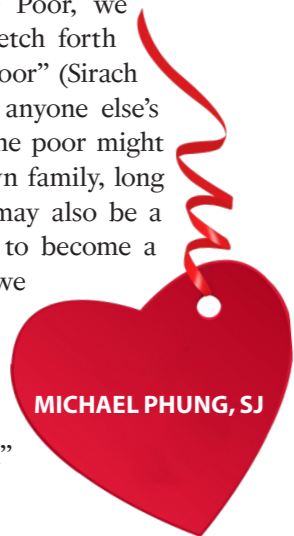
possessions. Whether the material help given is an aggregate or particularly developed for a person, depends on circumstances.

What cannot be aggregated is the corrective response to marginalization that accompanies material poverty or lack of affection. Marginalization is overcome only when there is a face, a name, and a relationship that loves and enriches the life of the impoverished person. My mother admirably demonstrates that our capacity to love does not depend on circumstances. She does not love as a sacrifice that diminishes herself, but she loves due to a desire to see our success and happiness. She loves us because our success is her success.

Both actions – addressing poverty and overcoming marginalization – should be the by-products of a core dynamic of mutual love that knows, understands and accepts the other person as they are. Applied to God, this mutuality gives God's love a fresh perspective.

Jesus' death is not just a sacrifice to redeem our sins and restore our relationship with God. It becomes a generous giving in order to eventually, mutually, enjoy each other's company in heaven. Jesus did not recklessly sacrifice his life, but closely followed God's will in suffering and pain, his generous gift for our mutual reward. Jesus, born into poverty and hardship – he was not a financially successful or innovative carpenter as far as we know – gave his life, and more, for a shared future that included all humanity, and creation.

On this occasion of the Fourth World Day of the Poor, we each called to "stretch forth your hand to the poor" (Sirach 7:32). Look not at anyone else's hand, but yours. The poor might even be in your own family, long overlooked. They may also be a person who is yet to become a friend. Howsoever we generously give in our situation and with our love, "in everything you do, remember your end" (Sirach, 7:36).



## PARISH DIAMOND JUBILEE

To commemorate our Diamond Jubilee, our church is selling special edition T-shirts and reverse umbrellas. We are also giving away commemorative car decals and mask holders at the Place of Gathering. Love offerings are welcome.

As part of our celebrations, we have adopted Morning Star Community Services as the beneficiary for our Walking with the Poor project. Go to [jubilee-stignatius.com](http://jubilee-stignatius.com) for details. Let us celebrate our Jubilee by blessing the less fortunate.

### PARISH NEWS

#### NO-SHOW FOR BOOKED MASS

If you are unable to attend the Mass that you had booked, please email [csi.admin@catholic.org.sg](mailto:csi.admin@catholic.org.sg) with your name as in the registration, last four digits of IC, date & time of Mass.

#### UPDATES ON THE MASS ATTENDANCE REGISTRATION SYSTEM (MARS)

You can now cancel your Mass booking up to 48 hours before Mass begins. You may edit your name, date of birth and mobile number on the MARS profile page. However to edit your NRIC or email address, you will need to email [mycatholic@catholic.org.sg](mailto:mycatholic@catholic.org.sg) directly.

#### ONE-TIME CHANGE OF PARISH CHURCH

With effect from Saturday, 17 October at 0900 hrs, our Catholic faithful will be able to make a one-time change of their parish church via [mycatholic.sg](http://mycatholic.sg) under their *myProfile* page. In response to the many requests made, this now one-time option to register at a different church - will meet the various personal considerations of members of our community. In order to qualify for the change of a parish church, please

ensure that you meet the following criteria:

1. You do not have any upcoming bookings in your current parish church.
2. Your previous booking was more than 14 days ago.
3. You have not attended a Mass in person in the last 14 days in any church. This is an extra precaution to prevent potential cross-infection.

Please note that after a change of a parish church has been made on [mycatholic.sg](http://mycatholic.sg), you will not be able to make a further switch to another church. At the moment, this is a one-time change.

For more information, please check with your respective churches or visit: [mycatholic.sg](http://mycatholic.sg) or email: [mycatholicsg@catholic.org.sg](mailto:mycatholicsg@catholic.org.sg)

#### LIVESTREAM MASSES

WEEKDAY MASS: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 7.00pm  
Please go to <https://stignatius.org.sg/home/>  
Tuesday and Thursday, 6.00pm. Presided by Fr Jerome Leon, SJ. Please go to [www.youtube.com/c/jeromeleonsj](http://www.youtube.com/c/jeromeleonsj)  
WEEKEND MASS: Saturday 6.00pm  
Sunday 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm, and 6.00pm.  
Please note that livestreams will only be available during Mass time and will not be accessible after the Mass.

#### WEEKLY SUNDAY REFLECTION with Fr Colin Tan, SJ.

Please go to <https://stignatius.org.sg/home/>

#### CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

JESUS AT THE CENTRE OF OUR LIVES REFLECTION SERIES

3 All are invited to pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, reflect and share on "Community/Fellowship" spoke of the Wheel of a Christ-Centred Life. This Wednesday 18 November, at 8pm. Email [cpg.cosi@gmail.com](mailto:cpg.cosi@gmail.com) for Zoom details.

#### ADVENT/CHRISTMAS REFLECTION E-BOOKLETS

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a reflection e-booklet available in English, Chinese and Tamil to journey with you throughout Advent and Christmas. The reflection themes are "The Coming Word" and "Word Among Us" respectively. Download e-booklet at [bit.ly/AdventChristmas2020](http://bit.ly/AdventChristmas2020)  
Short weekly videos that complement the e-booklet will also be uploaded on Monday 8pm, beginning from 23 November at [tinyurl.com/oneyoutubechannel](http://tinyurl.com/oneyoutubechannel)

#### VISITING THE COLUMBARIUM

Our Columbarium is open for visits on Sundays, 9.00am-9.45am, 11.00am-11.45am, and 1.00pm-1.45pm; and Saturdays, 5.00pm-5.45pm.  
For Sundays, make your bookings at <https://forms.gle/o3b1KN1nLS5d9zNf7> and for Saturdays at <https://forms.gle/fj76SLpxtUAdV3Sv6>  
Only 30 visitors are allowed per session, so please do not visit unless your booking is confirmed by the parish through phone call or WhatsApp. If you need help in booking, please call the church office 6466 0625 (Angela/ Suzie). After office hours, WhatsApp/SMS 9675 6621.



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 \* Natalie Ang Youth Coordinator \* Susan Thian Catechetical Coordinator  
David Saw Operations Manager \* Steven Leong Facilities Manager \* Therese Gian Sacristan