



## Simple Attention

**E**ach day has a rhythm. Whether steady or chaotic, pleasant or irritating. God is there, irrespective of how I feel. I was once given the advice that the irritating, unpleasant and difficult events of the day are where I will tend to find God. Whether it's because God is dropping a heavy hint or that I need God's help with something difficult, unpleasant, challenging.

What changes the day is the simple attention I give it. A simple attention towards the changing noise and people around me. Noticing the plants, insects, birds – even the occasional weed. Paying attention to the traffic and bustle, while noticing those pockets of stillness blending into the background. Appraise the gathering clouds or the dropping wind. Such time spent on moments of paying heed to my surroundings invites God into my life. All God really wants is our simple attention.

What we give in response is never equal to what we have received. On the other hand, love never demeans, and any attention we give is a precious gift in itself; be it an hour in contemplation, a few minutes of silence or a passing glance and a prayer on the go. Such was the prayer practice of devout Irish (and possibly Goan) Catholics who passed by public crosses and churches, often making the sign

of the cross and saying a quick prayer, especially if they see the Eucharistic light from outside. What matters is that attention was given.

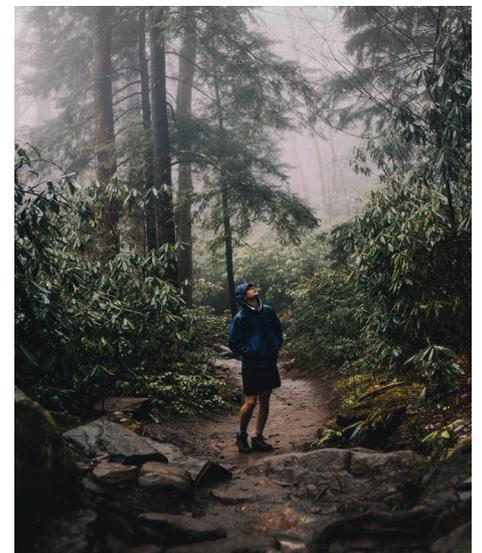
While there might not be religious symbols and places peppering our way through the day, what we do can be our offering, our place where we give attention to what we do, and also attention to God. Honestly. What we can give is only what we genuinely have, and that is the experience of our selves. Of all these, attention is one important, precious, beloved by God, shred from the bundle of experiences we can offer. It's worth the effort to dig it up from below the layers piled on by routine and familiarity, because it gives us so much more immediately in return.

Attention can be very simple. Like noticing a colour, savouring all the positive ideas it brings out, and thanking God for that experience. Like smelling the food in front of you, giving thanks without fuss, and enjoying not only the taste, but the memories it might bring, even if you're rushing through a lunch break. You don't need to be dreaming every second of the day. You pick the precious, or vexing, moments you want to share. As long as you're genuine, honest, God's not going to fault you – far from it!

Jesus knows the demands of life – he couldn't even pray

properly before he was whisked up by the concerns before him. Yet, in a way, just voicing out those demands might be like a prayer, letting God the Father know what was going through his mind. Like the one actively contemplating God, Jesus did not have any expectations of God as he returned to the busy demands on his time. Rather, I suspect, he turned his attention to God from time to time, redirecting his cares to God like an adult show-and-tell between two long married persons who are content with just being addressed or acknowledged, given a little respect, by their significant other.

It's not wrong to feel like Job did. That's a reality for a very large portion of humanity. Our attention naturally goes



to the things that threaten or harm us – stressors, pains and inconveniences, or mistakes. We would not survive if we didn't know fear. Yet, the psalmist remembers, reminds us and calls on God because life is much more than that. God, especially through Jesus, will live eternally with us in the Holy Spirit. Who else can transform something mundane into an encounter with infinity?

Which brings us to that other most important – you. As in any conversation, you need at least two partners. God's significant other is you. You are precious, because of love. You are precious, because you are you whom God wanted, God loved. And God being God, your simple attention is enough for him.

However, we don't live exclusively just with God – not most of us, anyway. We live in families and relationships of many sorts. We spend many hours at work and in more relationships with other persons, fleetingly as we buy something, or work closely together on a project or issue. These relationships tend to define how things are exchanged. Or must it?

I'm living in a religious community where relationships are always complex, always changing depending on who is there or who I see. I'm no Machiavelli who plots and charts the lives of others to navigate around them. In fact, I'd rather be laid-back and treat everyone kindly, unilaterally. Maybe the most important and unexpected exchange could be of simple attention. Do you really see the other? What do you see? Who do you see? Look, and let your heart, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit take it from there.

**MICHAEL PHUNG, SJ**

## PARISH NEWS

### OFFICE CLOSURE

The Parish office will be closed during the Chinese New Year public holiday on **Friday, 12 February**.

### FEBRUARY MASS BOOKINGS

Stage 3 Mass bookings for February opens on **9 February, 3pm** via [myCatholic.sg](http://myCatholic.sg). Parishioners will be able to book **ONE weekend Mass** and up to **FIVE weekday Masses** at each stage, subject to availability.

WEEKDAY MASS: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 7.00pm

WEEKEND MASS: Saturday 4.30pm and 6.00pm

Sunday 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm, 4.30pm and 6.00pm

Please note that the limited weekday Mass bookings system is currently only on trial in the Church of St Ignatius.

Parking is ONLY at the King's Road basement car park.

Go to [stignatius.org.sg](http://stignatius.org.sg) and our church Telegram channel for updates, guidelines to the resumption of Masses.

### CANCELLATION FOR BOOKED MASS

The cancellation cut-off time for Mass bookings has been **reduced from 48hrs to 24hrs as of 1 February**. If you are unable to attend a Mass you have booked, please cancel your booking early so that another parishioner may take your place.

### CHINESE NEW YEAR MASS TIMINGS

Friday, 12 February: **8.15am\***, 10.15am\*, 7pm.

\*There will be distribution and blessing of oranges during these Masses.

We'll also be commemorating the dedication of our Church at the 8.15am Mass as part of our Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

### ASH WEDNESDAY MASS TIMINGS

Wednesday, 17 February: 7.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm.

You can drop off your **OLD PALMS** in the basket outside the vestry room. The last day of collection is Sunday, 14 February.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday during Lent, starting from 19 February, after the 7pm Mass. Please note that parishioners will need to have a valid Mass booking to attend.

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are available every Wednesday, 6.00pm-6.30pm and Friday, 5.00pm-6.30pm. Kindly call the parish office (Pauline/ Suzie) to make an appointment before coming down.

### COMPULSORY USE OF TRACETOGETHER

All parishioners attending Mass are to use the TRACETOGETHER app or token to perform SafeEntry check-ins.

All parishioners must download the TraceTogether app OR bring along your tokens for SafeEntry when you arrive for Mass. Please continue to bring your NRIC/Work Permit to verify your Mass booking before you can be admitted to the Church Hall.

Download the TraceTogether App: [tracetogogether.gov.sg](http://tracetogogether.gov.sg)  
Collect TraceTogether Token: [token.gowhere.gov.sg](http://token.gowhere.gov.sg)

**WEEKLY SUNDAY REFLECTION** with Fr Colin Tan, SJ. Please go to [stignatius.org.sg/home/](http://stignatius.org.sg/home/)

### CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

There is no CRC Prayer Meet this Wednesday, February 10 due to the coming CNY weekend. May you all have a blessed and spirit-filled Chinese New Year celebration with loved ones! Gong Xi Fa Cai!

### ALPHA ONLINE at Catholic Church of St Ignatius

Got questions about life? Come and join us on 22 February at 8pm via Zoom. For enquiry and/or registration, go to [bit.ly/2021AOCC3](http://bit.ly/2021AOCC3)

### 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 February bookings, please book at [bit.ly/stigscolumbariumFeb2021](http://bit.ly/stigscolumbariumFeb2021)

For February 12 booking, please book at [bit.ly/stigscolumbariumFeb12CNY](http://bit.ly/stigscolumbariumFeb12CNY)

If you need help in booking, please call the church office 6466 0625 (Pauline/Suzie). After office hours, WhatsApp/Telegram/SMS 9675 6621.

### PARISH DIAMOND JUBILEE

Be united in our celebrations and get your T-shirts before our 60th anniversary on 12th February! You may purchase them at [jubilee-stignatius.com/shop](http://jubilee-stignatius.com/shop) or go to the church office at any time during office hours to make your purchases and collect your items.

### HOMEMAKERS

The Homemakers are currently NOT accepting any donations of second-hand goods during this Covid-19 period. We seek your understanding and cooperation in ensuring that parishioners do not leave any item at the Homemakers drop-off point outside the staircase at ground floor of Sacred Heart Hall until further notice.

## ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

### CATHOLIC200SG: IGNITE AND SHINE WITH FAITH

In this special year of faith, we invite all Catholics to participate in the **Collective Discernment Exercise** to reflect on how you have been living your faith.

Experience personal renewal and contribute your ideas to the Archdiocese! You may do this exercise via video, podcast or through a booklet – on your own or through a group setting.

More information on the Catholic200SG Discernment Exercise can be found at <https://catholic200.sg/spiritual/collective-discernment/>

### LENT REFLECTION BOOKLET 2021

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a reflection e-booklet to journey with you throughout Lent. They are available in English, Chinese and Tamil. The reflection theme for Lent is "The Word, Source of Life".

Please download the e-booklet at [bit.ly/Lenten2021](http://bit.ly/Lenten2021)

Short weekly videos that complement the e-booklet will also be uploaded on Thursdays 8pm, starting 31 January at [tinyurl.com/oneyoutubechannel](http://tinyurl.com/oneyoutubechannel)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SINGAPORE IS ON TELEGRAM!**

**IMPORTANT MESSAGES DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO YOU**

Search CatholicSG on Telegram and join us!  
Share this!

**Catholic SG**

Fr Colin Tan, SJ Parish Priest ★ Fr Jerome Leon, SJ Assistant Parish Priest ★ Fr Ravi Michael Louis, SJ Assistant Parish Priest  
Pauline Khoo 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 ★ Chrestella Setiyadi Communications Manager