



Self-identity is a Great Gift of God

Twice a year in our Church's liturgy we have two rather long and similar gospel narratives, one on Palm Sunday and the other on Good Friday, which focus on the passion and death of Jesus of Nazareth. If you were to read them carefully and prayerfully, you will realise that there are many different and interesting characters involved in the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. From ordinary people at the periphery of society to individuals at the centre of religious and political power, from ordinary followers to hand-picked disciples of Jesus, from ordinary family friends to close relatives like Mary of Nazareth. Each of these characters played a significant role in Jesus' passion, death and resurrection on Easter Sunday. And if you were to take time to reflect and pray with these characters, including with Jesus during the coming Holy Week, you may be surprised by them, and likely gain a deeper understanding of your faith and relationship with this person of Jesus.


Over the years, I had attended numerous silent retreats at our beautiful Jesuit retreat house in Chiangmai, Thailand. Seven Fountains retreat house is nestled

within a lovely green oasis that is within walking distance from downtown Chiangmai and the reservoir park at the university campus. What attracted me to that retreat house over the years besides the great location is the chapel of St Ignatius, with its screened windows overlooking the lush greenery outside it. It is an ideal place for Ignatian contemplative prayer with the various characters in today's gospel.




Holy Week Schedule

28 March - 4 April 2021




Palm Sunday

Saturday, 27 March 4.30pm, 6pm
Sunday, 28 March 8.15am, 10.15am,
12.15pm, 4.30pm and 6.00pm




Holy Thursday

Thursday, 1 April 7.30pm




Good Friday

Friday, 2 April 12pm, 3pm, 6pm and 8pm



Easter Vigil

Saturday, 3 April 7.30pm



Easter Sunday

Sunday, 4 April 8.15am, 10.15am,
12.15pm, 4.30pm and 6.00pm

Bookings open on **23 March at 3pm**
via myCatholic.sg. All Masses (except
the 4.30pm Masses) will be livestreamed
via our **YouTube channel**.

Left: Views of Seven Fountains
St Ignatius' chapel on the ground
floor of the St Ignatius' building
overlooking the lush garden

The Ignatian contemplative prayer which uses the composition of place and people in the Gospels is a good prayer method here, because you can take on different characters. For example, Peter, James or John, sleeping soundly while Jesus was praying at the Garden of Gethsemane; or Peter who denied Jesus three times in the courtyard; even the character of the chief priest, or Pilate in condemning Jesus to death at his trial; or as a member of the crowd demanding the release of Barabbas and shouting for Jesus to be crucified. In truth, we may identify ourselves to some extent with these characters in the Passion of Jesus, especially in situations where we failed as Christians in our dealings with others.

On a more positive note, you can also be that passerby, Simon of Cyrene who was asked or rather “forced” to help Jesus to carry his cross along the road to Calvary, or be the brave woman who stood at the foot of the cross, or perhaps the character of Joseph of Arimathaea, or Mary Magdala who witnessed the closing and location of Jesus’ tomb, ready to return early on Easter Sunday to anoint his body. Whichever character you take in your contemplative prayer, the important thing here is to be with Jesus in the coming days and at the last moments of his life.

You may be wondering why I am presenting you with all these different characters in the gospel narrative. For one simple reason – to invite you to enter more deeply into the Passion of Jesus by taking on one or more of these characters in your contemplative prayer, as you prepare yourself spiritually for the Holy Week. This contemplative prayer will provide you not only

with the deep experience of what it is like to be with Jesus during his passion and death some 2,000 years ago, but more importantly to deepen your personal encounter and relationship with Jesus, whom you acknowledge as your Lord and Saviour.

I believe the most challenging role to take in your contemplative prayer is that of Jesus himself, because most of us may feel unworthy to be that suffering son of Yahweh. However, it is one of the most important characters that we must attempt, in order to enter more fully into the mystery of Jesus’ passion and death. The invitation to take on the character of Jesus is a call to identify ourselves closely with this person of Jesus, where **“self-identity is a great gift of God”** to us, since the **“Kingdom of God is within you”**, wrote Fr William F Lynch, SJ, in his book *Images of Hope*.

Kindly allow me to quote a paragraph from Fr Lynch’s book, *“This self-identity is the great gift of God. It is not merely the gift of existence, but the gift of a sensed and possessed existence, the calm, fundamental comfortable possession of the good and the bad in us, of the good certainty – but of the bad in a certain extraordinary sense, too. This is where such a thing as forgiving myself and thus of possessing the whole of me, without getting involved in some process of self-destruction”*.

It is indeed difficult to put ourselves in the shoes of Jesus, let alone be *“in persona Christi”* because of our sense of unworthiness as a sinner. However, we need to remember that we are also *“loved sinners”* in the eyes of God, and we are called to be Christ for others in our daily lives, in spite

of our weaknesses and limitations. For Christ has no hands but ours, no legs but ours, and no mouth but ours, to speak and bring God’s immense love to those around us. Be mindful that we are forgiven and loved sinners, called to be the living representatives of Christ in this world!

For Jesus’ humanity was fully revealed in his passion and death on the cross. He shows us what it means to be a person of faith and an authentic human being. And through his suffering, passion and death, Jesus unites humanity with divinity. Echoing the words of St Irenaeus of Lyons, where Jesus recapitulated fallen humanity back to God through his life, passion, death and resurrection. Hence, we are no longer alone in our trials and sufferings, for Christ who has gone before us will be with us along our life’s journey here, especially at the moment of our death. And with the loving assurance of his own resurrection and gift of eternal life to all who believe and identify with Him as the suffering servant of Yahweh, as well as our Risen Lord.

God Bless and have a blessed Holy Week ahead!

FR CHARLES SIM, SJ



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

PARISH NEWS

APRIL MASS BOOKINGS

Stage 2 Mass bookings for April opens on **30 March at 3pm** via myCatholic.sg. Parishioners will be able to book **ONE weekend Mass** and up to **FIVE weekday Masses** at each stage, subject to availability.

Kindly note the **NEW additional Weekday Mass Timings, effective from 6 April 2021**. Our Parish capacity for all weekend Masses will also be increased to **200 pax** in April 2021. The capacity for weekday evening Masses remains at 170 pax.

WEEKDAY MORNING MASS: Tuesday & Thursday, 7.30am (50 pax)

WEEKDAY EVENING MASS: Monday - Friday, 7.00pm

WEEKEND MASS: Saturday 4.30pm and 6.00pm

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

All parishioners attending Mass are to use the TRACETOGETHER app or token to perform SafeEntry check-ins. Please continue to bring your NRIC/Work Permit to verify your Mass booking before you can be admitted to the Church Hall.

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

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

Our community will meet this Wednesday, March 31 and pray the Stations of the Cross together. Please feel free to join us. We start at 8pm. Email us at cpg.cosi@gmail.com for Zoom details.

VISITING THE COLUMBARIUM

Our Columbarium is open for visits on Saturdays, 5.00pm-5.45pm; and Sundays, 9.00am-9.45am, 11.00am-11.45am, 1.00pm-1.45pm, and 5.00pm-5.45pm.

For April bookings, please book at bit.ly/stigscolumbariumApr2021

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

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

PONTIFICAL GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION

Pope Francis has asked our parishes to support the Pontifical Good Friday Collection, which helps Christians in the Holy Land. Your support helps the Church minister in parishes, provide Catholic schools and offer religious education. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection also helps to preserve the sacred shrines.

The wars, unrest and instability have been especially hard on Christians. In these times of crisis, the Pontifical Good Friday Collection provides humanitarian aid to refugees. Please donate generously!

For more information about Christians in the Holy Land, visit www.myfranciscan.org/good-friday.

WELCOMING HOME RETURNING CATHOLICS

Landings Singapore will start an 8-week programme on **Thursdays (8pm to 10pm)** commencing on **15 April 2021 till 3 June 2021**. We invite Catholics seeking a reconnection with the faith to register.

Please register for the programme at bit.ly/Landings-Apr2021 or scan the QR code below by 7 April 2021.

For more information on Landings, please email singapore@landings.org.sg or visit www.landings.org.sg



EASTER REFLECTION BOOKLET 2021

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a reflection e-booklet to journey with you throughout Easter. They are available in English, Chinese and Tamil. The reflection theme for Easter is "The Word Liberates". Download the e-booklet at bit.ly/TheWordLiberates

ASIA APOSTOLIC CONGRESS ON MERCY (AACOM) 2021 - VIRTUAL DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

Date: Good Friday, 2 April until Divine Mercy Sunday 11 April 2021

Time: Good Friday 2 April and Holy Saturday 3 April, 7.00 - 8.00 pm; Easter Sunday 4 April to Divine Mercy Sunday 11 April, 7.00 - 9.00 pm

The Programme will be as follows:

7.00 - 7.20 pm Chaplet of the Divine Mercy

7.20 - 8.00 pm Talk

8.00 - 9.00 pm Mass Live Stream (no Mass on Good Friday & Holy Saturday)

Please go to https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBn3D87_ZVNP2EEX3cx8-w to join.

Detail of the speakers and celebrant can be found [here](#).

CATHOLIC200SG COMMUNITY CALL

If you wish to find out more about the myriad of Catholic200SG events and activities to participate or be more involved in, please attend the following zoom call:

Date : Saturday, 10 April 2021

Time : 10.00 am to 11.30 pm

Zoom : Meeting ID: 982 5400 0162

Passcode: 200



Do register at this [webpage](#) for identification purposes.